

LAY YOUR SLEEPING HEAD, EPISODE 5

6/29/18

## THEME MUSIC

### ANNOUNCER

Persigo Press presents The Henry Rios Mysteries Podcast.

Hello, this is Michael Nava, author of a series of crime novels, featuring Henry Rios, a gay, Mexican-American criminal defense lawyer, and the producer of this podcast.

Today, we present episode five of *Lay Your Sleeping Head*, the first novel in the series.

*Lay Your Sleeping* opens in the summer of 1982, in the fictional town of Linden, California, thirty miles south of San Francisco. Linden is the home of the prestigious university of the same name, founded in the nineteenth century by railroad tycoon, Grover Linden.

Henry Rios is a Public Defender, born and raised in a small town in California's central valley and from a working class, Mexican-American family. He is a graduate of Linden University and its top-ranked law school.

In 1982, there is no Internet, [beat] people smoke in bars and airplanes [beat] most gay men are closeted and no one has heard of

AIDS [beat]. It's an America where 83 percent of the people identify as white, 85 percent as Christian and 83 percent say that homosexuality is morally wrong. [Beat] Ronald Wilson Reagan, who once declared that trees cause more pollution than automobiles, is the president of the United States.

In this episode, Rios is reunited with Hugh Paris, the young man with whom Rios realizes he is falling in love. Hugh apologizes for running away the morning after he and Rios had slept together and reveals more about his troubled past. The two men spend the next few days together. Their initial connection deepens as they exchange stories about their lives. Hugh leaves, telling Rios he has to run an errand, but will return that night. But Hugh does not return. Instead, a phone call from a stranger brings Rios disturbing news about his lover.

### THEME MUSIC

PARIS

[Sexy voice] That felt so good. [Beat] Hey, don't fall asleep on me!

RIOS

You think I could fall asleep with you next to me? Every nerve in my body is wide awake. [Beat] I want to know everything about you.

PARIS

You can ask me five questions.

RIOS

Just five? You do remember I'm a lawyer. Asking questions is my job.

PARIS

Five for now, but they can be about anything.

RIOS

Who was the man who raped you when you were a child?

PARIS

Really? That's your first question? [Beat] Why would you want to know that?

RIOS

Because he hurt you.

PARIS

That was a long time ago, Henry.

RIOS

You're still hurting.

PARIS

[Beat] My grandfather.

RIOS

Jesus. That explains . . .

PARIS

[Defensively] Explains what?

RIOS

Nothing. [Beat] Where were your parents?

PARIS

My dad was already gone. My mother was . . . a drunk. She went back east and left me with my grandparents. I lived with them until I was 14.

RIOS

No brothers or sisters?

PARIS

I'm an only child.

RIOS

Do you have any other family?

PARIS

Just Uncle John. He's the one who arranged for me to go prep school when I was 14. I think he suspected what my grandfather was doing to me.

RIOS

*Doing to you?* It happened more than once?

PARIS

[Sad] You're using up all your questions on this.

RIOS

Someone should have been there to protect you?

PARIS

I survived. That's what matters, isn't it? You have one more question but let's get off this subject, okay? Ask me my favorite color or my astrological sign.

RIOS

Who is the other boy in the snapshot you sent me?

PARIS

[Lightly] Are you jealous?

RIOS

Should I be?

PARIS

That's six questions. His name is Grant Hancock. Uncle John is friends with his father and when I went back east to school, Mister Hancock asked Grant to watch out for me.

RIOS

From the way he had his arm around you in the picture, I'd say he took his job seriously.

PARIS

[Laughing] You are jealous. He was a good friend. I owe him an apology.

RIOS

For what?

PARIS

You've used up all your questions. My turn. Where are you from?

RIOS

I grew up in a little town about a hundred miles northeast of here, in the central valley.

PARIS

What about your family?

RIOS

[Impersonal voice] Working class, Mexican. My parents are dead. I have a sister. We're not close.

PARIS

It doesn't sound like you were close to any of them.

RIOS

I'm going to count that as a question. The answer is no. I got away as soon as I could.

PARIS

Why?

RIOS

My father knew about me before I did. Knew I was a *joto* — they probably didn't teach that word in your Spanish class . . . It means faggot. He tried to beat it out of me.

