

Brian's Path, Episode 6

by Alan Holman

BRIAN'S PATH

Episode 6: "Animation"

EXT. DARK ALLEY

ANTON's walking through a dark alley, wearing a heavy trench-coat, and carrying his guitar case.

His head is bowed down, and it's raining oppressively.

ANTON'S THOUGHTS

First my girlfriend, then my band.

INT. DINNER TABLE, MONKEYBOY'S APARTMENT

MONKEYBOY eats, while talking on the phone.

MONKEYBOY

I turned off Brian's parents.

BRIAN enters.

MONKEYBOY

Talk to you later.

MONKEYBOY hangs-up the phone.

BRIAN

Why's the group breaking up?

MONKEYBOY

People are mean.

BRIAN

I want to move back in with my parents next door.

MONKEYBOY

I gotta see this...

BRIAN exits.

Pause.

BRIAN re-enters.

BRIAN
MY PARENTS MOVED OUT! THEIR
APARTMENT IS BEING USED AS STORAGE
SPACE FOR HEAVY MACHINERY! THEY
SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME!

MONKEYBOY
Harsh, dude.

MONKEYBOY stifles a laugh; luckily, BRIAN didn't notice.

BRIAN
...maybe Dad found out about the priest
mom's been seeing...

MONKEYBOY'S THOUGHTS
(Voice Over.)
... the false histories are amazing ... Brian
actually remembers parents who never
existed. To think, HAARP does this on a
global scale!

BRIAN
My parents left me, and they didn't even leave
a note. Excuse me while I take this like a
man by going to my room and crying like a
little kid...

BRIAN exits to his bedroom. MONKEYBOY laughs hysterically.

INT. PRINCIPAL BRUTUS' OFFICE, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

BRUTUS is furious towards GABE.

BRUTUS
For undermining Mrs. Luanne's authority,
calling her ignorant, and damaging her
reputation, by going behind her back with this
essay, you are hereby expelled from Shady
Brook High School, Gabe.

GABE leaves.

BRUTUS throws the essay in the garbage can.

CUT TO:

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

BRIAN, and the entire class, listen as MR. BEND presides over the class.

MR. BEND
...stupid kids.

MR. BEND exits.

BRIAN watches the clock, as time drags from 2:39, to 2:59

BRIAN
Whoa?

MR. BEND re-enters the room.

BRIAN
I'm sick of this! You always leave for long periods of time, without giving us instruction! Now's my turn!

Brian exits.

WIPE TO:

INT. LIBRARY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

THE COMPUTER ROOM GANG sits around a table, talking.

GABE
Great TV series, Brian.

BRIAN
I just wanted to tell a good story. Do you guys mind how your characters were used in the story?

DARLA
Well, I'm flattered.

GABE
What inspired you to write this mammoth tome anyway?

BRIAN
Fear of Y2K.

CUT TO:

INT. MR. BRUTUS'S OFFICE, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL - AFTERNOON

BRIAN talks with MR. BRUTUS and MRS. LUANNE.

MRS. LUANNE

Brian. Thank you for sharing your TV script with us.

MR. BRUTUS

You have a real talent for writing.

BRIAN

So, will you change the internet policy?

MR. BRUTUS

No, Brian.

BRIAN'S THOUGHTS

I won't give up.

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN

1996

CUT TO:

INT. STARBUCKS - DAY

BRIAN talks with CAP over coffee.

CAP

But I need that to breathe ... like the internet.

BRIAN

You don't need all of it. C'mon! It's got steroids, and I need muscles.

CAP

But my doctor's not in his office until tomorrow.

BRIAN

What are the chances you'll need it tonight, huh?

CAP

Well, I don't have fits every night.

INT. CAP'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CAP breathes heavily as tears stream down his face.

His lack of oxygen makes him unable to move or call for help.

CAP dies.

INT. COFFEE-SHOP - MORNING

ANTON is in conversation with DARLA.

ANTON
Have you seen Cap?

DARLA
No, why?

ANTON
He's usually here.

INT. LIBRARY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

MRS. LUANNE watches BRIAN enters.

BRIAN asks...

BRIAN
May I use it?

MRS. LUANNE
Use what?

BRIAN
The internet.

MRS. LUANNE
No. Did you hear the sad news?

BRIAN
What sad news?

MRS. LUANNE
Cap died.

