



COMING HOME

Victor J. Banis

Coming Home
by Victor J. Banis

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The Swinging Sixties. To some, that conjures up images of The Haight in all its flower power glory, before the lilies festered. To others, it was Greenwich Village and that heady period leading up to the events at Stonewall; or the love-ins in Griffith Park.

For me, it was The Strip. Sunset Boulevard. Not the Norma Desmond Boulevard, of flame red Maseratis and grand hotels and pink mansions with heart-shaped swimming pools, but the hurdy-gurdy strip of once-elegant-now-sleazy clubs, discount record stores and gay bars.

And Marines. Scores of them, hundreds of them, flocking there every weekend from Camp Pendleton down the road, strolling about wide-eyed in twosomes, three-four-and-more-somes. And some of them alone. On the prowl. Happily, because these were the ones a gay man like me looked for.

This was the era of the Vietnam war—or police action, as some put it. The population of the one-time Rancho Santa Margarita between Oceanside and San Clemente had soared from a few hundred Marines who marched there from San Diego in 1942 to somewhere around a hundred thousand, give or take a thou or two at any time. Every one of them young, buff, tough—and best of all, as many of us saw it, terminally horny.

To be sure, Camp Pendleton was not the only military establishment in the Southern California area. There were navel stations in Long Beach and San Diego, and one saw sailors, too, on The Strip, their legs slightly bowed, sweet little buns enclosed in tight white that showed their crotches,

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too, to best advantage, everything nicely outlined to show you exactly what was on the menu—and what hungry wanderer would turn down a tasty seafood dinner when it was on offer?

But for whatever reason, it was the Marines who claimed that Sunset beachhead for their own, where they came each weekend to establish a foothold, to occupy the terrain, to hunt and shoot, and hoist their flagpoles in victory over the restless natives. Their conquests were many. My heart was among them, and therein lies a tale.

For a young unattached gay man, the tail end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies was a kind of golden era, as close as we ever got to a gay Heaven-on-earth. The whole love-in, hippie-flower-child explosion had made men more aware of their tender side. Men, real macho men, not sissies, wore feathers and bead necklaces and their hair hanging down over their shoulders.

This was the onset of the sexual and social revolution as well. Civil rights, gay rights, women's rights—the pot never stopped simmering. Porn had gone from underground collector's items to big budget movie theater smash hits like *Deep Throat*, *Behind the Green Door*, and *The Opening of Misty Beethoven*, though the days when you could walk into a store and buy one to take home and watch were still in the future.

It was almost a rule of the day, too, especially among the young and the curious, that everyone tried almost everything. Drugs, for sure, but for many, that meant sexual experimentation as well. Mick Jagger dressed in drag on the

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silver screen, Dr. Hook and The Medicine Show sang about "The Freakers' Ball" (I'll kiss yours if you'll kiss mine) and straight men, if a bit shamefacedly, did kiss one another, in public, no less. To be regarded as square was a fate worse than death. To which end, nearly every guy was willing to swing. If you had any hope of being regarded as cool, you had to try it, at least once. Not a few discovered they liked it enough to try it again. Lucky me.

Of course, service men in general, and Marines in particular, were less caught up in this atmosphere than their civilian counterparts, but they were not altogether immune to it either. They were lonely, too, and more of them than would have admitted it were scared. When you think maybe you are going to die soon, it makes living more important, and nothing says, "I'm alive" better than a rock hard dick, especially one in action. Wars and the threat of one's demise make men horny. Always have. Insects start doing it too, when they think the end is near, but I don't do bugs. Ever try to give a bedbug a blow job? Marines are way better.

The result was that it would have been a very poor representative of the gay male community who couldn't find himself a hunk—or two or three if you were especially hungry—to share his Friday night or Sunday afternoon with.

Oh, you're wondering about that Saturday night I skipped over? Well, conventional wisdom was, when the guys hit The Strip on Friday evening, they were too horny after a week on the base to concern themselves overmuch with who or how. The main objective was, get that load off, now, however, whatever. Sweat the details later, when your nuts cool down.

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By Saturday, however, having most of them gotten themselves well taken care of the night before, they were inclined to be more particular and since in general these guys were essentially straight, Saturday night they went out looking for women—never mind that their chances of finding any on The Strip—which was, after all, a part of West Hollywood, or Boy's Town, as it was known—were awfully slim.

By Sunday afternoon, however, they had regained their senses—along with their hot nuts. And, return to base was looming, which meant another week of doing without. Quite a few of them decided it was best to get what they could while the getting was still good.

For shoppers like myself, Sunday pickings were not quite as generous as Friday night. To be sure, some of the real prizes were still ensconced in the love nests to which the grander queens had whisked them on Friday night; but most Sunday afternoons the crop was still bountiful.

Sometimes you even nabbed a prize bull, one so nearly straight that he had held out for a woman both Friday and Saturday nights, which meant by now his balls were about to burst and "no" had vanished temporarily but completely from his vocabulary. Once was never enough in these cases. You could count on an afternoon's feast of several repeat loads from these hearty lads before you got them cooled down enough to catch the bus back to the base. This was an occasional Sunday afternoon bonus in the game, much to be hoped for. Truth to tell, it was what many of us prayed for on

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Sunday mornings. Hey, you kneel in your pew and I'll kneel in mine.

It was a Sunday afternoon when I met Doug.

I wasn't, in fact, cruising, having scored very nicely on both Friday and Saturday nights, thank you—not all of them were looking for women on Saturday. I lived a scant half a block off the strip, a fact which had contributed to my success on more than one occasion. Before they could have second thoughts or get cold feet, or think maybe they'd rather keep looking for that elusive pussy, we were already inside my door with skivvies at half-mast, ready for battle stations. It's called guerilla action, and I can be fast and stealthy when I need to.

So, on this particular Sunday, I'd simply strolled up to a favorite coffee shop on The Strip for a late breakfast early lunch, and was on my way home, when I passed this young man at a corner. He wasn't cruising, so far as I could tell. Wasn't doing much of anything, actually, just standing still, watching the traffic, seemingly absorbed in his thoughts.

I was absorbed in my own thoughts as well. Friends had asked if I wanted to go to a matinee showing of an old Robert Mitchum movie and I was considering the possibility—River of No Return, with both Mitchum and Marilyn, neither of them at their very best, but the chemistry between them was worth watching. They'd become good friends during the making of the movie. Years later, when others would trash her, he would say insistently that she was "a good kid." I liked him for that.

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So I had gone by the young man on the corner before he fully registered on my consciousness—like I said, I'd had a couple of busy nights. My fires were tamped.

They were not out altogether, however. I was still alive, in other words. I paused a few feet past him and glanced back, giving him a quick once over. He was nice—not quite movie star material, which was fine with me. There's something about a guy too handsome to be true that turns me off. I like the hunk next door type. This one qualified, and then some.

Plus, he had the Marine buzz cut. The Vietnam war wasn't terribly popular in some circles, and a lot of the servicemen wore cheap wigs when they cruised the strip, in a kind of sad attempt to make themselves look less conspicuous—with, of course, the opposite effect.

So, the buzz cut was almost the first thing I noticed about this guy. I liked it. It kind of said, "Here I am, this is the package, take it or leave it." Masculine confidence is sexy in my book.

There was a lot more to the package, however, than an undisguised haircut. He was a big guy, six three, maybe six four, and beefy, but in the U.S. Marine Corps T-shirt and the tight, faded Levi's, it was obvious that the beef was solid. And well packed. Did I mention that the Levi's were tight?

So, there I was, adding all this up, when he turned his head and looked right at me. Not so much like he was cruising. No coy glances. Not even a smile. Just this frank look. Like he was sizing me up too. Then he nodded ever so slightly, as if he had agreed to something.

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I hoped I knew what. Mitchum and Marilyn were suddenly a lot less appealing. I walked back to where he was standing. He continued to watch me, neither smiling nor frowning, his expression neutral.

"Busy?" I asked.

"Not really," he said.

I hesitated. Usually by this time I was getting signals, one way or another. Many, probably most, of these guys were available, but not all. A few were even hostile, though why those were on The Strip I never did understand. This guy, though, I couldn't tell. He looked innocent, only not quite. I had a sense that he was looking for something, that he was interested, but in what I wasn't quite sure. He had the look about him of one of those bulls I looked upon as a special catch, the ones who were still carrying Friday night's load around, with Saturday's added to it for good measure, but something about the way he regarded me reminded me too of a bull sizing up the matador.

"I just live a block away," I said, grabbing the bull by the horns. "Want to come by?"

"Maybe." A long pause, and then he asked, "You're queer, aren't you?"

"Uh, yes. Gay, actually. We prefer gay."

He continued to appraise me for a minute longer. Then, he kind of shrugged. "I've got nothing better to do."

He fell into step beside me and we walked for a bit, turning down the steep hillside that was Alta Loma Street, where I lived.

"You do this often?" I asked.

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"This?"

"Get picked up by gay guys?"

"No. First time." He glanced sideways at me. "Does that make a difference?"

