

FRATERNAL LEGACY

Author's Note: I am currently writing a mystery series that takes place in modern day Long Beach, California. I have completed the first book in the series and am working on the second book. In researching storylines for my series, I actively talk to people in the community, trying to find real stories to incorporate into subplots. The GLBT community has lots of stories. As a writer, I seek to tell our stories in a way that captures truth and authenticity. If I come across a story that doesn't fit into my series, like the one below, I write it as a short and post it on Nifty or a few other queer-oriented story sites.

If you are interested in reading the series, please visit my website at www.jaysenmarshall.com. The main character is a personal trainer in his early twenties. The series is not classified as erotica. Instead, I am interested in creating a character who happens to be gay, and is someone with whom the everyday person, irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identification, can relate. You can read a synopsis of the first book at the website and if you're interested, can download a .pdf version to read at your leisure, too. I'd love to hear your feedback. An online form is available at the website where you can leave me praise, criticism, suggestions, or recommendations.

In the meantime, please enjoy the story below. It came from a recent college graduate I met at a coffeehouse in Long Beach. My thanks to "Eric" for allowing me to tell his story.

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During my freshman year in college, the decision to join a fraternity was an easy one to make. More than 25% of the student body was Greek and it seemed like if you wanted to be anyone of any significance on campus, you needed to be in a fraternity or sorority house. I suppose somewhere deep in my mind, I joined hoping that living in a fraternity house may get me some action with a guy. But after a few weeks living in the house, it was easy to see that nothing was going to happen.

Of the 120-some guys that lived in the fraternity house, I would guess at least ten, maybe fifteen of us were gay. As far as I knew, though, none of the other guys would dare hookup with another guy in the fraternity house. It may have happened, but it was definitely on the down low.

The fraternity I joined was one of the better-known houses on campus. While we had a reputation for being athletically talented and actively involved on campus, we were also known for being on the wild side. One of the stunts that made our house notoriously famous occurred the year I was a pledge.

During the yearbook photograph that was taken in the fall, one of the senior fraternity brothers, Rick, decided to show his stuff to the world. Rick was standing in the front row and let his unit hang out of his suit pants. The photographer didn't notice, nor did the editors of the yearbook. It wasn't until the yearbook came out the following spring that the whole campus was exposed to his stunt. It was a bad scene. The University and the National Chapter came down on the fraternity hard, putting the house on social probation.

While the house was taken off of social probation a year later, our relationship with the University's administrators was never the same. It never hurt our standing among prospective recruits, and to some extent may have even helped by projecting the image of the stereotypical fraternity. But nonetheless, those of us who were in the house always felt a little resentment that we were forever being punished by the school administrators. They literally kept their eye on everything we did, requiring approval for any official fraternity event we held. It sucked.

During my senior year, the resentment boiled over and a few of the brothers in the house were ready to take action. On Thursday night during the first week of school, five of us were sitting around, drinking beers and listening to music. All five of us in the room were in the same pledge class, giving us a special bond with one another. But on top of that, we all genuinely enjoyed each other's friendship and brotherhood.

Todd was the mega-jock of our fraternity. He was a three-sport athlete in high school and highly recruited by many colleges across the country. He was awarded a scholarship to play baseball for the University, but an injury to his shoulder the summer before his freshman year ended that dream. So instead, he played on intramural leagues, leading our house to dominate in flag football, basketball, and softball. Despite being highly envied for his athletic ability, Todd was refreshingly down-to-earth. He was the kind of guy everyone liked. Even guys in other fraternities who lost against him in competition loved him. And of course, the ladies loved him, too. He never had a steady girlfriend, though. His style was to date a woman for two or three months before moving on.

Andrew was our pretty boy. Definitely not the sharpest tool in the shed, but certainly fun to look at. He was the reason our parties were so popular with sororities. Andrew's face and body could have easily been on a Calvin Klein advertisement for underwear. He was the one guy who could always get me to stare when I saw him shirtless. I resisted gawking at the other guys, terrified that I would out myself. But with Andrew, I couldn't help myself. He was tall and had dark features. He had a rugged jawline and high cheekbones. His body was amazing, with muscles that were well-defined, but not overly developed like a meathead. Andrew's greatest attribute, by far, was his eight-pack stomach. Once, I caught a sneak peak of him getting out of the shower without a towel around his waist. I took a mental snapshot and enjoyed the image for months afterwards. Andrew was a total sex-fiend. He had a reputation for being the campus man-whore, a title he relished. His policy on dating was widely known – if you wanted to be his girlfriend, you'd have to be willing to share him with his

harem. Being in a monogamous, committed relationship with one girlfriend wasn't his style.

