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Mormon Underwear

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Mormon Underwear

Johnny Townsend

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Mormon Underwear

was never any good at keeping secrets. When I found condoms in my Dad's underwear drawer at the age of 13, I told my 12-year-old sister, who promptly told my mother, and I was grounded two weeks for snooping.

The same thing happened when I went on a Boy Scout campout with our church group, and one of the scouts brought along a *Playboy* magazine. It wasn't that I was a tattletale. I just couldn't resist sharing the tantalizing news with my cousin. He, on the other hand, *was* a tattletale, and our whole troop got in trouble over that one.

There are unfortunately dozens more examples of my inability to keep my mouth shut, so it was truly a miracle that I had managed to keep quiet about the fact that I was going to gay bars on Friday nights ever since I'd turned 25, seven months ago. Somehow, when I realized I was a quarter of a century old, I felt I couldn't waste any more time trying to become straight and started going out almost every Friday night. I didn't go out on Saturday nights, of course, because if I stayed out past midnight, that would be Sunday, and I didn't want to be out partying on the Sabbath.

I didn't drink alcohol, so partying was a relative term. I wasn't sure if my abstinence was me being "smart," or if I was really still just hung up on Church teachings. By this point, I absolutely believed the Mormons were wrong about homosexuality, and that obviously threw into question everything else the prophet said, but I didn't want to simply chuck the whole thing all at once. Maybe *some* of the rest was true. Perhaps the Church was just keeping it secret that

homosexuality was acceptable, the way they had kept secret for so long the fact that blacks were equal to whites.

This Friday evening, I went to one of the seedier bars in Chicago. I pretty much exuded "white breadness," so I didn't expect anyone to look twice at me there, but I'd only been in the place twenty minutes when a slim yet muscular guy in tight jeans and a tight white T-shirt nodded at me.

"Boxers or briefs?" he said.

"Uh, neither," I replied a little uncertainly.

"Really?" said the man, trying hard not to smile condescendingly. "You don't look like the type to walk around without underwear."

"Oh, I have underwear," I said. "Just not boxers or briefs."

The man's eyes widened. "Don't tell me you have on bikinis. I'll have to leave."

"No." I smiled. "I'm afraid I have on Mormon underwear."

The man frowned. "What's that?"

"Well, it's a one-piece outfit that has a T-shirt for the top portion and knee-length shorts for the bottom. There's a slit in front and a slit in back. And you get into them by crawling through the neck."

The man's mouth fell open, but he didn't say anything.

"And there are little symbols embroidered in them, over the breasts and navel and right knee, that all have special religious meanings."

The man continued to stare. Of course, we weren't supposed to talk about our "garments" to non-members, and we most definitely weren't supposed to mention the symbols, but

he had asked what I was wearing, hadn't he? And I couldn't resist sharing the privileged information.

The man finally shut his mouth and gave me a head-to-toe lookover. "Well," he said finally, "there's a back room in this bar. Can I get inside you through your rear slit?"

I hadn't ever been fucked yet and was anxious to try it, so I nodded and followed the man to the rear of the bar. When we finished, the man kissed the back of my neck. It seemed a little out of place in this high testosterone environment, but it touched me.

"My name's Andy," said the man, zipping back up.

"I'm Bruce."

"Listen, Bruce, you were a lot of fun. Would you mind if I took your phone number?"

"Sure."

There was a message from Andy on my machine Sunday when I got home from church. "I was wondering if you'd like to get together this week. I go to a group called Third Thursday on, obviously, the third Thursday of each month. It's a gay professionals group. I think you'd like it. Anyway, this week is Show and Tell. We're all supposed to bring something interesting to show everyone. I thought you could show your Mormon underwear. Since you're new, you wouldn't have to participate if you didn't want to. But if you're interested, give me a call."

I'd felt a little bad even telling Andy as much as I had the other day. I wasn't sure I wanted to blaspheme to the extent of showing a whole roomful of people these sacred underwear. But

I called Andy Sunday night, and he agreed to pick me up on Thursday.

On Tuesday, though, I got a call from the stake president. He was the man in charge of nine Chicago congregations, including the ward I belonged to. Had I been found out, I wondered? Had someone seen me go into the bar the other night?

"Can you come in for an interview tomorrow evening?"

I took a deep breath. I knew it had to come sometime. "Sure," I said. "What time?"

I walked into the stake center the next evening at 6:30 and knocked on the stake president's door. After a little innocuous chit chat, the president said, "I suppose we ought to get down to business."

I braced myself, but I had made a promise that I would take the order to attend a Church court gracefully. It would be a little awkward since my father was on the stake high council and would have to be one of the twelve men holding court for me, but before I ever went to my first bar, I'd accepted the consequences.

"We'd like to call you to be second counselor in the bishopric."

"What?"

"You're an upstanding young man. We've decided to groom you to be a bishop one day. Of course, that won't happen till after you're married. You really need to make a little more effort on that front. It wouldn't hurt for you to switch over to a Singles ward. But since you insist on coming to one of the

regular wards, we decided it was time to push you to the next step in Church leadership."

"I don't know what to say."

"You go home and pray about it, but let us know by tomorrow. We'll have to call someone else if you don't accept the calling, and if we wait too long, he'll know he was second choice. We don't want that."

"No, of course not."

"What do you think?"

