

ABROAD

Pilot Episode

Written by

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ACT ONE

EXT. OUTSIDE INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS UNIVERSITY - DAY

TEXT: LONDON, UK

Oliver and his parents JOHN (50's) and FRANKIE (50's) unload Oliver's luggage from a black cab. Oliver looks absolutely fed up.

OLIVER

I really could have made it here on my own, mum. We didn't have to take a cab.

FRANKIE

Oh, it's no trouble. A cab's not that expensive, is it, John?

PAN TO:

John is taking his watch off and handing it to the cabbie.

PAN BACK TO:

Oliver rolls his eyes.

OLIVER (V.O.)

They'd sell our house if it meant one more minute to nag me about Uni.

FRANKIE

(changing the subject)

You're sure you don't want to live home another term? I don't see what the point of starting your international experience in your home city.

OLIVER

If I did that, I'd have to apply all over again.

OLIVER (V.O.)

And I'd have to live at home for another four months. I'd rather bathe in the Camden Loch.

FRANKIE

Well, if you're sure. I just want--

OLIVER  
--I'm sure, mum.

John finishes paying the cabbie. He's missing his shirt. The cabbie drives off with it waving out the window.

JOHN  
Got everything?

OLIVER  
Yeah, Dad.

JOHN  
If you need anything, we're just a tube ride away.

John turns to Frankie.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Speaking of which, I suggest we walk to Hammersmith station. I don't think I have enough possessions for another cab ride.

Frankie nods.

FRANKIE  
Do you want us to come in with you?

OLIVER  
I'll get along fine. Go catch the next train.

They hug. Frankie is in tears as she walks off with John.

Oliver grabs hold of his suitcase and turns around.

INSERT - Sign for INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS UNIVERSITY LONDON

Oliver smiles and walks through the gates.

EXT. INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARS UNIVERSITY LAWN - NEXT DAY

Oliver lugs his trunk across the lawn. The queue for registration is massively long. Oliver groans. He gets in the queue and waits patiently.

In front of him is RILEY JOHNSON, 18, American. She and CATHY, 19, also American, talk excitedly.

RILEY

Well, I did some deductions of my own and Sherlock's logic is totally flawed!

CATHY

Take that, Moffat!

Oliver interrupts.

OLIVER

Sorry, what are you talking about?

Riley turns around to face him.

RILEY

Are you from around here?

OLIVER

Uh...Yes, I grew up here.

RILEY

Can I ask you a question then?

OLIVER

Sure, love.

CATHY

Oh my Merlin. "Love." It's so British! Just like Harry Pott-ah.

OLIVER (V.O.)

Anglophilia is a mental illness.

RILEY

How fast does it take for a coat to dry in the UK?

OLIVER

(confused)

Sorry, what?

RILEY

Like a rain jacket or something.

OLIVER

I... I'm not sure. Why?

RILEY

Well, we're both big fans of *Sherlock* and I was watching "A Study in Pink" yesterday and there's this coat this woman wears and-

Riley continues to ramble on as Oliver stares at her blankly.

RILEY (CONT'D)

-I looked it up because I want to visit Cardiff while I'm here and there's just no way that she could get from Cardiff to London, get out of the airport, drive through London traffic to her destination and die before-

The line moves up slightly. Oliver looks like he's about to keel over listening to her.

RILEY (CONT'D)

-And you would think Moffat or Gatiss would know that because they shoot in Cardiff *all the time*, but-

Oliver peers around Riley to look at how far they've moved. They're still ages behind. He looks exhausted.

RILEY (CONT'D)

I know it's a little more humid here because of the ocean but I didn't notice it at first so I'm just wondering if Sherlock's logic even holds up because-

BEN MOREAU, 19, French walks across the lawn. He is absolutely gorgeous. Oliver watches him. He suddenly realizes he's staring and looks away, shaking his head.

OLIVER (V.O.)