On the other end of the spectrum was Jordan, our campus leader. As a freshman, he was a member of a bunch of clubs. By our senior year, he was leading most of them. Jordan was President of the College Republicans, President of the Student Body, and Vice President of the College of Business Honorary. Most guys in the house suspected he was also a member of the University's secret society, an accusation he fiercely denied. One day when I was digging through his dresser to borrow a tie, I stumbled on a lapel pin with a skull and cross bones on it, confirming his membership in the secret society. I never told anyone about my find – we all had secrets in the fraternity, and I certainly didn't want others knowing about mine. Jordan had one girlfriend the entire time we were in college. He was straight-laced, never cheating on her or even allowing himself to be in a situation where the opportunity to do so could present itself.

Paul was the rebel. When we were freshmen, he placed dead last in our pledge class during initiation week. Upperclassmen told us after-the-fact that his initiation was one vote away from being denied. Much of this he brought on himself, purposely trying to piss off upperclassmen when he was still a pledge. His grades were marginal and he didn't play sports. Paul was regularly drunk and almost always had a cigarette in his hand. He brought very little to the fraternity, but because he was a third-generation legacy, he initiated with the rest of us. Deep down inside, Paul was a good guy. If he liked you, his loyalty had no end. He was the kind of guy you hoped would have your back if you ever got into a fight. And he was actually one of the smartest people I knew. But his grades never reflected it because he didn't put the effort in completing assignments or showing up to class. Paul never had a girlfriend during college. He was known for his one-night stands. I always had a soft spot for women who hooked up with him during one of our parties. They'd go to bed with him, only to find out the following morning he was out for sex, not a relationship.

Then there was me. I wasn't a standout in the fraternity, which accurately summarized the rest of my life, too. My grades were good, but not good enough to put me on the Dean's list. I was decent at most sports, but never the high scorer. I was better-looking than most guys in the house, but not the one who turned heads when I walked into a room. Don't get me wrong, though, I liked blending in with the crowd. It was a comfortable place to hide. As for romance, I didn't have a girlfriend during my entire time in college. On occasion, I would go on a date with a woman, just so guys in the house wouldn't have too many questions. I'm sure some of my fraternity brothers suspected I was gay, but thankfully, no one ever questioned me.

That Thursday night, the five of us sat in Andrew's room and talked about the new pledge class, making predictions on which ones wouldn't make it through initiation week. When there was a lull in the conversation, Paul had a devious grin on his face. All of us had seen that grin before and knew that he was plotting. Given his track record for coming up with some really twisted ideas, none of us wanted to find out what he had

in mind. But that didn't matter, because he was going to tell us anyway.

“So I was thinking,” Paul said, taking a draw from his beer. “We're all seniors this year.”

Andrew interrupted with a smile, “Well, if you wanna be accurate, we all *should* be seniors. But one of us in this room has failed so many classes he's still probably a freshman based on credit hours.”

“Okay, asshole,” Paul shot back. “Like I was saying before I was rudely interrupted, for the majority of our time in the house, we've had to carry the burden of one guy showing his wang in the yearbook photo. The administrators have never treated us the same ever since, even though we never pulled a stunt like that again. I say the five of us in this room go out with a bang and do a repeat of the stunt.”

Jordan laughed at his suggestion, “What are you, a perv? You want us to go around showing our cock on campus?”

“Not like that, dip shit. We're not gonna go around flashing people like exhibitionists,” Paul clarified. “We're going to do the exact same thing Rick did. But we're gonna do it smarter this time – in no way will it be connected to the fraternity. We have to do it independent of the house. It's kind of our way of giving the bird to the University, without getting the rest of the house into trouble. It'll be our unofficial fraternal legacy. Are you pansies up for the challenge?”