"Well, I'm not that good at keeping confidences..."

"The bishop will handle most of the delicate part."

"Okay. I'll certainly think about it and give you a call tomorrow evening."

That night in my apartment, I debated over what to do. On the one hand, it was a great honor to be second counselor. On the other, I didn't want to be even more of a hypocrite than I already was. Then again, when the inevitable happened and I was discovered, it would make more of a ripple the higher up I was, and that was good. But I also had to consider that the higher my position, the more embarrassed my parents would be at my fall from grace. And on the other hand...

How many hands was that?

I accepted the call and phoned the stake president Thursday evening when I got home from work. I called my Mom to tell her. She said she'd bake my favorite cookies for Sunday. Then I showered and put on a fresh pair of garments and was smiling eagerly when Andy came by a few minutes later to pick me up.

"This is Ivan," said Andy after I'd climbed into the back seat. Ivan was in the passenger seat up front. I offered my hand. "Ivan's my partner."

"Oh," I said. "Nice to meet you."

Andy chuckled. "Don't worry. He knows everything. We have a very progressive relationship."

"Okay."

Ivan smiled. "I can't wait to see those underwear of yours tonight."

Third Thursday had about 40 or so people, all dressed on the nicer side, even Andy, who wore Dockers tonight in place of his tight jeans. It was pretty evenly split between gays and lesbians, and between those who could "pass" and those who made no attempt at it.

Andy and Ivan introduced me to several men and a few women, doctors and lawyers and business professionals mostly. It was pleasant to meet people outside of a cruisy bar setting. It made everyone seem a little more real. I'd made a couple of gay friends over the past several months, though not as many as I'd have liked.

The people here were friendly, but there was also an element of gossip in the air. "Bob's in AA." "Suzanne was arrested for domestic violence a couple of months ago." "Gerald's into shady dealing." "Bette's a closet Republican." Apparently, I wasn't the only one having trouble keeping personal information private.

Soon the meeting started, and everyone seemed to have a ball with the Show and Tell. One man showed a large ammonite fossil. I wondered if it was named after Ammon in the Book of

Mormon. Another man showed us some nice embroidery he had recently completed. A woman proudly displayed a lovely art deco vase. Another woman showed everyone her favorite mezuzah. A man showed us his son's most recent drawing.

And then it was my turn.

"You know," I said, standing in front of the group and slowly unbuttoning my shirt, "you see those Mormon missionaries going around in twos, and they look so innocent."

I pulled off my shirt, which must have puzzled some of the crowd, though so far all it revealed was a fairly ordinary T-shirt.

"But did you know they carry a secret around with them every day?"

There were a few raised eyebrows at this, and even more when I started unbuckling my belt. "When they go home at night and go to bed, they don't look like everyone else."

I unhooked my pants and lowered my zipper but held my pants up as I continued. "Mormons are supposed to wear their Mormon underwear at all times except when they're showering or participating in sports that would prevent it. But they have to put them back on as soon as possible, and theoretically they're supposed to wear them even while they're having sex."

At this point, I dropped my pants to the floor, and there were a couple of gasps and also a couple of laughs.

"And he did wear them when we had sex the other night," Andy announced.

"TMI!" someone shouted.

"Anyone wanting to try sex with a Mormon wearing Mormon underwear drop your phone number off here," Andy continued unfazed.

I blushed and pulled up my pants and then put my shirt back on as the next person in line showed off a Wedgwood saucer.

"You were a hit," Andy said later as he drove me home. "Sometimes, it's hard to break into an established group. But people there tonight will definitely remember you."

"I did get two phone numbers," I said, laughing.

"And here's my cell," said Ivan, handing me a slip of paper.

Andy laughed, and I kissed them both when I got out of the car.

On Sunday, I was officially called to be second counselor in the bishopric, and the congregation raised their right hands in Sacrament meeting to sustain me. I was set apart afterward by the stake president and his counselors. My parents belonged to another ward but came to watch. My Mom had kept a scrapbook over the years of my rise through the Priesthood and all of my various callings. The most damning thing I ever saw her do was drink café au lait at the Café du Monde on our trip to New Orleans once. My Dad had only ordered milk, but he did steal a single sip himself. Seeing my parents look so proud now only made me feel like a heel because I knew that feeling was bound to come to an end eventually.

I put it out of my mind, though, and that evening, Ivan came over. He was a French professor at the university and told me Andy was a Spanish professor there. That was how they'd met six years ago when they'd both started teaching the same semester. I had served my mission in Scotland and so didn't speak a second language.

"I wish I could speak French," I said.

"You can audit my class for free if you like."

"I couldn't get away from work in the day."

"I actually teach one Monday/Wednesday evening class to make a little extra money. You're welcome to sit in. The semester only started two weeks ago. I can help you catch up."

"Really?"

"Sure. But only if you let me at that front slit."

"I always wanted one of my professors to come on to me."

Ivan sucked my dick for a while and then I asked if I could reciprocate. "On the condition that you go in my back slit afterwards."

His back slit, it turned out, was fairly wide, as he was wearing a jock strap. After we finished playing, Ivan gave me directions to his class and then said, "Andy and I would like to have you over for Sunday dinner next week. What do you say?"

"Sounds great."

