

anatomically incorrect

Bringing things up to date

by Ronda Shouse
Special to Q-Notes

[Ed. note: This column details the life experience of one Charlotte transsexual. Send differing perspectives to editor@q-notes.com. Some content may be uncomfortable for some readers.]

I began this column last summer with the first part published in September. Just about everything published to date was written prior to October. In the interim, many things have taken place, and I'd like to share them.

I had scheduled March 16 of this year for SRS with Doctor Sanguan. The thought of flying for more than 20 hours to Thailand and then back after major surgery was too much. I canceled that date and decided instead to go to Montreal and have surgery with Dr. Pierre Brassard. His work is said to be so good that other doctors cannot tell the difference. Montreal has what is called total care. For one price (under \$10,000) they will house me, perform surgery and, after a few days in the clinic, take me back to "their" house. I will have 24-hour nursing care and all meals of my choice prepared for me. They will instruct me in how to care for myself. From the comments of others who have been there, it is a wonderful experience. I expect my surgery will be late summer or early fall. I hope for fall.

After nearly twenty-three years of near hatred for my ex, I finally have no ill feelings. Suz had followed her mother so much that they were like clones, but it seems that finally she has seen the light, cut the apron strings and is standing on her own. She has been dating someone for many months now. I hope he is the man she has searched for all these years. It is quite obvious that I never was and could have never been.

My daughter Jenn and I were very close for many years. She could always come to me with any problem and I would not get mad at her or judge her. Today Suz has moved into that position and she and Jenn are getting along wonderfully. It seems as if my transition has had some positive, long-term effects for my children and also for Suz.

Jenn called me this past summer and from the beginning I could tell a difference in her. It is easy to see just how mature she has become. I asked her if she would be willing to read my story and she said yes. I told her she would discover things that she did not know but that my primary reason for writing it was to educate. Jenn wrote to me saying that it did open her eyes and she did learn some surprising things. My hope is that one day soon she will sit down and talk with me.

Lar and I began a new relationship back in July. When she first called me I was surprised and thrilled. But with the next couple of con-

versations I could sense a change in her voice. I asked if she was uncomfortable talking with me and why. She said it was strange to hear me talk about female things. She says she just can not handle it and has not called. While I can understand being uncomfortable, Lar has not attempted at all to learn about transsexualism. My oldest, most mature and responsible child is very narrow-minded. I love her and it hurts me that she is this way and there is absolutely nothing I can do.

Absolutely nothing has changed with my son. I fear he and I will never again see each other. Some have said that as he gets older he will begin to understand. As much as I wish this were the truth, I do not believe it will ever happen. Sadly, I am a freak to him.

The two cousins that made contact with me are still interested, but the novelty has worn off and they rarely call me, though I have called them several times. I have asked about visiting, but it is impossible to get a commitment. I can love and reach out to them but I cannot, and will not, force myself upon anyone.

It has been three years since my brother has spoken to me. My cousins have spoken with him and he said he would call me. But he hasn't. I love my brother but I can not force him to love me. He seems to think that this is a terrible thing and I am embarrassing the family.

In August of last year, I met someone on

the Internet. Our relationship soon blossomed into a long-distance romance. Each time we planned on meeting each other something would happen. During those months I asked repeatedly if he were sure about me. He always assured me he was.

We planned on being together for Thanksgiving. He picked me up at the bus station and we hugged one another and went to the car. The first day was spent in his home. My love for Sam was being expressed constantly, but he did not seem to pay me the attention I expected. I thought that maybe it was a case of the jitters, so I didn't worry about it.

That night after being in bed a short time Sam went down stairs to sleep on the couch. He has sleep apnea and just could not get comfortable. Still, it seemed odd that he would not be sleeping with me. The next day we again stayed inside all day and I began to wonder why. When bedtime came, he went back downstairs to sleep. I began to feel used and ignored.

By the fourth day, he admitted he was uncomfortable with my transsexualism in public and with his family. This was a terrible blow to me and I felt a hurt I had never experienced before. I cried, but I did not let him see me.

Thanksgiving evening I decided to go all out. I excused myself and went upstairs, changing into a sheer white baby-doll outfit. I was very nervous when I came down stairs, but I felt I had nothing to lose. Sam paid me attention for

a while but when we got in bed together, he jumped up and went downstairs. I felt like dirt.

The next morning I got my things together to leave. Sam went and bought me a train ticket home and then we went to the train station. He dropped me off and left. I have never experienced such complete rejection.

I spent time with my friend Terry at the Holidays. We watched movies at her house; we went out to eat once or twice a week; we went to the nail shop together. I went on with life, but my work suffered.

Then the Friday before New Years, the phone rang late in the evening. It was Sam. All the memories and emotions came rushing back. We talked for a while and I cried. He repeated that it was his fault. He was worried about what friends and family might say.

Sam asked if there was any chance of getting back together. He had made a mistake and realized what he had thrown away. I wanted to be with him and so we agreed to work on his problem. I did tell Sam I would do what I could to help but the bottom line remains — it is his problem.

That is where Sam and I are. With much luck we will be able to marry, maybe by year-end. Sam wants to come for a visit soon. I believe that we have something special and should do all that we can to make our relationship work and grow. I believe that the Lord brought us together and now is bringing us together again. Love will find a way. ▼

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