

## Dark Years, Different Lifestyle

*The following story, submitted by a Carolina student, is very personal and makes judgments about an issue that is controversial in the gay community. The opinions are the student's. Some readers may find the language too coarse at times, but because the article is very personal we have decided to leave it in the language of the author. The occasional coarseness is also more expressive than the appropriate substitutions. The article may antagonize those who disagree with its conclusions, but we hope that it will encourage everyone to examine their own opinions, both negative and positive, about the issue. Reader responses, as always, are welcomed.*

-Editor

My story is about my "different lifestyle" and how I lived in it for five years until a few good friends helped me out. I would like to stress that this story is about my life and how I overcame my problem. I also would like to state that not everyone who participates in "bathroom sex" believes it is wrong, and that is why I am dedicating this story to those who are still having "bathroom sex" and those who turn their heads without lifting a helping hand. I hope that these people will change.

Before I begin my story, I will explain why I believe this type of sex is wrong. This might seem unnecessary, but there is obviously a large number of people who disagree with me. First, there is a great risk that people take with their health when they don't know anything about the background of the person with whom they are having sex. Second, and more important, I found the experience to be very damaging emotionally. Everyone that goes into a bathroom for sex has different reasons: power, a quick thrill, a relationship, or to know that you are wanted. One thing is certain, though: most people do not feel good about themselves or other people.

I compare this behavior to alcoholism, except that it is worse. When people are depressed, some tend to use sex as a drug to make them feel good for a short while. Like alcoholics, they build a tolerance and need more and more to make them feel good. Eventually sex becomes such a necessity that it controls their lives. It happened to me.

My story begins when I was 14 or 15 in a public bathroom in Minnesota. I had always found myself entranced by bathrooms. I guess it was the sexual zeal of actually getting a glimpse of another man's cock and comparing it to my own. It was also the excitement of seeing and doing something forbidden: loitering in a bathroom.

One day as I was washing my hands for the fifteenth time and drying my hands under the heater, I felt a pair of hands cup my groin and squeeze. I turned around and saw an elderly man massaging my groin. I guess I was a little shocked and scared that my loitering would actually result in physical touching. The man leaned down

and whispered, "You like that?" I mumbled something, and he said, "Come with me." I followed him into a smaller bathroom in a department store where we both went into one stall. Before I knew it, I felt this man sucking on my cock. It was all over before I knew it, and as I was scurrying to put my pants on and meet my mother the man whispered in my ear, "This is our secret, eh?"

It was not until two or three days later that I actually started thinking about what I had done. When I did, a deep sense of anxiety washed over me and left me crying. I felt that I couldn't tell anyone, not a single person. From that moment on I started leading a secret, dark life, contrary to my public happy-go-lucky personality.

I didn't go back to a restroom until about a month later. As before I waited around, busying myself with personal hygiene, until another man approached me. This time I knew what to do and didn't want to be considered a novice. After our quick sex, I realized there was something different; we hadn't spoken to each other.

As my life went on I became more and more obsessed with getting out of the house and going to a shopping mall for sex. I remember making up reasons to tell my mother so she would take me there: birthday present shopping, party shopping, and Christmas shopping. (I lived for the weeks of pre-Christmas shopping.) For two (see DARK YEARS, page 12)

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