When Paul put it like that, I knew Andrew and Todd would take him up on the challenge. It wasn't long before the three of them joined forces to convince Jordan and me to go in on the stunt, too. Shortly after, we were brainstorming ideas on how to pull a similar stunt before the five of us graduated from college.

After another two rounds of beers, it was settled that all of us in the room, before the end of the school year, would find one opportunity to pull a repeat of Rick's stunt. Next, we haggled over the rules. Each of us was allowed to contribute one rule.

Andrew threw out the first rule. “Alright, my rule is that the picture must be published formally, like in a newsletter or displayed in an administrator's office. It can't just be a photo of you naked in a public place. It's got to make it in something official to the University.”

“Alright, my rule is that we do this separate from each other. Two of us can't be in the same picture together. That way we can have the last laugh against the University five different times,” Todd said. He thought for a minute and then added, “And we have to do it on our own. No helping each other out.”

Jordan said the obvious rule, “No one beyond the five of us will ever know about this stunt. If one of us gets caught, you're on your own. No dragging the rest of us

down, too.”

Paul laughed at him and said, “You just don't want your political career ruined.”

“You got that right. The media digs up all sorts of information on you when you run for office. While I'm all for a little brotherhood fun, I'm not jeopardizing my future for a prank.”

So far, all three rules seemed reasonable. It was my turn to add a rule. I couldn't think of anything really clever, so I just blurted out the first thing that came to my mind. “Your face must be visible in the picture. We have to know it's really yours.”

The other four guys turned to look at me, stunned that I would even suggest such a rule.

“What,” I asked. “Am I taking it too far?”

No one responded for a minute, and then Paul said, “It's a gutsy rule, Eric. I'm surprised it came from you. But it's a good idea. So, that means I get to add the last rule. My rule is that your four peers will be the judge and jury in deciding whether your stunt meets our standards. What they say goes. If it doesn't meet their standards, you gotta go back and try again.”

We all nodded in agreement. Paul took his bottle of beer, held it up in the air, and looked to the rest of us. One by one, we held up our beer, too, and committed to pulling off this stunt.

Truthfully, in any other situation, I would never have agreed to it. Not only was I afraid it would jeopardize my discipline-free standing with the University, but I was also uncomfortable putting myself out there for the world to see. Don't get me wrong. I wasn't embarrassed about my assets. But putting them out in public was a little too daring for my style. I rarely even liked guys in the fraternity seeing me get out of the shower. I was the one who came out of the shower with my towel around my waste, doubled knotted. This little stunt we were about to embark upon was contrary to my typical modesty.

But with four of my pledge class brothers egging me on, all of us a little tipsy, and none of us wanting to be the chicken, I gave into peer pressure. Besides, I thought, conservative, right-wing Jordan would never follow through with this, so if I ended up wimping out, I wouldn't be the only one.

The first month of the school year went by and no one brought up the subject again. I was hoping it was just a bunch of talk and that none of us would really follow through with our plan. As my luck would have it, my four cohorts thought differently. They fully intended to make it happen, and once the first of us was successful, the rest fell like dominoes.

Much to our surprise, Todd was the first to achieve the stunt. Everyone assumed it would be Paul who would finish first. He didn't seem to care with others thought of him, nor did he seem to worry about adhering to any social norms. He also had the least to lose, since he was barely passing his classes.

Todd's opportunity came in early October. At the end of the intramural flag football season, our house claimed the championship title. University tradition was such that the captain of the winning team would assemble a new team to compete against the captain of the runner-up team, who also selected a team of his own. The two "dream teams" made up of the best intramural players would then compete in a flag football game for a local charity.

It rained heavily the day before the competition, leaving the field a muddy mess. But the competition went forward as planned. As expected, Todd's team creamed their opponents. Their championship photograph was taken immediately after the game, with all of the players covered in mud.

Todd didn't miss the chance to be the first to carry out our stunt. Some of the players stripped off their muddy shirts for the photograph, which inspired Todd to show a little skin of his own. While the photographer prepped for the picture, Todd grabbed a handful of mud, reached into his shorts, and covered his crotch. As team captain, he was positioned front and center, down on one knee, while the rest of his team filled in the space behind and around him. Seconds before the photographer depressed the button, Todd hiked up his shorts, pulled his muddy cock and balls out of his underwear, and let them hang out of the leg hole of his shorts. The picture was printed on the front page of the school newspaper the following day.