PARIS

I'm sorry.

RIOS

I survived, too.

PARIS

How?

RIOS

I knew he was wrong. Not wrong about who I was, but wrong to try to change me, wrong to believe there was something defective about me. That belief kept me alive until I could get out the hell of there.

PARIS

After he raped me the first time, and I asked him why he'd hurt me, my grandfather said since I acted and sounded like a girl he was going to treat me like one. Like it was my fault, but I know I hadn't done anything and that what he was doing to me was wrong.

RIOS

You didn't tell anyone he abused you?

PARIS

Did you tell anyone about your father?

RIOS

No. [Beat] There was no one to tell who could have done anything about it.

PARIS

Exactly. [Beat] [To lighten the mood] What is your astrological sign?

RIOS

Virgo.

PARIS

[Laughs] Figures! You're so controlled. [Beat] I have one more question left. [Beat] Have you ever been in love?

RIOS

No, but there's a first time for everything.

PARIS

At my prep school, we were required to take a classics course. Homer and Plato and those guys. The only thing that got my attention was the story of love.

RIOS

How did it go?

**MUSIC COMES UP BEHIND THIS DIALOGUE**

PARIS

Well, the first human beings were joined together like Siamese twins. There were originally three sexes, men and women, women and women and men and men. The gods worried the humans were becoming too powerful so they split them in two. And that's what love is, lonely people looking for their missing half.

RIOS

How will we know when we've found it?

PARIS

Our bodies will fit together. [Beat] Like this.

**SCENE TRANSITION MUSIC**

**MUSIC FADES AND GIVES WAY TO RESTAURANT SOUNDS.**

RIOS

I've lived in this town since I was eighteen and had no idea it had a restaurant this fancy.

PARIS

It was my grandparents' favorite place when I lived with them. That was their table.

RIOS

Is that old guy –?

PARIS

No, he's not my grandfather.

RIOS

Still kind of risky for you to come here. Unless you want to run into him.

PARIS

[Stern] When I want to see him, I'll pick the time and place. [Beat] I think I'll have the lamb. What about you?

RIOS

Whenever I'm in a place like this I feel like I should be clearing dishes not ordering them.

PARIS

We can go somewhere else.

RIOS

No . . . It's interesting, how the other half lives. [Beat] Just promise me you won't let use the wrong fork.

**BREIF SCENE TRANSITION MUSIC**

RIOS

That was amazing food.

PARIS

Order the tarte tatin for dessert.

RIOS

What is it?

PARIS

Trust me.

RIOS

Okay, that's what I'll have.

**BRIEF SCENE TRANSITION MUSIC**

WAITER

Your dessert, sir.

RIOS

Apple pie?

PARIS

Take a bite.

RIOS

Oh, my God. So, this is what snake gave Eve in the Garden of Eden.

PARIS

Nice to know a little caramelized sugar and pastry dough can lead you into sin.

RIOS

No, that was you.

PARIS

Henry, this thing that's happening between us. It's not just about sex, is it?

RIOS

You know it's not.

PARIS

But I don't, because nothing like this has ever happened to me before. Sex? I could write the book about sex but the only boyfriend I ever had was heroin.

RIOS

Good thing you dumped him for me.

PARIS

Can I ask you something?

RIOS

Anything.

PARIS

What do you see when you look at me?

RIOS

[Beat] I see the boy in the picture you sent me. The one you said could have grown up to be a good man. I see the good man.

PARIS

You don't think I'm crazy anymore?

RIOS

I think you're brave. [Beat] Let's go home.

### SCENE TRANSITION MUSIC

RIOS

I haven't spent this much time in bed since I had pneumonia when I was a kid.

PARIS

[Laughs] I hope I'm more fun than pneumonia. [Beat] Have you ever bottomed, Henry?

RIOS

Back in college a couple of times, when a guy wanted to flip.

PARIS

Did you like it?

RIOS

I never got past, "ouch, that hurts, take it out."

PARIS

Those guys didn't know what they were doing. [Beat] You have such a nice ass.

RIOS

Uh, where are you going with this?

PARIS

Shh. Relax. Trust me. I know what I'm doing, daddy.

RIOS

Daddy?

PARIS

Quiet. This is my fantasy.