BRIAN
(unaffected)
So?

CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF "CAP" CLIPS, TO THE TUNE OF MARVIN GAYE'S "AIN'T THAT PECULIAR"

CUT TO:

INT. GRADE TEN SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM - MORNING

MR. RAY approaches the desk upon which BRIAN sleeps.

MR. RAY
Wake up, Brian.

MR. RAY shakes BRIAN a bit.

MR. RAY
Wake up.

MR. RAY taps BRIAN's head.

MR. RAY
You were talking in your sleep, like having a bad dream, y'know?

Forty students watch.

MRS. LUANNE enters as BRIAN begins talking in his sleep.

BRIAN
I killed you by creating you!!

MRS. LUANNE
Not only is Brian a good for nothing friendless punk, but he also sleeps in school.

INT. LIBRARY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

MR. BEND talks with MRS. LUANNE.

BRIAN enters.

MRS. LUANNE looks at BRIAN.

BRIAN
Mrs. Luanne. I need to use the internet for a current events assignment.

BRIAN gives the note to MRS. LUANNE.

MRS. LUANNE
Can't you see I'm busy?

BRIAN

Why are you such a bitch?

INT. PRINCIPAL BRUTUS' OFFICE

BRIAN listens to BRUTUS.

MR. BRUTUS

...expelled.

INT. LIBRARY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

BRIAN talks to MRS. LUANNE.

MRS. LUANNE

Weren't you expelled?

BRIAN

Yup.

INT. MONKEYBOY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BRIAN, DARLA, and GABE, play Dungeons and Dragons.

BRIAN is the Dungeon Master.

BRIAN

You've entered a dark cave.

DARLA

Can we see anything?

BRIAN

No.

GABE

I exit the cave.

BRIAN

You can't.

GABE

Why not?

BRIAN

Good point. You're out. You see a cave...

INT. HALLWAY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

MONKEYBOY talks with DARLA.

MONKEYBOY

Lucky Anton got to University at ... what is he, fourteen or fifteen years old?

DARLA

...not sure.

MONKEYBOY

And here I am, in my twenties, still taking crap from high-school teachers...I tell ya, the world's un-just.

INT. MR. BRUTUS' OFFICE, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

MR. BRUTUS confronts BRIAN.

MR. BRUTUS

If you had a problem, you should have approached me, instead of the head office...

BRIAN

I did, but you didn't do anything!

Pause.

MR. BRUTUS

What would you have me do?

BRIAN

Granted free internet access at noon.

MR. BRUTUS

No internet in our library, unless accompanied by an adult.

INT. MR. RAY'S HISTORY CLASS - AFTERNOON

BRIAN is bored. Everyone colors maps with crayons.

MR. RAY enters.

MR. RAY

Do I hear talking?

BRIAN

No.

MR. RAY

Continue coloring, children.

BRIAN
We're not children.

CHERYL enters the class room.

CHERYL
I'm new here.

BRIAN
Cheryl?

CHERYL looks at BRIAN, quizzically.

MR. RAY
(to CHERYL)
Don't let Brian distract you; he's a troublemaker.

BRIAN
Yes, I'm troublesome.

BRIAN winks at CHERYL.

CHERYL giggles.

MR. RAY
Okay, open your textbooks to page 33,
about...

CHERYL
I don't have a text book.

MR. RAY
Oh, well, go to the office, and ask for a history
book.

CHERYL
Great!

Cheryl exits.

BRIAN
Suspend me.

Brian exits.

INT. HALLWAY, SHADY BROOK HIGH SCHOOL

BRIAN talks to CHERYL.

CHERYL
IT IS YOU!!

BRIAN
Yup! It's weird to see you again, but how've ya
been?

CUT TO:

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN
1997

CUT TO:

INT. SHADY BROOK HOSPITAL, NEUROLOGY DEPT - NIGHT

Two doctors, ANTON LACE and STEPHAN HARDING, converse in
an empty hospital wing.

ANTON LACE is a prodigious strapping young lad in his late
teens, and STEPHAN HARDING is a middle aged homosexual
doctor.

ANTON
Hmm...I wonder how Tire's doing...

STEPHAN
Who's Tire?

ANTON
A name from the past, so...
(angrily)
NEVER-MIND!

STEPHAN
You're cute when you're angry.

Pause.

ANTON
If you ever say that again, I'll rip your head off
and poke your brain with a fork.