Outside of the five of us, no one noticed anything wrong. It was probably because everyone in the picture was coated with a thick layer of mud and Todd's mud-covered cock seemed to blend right in. But if you knew what you were looking for, a close examination of his crotch did, indeed, reveal his cock hanging out of the leg opening of his shorts.

A few days later, much to my dismay, Jordan was the second to pull off the stunt. During the University's Alumni Week, prominent alumni were recognized for their successful contribution to the community. At the end of the week, a tailgate party was held before the football game to conclude the week's activities. As Student Body President, Jordan hosted the tailgate party. He was in luck when the theme of the party was a weenie roast.

Jordan's role at the tailgate party was to be grill master. Alumni purchased hot dogs and beer at outrageous prices, with all proceeds going to the Alumni Association. Sometime at the end of the tailgate, Jordan found his opportunity to pull off the stunt. Minutes before the game, alumni at the tailgate migrated towards the stadium for kickoff. The historian for the Alumni Association asked to take a few pictures of Jordan preparing hot dogs, which she was then going to post on the Alumni Association's

website.

Later that day, after the football game, pictures from Alumni Week were posted on the website. The five of us crowded around Jordan's computer screen to see his handiwork. The picture showed Jordan posing behind a waist-high table. On the table were bottles of ketchup and mustard, jars of relish, bags of chips, and several plates piled high with hot dogs. It was a little hard to see, but among the weenies that were sitting on the table was Jordan's fleshy hot dog, too. Most impressive to me was that Jordan's weenie seemed to fit right in with the other weenies on the table, in length and width.

Jordan told us how he pulled it off. He cut a slit into the front of his apron. He knew the historian who was taking the picture had a visual impairment. So, like a good politician-in-training, he used her disability to his advantage. While she was innocently taking pictures of him at the barbecue, Jordan pulled his pants down to his knees, yanked his dick out of the slit in his apron, and laid it among the other hot dogs on the table. The historian loaded a bunch of digital photos onto the alumni website without carefully screening each picture, and with that, Jordan was the second to complete the stunt.

Paul's turn was next and to no one's surprise, his was the most daring. During Homecoming Week, Paul noticed that he had a striking similarity to one of the candidates for Homecoming King. Throughout the week, candidates for King and Queen were expected to make appearances at various events on campus. A media entourage consisting of the student newspaper and student news station was also at these events, creating a perfect opportunity for Paul to get some exposure.

Paul must have planned it for days. At a pep rally on Friday afternoon, the day before the Homecoming football game, the royalty court made an appearance outside the front steps of the Student Union. As expected, the student news station was there to cover the pep rally, broadcasting the show live into dormitories, and sorority and fraternity houses. Following the conclusion of the pep rally, the reporter interviewed the Homecoming Court, asking questions about their prediction of who would win the football game, what it felt like to be a part of the Court, and other cheesy questions.

While members of the Court waited for their turn to be interviewed, Paul went up to his "twin" and kindly let him know that there was an emergency and the "twin" needed to return to his dorm room immediately. As soon as the coast was clear, Paul slipped on a cap and sunglasses and blended right in with the rest of the Homecoming Court. When it was Paul's turn to be interviewed by the reporter, he answered the first question with exaggerated enthusiasm. The sarcasm was missed by the reporter and he proceeded with the interview.

For Paul's second question, the reporter asked, "As a candidate for Homecoming King, you're one of only ten males to be considered for the honor. Why should students vote for you?"

Paul calmly turned to the camera and said, "Because I've got the biggest cock on campus." While the reporter stumbled to come up with a response, Paul pulled down his shorts and lifted up his t-shirt. He had painted cock black and his balls gold, the University's official colors.

Everyone, including the reporter and camera man, were frozen in place, stunned that a member of the Homecoming Court could be so disrespectful. Then, someone noticed that Paul wasn't one of the candidates for royalty. That's when Paul promptly pulled up his pants and sprinted to the other side of the Student Union. He jumped on his bike and cruised out of the area, escaping the mob of people who tried to tackle him to the ground.

