

Brian's Path, Episode 1

by Alan Holman

BRIAN'S PATH

Episode 1: "Rosebud Speech"

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT, NEW YORK CITY - MORNING

BRIAN NOLASTNAME (Caucasian American, age 40) -- wearing a Squall Leonhart (FFVIII) cosplay outfit -- talks on a smartphone while looking out the 33rd storey window, of someone else's apartment, at the lightning storm.

DARLA'S VOICE

Hey, it's Darla. I don't know why you called when you can text. Do you like my voice that much?

There's a beep, and then BRIAN speaks.

BRIAN

Darla, it's Brian. I've found that the earth is flat, and so much of what we're taught are lies. So I'm just trying to enjoy life as an otaku, general fan of television, and cosplayer. But I'm finding unexpected barriers between me and even doing that smoothly.

The song BELOVED by VNV NATION begins to play.

BRIAN

I guess what I'm trying to say is that we're in a matrix, and those people we so aptly criticized in high school know something secret about it that we don't. Call me back if you've heard about the Freemasons.

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN

1994

CUT TO:

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - MORNING.

MR. BEND is the teacher, and BRIAN NOLASTNAME (age 14) is

one of the students.

[BRIAN is described later.]

MR. BEND

Which brings us to character arcs.

BRIAN whispers silently to himself.

BRIAN

Blah. Blah. Blah.

MR. BEND

Every character has an arc.

BRIAN

Ever...cara...ark...got it.

CUT TO:

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN

1995

CUT TO:

INT. GYM, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

ANTON plays volleyball. He's very un-coordinated as he fails to serve the volleyball. In one corner, BRIAN free-throws many flawless basketball-baskets as only DARLA watches in amazement.

[These characters are described soon.]

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - MORNING

ANTON, BRIAN, and DARLA, walk down the street in their high school gym clothes. CAP -- also wearing his gym clothes -- rides his wheelchair beside them.

[These characters are described soon.]

DARLA

(nods)

...those teacher's are biased when it comes to their own kids.

BRIAN

Especially Mrs. Luanne.

ANTON

No, you two, the worst parent/kid team is Mr. Asshat, that physics teacher of mine.

EXT. IN FRONT OF A WHARF, MORNING - DAY

BRIAN, DARLA, ANTON, and CAP, loiter in a "no loitering" zone.

[These characters are described soon.]

ANTON opens a pack of cigarettes.

BRIAN

Dude. Where in these skimpy gym uniforms did you hide your smokes?

ANTON

Up my ass.

ANTON gives cigarettes to everyone ... except BRIAN. ANTON gives a cigar to BRIAN.

CAP takes a puff from his inhaler, then his cigarette.

BRIAN and ANTON (to CAP) Where'd you hide your inhaler?

CAP

Up my rear end.

DARLA laughs.

DARLA

Let's run across the street...

They dash across the street...

WIPE TO:

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL.

The COMPUTER ROOM GANG [MONKEYBOY, CAP, GABE, DARLA, ANTON, and BRIAN] play DESCENT (a LAN game) against each-other on multiple computers.

MONKEYBOY [age 20] is a slim, shaggy boy, with extremely large ears.

CAP [age 13] is a tiny, wheelchair-bound, hormonal thing.

GABE [age 16] is a buff, blonde-haired boy, of German descent, with a great smile, stylish clothes (because he's rich), and good looks.

DARLA [age 16] is a tall and beautiful, blonde girl.

ANTON [age 14] is a skinny, pre-pubescent, black-haired, thin-necked, pale-faced, emo goth boy, who always wears thick glasses and a large trench-coat.

BRIAN [age 15] is a black-haired, leather jacket wearing, rebellious looking boy, who usually has an extremely focused expression on his face, and rarely smiles.

BRIAN

I won another game!

The time on the clock is 12:53.

ANTON

Another game?

GABE

No time.

DARLA

I want ... to eat ... lunch.

ANTON

I want ... to eat ... out.

DARLA leaves.

BRIAN and ANTON sigh.

A tone sounds.

BRIAN

Well, it's time to leave behind the fantasy of the game, and enter the reality of classes.

ANTON

I want to explore more metaphysical concepts.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

GABE finds a note stapled to his locker.

He blushes.

GABE

A love note? Score!

GABE's mother, EUNICE, enters.

EUNICE

No dating until you've graduated college,
Gabe, so throw away that note.

GABE tears-up the note.