I had to start meeting with the bishop but told the man I wouldn't be available on Monday or Wednesday evenings. Of course, no Church work was done on Monday nights anyway because it was Family Night. I usually met with the Singles for a Single Adult Family Home Evening, but this Monday I went to French class for the first time instead. I sucked Ivan off in his office afterwards, and when I joined the bishop in the bishop's office Tuesday night, I couldn't help but have a flashback of the previous evening. I put a folder on my lap to hide my erection.

"I'd like you to start going through the inactives list," said the bishop. "I'd like you to visit just one person on the list each week. You know how Home Teaching goes. Most of these people never get visited at all. I've assigned you a new Home

Teacher, too. It's important that at least *we* get visited once a month, and I know Pete will be diligent in seeing you. He's a stalwart member, as you know. He was first counselor for a while before I became bishop."

"Okay."

"Now when you visit these people, I want you to find out what's keeping them from church, or if they even still want to be members or not. We can take their names off the rolls if they want."

"Excommunicate them?"

"It's really only excommunication if they're committing some grave sin. Otherwise, it's just cleaning up the records."

"What if they won't tell me why they're inactive?"

"It'll be your job to find out their secrets."

I shrugged. "Okay."

I called my first inactive member when I got home that night and went to see him and his wife Thursday. They were inactive, the man said, because the bishop's wife had made a rude remark about his wife's dress one Sunday. It turned out that this was the previous bishop, who'd since moved out of the ward.

"Do you think you might like to come back?" I asked. "Or did that incident shake your faith?"

The man blushed. "No, I guess that was a pretty silly reason to begin with. We'll be at church on Sunday." I noticed the woman had said very little the entire visit, so I really had no way of knowing if the man's version of events was accurate or not, or if she was willing to forgive and forget and move on as he was. I wondered why I still cared about the Church at all,

when I certainly had more reason to be upset than these people ever had. Was I just a mindless sheep? I wondered if I should see a psychiatrist to dig up my deep, hidden motivations. There was one I'd met at Third Thursday who seemed nice.

But truth be told, I was enjoying my little position of power and wanted to keep it a little longer. Despite all the negative energy I got from the Church, I did get a lot of positive things out of it, too.

Friday I went out to the bars as usual, but no one was interested. I wondered if I'd ever find a man of my own. If I did, that would pretty much force the issue at church, I supposed. Maybe I was sending out conflicting vibes. Perhaps people could tell I wasn't completely sure I wanted to meet them.

Of course, I was absolutely sure I at least wanted sex. I could worry about dating if that opportunity ever presented itself. Just as fun as the sex, though, was hearing people's life stories. One man a few weeks ago had told me he'd learned how to braid hair while in jail. Another told me he escorted to bring in a few extra dollars. And yet another guy told me he was a cantor and was having an affair with a Catholic priest. He said his wife was upset that he wasn't having an affair with the rabbi if he had to have an affair at all.

People would tell complete strangers absolutely anything, I decided, and these friendly revelations would probably keep me going out even if I did meet someone special somewhere down the line.

Sunday after church, I went to Andy and Ivan's house for dinner. "I see Ivan recruited you to French before I could get you interested in Spanish."

"Well, I'd eventually like to learn Spanish and Italian, too. I've always been intrigued by Romance languages."

"I know Portuguese as well, and Ivan knows a little Romanian."

"But we don't know any languages in common except English. Makes it hard to talk about people behind their backs. You can't gossip in public."

"That must be very frustrating."

"We are studying sign language together, though. But so far all I can say is, 'You're beautiful' and 'Let's fuck."

"As long as you have the essentials down."

After dinner, we watched *A Love to Hide*, about gays and Jews trying to keep their identities hidden during World War II.

Then we all went to the bedroom, where I was able to use my front slit and back slit both at the same time.

On Tuesday, I visited another inactive member. His reason for becoming inactive was his discovery of the Mountain Meadows massacre. "It wouldn't be all that bad just to know it happened," said the man, "but the Church keeps so mum about it. It's like they're trying to hide something."

I couldn't help him with that one, but when I asked if he wanted his name removed from Church records, he was quick to say no. He looked shaken by the very idea.

Friday night, I went home with a guy who picked me up at a bar I'd gone to. But as we were making out on his sofa and he started unbuckling my belt, I said, "You're in for a surprise." I of course was referring to my underwear, but the guy stopped working on my belt immediately and looked shocked, as if I'd

just announced I had two dicks. He sat up and asked me to leave.

As I drove back home, I wondered if I should stop wearing my garments altogether if they were going to keep me from having sex. Even those who tolerated the strange underwear certainly didn't find them very sexy.

And there was also the possibility that wearing them while out cruising just added points to my sin tally.

But I *liked* the garments, as odd as they were. Lots of members had moved to the relatively new two-piece garments, but the one-piece was so different that it made me feel special somehow, and I liked feeling special.

So I wore them again Saturday night when I went back to Andy and Ivan's place for a sleepover. We had an early dinner and then played cards, which of course was forbidden by the Church, and then we watched a movie. It wasn't a gay film, but it was rated R, so that was forbidden by the Church, too. Somehow, though, I suspected the movie and the cards would be the least of my worries if tonight's activities were ever discovered.

We played a version of Truth or Dare, where at one point Ivan had to reveal his first sexual experience. "The first time I had a cock up my ass," he said, "was when I was twelve."