And that was how Paul managed to complete his commitment to our stunt. Of course, the following week, University administrators went on a witch hunt to find the impostor. At one point, they circulated a picture of Paul around campus to see if anyone could identify him. Thankfully, he was smart enough to wear a cap and sunglasses when he performed the stunt, making it near impossible for positive identification. In addition, since Paul rarely attended classes and was not a member of any student organization, no one knew who he was. Even guys in the house didn't recognize the impostor, especially since Paul used a phony Southern accent during the reporter's interview.

Andrew's attempt to pull off the stunt was the only one that almost didn't pass the vote of his peers. In early November, the College of Fine and Performing Arts held a fashion show to highlight the work of its students in the Fashion Design program. With Andrew's good looks, he was recruited to be a model at the showcase. As a University-sanctioned event, most of the fashion show was on the vanilla side. Of course, being that it was sponsored by the School of Fine and Performing Arts, there was a section for mature audiences, too. Andrew's flawless body was selected to model jewelry, primarily necklaces and chokers. He and a few other beautiful men and women were stationed on pedestals, wearing next to nothing except for undergarments and jewelry. They were put in a makeshift gallery that, during normal times, was the 3-D art gallery.

As Andrew told it to us, he was paid \$400 to work an eight-hour shift during the showcase. All he had to do was sit still on a pedestal, modeling the jewelry. Every half hour or so, a student would come in to swap out his necklace for a different one, and he would take on a new pose. Parents and friends of the students in the Fashion Design program paraded through the room, admiring the jewelry. I'm sure they admired the exposed flesh, too.

Apparently, sometime towards the end of his shift, a photographer who was taking pictures to document the event, asked to take a picture of Andrew wearing a leather choker. Andrew jumped at the chance to show off his body. But he also saw it as a chance to fulfill his duty to our stunt.

The photographer gave Andrew the latitude to choose how he wanted to pose in

the picture. Andrew decided to lay on his side, with his back facing the camera. He turned the front of the choker around so that it was still the main focus of the picture. Andrew was positioned in front of a large, silver platter, apparently a project designed by a visual arts student. With his back facing the photographer, Andrew let his cock and balls hang out the front of his boxers. The photographer took the picture, too busy making sure the necklace was in focus, to realize Andrew's unit was getting photographed, too.

A few days later, pictures taken during the fashion showcase were displayed in the main hall of the College. Andrew dragged the four of us to the building and showed us the picture. At first, we couldn't see why he was so proud. As far as we could tell, it was simply a picture of him in a pair of boxers wearing a choker around his neck. Then he pointed at the silver platter in the picture, which captured the reflection of his front side. The lighting wasn't too good, but if you looked close enough, you could see Andrew's cock hanging out of his boxer shorts.

Paul said, "I don't know if we can accept this one, Andrew. I believe we have a rule that states your face must be visible in the picture. We can only see the back of your head. How do we know it's really you?"

"Oh my God, you know it's me," Andrew said. Then he looked at me and pleaded, "Eric, that was the rule you came up with. What do you think? Does this qualify?"

Since I had yet to achieve my stunt, I didn't think it should be in my place to disqualify Andrew's picture. Besides, I thought, if I showed a little leniency towards Andrew, he may reciprocate when it was my turn.

I nodded, showing my approval. The other three guys caved-in and with that, Andrew was the fourth to officially complete the stunt. Four down, one to go.

By the time Thanksgiving came, it didn't look promising that I'd be able to hold up my end of the stunt before the semester was over. Finals were coming up and I thought I would have to wait until second semester to get the job done.

I spent Thanksgiving Day with my family, who lived fifty-some miles from the University. Because I had a paper due the week after Thanksgiving, I ended up heading back to school right after our turkey dinner. When I got back, I was the only one in the fraternity house. Everyone else was still with their families, and most of them probably wouldn't return until Sunday night. It was a little creepy to be all alone in the house, but it also gave me the peace and quiet I needed to finish my paper by Friday afternoon.

On Friday evening, a few of the brothers, including Todd, returned to the house. With nothing else to do that night, some of us got together for a room party. I had a couple of beers to be social and shortly before midnight, headed back to my room. I was lucky to be one of the three seniors to have a room all to myself. It was the best of

both worlds. When lonely, I could always find someone else's room to hangout in. But when I wanted privacy, I could hide out in my room with the door locked.

