MYTHIC QUEST

"Pride Flag Emoji"

Spec Script

Written by Caitlyn Connelly

WEBCAM LIVE FEED OF DAVID

DAVID addresses the audience of a Mythic Quest charity livestream. Live chat messages appear intermittently with a <POP>.

DAVID

Reminder guys, we are doing a stream every week this month to celebrate Pride. We are so close to our next incentive: a guest appearance from local drag queen Ima Kunt--

David is interrupted by a <HORN BLAST> as Jo pops into view with party horn.

JO

Go gays! Get that coin, queers!

DAVID

Jo, you can't say that. Unless, of course, you yourself are gay and you're <u>reclaiming</u> the very slurs that have been used to subjugate you -- in which case I applaud your bravery!

JO

Nope!

DAVID

Okay, I can save this. Guys -- I mean folks -- I mean, queens, my apologies, I --

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE

<POP, POP, POP! > Suddenly the chat is going crazy.

DAVID

JO

David, did you tweet your penis?

DAVID

No, Jo, Jesus Christ I did not tweet my...

Comments from the chat pop up: "Soooo what's the big announcement?" "WHAT DOES THE EYEBALL MEAN" "GUYS CHECK IGN!!" "This just seems like their usual boring charity shit..."

DAVID (cont'd)

(to himself)

This is my passion project... (clicking around)

Guys, I'm sorry to disappoint but there isn't any announcement...

David opens a tab and googles "Mythic Quest tweet" and clicks on a headline from IGN reading "MYTHIC QUEST CREATOR HINTS AT MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT."

The headline image is a screenshot of a tweet from IAN:

He's quote-retweeted a reminder for the charity stream with an EYEBALL EMOJI followed by a PAINTING NAILS EMOJI.

To a regular person, this would mean nothing. To a hungry fanbase awaiting an expansion announcement, it's everything.

DAVID (cont'd)

Shit.

<POP, POP, POP, POP!>

LIVE FEED

A Mythic Quest graphic pops up: "WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK!"

INT. MQ STUDIOS - MOMENTS LATER

David frantically speed-walks behind Ian.

DAVID

Ian, Ian, hello!

IAN

You owe me a new pair of shoes, David. And I'm gonna try to forget what you said to that bartender.

DAVID

What are you talking about?

Ian stops walking abruptly and turns to face David.

IAN

We didn't do karaoke last night?

DAVID

No?

Ian continues speed-walking.

IAN

Must have been someone else.

David shakes off that conversation and follows again.

DAVID

Ian, what's all this hubub about a
game announcement? For a game we
don't have yet?

IAN

(unbothered)

I didn't say anything about a game announcement. Explicitly.

David struggles to keep up with Ian's casual stride.

DAVID

All the fans sure think you did. I don't even get it -- why are you painting your nails?

Ian stops walking abruptly and turns to David.

IAN

It's not about painting nails, David. Jesus, you are so out of it. Remind me to never hire a producer whose Instagram is all sepia-toned latte art. When was the last time you tweeted, David?

DAVID

Are those the ones that go away after you look at them?

IAN

(big sigh,
 explaining)

The eyeballs are like, "Yo, check this" and the painting fingernails is like, "Or else you're lame." Then factoring in my clout as a gaming mogul, of course many fans assumed I was alluding to a game announcement to be made on your stream.

DAVID

I see, so you <u>intentionally</u> blew up our community with your -- suggestive emojis.

IAN

Suggestive? David it was an eyeball and a fingernail. That'll never hold up in court.

DAVID

But you just said -- Court?!

IAN

And it certainly doesn't break my NDA, not that those have ever mattered.

DAVID

Ian, I'm not suing you! I'm begging
you why, why did you do this?!

IAN

Honestly, David, your charity streams are always so sad and poorly-attended. So I thought let me boost the numbers and rile up some fan speculation for a good cause.

DAVID

But we don't <u>have</u> anything! What am I going to tell them?

IAN

I'll handle it.