EUNICE nods, and leaves.

Gabe mutters.

GABE

I hate that you volunteer to help my band
teacher, mom. And I hate that you're here all
the time.

DARLA enters.

DARLA

Hey!

Darla gives him a kiss on the cheek.

GABE

Watch out. The old ball and chains is lurking.

DARLA

Your mom's here this early?

GABE

She drove me.

An obese girl named TWAYLA watches from around a corner.

DARLA

What's that ripped up on the floor?

GABE

It's a love note. It made me very happy this
morning.

INT. STARBUCKS - MORNING

THE COMPUTER ROOM GANG sits around a table, drinking

coffee.

CAP

My dad initialized the Community Access Program.

MONKEYBOY

That's the Free-Net, eh boy?

CAP nods.

CAP

It's also called the CAP.

ANTON

You're called the Cap.

The gang laughs a bit.

MONKEYBOY

I'm the Capo.

GABE laughs. Everyone else looks confused.

BRIAN

I can't log in unless I find some way to establish a PPP connection.

ANTON

Piss collection?

DARLA

Yuck.

DARLA looks at ANTON.

ANTON

I hope it was something I said.

DARLA

I'm feeling sick. I should go.

DARLA stands up.

GABE

Don't forget to e-mail!

DARLA

Bye, Gabe.

DARLA exits.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - DAY

MONKEYBOY uses a text-only computer which has a sign on top of it that says, "SHADY BROOK FREENET - PUBLIC ACCESS TERMINAL"

MONKEYBOY'S THOUGHTS

I wanna do something FUN! Hmm...I wonder what this "Secret Eleven Dimensional Matrix Hacking Manual" is all about...

He pushes a few buttons...

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVERSIDE PATH - DAY

CAP rides his wheelchair beside the river. BRIAN walks beside CAP.

CAP

That movie was really exciting!

BRIAN

No, It was a boring period-piece.

BRIAN and CAP continue walking.

A uniformed football-player named JAMES D. ELLIOT enters the scene, and purposely tips over CAP's wheelchair.

JAMES D. ELLIOT

Is there a problem with your loser-cruiser?

BRIAN runs away.

CAP, laying on the ground, says:

CAP

You broke my arm!

JAMES D. ELLIOT

You computer nerds make me sick.

CAP throws up, and JAMES kicks him.

INT. GABE'S BEDROOM - DAY

GABE looks at his three computers -- 486s.

GABE

Tee hee. I'm so rich, and spoiled.

INT. GABE'S OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

GABE looks through his telescope. MONKEYBOY rifles through a five-hundred page printout of "Secret Eleven Dimensional Matrix Hacking Manual"

MONKEYBOY

This section has instructions for picking ANY lock!

GABE lets go of the telescope, and looks at the handbook.

GABE

You're actually reading!?!

MONKEYBOY

The Secret Eleven Dimensional Matrix Hacking Manual has revitalized my interest in the written word!

INT. WEIGHT ROOM, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

MONKEYBOY lifts weights, as GABE exercises on the rowing machine.

A coat-hanger is on the floor, beside the rowing machine.

GABE

We can pick any lock, anywhere; well, mostly.

MONKEYBOY

What other cool places should we go?

INT. GABE'S OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

GABE has a small observatory in his back yard.

MONKEYBOY gazes, with dumb wonder, at the stars. GABE's starry-eyed glare is at the handbook.

GABE

Let's tell the gang about this manual.

MONKEYBOY

No. Look at this Matrix Hack I learned from it.

MONKEYBOY's face is - for a brief second - replaced with a nearly invisible liquid - then back to normal again.

GABE

Come on. LAN games won't get boring if we have a bunch of players!

MONKEYBOY

Good point.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

THE COMPUTER ROOM GANG sits around a table in the library.

CAP

Are you suggesting that we commit acts of B&E?

MONKEYBOY nods.

BRIAN

He suggests B&E, right after I suggested A&E.

GABE laughs.

MONKEYBOY

In the next fifteen minutes, I will teach you how a coke-can, a clothes hanger, a wire, and yellow tape, can be your tickets through any door in the world.

BRIAN

Avoiding red tape, eh?

GABE laughs.

BRIAN

Monkeyboy. How did you find out how to break into places?

MONKEYBOY

A book about hacking the matrix.

DARLA

Isn't that illegal?

MONKEYBOY

It was written by a screenwriter as a resource for other screenwriters; in our hands, it's a powerful tool for breaking into places.

