

TS

(and it doesn't mean tough shit, either!)

by Liz Eden

You'd probably think that if you woke up one morning minus your cock, your sex life would be pretty well over. In case you're wondering, that makes you normal--and worthy of my phone number! I, on the other hand, began to live once I was rid of that dread growth. Mind you, I have nothing against cocks. Everyone I fuck should have at least one. Somehow, though, I never got off on the idea of having one attached to my body--in my body's another story. As you probably know by now, I am a transsexual.

I was born genetically male but for as long as I can remember my mind has always identified female. This cross (or trans) sexual identity is the essence of transsexuality. My sexual preference has been much more consistent. I've always preferred men--tall men, short men, blond hair, black hair, young men--if you think I'm going to say old men, you're crazy! There's no doubt about that preference either. I like 'em young.

Thanks to a couple of sharp, hustling producer types (bless their hearts!), millions of people are aware of a small portion of my life. Dog Day Afternoon was the story of my ex-lover, John Wojtowicz, who attempted to rob a bank to get money for the one thing I wanted most in the world--my sex change operation. It was a bizarre and desperate act but at the time it was no more desperate than either John or myself.

I met John the summer of 1971 at Saint Anthony's Feast in Little Italy. In keeping with my gay/drag lifestyle at the time, I was busy cruising all the hot, young Italians with three gay friends when another friend came up behind me.

"Liz, I've got someone here who's dying to meet you," he said.

"I hate to break it to you, Jimmy, but I think you're a little late. Your friend looks like he's been dead at least a week," I said, always the charmer.

His friend beamed. His friend was John Wojtowicz better known around the Village as "Little John," a name he earned on more than one count.

My attraction to John was not exactly "love at first sight." It was closer to repulsion. He was too short, too old (28--I told you I liked them young!) and too eager. John tagged along with us for a while until I decided to fix him up with my friend, Father David, an ex-man of the cloth. I gave them the keys to my one-room tenement apartment on West 10th Street and wished them well.

"Just don't get shit on the sheets," I said.

Tired of just looking at all the humpy guys at the Feast, I was off to "the trucks" for something a bit more satisfying. ("The trucks" is a small warehouse area in the Village where you fuck and suck surrounded by--you guessed it--trucks. It's very romantic if you get off on the smell of sweat mixed with diesel fuel. Apparently many, many people do.)

After a strictly mediocre blow-job, I returned to my apartment finding John still there. We exchanged quips and I, feeling the grime of the trucks, said, "I hope you don't mind if I undress in front of you." I'm such a cock tease! John smiled his approval.

As my jeans hit the floor, my fate was sealed. John took

one look at my scarlet red underwear and almost came. Red is his favorite color.

"Can I blow you?" John asked.

Still horny, I agreed. And let me tell you, if there's one thing John did well, it's suck cock. Knowing a good blow job is tough to find, I even invited him for a return engagement. Perhaps all this sounds a bit callous, but such was my life at the time.

As our relationship grew John began to penetrate even my thick skin. He was sweet, kind and one of the most thoughtful men I'd ever known. Every week he would appear at my door with a dozen red roses. He treated me as no man ever had. There are men who will give you anything you ask for; John went them one better. Often I didn't even have to ask; he knew.

The first few months of our life together went well. Even sex was good. John wasn't exactly hung the way I liked (big!), but we managed. God did we manage! We carried on everywhere--buses, cabs, trains, subway platforms, in bars, behind bars--you name it! I remember how John used to love it when we'd go to the movies. He really loved going down on me in the movies. (Is that ironic?) At home I loved getting fucked and John was always obliging. For some reason, John didn't really enjoy getting fucked himself. I suspect it was because he enjoyed being more in control, more dominant, than he felt getting fucked let him. That was fine with me 'cause sexually I was very fem. Shit--sexually! I was fem period!

At the end of the summer we met there was another feast in Little Italy. Always the romantic, John saw the feast as a kind of anniversary^R so naturally we went. Walking along Grant Street en route,

a shop window caught my eye. There was the most beautiful wedding gown I had ever seen. I had to have it.