"Twelve!" exclaimed Andy. "You said you were 18 the first time you were with a man."

"Now that's true," Ivan agreed.

"So?"

"The first time I had a cock inside me was when I was visiting my grandparents one summer and found my grandmother's dildo."

"Oh, no," said Andy.

"Are you sure it was your grandmother's?"

"It was in her lacy underwear drawer."

"You sure those were *her* underwear?"

"Why didn't you ever tell me about this before?" asked Andy.

"It's embarrassing."

"You know you can tell me anything."

"Even gay people can be judgmental."

I slept between Andy and Ivan that night. They were both nude, but I liked sleeping in my garments. We were too tired for sex by the time we went to bed, but at some point in the middle of the night, I felt my back slit being opened, and Andy pushed himself inside me. I only half woke up, and even Andy seemed to fall asleep before he finished, lying quietly next to me, still inside me for several minutes before he slipped out.

Sunday was a long day at church, including an extra meeting with the bishop and his first counselor. Despite what the stake president had said, the bishop decided to confide in us what one of the members had told him the previous week. One of the elders in the elders quorum had confessed that he was attracted to his 12-year-old daughter. He hadn't acted on it but was afraid to get counseling, afraid the police would find out his hidden desires and private thoughts. I didn't much like learning about them either.

Weeks went by in much the same manner. I was learning French, and seeing Andy and Ivan usually once a week, and meeting with a new inactive member every week, and still going to the bars on Fridays where I occasionally hooked up with other guys, none of whom ended up being date-worthy. I was seeing my home teacher Pete and his companion once a month, and seeing my parents every few weeks. My mother gave me Jello on each visit to take home with me.

As Andy had predicted, people did remember me at Third Thursday, and I made a couple of decent friends there. I spent an occasional Friday evening with one friend and a Sunday evening with another, and had a fairly satisfying social life. Eventually, though, I was spending almost every Saturday night on sleepovers with Andy and Ivan. It was at their place one Saturday night when Ivan told me I'd made an A on my final exam.

"That's great!" I said. "Does anyone teach the second semester class at night usually?"

"The second semester will be offered as an evening class in the Spring semester, but after that, you may have to study on your own."

"Yikes"

"You seem like a self-motivated type."

"Well, it's easier to study when I get a blow job after each class."

We played naked charades for a while. It was amusing to try to find hidden meanings from someone who had nothing at all hidden

This seemed to evolve naturally into a discussion of more sexual secrets. "The son of our department chair took my class one semester," said Andy. "He came to my office one day and bent over my desk. I took a chance and went for it. I don't know if there's any connection, but I ended up with a raise a month later."

"I wondered why you got a raise that year and I didn't!"

"The chair's daughter will be a freshman next year."

"No, thanks."

But Ivan had a secret of his own to share.

"The first week of this semester, one of my student athletes left a gym bag in my class," he said. "I brought it to my office and gave him a call to let him know I had it. But I couldn't resist looking through it, though I don't know what I expected to find.

"What I found, though, was a jock strap," Ivan went on. "So I took it, and the student never said anything. Anyway, he left his bag in class another time a few weeks later, and I brought it to my office and called him again. And I couldn't resist looking in the bag again."

"And?"

"And I took another jock strap for my personal collection. I knew he couldn't help but notice it the second time, but I really wanted it."

"You look so professional and reserved on the surface."

"But underneath, I'm simply a pervert."

"You say that with just the right amount of self-confidence"

"Anyway, the other day when he turned in his final exam, he gave me a little Christmas gift."

"A pair of your own jock straps?"

"No. Another of his." Ivan paused. "But this one had dried cum in the cup."

"Oh, no."

"I still don't know if he was gay or just flattered or what. But I bet he keeps that little gift a secret for a while."

"How about you, Bruce?" said Andy. "Tell us one of your dirty little secrets."

I tried to think of something I could reveal without embarrassing myself too much. But I finally decided to just let go. "When I was a teenager," I said, "I used to beat off while looking at a picture of Joseph Smith."

"No way."

"And after my mission, one night I wanted to feel the weight of a man on top of me. So I stuffed some clothes with my bedspread, but I put some of my free weights in the dummy, too, to make it heavy, and..."

"And? Let's hear it."

"And I made a head and posted a full-page picture of Joseph Smith on it, so while the dummy was on top of me, I masturbated pretending Joseph Smith was in bed with me."

Andy and Ivan howled.

"Now, if you'd just put a cum-stained jock strap on Joseph Smith, I might try that myself."

"Are all people as weird as we are?"

"I don't know about women," said Andy, "but I would be very surprised if almost every man alive, both gay and straight, didn't have some kinky fantasy or even fact he'd like to keep hidden from most people."

"So I'm not going to hell?"

"Well, I can't guarantee that. But it won't be for having sex with Joseph Smith."

The next day in church, I looked at the other congregants, mostly at the men, and wondered what secrets they were carrying with them. They seemed good and decent. Surely, Andy was wrong in his judgment. But then I looked at the member who I knew was lusting after his daughter, and he looked perfectly normal now. And undoubtedly, most people still thought I was an innocent virgin. So how reliable were appearances?

"Hey, Bruce," said Pete, coming up to me after Priesthood meeting. "I still haven't seen you for December yet, and it's getting close to the middle of the month. Things'll get too crazy for me if I don't get my home teaching done this week. Then you'll be busy with everyone's tithing settlement before the end of the year. So can I come by your place tonight?"

