Bet Power
146 Riverbank Rd.
Northampton, MA 01060

August 7, 1989

Lou Sullivan
1827 Haight St. #164
San Francisco, CA 94117

Dear Lou,

Although I haven't written for awhile, I've been thinking of you very often and wondering how you are. It has been so good for me to correspond with you and especially good to meet you in SF this past March! Thank you for sending me the newspaper clips about the International Ms Leather contest and for continuing to send me the FTM newsletters.

I hope you appreciate the humor in this card as much as I did when I saw it! (Or is it just my dirty mind working overtime?) I have, however, resolved any such predicament for myself by purchasing one of Parivarto's "Willys." Much better than the rolled up sock/safety pin hassle.

Now, to get to the good news quickly. I now have the lover I've wanted for so long! The photos enclosed are a recent shot of me at a Morgan horse championship show last weekend and of [redacted], my lover, at the same show. Pretty, huh?! (I mean her.) I feel so lucky. Let me tell you how we met:

Back in February, I was flipping through Bay Windows (a Boston-area Lesbian and Gay newspaper) as I usually do and skimming the personals. The usual dull and boring stuff to me went on ad after ad in the Lesbian section until I came to the following ad which stood out like the North Star:

> "Ultra fem, 32, vry pretty, Ivy League, sane. Willing to go back to being straight for love in the form of F2M. TS pre &/or post op. BW Box 175."

I waited for a few weeks and saw the same ad run about three times before I sent a very short note which told this woman I'm a F to M transvestite and also a dominant/top/sadist. I asked her to send me a detailed letter about herself, with a photo, if she was interested. She did as I asked and then I sent her photos of me. She lives in Boston and drove 100 miles all the way across the state to meet me at my home in Northampton. We've been very happily together for 14 weeks now. She's 32, a student at Harvard Divinity School, and plans to become an Episcopalian priest. She's not at all conservative, though. And she's a very good match for me emotionally, psychologically and sexually. She's a true partner of a F to M (she says she'll love me through whatever process I go through with my man self), she's extremely feminine, submissive and a masochist. Plus, she's an excellent cook and wife. My dream come true! In a month or so, she plans to move to the Worcester area, 50 miles closer to where I live and very near the city of Worcester where I work. It took 4 years of being single and focusing on

really getting the kind of partner I want this time, but all the processing and self-exploration sure seems worth it now.

An interesting thing about [redacted] is that she's been very connected to IFGE in Boston. She's introduced me to a few TSs there and helps put their newsletter out. At one point, she was crossdressing as a man, calling herself James P. (She mentioned to me that she even wrote to your FTM newsletter about how she took her male name.) She's shown me photos of herself crossdressed ... not at all a convincing performance.

She says she is a woman, female-identified inside, prefers to be "fem" but had despaired of ever meeting the female-to-male she wanted, before me. She says she was crossdressing to try and "do it all herself" and to be able to understand the experience of F to Ms. I have been somewhat concerned about it, though. Because I feel like a straight man inside and in my sexuality, I would feel like I lost her as a lover if she dressed as a man. We've talked about it and she reassures me she doesn't need to do so anymore. I've shown [redacted] the FTM video and she thinks you and your story is great, really good to hear! And I've been putting on a mustache, we've been going out together and passing as a straight couple in public.

[redacted] also doesn't think of herself (nor of me) as a Lesbian. I am currently having a bit of conflict about which community(s) I belong or don't belong in. I've been walking in the Lesbian community for nearly 20 years and am a leader in that community. In the last several years, I have been mistreated and excluded by some Lesbians because of my sexualities: S/M and F to M. However, I have this conviction inside that many F to M TVs are (and should be included as) a part of the Lesbian community just as M to F TVs are part of the Gay community. Drag queens and drag kings!! It seems to me we ought to be accepted there. I know, too, that drag queens and one Lezzie F to M started the Stonewall rebellion and today the "mainstream" Gays and Lesbians try to cover over that fact and imply that the clean cut, conservative types began the Movement, taking credit themselves. I know how hard I've worked (in the Library I live with, in the community) for Lesbians. And I don't want to just "shut up and go away" simply because some Lesbians want me to. And, on the other hand, I don't feel enough "community" by and for F to Ms yet, particularly F to M TVs. Any thoughts on this? Do you think I'm kidding myself? Or do you think some F to M crossdressers have a chance inside the dyke community?

How is your health, Lou? I send out healing energy to you and pray to Life for you frequently now. Are you still having the night sweats or have they passed?

And what's happening with your book? Has the tyrannical editor at Alyson let up yet, gotten out of the way, and let the world have your important book and ideas at last? I am feeling really frustrated along with you, Lou, at not yet holding your book in my hands.

I am still meaning to send you info. from The Ladder on F to Ms. However, if you'd like the references sooner than I can send them, most libraries which carry Lesbian and Gay literature (The Harvey Milk Library in SF?) have an

"Index to The Ladder." You could look it up and check under "crossdressers" or "passing women," and see if the library also has the back issues. I must warn you though that, on the one hand, the abundance of references in The Ladder indicate the prevalence and numbers of F to Ms within the old 50s and 60s Lesbian subculture, on the other hand, most of the commentary in The Ladder about them is negative and judgmental. (Times do not seem to have changed much since then, except of course for people like me who really want to speak out and write about our experiences/lives/realities as F to Ms inside the Lesbian community and interacting with other communities.

This letter has gone on. I miss hearing from you. I also wish I could visit you again soon. Would it be OK if I called you to chat? If not, please do write to me and fill me in on the latest. I also want you to know you can call me whenever you like, should you want to at [redacted]. The machine is always on, but I would get right back to you.

Have a good rest of the Summer, Lou! And thanks for being who you are.

With love,

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enclosures: 2 photos

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(and quote)

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She says she is a woman, female-identified inside, prefers to be "femme" but had despaired of ever meeting the ~~F to M~~ female-to-male she wanted, before me. She says she was crossdressing to try and "do it all herself" and to be able to understand the experience of F to Ms.

I have been somewhat concerned about it, though; ~~because~~ Because ~~I identify~~ feel like a straight man inside, and in my sexuality, I would feel I lost her as a lover if she dressed as a man. We've talked about it and she reassures me she doesn't need to do so any more. I've shared [redacted] the FTM video and she thinks you and your story is great, really good to hear! And ~~we've been~~ I've been posting on a message board, ~~saying~~ we've been going out together and posing as a straight couple in public. (none of me)

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and members of FtMs within the old 50s & 60s lesbian subculture, on the other hand, most of the commentary in the Lesbian about them is negative & judgmental (Times do not seem to have changed much, since then), except, of course, for people like me who really want to speak out & write about our experiences (living/realities inside the lesbian community.)

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