"Not really," I lied, and restrained myself from turning cartwheels. Alta Loma was a very steep street; I could end up down on Santa Monica Boulevard.

But, he wasn't giving me a lot to go on here. Maybe he didn't really know the score. Maybe he thought I was offering a kind of alternative USO without the starlets. Drinks, a bite to eat, some music to listen to. Maybe he thought I was a starlet. *Maybe, I thought, I ought to get things cleared up before we waste a lot of time.* There was still time to catch Mitchum and Marilyn—or find myself another Marine, now that my appetite had been aroused.

"I was kind of hoping," I sort of stammered, though I wasn't usually tongue-tied, and I don't know why I suddenly was with him, "that we might, you know, fool around when we got to my place."

"I understand."

"If that's cool," I persisted. "With you, I mean."

He looked sideways at me, his expression still neutral. "That's what I figured you had in mind."

"Ah." Well, so now I knew that he was amenable—and, also, that he wasn't much of a talker. Both of which were fine with me. We walked the rest of the way in silence. It wasn't an uncomfortable silence. He didn't feel threatening, the way some do. You learn to sense that sort of thing with these fellows, or you can get into a lot of trouble. I am happy

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getting pounded with a big dick. Fists are another matter. Sometimes you had to know when to bail out.

I wasn't getting any angry or threatening vibes from this guy, though. It was more like, I didn't have any clue what was going on behind that kind of chiseled facade of his.

Even if we never discussed it, most of the jarheads I picked up sort of knew the drill, pretty much knew what was on the agenda. Some of them, a lot of them, wanted a blow job, short and sweet, here's your supper and thanks for the memories. Some of them—more than a few, I'm glad to report—liked to have their asses plowed, and if I say so myself, I had the tractor for the job. Some were on their way in fifteen, twenty minutes and a few spent the day or even the night, which generally meant a repeat. If once was good, in my book, twice was even better. Sometimes, I got a three-peat. No sense putting the tractor away till the field's properly seeded, the way I saw it.

In general, there's a way they have about them, these weekend warriors, and with practice I had gotten very good at tuning in to it, like dialing up an FM station. It was message they broadcast that said better than words, "I'm horny, I just want to get my nuts off, and you're the lucky one."

This gyrene, though, was a total mystery. He just didn't have that feel about him. Didn't seemed to be broadcasting any particular message. I kept twiddling the dial, and I couldn't find a station. I glanced sideways at him a couple of times, but he was looking straight ahead, his face expressionless.

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"Home sweet home," I said, letting us into my apartment and closing the door after us. He paused in the middle of the living room, looking around. "Would you like a beer?"

"Not really." He looked back at me. I've said already, he wasn't what you would ordinarily call handsome, but it was a nice face. Mouth a little large, nose just slightly askew, like it might have been broken a time or two. His eyes were great, though, dark brown, liquid like a Spaniel's, both frank and intimate at the same time.

There was a long silence. "Mike," I said, to break it, and offered my hand.

"Doug," he said, giving me a firm shake, and then, "So, what usually happens next?"

"You've really never done this kind of thing?"

"No. I told you. First time."

I had to think for a moment. Either this guy genuinely didn't have a clue where we were headed or he was putting on a hell of a good act.

"We could get naked," I said, kind of tentatively. It wasn't unheard of for one of them to chicken out even at this late stage. Might as well get that possibility out of the way. In my experience, if you got a guy out of his clothes, he was pretty well committed to what was going to come—so to speak. Once a guy shows you his dick, he has almost certainly made up his mind to having something done with it before he puts it away. Even the reluctant ones, the ones who aren't sure about fooling around with another man, tend to lose their scruples with their clothes.

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Better yet, once it's on display, if you can coax him into getting it hard, things are pretty much guaranteed. A stiff dick generally trumps any scruple. No one wants to waste a good woodie. Not when you're nineteen or thereabouts, and the neighborhood crawling with starving queens. That would be like tossing hundred dollar bills at someone's feet, and saying, "But you mustn't spend them." You can say it, but neither of you is going to take it seriously.

So, without much else to go by, I decided that the first order of business was to see if I could get him naked. It worked, too.

"Okay," he said at my suggestion, though in what might have been a disinterested voice. And with that, he began to shed his clothes.

Marines tend to be neat, I don't know exactly why that is, it's just a Marine thing, and he was, too. He folded his T-shirt and put it on the sofa, and sat to slip his loafers off, tucked the socks carefully into them, and when he slipped the jeans off, he folded them also and put them atop the tee shirt in an orderly little pile.

The boxers, however, went to the floor in a heap when he stood up, like all of a sudden he was in a hurry. He slipped them down in one quick, fluid movement, and stepped out of them, letting them lie where they fell. There's something oddly erotic about boxers in a pile at a naked man's feet, isn't there?

I had been shedding my own clothes, quickly but absentmindedly, more intent on enjoying the show as he stripped. It was a terrific performance, and the last act was

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truly impressive. He looked even better out of his clothes, in fact, than he had in them—rock hard body, beautifully muscled chest, just a few wisps of hair, leading across six pack abs, down to a deep, russet bush—and a nice fat sausage of a dick—already, I noticed with a smile, slightly swollen. So, then, he was not as altogether disinterested as he had sounded.

To my surprise, he smiled back at me, for the first time looking and sounding a little shy. "What do you think?"

Now, here's something you can write in your instruction manual: no guy asks you what you think about his dick without already knowing that he's got a good one. Mister Teeny Weeny is more likely to hope you don't notice the lack—he isn't going to call attention to it. This one plainly knew that what he had hanging was on the special side. Okay with me. I like a man who knows what he's got to offer—but his consciousness of it was little-boy proud rather than macho arrogant.

"I think this is my lucky day," I said, tossing my own shorts aside. I stepped closer, put a hand on that big meat, and felt it begin quickly to stiffen. We were close. I looked into his face and felt all of a sudden as if I were drowning in those gleaming brown eyes. This man had me feeling weak in the knees. The vibes I was getting were a new experience for me, something that never happened in all these many encounters.

"Do we kiss?" he asked.

He also had a talent for taking me by surprise. Kissing was not unheard of, but it was rare. Sucking cock or fucking—just

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about anything went with your typical gyrene, but kissing was queer. I'd had one or two who did it, but for sure I'd never had one ask about it before.

"It can be nice," I said, holding my breath.

He reached out—the first he'd actually touched me—and pulled me close, and lowered his mouth to mine. Tentatively at first, testing the waters, kind of brushing my lips with his, and then a rogue tongue slipped into my mouth and explored, not at all timidly. And, he reached down between us and took hold of my cock.

I think I moaned. I know I leaned in to him, and he held me tighter, and began kissing in earnest. And his dick got bigger and harder. Mine felt like it was about to explode. He found the small of my back with one enormous hand, pulling me so tight against him he squeezed the breath out of me and our cocks were grinding together between us.

"Do you want to go into the bedroom?" I asked when we came up for breath.

"No," he said, taking a couple of steps backward and pulling me with him down onto the couch, so that I landed atop him and somehow found myself kneeling between his widespread legs. It didn't take any great leap of imagination to kiss my way over his sculpted chest, across his belly, to his dick, now standing fully at attention. Eight and a half, I guessed, and for sure the thickest I'd ever seen, big around as a beer can, with a giant military helmet of a head and an oversized pee-slit, glistening now with a drop or two of silvery pre-cum. I licked that off with the tip of my tongue.

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He made a kind of grunting noise, and tightened his legs like a vise about my torso. Like I was going to try to escape? His hands were resting on the sofa cushions and out of the corner of my eye I saw him clasp and unclasp them a couple of times, as if he wasn't sure what to do with them, and then he brought them up and took hold of my head on either side, which I thought was a sensible move. For a novice, this guy learned fast.

I opened my lips, sucking that big mushroom head into my mouth wondering fleetingly if I could even get my mouth around that thick shaft, it was so fat, but he quickly settled that question for me. He did that grunting thing again and pushed up at me, shoving about four inches of sweet, fat, hot, fat, determined, fat cock down my throat. I matched his grunt with a moan of pleasure. It was a lot to accommodate, but I was never one to complain, certainly not when I was doing what I regarded as a service to my country. I reached below, cupping a pair of hairy balls, the size of tennis balls and weighty, in my hand.

I guess this is a good place to mention, I'm a ball man. You might think they're all the same, but not so. There are balls and there are balls. Some are smooth with nothing more than a little down on them, and some hairy and some covered with what was more like fur. There's the low hangers, and the ones so tight up into the crotch they barely move; the ones that are so close together it's more like one big ball, and the perfectly matched pair of eggs.

His were perfect. Enough hair to say "man" and not so much you couldn't see the forest for the trees, so to speak.

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Loose, but not down to the floor, just enough that they swung freely; and distinctly halved. I had to take a break from that delicious cock and travel down to admire them, visually and lingually, licking and kissing them, front and back, tracing my tongue along the crest of his perineum. He lifted his butt slightly off the sofa to make my trip easier, and I made it almost to his little rosebud, stopping just short of that savory goal—always leave 'em wanting more as they say in show biz, and this was definitely entertainment, I don't care what MGM says.