BRIAN

I've gotta read it!

INT. COMPUTER ROOM, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING

MONKEYBOY, GABE and BRIAN, play a multi-player video game called DESCENT.

GABE

We're not supposed to be here!

BRIAN

I know. But since no one ever stops us when we come here at this time, and at certain other times, and since we always pick up our own trash when we're done in here, let's just continue as we do until those things change.

INT. LIBRARY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - EVENING.

The room is empty, and the lights are off.

BRIAN and ANTON enter, and turn the lights on.

They sit at a table.

ANTON puts a tape-recorder on the table, and presses record.

ANTON

I want a cartoon idea.

BRIAN

The cartoon could be a dream; that way, we'd never have to explain anything.

They laugh.

ANTON

You got any more ideas?

BRIAN

No ideas, no life.

ANTON
I came close to having a metaphysical
epiphany last year.

BRIAN
Oh.

ANTON
So what's the deal with you and Monkeyboy?

BRIAN
I moved in with him. Now, I don't have to see
the family every day, and that's awesome.

ANTON
What's awesome about being away from your
family?

BRIAN
Such a stupid question doesn't deserve an
answer.

ANTON
Fine. Just tell me a cartoon idea.

BRIAN
A group of friends and family is put on a
space-ship.

ANTON
When's this take place?

BRIAN
Uhh...in anime.

ANTON
Why?

BRIAN
Why not?

ANTON
Good point.

BRIAN
It's called THE ETERNAL OASIS, because
that's the name of the ship. They're going on
a trip to Jupiter's "Ice Moon" Europa, where...

CUT TO:

INT. COMPUTER LAB, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

BRIAN and ANTON are playing a video game called DESCENT in the computer lab.

The lights are off. A roll of yellow tape is on the ground, beside the door.

BRIAN

Home is where the reactor core is!

ANTON

In the library, you began describing an idea about people who go to Jupiter ... what's with that?

BRIAN

Yeah, I was gonna describe that idea...

ANTON

What's your Jupiter idea?

BRIAN

I'll fill you in as soon as my dreams fill me in.

ANTON

Did you know: the human brain can't tell the difference between dreams and reality? It's because the same parts of the brain are used for both activities!

BRIAN

I know surreal dreams are dreams.

COMMERCIAL BREAK

INT. BACHELOR PAD, HOME OF BRIAN AND MONKEYBOY

This is a well-maintained apartment. There are two bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, and a living-room. Each room has it's own shaded lamps, and it's own brighter light-bulbs. The living room contains a Sony Playstation, a Super Nintendo, several videogames, and a computer (a 386) which is not hooked up to a modem.

BRIAN and MONKEYBOY enter. BRIAN carries a box.

BRIAN

The fifteen year old who occupies this body

has lead a sheltered life up until my parents
let me move in with you.

MONKEYBOY laughs, as BRIAN puts the box on a coffee-table.

BRIAN
Thanks for this, Monkeyboy.

MONKEYBOY
What are neighbors for?

BRIAN notices the 386.

BRIAN
We've got a computer!

MONKEYBOY
It's not hooked to the net.

BRIAN
Any games?

MONKEYBOY
Nope, just projects.

BRIAN
Like what?

MONKEYBOY
Hacking projects.

BRIAN
Hack the world?

MONKEYBOY
(nods)
Hack the world.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL, FRONT LAWN - NOON.

The Computer Room Gang sits in a semi-circle on the lawn.

BRIAN sits in the middle, looking at the road where car-
stereos blare as jocks and motor-heads spend time with their
beautiful girlfriends.

White envelopes lay in front of each member of the Computer
Room Gang.

BRIAN
Our midterm report cards are laid out before
us, people.

GABE
My parents said that they'd buy me a car if I
got straight As!

BRIAN
Gabe, you lucky rich jerk.

GABE
Money can be a problem...

BRIAN
His parents place him in...

GABE
Brian, shut up.

ANTON
I wish the computer lab was open on report
card day. They already printed the report
cards, why should we be stuck here,
attempting to socialize, un-networked and
physically; it's so retro.

MONKEYBOY
Yeah. Where's the beef?

DARLA
Huh?

INT. BRIAN'S BEDROOM, MONKEYBOY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

BRIAN wakes up.

There's a knock on his bedroom door.

BRIAN
Monkey?

GABE'S VOICE
The door was unlocked.

