

## **Pinkface**

by JD Stewart

The film begins in a hallway as Justin practices his lines for his upcoming audition. He's stressed and nervous but is pushing for confidence - repeating that the part is 'him' and inferring to us that there is a connection to it rooted deeper than just the words.

In the audition an unseen casting director sits with a camera on a tripod. Justin introduces himself, explaining that he is gay and why this role means a lot to him. Justin begins his scene with determination, but after receiving feedback from the Casting Director to be more 'gay' he falters at the thought of being reduced to a stereotype. Justin manages to finish his audition and is asked to hang around for an answer on whether or not he got the part.

Outside the audition room, Justin meets Stephen, an old acting school classmate who is straight. Knowing what the casting director has asked him to do in his audition, he begins to get angry at the thought of Stephen upping the 'gay' to get a part he has no business taking.

While waiting in the corridor, he overhears Stephen's audition, and his suspicion is confirmed. Stephen's audition is of a gay man who is more straight-passing. Justin ransacks Stephen's belongings, discovering the 'masculine' clothing Stephen uses for auditions.

Justin barges into the audition room, confronting Stephen and accusing him of queer-baiting and exploiting stereotypes for his own gain while never experiencing the struggles and rejections which come with being openly gay. However, Justin's breakdown is met with silence from the Casting Director. The film ends with the Casting Director asking Justin to leave so Stephen can finish his audition - a reminder that the industry is resilient in upholding a superficial status quo.