But for someone who likes to make a meal of a hot male body, balls and buttoles, however delicious, are rightly regarded as appetizers to the real feast, and I had a main course waiting, sizzling and ready, a tube steak sure to delight any connoisseur of man-food, and judging from all the signs, soon to spill over with a robust cream sauce straight from the mess.

One thing was quickly apparent. Having his balls licked and a tongue almost, but not quite, up his asshole, had greatly increased his already major excitement. That awesome prick was practically trembling when I took it in my mouth again. I had to work it into my throat slowly, swallowing and inching my way down while I got myself stretched open to accommodate it. I could tell that he wanted nothing so much as to drive it home, but he was patient, holding himself back, letting me take charge.

I rewarded his patience by soon taking it all the way, down to the balls, my nose buried in that thick, wiry bush at its base, smelling the heady crotch smells of male sexual

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arousal. His grunt as it finally touched home was more like a sigh this time. He held my head steady in his hands, just keeping himself buried for a long, glorious moment of total filling-up. Choking me with it, but wonderfully. I could breathe anytime. You didn't often get cock-filled this completely.

Then he began to move, gently, almost imperceptibly at first, the slightest withdrawal, a gentle impalement, back, in, a little further each time, a little more forcefully, giving me time to breath, to get used to having that huge power pole pistoning in and out of my throat.

I reached underneath, cupping his wide, stone hard cheeks in my hands, feeling the muscles in them flex with every movement, encouraging him with each thrust, pulling him up and into me, harder, harder, fast and faster until he was fucking my face at a furious clip, holding me steady, taking full charge now, making me for the moment nothing but a vessel for his primal needs, the means to his end, no longer concerned with my comfort or my pleasure—or, more correctly man-animal-intuiting that I would take pleasure too in his having his way with me, savaging me mercilessly.

And I did, I loved it when a man stopped thinking about it and just let go, using me as a vessel for his own fulfillment, experiencing the joy of his sex to the max, and me the lucky recipient, the one who got him hot enough to go over the edge that maybe he'd never reached before, that a lot of men never experience. It's one of the great elements of man on man sex, that swapping of selfish abandon that happens in

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the very best sex, with the very best partners. You have to be good to take it like that—and to give it.

The downside is, though, that once a man gets to this stage, it doesn't take long. His breath had become a series of ragged gasps and pants. His belly was heaving. I could feel the muscles in his butt tighten, and his legs clasped me more firmly. His dick, already so big I was still amazed I could handle it, seemed to get even bigger, swelling in my mouth, driving, I swear it, deeper still—and then, with one lunge so violent it almost knocked me back on my ass, it exploded, like a fire hose going off, a torrent of sweet, hot cum flooding into my mouth, overflowing out the corners and running down my chin.

Spurt after powerful spurt, it felt like he'd never stop shooting. Finally, though, it dwindled to a last few squirts, and stopped. He sank back on the couch, letting me slurp and lick it clean, even tongue washing his crotch hairs, until I was satisfied I hadn't missed a drop. For some men, once they've shot off, the party's over, but I love cleaning up the leftovers and he seemed to savor the afterplay too, just lay relaxed, legs wide now, letting me have my fill of him. While I was working on his crotch, I glanced up into his face. To my surprise, he smiled contentedly at me. It made my heart do a little flip flop, and I went back to tonguing his balls to hide my confusion.

So, Mike, I asked myself, what's going on here?

I decided I didn't want to answer that question.

"You pick up guys a lot?"

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We were having those beers now, sitting together on the floor. He seemed in no hurry to get his clothes back on. Fine with me. This was one hunk of prime beef on display for my pleasure. I'm very visual. I was enjoying the view.

"Marines," I corrected him. "I pick up Marines."

"You knew I was a Marine?" I nodded. He thought about that for a minute, decided, apparently, that it made sense. Marines mostly have a keen sense of their Marine-ness. Not to mention that buzz cut, but that didn't seem to cross his mind.

"So. How did I stack up?" He gave me that shy smile again. "In your experience." This guy was a mass of contradictions. Total take-charge-man one minute and the next, little boy cute.

"Pretty nicely," I said. An understatement, for sure, but, I didn't want to gush, either.

He was cool with that, though. I think he knew I was understating things. We grinned at one another. Relaxed. Friendly. It felt oddly like we had known one another a long time, and not like I'd just picked him up off The Strip little more than an hour ago. He took another sip of his beer, and gave me a more serious look.

"Is that it?" he asked.

"It?"

"That's the whole show?"

I gave his dick a frank look. Soft, flopped across one heavily muscled thigh, it was still red from the hard core sucking I'd given it, and still swollen. It didn't look all that much smaller than it had when I was stretching my mouth to

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the max to accommodate it. The corners of my mouth were still a little tender, in fact. It really had been a stretch. But not too tender, not enough to complain about. Anything I hate, it's a whiner. Besides, I was patriotic. Plus, I had begun to suspect I had lassoed myself one of those bulls.

"We could go another round, if you've got anything left in the tank."

"My tank's never empty," he said, making it sound like a statement of fact and not a boast. He gave my dick a glance. It was still half hard. Unlike some in the room, I hadn't gotten a big load off. Not yet. And it got a little harder when it noticed his glance—but it was more a weighing look he gave it than a leer, like he was thinking about it, but not real seriously. I was guessing that was something he hadn't tried before, and wasn't sure he was ready for. Still, there were other possibilities.

"Some guys like to get fucked," I said, taking a chance. Spaniel eyes met mine. "In the ass?"

I nodded. "Marines, especially. I don't know why that is. Just a Corps thing, I guess."

He considered that for a moment, too, and then gave a little shrug and turned over, on his knees on the carpet, his butt turned toward me.

"Go for it," he said. "Just take it easy, okay?"

I almost shot that load I'd been holding back. Did I say earlier I was a ball man? Forget it, I lied. I'm a butt man, totally, and here right before my eyes was the most beautiful one I had ever seen—full, sculpted cheeks—I don't like the little biscuit ones, I like real loaves, something you can hang

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on to when the riding gets rough—generous, round hills sloping sharply down to a deep valley, the faintest line of dark, silky hair running like a pencil smudge down the cleft, blossoming into a little halo around that pretty little flower I had only glimpsed before, growing thicker as it descended down to those beautiful balls, dangling temptingly between his thick thighs, the head of his dick just visible beneath them.

What a thrill it was to bury my face in a butt that gorgeous, my tongue slipping down into the crack of his ass. I know there are some who think it's demeaning; "kissing someone's ass," as the pissier types sometimes put it, with their voices dripping disapproval, but I don't see it that way. To me, it's more like paying homage to one of the most beautiful parts of a beautiful man's body—and an honor that a guy like this would shove it in my face, let me run my tongue around that tight, velvety little hole, which I was sure he had never shared like this with anyone else before me. Like he was paying me a compliment, of sorts, offering me a very special gift, an homage of his own to me and to our new found friendship.

I gently pulled his cheeks further apart. He got the message, and spread his legs, giving me even greater access to his asshole. I entered it with my tongue, probing, lightly at first and then more insistently, fucking him with my tongue, in and out, then a pause to circle the perimeter of his opening. At first, I could feel him tighten up at the unfamiliar sensation—meaning, this really was his first time, I truly was the first to enjoy to savor this incredible treat.

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He relaxed, then, and I could feel his buttlips respond to my mouth, opening slightly to me, enough that I could work my tongue up far inside him, which got him all the more turned on. I reached beneath him and cupped his massive balls in my hand, fondling them, and reached for his dick. It was rock hard now.

And if there was any question of whether he was enjoying my rimming him, he removed that doubt by beginning to push back against my mouth, smothering my face with his butt and working it around in a slow grind, at the same time flexing the tiny muscles in his hole.

The sensation, of his butt crushed against my face, of those lips pressing and working against my mouth, was almost as if he were kissing me back. I'd never had anybody butt-kiss me before. He was totally into it, too, like he knew exactly what he was doing, and he was doing it to make me happy, focused for the moment on my pleasure, the way we had both focused before on his. My turn at the trough.

My own dick jumped with excitement. By now his hole was definitely relaxed, and slick with my spit. But this was his first time, and I wanted to make it as good as possible for him, too. Spit was okay if you just wanted to get your rocks off and didn't particularly care about your partner, but it wasn't enough for a virgin hole, not if you wanted to do it right, not if you wanted him to be happy about it afterwards. Like, maybe you might want another go at it in the future. Then you needed to make it work for him, too.

"Wait here," I said, scrambling to my feet. "Don't move."

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He lifted his head to watch as I darted into the bedroom. I grabbed my jar of Albolene cream out of the nightstand, and the little hand towel I kept there with it. Somebody once said you could get an elephant's dick inside a flea's butthole with Albolene. I believed it. I'd tried every kind of lube known to man. Nothing worked better.