"I'll only get it for you on one condition," John said smiling.

"I'll do anything, anything!" I pleaded.

"You have to marry me in it," he said.

It was a cold, clear December day when I swished down the aisle. (Before it becomes too confusing, I must point out it was not a legal wedding. After all, John was already married and that would be bigamy! Technically, it was a "blessing" but we always referred to it as our wedding.) A friend of mine, Father John, another defrocked priest, presided. I was wigged and dressed to death. I had my beautiful beaded wedding gown (yes, I had the nerve to wear white!) and was really floating. The downs I gobbled to calm me helped with the floating feeling. I had a maid of honor, Caroline, and two bridesmaids, Ronnie and Walter. All three wore deep burgundy gowns and, of course, were drags. As if beastly bridesmaids weren't enough, there I stood towering over John decked out in his dress uniform from his Nam days. In flats I'm several inches taller than John but add heels, wig and veil and it's strictly a circus act!

With an eye for camp, I insisted we stop for our wedding pictures in front of the 6th precinct. The cops went crazy. At first the cops just noticed me and assumed it was a real straight wedding.

"Hey, babe, is it too late for me to stand in for the groom? How 'bout just for the night?" teased one humpy cop.

I loved it! There's only one thing I like better than a man in uniform ~~and~~ that's helping him out of it. It was back to reality

when they caught sight of my bridesmaids. There wasn't enough make-up in New York to make them look real.

After the reception and a night of partying which included the wedding party in full drag being bodily removed from a leather bar, John and I returned to my apartment for some wedding night bliss. As I was about to find out, I should have grabbed the cop when I had the chance.

As a wedding night treat, John decided to give me his virgin ass. I use the word "virgin" loosely.

"I can't do it if you just fuck me," John said, "You gotta tie me to the bed."

So this was it; my big moment in S & M. I was the S for a change. I really wasn't into it to begin with but I tied him up anyway. In the middle of the scene I was so turned off I gave up. I ended up coming and John was purple with rage! I could see the Daily News headline: "Gay Lover ^dBludgeons Drag Bride on Wedding Night." I wouldn't even be around to clip it for my scrapbook. Fortunately, John was still tied up tightly, very tightly. John finally calmed down and I untied him. Considering ~~what~~ was to happen in the months to come, I should have left him tied and run like hell.

After our wedding, John and I were constantly at each other's throats. The shouting matches came like queens at the trucks--often! John just could not control his jealousy. All I had to do was talk to another man and he would go into an uncontrolable rage. At first it was flattering, but a few guys who John put through Village bar windows didn't see it quite that way. Soon, neither did I.

During one fight I remember grabbing a knife and running into the bathroom with John in hot pursuit. He was crazed and I wasn't doing too bad myself. I was locked in the bathroom and he was trying to kick down the door. I began stabbing through the flimsy bathroom door. Penetrating the door, the knife nicked John. He went berserk and broke down the door. He dragged me out and punched me wildly and violently in the chest and face. He threw me on the bed and I started to sob hysterically. A neighbor had called the police and they arrived just as the scene came to an end.

I remember the look on John's face after we calmed down. His face told me he knew he had gone too far. And he had; we had. It was over. Whatever love I felt for John was gone. Nothing he could say or do made any difference.

The months that followed were beyond belief. John just would not believe it was over. He began to threaten my life, writing me letters telling me how many days I had to live if I didn't come back to him and the like. Knowing how true John was to his word, I tried reasoning with him. No luck. Finally I tried faking a move to Florida while really moving to Forest Hills, another section of New York. John bought the story but he didn't stop there. He came to the office where I worked and demanded my Florida address. Thoroughly briefed, everyone at the office confirmed my move story but refused to give John any address. He lost control. "I'll kill you if you don't tell me!" he screamed at one woman in the elevator. I was fired the same day.

Flat broke, I moved in with a friend in Manhattan. I let my eyebrows grow in very thick, grew a moustache, and started wearing

glasses. To see me, you'd never have guessed I was Miss Mattachine New York for two years running! I was a pretty butch number considering how I really felt.