"Sure."

"My home teaching companion is sick, so he won't be able to come. I know it's a little unorthodox, but do you mind if I come by myself?"

"No, that's fine."

Pete did come over that evening. He was in his late thirties, with two teenage boys, twelve and thirteen, both deacons. He

gave a brief little lesson about the Christmas spirit and then asked how things were going for me personally.

"Oh, just fine."

"Are you seeing anyone? I hear you're not going to the Singles dances any more."

"No. Just hanging out with friends. I'm not really in the market right now for a wife."

Pete nodded. "Sometimes, I wish I'd waited longer. Maybe..."

I wasn't sure I was up to hearing any more confessions, but at the same time, I wasn't able to resist the hook.

"Maybe what?"

"Do you ever wonder what life would have been like if you'd taken the path less traveled?"

"How much less traveled?"

Pete looked at me. "Traveled by about one tenth of the population." His eyes locked onto mine.

Pete then told me about when he was about twelve, he'd gone camping with his father, his father's best friend, and the best friend's son, about Pete's age. The two men shared a tent and the two boys shared another. Not long after they'd gone to bed, the other boy propositioned Pete, who was horrified and ran to his father's tent. When he opened the flap, though, he saw his father making love to the other man. He closed the flap and walked slowly back to his tent, where he and the other boy had sex as well.

Pete and his father never talked about what happened, and though the two men continued to go camping once in a while,

Pete never returned to the woods with him. But he remembered that night over the years, and the older he became, the more he wished over and over he'd gone camping again.

"I have a sleeping bag," I said. "Would you like to go camping with me sometime?" I knew I was taking a chance saying such a thing to another Mormon, but I liked Pete.

"It's a nice night out," said Pete. "Not too cold, but just cold enough to cuddle." He looked at me again.

Pete called his wife a little later to tell her the car wouldn't start and he was going to spend the night with me and call a garage in the morning. Then we carried the sleeping bag outside. Pete crawled in first, still fully clothed, and I crawled in after him.

It started out as a back rub, but the foreplay went on non-stop for six more hours. Finally, still fully clothed, Pete pulled himself on top of me and pumped away for about ten seconds. He groaned and collapsed at the same time that I came, too.

Tuesday night, I got a call from the bishop. "Uh, Bruce, we need to talk."

I'd finally made a mistake, and events now began to unfold rapidly. After I told the bishop everything on Tuesday night, I had to speak with the stake president on Wednesday, and my court was held Thursday.

My father was there and heard all the accusations against me. I denied nothing, and after about half an hour of prosecution and "defense," I was asked to wait in an adjoining room while the High Council made their decision.

It was a foregone conclusion, of course, so when the stake president came in my little room a few minutes later, I was prepared for the verdict.

Or so I thought.

"You're being excommunicated, Bruce," said the stake president sadly. "You're going to need to take off your garments now."

"What?"

"You're no longer a member. You can't wear them any more."

I started unzipping right there, and the president almost ran out of the room. I zipped back up and walked out of the building. I went back home, and about half an hour later, there was a knock at the door.

"Mom. Dad."

"Hi, son."

I ushered them in, and they both hugged me. I expected Mom to be a little weepy, but she wasn't.

"Thank god it's finally all out in the open," she said. "We've known you were gay since you were seven years old. It's been no secret to us. All these years, it's been like the elephant in the living room no one can talk about, but now we can finally have an adult relationship."

"You knew?"

"We can't even put our finger on just what it was. Maybe it was the way you insisted on having two G.I. Joe's so just the one wouldn't be lonely. Or the way you simply never took to sports. Whatever. It was just a sense, but we knew we weren't

wrong. We just wanted you to have a few nice experiences in the Church before it all came out."

"You're not upset?"

"Well," said Mom slowly. "I always knew something awkward had to come out of my pregnancy with you." She paused. "Your father and I weren't married when you were conceived."

"You're kidding me."

"I was still on my mission," my mother went on. "I was having my final interview with the mission president. Then he said he would tell everyone I had come on to him and he'd send me home dishonorably if I didn't... well, a month later, your father and I were married."

"I'd waited for her just like she'd waited for me on my mission. When she told me what happened, we got married in the temple as soon as she missed her period."

"Oh, my god."

"But you're sealed to me, so you'll always be my son," said my father. Since I was ex'ed, of course, the sealing was no longer in effect, but I knew what he meant, and I smiled.

"What a relief to finally get the cards on the table." My mother sighed heavily.

We talked a little more, and when my parents stood up to leave, my mother said, "Now when you meet a nice young man and get married, we want him to be part of our lives, too."

We hugged and then they left. I sat back on my sofa and just stared at the floor for a while.

I didn't go out Friday night.

But Saturday, I headed back to Andy and Ivan's place. After dinner, we played Trivial Pursuit and then watched a couple of episodes of *Bewitched*, the ones with the gay Darrin. Then we got ready for bed.

"Boxer briefs?" asked Andy in surprise.

"What happened to your Mormon underwear?"

"I'm moving on to a new stage in my life." I told them briefly what had happened. They both hugged me at the same time, a long, sweet, comforting hug.

"Can I tell you guys a secret?" I asked as we climbed into bed.

"You know you can."

