

illustration | DAVE ARKLE



CHELSEA HANDLER

GETS THE LAST WORD

There's always a glint of mischief in her eye. And whether her tongue is planted firmly in cheek or she's using it to give a lashing to the latest celebrity train wreck, the gorgeous and hysterical goddess of late night TV has us worshipping at her altar.

Gay men love me because there is a really strong chance that I have a penis. I definitely have balls, and I'm just waiting for that penis to pop out and poke me in the eye.

I came to Hollywood because I wanted people to listen to me and to hear me. I've always felt like I have an opinion that is important and a lot of people didn't think it was. Imagine that?! I needed to find people who would appreciate it, and I thought, *Well, I'll just have to find somebody to listen to me. I have a lot of things I want to say!*

I auditioned for *Girls Behaving Badly* at the Oxygen network. That was the first series I was on. That was a really fun, stupid job. It was good kind of prep work for the rest of my life since it was all improvisational and it's all about outlining an idea and not sticking to a script. I'm terrible at memorizing lines. Probably from Grey Goose I think. I don't know.

My comedy comes from my upbringing, my being Jewish, being from New Jersey and having a father who's a used car dealer who drops you off at school in some junker. My father pees in our driveway like a Doberman. It's all true. And I wish it wasn't, but that's my life and that's why you have to develop a thick skin because kids at school are making fun of you because nobody else's father is a used car dealer who keeps the cars at their *house!* It's embarrassing! We kept telling him that, but he didn't care. Now I drive a Jaguar, like God meant it to be.

I think when you're used to defending yourself as a kid you're more prone to telling the truth as an adult, and feeling free to tell people what you think of them. Gay men are like me because

we're not afraid to call people out on their shit. We're used to standing up for ourselves and saying, "You know what? No! This is wrong, this is why you're wrong and you're acting like a moron, jackass!"

I had to defend myself against my brothers and sisters. There are six of us. So I had to be quick. To be heard you have to think of a clever way to be heard. And when I was young, I would just lie. I would lie to everyone. "I'm going to be in a sequel to *Private Benjamin!* I'm Goldie Hawn's daughter!" I would tell these huge lies so that people would pay attention to me! I was always like, "Hello? Over here. Me. I need some fucking attention, please!"

My sisters and I are really close. They know they are the butt of my jokes and they love it. My sister called me and was like, "Really? I'm as much fun as a cold sore? Is that really necessary?" And I said, "Well, you really *aren't* that much fun." And she said, "Well, I know. But do you have to write it in a book?" Ah, yeah. I'm trying to *express* it. Duh. I make fun of my sister more on the show on a daily basis for being Mormon, and she thinks *Well, at least those shows air and then they're done.* And I'm like, "Not with E! They rerun everything at least 75 times."

There are some things that are off-limits. I don't like making fun of little kids for being ugly. I don't think that's very nice. I don't like making fun of people who are sick, with like a disease. Obviously

that isn't funny. Death isn't funny...until like a couple of weeks after. Yeah, just those things.

Okay, I think everything can be funny. And I think everything *should* be funny. We should make fun of everything. Laughter is the best. I fucking *love* to laugh. And I love to make other people laugh, and I like when people make me laugh especially when they're not even trying.

I remember when Mom was dying and I was in the hospital with all my brothers and sisters. We're all really close and we'd all be bawling one minute and the next minute something would happen, a memory would pop up, or like a bedpan would fall over and we'd all be hysterically laughing. Our family is really inappropriate that way, but the truth is you have these moments where you just laugh so hard that it's so much more therapeutic than a good cry. I mean, laughter *is* the best medicine. It's an adage for a reason. It's so true. There's nothing better than watching people laugh—that's the best thing, the best feeling in the world.

A final word for my gay fans: Suck it hard, and suck it forward. Suck it forward. You know, like pay it forward. Do a good deed. Like Oprah. But just a little bit different. Suck it forward.

Laugh out loud weeknights with Chelsea Lately on E! at 11:30pm and steal a copy of her latest book Are You There, Vodka? It's Me, Chelsea. You won't regret it. Unless, maybe, you do jail time.