

11/17/87

Dear Eldon,

Thanks for calling the other day. I'm glad to hear your job situation worked out, and especially that you've quit smoking!

I'm still feeling very well. I haven't really been sick since my bout of pneumocystis in December. In Sept. I had my usual sinus infection and fever and they gave me ampicillin. Well, after taking it 10 days, I woke up with a rash from head to toe... looked like the measles... so went for an emergency visit to my doc. I was all prepared to be thrown into the hospital right away, but they just said, oh, sorry, seems I'm having an allergic reaction to the ampicillin and it'll go away in a few days. Which it did. However 2 weeks ago my doc phoned to tell me to cut my dose of AZT in half because my latest blood work shows I'd getting toxified by it and my white blood cell count is 720. So now I'm only taking one capsule every 4 hrs. around the clock. Since cutting the dosage, I'm feeling slightly more nauseous and headachey, but nothing debilitating. I still get out of the house every day, ride my motorcycle, get things done. But I am more tired and taking more naps. Am also still doing the inhaled pentamidine once a month as a preventitive against pneumocystis.

I have been being good to myself by getting a weekly massage (legit, only) from a hunky doll. I go to a weekly group counseling for "disabled gay men" (I just tell them I have a one-inch dick and AIDS), and once a week I go out to eat with my emotional support counselor from an AIDS group. He also knows me only as a gay man, nothing of my TSism.

Now for the exciting news: I joined a "Small Endowed & Guys Who Like 'em Small" club, and got together with 3 guys from the contact list. Of course I didn't tell them anything about my TSism. The first guy never even reached out to look at or touch me, and one meeting like that was enough for me. The 2nd guy spent all night giving me the 3rd degree about every little scar/imperfection on my body and complaining how rough life is and if he was ever diagnosed he'd commit suicide, etc etc. Never went back there again, either. But the 3rd guy was really fun, although (unbelievably) he wasn't too hip on What's Safe. We had 2 fun times but I had to keep enforcing The Rules. Plus, by the end of the 2nd night he figured out I had 2 holes down there. He never said anything, but he "wasn't feeling well" last time I called & I haven't heard from him in over a week, but I'll try calling him at least once more... I KNOW he had a good time with me. And I sure did with him!

I also finally got the nerve up to go into a "jack-off club" that doesn't have a mandatory clothes check. So I just left my underwear on and sat around with the others, watched porn on the video and jerked off. What fun! I imagined some of the guys were giving me a dirty look because I wasn't showing them what I had, but too bad for them. But now it's too bad for me cuz they just

closed the place down. Guess I should be thankful I went the 2 times I did.

More good news: I've been searching for a publisher for my Jack Garland biography, and sent a letter of inquiry to Naiad, the lesbian press in Florida. Well, Saturday I got a phone call from the president of Naiad who is VERY excited about my work and says it MUST be published, but they couldn't. She suggested Alyson, but I told her they sent me a form letter saying they're all booked up until 1989 and I could resubmit it then. She asked, "Don't you want to wait that long?" so I told her that I don't expect to be around that long, and about my diagnosis. She was very sorry, but said they can't publish it because they're "by, for and about lesbians," and I'm a man! (Oh, the ironies of life!) SO, ha ha, told her I haven't always been. Well! Then she REALLY didn't know what to do! Told me to give her a few days to think this over, and even if they still decide Naiad can't accept it, Garland's story MUST be published and she knows everyone in the industry and she'll find someone to publish it. So, it looks like this really will happen after all! I'd almost given up. She also urged me to work on my own autobiography, so told her that's my next project and, in fact, I have already begun editing the diaries I've kept every year since 1964. [She remarked that one rarely hears of the female-to-male, so I sent her a letter saying I think it's because the straights think F-to-M's are a gay issue, but the women think it's a men's issue and the men think it's a women's issue, and consequently no one will deal with it. Might make her reconsider Naiad's rejection.]

Also, the San Joaquin County Historical Society (a straight organization with 650 members) solicited an article from me on Garland, as he spent time there from 1897-1899. That should have gone to press this week. Will be the first publicity on my work in the straight press; important, I think, to prove the story appeals to a wider audience than just gay readers.

So far I've sold over 200 copies of my booklet INFORMATION FOR THE FEMALE-TO-MALE and did a mass advertising through the mail. As a result, it's now on sale in gay bookstores in Boston, Denver, Minneapolis, Toronto, Seattle, L.A., Philadelphia, Austin TX, and N.Y.

In addition, I'm spending my energy organizing a F-to-M peer support group. We met in Sept. (9 attending) and I plan to organize a meeting at least every 3 mos. Paul Walker, renowned psychologist specializing in gender issues, phoned to tell me he'd been at the Harry Benjamin Internat'l Gender Symposium in Amsterdam and the F-to-M gay man was discussed. They had located nine of us just in the city of Amsterdam! A doctor in Minneapolis is now seeking to interview as many gay and bi F-M's he can in the U.S. and Canada, and he came here to S.F. to see me. I also took a trip to Reno in Oct. to see Dr. Ira Pauly, supposedly THE expert on the F-M tho he's never seen one who's a gay man. So I wrote him to say he better see me before I croak. It went VERY well and

he even videotaped our interview and wants me to come back in January to speak to his sophomore medical students. Also wrote a 5-page letter to a doc in Toronto who wrote an article on sexual preference of TS's, admitting he was excluding one F-M gay man because such an orientation was so unusual. Walker is now actually referring his F-M patients to me! He says that, already, gender clinics (read: Stanford) are more open to considering working with the F-M gay man, because of "pioneers like Lou Sullivan."

I know you get nervous, Eldon, when I get so "public," but being gay, I know the value of "coming out," and do believe I can maintain my circle of friends who only know me as a gay man while still being there for other F-M's who need to talk to someone who's been through it.

Spoke on the phone with Elizabeth this past weekend. She's doing real good. Also got a postcard from Alyn Hess when he was in Wash DC for the March. I write regularly to Howard.

Have you seen the movie Maurice? If not, DO! It is SO GOOD!! I cried! No lie! Though it got such bad reviews, I think it is one of the best movies I've ever seen. Saw it twice already, and will go again this week. I saw so much of what happened between Maurice and Clive as what happened to me and my ex, Tom.

Eldon, you never responded re: the issues of GPU NEWS we need to complete our holdings at the S.F. Gay Historical Society. Is there any hope? Do you still have that list I once sent of issues needed? I'd be willing to pay the postage if you'd send them. I believe it's really important.

Well, that's all I know. Until next time,