Ian walks off. David does a played-up exasperated reaction like Jan Brady.

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Ian sits in front of an open laptop. He's is in Creative Director pitch mode.

IAN

Next week, on this very stream...

WEBCAM LIVE FEED

David is visible behind Ian with a worried look on his face. The chat is flooded with excited reacts and messages "IANNN!" "Finally!" "IAN WE LOVE YOU!!"

IAN

Instead of whatever boring shit we were gonna do--

DAVID

(to himself)

We were going to talk to the President...

IAN

We are going to share an exclusive first look at our newest Raven's Banquet DLC.

<POP!> The chat goes crazy.

IAN (cont'd)

This is not like anything you've ever seen. This will be untouched territory in the Raven's Banquet Universe. Get ready to get your minds blown.

<POP, POP, POP, POP!>

IAN (cont'd)

Be there.

Ian slaps the laptop closed and gets up. David is at a loss for words.

DAVID

Ian, how-- we don't---

Ian dismisses him with a raised hand.

IAN

We'll whip something up.

Ian exits and David deflates.

DAVID

(defeated)

What am I gonna tell the President?

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES: MYTHIC QUEST

CUT TO:

PARTIALLY RENDERED VIDEO GAME CUTSCENE

Two SORCERESSES huddle in a forest looking over their shoulders. Their voices are auto-generated and the animation is rough.

SORCERESS 1

What if they come looking for us?

SORCERESS 2

Then they can watch--

Sorceress 2 lunges at Sorceress 1 for an aggressive makeout. Before they connect...

CUT TO:

INT. C.W.'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

C.W. and BRAD stand in C.W.'s office looking at the final frame of the cutscene: an obscene makeout shot straight out of a '90s sex comedy. Brad cringes while C.W. looks at him proudly, as if he's just created The Lesbian Notebook.

BRAD

You don't think it's a little... superfluous?

C.W.

Is love superfluous?

BRAD

Whatever, it actually doesn't matter. The point is, unless you want to run a Walmart ad in the middle, we don't have the money for this. We gotta trim it down.

C.W. sticks his nose up.

C.W.

I'm afraid I don't know how to cut it down without sacrificing the sapphic beauty of the scene.

BRAD

Riiiight. Well...

He slaps his knee and stands up.

BRAD (cont'd)

Why don't we get some internal feedback?

INT. C.W.'S OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Dana and Rachel are there.

BRAD

So, we're wondering if you two lesbians--

Rachel looks offended.

BRAD (cont'd)

Do I offend? You are lesbians?

DANA

RACHEL

Yeah, but...

Just when you say it like that--

BRAD

We're wondering if you two could help us trim down this cutscene with a little...lesbian shorthand?

Rachel looks over at Dana, visibly offended. Dana gives her a shrug.

RACHEL

This feels incredibly inappropriate and really you should be hiring a cultural consultant for this kinda thing — someone who can speak to the historical context, the intersectional identities of these women —

BRAD

I'm sorry, all of the Taradian fire nymph consultants were booked up. Besides, why pay some fancy Harvard lesbian when we're already paying you two nerds?

DANA

(to Rachel)

Why don't we just watch it? See if we can help? It's better that we take a pass than...them.

Dana gestures to Brad, who is literally counting money, and C.W. who is twiddling his mustache and sipping scotch.

DANA (cont'd)

...right?

RACHEL

(nervous)

Right, okay, we'll watch it.

Rachel grabs a pillow which she clutches like she's about to watch a horror movie. They sit on the couch in C.W.'s office to view the cutscene.

INT. ENGINEERING BULLPEN - SAME TIME

David and Ian address a room full of engineers.

IAN

(claps his hands)

What can we have ready in one week to share on the charity stream?

MICHELLE

Nothing. You haven't given us any concepts yet.

IAN

Jesus Christ, can't you guys be proactive for once?

A young eager engineer stands up from his desk with his notebook.

YOUNG ENGINEER

Actually I have a few ideas that--

Ian throws his hands.

IAN

Ugh, I'll just do it myself!!