WIPE TO:

INT. SHADY BROOK HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Doctors ANTON LACE and STEPHAN HARDING, converse in an empty hospital wing.

ANTON LACE is a prodigious strapping young lad in his late teens, and STEPHAN HARDING is a middle aged doctor.

ANTON
I'd rather be an astronaut.

STEPHAN smiles wryly.

STEPHAN
An astro-NOT, or an astro-DOES?

ANTON
Huh? What? Listen, about Cara: as you were in there, I looked at her chart for a second, and ... she's pregnant?

STEPHAN
No. Stick to neurology.

ANTON
What's her chart really say?

STEPHAN
She's not your patient. That's confidential.

ANTON
Huh?

STEPHAN
Why were you looking at her chart in the first place?

ANTON
Well, she's cute; can't you see it?

STEPHAN
All I see is a patient.

ANTON
And she's a friend of mine.

STEPHAN
Oh? You know Cara?

ANTON nods.

ANTON

She was, and might still be, the girlfriend of a guy who used to be my best friend.

STEPHAN

Yes, it's a small world, so what?

ANTON

I'll happily pay for her ... medical bills!

STEPHAN

Are you nobly volunteering a great amount of money which would easily devastate your well-balanced rock-n-roll personality?

ANTON

Yes, or my name's not Anton Fernando Lace!

STEPHAN

That's not your middle name.

Pause.

ANTON

Maybe I should quit this doctoring thingy.

STEPHAN

What'll you do?

ANTON I'll become a famous actor, and my friends will gravitate back to me!

STEPHAN

That didn't work for my friend; they resented him, he turned to drugs, the end.

ANTON

I'll help people with their web-sites! Geocities Forever!

STEPHAN

Good luck!

COMMERCIAL BREAK

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN

1998

CUT TO:

INT. BRIAN'S BEDROOM, BRIAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Seventeen year old BRIAN gets out of bed as the song "Wonderwall" by Oasis plays on his clock radio, which displays the time as being 7:40AM.

BRIAN'S THOUGHTS

Who's Cheryl, and why don't I have a last name in the dreams?

Pause.

BRIAN

Well... back to sleep!

BRIAN lays down, and falls asleep.

CUT TO:

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN

1999

CUT TO:

INT. THEATER.

The curtains are closed. The house-lights are up. The audience is talking amongst themselves.

No seats are left in the audience, except for two reserved seats in the front row.

BRIAN, now nineteen years old, wears a shirt and cargo pants, and sits in one of the reserved seats.

CARA, now a cute eighteen year old girl, sits beside BRIAN, filling the other reserved seat.

CARA

Will this be good?

BRIAN

James has come a long way since he beat me up in school.

CARA

But his absurd plays were kooky and strange.
I don't know what his new straightforward
method ... It might be boring, Brian.

BRIAN

But if it's good, we recruit him as a writer for
the team. His prolificness-iss-iscitudeinal ...
um, fast writing style... might be just what we
need for writing a series.

The house-lights dim. The audience shuts the hell up.

BRIAN

It's gonna start.

CUT TO:

INT. BACKSTAGE

BRIAN is talking to a young man in a football jersey. The
young man is JAMES D. ELLIOT.

BRIAN

Ever thought of writing for TV?

JAMES

Is this a job offer?

BRIAN

Agartha Animated Productions.

JAMES

Never heard of 'em.

BRIAN

That's because we're not of this earth!

JAMES

(laughs)
What?

INT. STARBUCKS - NIGHT

CARA, BRIAN, and JAMES are drinking coffee, and chatting.

JAMES

Why a coffee-shop? Why don't we do this in a
bar?

BRIAN

Anton says alcohol consumption shrinks the frontal lobe.

JAMES
Who?

BRIAN
Anton Lace. We went to high school with him. He says one drink kills 50,000 brain cells.

JAMES
He's working for you?

BRIAN
Well, he WILL be working for me soon, but now he's a neurologist, and he doesn't even know about my company yet.

JAMES
Huh?

Pause.

BRIAN
Alright James. I've got a few questions for you.

JAMES
Shoot.

BRIAN
You got me. I don't have any questions. You're hired.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARD ROOM, E-PUBLISHCO - NIGHT

18 year old ANTON, wears business attire while giving a speech to the board of a dotcom startup called E-PublishCo.

