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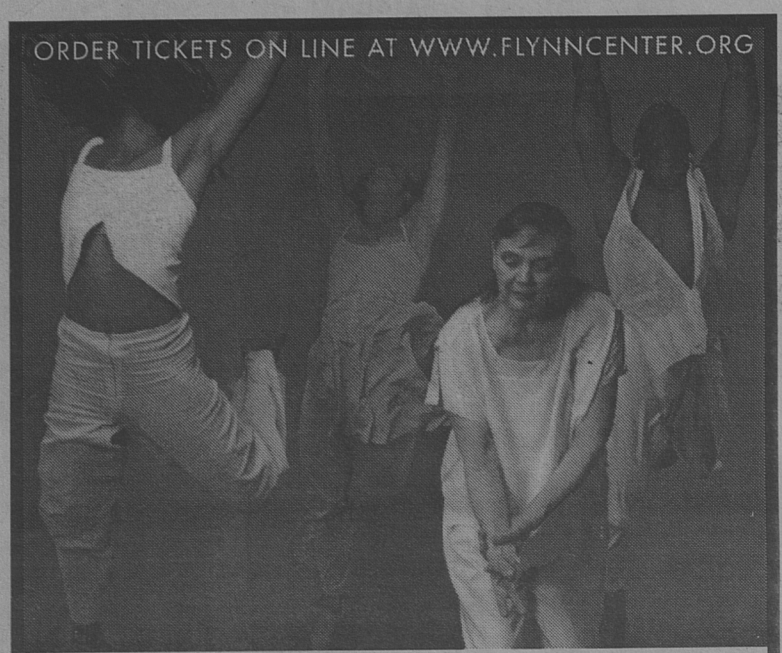

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Naked Curiosity

Stalled

By Dennis Scott-Bush

> What troubles me is that he swears he's seeking love and companionship but keeps putting himself in situations and places where the other people are looking only for sex.

The routine was familiar.

My friend, Adam, called to say, "I met a really special guy." He went on to describe the man's striking appearance and rampant charisma. I followed that with my usual question: "Where'd you meet him?"

"At the gym," he answered.

I asked if a stimulating conversation had been struck up while waiting to use the decline bench, or whether they'd gotten acquainted elsewhere in the health club's sprawling facility.

"We started in the shower and ended up in the handicap stall," Adam explained.

Was Adam flush with the rush of love at first sight?

Despite no follow-up phone call from his recent stallmate in the three days since their encounter, Adam still wasn't ready to give up hope. "I gave him my number," he assured me. "I wrote it on a piece of paper towel and gave it to him when we were both in the locker room."

Was Adam's clear thinking clouded by a cacophony of sweet words showered on him in the heat of desire? Can passion amidst the porcelain form the foundation for long-term bliss?

Adam has been hunting for a boyfriend for several years. He spends countless hours searching for Mr. Right at his gym, in bars, parks and at the baths.

A week after his gym encounter, Adam was prowling the great outdoors looking for a great outdoorsman. He was praying before his prey in no time, pondering the potential of the man with whom he was spending a few impetuous moments in the park. The next morning, he e-mailed me the news that he'd found a special man. Again.

We ran the regular drill.

Adam hadn't got the man's phone number or even his name. All he had to show for his effort were grass stains on the knees of his pants and a cut on his right ear. His Don Juan of the thicket had grabbed Adam's ears to drive a point home, and one of his untrimmed fingernails had sliced into the skin.

Should a tetanus booster and an ample supply of Shout be required to find a boyfriend?

The baths were a beacon in Adam's search for his soulmate. He'd had a five-week relationship with a man he met one night at a particular bathhouse.

The glory hole maze hadn't allowed for a proper introduction or handshake. But it was indeed shaking that brought Adam and Walt together. While they stood at neighboring urinals, Walt was shaking his glory-seeking member after relieving himself. Adam glanced over and recognized the one part of Walt that he had met a half hour earlier.

It's not the most romantic how-we-met story to tell friends and family but it did the trick, so to speak.

During their brief coupling, Adam discovered that Walt continued to visit the bathhouse where they met. When confronted, Walt told Adam that he shouldn't be surprised and that no agreement of monogamy had ever been discussed or implied.

Adam believes that, because he had one relationship with a man he met at the baths, the possibility exists for it to happen again. So, he packs his bag of personal hygiene products and his shower clogs and he returns, full of hope.

I worry about Adam.

My concern isn't that he's being promiscuous. He's single and practices safer sex — though not always in the safest places. There's no reason he shouldn't satisfy his carnal appetite.

What troubles me is that he swears he's seeking love and companionship but keeps putting himself in situations and places where the other people are looking only for sex. The majority of guys cruising parks, lingering in steam rooms or prowling the halls of bathhouses are not in the market for a discussion about current events nor are they anxious to plan a commitment ceremony.

Adam says he's looking for someone to share his ride on the gay road of life. Wouldn't it be helpful to focus on the drivers who want a long-term maintenance agreement rather than those who just want a jiffy lube?

In his heart, Adam understands that he's more likely to find boyfriend candidates at social activities or through friends. The challenge is getting that message to resonate throughout his mind and body.

Until then, his impetuous sex life may be in hot pursuit, but his love life is going nowhere fast.

Dennis Scott-Bush has always been curious. He is often naked. His work has appeared in a variety of publications throughout the country. E-mail may be directed to him at NakedCuriosity@aol.com.

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