Desperate for money, I took a job as a waiter in an uptown gay bar I knew John never came to. One night, his best friend, Richie, did. Recognizing me he called my name. Not thinking, I turned.

"When'd you get back in town?" he asked.

"I don't know what you're talking about," I said hoping he might think he had his stories mixed, or something--anything! As it turned out the only thing Richie had mixed was his drink.

Dressed in hot pants and a corporal's shirt with a butterfly embroidered on it, John rushed into the bar at 3 AM. He found me and began pleading with me, telling me how much he loved me. There was no escape. Reconciled to my fate, I tried bargaining with JOHN. I would see him once or twice a week--no more. He agreed. The rest of the time, I explained, I needed to myself because I was going through some rough times. He couldn't understand that he was a part of my rough times. All he knew was that he loved me and I must still love him no matter what I said.

I think it was in June shortly after John found me working at the bar that I told him of my plans to get the sex change. I prayed that would finally turn him off. No such luck! He didn't like the idea at first but when he realized how serious I was and how much it meant to me, it became his goal also. He insisted he was going to help. He was going to get me the money. He never said how and I never asked.

After two more months of John's constant demands; numerous scenes, the worst of which peaked with John holding a gun to my head; thrice weekly visits to a shrink; and God only knows how many pills, August came and with it my 26th birthday. I persuaded John to leave me alone to celebrate my birthday with some friends at the bar. The next day, August 20th, it was back to John. He picked me up in the morning and we spent the day together. All I could think about was how horrible my life was. Here I was, 26, and nothing was right, nor had it ever been. I was no closer to what I wanted--the sex change--and what was worse, it was nowhere in sight.

John dropped me at my apartment and I reluctantly made plans to meet him at 11:00 that night. Alone, my depression grew deeper. I came to what I thought was a rational decision. I decided to kill myself. The rest is Hollywood history. As John was busily robbing a Brooklyn bank, I was in the psychiatric ward of Kings County Hospital recovering from my suicide attempt knowing nothing about what's going on until the FBI came to bring me to the bank scene.

As unbearable as John made my life just before the robbery, I can't help but feel sorry for him. He got the royal shaft anyway you look at it. ^{He is} Now doing 20 years in a California Federal penitentiary while others who make his crime look like petty theft are sipping scotch and sofa in the comfort of their homes thanks to social position and smart lawyers. All you have to do is read the newspapers and you know what I mean.

And then there's Warner Brothers and the film Dog Day Afternoon. John was paid \$7,500 for a story that is grossing millions. Of course

he was promised more but then so was everyone involved. We were all to be salaried technical advisors on the film. Once those releases were signed though, we didn't hear shit from Warners until they wanted something. The summer before the film opened, Warners got in touch with me hoping I would do a thirty minute promotional documentary for the film. If they took my advice, they're standing on the corner of Eighth Avenue and 42nd Street with their promotional documentary up their collective ass. I then filed suit for one million dollars and settled out of court for considerably less.

Of the \$7,500 John got for his story, his lawyer got \$5,000 (for what, I don't know) and I was given \$2,500 for my sex-change. It was just what I needed to get the ball rolling, or two balls, I should say. I had my castration--the removal of my balls--by a doctor in Yonkers, One pushy, greedy would-be writer recorded the incident for Screw and Gay magazines complete with doctor's name. The questionable legality of sex change operations in New York coupled with the bad publicity from Screw for the surgeon, left me with tiny hormone induced tits, no balls, and a surgeon who now refused to complete the operation. I got myself a lawyer and threatened to drag his ass through every court in N.Y. if didn't at least come up with another surgeon. I was then referred to an associate of his willing to complete the operation.

On March 27, 1974, seven months following the bank robbery, I entered a New York hospital for what I thought was the final stage of my sex change. A V shaped incision was cut behind the scrotum near the rectum for about three inches up both sides of the scrotum. The fleshy inside of of the cock was then removed but the cock and scrotum

were never cut. The hollowed ^{still-connected} ~~then~~ _g cock was tucked up inside me, inside out, creating a vagina from the sensitive skin. The scrotum was then used to form the lips of the vagina. Natuarally I didn't get to see my operation but I did see a film of another sex-change at a medical conference I spoke at. It was so fascinating I couldn't take my eyes off the screen--not even to cruise the doctors. Now that's fascinating!