He was exactly as I had left him, except he was stroking his own cock now, but nonchalantly, like he was in no hurry. Neither was I. I knelt behind once again and gave him another good licking, and got the same enthusiastic response. I don't think I'd ever had anybody so obviously enjoy having me chow down on his ass. He went back to butt kissing me, the way I had never experienced with anyone before. It was the kind of thing that inspires you to do your very best, and I did. The pleasure was like a reciprocating current. The more it turned me on, the hotter he got, and back again, each of us trying to make it as good as it could be for the other, and ratcheting up our own excitement in the process.

When I was sure he was as relaxed and loosened up, and as turned on butthole-wise, as I could get him, I raised up and scooted in between his legs. While I had been thrilling to those puckery little lips, soft as velvet, I had also gotten my dick well greased up with the magic ointment. I took a minute to grease his hole well, too. He tightened up again when he felt my finger slip inside him where only the tip of my tongue had gone before, but I poked and massaged him gently, and after a minute, the muscles relaxed and he loosened up.

When I was sure he was ready, I moved up against him and guided my dick head to his tiny hole. I had to push hard

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against him even to gain an entrance, and he gave me another of those grunts of his, and braced himself against the floor.

I took my time easing the head in. He closed himself down slightly to start, the way first timers do, so clenched it was painful, but pleurably so. I waited for a minute or two, letting him get used to it. Then I put my hands on his hips and pulled him toward me. He got the message and shoved back at me, opening himself to the max, and I slipped in, felt those vise-like muscles close around my knob.

Tight is an understatement. I hesitated, giving him plenty of time, and waiting in case he changed his mind about this. Apparently not. After a moment, he shoved determinedly back at me again, making it clear that he was okay with it, and taking me further up inside, his tunnel yielding to me but not without resistance. Seemed like he'd settled his mind to doing this, for whatever reason, and I had no reason to complain. I was in Butt-Fuck-Heaven. I'd poked my share of asses, but I was totally sure I'd never had it this good.

I took it slow and easy, pulling back, the lips of his butt hole clinging to my dick, like it was reluctant to let me go. A pause, then in again, slowly, a little further each time. His back was arched, the muscles like bands of steel, and he breathed in little gasps each time I pushed a little deeper, but he took it gamely, moving his legs further apart to spread his butt as wide as he could for me.

Finally, I just couldn't hold back any longer, I was practically delirious with the sensations he was causing. I drove it home, my balls slapping against his upturned

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perineum, felt him clench and unclench a time or two as he took it all deep inside. It felt like he was sucking me in, milking me with his butt tunnel. Those little butt lips felt just as good on my cock as they had on my mouth. Better, even. I had to rest again to keep from shooting right there. This was too good to rush it.

But, I was still conscious of the fact that I was getting his cherry, however cooperative he might be. "You okay?" I asked him, leaning down over him.

For a response, he wriggled his butt against me and said, "Go for it."

Which was all the encouragement I needed. I began to plow him steadily, with longer and longer strokes each time, until there was nothing now but the tip of my cockhead inside him on the back stroke, and I was piledriving it into him on the thrust.

Some guys, you have to be gentle the whole time or they'll quit on you, rear you off like an untamed pony, and your chances of getting back in the saddle were slim to none, but instinct told me this was one who could take a good ramrodding, and I was right. His hand, on his cock, was moving faster and faster, and he was panting now, grinding his butt back against me and moving in rhythm with each stroke. If it was still hurting him, for sure it was hurting good.

I'd like to have made this last the rest of the day, but when you're both this hot, it can't last long, and it didn't. He groaned aloud and his clinging asshole suddenly gave a series of violent spasms, clamping down on my dick like that vise

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again, clenching and unclenching, and I realized he was going off.

That was all it took for me, I unleashed a load of my own, all the way up inside the glorious love-chute, filling him so full of cum that, with another spurt, began to gush out of him, around my cock, flooding over my balls, and him shooting at the same time, as if my load were going right through him and spurting out his cock. Twin geysers. Couldn't have timed it better if we'd tried.

He sank to his belly on the floor and I collapsed on top of him. After a long minute of catching his breath, he turned his head, pulled mine down, and kissed me again, long, sweet, tender.

Oh, shit, I thought, thrilling to that kiss in a way I hadn't thrilled to anything for a long time.

Rule number one of this particular game: keep you heart out of it. It can't ever work out that way for you.

Ever.

Afterward, we showered together, washing one another's backs, and I dropped to my knees and sucked him again, with the water pouring over both of us, like a couple of primitives in some jungle waterfall, and he rewarded me with another load, as big and as delicious as the first one had been, like he hadn't shot off twice already in not much more than an hour. Apparently he hadn't been kidding: That tank didn't run dry.

We toweled one another off, and got dressed. The afternoon was over, the windows going dark with the approach of evening. "I'll have to go soon," he said, and

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sounded genuinely regretful, "if I want to catch my bus back to the base."

I drove him downtown to the bus station, which gave us enough time to stop on the way for a quick sandwich. We didn't talk much, either in the car or the restaurant, but I already knew he wasn't big on conversation, and my mind was filled with thoughts of my own. Sometimes, when it's over, they get a little surly, guilty about what they had done, and especially over having enjoyed it so much. I didn't get that kind of feeling from him at all, he was polite and certainly friendly, but I could tell he was thoughtful. Probably reliving it all. I hoped the memories were pleasant ones. I know mine were.

The bus station in Los Angeles was not in the best of neighborhoods, and it was close to time for his bus to depart, so I didn't bother with the rooftop parking, just pulled up to the curb to drop him off. We shook hands.

"Thanks," I said, and meant it. He grinned back, reached for the door handle, and paused.

"I can come back up," he said, looking out the windshield instead of at me. "Like, next weekend. If you wanted."

I hesitated, caught by surprise. These encounters rarely repeated themselves—in part, it was just their nature. These weren't romantic interludes, they were only sexual get-togethers. Anyway, these were Marines and there was a war on, meaning they were just passing through, were here one week, and shipping out the next, the game the same, the faces ever changing.

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I suppose if I were honest with myself, I'd admit that a big part of the appeal for me in these encounters had always been that "one date and it's over" anonymity, tanks passing in the night. It had been nearly four years since I had been involved emotionally with anybody and that had ended on a decidedly unpleasant note. I had vowed never to get involved again.

Since then, I kept everyone at a distance. These pickups and quickie sex were as much as I allowed myself. Even the time or two I had been tempted to make something more of it, there was no forgetting that some of those who shipped out didn't come back. I didn't want that kind of grief, getting attached to someone and then losing them when it would hurt the most. Better to do what we both wanted to do and move on.

I couldn't deny, though, that something was different with Doug. The sex had been great—the best, I was convinced, I'd ever had. But, part of what made it so hot was that there was something more to it. I wouldn't exactly say I was falling in love, it had been way too brief for that, but there was something there on the non-physical level. Like, the way he kissed me, the way it felt. And I was sure he'd felt it too, that spark of electricity that had crackled between us. It intrigued me, and scared me at the same time.

Or, maybe I *was* falling in love?

Don't be a sap, I told myself. End it now. Like the Band-aid, pull it off fast all at once, get it over quick.

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"Sure," I said aloud. I reached across to open the glove box and take out a pen and a scrap of paper, and wrote my telephone number on it. "Call me."

He looked at it for a few seconds like he wasn't sure if he wanted it or not, and tucked it into his pocket. Probably, I thought, he was as ambivalent about doing it again as I was. He looked at me, in that appraising way he had, almost as if he was trying to memorize my face, and he nodded, and got out of the car. Leaned down to give me a wink and a mock salute through the open window and turned to walk away.

I watched him go, admiring all over again that gorgeous body and the beautiful shape of his manly butt, the walk that was almost a strut. Heads turned as he passed by. He showed no sign that he noticed.

Was he really coming back? I honestly didn't know.

Did I want him to? I didn't know that either.

He did call, though, the following Friday. Early evening. He must have run to the bus stop outside the Pendleton gate and caught the first bus. He was already at the station in downtown L.A. when he called.

"I'll pick you up out front of the station," I said, excited and scared at the same time. What if the second time was a bust? I had been savoring the memory of our get together the whole week, and it had kept my hand moving steadily at night. But what if nothing clicked between us on a second visit? Things happened like that. And, there was that other thing. It was no good pretending he hadn't started something stirring inside me, something that had been sleeping for a

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good long time now. Something I wasn't sure I wanted to wake up.

"There's one thing," he said, and paused.

A little voice inside my head said, loud and clear, *uh oh*.
"What?"

Whatever it was, though, he apparently changed his mind about saying it just now. It was a moment before he said, instead, "I'll see you in a little bit."

I couldn't help wondering what he had been about to mention—but I decided to leave it at that for the moment. I could easily imagine he was having the same kind of cold feet I was. Maybe he had decided to make it just a friendly visit, no sex. Or...but, there was no sense in trying to guess. It took less than half an hour to drive downtown to the bus station. He could tell me then whatever was on his mind. Worst case scenario, we'd spend the evening together—he was easy company—and go our separate ways for the rest of the weekend.