**SEXY MUSIC**

RIOS

You were right. Those other guys really didn't know what they were doing.

PARIS

So, you liked that.

RIOS

Oh, yeah. [Beat] But what's with the daddy thing. I'm not that much older than you.

PARIS

It about power, not age, Henry. You're a powerful man. When you let me inside you, I felt powerful, too. In control. Something I don't usually feel. Does that sound stupid?

RIOS

No. I understand. If you have to fuck me every now and then to reassure yourself, that's okay with me.

PARIS

I prefer bottoming, so your butt's safe.

RIOS

What if I want to change it up sometimes.

PARIS

Just say the word . . . daddy.

SCENE TRANSITION MUSIC

BACON FRYING

PARIS

Morning, baby. How do you like your eggs?

RIOS

Over-easy.

PARIS

Put some toast in, okay.

RIOS

Let me get dressed.

PARIS

Don't bother. I like the view. [Beat] Shit! I broke the yolk. Sorry, baby, you're getting scrambled eggs.

RIOS

Scrambled is fine. [Beat] What do you want to today?

PARIS

Ah, actually, I have to go back into the city.

RIOS

Why?

PARIS

I have to run an errand. It'll take most of the day but I can be back here tonight. [Beat] Henry, I promise, I'll be back. I'm not going to disappear again.

RIOS

What's this errand?

PARIS

I'll tell you everything tonight.

RIOS

Don't you trust me?

PARIS

Of course, I trust you.

RIOS

Then tell me now.

PARIS

I can't . . . Not yet. [Beat] You have to trust me, Henry.

RIOS

Okay, I trust you. [Beat] What am I supposed to do while you're gone?

PARIS

[Lightly] You might want to wash your sheets.

**SCENE TRANSITION MUSIC**

RIOS

I did do the laundry and, when that was dried and folded away, cleaned the apartment, ran a couple of errands and ate dinner. That took me to 7:30. I cracked a beer and watched the tail end of a Giant's game that had gone into extra innings. I fell asleep in front of the TV. When I woke up, the local ten o'clock news was winding up. I glanced at the answering machine. No calls, no messages. I dug Hugh's number out of my pocket, picked up the phone and dialed. The phone rang off the hook. I hung up. It was almost 11:30. And then, just after midnight . . .

**SFX: PHONE RINGS**

RIOS

Hugh?

LEON

Uh, hi, is your name Henry?

RIOS

Yeah. Who is this?

LEON

Um, do you have a friend named Hugh?

RIOS

Yeah. Is he all right?

LEON

Um, my name is Leon. I manage the Liberty Baths in the city. We found your friend unconscious in one of the rooms. It looks like he OD'd on something. Do you know what that might be?

RIOS

Heroin. Did you call an ambulance?

LEON

It's on its way. They'll take him to the emergency room at General. Do you know where that is?

RIOS

SF General? Yeah, I know where it is. [Beat] How is he?

LEON

He's breathing.

RIOS

I'm on my way. [Beat] Leon, can you tell me . . . did he come in alone?

LEON

Yeah, and he was alone when they found him. I'm sorry about your boyfriend. I hope he's okay.

RIOS

I thanked him, hung up, threw on some clothes and headed to San Francisco.

## THEME MUSIC

You've been listening to episode five of *Lay Your Sleeping Head*, a Henry Rios mystery, starring Armando Rey as Henry Rios, Cameron La Brie as Hugh Paris and James Warren Boyd as Leon. Our director is Russell Kaltschmidt. Our sound engineer is Dave Peck. Music and sound effects were composed by Josh DeRosa. This episode was written and produced by Michael Nava.

If you enjoyed this episode, please spread the word on social media. We depend upon your support to continue this series.

For behind the scene extras visit us at our Facebook page, The Henry Rios Mysteries, or at [michaelnavawriter.com](http://michaelnavawriter.com) under the podcast tab. We'd also love to hear from you. Message us on Facebook or e-mail us at [persigopress@gmail.com](mailto:persigopress@gmail.com). That's P-e-r-s-i-g-o p-r-e-s-s @ gmail.com.

This is an abridged version of the novel *Lay Your Sleeping Head*. You can buy the complete novel at Amazon.

This is Michael Nava. Thank you for listening.