No, no. Do not go there. Not good.

Oliver's attention is directed back to Riley who is looking at him expectantly.

RILEY

So? What do you think?

OLIVER

Sorry?

RILEY

Would a coat stay wet for a minimum of four hours in British humidity?

Oliver blinks dumbly.

OLIVER

Uh... Probably not?

RILEY  
I knew it! Who's Sherlock now,  
Moffat?

ISU WORKER (O.S.)  
Next in the queue, please.

Riley turns around. They've finally made it to the front of the queue. Cathy walks up to the table.

ISU WORKER (CONT'D)  
Here is your orientation packet.  
You'll get your class schedule at  
the meeting in Victoria Hall.

CATHY  
Brilliant! And that's just up the  
old "apples and pears" right?

ISU WORKER  
The what?

RILEY  
She means the stairs.

OLIVER (V.O.)  
Not everyone in London speaks  
cockney.

ISU WORKER  
Yes... It's up the stairs to the  
left.

CATHY  
Great. Thanks. Is there a place I  
can get a good cuppa?

OLIVER (V.O.)  
Only people in the country use  
"cuppa," you twat.

ISU WORKER  
There will be tea at orientation.

Riley turns around.

RILEY  
What's your name?

OLIVER  
Oliver.

CATHY  
Just like Oliver Twist!

OLIVER (V.O.)  
Curse my insufferably British  
parents.

ISU WORKER  
Next, please.

RILEY  
I'm Riley. This is Cathy. We'll see  
you inside.

Riley pulls Cathy away.

RILEY (CONT'D)  
(hushed)  
You've got to stop pointing out  
everyone's nationality like that.

Riley smiles and leaves. Oliver's smile falls immediately as  
he steps up the table.

He hands the worker his paperwork. Their exchange is in  
complete silence. He smiles, nods and begins to head toward  
the building, then turns back.

OLIVER  
You said tea was to the left?

INT. VICTORIA BUILDING - DAY

Oliver walks into the orientation room which is filled with  
several rows of chairs and a podium at the front.

Oliver makes a bee line for the tea.

Cathy, next to him, pours milk into the cup first. Oliver  
looks aghast.

OLIVER (V.O.)  
She's a bloody milker!

Cathy looks up at him and smiles. He smiles back, finishes  
making his tea and takes his seat.

At the front, JENNY CALLAWAY, 34, British speaks to the  
group.

JENNY  
Hello students! My name is Jenny  
Callaway and welcome to  
International Scholars University.  
We are excited to have you here  
with us in London this term.  
(MORE)

JENNY (CONT'D)  
I have some beginning of term  
announcements, the first of which  
comes at a bit of a shock.

Murmurs fill the room.

JENNY (CONT'D)  
This morning one of our American  
students was crossing the street.  
Americans drive on the right and so  
she didn't look the right way and-

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSSWALK - DAY

Student crosses the street looking right and is promptly hit  
by a double decker bus coming from the left.

CUT TO:

INT. VICTORIA BUILDING - DAY

JENNY  
I must remind you students who come  
from countries where the traffic  
laws are different, that we do  
drive on the left here in Britain.  
To combat this dangerous cultural  
difference, you will be divided  
into groups of four for all  
traveling done outside campus.

Oliver raises his hand.

JENNY (CONT'D)  
Yes, sir? What's your name?

OLIVER  
My name's Oliver. I'm from London.  
Do I need to be in a group? I've  
lived here my whole life.

JENNY  
Then you'll be very good at  
directing the rest of the group  
away from oncoming traffic, won't  
you?

OLIVER  
But-



JENNY  
This is nonnegotiable.

OLIVER  
Sorry, Miss.

Oliver sits.

JENNY  
Your group will consist of your  
flatmate and two other students.  
Any questions?

The room is silent.