"I love you both."

There was silence for a moment, and my heart started beating faster.

Then Andy said slowly, "Even though you're not a Mormon anymore..." He hesitated. "Do you think you could consider polygamy?"

"No," I replied firmly. Then I smiled nervously. "But I've been thinking a lot about polyandry, and basically I'm for it."

"We'd love to marry you," said Ivan. "We were just wondering when to bring it up."

"You really like us?"

"You're the most normal guys I know."

"I'll try not to take offense at that."

"We have a spare bedroom where you can put your books and things. And we'll fit anything else you need throughout the rest of the house."

We got down to sharing our bodies then, and had the most passionate sex we'd had to date. As I lay on top of Ivan with cum on my back, I wondered briefly if my parents were prepared for my bringing two husbands home to Christmas dinner.

We'd work that one out as we came to it, I decided.

Feeling Andy softly kissing my back, I wondered if the secret to life was just truly loving someone no matter what anyone else thought, no matter what the consequences, just to love as long as you were able, the best you could.

A few years ago, I'd been begging God to make me straight. I'd had no idea of the secret he had in store for me. I wondered now what other secrets were ahead in the future.

I lay down next to Ivan, and Andy lay down next to me. We didn't clean up but just lay there all sticky and covered in sex and love. Then we turned out the light and, one arm on top of another on top of another, we unhurriedly drifted gently off to sleep.

Sex Organs

h, my god."

"Larry, we'll do everything we can to fight."

"This can't be real."

"Don't give up. We'll overcome this. It's not the end of the world."

Larry smiled. It *was* the end of the world. He hadn't been so happy in all his life, in all his seventy years. Pancreatic cancer. He wanted to get down on his knees right there in Dr. Kramer's office and praise God for His goodness.

"Is there any treatment that will cure this, or will it just prolong my suffering?"

"There's always hope."

Larry smiled again. There clearly was no way to survive. Tears came to his eyes. Ten years ago when he'd had his heart attack, he'd submitted to placing a stent in his heart, and he'd suffered some unappetizing changes in diet. He'd *wanted* to die of a heart attack, but not fighting to survive would have been suicide, and that was as terrible a sin as homosexuality. If he'd managed to stay a virgin his entire life, he wasn't going to ruin his chances for the afterlife by losing points at the very end.

But terminal cancer to a vital organ. There was nothing he could do about that. His test was finally over. His trial. His torture.

"Please don't cry, Larry."

"How long do I have?"

"You know we can't say."

"How long?"

Dr. Kramer shrugged. "Six months."

Larry nodded. "Thanks, Doc."

Larry drove home slowly. The trees looked greener, the flowers redder and yellower, the sky bluer.

Back in his house, Larry got on the internet and booked a flight for Atlanta. His favorite destinations were San Francisco, New York, and Toronto, but he thought he'd start out with a tamer city. The Pole Vault in Atlanta was a reliable first way to celebrate. Larry made a reservation at the Marriott. He liked Marriott because he was a Mormon, too. And Marriott had shown himself to be sensitive to gay issues, though of course he couldn't be too supportive or he'd risk excommunication.

Larry had longed for sex almost sixty years, but his longing for the Celestial Kingdom was even stronger. He'd prayed at first to be made heterosexual. When that didn't work, he'd prayed for paralysis or coma. Those hadn't happened, either. Finally, he'd begun praying for death, but after thirty years of unanswered prayers, the doctor's diagnosis was like seeing a vision of Jesus Christ. It was a miracle.

"Cole, this is Larry from Salt Lake. How are you?"

"Hi, Larry. You coming to Atlanta?"

"I want to arrange another 'date.' On the 17th. Around 6:00, so you still have time to dance at the club later."

"Sounds great. I'd love to see you again."

"And can you find someone else to come along? You know my type, and what I like."

"There's a new guy, Cliff. He'll be perfect. Want me to send you a picture?"

Larry considered. He loved looking at naked men, but he'd worked hard over the years to avoid addiction to pornography. There was no sense risking it now. "No, surprise me."

Larry gave Cole the address of the Marriott and his cell number, and he started packing. Normally, he planned trips weeks, even months, in advance. He already had one set up for San Francisco five weeks from now. But this diagnosis called for immediate celebration. He was willing to pay extra for a last-minute ticket.

After he packed for his flight the following morning, Larry sat on his bed, wondering what to do. He had no friends he could call. He'd stopped attending Single Adult activities decades ago. It was too painful to see everyone else pairing up. He never accepted callings at church because it meant involvement with people who talked incessantly about their happy families. Larry went to Sacrament meeting, Sunday School, and Priesthood. He didn't volunteer answers. He didn't ask questions. It was too agonizing to have human contact that was never quite enough.

Larry remembered the interviews with the bishop when he was in his twenties. Why aren't you married? When are you going to settle down and raise a family? It started getting serious, the bishop almost threatening him if he didn't do his duty as a man. Finally, Larry had to "admit" to having sustained an injury while serving in the army. It was during peacetime, so he described it as a "training accident," but thankfully, the bishop left him alone after that.

The problem with this story was that it meant Larry could never confess his sin of masturbation to the bishop. He could therefore never fully repent and be forgiven, and that might affect his salvation. Of course, true repentance meant giving up the sin, and Larry had never been able to do that, either. He figured it was a compromise. "I won't have sex with another man. I won't ruin a woman's life. But in exchange, You'll have to grant me the right to touch myself."