BRIAN
Gabe?

GABE enters.

GABE

Monkeyboy has a slow reading speed.

BRIAN

What's that got to do with anything?

GABE

Monkeyboy said to visit before school so I could borrow his copy of THE ROBOT'S REBELLION by David Icke.

BRIAN

Yeah, he's passing that around to the entire gang. I guess it's your turn, huh?

GABE

Yup.

BRIAN

The book's in his bedroom.

GABE

Thanks.

BRIAN

Don't go into his room right now.

GABE

Why not?

BRIAN

Monkeyboy's a bed-wetter -- the room STINKS!

GABE laughs hysterically.

INT. DINING ROOM, MONKEYBOY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

BRIAN eats breakfast with MONKEYBOY.

There's a knock on the door.

MONKEYBOY

Who is it?

GABE'S VOICE

It's me. I picked up your mail on the way in. There was an Apple-Shampoo sample and some catalogues. But, I'm here for the book.

MONKEYBOY

There are poisons in shampoos which absorb
into your skin and make you suck..

GABE enters. BRIAN can't keep a straight face, so Brian
retreats to his bedroom. GABE shoots a strange look at
MONKEYBOY.

GABE laughs hysterically.

MONKEYBOY

What's so funny?

GABE

Nothing.

MONKEYBOY

Well, anyway, since Brian left, we can
discuss "Operation Computer Steal."

GABE

It needs a better name.

MONKEYBOY

How 'bout "Operation Gather Computers For
Solar-Powered Underground New World Order
Resistance Mission Control Delta" or else
Boris won't let us into his Y2K shelter?

GABE

Too specific. "Operation Computer Steal" is
fine, on second thought.

INT. MR. BEND'S ENGLISH CLASS - MORNING

MR. BEND rants about one of Shakespeare's comedies.

BRIAN'S THOUGHTS

Everyone smells like apples today.

BRIAN sniffs the air.

BRIAN'S THOUGHTS

Such a refreshing aroma.

BRIAN smiles.

INT. BOMB SHELTER

ANTON, GABE, CAP, DARLA, and MONKEYBOY are in a bomb shelter.

MONKEYBOY

So this is where Boris will put us if we do missions for him until Y2K! However, if Brian learns his part in all of this, we're screwed, and Boris won't save us.

DARLA

How are we going to keep Brian un-suspicious?

MONKEYBOY

Un-suspicious? Well, sometimes it'll be tough. We must act surprised when Brian transforms!

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM, NOLASTNAME HOUSEHOLD - MORNING.

BRIAN eats breakfast with his parents RUFUS and GRACE.

RUFUS

What kind of trouble are you rebellious youths planning today?

BRIAN

Well, I'm walking Cap to school.

RUFUS

Oh, that's nice of you, Brian.

GRACE

Oh, I remember Cap. Cap's the wheelchair kid. Is Cap still on Anti-Depressants?

BRIAN

Yup. And Anton's the one on Antipsychotics.

RUFUS

Anton's the one with the Rock band, right?

BRIAN

Yeah: THE SEX WHISTOLS.

RUFUS

I love that name...

GRACE

Monkeyboy's the kid who always needs a shave, right?

BRIAN

Yeah -- he's twenty.

RUFUS

A twenty-year-old is in the tenth grade?

BRIAN

He found a grade he likes ... and he sticks with it.

EXT. A RIVERSIDE PATH - MORNING.

BRIAN walks beside his wheelchair-bound pal CAP.

BRIAN

When you crawled out of your wheelchair, I couldn't help thinking that you should change your name to Monkeyboy.

CAP

Hey!

BRIAN

His parents don't love him.

They laugh.

INT. COFFEE-SHOP - MORNING.

BRIAN, MONKEYBOY, CAP, ANTON, and GABE, sit around a table, drinking coffee.

MONKEYBOY

Gang. This is a glorious day.

GABE

And why's that, fearless leader?

MONKEYBOY

Because we're all awake.

CAP

That Jordan Maxwell is a real eye-opener, eh guys?

BRIAN

No one said you could talk, Cap.

CAP
Sorry.

MONKEYBOY
The cripple does bring up a good point.
Jordan Maxwell's work is a required area of
study in my little Mystery School.

CAP
Exactly.

MONKEYBOY
Shut up, Cap.

CAP
Sorry.

MONKEYBOY
Jordan Maxwell awoke us to the Illuminati
symbolism.

