**Out Late**
**by Dave Carley**

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**Cast:**

TYLER, 19. Old enough to drive and to be figuring things out. Dressed in shorts or sweats, T shirt, no shoes. A typical high school jock.

DEAN, 30s, maybe older. He is a cleaner in the bathhouse.

SAM, 50. Tyler’s father.

**Location:**

1. Outside the door to Spa 2000. The spa is discreetly signed. Maybe a pink light but all pretty discreet.

2. Inside the spa. Either in or by the door of Sam’s room.

3. Outside the door to Spa 2000. The next morning.

**Time:**

About 11 pm – 7 am

**Play Synopsis:**

Tyler has followed his father Sam downtown. His Dad has been disappearing out of the family home a couple of times every week and Tyler is beginning to have his suspicions. What follows is a process of discovery for the son, and a time of reckoning and courage for his father.

Non-traditional casting is encouraged. This story is being playing out in many communities. There are still plenty of Sams. What has changed is the level of acceptance by their children. *Out Late* is a very real story, with an optimistic ending.

**Production History:**

A shorter, one scene version of *Out Late* premiered at Georgia State University in Atlanta in July, 2013, directed by Frank Miller.  It has subsequently had a number of productions in festivals across North America.

**Out Late**

**(1)**

*The set: An exterior door. Maybe a pink light. Maybe the words “Spa” or “Spa 2000” on it, but discreet. Night-time sounds of the city.*

*Light comes up on TYLER, pacing or standing outside the door. He seems to want to go inside, but is unsure. He’s agitated. DEAN enters, walks up, and is about to go in.*

**TYLER:**  Wait.

  *(DEAN pauses.)*

 Can I ask you something?

**DEAN:**  Yeah?

**TYLER:** What kind of place is this?

  *(DEAN is immediately on guard.)*

**DEAN:** How do you mean.

**TYLER:** What goes on in there - is it a bar?

**DEAN:** Why don’t you come in and see – *(Registers how TYLER is dressed; cautious again.)* Where’s your shoes?/

**TYLER:** So it’s a bar, a regular bar –

**DEAN:** Why –

**TYLER:** Just tell me, is it a – what kind of bar?/

**DEAN:**  Why the questions?

**TYLER:** My Dad just went in there.

**DEAN:** Oh.

 *(TYLER seems to be about to go in. Dean stops him.)*

 Sorry. It’s a club. Private.

**TYLER:** You said it was a bar.

**DEAN:** I didn’t say anything. It’s more of a club than a bar. It’s not public.

**TYLER:** What do you mean/

**DEAN:** You can’t go in. For starters – shoes?

**TYLER:** I just want to know what goes on in there/

**DEAN:** Where are your shoes?/

**TYLER:** Just tell me what/

**DEAN:**  Where are you from?

**TYLER:** Northridge.

**DEAN:** You came all the way down here from the burbs dressed like that, what you don’t have shoes in Northridge?

**TYLER:** I was in a hurry.

**DEAN:** Yeah, I’d be in a hurry to get out of there too/

**TYLER:** Dad went out, Mom came running downstairs and told me to follow him.

**DEAN:** Why?

**TYLER:** Cuz he’s always going out, we don’t know where. I jumped in the van – didn’t have time to change, I followed him here. That’s his car. He went in five minutes ago. So it’s a club, like a private club, why does it say ‘spa’ -

**DEAN:** You really want to know what goes on in there?

**TYLER:**  Yes!

**DEAN:** *(Pause.)* Gambling.

**TYLER:** *(Not sure he’s believing this.)* Gambling.

**DEAN:**  Yeah. If your Dad’s in there he’s gambling.

**TYLER:**  Gambling. Like slots -

**DEAN:** No, poker, stuff. Pretty high stakes.

**TYLER:** So you’re going in to gamble -

**DEAN:**  I work here.

**TYLER:**  My Dad doesn’t even buy lottery tickets.

**DEAN:** Lots of guys keep it quiet.

**TYLER:** I don’t think he’s gambling, he could do that online.

**DEAN:** It’s more fun in person.

**TYLER:** You’re shitting me about this. Why’s the sign say ‘Spa’ then.

**DEAN:** Because it’s not legal OK. It’s gambling, there’s all sorts of licence shit, it’s not legal without it, you know how many people you have to pay off, so they call it something else. *(Around this point, DEAN has figured out who TYLER is.)* You shouldn’t be following your Dad around. You really followed him all the way in from Northridge -

**TYLER:** He’s always going out, twice a week.

**DEAN:** That’s not allowed?

**TYLER:** He says he’s going for a drive, if he says anything, a lot of times he just leaves, and he’s gone, three four hours.