He knew it was still a sin, but he watched TV. He watched movies. He knew perfectly well that there wasn't a man in a million who had *never* had sex. He wasn't sure he qualified for the lower part of the Celestial Kingdom, the part set aside for ministering angels who would never be gods, but he hoped at least for the Terrestrial, where "good, decent people" were to go. In his heart of hearts, though, he still hoped for a bell curve. For a gay man, he'd done exceptionally well. He deserved amnesty and admittance to the top kingdom. He wanted it. He had earned it.

Larry looked at the phone again, wanting to talk to someone. He'd never had a roommate, of course, or a best friend. It would have been too difficult not to confide, not to want a comforting shoulder.

He smiled. Soon he'd see his mother again. He could talk to someone then.

Larry lay back on the bed and rubbed his crotch through his pants. He smiled as he felt a hardening under the thick cloth. He started fantasizing about what would take place in Atlanta. Larry always hired two escorts at a time. He had them act out various scenarios. Perhaps one of them would play a Roman slave dealer who had to show Larry a prospective slave to purchase. The slave dealer would slowly unrobe the slave to let

Larry see the entire piece of merchandise. He'd get the slave hard to show how well he'd be able to service his new master. The dealer would kiss the man to gauge how passionate he could be.

But Larry would never let the two escorts actually have sex. It was a sin to commit homosexual acts, and Larry couldn't allow causing others to sin to be on his conscience. He just needed to see beautiful men, sexy men, impassioned men.

But no sex.

Larry unzipped his pants and pulled out his penis. He stroked it lovingly and closed his eyes.

No, he was not going to do this. He was going to be strong.

Yet he needed *something*. Larry walked to the kitchen and ate a peach. Then he ate a banana. Somehow, he still wasn't satisfied.

He paced back and forth across the living room for twenty minutes. He looked at his prints of the famous Arnold Friberg paintings on his walls. The stripling warriors, Samuel the Lamanite, Moroni burying the gold plates. He rubbed his crotch again.

Larry sat at the kitchen table and thought. He'd never hired an escort in Salt Lake before. It always seemed too risky. But he needed to see another human being. Maybe touch his arm or his chest. He always picked up the gay paper and knew there were ads.

He nodded. He was going to do it.

Around 3:30, Jeffrey knocked on his door. Larry smiled when he opened it. "You're perfect," said Larry.

Jeffrey smiled and came inside. "Nice house. You have money."

"Not really. I just don't have kids."

"What do you want to do?"

"I want to see you look hot and bothered. I want to watch you slowly, very slowly take off your clothes and rub yourself all over. I want you to look like you've just got to get off, but I don't want you to actually do it."

Larry didn't know why he couldn't allow himself to ask an escort to masturbate for him. If it was a small enough sin that he could do it himself, then what would be the harm in ordering someone else to beat off? Larry didn't really know; he just understood it would be a sin, and he didn't do it.

"Right here?"

"This way."

The two men walked into Larry's bedroom, and Larry sat on the edge of his bed and licked his lips. Jeffrey walked slowly about, pulling at his collar a little, wiping his brow, and finally ripping off his shirt. He caressed his stomach and his nipples, traced a line up and down his chest, and let the line go down to his crotch.

He rubbed his crotch lightly for a moment, sighed, and then squeezed. He moaned and slowly unbuttoned his jeans. With each button he undid, Jeffrey would moan and squeeze again. Finally, the pants fell down around Jeffrey's ankles, and Larry watched in delight as the escort's huge penis throbbed against his underwear. There was a little drop of pre-cum on the fabric. Larry rubbed his own crotch for a second, too, but quickly

stopped. He was not going to masturbate while with another man. That would be sex, not masturbation.

"I need you," said Jeffrey.

Larry smiled and nodded for him to go on.

"I really need you." Jeffrey moved up to the bed and put his hand on Larry's chest.

"No. No touching."

Jeffrey removed his hand but still stood right next to Larry, his bulging underwear only a centimeter away from Larry's leg. Larry closed his eyes. The pain was almost unbearable. But he smiled. Soon he'd feel the pain of his cancer, and then everything would be fine.

When he opened his eyes, Larry saw Jeffrey's face only inches from his own. He could feel the warmth across the brief space between them. He tried to move backward, but Jeffrey moved forward. "Just a little kiss," he whispered. "I don't usually kiss my clients, but I want to kiss you. You're different. You're special."

Larry's first instinct was to say no. He'd never kissed a man before, and while kissing didn't sound like a serious sin in itself, he was scared to cross the line into physical contact.

But he was about to die. What if there was no kissing for celibate angels in heaven? Maybe this was his only chance in all of eternity for a kiss.

"Yes." he breathed.

Jeffrey leaned in closer, and his lips met Larry's. It was the most glorious thing Larry had ever experienced in his life. Something that wonderful couldn't be a sin.

Jeffrey pushed Larry gently onto his back and climbed on top of him. Larry protested weakly, but he was fully clothed, wasn't he? It wasn't as if he were guilty of petting. Then he felt Jeffrey's hand on his crotch, and he moaned in protest. Jeffrey seemed to think that this was a good moan and squeezed harder. Now he forced his tongue into Larry's mouth. Larry tried to pull away, but Jeffrey seemed so heavy.