High above their large round table, a circular window displays the night sky. The lights bend around the window in a way which both illuminates the room and displays the night sky through the window above them.

A suitcase is beside Anton.

The members of the board are between the ages of fifteen to

twenty seven.

The boss is twenty two. ANTON stands in front of them, giving a comedic account of his recent experiences...and over acting.

ANTON

I'm very interested in the field of electronic publishing.

BOSS

You have the floor.

ANTON

I think that I've had just about enough of the internet.

The entire board applauds.

ANTON

I've been promoting my web-site for ages, adding new sections to my web-site, and joining affiliate programs forever, it seems, which I usually end up not advertising.

Everyone in the board room chuckles.

ANTON

Friends tell me things about their web-sites which I don't give a cat's ass about...

Laughter.

ANTON

...because truthfully, I don't know when exactly the moment was when I lost interest in my own web-site.

Some people burst out into extreme fits of laughter.

ANTON

Friends won't stop telling me things, such as, "Hey Anton! I added a new movie review to my site, cause I saw...[add a name of a movie I don't give a cat's ass about to this space.]"

Some board members laugh.

A BOARD MEMBER

So true. So true.

ANTON

And then I go to their site only to find the worst spelling in the history of the printed word...

The boss convulses in a silent fit of extreme laughter.

ANTON

...and a web-counter that says, in normal, unattractive numbers, "0002."

Uproarious laughter all around.

ANTON

...and the next day, that friend CALLS ME UP, and tells me that he's so happy because he can't account for ONE of the visits to his site.

Huge laughter.

ANTON

It's pitiful.

Huge laughter, and applause.

ANTON

Then there's the guy who's suicidal tendencies inspired him to write pages and pages of dark non-poetic literature...

People giggle.

ANTON

...which he posted onto his site, for some grim souls to stumble upon...if they ever do...

People laugh.

ANTON

...someday, or never; whichever comes first.

Huge laughter fills the room.

ONE BOARD MEMBER

I totally AM that guy!

ANTON

Some of his dark poetry is just nonsensical! Here's a sample of one I found last week; it's

by this guy named ... Josh Derak; he writes a lot of my material:

Some people laugh.

ANTON recites.

ANTON
The Great Void, by J.D.

ANTON dons a dark trench-coat, and lowers his head and his eyes. The lights dim.

ANTON
I am a void...

Anton pauses until everyone laughs.

ANTON
...of pain...

ONE BOARD MEMBER
Sounds like most of our customers.

BOSS
That's right!

ANTON
I am a void of pain...

Pause.

ANTON
...and happiness!

Laughter, and applause.

Anton maintains a somber mode, and continues.

ANTON
I cry...

Pause.

ANTON
...every time I smile.

Laughter, and applause.

Anton maintains a somber mode, and continues.

ANTON
I die...

Pause.

ANTON
...whenever I laugh.

Everyone laughs. A tear rolls down Anton's sad face, and everyone laughs some more.

ANTON
Why is my full life so distraught?

Pause.

A few seconds roll by, along with tears on his face. Then finally, everyone laughs. Anton maintains a somber mode, and continues.

ANTON
If there is a better life, is it worse?

Applause, and laughter.

ONE GUY
This guy reads like the submissions to our site!

Everyone laughs, and applauds.

ANTON
My joy depresses me.

BOSS
You sure you never posted to our message boards?

ANTON
Puppies and fluffy kittens make me want to die. of laughter from all around.

ANTON
Fishes with one eye missing give my life meaning.

ONE BOARD MEMBER
It's the typical rants of the teenage subversive!

BOSS
Our audience!

ANTON
Sticks and stones may break my downward
spiral...

Huge, unruly fits of laughter, while Anton maintains his
composure.

ANTON
...but kind words will drill holes in my head.

Everyone laughs, except Anton.

BOSS
He's been reading our e-mail!

ANTON
All your love repels me.

Anton receives a standing ovation for that previous
sentence.

Then, they sit, and he continues, maintaining his somber
expression.

ANTON
When you frown, I know there is a God.

Pause.

ANTON
Happiness, thy name is bloody death.

Laughter from all around. Applause. Anton receives a
standing ovation.

ANTON takes the trenchcoat off, and stands in his business
suit again.

Anton reverts back to his "comedian composure".

ANTON
See, the poetry's just rotten!