JENNY (CONT'D)  
Great. And now I pass it over to  
Fredrick to go over living  
accommodations.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. OLIVER AND EMERSHAN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Oliver unpacks his suitcase. Music plays off his iPhone. He begins dancing around the room as he packs, throwing clothes into his drawer as he does so.

BEN (O.S.)

Ahem.

Oliver stops and turns to see Ben standing in the doorway, holding a duffle bag. He stops dancing, embarrassed.

OLIVER

Oh... uh... Hi.

Oliver holds his hand out to shake. Ben takes it.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

I'm Oliver.

BEN

My name is Ben.

OLIVER

I take it you're my roommate?

Oliver grins at him.

CUT TO:

INT. DORM ROOM FANTASY - DAY

Ben strides across the room and takes Oliver in his arms.

BEN

I sure am, mon ami.

Ben strokes Oliver's cheek. Oliver is practically swooning.

OLIVER

Lucky me.

They kiss. End fantasy.

CUT TO:

INT. OLIVER AND EMERSHAN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

BEN

No, I'm down the hall. I was just helping Emershan with his things.

EMERSHAN, 18, African, appears at the door, heaving as he drags his suitcase into the room.

EMERSHAN

Don't you have elevators in this country? Four floors is insane!

Ben drops the duffle bag onto Emershan's bed.

BEN

Hey, at least there is no one above you. Our upstairs neighbors are a nightmare.

OLIVER

You've met them already?

BEN

I got here early. We have become a little too acquainted.

CUT TO:

INT. BEN'S DORM ROOM - LAST NIGHT

TEXT: LAST NIGHT

Ben is laying in bed. Loud creaking, moans, and a whip lash is heard from above him. He rolls over and throws a pillow over his head.

CUT TO:

INT. OLIVER AND EMERSHAN'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Oliver winces.

OLIVER

I'm sorry.

Ben shrugs. He looks at Emershan.

BEN

You can unpack later. Everyone else is getting drinks tonight. Come on.

Emershan shoves his suitcase under his bed.

OLIVER  
You're not staying with your group?

BEN  
Everyone is going out. We'll be fine.

Ben thinks for a second, looking at Oliver.

BEN (CONT'D)  
You should come.

Oliver hesitates but nods.

OLIVER  
Yeah, sure. Who else is coming?

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE WEATHERSPOONS - EVENING

Emershan and Oliver hold Cathy up by her armpits as she stumbles out of the pub. Riley has her arm around Ben. Oliver glances at them, then looks away.

CATHY  
Hoo! You foreigners sure do pack a punch in y'all's drinks!

OLIVER  
You're in London, love. You're the foreigner.

Cathy widens her eyes. She pulls away from Oliver and Emershan and stumbles a few steps.

CATHY  
I *am*! Guys! I'm- I'm cultured. I- I'm...

A man hands her a flier.

FLIER MAN  
Four pound drinks at Heaven tonight. Come by, gorgeous.

Riley giggles.

CATHY  
British men are so hot!

A woman hands her another flier.

FLIER WOMAN  
New DJ at Zoo.

CATHY  
British women are so hot!

The group laughs.

RILEY  
Guys! We should go to these clubs!  
We should- We should dance!

Cathy holds up a flier.

CATHY  
This one is a gay bar!

EMERSHAN  
Shouldn't we get home? We have  
orientation tomorrow.

BEN  
We'll be fine. I'm having fun.  
Let's go.

He looks at Oliver.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Are these clubs good?

Oliver is taken off guard.

OLIVER  
How would I know?

BEN  
Aren't you--

OLIVER  
--No. No, I'm not.

BEN  
(disappointed)  
Oh.

OLIVER  
B-But it sounds fun! We should go.

RILEY  
To the gay bar!

CATHY  
To the gay bar!

CUT TO:

With that she takes off down the road. The group follows.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN GAY BAR, BAR - EVENING

Heaven is a normal pub from the look of the first floor. Gay men crowd the floor, all in a mob-like queue to get drinks. A rainbow flag hangs in the window. Another hangs behind the bar.