**DEAN:** It’s his life.

**TYLER:** He’s driving us crazy.

**DEAN:**  Look, you should go home.

**TYLER:**  I have to find out what he’s doing.

**DEAN:**  I told you already. He’s playing poker. Now: guy code. You don’t have to tell your Mom what he’s doing. Go back home, say you lost him on the way in. Make things easy. Then, OK, OK, do this: *(Thinking fast.)* Tomorrow. Get your father alone - tomorrow. Sit down with him, tell him you followed him here. OK? Tell him you talked to a guy outside and he told you it was a gambling place. Then let him talk. You can’t come in. You’ve got no shoes and – how old are you –

**TYLER:**  19.

**DEAN:**  Yeah, that’s too young , you have to be 21. With shoes.

**TYLER:** You the manager?

**DEAN:** I clean the rooms. *(Gentle.)* Go home?

**TYLER:** It’s wrecking our family. Mom’s crying all the time. Gambling.

 *(Tyler hesitates, then begins walking off. Looks like it might be the end. DEAN seems to be about to go inside, then turns back.)*

 Tyler.

  *(Tyler turns.)*

 You’re Tyler aren’t you.

**TYLER:** How’d you know?

**DEAN:** Your Dad’s shown me your picture. I didn’t recognize you at first because the picture, you look different in your football uniform. He talks about you all the time. He’s really proud of you. He’s always talking about your games, he’s proud, he’s a good man, don’t ever think otherwise. If I’d had a father like yours…

**TYLER:** What.

**DEAN:** Let’s just say, my father didn’t ever brag about me. You’re lucky. *(Turns to go in.)*

**TYLER:**  It’s not gambling is it.

 *(Pause.)*

**DEAN:**  *(Turns back.)* No.

**TYLER:**  It’s a gay – place.

 *(TYLER starts to walk towards the door. DEAN stops him.)*

**DEAN:**  You can’t go in. There’s other people there. It’s not fair to them. Or your Dad.

**TYLER:** Why won’t he tell me? You think that’s fair?

**DEAN:** No. It’s not fair.

**TYLER:** So

**DEAN:** So he’s afraid.

**TYLER:** Afraid of what?

**DEAN:** What you’ll do.

**TYLER:** I want to go in and talk to him/

 *(As TYLER tries to go in.)*

**DEAN:**  No, Tyler, Tyler, you’re not going in there, no, it’s not the right place for you – to confront him.

**TYLER:** I just want to talk.

**DEAN:** Go home.

**TYLER:**  Don’t tell me what to/

**DEAN:**  They won’t let you in. There’s a guy on door. You have to be buzzed – there’s a camera. *(Points.)* Listen to me. Tell your mother you lost sight of him on the way down, seriously. Then talk to him when he gets home, just the two of you.

**TYLER:** Can’t you get him to come out? Tell him I’m out here/

**DEAN:**  He needs time. You need time. Wait at home. He’ll be home soon. If it’s OK, I’ll tell him you were here. That we talked.

**TYLER:** I’ll wait by his car.

**DEAN:**  You cannot stay out here. Not looking like that, not this time of night, let Sam have some time, to prepare.

**TYLER:**  What’s he have to prepare?

**DEAN:** What he wants to say.

**TYLER:** He’s gay, what’s there to say!

**DEAN:** Let him say it. Wait for him at home.

**TYLER:** What if he doesn’t come home.

**DEAN:** He will. He always does, doesn’t he?

 *(TYLER turns to leave, takes a few steps, turns.)*

 Go home Tyler. Please.

 *(DEAN watches TYLER leave, then goes inside.)*

**(2)**

*Later that night. In a small cubicle room. Bed. Father sitting on bed, in towel. He might be keeping his eye on the door, but he’s also working his phone. A cleaning cart appears, with Dean. Or, simpler staging: SAM is by his door, in a towel. DEAN appears with cleaning cart.*

**DEAN:** What, no action Sam?

**SAM:**  I’ve worn them all out.

**DEAN:** I saw you talking to Albert.

**SAM:** Which –

**DEAN:** The African guy.

**SAM:** Yeah yeah, just talking. I’m too old for him. Sometimes it’s good enough just to talk. Where would I ever meet a guy from Uganda. You know him?