Ian exits. David, embarrassed, is left standing in the front of the room. He gives a pitying look to the young engineer.

DAVID

I'm sure they're really great.

JO

They're terrible. I read them.

The guy deflates. David gives Jo a WTF look.

JO (cont'd)

What? He left it open in the men's bathroom.

David gives an even bigger WTF look.

POPPY (O.S.)

David! What are you doing in here with my engineers?

Poppy walks in. She's hysterical but trying to hide it.

POPPY (cont'd)

(grinning)

You're not trying to force me to resign because of these crazy fan theories, right?

Her grin falls and she looks desperate.

DAVID

What-- what fan theories?

INT. POPPY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

David and Poppy sit in front of Poppy's computer.

DAVID

Poppy, if this is about the emojis that Ian tweeted, we are dealing with it--

POPPY

Oh, no, this isn't about that.

DAVID

Oh, great!

POPPY

It's much worse.

DAVID

Oh.

POPPY

See, I would love to help with the whole charity stream sneak peek thing, but I've been absorbed with Holegate.

DAVID

Holegate?

POPPY

Yes, David. There's a growing subset of fans that truly believe that I, Poppy Li, do not have a butthole.

DAVID

Oh, gross--

POPPY

I KNOW. I just found out about it. I saw a weird comment in the livestream chat this morning and...

DAVID

(lights up)

You watch the stream?

POPPY

Oh this was the first time. I saw Ian's emojis and I thought something interesting would happen.

David deflates.

POPPY (cont'd)

So I searched "Poppy Li butthole" and I found this thread.

Poppy pulls up a creepy 4chan-like forum.

POPPY (cont'd)

It all starts with this video.

Poppy plays a video from a game launch red carpet.

INTERVIEWER (IN THE VIDEO)

You said you guys crunched for three days straight to release this game. What's your favorite snack for an all-nighter?

POPPY (IN THE VIDEO)

Ooooo I love Flaming Hot Cheetos. I ate like 4000 of them a day. My butthole is like eviscerated.

The clip ends with a freeze-frame on Video Poppy's crazed, oblivious grin.

POPPY (cont'd)

And then they just went crazy with it! Like look at this--

Poppy pulls up a comment in the thread. There's a blurry, paparazzi photo of Poppy leaving an office building.

POPPY (cont'd)

"The following day Poppy was seen coming out of a proctologist, where it is assumed the doctor determined her butthole was unsalvageable and they would have to amputate."

DAVID

Amputate?

POPPY

WE HAVE TO SQUASH THIS, DAVID. I have a butthole!!

Poppy puts her head in her hands.

DAVID

(comforting)

I know that.

He awkwardly pats Poppy on the head.

POPPY

I wasn't having my butthole removed. It was a carbuncle. It's normal.

DAVID

Is that an Australian thing?
 (then)

Maybe we should talk to someone...more qualified about this.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

DAVID

Today I call to order our crisis response team.

David <HITS A GAVEL>. We see the room is only David, Poppy, and CAROL.

CAROL

That's it? It's just me?

David nods.

CAROL (cont'd)

What's the situation?

DAVID

Fans are speculating about some very personal details in Poppy's life. Poppy, do you want to tell--

POPPY

(hysterical)

It was just a carbuncle, Carol! I --

Carol holds up her hand to interrupt Poppy.

CAROL

Oh I know about holegate! That's what this is about? Some little gamers think you botched your butthole with some flaming hot chips?

POPPY

(shameful)

Yes.

CAROL

You didn't tweet anything crazy racist or get involved with fracking?

POPPY

No!

CAROL

Woo! Thank god! I can eat dinner with my family tonight.

David and Poppy look at each other.

DAVID

We're just hoping that you can help Poppy here to cope with this disgusting rumor and maybe discuss some strategies to help this thing go away.

CAROL

Listen to me: Do. Not. Engage. Once you start sending fans messages about your...whatever, you're starting even more trouble.

POPPY

So you're saying I shouldn't send this tweet I drafted?

