

Tony changes sex to keep lesbian wife who fled with nanny



THEN: Tony and Rose on their wedding day



NOW: The couple who say "we'll stay together"

TONY COHEN, the father of three whose wife had an affair with their children's teenage nanny, is having a sex change.

"But there's no question of us splitting up," says his wife, Rose. "We love each other and we'll go through it together."

Tony says: "I still love my wife. I suppose you could say our relationship is platonic, although we do sleep together. We do have a kiss and a cuddle, but that's all."

"When Rose went away with the nanny, I wanted her back. I knew then that I had to do something—that I needed help."

"Rose asked me to see a psychiatrist and I did. That was the start of my change."

The couple's love-life has taken yet another bizarre twist since Tony began to change.

For 32-year-old Rose has been advertising in sex magazines.

She has entertained male lovers at home while Tony and the children were in the house.

The family first hit the headlines last year when Rose went away with 18-year-old nanny Marie Wood.

Marie's parents later took their daughter away from Rose who then vanished.

She returned to Tony, a 38-year-old ex-inventor, after he made a plea through the News of the World.

An industrial tribunal later awarded Marie £386 compensation for losing her job. Rose told me:

"I find it incredible that people think I'm incredible for staying with Tony."

Future

I don't understand why anyone should think I should leave him.

I love him. The fact that he lives as a woman and will become one — hopefully soon — doesn't make any difference.

Perhaps the fact that I've had a lesbian relationship makes it easier for me to understand and accept.

It's possible that in the future we will have a lesbian relationship.

I would be prepared for that after the change is completed.

EXCLUSIVE

by POLLY HEPBURN

But I would never force the issue.

We'll carry on as we are, sleeping together and kissing and cuddling.

You don't stop loving someone overnight when something like this happens. We're living together as two women. You couldn't call it a lesbian relationship.

But it's true that we talk together like two women about clothes and make-up.

Friend

I've had lovers and Tony and I sat down and talked it over. We decided that I should advertise in a magazine.

I just said something like: Attractive women seeks gentleman friend.

I can't remember how many replies I had. But I saw about six of them and had sex with two or three.

I used to bring them home. Tony would be in the house, but obviously in another part.

I don't think it was particularly odd. Tony knew what was going on.

There was never any question of a permanent relationship — I already had that with Tony. It was just a question fulfilling a need.

I couldn't face going out and picking someone up, so I advertised.

They were quite prepared to pay, but I didn't want to cheapen myself in that way.

I had a relationship

with one of the men who answered that lasted a few months. But then he got over-zealous.

For a short time I rented a flat and took him there. Other times we made love at home. It was purely a question of need.

I realised that Tony was going to need a lot of help to get through this change.

I feel frustrated for him that it's taking so long. I feel angry on his behalf when people stare and point.

We were asked to leave a restaurant one night because they didn't like the way he looked but you get used to that happening.

We intend to stay together although we have to face the fact that there may well be relationships for both of us.

I don't know what would happen if we both were attracted to the same man.

But I think it's less likely to happen at our age than, for instance, with two young sisters.

Lesbian

I didn't worry about it at all. I was attracted to him and eventually we started a relationship.

He was always willing to kiss and cuddle but I suppose, looking back, I was the one who initiated taking our love-making to the final stages.

"Sometimes he had difficulty making love. But I never thought he was odd or anything like that."

When I first met Tony there was no doubt that he was a good-looking man. I liked his looks and his personality.

He told me quite early on that he had feminine feelings and I noticed the odd mannerism.

It was just the way he sometimes sat with his legs crossed or a certain way he would hold his hands.

When we took on Marie I found myself turning more and more to her.

I was attracted to her, although I'd never had a lesbian relationship before.

"I didn't have any



Sex-change husband and lesbian wife

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thoughts of leaving Tony. I thought the three of us would go on together.

It didn't seem strange to me because I knew there were many variations on sex.

We were all living together until I decided to go away with her.

Tony, 38, who has already had breast implants and intends to call himself Anita, told me:

“The fact that I feel like a woman has not changed my love for Rose.

There's no question of us splitting up although I don't want a lesbian relationship with her. I hope one day to have a relationship with a man.

Inside

The children don't know yet what is happening. But when they're old enough, we'll have to explain.

That is when they will have to judge me.

I don't expect people to understand. It's asking the impossible unless they've been through it.

People who read about sex-changes think we're all kinds of perverts. They have no idea what it's like to live like I did.

When I went to boarding school at 11, you can't imagine the

horror I went through every day surrounded by all those male bodies.

Later I used to go out with girls and then pretend to all my mates that I was having sex with them. But I couldn't I just wanted to be with them and nothing more.

Looking back, I went overboard to be manly. I took up boxing and got as far as the ABA championships.

When I met Rose, we bought a shop and eventually started living together.

We started kissing and cuddling and finally had sex but it was difficult for me.

Rose wanted children and I managed to give her three. But all the time she was having them I suffered this jealousy.

I wanted to be the one having children. I wanted to pick up the baby and hold it to my breast — that's how strong my maternal feelings were.

So far I've paid for my sex change operation myself. I suppose by the time it is finished it will have cost the best part of £10,000.

Tony and Rose, of Boughton Monchelsea, near Maidstone, plan to keep their children — a son aged seven and two younger daughters — when Tony's change is complete.