As it happened, he didn't have to explain. I could see the problem the minute I pulled up and he started toward the car. Or, rather, *they* started toward the car. He wasn't alone. There was a slim, blond jarhead with him, drop dead handsome and looking a little uncertain as he threw his duffel bag into the back seat and got in after it. Doug got in the front with me and turned in the seat to toss his duffel into the back, which gave him a few extra seconds to avoid looking at me.

"Mike, Ryan," he said in the way of introduction, "Ryan, this is Mike."

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Ryan leaned forward, a hopeful kind of smile on his face, and offered his hand. I turned to shake it before putting the car in gear and starting up.

"Ryan's in the same barracks," Doug said as I threaded my way through the Friday evening traffic, heading for the Hollywood freeway—otherwise known as The World's Largest Outdoor Parking Lot. "I told him what a great time I had last weekend and he asked if he could come with me. Hope that's okay."

"Sure," I said, wondering how much Doug had told him about the "great time" we'd had before. Ryan was a delectable looking dish. Was I being offered a two-for-one special dinner?

No one had eaten, so we dropped their stuff at my place and walked up to Hamburger Hamlet on The Strip for burgers and fries. They were both in full uniform, buttons shining, pleats like razors. There's not much that can beat a Marine in full regalia, unless it's two of them. Especially two super hot ones. They were a splendid looking duo, and we got lots of attention. It was Friday evening and the gay boys were out in force. Obviously a few of them thought I was being greedy, grabbing more than my fair share of the evening's offerings. I ignored the dirty looks I got, and allowed myself to feel just a little smug. "Eat your hearts out, girls," I told them silently. Doug and Ryan seemed oblivious to the undercurrents.

I was still puzzled by the situation, but I figured things would get clearer later. Anyway, it was quickly apparent that Ryan was good company, a pleasant guy to be around. He had a quick smile and sky blue eyes that sparkled when he

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laughed, which was often, in a melodious baritone. He was the boy next door, the one you covertly watched while, shirtless, he mowed the lawn—and here he was, all grown up, the gorgeous hunk of manhood that little boy had only promised.

Doug was quiet, which was his style, but Ryan talked enough for both of them. I learned that they had grown up together in the same town in Ohio—"Eaton," Ryan explained, "with an 'a'."—played baseball together, double dated at the prom, and, eventually, enlisted in the Corps together.

I was tempted more than once to ask what else they had done together. There was a fleeting reference to skinny-dipping in the local creek, and I thought I saw a flicker of something in Doug's eyes when this was mentioned. I had a vision myself of these two, a few years younger, buck naked and engaged in some spirited horseplay. But the reference was fleeting indeed, no details, and apart from that, nothing in Ryan's steady patter even hinted at any queer activities. I put that question on the shelf for later, too.

Back at the apartment, we opened a trio of cool Buds and I got out the projector and the screen. Fuck movies were still the old eight millimeter reel to reel stuff in those days, hard to come by, but I had a fair collection. They were a good way of melting any residual ice.

I ran one of the straight ones. Two males, one female—just a hint of homoeroticism in the way the men occasionally looked at one another and, a couple of times, patted one another's asses.

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Ryan was seated in a chair off to my left. I managed to steal a glance during the action, and saw the trousers of his uniform tented temptingly. Doug was sitting next to me on the sofa so that I couldn't see his lap without turning rather conspicuously. I thought for a fleeting moment of reaching over and grabbing a handful to check it out, and thought better of it. So far, no one had offered me a clue as to what was afoot.

When the movie was over and the lights back on, Ryan got up and went to the bathroom. I got no more than a glimpse of his boner, which to my disappointment he had managed to rearrange discreetly.

The bathroom opened off the bedroom. He disappeared into the bedroom and we heard the bathroom door close after him. "So, he's hot," I said, nodding in that direction. "Is he on the menu for tonight, or what exactly is the score?"

Doug sighed and looked unhappy. "I'm sorry about that. It was a last minute thing. He invited himself, and I couldn't think of anyway to get out of it without sounding like a dunce."

"Meaning," I said, "all those years you were hanging out together, you've never fooled around?"

"Never."

"So, he's straight?"

"I don't know for sure. I always thought so, but, lately...well, I just don't know."

"Do you think he's too straight to play, if we got something going?"

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Doug's unhappiness increased. "I don't know that either. I've dropped plenty of hints but I've never gotten any kind of signals from him. He never talks about shit like that. Maybe he doesn't get it. Or maybe he's just being cautious. Guys don't talk much about that stuff on the base."

I thought about that for a minute. "Well, I guess there's one way to find out." I got up and started for the bathroom. "Only," I said, looking back, "If he starts swinging at me, save my ass, okay?"

Ryan was standing at the toilet, his back to me. He had just finished taking a leak and was shaking himself off when I slipped into the bathroom and closed the door carefully after myself.

"There's one thing I wanted to ask you about," I said, coming up behind him and putting a tentative hand on his shoulder.

He turned away from the john, his dick still hanging out of his uniform, and in one smooth movement had put an arm around me, pulled me close, and kissed me—warmly, not at all tentatively. Which answered the question I hadn't even had time to ask.

But I asked anyway, to be sure. "Doug and I, we were kind of thinking of doing some fooling around," I said, "You know, guy stuff. But he wasn't sure how you'd feel about that."

"Am I in on the action?" he asked.

"I hope so."

"Great," he said, and kissed me again. This had turned out to be a lot simpler than I had anticipated. And it was promising to be a special occasion. He was drop dead good

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looking, and the dick still hanging out of his trousers looked pretty impressive.

He started to put that away. "You're just going to have to take it out again," I told him, stopping his hand. He grinned, and I reached to give his meat a friendly kind of squeeze and felt it begin to stiffen. Things were looking decidedly looking up for the evening. This could be a weekend to remember.

We came out of the bathroom into the bedroom. "Why don't you get out of those clothes," I said, indicating the bed, "I'll get Doug and join you."

Doug was sitting on the couch, looking apprehensive. He looked up at me as I came back into the room, and beyond me for Ryan.

"He's in the bedroom, getting undressed," I said. "Why don't you join us?" A wide smile lit up Doug's face and he jumped to his feet.

I turned and went back to the bedroom, taking my shirt off as I went. Doug somehow got there before me, pulling his tee shirt over his head. Ryan was way ahead of both of us, sprawled on the bed and already totally naked, and it was a pretty splendid sight. If Doug had the body of a football player, Ryan was the star of the swim team, lean and sinewy. His dick had gotten fully hard since we'd come out of the bathroom, a good nine inches or more, uncut, nowhere near as fat as Doug's—I kind of doubted if anybody's was—but no matchstick either.

Doug was naked in seconds and beat me to the bed, dropping heavily down beside his buddy—only, the two of them didn't quite seem to know what to do with one another

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now that they were actually naked in a bed together. They lay side by side, sort of propped up against the headboard, and stole a couple of quick looks at one another's crotches, but otherwise avoided making eye contact, and although they were only an inch or two apart, neither of them made a move to touch the other.

Well, this was where I came in, I thought. Once you got the action started, all kinds of things could happen. I started with Ryan, since he was the guest, so to speak. He spread his legs for me and I knelt between them, took hold of his cock, and began to suck it with gusto. Underneath that loose skin was a spade shaped head, not as wide as Doug's and longer than most, probably two inches, maybe a bit more. Plenty tasty, too, already dampened with pre-cum.

He was way less shy about this stuff than Doug had been, too. "Oh, yeah, suck it," he crooned as soon as I started. "Do it." He wriggled his butt and shoved up at me. I was pretty sure he'd done this before. And liked it a lot.

I gave him a couple of minutes of heavy duty cocksucking, while I reached over and took Doug's thick pole in my hand and stroked it in time. I could see at a glance that Doug was watching our action avidly, his eyes bright, his lips parted. It was obvious that the scene was turning him on.

After a bit, I took Ryan's cock in my left hand and switched to sucking Doug's. It was even better than I remembered from the last time, a nice, sweaty-salty taste, man-crotch smells. Ryan's was great, but I still thought Doug's was the best cock I'd ever sucked. And still so fat that I had to work

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to get my mouth around it. Man, two big hard beauties to gobble. This was shaping up to be one hell of a nice session.

Then, things got changed around. Doug kind of shifted on the bed and, glancing sideways, I saw that he had slid down to take hold of Ryan's dick. I still had my hand on it, but I relinquished it to Doug, curious to see how far he was willing to go. He had played with mine a bit, but that was all. I hadn't tried to get him to suck me because I had been pretty sure that wasn't his thing.

Maybe it hadn't been up till now, but while I watched, he slipped Ryan's cock into his mouth and began to suck on it. At a guess, I was willing to bet this was his first time. He seemed a bit unsure of the procedure at first, gagged a couple of times, took it out to wipe the back of his hand across his mouth. But he quickly put it back in his mouth, and in no time at all he was getting the hang of it. Surprising what an instinctive thing sucking dick was once you tried it, easier than learning to ride a bicycle, and a much more fun way to go.