Poppy slides her phone across the table. Carol takes the phone and puts her glasses on to read the tweet.

CAROL

(reading)

"Oh I'll show you a spicy butthole...Come to my house and we can...fight?!"...What!

(MORE)

CAROL (cont'd)

"I live across from Grand Park, you can meet me there"...Girl, this is a kidnapping attempt!

Carol slides the phone back across the table.

POPPY

(oblivious)

He's not a kid! His profile picture is a grown man!

Poppy turns the phone around. The profile picture is an obvious meme like an anthromorphic Pepe the Frog.

DAVID

Oh come on.

CAROL

Poppy Li. You listen to me. Stay off the internet. This will pass like every other niche online community scandal.

Carol packs up her binder to leave.

CAROL (cont'd)

And stay out of the hot chips. I can see the dust on your fingers.

Poppy raises her fingers to look at them. They're orange-red.

DAVID

Aw.

INT. C.W.'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Brad, C.W., Dana, and Rachel have watched the cutscene and are now in the midst of an argument.

BRAD

Listen, I brought you guys in here to consult on $\underline{\text{trims}}$. Not to rewrite the scene from the ground up.

C.W. shoots daggers at them.

C.W.

Which is my realm, not yours.

DANA

You're givign us no choice! This cannot go out with Mythic Quest's name on it. The gays will rip you apart.

RACHEL

"They can watch." Eugh!

Dana and Rachel shiver.

DANA

They are gonna know exactly who wrote this.

C.W.

A Nebula Prize-winning wordsmith?

RACHEL

An old straight white guy.

C.W.

I'll have you know I spent my midtwenties in Paris amidst the beatniks.

(looks at Brad)

Lines were very blurred.

(looks back at the

girls)

The cigarette smoke was so thick you often didn't know the gender of your company until you were pinned up against the wall fondling each others-

DANA RACHEL

Gross!

Please stop.

Brad finishes typing on his laptop with a flourish.

BRAD

You know, ladies. I think we should take your input. C.W., wet your quill and listen up.

C.W. grabs his quill and ink with a desatisfied smirk.

DANA

What's with the change of heart?

Brad flips his laptop around and shows a screen full of graphs.

BRAD

Well I just reran the numbers and it turns out that 51% of our audience is gay or gay-sympathizing. So whatever we lose by making this cutscene heartfelt and authentic instead of

Dana and Rachel look at each other, surprised and lit up.

DANA

Oh!

BRAD

And they spend more on microtransactions.

RACHEL

Really?

BRAD

Gays love shopping!

RACHEL

Brad...

BRAD

The numbers don't lie. This is a financially beneficial investment.

Dana takes Rachel by the arm. They turn away from Brad and C.W.

DANA

You know, I don't know how I feel about this now. The fact that Mythic Quest is gonna profit off this makes me feel...icky.

RACHEL

I know, like, it's not like either of these guys care about their queer users. They're only considering this because they'll benefit from it. They're not allies.

BRAD

(overhearing)

I donate!

Rachel turns around.

RACHEL

Donate what? 0.0001 percent of your salary?

BRAD

Well, that would be more money than you've ever seen in your life. And, no. I donate sperm. To hundreds of lesbian couples like yourselves.

RACHEL DANA

Oh we're not --

Ew.

BRAD

Oh, don't turn up your noses. My sperm is incredibly valuable. In fact, there's a waitlist for it at the sperm bank.

DANA

There's a waitlist...?

BRAD

Oh yes, every day at 9am when the sperm bank opens their phone line blows up with women calling in to check whether I've made a new delivery.

Rachel gags.

BRAD (cont'd)

It's incredibly competitive. I'm sure you two will learn that eventually.

Dana and Rachel look at each other awkwardly.

BRAD (cont'd)

Who knows, one day when you two decide to conceive, one of you might pop out a little brown baby from an anonymous donor with a high IQ and a penchant for capitalism.

Dana and Rachel look horrified.

BRAD (cont'd)

But you'll know.

