



*Men Playing  
Safe  
With Men*

# MaleMen

Models 364-4967

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

## A FAMILY'S STORY

# The First Day Back From The Hospital

*EDITOR'S NOTE: For three months, you have read the story of a Charlotte-area mother and father whose gay son, living in New York, has AIDS. Now, through associate editor Mark Drum, meet Bobby, the 30-year-old PWA who has found a new serenity amidst the indignities of AIDS.*

By **MARK DRUM**  
Associate Editor

In Bobby's New York City apartment, the living room, high above harried streets, is tasteful and filled with treasured art collected over the years. Medical supplies and prescription medicines fill the kitchen and flow into the hall. Classical music lulls in the background, counterpoint to constantly interrupting phone calls, nursing support personnel, friends, and family. It is a typical first day home from the hospital, where Bobby has spent five of the last six weeks.

He sat across from me, at once a stranger and a friend I had grown to know through his parents. He wore jeans and sweater. His face streamed emotions. This was our first meeting.

One of the three nurses sent by agencies comes to take his blood pressure, looking for adverse reaction to either of two drugs administered intravenously through a Hickman implant in his chest.

Bobby's mother later asked me how he looked, and I could only say "fabulous." From pictures and video tapes I had seen, I was prepared for the worst. I expected to see ravages I had come to expect from someone suffering a terminal illness. I was wrong — the first of my misconceptions about AIDS patients.

For an afternoon, I became part of his world; part of his hopes and fears. I found in him a man driven with commitment to telling what he has learned and what the rest of us need to know to survive. His story is laced with anger, hope, depression and a will to live; a story not so much of dying, but of learning to live each day more fully than many of us dream possible.

"It's all up to the individual," he told me time and again. "If people don't take individual responsibility for their actions, it will catch up to them."

Bobby addresses the apathy in both the straight and gay communities concerning the reality of AIDS.

"What they will find is that the fear of the disease will start closing in on them," he said. "It will get closer and closer. First, it will be a son of a friend, then a friend, then a family member. Then, they will realize that they must reach out to those who have it and educate those who don't. We must teach children how to avoid it, and health-care professionals how to work with people who have it. These are being done in the larger cities; they're way ahead of (much of) the South where people are sitting around waiting for it to become a problem."



DRUM

CONTINUED, NEXT PAGE

# After Work . . . Seven Days A Week.

You're professional. You know your company makes it possible to enjoy the fine things in life. But it's hard not to watch the clock with Stevens waiting one hard spit from uptown.

After all, nowhere else in Charlotte can you enjoy the friends you want to see — outside . . . on the porch, the waning sun feeling good on your face. A cool refresher in hand. Free munchies an elbow away.

You know business. You know Stevens just had to start opening every day after work. With dinner just down the stairs and potential friends ambling in moment by moment. And with those little adult toys just inside on the upstairs bar.

Besides, you wanted today's bar special. You appreciate the variety. Sure, not all of them are your fancy, but your favorite is a bartender's seconds away.

Ah, yes, the weekend's soon! But in the meantime, today's special! And perhaps a sandwich just before leaving for home.

MONDAY: Draft.

TUESDAY: Bourbon.

WEDNESDAY: Domestic beer.

THURSDAY: Beck's and Watney's.

And SUNDAY: Bloody Marys and Champagne!

And you're marking Thursday, May 14, on the calendar for an especially early arrival. Pleasant hours on the porch before watching Charlotte's largest fireworks display: the \$25,000 World 600 Festival explosion engineered from about an eighth of a mile away.

Yes, that's during Drummer Week when Stevens has special drink prices for anyone dressed in leather.

Think about it. Stevens after work . . . seven days a week.

4-1 Mon-Fri 11:30-1 Sat-Sun

# STEVENS

◆ Cafe and Bar ◆

316 Rensselaer

377-1221