BOSS
And it'll never get found...

ONE BOARD MEMBER

Those poets are our lifeblood.

ANTON

Then there's the group of friends I'm in, who connected our web-sites together in a brilliant puzzle...

Many of the teenaged board-members wipe their eyes with kleenex.

BOSS

You seem to have hit a nerve.

ANTON

...that no one but us will ever find out about.

ANTON'S THOUGHTS

It seems COMPUTER ROOM GANGS are everywhere.

ANTON

In my opinion, there are several html files in that puzzle which, if discovered, would actually contribute a bit of meaningful info to society as a whole...

People nod.

ANTON

...but those files are all inside of a tangled knot...

Anton wipes a tear from his face.

ANTON

...of web-space that will never be easily navigable by an outsider of the clique.

Anton sits among the board.

ANTON

Every high school has these students and cliques I have described, these lost souls with their greatest literary marvels lost in tiny corners of geocities.com, tripod.com, or xoom.com...Corners of the web so immensely tiny that they will never, or hardly ever, be seen by someone else. The search engines are clogged with these pages, but few of them are visited ever. These sites are promoted on

search engines which have no other choice but to do so, which is pointless because no one's going to go to these pages anyway. Here's my proposal: If you have an idea for a web-site which only offers you, the writer, a bit of gratification, go out into the sun and get some fresh air. You'll find far more gratification in life. ...and if you must promote your non-commercial site which offers no goods, services, or insights into anything which people haven't already heard a million times already, you're already stuck, and you're in my prayers.

BOSS

Yeah, you're right. This business will fold after our initial... wave of goths and loners.

Everyone laughs, even Anton.

ANTON

Gimme money.

BOSS

For what?

ANTON

Huh?

BOSS

Don't you have a business plan?

ANTON

Oh... umm...

(confused)

I just wanted to give this speech. I enjoy acting.

BOSS

You're funny. You should be a comedian.

ANTON

Okay.

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN

2000

CUT TO:

INT. OPERATING ROOM, HOSPITAL

A fat, middle aged man, lays comatose on a hospital bed, as DR. ANTON LACE beaks-off angrily, at DOCTOR STEPHAN .

DR. STEPHAN HARDING looks heart-broken, as ANTON yells the following:

ANTON

I just realized that neurology isn't my calling; instead, I am going to be a comedian, and write funny things. I don't want to become a specialist who knows nothing but his craft, like you.

STEPHAN starts crying.

CUT TO:

INT. COMEDY CLUB

ANTON stands in front of a brick wall, holding a microphone, telling jokes to an audience.

ANTON

Good morning, everyone. Oh hell, I mean good night. Well, it must be morning somewhere in the world.

DR. STEPHAN HARDING ENTERS, wearing a pink shirt, and corduroy pants. He is drunk. He flops onto a chair.

STEPHAN

Blah, blah, blah.

ANTON

My name is Doctor Anton Lace. I used to be a neurologist, and now I'm a comedian.

STEPHAN

Now I'm a comedian...

ANTON

I woke up one morning, more keenly aware than ever, I was a doctor, and I said, screw this, let me tell jokes, so here I am.

STEPHAN

Yay.

ANTON

Being a doctor is just plain hard work. The hardest part is around the ninth hole.

No audience response.

STEPHAN sips his beer.

ANTON

Being a doctor means you need to be able to walk long distances. Is this on?

(Tapping the mike)

That too was a golf reference.

STEPHAN

You suck!

ANTON starts crying.

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN

Still 2000.

CUT TO:

INT. CEREAL AISLE, GROCERY STORE - DAY

DARLA, and her African-American friend CHANTANE, browse the cereal aisle.

CHANTANE

The big day is in a few weeks.

DARLA

About that: we've decided that it's either all or none. If you don't invite Monkeyboy, the rest of the gang has agreed to be no-shows.

CHANTANE

Don't guilt me out of this. He's creepy, and I'm not inviting him to my wedding, and I'll be devastated if the rest of you guys don't show up! You're my best friends!

DARLA

And we're not fans of exclusion. And when he comes across as creepy, it's involuntary; it's not his intent. You shouldn't punish someone

for an involuntary perception that only exists in your head. He told me that he's hurt that you don't want him there, and his intent is to be there in support of you. You should look to someone's intent ... you prejudicial bitch.

TO BE CONTINUED ...