C.W. <CLEARS HIS THROAT>.

C.W.

What are we doing here?

DANA

Are you willing to accept our help?

C.W. considers this, then gestures for them to take a seat across from him. He wets his quill.

Rachel goes to sit down and sits on something. She picks it up.

RACHEL

Oh - ew!

It's a corny 70s porn mag with women making out on the cover. Rachel tosses it away.

C.W.

My research!

INT. MYTHIC QUEST DINING AREA - LATER

David, satisfied with himself for assembling that Crisis Response team, walks into the lunch area, shaking his salad and humming/singing to himself "Dirty Work" by Steely Dan.

He passes by Poppy and WE STAY on her.

Poppy sits at a lunch table with her head on the table. Ian walks up.

IAN

Pop? What's up?

He sits with her. She puts her head up. She's a mess.

IAN (cont'd)

Jesus!

She puts her head back down.

POPPY

(muffled)

Mere saying I domt haf a buhhole.

IAN

What?

She puts her head up.

POPPY

THE INTERNET IS SAYING I DON'T HAVE A BUTTHOLE!

IAN

Oh, Pop. That's just a meme.

POPPY

You know about it?!

Ian takes out his phone.

IAN

Oh yeah, I've been seeing this shit all day. I just got tagged in this.

Ian shows Poppy a meme on his phone. It's an image of a scorched creature. The text reads "ian when he used the mythic quest bathroom after poppy."

POPPY

Ugh! This is gonna follow me for the rest of my life. But frickin "Crisis Management" says I just need to ignore it.

(mocking voice)

"Don't engage."

IAN

Poppy, don't listen to that PR shit. You should've come to me sooner. What you really need to do is <u>fan the</u> flames.

POPPY

But that's exactly what they told me not to do!

IAN

Right, maybe if you ran over someone with your boat or said a little girl was "homely," --

Poppy gives him a suspicious look.

IAN (cont'd)

Not that I've done any of those...anyway what I'm saying is this isn't real, okay? It's a meme. I mean, they don't actually think that you got your butthole amputated, right?

POPPY

Amputated, singed, reconstructed, I don't even know anymore. There's too many layers to it at this point.

IAN

Listen, all the fans are saying when they start these memes is "Acknowledge us, see us, show us that you're listening."

Poppy considers this.

IAN (cont'd)

"Laugh at our fucking joke!" And, Pop, if you just give 'em a wink. They're gonna lose their shit. And that is great for us.

Ian gets up, pats Poppy on the head, and leaves.

POPPY

Why does everyone keep patting me on the head?!

INT. C.W.'S OFFICE - SOME TIME LATER

Everyone is scattered around the office eating lunch. Rachel and Dana are eating together at a table. C.W. is behind them working at his desk. He looks stumped. Brad looks up from his laptop.

BRAD

Over thirty minutes for lunch, huh, guys. I'm sorry, I didn't realize we were in Europe!

Ignoring him, Rachel and Dana are in the middle of a silly debate.

DANA

All I'm saying is I've never fought the Lord of Astor. I always befriend him.

RACHEL

No way! I didn't even know that was possible. And I've watched a lot of people play that game.

DANA

Really? I didn't know. I thought everyone played that way.

RACHEL

Well I've never met someone like you.

DANA

(smiling)

Me either.

They each go to reach for their utensils and brush hands. They blush and pull away.

C.W. notices this and looks inspired. He starts furiously writing with his quill.

INT. MYTHIC QUEST CONFERENCE ROOM - END OF DAY

Ian is doing a Rubick's cube with his feet up on the conference room table.

DAVID

Ian, I would really like to go home
for dinner tonight--

IAN

Why? You're divorced.

David holds his tongue and takes a deep breath.

DAVID

Can we please just come up with something small that we can announce? Something manageable? We can talk to PR about how to couch the fan's disappointment and stay focused on pre-production for the real expansion.

IAN

No, it has to be amazing. It has to be like nothing we've ever done before.

