

Live and Uncut

By Sam DeLeo

CHARACTERS:

Bob: mid-twenties

Otto: mid-twenties

* woman playing Anna has no speaking parts, but preferably, should be roughly the same age and have some training in dance.

RUNNING TIME: approximately 25 minutes. no set changes

SET:

Facing stage right, a desk with a large computer monitor on it; Two chairs, one at the desk, the other an easy chair facing more toward the front of the stage; A floor lamp on the stage left side of the easy chair; A tapestry or other see-through fabric hangs covering the back of the stage so that the silhouette of a woman can be seen clearly by the audience; and, if available, a stack of stereo components and speakers.

Bob: (dressed in ratty sweats and a t-shirt; eating cereal). Hey dude, have a good nap?

Otto: (in dress designer clothes). Bob, I thought I told you not to eat at the computer.

Bob: Don't worry, man. Look, I'm way far away (chewing more), look.

Otto: You're about 12 inches away.
Bob: (still with mouthful). No man, way far away, look. I'd have to throw up or something.
Otto: I don't have the money to fix it if you spill something on it.
Bob: You don't have money because you spent it on clothes again. Those are new threads you got on, aren't they?
Otto: Yeah. Donna Karan.
Bob: Dude, wait till you find a new job to be stylin' with that cash. Hey, you still want me to check into an opening for you at work on Monday?
Otto: I-I don't think we should work together. Thanks, though.
Bob: So what are you dressed for, job hunting?
Otto: Naw.
Bob: Dinner with the old flame maybe?
Otto: No man! I told you, we're through.
Bob: Alright, alright.
Otto: Why is just looking nice for the sake of it such a strange concept to you?
Bob: I like to look nice, but it's usually for other people to see. Otherwise, I'd wear my suit instead of my skivvies to bed (looking more closely at the clothes and smiling). But damn, those threads are dope, hoooo-hoo. They are the shit. Man, you are gonna have the women all over your ass.
Otto: Look, I'm not trying to have women all over my ass, okay?
Bob: But they will be all the same. And if I was you, I'd take adv-
Otto: Step off, Bob.
Bob: Sorry. Just trying to-
Otto: I know.
Bob: Otto, it's been two months since you broke up. It's time for you to go out and have some fun.
Otto: That's easy to say for someone who's been dating the same girl since he grew pubic hair.
Bob: Oh, and you think you're Hugh Hefner or something?
Otto: I'd prefer not to.
Bob: (suddenly lost in reverie) Not me. Think of it. Breasts and asses everywhere you turn around. Girls for breakfast, lunch and dinner, get outta here!
Otto: You gotta helluva imagination.
Bob: So come on, what're you dressed out for?
Otto: I told you. You just don't understand taking pride in the way you look. Now can you let me sit there?
Bob: (gets half-way up and stops). Wait, you're not gonna watch that Anna chick again, are you? (then astonished). Goddamnit Otto, is that why you're dressed up? To watch her!?! (no answer. Otto squeezes by him and opens Anna's web site, which broadcasts her home life on the Internet 24 hours a day through a video cam in her house.) Jesus! I wish I would have never showed you that web site. You gotta stop

wasting your money on this, I mean, shit, rent's due again in three weeks and you don't have a job.

Otto: I'll pay my rent.

Bob: You'll pay your rent. I don't know how. But then, what about just getting out, getting out of this place and doing something, anything? Listen, how about we go check out a matinee today, huh? It's hotter than hell — we go relax in a nice air-conditioned theater. Whattya say?

Otto: Check it out. (Anna appears in silhouette at the back of the stage, simulating for the audience what Otto and Bob see on the monitor: She is vacuuming her apartment in the nude.)

Bob: (sarcastically). Yeah, she's nude again, and we've never seen nude women before. Boy, what the hell are those floppy things hanging from her chest.

Otto: You haven't seen women like Anna.

Bob: Come on. She's not that great.

Otto: Look. (Anna slowly and seductively bends over to untangle the cord from the bottom of the vacuum.)

Bob: (slowly becomes more engrossed). Yeah. Alright.

Otto: She's really graceful.

Bob: Okay. I'll give her that. But she hardly ever masturbates anymore, so what's the use in watching?

Otto: Do you have to reach that level of vulgarity all of the time?

Bob: Well that's what everyone waits for.

Otto: Yeah, the people without any imagination maybe. But, I don't think that many people watch her, anyway.

Bob: Are you crazy? This woman has no job. I mean this is her job, right there, broadcastin' herself 24-7. You think she's not making some serious cash off this?

Otto: She's doing okay for herself. She tells me in her e-mails.

Bob: Oh, and I suppose you think you're the only guy she e-mails?

Otto: Well if everyone else is just waiting for her to masturbate, then they wouldn't have much use for e-mail correspondence, would they? Ah, she's taking a break. I think she's tired today, she said she's been getting bouts of insomnia lately. Her mom's been ill.