ANTON
There's a lot of it in the mall.

MONKEYBOY
You're right, Anton.

ANTON
Yay!

MONKEYBOY
And that's why you and Brian will be taking a
little trip to the mall.

MONKEYBOY takes two envelopes out of his pocket. He hands
one of those envelopes to BRIAN, and he hands one of those
envelopes to ANTON.

MONKEYBOY
Open those envelopes when you get home,
guys. The details of your mission are inside.

BRIAN
Cool.

ANTON
Yes. Very cool. We're like secret agents
now.

MONKEYBOY

Not secret. We've just gotta wake people up.

BRIAN

(nods)

Yes. So, why can't we read the details of the mission now?

MONKEYBOY

Suspense is cool.

ANTON

As always: impeccable logic.

BRIAN

And if the mission puts me in any danger, it's impeachable logic ... because you'll be impeached as our leader.

MONKEYBOY laughs.

BRIAN

Anyway guys, I'm skipping my first class today. I'm gonna go visit Cara for a while.

MONKEYBOY

When in Duane Oak, heh!

ANTON

RIT ME!!!

CAP gives a handful of Ritalin to ANTON. ANTON puts it in his pocket.

CAP

If I may say...

MONKEYBOY

YOU MAY NOT SAY ANYTHING, CAP!!!

CAP wheels away.

They rest of the gang laughs after CAP exits, crying.

MONKEYBOY

Brian. CARA'S ARK was awesome.

BRIAN

Thanks.

INT. HALLWAY, DUANE OAK PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING.

BRIAN and CARA CHAN talk as she looks through her locker for something.

CARA CHAN is an orange-haired, freckle-faced, fourteen year old girl.

BRIAN
You're beautiful.

CARA
Thanks.

BRIAN
It was love at first sight.

CARA
We just sorta clicked.

BRIAN nods. CARA pulls a bag of something out of her locker, and looks at BRIAN with a smile on her face.

BRIAN
You may never see me again, after tonight.

CARA
What are you talking about, luv?

BRIAN
Well, um, gotta go. See ya. Love ya. I hope I can get ready on time.

CARA
Brian, wait!

BRIAN
Wait? Uhh... what for, Cara?

CARA
What if I told you that I just recently woke up in an underground stasis chamber, and found a note from my dead boyfriend, explaining that he made you?

BRIAN
(laughs)
He made me?

CARA

Yes. You're a clever mix of prosthetics, robotics, and my dead cat. He also programmed you with his own memories and personality, and a data-collecting mission. Sadly, someone found you before I found the note which urged me to find you, and ...

BRIAN

(laughs)

Wow! You're my muse! This goes awesome with my Cara's Ark story!

CARA

Cara's Ark?

BRIAN

Yeah.

(blushing)

Ever since we met, I've been having an odd lack of dreams about you, so I've been daydreaming that you're a girl on a space-ark.

CARA

That's perfect!

BRIAN

Do you mind if I steal your idea, and add it to my Cara's Ark story?

CARA

That's a good idea! Write a story about it!
Yes!

BRIAN

Great! I'll write your story! This is awesome sci-fi!

CARA

Speaking of awesome: my dead boyfriend founded a race of superhumans!

BRIAN

That's too contrived. I won't include it in the story.

CARA

(disappointed)

I thought you'd say that.

INT. MEN'S WASHROOM, MALL

BRIAN and ANTON talk while urinating into a water-gun.

ANTON

This is it; the moment we've talked about.

They finish urinating, zip up, and BRIAN sits on the ledge of the sink, while ANTON puts the water-gun into a guitar-case.

BRIAN

I'm not convinced that anyone will believe it, but I believe it, so I know it's the right thing to do ... to spray-paint conspiracy truth quotes over all the Illuminati or masonic symbolism that we've identified in this mall, while scattering pamphlets that explain the symbols, and suggest the folks read Icke's books before it's too late. The task redeems itself, actually, and although I'm chickenshit, I do hope you enjoy yourself!

ANTON

When I walk into that food court: redemption.

BRIAN

Well, good luck buddy! I'll sneak out for a toke, then I'll watch the action from outside. The getaway vehicle has a muddy license plate.

ANTON nods.

ANTON

I know pissing into waterguns was a whimsied after-thought, but are we gonna use them for anything?

BRIAN

No. I guess we just wrecked these waterguns.

TO BE CONTINUED ...