So it looked like we'd had some kind of graduation ceremony, Doug moving easily on to the next plateau in the man on man school of action. The bonus for me was that sucking Ryan's cock obviously made Doug even hotter. For sure, he was now enjoying his newly discovered activity. He put a hand on the back of my head and pushed down, shoving his fat cock up at me and down my throat to the max.

I put my hands under him, on that marble ass of his, and remembered how great it had been to fuck it the last time.

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And immediately thought of a Doug sandwich, him in the middle, me getting a piece of that killer ass while he ate Ryan's dick. I could even think of a whole bunch of variations on the theme. This might be the evening of a lifetime.

While I sucked, I slipped a finger up to tease at Doug's butt hole, to see whether or not I got any encouragement, and felt it twitch in instant response. Great! He remembered too. I fumbled the nightstand drawer open and pulled out the Albolene, already thinking ahead. The sound of the drawer opening seemed to inspire Doug to even more ardor. He fucked harder at my mouth, upping my expectations.

So far, so good. Everything was going my way—but after a moment, things changed again. Doug sort of rose up off the bed and lifted his leg over me, leaving me with a finger tickling empty air, and climbed up atop Ryan. In a heartbeat, as if he had rehearsed this a bunch of times, knew exactly how it was done, he was between Ryan's legs, had Ryan's legs over his shoulders and was reaching for the lube. Meaning, I realized belatedly, it hadn't been the idea of my fucking him that had turned the heat up for Doug. He had already made his own plans to fuck Ryan. Maybe he *had* rehearsed it a lot, in his mind. In any case, he wasn't wasting any time putting his battle plans into action. It was intriguing, to say the least—from a guy who had been every kind of virgin a week ago. And if Ryan was at all surprised by what was happening, he gave no sign of it. Maybe he had mentally rehearsed it too. They had known one another a long time, after all.

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I kind of slipped back down on the bed, watching between Doug's legs as he greased up his pole and guided it to the little hole in Ryan's butt, that looked way too small to possibly accommodate the missile that was being launched at it. I heard one of Doug's fondly remembered grunts of pleasure as his dick slipped inside, and a moan of pain from Ryan as that beer can forced its way inside. That was an enormously thick prick being shoved unceremoniously up what might have been a never-before-poked backside.

Doug froze for a minute at Ryan's moan, but however painful Ryan might have found losing his cherry, he wasn't buying that. Seemed like he wanted this to happen as badly as Doug obviously did. He reached down, clasping Doug's marble cheeks in his hands, and pulled him in.

That was all the encouragement Doug needed. He plunged forward, poking deeper each time, eliciting deep groans from his partner, groans that began to sound more now like a combination of pain and pleasure.

However much a stretch it was, though, Ryan took it with real Marine fortitude. He was raising his butt off the bed, lifting up to meet Doug's thrusts, taking him deeper with each stroke, until finally Doug was buried to the hilt, his balls crushed against the alabaster whiteness of Ryan's upturned cheeks. They lay like that for a moment, and then Doug began to fuck in earnest, clearly slipping now into that zone of going all out for his own pleasure, seemingly oblivious to Ryan's continuing chorus of moans and groans. Or maybe all the more turned on by them.

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I watched the action for a minute or so more, until the moans became smacking noises and I looked up see that they were engaged in a serious lip-lock, kissing one another like they had just discovered that too.

I suddenly was conscious that the two of them had forgotten me completely for the moment, were so lost in their fucking that they weren't even aware I was still in the bed with them. Doug was really pouring it on now, plowing him steadily with that massive ramrod, and Ryan was jerking his own dick and moaning with pleasure. I heard, "Yeah, fuck me," and "harder." And a lot of Doug's enthusiastic grunts.

I wasn't sure how I felt about being forgotten like that. Like I said before, I get turned on visually—which was why I had the porn flicks. And it was a hell of a performance they were putting on—my own private sex show, better than any movie, and two of the hottest guys anyone could imagine.

It was kind of sweet, too. It was obvious that this was something both of them had been thinking of for a long time, had wanted and didn't know how to bring it about, and I had kind of made it possible for them. It occurred to me that this threesome was no accident. This was probably why Doug had brought him along for the weekend, in the hope that I would somehow make it happen for them. I had no doubt that Ryan had thought along the same lines as well.

That was me: Mike, the little old matchmaker. Which, sadly, was a lot less thrilling than Mike, the butthole reamer.

I slipped out of the bed—unnoticed, apparently—and went back to the living room. It was a warm night. I stepped out onto the little balcony. I could see the lights of The Strip up

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the hill, and hear the roar of the Friday night traffic, like water in a distant gully, but down here, a long block away, it was amazingly peaceful. No car traffic, only a lone pedestrian who strolled by on the sidewalk below, walking quickly in the direction of Santa Monica Boulevard, no doubt on his way to one of the gay bars there, looking for some Friday night action. If he'd looked up he'd have seen a naked man, with a disappointed half hard, standing above him. He could have saved himself the trip. I almost called down to him. But I didn't, and he didn't look up. A minute later, he passed under one of the acacia trees and disappeared into the darkness.

I don't know how much later it was when the curtains billowed and Doug came out to stand behind me. He put his arms cautiously around me and pulled me back against him. He was sweaty, and smelled of man sex. His dick, not quite hard and not quite soft, pressed against my butt.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I didn't mean for it to go like that. I mean, I never even thought of cutting you out of the action. It just...well, I was so hot for Ryan, I just..."

"It just happened," I finished for him. "You get to a certain point, and the dick takes over. Happens to all of us from time to time. If we're lucky," I added.

"Thanks." He was silent for a moment. "It's like...I've been wanting that with him for years. I didn't even know for a long time what it was that I wanted. I'd see him naked, and something would happen inside me, but I used to pretend it wasn't happening. And then, after a while, I started thinking about, well, shit like that, about fucking him, even sometimes about what his dick would taste like if I put my mouth on it.

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Only, I couldn't believe it, couldn't believe those things kept popping into my mind. I swear to God, I'd never done any of that stuff, never even thought of doing it with anybody else, and all of a sudden, I couldn't stop thinking about doing it with him." Another pause. I thought it was a good time to keep my mouth shut. This was the most I'd ever heard him say.

"Only, I couldn't think how I could ever bring the subject up. I mean, a guy I've known all my life? Practically my brother? How do you say, out of the blue, 'hey, bro, I think I'd like to make babies with you?' Fuck, I didn't even know exactly what two guys did together, or how they did it."

A light bulb went off in my head. "And that's why you came home with me last weekend?" I said in a burst of understanding. "Like, for a trial run?"

His silence sounded a little guilty, but after a moment, he sighed. "See, I thought, well, if I tried it on with somebody else, and it didn't work, I'd know the whole idea was crazy...and then, when it was so great with you, which it was...that's all I could think of this past week, what if I could get something like that going with Ryan? Only I still didn't know how to set it up."

"So you brought him here to Uncle Mike, to see what I could do."

"I'm sorry. I don't blame you for being pissed..."

I had to think about that a minute. "Actually, I'm not," I said, turning into his arms. "I'm just a little—oh, fuck, I don't even know what. Are you in love with him?"

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He looked long and searchingly at me. "I don't even know," he admitted finally. "Maybe. Or, it's just, you know, sometimes you get something stuck in your craw, and it won't go away. It's more like, I just had this feeling that I'd never be satisfied until I nailed him, till I got my prick up that sexy little butt of his. I'd see him in the showers, or just bending over in the barracks, and it was all I could do not to jump on him, it got to where I had to avoid the sight of him, I was starting to get boners every time I looked in his direction. I never felt like that about anybody else. I don't know if that's love or not. It was just something I had to do."

"So? Was it what you'd dreamed it would be?"

He gave me one of those little boy grins, shy and pleased with himself all at the same time. "Better than I dreamed. Only...to tell you the truth, I really was looking forward to getting it on with you again too. I mean that, no shit. I really did like it with you. Hell, not just the stuff we did, I like you, too. Not more than Ryan, but differently. Last weekend, I almost felt, well, you're pretty special, and it was such a great time, it was almost as if I was starting to..."

We heard a toilet flush from inside the apartment, so I never did hear the rest of what he was going to say. Seemed like this was my night for disappointments. Both of us glanced back into the apartment and stepped apart, almost guilty, as if we'd been caught in something we shouldn't be doing.

"Look," he said, "Ryan and me, we can get a motel room..."

"No, don't," I said and when he looked about to argue, I said, "I mean it. Stay here. I can bunk on the couch."

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"Jesus, we can't just kick you out of your bed, too."

I managed a smile. "Think of it as your honeymoon, and this is my wedding gift. Look, you're here anyway, and we've got the weekend. Let's just have a good one, the three of us. And the two of you...well, you've been wanting this for a long time, and if I was a betting man, I'd bet he has too. Who knows when you'll ever have another chance like this one? Why not make the most of it?"

