

**SLIGHTLY AWKWARD
ADVENTURES**

Family Sex Video 2: In the beginning

Greg, two producers, two writers and a sound guy sat at a table. At this point, it was down to three possibilities. The producers wanted to hear the candidates as if they were on the set so the sound manager or as they called him the sound guy was there with all his equipment. Greg was the first and only choice to play the co-lead. He had years of experience on stage where he did some nude work. The show was being shopped out to either a streaming service or a premium cable channel. He would read the lines with the possible co-stars.

The show was originally to be named, “Family Lies.” A play on the 1980’s show Family Ties but with a gritty, dark edge. It would revolve around teenage twins and their unraveling family. Greg was twenty-one, but he was playing a seventeen-year-old. The co-star would be his twin. She would also add most of the nudity. They needed someone who was comfortable with the nudity but not so much that they could be linked to something like porn. Wholesome, fresh and young looking but not actually young. The producers had the managers send nude shots of their clients showing they knew what would be expected and soon they were down to three.

The longshot was a girl named Janet. She tested well in the beginning, but she had no real experience on a show. One producer said, “*she looks too young. Her nude shots felt like child porn.*” What he didn’t know was how right he was. She was sixteen at the time the pictures were taken with her turning seventeen just before the audition. Before she came in, they reviewed her progress in the interview process. Then they reviewed her print work including the nude shots. One of the writers said, “*she would easily pass as seventeen. It would make the grab and grope scenes feel a little more real.*” The grab and grope scenes referred to a rape scene written into the first season that would never see the light of day. Greg saw the picture. Janet was sitting with her back slightly arched on a bench sitting in such a way that her breasts were on display but not much else. Compared to the others it was tasteful.

About a week later and they were filming Janet’s first scene. It would define her as an actor. She said she was willing to do the nudity, but now she would have to prove it. The scene calls for her to be in bed in a nightgown. She wakes up and dangles her legs over the bed. With a

shuffle, she would pull the nightgown off revealing her naked back. Her chest would be visible in a mirror. This would be the big post-rape reveal showing bruises and bite marks. The camera would zoom in on her face in the mirror. Six hours of makeup, an hour of blocking, camera effects and lighting went into this 45-second shot. This also included some takes from other angles so the nightgown reveal would play naturally. What it really revealed was Janet's resolve. She improvised a few moments that were later used in the final scene. The director and the camera crew all said she was a natural.

In what would feel like an eternity later in the series they filmed the pilot in a month. As they did they tweaked the script here and there. The tone shifted from the good twin son bad daughter to a drama dealing with the aftermath of Janet's attack and how everyone in the family was affected. Greg went from being the star to a co-star to a support player. He didn't mind. There was just something about Janet that made you want to watch her. In the many readings, they did in the audition as well as in rehearsal everyone said they had chemistry. One of the producers remarked, "*yeah just not a brother-sister kind. There were steam and heat. This might not end well.*"

With the pilot shot, they worked on more scenes as some of the cast went back to their other 9 to 5 jobs. Janet wanted to work on her craft as much as she could while among other actors. One night she asked Greg to help her with a script reading in her trailer. Greg came in to find Janet in a white terrycloth robe. She gave him a set of blue pages. Greg thought to himself, "*I thought we were on green pages with blue a distant memory?*" He looked at the lines. They were not even his. He asked, "*is it ok if I just read I don't know this part.*" She said, "*yes as long as you are in the role. I mean I will be doing this like a full-dress rehearsal, so I need you to do that as well.*" Greg started to say, "*I don't have this wardrobe*" when he saw the line Sally is naked.

Janet opened her robe and let it fall to the floor. She then pointed to the script. She asked, "*are you ready?*" He looked at the script like it just somehow materialized in his hand. Just

before his first line, it said he was to take his shirt off and his pants. This would include the underwear. He has done nudity before onstage in front of hundreds on Broadway, but somehow this felt different. He pulled his shirt off. He works out every day, and the effect was beginning to show. He got up and pulled his jeans off after kicking off his shoes. Then the boxers came off. He sat on the edge of the bed. She said, “*no you need to sit further back so I can sit in your lap.*” She slowly climbed into his lap. She sat close to his knees so his penis wouldn’t touch her. She put her arms on his shoulders and asked, “*are you ready?*” Instead of answering her he kissed her on the lips. She kissed back as he slid forward and into her. The fake script she had made for this occasion hit the floor. She wanted to see if he was into her and now he really is in her. Janet also wanted the footage she was recording for her backup plan.

The pilot was a failure. Not any of their target demographics found the show bankable. One suggested they tweak the pilot, removing the nudity and language. An MA-TV became TV-13 and still no takers. Greg was certain it was over. Janet was staying with him in his apartment in New York City. At the time, no one knew them as anything. He was known among the Broadway crowd, and she was known for print media, but on the street, they could be anyone. They spent their time working on Janet’s acting and making love. Greg was eyeing a new production in the works by a friend of his. He billed it as Rent set in the future. As Greg and his friend worked on the play, Janet got a call. Her manager had some good news. They wanted them back to reshoot a new pilot. Greg wondered if this would be worth it.