**DEAN:** He lives in my building.

**SAM:** You wouldn’t believe his stories. The shit they go through there. The gays. But that’s what I love about this place. I mean, OK, I’ve got the grindr app, right, I don’t use it, everyone is so – exact- about they want. Which excludes me eh. So what they do is meet a tiny, tiny percentage of who’s out there and I’m new to this and new to grindr but it’s like they only want to meet the guy in the mirror. But shit, here, OK, I just spent a half hour talking to an African guy fresh off the boat. And - and last week I was with a professor. Me, having sex with a professor, how funny is that. As soon as he told me that I got nervous, what do you talk about with a professor? But the point is, I met him. A professor. It wasn’t very good sex but I’m not going to put on my profile “no Professors”. But that’s what they do on grindr. They put no this no that only fit only European only this. I want to put “everyone”.

**DEAN:**  Maybe you’re just a slut.

**SAM:** Are you on Grindr?

**DEAN:** You don’t need it, working here.

 *(DEAN hesitates, then.)*

 Sammy.

**SAM:**  Yeah.

**DEAN:** I have to tell you something.

**SAM:** Yeah?

**DEAN:**  When I came on shift earlier – Tyler was outside.

**SAM:** What - my Tyler?

**DEAN:**  He followed you downtown.

**SAM:**  Aw shit.

  *(DEAN comes in, sits on bed.)*

**DEAN:**  I thought you should know.

**SAM:** Yeah yeah. Tyler. Really?

**DEAN:** Yeah.

**SAM:** Shit.

**DEAN:**  You OK.

**SAM:** He followed me here?

**DEAN:** He wanted to know what kind of place this was. He stopped me when I was coming in to work, started asking stuff.

**SAM:**  What did you tell him?

**DEAN:**  At first I tried saying it was gambling, but you know what - he already knew. He wanted to come in and confront you.

**SAM:**  Was he mad?

**DEAN:** I wouldn’t say mad. Agitated. I talked him into going home. He drove down here barefoot. He heard you leave and dashed out and tailed you/

**SAM:**  Jesus, you know there was a moment driving in when I wondered if –

**DEAN:** Will he tell your wife?

**SAM:** Probably.

**DEAN:** I told him to go home and say that he’d lost sight of you driving down. He seems like a nice young man, nice, you know, presentable, well-brought up

**SAM:** Yeah.

 *(Pause.)*

 So was he – I mean, he was going to come in and confront me, how’d you know it was him, you’re sure

**DEAN:**  You’ve showed me pictures. And he gave me his name. What will you do.

**SAM:** I don’t know.

**DEAN:** You said before you knew this would happen.

**SAM:**  Just not this soon.

**DEAN:** You’ve been coming here three years.

**SAM:** I wanted to wait till after Tyler left home. Maria will kick me out.

**DEAN:** Maybe not.

**SAM:** She will. But you know, it’s been dead between us for years, years. It’s Tyler I care about. When you say he was agitated you mean/

**DEAN:** Jumpy.

**SAM:**  I don’t know how that, I’m not sure what that means. He’s pretty steady you know, he doesn’t get stressed by much. Oh God.

**DEAN:**  Sammy, I’ve got to go back on shift. Are you going to be OK?

**SAM:** Yeah.

 *(DEAN is leaving, turns around.)*

**DEAN:** If you need a place, you can crash at my house. I got a pullout, people say it’s comfy.

**SAM:** Thanks, I’ll – what will I do?

**DEAN:**  You could get an apartment, I can ask my super, there’s always something coming up in my building

**SAM:**  I don’t want to start everything over again. That’s what I was trying to figure out. How I could start a new life but, you know, keep *(breaks down a little)* but I want to – sorry - sorry

**DEAN:** You want to keep Tyler in it.

 *(FATHER is crumpling.)*

 Sammy. You won’t do anything rash.

**SAM:**  Me? Nah. Nah – you mean – no no. I’m kinda relieved actually.

**DEAN:**  What’ll you do.

**SAM:**  Stay here tonight. Then tomorrow, first thing, I’ll go home. Face the music.

**DEAN:**  I’ll come back on my next break.

**SAM:** Thanks. Dean? Can you shut the door? I gotta think.

**(3)**

*Music perhaps to help with passage of time. Outside the spa. Early morning. TYLER is still there, still waiting. The door opens and SAM emerges. He sees TYLER, they both face each other and look as if they are about to say something, and then TYLER throws his arms around his father. Fast black.*

**The End.**