

Naked Curiosity



# More Than A Woman

By Dennis Scott-Bush

Larry opened his underwear drawer and discovered bras where his boxers had been. He reached into the closet for his lucky interview suit and hanging in its place was a full-length red sequined gown.

Chuck had struck, again.

Larry's partner of five years, Chuck, began experimenting with drag, a few months ago, and their lives—not to mention their closets and dresser drawers—haven't been the same since.

"If I had wanted women's clothes in my bedroom, I'd have married a woman," Larry vented. "I never liked drag. Never!"

It's true. As long as I'd known him, Larry had been one of those gay men who had absolutely no appreciation for the gender-bending art form.

"I knew I shouldn't have let him talk me into going as Laverne and Shirley, for Halloween, last year," Larry muttered. "That's when this all started."

Larry had been a convincing brewery-worker Laverne but it was Chuck who'd tapped into what would make all his dreams come true. And, now, Larry blamed Chuck's current costumed pursuits on his hours spent as the other half of the sit-com duo.

Can their whole hurly-burly be traced back to Shirley, in terms of Chuck's change from burly to girly? And, now that Larry had a drag queen for a partner, how would he handle it?

Larry tried to be supportive, at first. He chipped in for costumes and watched endless rehearsals of Chuck lip-synching to torch

songs. He assisted with the physical transformation and escorted Chuck's sassy alter ego to various bars and clubs.

It wasn't long, though, before Larry's real feelings about drag began to slip out in conversations. He belittled Chuck and insulted his new friends. Larry had no intention of trying to pledge their sorority and he made that quite clear.

"I think they give gay people a bad name," Larry articulated. "They set back gay rights every time they show up at a pride parade."

I reminded him that it had been the drag queens at Stonewall who'd started the modern gay rights movement and who are still among the most dedicated fundraisers and activists.

"They primp and shave and, then, put on a dress and think they're suddenly witty and wise," Larry opined.

This from a man who has his chest waxed to better display his muscles and, after two cocktails, acts as if he's the Oracle of Delphi.

My friend Wayne also struggled with some issues, when he dated a drag queen.

As a professional singer and dancer, Wayne considered lip-synching performances to be nothing more than karaoke with better production values.

He understood the desire to put on a show, though, he probably wouldn't have

gotten involved with Billy if he hadn't met him in the very butch surroundings of kick boxing class.

Knowing that the man he was dating did drag was one thing. Watching that guy tuck his penis out of sight, put on a gown and ask to be zipped up was something else altogether. And being seen in public with Billy in full regalia was a scenario that Wayne

could barely speak, much less introduce his neighbors to the six-foot-two gender illusionist beside him.

Frozen smiles were exchanged. But even colder were the disapproving looks the couple gave Billy. Wayne was incensed. How dare they cast a disparaging eye on such a fine man? They didn't know anything about him, yet, they judged him merely because he was in drag. Then, Wayne realized that, by not wanting to be seen in public with Billy in costume and make up, he'd been just as prejudiced.

Should every gay man do drag? Of course not. And not all of us could handle the challenges of being in a relationship with a drag queen, either.

But a community that expects others to accept our diversity should be more accepting of those who aren't cookie-cutter clones or conservative assimilationists.

Clothes don't make the man. And a dress and heels don't make the man any less deserving of our respect and kindness.



Cindy Williams and Penny Marshall

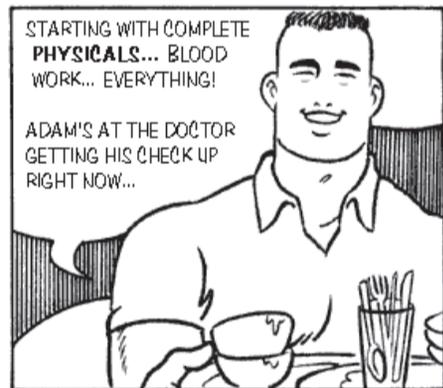
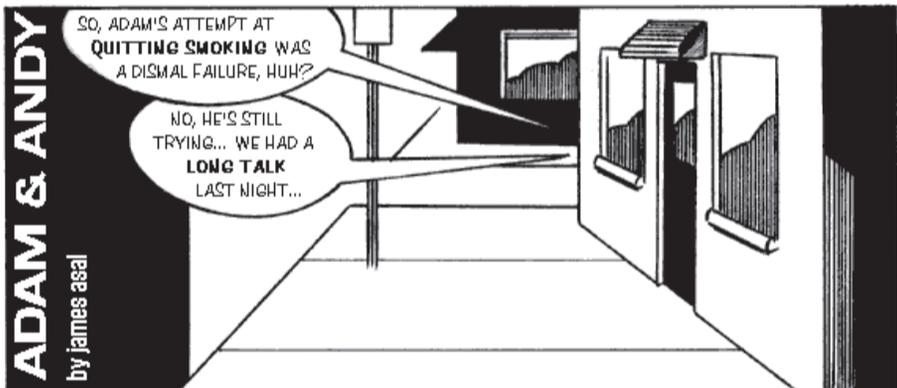
desperately hoped to avoid.

But, when his high-heeled honey handed him an invitation to a fundraising gala where he would be a featured entertainer, Wayne grudgingly agreed to go.

It was a glittery evening and not just because of the lights reflecting off Billy's bugle-beaded bustier.

As they mingled with the other attendees, Wayne and his dolled-up date ran into a straight couple who lived in Wayne's apartment building. Wayne was mortified. He

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