Bob: She didn't SAY anything to you.

Otto: Are you jealous, Bob?

Bob: She sends e-mails to PAYING customers, like you and me and everyone else.

Otto: Are you saying e-mail is not a valid form of communication?

Bob: No.

Otto: And did you know I've been getting unsolicited mail from her?

Bob: No. And I don't care.

Otto: I have been for quite a while.

Bob: Alright, so you're one of her favorites. (Anna gets up from relaxing, yawns and does some very non-chalant stretches, one of which includes her touching her toes alternately with her opposite side

hands.)
Otto: Look.
Bob: Wha-oh yeah. Yeah. (Anna suddenly leaves the stage to answer her phone.) Hey. Now where's she going?
Otto: She's busy.
Bob: (Anna re-enters talking animatedly on a cordless phone.) Ah-ha, probably her stud boyfriend calling.
Otto: Let's not stereotype, Bob.
Bob: She's probably got 10 guys on a string.
Otto: Actually, she's pretty much of a homebody.
Bob: She's a homebody who films her fucking life for everyone to gawk at!
Otto: Everyone's gotta make a living somehow. And she's good at what she does.
Bob: She's good at what she doe- have you lost it, dude!? She doesn't DO anything. (beat). What's she doing now?
Otto: (Anna finishes her call and begins reading a newspaper on the sofa). She's reading the newspaper.
Bob: Why doesn't she just masturbate and get it over with?
Otto: Why don't you just watch TV or something. Maybe there's some WWF wrestling on for you.
Bob: There, calling me a dumb shit again.
Otto: I wasn't calling you a dumb shit.
Bob: You were insinuating I was.
Otto: No I wasn't. Cool out.
Bob: Because all the way from college days you know that's a sore spot with me. And that's what you're good at, right Otto? Finding everyone's sore spot.
Otto: I guess.
Bob: What?
Otto: I said, I guess you're probably right about that. (quieter). Sorry. (beat).
Bob: What the hell's wrong with you?
Otto: What do you mean?
Bob: "Sorry?" You never say "sorry." What the hell's up with you?
Otto: Nothing. (beat).
Bob: (getting up animatedly) Hey man, listen, I was thinking about this the other day: Remember all the parties we used to throw in college? Those were the best goddamn parties: all the live bands I used to get to play for us, and all the food you used to throw down with, the barbecue chicken and ribs and the pasta and the vegetables and those little meatballs with the toothpicks. When's the last time you didn't order out or eat a frozen dinner, man? And you're a damn good cook, Otto. So you know what I started thinkin' was, we should throw a party just like old times, a big bash. Whattya think?
Otto: Go for it. Just don't count on me to be there.
Bob: What?
Otto: I don't like being around a lot of people.

Bob: You never minded much before.

Otto: The past is gone, Bob. Like I said, I'm not stopping you. I just don't want to do it myself.

Bob: (giving up). Well, maybe we'll just have a few friends over. (beat). Know what else I was remembering? The Independent. For a school newspaper, we did some really good shit with that, your columns especially. I'll never forget the one you wrote called "Youth Arrested for Rhyming." We got a ton of mail on that one, and eventually, the cops eased off hassling kids at that park, too. You ever write any more?

Otto: Not really.

Bob: You were really into essay writing.

Otto: I was. But it's silly. And I really wasn't that good at it.

Bob: The hell you weren't.

Otto: No.

Bob: I bet there's plenty of small publications in this town you could write for, your shit was good.

Otto: Compared to whom, Bob. Who are you comparing me with?

Bob: I don't know.

Otto: Okay then.

Bob: Goddamnit! (begins pacing in frustration).

Otto: What are you so agitated about? Hey hey Anna, welcome back. Is it exercise time? Yeah, it's exercise time. You gotta exercise if you want to maintain a body like that. (Anna begins exercising. Bob tries to ignore looking at her on the monitor as he paces, but gradually gives in and is transfixed like Otto.) See those powerful legs. Powerful yet supple. She tells me she doesn't feel right unless she exercises everyday. She said I should think about trying it myself.

Bob: Yeah.

Otto: It certainly pays off for her.

Bob: Yeah.

Otto: Have you ever seen any of the letters Anna's written me?

Bob: Letters?

Otto: Well, if you want to be technical about it, they're e-mails, but they're written in letter form. Here, I'll read you a couple. (opens e-mails). "Dear Otto; Thanks for being so supportive of my work. I feel like you really understand what I'm doing. You're a real sweetheart. Sincerely, Anna." Here's another. "Dear Otto; I liked some of your ideas about changing the color scheme in my living room. Where did you learn so much about design? I have to see if I can get a new sofa first before I begin painting anything in darker colors, though. All for now. Yours truly, Anna." But those are from months ago. Listen to this recent one. "Dear Otto; I don't know how I would have made it through these last few days without you. You've been so understanding. I really appreciate you being there for me when I needed you. Luckily, everything seems to be okay now. They say my mother has dropsy. I don't completely understand what that is yet,

but I'm guessing it's a lot better than a tumor. With much love, Anna."

