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Finding love as a transman

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Loren Cameron dishes about figuring out what he likes, who he likes, and how he likes it in his years as a transman.

By Loren Cameron

An Advocate.com exclusive posted December 18, 2006

A funny thing happened to me on my way to becoming a man... I began to want one. Initially, it was just my wishing to have whatever that guy over there has, coupled with a natural curiosity about the male body, and particularly about the marvels of marvels: "The Penis."



Next thing you know, my textbook case of object identification behavior spins out and I'm full-throttle fantasizing about touching and fondling "The Penis," along with a few other male body parts. My desire for high-maintenance femmes and soft, squishy bodies slowly began dissolving, along with my own female form.

Like my body changes (meaning my not-so-presto-chango from female-to-male), this randy lust seemed to gradually unfold over the span of several long-term relationships. As time went by, each new lover was clearly a bit more masculine than the one who had come and gone before her. This new attraction to manly women seemed to be in sync with my gender transformation and struck me as an interesting side effect.

In fact, my recent ex (My wife? My husband?) of a nine year marriage, being eleven years my junior, was frequently mistaken to be a young man. Just holding hands together while walking down the street anywhere in the Het World brought on surprisingly hostile looks. At first, I was perplexed, and then suddenly I realized that people were being glaringly homophobic. So much for the notion that all transsexuals enjoy heterosexual privilege once they get their bodies straightened out.

Maybe you're beginning to wonder why I would need to go to the trouble of changing my body when all I really want to do is sex it up with masculine women and men. Couldn't I have just remained a female in order to do that?

Just what it is that gets a rise out of me, and what I need my body to look like are not the same thing at all. That's got to be the toughest thing for most people to grasp and it's the hardest thing for me to explain. All I know is that my body didn't fit my intrinsic sense of self. Not until now, after having fixed what was painfully off-kilter.

Whatever the reason for my physical discomfort (a biological predisposition, perhaps? In my clan there are two of us who are transsexuals: my brother became my sister), it doesn't automatically determine my sexual preferences. That's another deal altogether. If all this has got your brain twisted, don't feel badly about it. Even the shrinks have recently caught up to the fact that gender and sexuality are two different issues.

Still, something about getting my body tailored began to alter my sexuality. All things manly and muscular started to look pretty good to me and having sex as a man (okay, as a hybrid male or whatever) with another man became infinitely more attractive to me than it ever did when I was perceived as female.

You figure it out. I just went with it.

This new appetite of mine started back when I was as a young FTM sporting a soft whisper of a mustache and a freshly constructed chest. My clitoris was swelling happily from the testosterone injections, trying its best to grow into the midget penis facsimile that it is. Would a genetic guy see it that way too, I wondered? When would I tell him about the little chemistry experiment going on in my skivvies? "Hey buster, you ever seen a dinky dick?"

This new taste for man flesh wasn't an easy proposition. Where would I find a guy that would want what I've got? What man would validate MY kind of maleness in contrast to HIS kind of maleness? Would he enjoy me as a muscle boy with a comfortable mouthful, who just happened to have an extra insertion point as a bonus? I didn't know the answer but decided to find out.

Thinking it was the safest and fastest way to find a date (like anyone else, I wanted the hunt for sex to be easy) I joined the legions of horny men perusing the personals ads for hot hookups. I figured getting no replies to my ad had to be better than being turned down face-to-face in



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a bar or rejected in the gym locker room.

To my surprise, there was no lack of interest in my ad, but there was a bit of confusion about just what I was. I had expected this because it was back during the late 1980's, before FTM's were even a blip on the queer gaydar screen. The word transgender had barely been coined and the T had yet to be tacked on the LGB, not even as a politically-correct afterthought. I was pretty much an unknown species to these horn dogs but it didn't seem to matter, and most of them really didn't want to talk about it either. That was a-okay with me. I just wanted to peel the banana, and I was thrilled when they just called me by the right gender pronoun. That would be "mister."

The most memorable guy was a taciturn fellow who was a Tom of Finland character incarnate and, somehow, he hooked up with me. This man's man was a merchant marine on leave from his ship. He was gigantically tall, broad-shouldered, with wide lats, and had a remarkably bushy mustache. His face was heavily stubbled and when we kissed, it scraped me like sandpaper. He had a six pack like nobody's business.

We had met for coffee, where I did the requisite, "This is what I am and this is what you get" interview. I kept it simple and unapologetic and, to his credit, he never flinched. He smiled, and in that man-of-a-few words way, slowly mumbled, "You look good to me." This uncomplicated one-liner was just the ticket, and we beat it for my place, or rather, at my place. Frankly, I would've done it in the trunk with this hunk, you bet.

In bed, he was as succinct as he was in conversation, but he was eagerly reciprocal, and fortunately was able to stay long enough for another round. At first, I wondered if it would turn things topsy-turvy for me, meaning it would make me feel like a girl again, but it didn't and he didn't. He never made me feel any less of a man than he was. Actually, quite the contrary (no he didn't wear panties or pumps...), and my top cat reputation stayed aggressively intact.

How? Use a little imagination, guys. It's not rocket science, it's hot, animal man-sex. Think sweat and muscles and plenty of feel-good friction. And lots of great beard burn to remember him by.

That was my lucky initiation into the world of sexing it up with men as a new and different kind of man: a transmale with something special to bring to the party. Now, years later, and a couple of masculine female partners since, I'm divorced, single and wondering just who the hell I'm attracted to.

Am I gay? I'm a gym rat who worships hard bodies, and my wardrobe is exclusively Abercrombie & Fitch. My studio apartment is stuffed with leather club chairs and designer rugs. I have a uniform and cigar fetish. On the stereotypical surface, it seems like a no-brainer. How could I be the last to know?!

But am I wired for it? For one, I tend to be a romantic monogamist (read that jealous killer bitch) which I think might make it a tough go for me in the gay Mecca of San Francisco. And will my gay lover be a size queen and get tired of my pint-sized, hybrid equipment, my yummy wonder weenie of three inches (okay, two and a half inches when it's hard) never adding up to the real deal I think it is? Will he closet me to his friends? Would he really see me as the man I've been for nearly twenty years? He would have to, or no deal, darling.

As I try to figure out who will next share my brand new mattress, my life, and my Chihuahua kids, I've once more began trawling the personal ads in search of sex and love. I so doing, I have discovered that I'm not alone. There are lots of other FTM's who have this same homo-bisexual revolution in their pants and many of them are red hot handsome.

Sifting through hundreds of online ads, I've found other FTM's who are seeking masculine partners: gay bio guys, other FTM's and masculine females (like my ex). Some are home at last as gay men, where they were always supposed to be, and many, like me, are experimenting and figuring out what fits and what doesn't. Others are casually hooking up while still partnering with women, negotiating their bisexuality impulses. And some FTM's are finding intimacy with those of their own kind. I have to say, I find them rather attractive, too. Perhaps I am gay after all.

Regardless of whether I discover that I'm gay, bisexual, or helplessly heterosexual (which I strongly doubt), I've become motivated to turn my camera lens on these sexy guys. In doing so, my project might help to dispel any myths about us by showing that men in my photographs are not butch lesbians with beards, sans breasts. They are sensual, attractive men, and some have modified their bodies to reflect their masculinity even more than I have. Maybe they're not what you're looking for, but I'll bet you that you don't even know what you've been missing.

Loren Cameron is a transman, photographer, and author of Body Alchemy: Transsexual Portraits and other books. His Web site is LorenCameron.com. Photo © Loren Cameron.

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