

Doc

say no thank you. And that's the attitude of most of the Laramie population. They might poke one, if they were in a bar situation you know, they had been drinking, they might actually smack one in the mouth, but then they'd just walk away. Most of 'em said they would just say, "I don't swing that way," and whistle on about their business. Laramie is live and let live.

ALISON MEARS. I'd say that Marge probably knows a lot more except she's even willing to say and we have to respect her for that.

MARGE MURRAY. Well, uh, where are you going with this story?

GREG PIEROTTI. Oh well, we still haven't decided. When we've finished, we are going to try to bring it around to Laramie.

MARGE MURRAY. Okay, then, there are parts I won't tell you.

### MOMENT: MATTHEW

NARRATOR. Company member Andy Paris.

ANDY PARIS: Today for the first time, we met someone who actually knew Matthew Shepard. Trish Steger, owner of a shop in town, referred to him as "Matt."

TRISH STEGER. Matt used to come into my shop — that's how I knew him.

ANDY PARIS. It was the first time I heard him referred to as Matt instead of Matthew. "Did he go by Matt to everyone?"

DOC O'CONNOR: Well, on the second of October, I get a phone call about, uh, ten after seven.

NARRATOR. Doc O'Connor.

DOC O'CONNOR. It was Matthew Shepard. And he said, "Can you pick me up at the corner of Third and Grand?" So, anyhow, I pull up to the corner, to see who Matthew Shepard, you know. It's a little guy, about five-two, soaking wet, I betcha ninety-seven pounds tops. They say he weighed a hundred and ten, but I wouldn't believe it. They also said he was five-five in the newspapers, but this man he was really only about five-two, maybe five-one. So he walks up the window — I'm gonna try and go in steps

so you can better understand the principle of this man. So he walks up to the window, and I say, "Are you Matthew Shepard?" And he says, "Yeah, I'm Matthew Shepard. But, I don't want you to call me Matthew, or Mr. Shepard. I don't want you to call me anything. My name is Matt. And I want you to know, I am gay and we're going to go to a gay bar. Do you have a problem with that?" And I said, "How're you payin'?"

The fact is ... Laramie doesn't have any gay bars ... and for that matter neither does Wyoming ... so he was hiring me to take him down to Fort Collins, Colorado, about an hour away.

Matt was a blunt little shit, you know what I'm sayin'? — he always was. But I liked him 'cause he was straightforward, you see what I'm saying? Maybe gay but straightforward, you see what I'm saying?

TRISH STEGER. I don't know, you know, how does any one person ever tell about another? You really should talk to my sister Romaine. She was a very close friend of Matthew's:

ROMAINE PATTERSON. We never called him Matthew actually. Most of the time we called him "Choo-choo." You know, because we used to call him Matchew, and then we just called him Choo-choo.

And whenever I think of Matthew, I always think of his incredible beaming smile. I mean, he'd walk in and he'd be like, (*Demonstrates.*) you know, and he'd smile at everyone ... he just made you feel great ... And he — would like stare people down in the coffee shop ... 'cause he always wanted to sit on the end seat so that he could talk to me while I was working. And if someone was sitting in that seat, he would just sit there and stare at them. Until they left. And then he would claim his spot.

But Matthew definitely had a political side to him ... I mean, he really wanted to get into political affairs ... that's all his big interest was, was watching CNN and MSNBC, I mean, that's the only TV station I ever saw his TV tuned into. He was just really smart in political affairs, but not too smart on like common sense things ...

So, he moves to Laramie to go to school.

JON PEACOCK. Matthew was very shy when he first came in.

NARRATOR. Jon Peacock, Matthew Shepard's academic adviser.