I had just flipped off the lights and crawled into bed when Todd popped into my room. He sat on the floor, a little tipsy, babbling about random subjects. Todd was the type of guy I could spend hours talking to. Over the years, we would regularly have conversations that we couldn't have with anyone else in the fraternity. They were never about deep topics – just the usual, like sports, current events, campus gossip. It was different talking to Todd because we exchanged real dialog; not just the usual bantering that guys get into. We actually enjoyed hearing each others thoughts.

Todd and I chatted for half an hour. As I was about ready to kick him out of my room so I could go to sleep, he asked, “Do you think you'll be able to pull off our stunt?”

“I don't know if I have the guts to go through with it,” I admitted. “I really thought Jordan wouldn't be able to do it, giving me an excuse to chicken out, too. But even he managed to get it done.”

“Well, all four of us managed to pull the stunt off in a style that suited our personalities. Like with me, I lucked out and found my chance while playing a game of flag football. Jordan got his done at one of his cheesy leadership activities. And pretty-boy Andrew found his chance while modeling. The only one of us who planned it was Paul. If you think about it, even that fit his personality, with him always plotting to do something mischievous,” Todd said. “Maybe you're getting cold feet because you're trying too hard to get it done in a way that tops the rest of us. But you might be better off if you just do it in a style that fits your personality, you know?”

“What is my style,” I asked, smiling to myself. I was curious to see what Todd thought of me.

“I dunno, I guess if I were to describe you, I'd say you're a go-with-the-flow kinda guy. You're not the one in our house meetings who gets worked up over stupid issues. But you're also not the guy who is annoyingly enthusiastic about the house,” Todd said.

“That's pretty accurate. But how the hell does that help me?”

Todd was silent for a minute. I could hear him take a swig of his beer and then he said, “I guess what I was thinking is that it's not your style to stand out and do something that gets a ton of attention, like hosting an alumni event or modeling student-made jewelry. I see you doing something that's more subtle. Something that maybe ends up on a wall where people walk by it a million times a day, but they never really notice because they're so used to seeing it.”

I sat up in bed. “I like what you're saying. Keep going.”

“I'm just thinking out loud, so tell me if you don't like the idea. What if we look

around the University for a hall or something that has a photograph? We can borrow the photo for a little while, get it professional scanned, and then digitally alter it to include you. This is the perfect weekend to try pulling it off. We can go check out some of the buildings tomorrow. Most of them will be open so that students can access computer labs. But there isn't gonna be anyone back until Sunday night. We can get the job done without having to do a lot of sneaking around."

"You'd really do this for me," I asked.

"Hell yea. You're one of my favorite brothers in the house. I won't even tell the others that I helped you," Todd said. I heard him get up off the floor. "Well, I'll let you get to sleep. We can start early tomorrow. Just get me up when you're ready to go. See ya, Eric."

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On Saturday morning, we started our covert operation at the College of Business. Just like Todd said, the halls of the building were lined with photographs of famous alumni, high achieving students, and crusty old administrators of the Business School. And just like he said, I had walked down this hall numerous times, but never even noticed the pictures on the walls. Unfortunately for us, the photographs were all enormous in size. It was probably to prevent students from trying to take them off the walls. What ever happened to trust?

We made our way through a few of the buildings of the other Colleges and to my disappointment, most of the pictures hanging on the walls were also too big to successfully remove without being noticed. The ones that were small enough to steal were secured to the wall. We were going to call it quits when Todd convinced me to try the University's library. We cruised through the first four floors of the library and nothing seemed like it was going to work. But on the very top floor, we hit pay dirt.

The fifth floor housed the library's special collections and was rarely used by the average student. The collection primarily consisted of ancient newspapers, magazines, and books, that if were exposed to normal conditions, would disintegrate into a pile of ashes. But in the climate controlled environment of the fifth floor, they were protected from the elements. Normally, the fifth floor was teeming with library staff busy at workstations, digitally archiving old newspapers or restoring books. With the Thanksgiving holiday, though, the place was empty.