Bob: I didn't know you guys were that tight.
Otto: Tight? She just said she loved me.
Bob: She didn't really SAY it. And it was "with much love," not "I love you." But still...
Otto: I know what she means. We understand each other.
Bob: I've never been that close to a beautiful woman, I mean to a REALLY beautiful woman.
Otto: You have no idea what it's like. I've told her things I've never told anyone before.
Bob: And what about her, she? -
Otto: Told me things she doesn't tell anyone else. You mean you and your future wife don't?
Bob: Of course, Elle and I have known each other years; you and Anna... I guess we don't do it all that much. We will, though, especially as we run into more problems.
Otto: Not everyone can do it.
Bob: Really?
Otto: Some people just aren't cut out for it. The minute I laid eyes on Anna I knew we were going to click. Did you know "The Wizard of Oz" is her favorite movie, too? And we've both played "The Dark Side of the Moon" to it exactly three times, one of which I think I saw her do, although she was in her TV room so it was hard to see. We like the same foods, the same style in cars, we've voted for some of the same political candidates.
Bob: But how do you know she's not giving everyone this line?
Otto: (beat while he finds e-mail). "Dear Otto; I want you to know I don't write like this to everyone. You're special to me. I just thought you should know how I feel. Love, Anna."
Bob: She said it! Goddamnit, she said it, "Love, Anna." What the fuck do ya know.
Otto: Whattya' think I've been trying to tell you?
Bob: But- I- This- You lucky son of a bitch, you! This is crazy! This woman is a goddess! She's got one of the rockinest' bodies I've ever seen.
Otto: You know it well.
Bob: So when are you going to ask her to meet you in person.
Otto: How do you mean?
Bob: You're right, it's probably too soon, she might get suspicious or something. Hey Otto, Otto, listen, I think I underestimated you. This Internet thing can really work. Listen, do you think Anna has a sister?
Otto: A sister and a brother.
Bob: Do you think you could somehow check out the sister for me-I dunno, get a photo of her scanned or some shit.
Otto: I don't think that would be appropriate. I can ask if you'd be allowed

to have her e-mail address.

Bob: (beside himself) What!?! What the hell is with you? You're sitting there watching this chick in the nude- I can't believe this shit- and you can't ask for a lousy photo of her sis- What the fuck is wrong with you Otto! Get me a photo!! (beat. then regaining himself) Listen to me. What the hell's gotten into me. Jesus. I've been engaged to Elle for three years and I let some bimbo rattle me.

Otto: (springs up and decks Bob). Don't ever call her that!

Bob: (gets up slowly, holding his jaw). That was real good, Otto. I'm about your only goddamned friend, you dumb ass!

Otto: Sorry but you shouldn't have said that.

Bob: (still trying to recover from the blow). What the hell (detecting some blood), I can't believe you just hit me. I can't believe you just did that.

Otto: I'm sorry I said. It's just a dribble, you're okay, Bob. Shake it off.

Bob: Shake it off. I can do better than that. I got a lotta problems. I got hurt. But I don't make anybody else pay for it. Ever since I met you, you been solid to me. You had a chip on your shoulder, but you were always solid. You were always the guy watching out for me. Now — I gotta' watch out for you. I'm going to Elle's. I'll come get my stuff tomorrow. Good luck making rent. Friend. (exits).

Otto: (following his exit but yelling after him too late). I'm sorry, but that comment was out of line. Dude! I shouldn't have hit you. Bob! (waits, but no answer). Damn it. (changing tone). We were getting on each other's nerves anyway. It's for the best. (begins straightening up things). He'll be with Elle. I'll have peace and quiet. And privacy. And more space. I can put my antique cabinet over there in place of the stereo. I gotta' get that outta' storage now. Or a bookshelf. Or something. (sits back down to watch Anna again). No more of his fucking nagging. Jesus, you would have thought I was dating him. No more distractions. Now I get my life in order. Now I focus. (begins typing an e-mail to Anna). "Dear Anna; You'll never guess what just happened to me. I don't know how to explain it, but-" (beat). No, it's too soon. I should think about it. She might start thinking I'm dangerous or something. Don't you worry your head over me, sweetie. Are you taking a nap on the couch already? (gets up and walks around. pretends to be looking out the window). Hardly any moon tonight, just a black sky. And still, look at all the people. Sure, it's Saturday night, but where in the hell could they all be going? Maybe nowhere all that particular. Maybe just out. To get away from where they just were. Find someone, something. Anything. Good luck. (walks back toward monitor). Well excuse me, Anna. I guess you weren't really sleeping. (sits down). Well, it's a good as night for it as any. You just go right ahead. I'll be right here for you. Poor Bob. He wasn't able to understand, anyway. Why would we ever want to meet? That would ruin everything. (Anna, heard for the first time, softly moans to orgasm. Lights out.)