He's lighting up. He stands up and starts pacing.

IAN (cont'd)

We need a new feature. And--and a story that we've never told-- that no one in games has ever told.

DAVID

We don't have the ti--

The door to the conference room whips open. It's Poppy and a few engineers.

POPPY

(giddy)

Ian, I've got a new feature for ya.

Rachel, Dana, and C.W. race up behind them. Brad joins behind them.

DANA

Ian, we have a story we really want
to show you.

Ian makes a face at David like "I told you so."

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

From the hallway, without audio, we see Dana and Rachel and C.W. presenting the cutscene.

CROSS DISSOLVE:

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

From the same angle, we see Poppy presenting a new feature with flames.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME

POPPY

So what do you think?

Ian sits back in his chair in thought.

TAN

So the flames shoot behind you...from your butt.

Poppy nods excitedly.

IAN (cont'd)

It's a total blind rear attack.

Beat.

IAN (cont'd)

We've never had anything like that. (beat)

It's great.

Everyone lets out a sigh of relief. Ian turns to address Dana, Rachel, and C.W. on the other side of the room.

IAN (cont'd)

And I think we can find a way to integrate it with the gay thing.

Dana and Rachel look at each other hesitantly proud. Ian claps his hands together.

IAN (cont'd)

We've got a feature and a story. Let's get to it.

Everyone celebrates. David lets out a collapsing sigh of relief.

EXT. MQ STUDIOS

CHRYON: TWO WEEKS LATER

INT. MQ STUDIOS

Everyone in the company gathers in front of a large projector to watch the charity stream. The charity stream is legit this time.

IAN

We'd like to share with you a sneak peek of our next DLC. This is just a taste of what's to come.

Ian steps aside as the clip plays. We don't see it yet -- we just see the Mythic Quest staff watching in admiration and hear the dialogue. A sweet score plays as the cutscene clip begins:

SORCERESS 2 (V.O.)

I've never met someone like you...

SORCERESS 1 (V.O.)

Me either.

Brad walks in with his laptop.

BRAD

Well, the incels are hating it, but the gays are winning out!

He flips his laptop around and we see the incoming microtransactions.

Dana reads the chat on her phone.

DANA

They love it!

We see her screen. Messages start flooding in from people reacting to Poppy's nod: They see us!!! We feel seen!!!! WE LOVE YOU POPPY LI!!! Rachel leans over Dana's shoulder to see the chat.

RACHEL

What's holegate?

Dana shrugs as the chat blows up.

SORCERESS 1 (V.O.)

We have to get out of here. They're closing in on us.

SORCERESS 2 (V.O.)

I'll never let them hurt you!

They look back up at the screen. The two scorceresses have locked hands and turned their butts to the villagers, spraying them with giant flames from their rear ends.

Dana and Rachel share a sweet look and take each other's hands.

SORCERESS 2 (V.O.)

Feel the heat of my sapphic wrath!!!

TAG

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

The bar is decorated for Pride month. David and Ian are standing on top of the bar with karaoke microphones. They're wasted. This is their big finish.

DAVID

I don't wanna do your dirty work no more!

IAN

I'm a fool to do your dirty work, oh yeah!

They collapse on each other. Ian helps David off the bar top.

DAVID

Oh man oh man oh man.

IAN

We gotta do this more often, dude. Y'know you might not be a creative guy, but you can SAAAANG.

DAVID

(laughing)

Oh man, I gotta sober up dude. I've got the charity stream tomorrow.

IAN

I've been meaning to talk to you about that--

DAVID

It's terrible, it's terrible I know. No one cares.

IAN

Can I help you out? Can I help you out dude?

DAVID

(grabbing Ian by the shoulders)

Dude, I would literally love that, man. Anything.

IAN

Cool, cool, cool.

David stumbles off. Ian takes his phone out. We see him compose the eyeball and painting nails emoji tweet.

EXT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

DAVID (O.S.)

BARFFFF!

IAN (0.S.)

Aww dude! My shoes!

END OF EPISODE