And yet that weight seemed so heavenly. Larry couldn't bring himself to push Jeffrey away.

Jeffrey started unbuttoning Larry's shirt. He moaned in protest another time. Then again, it wasn't as if a man's chest was a sex organ. There was no real sin to let Jeffrey touch it. He reached up to feel Jeffrey's chest as well.

Jeffrey got out of the bed and pulled his underwear off. Now he was completely naked in front of Larry. Larry could see something glisten on the end of his penis and stared. Jeffrey touched the tip of his penis and then brought his finger to Larry's lips. Larry kept them pressed firmly shut, but he couldn't resist the curiosity. In seventy years, he'd never tasted semen or even pre-cum. It was a sin to find out, but he licked his lips and felt a warmth spread through his chest.

It tasted good.

Jeffrey reached over and started unbuckling Larry's belt.

"No. I have to draw the line. We can't do any more."

"I just want to look at you. That's fair, isn't it?"

Larry considered. Just looking wasn't a sin. Or much of one, anyway. He took off all his clothes and lay on the bed. Jeffrey climbed back on the bed, prying Larry's legs apart. "No sex. Just looking," said Larry.

Jeffrey smiled. "A touch won't hurt." He put his hand gently on Larry's penis.

"No. Don't touch my penis. It's a sex organ. I'll go to hell."

Jeffrey giggled. "Okay, okay." He took his hand off and knelt, looking at Larry. Then he smiled again and wet his finger. He reached under Larry's balls and found his asshole. "Your ass isn't a sex organ, is it?"

Larry frowned.

"Is it?" Jeffrey repeated.

"It is if you put your penis in it."

"Then I won't put my penis in it." He pushed his finger forward, and Larry felt it bearing past his sphincter.

"No."

"A finger isn't a sex organ."

Larry frowned again. That was true enough, too, wasn't it? Jeffrey pushed his finger in deeper, pulled it almost all the way out, and pushed it in again. Larry had never felt anything so wonderful in his life. He relaxed and enjoyed it for a moment, but then he understood that despite the rationalizing, it was still a sin. He was almost finished his test. He couldn't allow himself to fail now.

"Okay, thanks," said Larry. "That's enough."

"I want to make you come."

"Oh, god, no."

"I can do it without ever touching your penis, I swear."

This thought intrigued Larry, and he considered again, but then he shook his head.

Jeffrey's eyebrows furrowed. "Old man, you are a real pain in the ass." He lifted Larry's legs in one quick motion and in seconds had thrust his penis deep inside Larry. Larry yelled from the sudden pain, but then Jeffrey clamped his mouth on top of his. He began pumping away, pumping away, and Larry could feel that enormous penis sliding back and forth against his sphincter. After a few moments, it stopped hurting and began to feel good. He tried to push Jeffrey away, but Jeffrey was too young and strong.

Then something horrible happened. Just as Larry heard Jeffrey's panting reach a crescendo that told him the youth was getting close to climax, Larry felt his own penis burning. With one last, deep thrust, Jeffrey came, groaning heavily, and a second later, Larry came as well.

But he'd been raped. It wasn't as if he'd done anything voluntarily. He was still innocent.

Jeffrey pulled out and got dressed while Larry lay there stunned. "That'll be \$200, old man." He held out his hand.

Larry continued to lie there.

"Come on, geezer. Pay up."

Larry sat up, his semen dripping off his stomach, and went to gather his wallet. He pulled out some twenties, and Jeffrey stuffed them in his pocket and left. Larry sat back on the edge of his bed.

He'd liked it. He could confess and repent, though, and hold out without repeating the incident another six months. Six months wasn't forever. He could do it.

But he'd crossed the line. Could he see Cole in Atlanta and not touch him? What would it be like to have a man come in his mouth? What would it be like to enter another man?

What would it be like to love someone?

No. He was going to be pure when he died. His parents and grandparents had all lived well into their nineties. God was merciful to let him die at age seventy. Larry would show his appreciation and be a good boy. The brain was the biggest sex organ, and he was going to keep it in control.

The phone rang. Larry looked at his watch. It was just 5:00. He sighed and picked up the receiver. "Hello?"

"Larry?" said a breathless voice. "It's Dr. Kramer. I had to call you right away." He paused just a moment. "There's been a terrible mistake. Your lab results got mixed up with someone else's. You don't have cancer. Do you hear me? You're perfectly fine. Healthy as a horse. I wanted to let you know as soon as I found out. I didn't want you to suffer needlessly."

Larry sat holding the phone in silence.

"Larry? You okay?"

"That's wonderful news," said Larry dully. "Thanks for calling." He hung up the phone in a daze. He sat there motionless for fifteen minutes, and then for another twenty. Finally, he blinked and looked about the room.

He needed to talk to someone.

But who? Larry didn't even have an address book.

Larry sat staring at the floor for another quarter of an hour. He needed human contact. What was he to do?

His eyes fell upon the gay newspaper again. He picked it up listlessly and turned to the back. Sighing, he picked up the phone and dialed. "Dallas, can you come to my place in an hour?" He listened a moment and then continued. "Yes, I have the money here." He nodded silently. "See you soon."

Larry sat naked on his bed for a few minutes longer. Then he licked some flakes of his dried cum. And he cried.

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