Riley pushes her way through to the front of the bar, holding Cathy's hand as she drags her to the front. A series of British tuts filters through the crowd. Riley laughs and tuts along to the tune of a jazz drum cymbal.

RILEY  
TSH, TI-TI-TSH, TI-TI-TSH, TI-TI-TSH, TSH.

Oliver gives them an apologetic look. He slips through the crowd after her.

OLIVER  
Sorry. Sorry. Excuse me. American friends. Sorry.

Riley points to a sign behind the bar.

RILEY  
Can I get five of those Skittle things?

INSERT - SIGN "SKITTLE SHOT, FOUR POUNDS"

Bartender rolls his eyes and grabs his shaker.

OLIVER  
You're supposed to wait your turn.

Cathy turns around and wags her finger in his face.

CATHY  
(in a terrible British accent)  
Listen.  
(MORE)

CATHY (CONT'D)  
I've watched enough BBC to know  
that when you want a bloody drink,  
you push through the bloody tossers  
in the club to get one! It's fine!  
Arms and elbows, mate!

Oliver covers his face with his hand

OLIVER  
Where the hell did you pick up that  
accent?

CATHY  
Marry Poppins, of course! I'm  
getting the drinks. Go sit down.  
You'll miss the show.

Oliver makes his way back through the crowd toward a set of  
stairs leading to the basement.

OLIVER  
(to himself)  
Dick Van Dyke is a menace to all  
cockney people.

CATHY  
Chim-chimeny chim-chimeny chim chim  
cheery!

She dances as she waits for her drinks.

INT. HEAVEN GAY BAR, DOWNSTAIRS PERFORMANCE AREA

Oliver walks downstairs and joins the rest of the group at a  
crowded table.

The basement stage is littered with bottles as a Heaven  
employee picks them up. A DANCER struts his stuff on the  
stage. The club goers are so packed together in front of the  
stage that steam seems to rise from their collective body  
heat.

EMERSHAN  
This isn't exactly how I pictured  
Heaven.

Ben lifts his foot off the floor. A thick, gooey substance  
comes with it. He grimaces.

BEN  
God, I hope that's alcohol.

Ben looks at Oliver, who is watching the dancer.

BEN (CONT'D)  
 Oliver, what do you think?

Oliver doesn't answer at first, distracted.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN GAY BAR, FANTASY

Oliver gets up suddenly and grabs Ben's hand, dragging him onto the dance floor. They begin to dance together, Oliver's arms draped over Ben's shoulders, the two of them extremely close. Oliver shoots Ben bedroom eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN GAY BAR, DOWNSTAIRS PERFORMANCE AREA

Oliver snaps out of it and looks at Ben. He blinks for a moment, looking between him and the dancer.

BEN  
 You okay?

Oliver shakes his head, frazzled and gets up.

OLIVER  
 I have to go.

Oliver pushes his way through the crowd of people toward the door. He passes Riley on his way out. She frowns and looks after him.

EXT. HEAVEN GAY BAR - NIGHT

Oliver bursts out of the bar. He walks over to a bus stop and sits down, breathing hard. Tears start to form in his eyes.

OLIVER  
 Damnit.

Ben steps outside of the bar and walks over to Oliver.

BEN  
 Are you alright?

Oliver nods, wiping his eyes.

Ben frowns and sits down next to him.



BEN (CONT'D)  
You know, when I first came out--

OLIVER  
I'm not gay.

BEN  
(a beat)  
Okay.

A beat. Oliver sighs.

OLIVER  
I'm tired. I think I'm just going  
to go home.

BEN  
You sure?

OLIVER  
Yeah, I--

Just then, Riley and Emershan come running out of the bar.

RILEY  
I can't find Cathy

OLIVER  
What do you mean? She was just with  
you.

EMERSHAN  
Yeah, well, she's not here anymore.  
No one can find her.

END ACT TWO