He leaned down to kiss me gently, affectionately, and gently bit my earlobe. "You're a hell of a guy," he said in a hoarse whisper. "Any gyrene would be lucky to land you for a fuck buddy. I wish..."

I kissed him back, lightly, quickly, wanting to keep everything on a friendly, uninvolved level, not wanting to hear any more, and gave his naked butt a little slap. Resisted the urge to fondle it, run my hand over one of those carved-rock cheeks, my finger along that downy ravine...

"Only, you've got your own fuck buddy for the present, and I would guess by now he's back in bed and wondering where his has gone."

He grinned and gave me another of those mock salutes and disappeared into the darkness of the apartment. I stayed where I was until it started to get chilly, wishing I had called down earlier to that lone pedestrian.

Back inside, I got a blanket and a pillow out of the closet, and curled up on the sofa. From the next room, I could hear heavy breathing and the slap of naked flesh against naked flesh. They were doing some serious fucking in there. Once is

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never enough when it's something you've been wanting for a long time.

I took my dick in hand and jacked off, imagining what it would be like if I crept into the bedroom and joined them, and knowing the whole while it wouldn't be like I was imagining. I shot a load and smeared it around on my belly and my chest, and when it was dry, I turned over and tried to sleep.

It was a nice weekend, really. Ryan was a helluva nice guy, both of them were, and they went out of their ways to show their appreciation and make me feel like they were including me in their fun.

We did tourist things—Santa Monica pier and Muscle Beach, with the weight lifters preening and posing; and Hollywood Boulevard, with the stars in the sidewalks and hustlers on every corner. Angel's Flight downtown. The Witch's House in Beverly Hills. Mulholland Drive, and the views of the endless valley, stretching to purple gray mountains in the far distance. I was a good guide. They enjoyed the tour.

They didn't exactly hold hands and they didn't have a lot to say, but it wouldn't have taken any great discernment to see that these two had something special going between them. If they weren't in love, they were in something very much like it: the constant glances, the quick, self satisfied smiles, a hundred ways to touch one another, not quite innocently.

It was sweet, and cute, and a part of me was as happy as a clam for them. Then there was that other Mike inside my head. He wasn't exactly jealous. How could he be? Hell, Doug

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and I had done nothing but share some really hot sex for one afternoon. And if I had, however fleetingly, however uncertainly, imagined that I had found something more, I knew I was just feeling sorry for myself.

And fooling myself, too. They were Marines. Next week, the week after, they would be shipping out. No matter how we reshuffled the deck, no one would be skipping to the altar. I told myself over and over, there never had been anything in the cards for Doug and me but a couple of horny fuck sessions. I'd lost nothing but a couple of loads of cum—okay, very nice loads of cum, let it be said. And I'd had the chance to make the two of them happy. I could feel good about myself, the whole time I was miserable inside. I shared the first part with them, and kept the rest resolutely to myself.

They even tried, back at the apartment that night, to make things up to me. "You could watch," Ryan said half jokingly when everybody was getting ready for bed—no porn flicks this time. They didn't need the inspiration and I didn't need the frustration.

I looked from Ryan to Doug, whose expression was carefully neutral. Which told me enough. This was honeymoon time, whatever you wanted to call it. I had no doubt Ryan was sincere, and I knew Doug wouldn't object if I took him up on it. Wouldn't object if I did more than watch. Neither of them would.

But, who wanted a third partner on their honeymoon? They'd had eyes for no one but one another the whole day, and as the time had passed, it had become increasingly obvious that they were both thinking ahead to the night to

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come, dreaming of more of last night's bounty. And I hadn't figured in their fantasies.

"Thanks," I said. "But I was planning on walking down to one of the bars, see if I can't pick up some action of my own. I've kind of had my eye on someone for a while. Maybe this will be my lucky night."

"You're sure?" Doug asked, giving me a searching look, and I nodded.

"Absolutely. And hands off if I bring him back with me."

They seemed relieved. I left them to the apartment, had a couple of beers alone in a couple of different bars, and came home. The apartment was still. Someone was snoring softly in the bedroom.

Later, I woke up to the sound of strenuous fucking. I listened, and beat off again, and went back to sleep.

Sunday afternoon rolled around, time for them to return to the base. I was genuinely sorry to see them go. And I was glad, too. Fifth wheel is never a very enjoyable role to play. But, when the subject came up of their coming back the next weekend, I insisted on it. Okay, maybe I have a masochistic streak, but I really was happy for them, and they really were good guys. Besides, maybe by next weekend, they'd be past the newness of things and more interested in a threesome. Hope springs eternal, as they say.

"Look, we're all friends now, okay?" I told them when they seemed a little reluctant, "I don't want either of you guys feeling like company in the future. You're officially part of Uncle Mike's family now, okay? *Mi casa es su casa*—my house is your house."

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"You mean it?" Doug asked, giving me one of those looks of his.

"Absolutely."

We even stopped on the way and I got keys copied to the apartment, and gave each of them one.

"From now on, my apartment is your home. I want you both to think of it that way. You can come home anytime. No invitations needed."

They were both enormously grateful, and Doug was especially moved. He looked as if he wanted to kiss me, but we were in a hardware store, so that wasn't a possibility. I'm not sure he would have done it anyway, even if we'd been some place more private. And I didn't want to find out, in case he didn't.

I dropped them at the bus station. They started away together, but Doug came back and leaned in the car window. "Listen, I just wanted to tell you," he said, "you're a pretty special guy. I never felt...well, it's different, with Ryan, I mean, we've known one another just about all our lives, we could be brothers, but you..." he paused and shook his head. "Shit, I'm not good at this stuff. I just wanted to tell you that, is all. You mean a lot to me, a whole lot. Probably the best thing that ever happened to me, that day you picked me up on the Strip. I thank you for that. For everything."

"Maybe, one of these days..." I said, and couldn't find the words for the rest of it.

"Yeah," he said, as if he knew exactly what I was thinking. "Maybe. One of these days."

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He left it at that and went to join Ryan on the sidewalk. Ryan waved at me one last time, but Doug didn't look back. They walked side by side to the big glass doors. Doug shoved them open.

I wondered if they actually would call me the next weekend, as they had both promised repeatedly. Wondered, too, if I wanted them to. I'd just have this to go through another time, this ache inside my chest, watching him disappear into the station. Because he would always be disappearing, wouldn't he? He was a dream, was all he was. Dreams always faded.

Doug did call, not the following Friday, but on Wednesday. From a pay phone. Probably in the barracks. I could hear lots of male voices in the background and I had to strain to catch what he was saying.

"We're shipping out," he said. "Tomorrow."

"The two of you? Together?"

"Yes."

I didn't ask where they were going. He wasn't supposed to tell me, and I already knew anyway. They went from Pendleton straight to Nam. At least they were together. I gave myself some credit for helping to make that happen. And hopefully being with one another, sharing what they had discovered, would make whatever they faced easier to handle.

Things are always easier to handle if you've got someone to share them with, aren't they?

I went back to my old routine, picking up Marines and the occasional sailor on The Strip, but somehow it didn't seem the

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same. Some hot sex, some great dicks, some beautiful butts to ride to town.

It seemed like the numbers of available guys on The Strip had swollen. They were everywhere, easier than ever to pick up, hardly a one who wasn't looking for action. Hog Heaven.

Or it should have been. It never quite seemed to satisfy, though. I'd bring one of them home, nail him, walk him back to The Strip, and by the time we'd gone twenty feet in opposite directions, I was already looking for the next one. It was like when I was a kid and discovered there was no Santa Claus. My folks and I pretended it was still Christmas. My dad kept on putting up the lights, year after year; but they just never twinkled the same.

I got a card from Vietnam not long after they left, a picture of some bar in Saigon, all bamboo and tropical foliage, and a row of pretty girls sitting at a long bar, smiling a little too brightly.

Both of them had signed their names on the back of the card, Doug's signature neat and small, Ryan's flamboyant, the Y spilling over Doug's name, like a leg tossed over your partner in sleep.

That was it, though, just their names. No message. What was there to say? Wish you were here?

Eventually, I just kind of drifted away from The Strip, I couldn't even pinpoint exactly when. I hung out in the Santa Monica bars some, picked up the occasional trick on a Friday night, went home with them so I didn't have the Saturday morning how-do-I-get-them-out-of-here problem. Just come and go, and thank you for the use of the facilities.

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I revisited a few old friends. As it happened, most of them were partnered up by this time, and too often I was the only bachelor at the parties. That got awkward, too. Everybody was toking in those days. Too many hubbies got a little stoned and made fooling around noises, which always ended up with someone pissed off, usually at me. After a while, those invitations stopped coming. I didn't miss them.

A year went by, the days slow, the year fast. A year and a half. I looked around the apartment one day and it occurred to me that I had become something of a hermit. I couldn't remember when I had last been out for any kind of social activity. Weeks, certainly. More like months, I decided when I thought about it. I actually looked at the calendar. It was nearing the end of April, May almost here.