Released from the hospital, I was in a hell of a lot of pain but took comfort from thinking the worst was over. It wasn't. My vagina closed up and I couldn't get a peanut, let alone a penis, up there. Considering the circumstances surrounding my referral to the surgeon, I should have known better. How clear hindsight can be.

Completely frustrated with my useless cunt, I sought out doctor after doctor. One particularly sadistic M.D. tried to force me open under local anesthetic with a metal dilator, or dildo, if you prefer. Imagine the pain of castration, triple it, and you'll have an idea of the ordeal. No go. Nothing short of major surgery was gonna pop my cherry.

Months later I found a plastic surgeon I trusted willing to perform the operation for a few hundred dollars up front and the rest in time payments. The \$2,500 from John long gone, a dear friend loaned me the money and I was back in the hospital the next December. Finding my cunt only deep enough to take a four-year-old--soft!--a skin graft from my ass was used to add depth. The operation was a total success leaving me with a working cunt and a doctor I still swear by.

After the operation, a rubber dilator was inserted to keep me

me open while the raw skin healed. Doctor's orders were no sex for three weeks and removal of the dilator several times a day for short periods to be lengthed over the weeks. My anxious, sex-starved mind (and body) began to run wild. Every night I hung out at a hustler bar, The New Camp, looking for just the right piece of trade for my first real fuck. I mean, a girl's got to shop around! Then it occurred to me, what's the difference between a dilator and a cock? One feels like rubber and the other sets my mouth to watering, but other than that I could see no real difference. Out of the hospital five days, I opted for the cock. I've been fucking and coming ever since.

In the two years since the last operation on my cunt, I've been hustling my ass off pulling my body together. I'm a perfectionist and insist my body be as feminine as I can make it. Hormones have reduced body hair to a minimum, made my features more feminine and caused my slight male body to spread in just the right places. Though my breasts developed thanks to hormones, I wanted them larger so I tried silicone injections. Not really satisfied with the silicone (it tends to sag after a while), I've since had water bag implants inserted bringing my tits to a 40D.

Am I read as a transsexual? It all depends on who's doing the reading. Strangers can't think past my tits. Gays and others familiar with the lifestyle usually know my story. There are certain cues easily picked up depending on how devoted a TS is to her face and body. A good TS eliminates them as best she can with surgery, say filing the Adam's apple; training for the voice; or dressing to play down something like broad shoulders. Like any woman, we know

all the tricks of the trade. Our lives depend on it.

As you probably can imagine by now, I'm not the kind ^{of} ~~an~~ transsexual who gets the change, runs off with a man, and lives happily ever after in suburbia. Not yet anyhow. My life centers around my boyfriend Tony, an air-conditioning and refrigeration mechanic. We live together in a Lower Eastside apartment with friends dropping in for hours, weeks or months. Tony's 13-year-old brother even lives with us a good deal of the time. It's a loose lifestyle and that's just the way we like it.

Though my life is anything but middle class, my tastes are. I enjoy all the creature comforts, nice clothes, jewelry--just about everything but work. (At least I'm honest about it!) Money is always tight, but a steady job is not for me. I write for Michael's Thing, a gay weekly N.Y. entertainment magazine; occasionally dance topless; and have been known to turn more than my share of tricks on Eighth Avenue. If Tony and I are strapped for money, I simply make the rounds. It's an easy, uncomplicated way to make a buck and that's just the way I like things--easy and uncomplicated.

I've just turned 30 and am happier than I ever thought I would be. I have a man I love, a few close friends, and peace of mind. That's more than many and I'm grateful. Now all I have to do is hang on to it all. If that's all life brings me, I'll be happy. I do admit to one small dream, though. I'd love to tell ~~to~~ the world my story; the story of transsexuality as no one before me dare tell it. In the meantime, if you see me on The Avenue, give a whistle. I love it!!!!