

██████████ E. Irving Place
Milwaukee, WI 53202
June 24, 1986

Dear Lou,

"Balls," cried the Queen
"If I had to, I'd be King!"

If I thought this little pun on the word to (two) would offend you, I wouldn't have written it to you. I'm delighted to hear that, at last, you have to. The run around with the idiot surgeons is finally over. I must also say that when you pull in psychiatric references, you sure get the best. I'm impressed, but always know that you would, ultimately, have your way. I'm proud of you - very proud!

I'm enclosing my check for \$6⁰⁰ for your manual (how appropriate - man-ual) even though I'll not be considering a gender change.

I wonder if you, as a favor to me, would have the author (whom you know quite well) to autograph it for me.

Last evening, when reading your letter, I dredged around in my memory bank and dusted off several precious memories that I'd like to share with you. These memories just might be in your memory bank also; but you may have conveniently forgotten them because they were painful to you. Again, be assured that I'm not trying to cause pain, but even painful memories can be good, particularly when you realize that frequently good things come out of pain.

Do you remember a Saturday morning many years ago when Sheila arrived in a panic

at my back door in near hysteria. She had been at the laundromat, doing her laundry, when she had been attacked by a group of neighborhood punks, who mistook her for a "faggot" and were going to ~~beat~~ "bash the faggot." As I remember, we sat at the kitchen table and with lots of coffee and conversation and a few ~~hugs~~ hugs, managed to soothe the jangled nerves and allow enough time to pass so that it was safe for Sheila to go back to the laundromat to pick up the laundry. "What am I going to do, Eldo. I can't continue to live in this half world, forever." Out of this experience the resolve to continue the transformation ~~process~~ ^{process} was actually strengthened.

Sometime later ~~Sheila~~ Sheila, now in a leather jacket, levis and men's shoes, at the old "Factory" bar on a crowded Saturday night, when a large number of straight couples had "discovered" that gay bars were more fun than straight ones. Sheila, in a loud voice, was making it known that as far as she was concerned the "hets" were not welcome. "Jesus Christ," she complained, "I can't get away from these damned 'hets' even in a gay bar." I tried to explain that we should not practice "reverse discrimination," but Sheila would not buy the argument. Several "hets" were offended at being called "hets," but they did learn about the language of oppression and how gays felt when they were called "faggots," "fruit" etc. A learning experience was had by all, because Sheila was very loud in her arguments against the "hets." She was afraid that

the "hets" would try to "take over" the bar. Indeed, they did try, but the owner, Chuck, realized on hearing Sheila loud cursing, that if he allowed the "hets" to take over, he could ~~lose~~ lose his profitable gay business. I told him it had happened in a very successful gay disco in L.A., which when it got 60% straight, lost its gay business and then finally had to close because it became "just another straight disco" when the gays left. Being gay himself, he decided that he really wanted a gay bar, so he suddenly began to card & screen all the couples at the door. After several fights between the gays and the straights (something he had never had to deal with) he really cracked down and the bar remained gay. Chalk one up for Sheila.

The Judy episode came to a bad close. I lost him back to faggotry. I finally kicked him out, after he became a "faggot prince" again. He began to stay out all night most of the time, started wearing his eye make up and faggot clothes again and became impossible to live with. He wanted to go back to the gutter, so he became completely disrespectful of my hospitality. He left the front door open & unlocked 2 times. He refused to lift a finger to take out the garbage, wash dishes etc and he even became completely slovenly about himself. He would use a fresh towel with every bath and then wash it up and dump

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it on the floor for me to pick up. His room was a disgrace with clothing strewn all over it. As a matter of fact, he peeled a banana and dropped the peeling on the table for me to pick up. He went to bars, even though he had promised not to because he is under age. Jim saw he was hustling because 5 different men with no last names - just John, Ed, Joe etc. Called in one week "Is Jody there?" Well, Jim not running a call boy house and I could no longer trust him, so I had to boot him out. He left on Saturday morning and said "I'll be back Monday and I asked him to come back Sunday because we had a "big day" on Sunday. He arrived at 9:30 Sunday evening.

Monday morning I got him up early and dropped the bomb. "You are leaving my house this morning." Of course he had spent the \$140⁰⁰ he had earned in the past week at part time jobs I had got for him and had (at least he said he had) no money. He called his parents and they refused to let him come home and also refused to send any money for a room. "Put him on the street," said his father. "He may be hungry for a few days, he may sleep in the park for a few days, but he will survive and will get work because he has to survive." I couldn't do this, so I coughed up \$100 for 2 weeks rent in a nice east side rooming house and John, my friend, gave him \$20 in cash and we

moved him out and took him to the rooming house. That was the 9th of June and he hasn't contacted me since then. I am told that he has been hanging around the porno book store, so I'm sure he is hustling there, but I can't interfere. Well, you win most times, but you lose sometimes. Keeps you humble.

I'm enclosing a photo of my ~~Painted~~ "Painted Lady". The painter just finished today and I grabbed my instant camera and took a snapshot for you. Actually the colors are more vivid than they appear in this photo, but you get the idea. The background is a soft buff, the window surrounds are a greyed lavender and the accent color is a deep wine color called "Bing Cherry." I've been joking about it, telling people I chose the colors to fit my politics - "Lavender with a touch of red." Needless to say the whole neighborhood is agog, but almost everyone likes it. I'm already fighting off the reporters and newspapers who want to feature it in an article.

Next year I hope to landscape - a low wall across the front, copped with a cast iron fence with arrow points, lilac bushes, ~~phlox~~ phlox, iris, violet and other flowers in the purple shades. However, my landscape artist may have other ideas and before I do it, I've got to replenish the money supply, which is quite low after paying for the paint job.

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I enjoyed the historical society's newsletter also. I agree, wholeheartedly, that gays need to know their history. Not being lived in S. F., I can't know about the history of the Bay area, but if your letter would like a fresh article on Whitman or Lytton Strachey, I could do a short one easily. With Whitman, I'd try to show how Whitman's being gay and coming out caused the great change in his work. Let me know if they want such an article. I'll find the time.

After all, if I can write a "book" to you as this letter is turning out, I can do ~~as~~ a short article.

With much love to my

Macho Man friend, I remain

Very truly yours

Edon

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