In the old days, I used to have friends over on the first Saturday in May—Kentucky Derby Day. I'd made mint juleps. I didn't much enjoy them, and I doubt that my friends did either, but it seemed the appropriate thing to drink while we sang *My Old Kentucky Home*, where none of us had ever lived. We watched the race, after which, we'd switch to beers and an old movie on television, or sometimes a new porn flick. Fuck movies were getting better. Super eight, and in color.

When I watched the flicks now, it was alone. More than once, looking at the images on the screen, whacking off, I would find that I had superimposed an image of Doug buttfucking Ryan. Nobody in the movies had a dick as fat as Doug's. None of the tricks I picked up did, either. I suspected nobody anywhere did. Or as sweet to the taste. Or...but then

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I would yank my attention back to the screen, and pound my meat all the harder, eager to get it off. Just to be finished.

It had been a couple of years since I'd done that Derby thing. I got out my address book and called half a dozen guys to invite them over for the day. They sounded glad to hear from me. I couple of the once-marrieds were single again, and I got a hint from one of them that he might be agreeable to making me his next ex.

I went shopping Saturday morning early for groceries—mostly chips and dips and a lot of beer—and, of course, the bourbon and that mint, for the obligatory first round.

I carried the bags up from the garage, put the silver julep glasses in the freezer to chill—frosted glasses were a part of the drill—and started back downstairs to get the beer, still in the trunk of the car—and met someone coming up with a case of beer in his hands.

At first, I didn't recognize him. He was leaner. He looked half starved, actually, but not just thinner. He'd seemed to shed something else along with twenty or maybe thirty pounds. His hair was long now, shaggy, actually, and he had a beard.

It was the eyes, when he looked at me, that gave him away. They had lost some of that puppy dog brightness they'd had in the past, but they still were like dark pools in which you could plunge down and down forever, without ever reaching the bottom.

He stopped on the stairs, looking up at me. I couldn't think what to say. It was a shock the way the sight of him sent

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tremors through me. I found myself thinking, *he's older*. Far more than a year and a half older.

"You said think of it as home," he said. "That's all I've been thinking about for most of a year. Coming home."

I looked past him, half expecting to see Ryan grinning over his shoulder, but he gave his head a shake. "Ryan caught a grenade. He didn't make it," he said, his face expressionless, his eyes avoiding mine.

I still hadn't said anything. He came the rest of the way up, limping a bit, one leg oddly stiff. I didn't think he'd noticed me staring at it, but he said, without looking at me, "Grenade messed it around some. They got it fixed up okay. It's not pretty, but it works."

"Was it...?" I started to ask, and hesitated, afraid to ask, afraid not to. "Was it the same grenade?"

He hesitated too, a long moment before he answered, his expression distant, like he was looking at something far, far away. "Yes," in a voice so faint I could barely hear it.

He carried the case into the kitchen, and set it on the counter, carefully still not facing me. There was another long silence while he stared down at the beer. I had followed him into the kitchen. I stood a few feet away, just looking at him, trying to absorb the fact of him, here, in the room with me. I'd imagined it so many times...now I couldn't remember how the scenario had even played out in my head.

Finally, he turned toward me. The eyes that sought mine had a haunted quality to them, and something else—a beseeching look, hopeful, but uncertain. He'd lost some of

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that confidence, too, that cocksure quality he'd worn so bravely in the past.

"Is this okay?" he asked. "I mean, my coming here like this? I didn't know where else to go." He added, after a heartbeat, "fuck, that's not the truth. I didn't *want* to go anywhere else, is more like it, never once thought of going anywhere else," talking fast now, nervously, stammering, "you were...I don't know how to say it, I guess what I mean is, while I was laying in that hospital, waiting for my leg to mend, waiting to see if I'd get to keep it...when I thought of you, which was every day, every minute, you were all I could think of...and I thought of home. Of coming home, to you. You meant home to me. Are home. If that makes any sense. If it's okay."

I couldn't speak for the longest time, couldn't find words, all I could do was stare at him. I saw the moment he misinterpreted my silence, the hope faded from his eyes.

"Fuck, did I just make an ass of myself?" He grimaced and ran his fingers through his hair. "Shit, what was I thinking of? I guess I was just some gyrene you picked up on the street one day for a little fun, and here I am, trying to...Christ, I wouldn't blame you...Look, I'll just go, okay?" He looked away from me again, and I saw something wet glisten on his cheeks.

I crossed the room to him in three quick steps, into the arms he opened for me. He gave a great sigh, almost a sob, and hugged me so tight he squeezed the breath clear out of me, kissed my lips and my nose and my ears and my hair, like a starving man at a feast, murmuring my name over and

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over in a hoarse, breaking whisper—and I felt as if I was the one who had been lost, and had just found my way home.

"Welcome home," I said between kisses. "Welcome home."
After that, we didn't say anything for a very long time.

About the Author

Lecturer, writing instructor and early rabble rouser for the rights and freedoms of individuals, including gay rights, civil rights, women's rights and freedom of the press, Victor J. Banis is the critically acclaimed author ("the master's touch in storytelling..." Publishers Weekly) of more than 160 published books, plus numerous shorter pieces and verse, in a career spanning nearly half a century. His most recent works include *Lola Dances* (MLR Press); *Angel Land* (Regal Crest Enterprises) and the Deadly Mystery Series from MLR Press: *Deadly Nightshade*; *Deadly Wrong*; *Deadly Dreams*, and *Deadly Slumber*. A native of Ohio and longtime California, he lives and writes now in West Virginia's beautiful Blue Ridge.

Visit Victor at his website www.vjbanis.com

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the trevor project

The Trevor Project operates the only nationwide, around-the-clock crisis and suicide prevention helpline for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. Every day, The Trevor Project saves lives through its free and confidential helpline, its website and its educational services. If you or a friend are feeling lost or alone call The Trevor Helpline. If you or a friend are feeling lost, alone, confused or in crisis, please call The Trevor Helpline. You'll be able to speak confidentially with a trained counselor 24/7.

The Trevor Helpline: 866-488-7386

On the Web: www.thetrevorproject.org/

the gay men's domestic violence project

Founded in 1994, The Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project is a grassroots, non-profit organization founded by a gay male survivor of domestic violence and developed through the strength, contributions and participation of the community. The Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project supports victims and survivors through education, advocacy and direct services. Understanding that the serious public health issue of domestic violence is not gender specific, we serve men in relationships with men, regardless of how they identify, and stand ready to assist them in navigating through abusive relationships.

GMDVP Helpline: 800.832.1901

On the Web: gmdvp.org/

the gay & lesbian alliance against defamation/glaad en espanol

The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (glaad) is dedicated to promoting and ensuring fair, accurate and inclusive representation of people and events in the media as a means of eliminating homophobia and discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation.

On the Web: www.glaad.org/

glaad en espanol: www.glaad.org/espanol/bienvenido.php

servicemembers legal defense network

Servicemembers Legal Defense Network is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, legal services, watchdog and policy organization dedicated to ending discrimination against and harassment of military personnel affected by "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" (dadt). The sldn provides free, confidential legal services to all those impacted by dadt and related discrimination. Since 1993, its inhouse legal team has responded to more than 9,000 requests for assistance. In Congress, it leads the fight to repeal dadt and replace it with a law that ensures equal treatment for every servicemember, regardless of sexual orientation. In the courts, it works to challenge the constitutionality of dadt.

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the glbt national help center

The glbt National Help Center is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that is dedicated to meeting the needs of the

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gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community and those questioning their sexual orientation and gender identity. It is an outgrowth of the Gay & Lesbian National Hotline, which began in 1996 and now is a primary program of The glbt National Help Center. It offers several different programs including two national hotlines that help members of the glbt community talk about the important issues that they are facing in their lives. It helps end the isolation that many people feel, by providing a safe environment on the phone or via the internet to discuss issues that people can't talk about anywhere else. The glbt National Help Center also helps other organizations build the infrastructure they need to provide strong support to our community at the local level.

National Hotline: 1-888-THE-GLNH (1-888-843-4564)

National Youth Talkline 1-800-246-PRIDE (1-800-246-7743)

On the Web: www.glnh.org/

e-mail: info@glbtnationalhelpcenter.org

* * * *

If you're a GLBT and questioning student heading off to university, should know that there are resources on campus for you. Here's just a sample:

US Local GLBT college campus organizations

dv-8.com/resources/us/local/campus.html

GLBT Scholarship Resources tinyurl.com/6fx9v6

Syracuse University lgbt.syr.edu/

Texas A&M glt.tamu.edu/

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Tulane University www.oma.tulane.edu/LGBT/Default.htm

University of Alaska www.uaf.edu/agla/

University of California, Davis lgbtrc.ucdavis.edu/

University of California, San Francisco lgbt.ucsf.edu/

University of Colorado www.colorado.edu/glbtrc/

University of Florida www.dso.ufl.edu/multicultural/lgbt/

University of Hawai'i, Manoa manoa.hawaii.edu/lgbt/

University of Utah www.sa.utah.edu/lgbt/

University of Virginia

www.virginia.edu/deanofstudents/lgbt/

Vanderbilt University www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/
