

Naked Curiosity

By Dennis Scott-Bush



Friend or Ho

Making plans with my friend, Mel, always concluded with him adding the caveat, "unless something comes up."

And something often came up.

Throughout our friendship, Mel blew me off to get blown dozens of times – always with the explanation that "something came up."

I wasn't the only one left hanging while Mel was banging some trick he'd met at Macy's, on a bus or at a doughnut shop. Every one of his friends had stories of agendas that were gutted while Mel slutted around with some spur-of-the-moment playmate.

Was Mel in touch with his inner primal man? Are we primordially-programmed to put sex before everything – including friendship?

I always tried to be understanding. Mel was not very comfortable in social situations. He didn't have a knack for getting dates with men he considered attractive. He said that he needed to take what he could get whenever he could get it, because he never knew when he'd have another chance.

From time to time, he verbalized his frustration. "I don't have a cute boyfriend like you who wants to get me off any time I pull it out," he'd whine. And he'd repeat that sad-sack gripe to anyone in our group of buddies who wasn't companion-challenged. I was younger, then, in age and experience, and I bought into his mindset that he should be allowed – and encouraged – to place sexual gratification above everything else. If friends were left with canceled plans and no-shows, then, that was as it should be.

In hindsight, I see that Mel was sixty-nined right out of his mind.

Mel is hardly alone in his screw-you-while-I-try-to-get-screwed mentality. Plenty of folks expect their friends to get lost whenever the slightest opportunity to get laid arises. And still more pledge allegiance to their chums while willingly quantifying their value far below that of a stranger who may possibly put out.

My friend, Anthony, e-mailed me, the other day, to ask if I had a classmates.com membership. He'd noticed that one of his best friends from high school had just been added to the roster and only members can send e-mail to others listed on the site. He determined that, as fond of her as he was, it wasn't worth the \$29.95 annual membership fee to send her a message.

This same cost-conscious

friend has spent boatloads of money and time following guys from bar to bar in a 150-mile radius of his home, just because he thought they "wanted him."

How many imported beers and gallons of gas is an old friend worth? What's the going rate for a guy who may not last five minutes in a fervent grope and grunt?

The question to be answered isn't friend or foe. In matters of our loyalty, is it to friend or ho?

Mel was notorious for trying to pick up the waiter, when our covey

he didn't get lucky, he still had us to fall back on. He'd call one or more of us, if his rendezvous took less time than he initially thought it would. He assumed that we would be delighted to return to the original plan, as if nothing had happened.

It doesn't take too long before that back-seat, second-string status gets old. After a while, the second string wants to tell the aggravating soloist to get plucked.

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of friends went out to dinner. These meals allowed us to revel in each other's company and enjoy a variety of taste treats, yet, Mel's attention was always focused on giving a particular tip to our designated server.

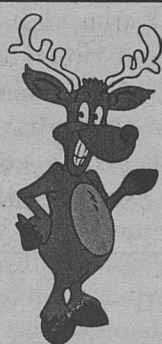
It didn't help that he'd assure us, afterward, "It really wasn't good. He was a lousy lay and I'm sure I would've had a better time with you guys." As if knowing that he realized we were ultimately preferable to tricking with a man, whose name he knew only because the guy had been wearing a name tag, would make us feel vindicated.

We were his safety net. Even if

I have no problem with people pursuing a hot piece of ass. But is it fair to put going after sex ahead of plans you've made with friends? Is it right to tell someone who was there for you, through good times and bad, that you'd love to see him, unless something comes up?

If any so-called friends of yours behave like Mel, show them what else can come up: Your middle finger.

Dennis Scott-Bush has always been curious and is often naked. His work appears in publications throughout the country. E-mail may be directed to NakedCuriosity@aol.com.



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