The walls were covered with portraits of past Chancellors. There were poster-sized pictures of the University from a birds-eye view, taken in the same place over a period of fifty years. While all of this was neat, my eye zoomed in on a framed picture that appeared to perfectly fit our needs. To be more precise, the size of the picture fit our needs – we could care less about the image.

Todd followed my line of vision and we walked over to our precious find. It was

an 8 x 10 black and white photograph of a bunch of professional looking businessmen. They were all dressed in contemporary suits and their hairstyles looked fairly modern. The placard just below the picture explained that the seven men were all graduates from the class of 2005 and all went on to serve in the Peace Corps in Afghanistan. Their accomplishment was celebrated by the University because they became the largest group of Peace Corps members to have come from the same school during the same year. I suspected that the picture was taken in black and white for artistic effect, emphasizing the simplistic lifestyle the seven men chose to accept.

There was a mousy-looking librarian scurrying about the floor. When she sat down in front of a microfiche machine and buried herself in a project, Todd wasted no time. He lifted the picture off of its mounts. To our surprise, the photograph, frame and all, came right off the wall without a struggle. No alarms went off. No lights flashed. It seemed as though we were in business.

Todd tucked the picture and frame into his duffle bag. It wouldn't zip shut, so Todd took off his sweatshirt and tossed it on top of the photograph, successfully hiding it from inquisitive eyes. We left the library and headed straight to the nearest Kinko's, where we parked ourselves at the do-it-yourself scanning station.

Todd fumbled with the frame for a bit, while I played lookout. In no time at all, he successfully removed the photograph without any damage to the frame. We carefully placed the photograph on the glass scanner, changed the settings to the highest resolution, and hit the scan button. I took the flash drive off my keychain, plugged it into the computer, and transferred the image. I forked over five dollars and some change to the employee behind the counter, and Todd and I headed back to the fraternity to begin the real work.

When we got back to the fraternity house, the place was still quiet. While Todd ran to his room to grab his digital camera, I asked around to see if Jordan, Paul, and Andrew were around, but no one had seen them return from the holiday. Knowing they were still at home gave me the confidence to move forward with our plan.

I went back to my room, booted up my computer, and plugged in the flash drive. A window popped open with my file. I double clicked and Picasa, the Google photo editor I regularly used to crop pictures, opened up the file. This was going to be tricky, I thought. Up until now, most of my photo editing had been pretty basic. Cropping photos, reducing red eye, adding captions to pictures – what I was attempting to do now was more complex.

While I was busy exploring the menu options in Picasa, trying to figure out how I was going to edit the photograph to include me, Todd came into my room. He had a six pack in one hand and his digital camera in the other hand. He said, "I thought beer might help us get the job done."

Todd's comment took me by surprise. I assumed he was only going to help me

steal the picture and replace it after it had been enhanced. I didn't think he wanted to be involved in editing my exposed crotch into the picture, too.

"You've already done enough for me, Todd. You came up with the idea and found our opportunity. Now, I think I need to finish the job. But I'm willing to get your help on replacing the picture once I doctor it up a bit."

"Well tell me this, Einstein. How do you expect to take a picture of you exposing your willy?"

That was a good question. I hadn't gotten that far in the plan, yet.

"Maybe I can use the self timer?"

Todd shook his head and said, "That's too complicated. I started this whole thing with you and I'll help you finish it, too."

There was no point arguing with Todd. It was clear he wanted to be involved and I certainly wasn't going to stand in his way. Besides, the whole situation was a little unnerving for me and I thought maybe Todd could help keep me grounded. My only discomfort was having him take photos of me with my pants down.

Todd popped open two beers. He handed me one and took a big swig from the other.

"Let's get started," he said. "Why don't you try standing against the door? It's painted black and it'll be easier to match the dark backdrop of the photograph."

I leaned against the door, chugging my beer and waiting for Todd to give me further directions. He fumbled with the camera for a bit. Todd put the camera up to his eye and focused on me, zooming the telescoping lens in and out. He was putting a lot of effort into this and I suddenly became keenly aware that he was dead serious about helping me complete the stunt.

"Okay, why don't you get in one of your suits? Something that matches what the guys have on in the picture," Todd said. He smirked and added, "Don't forget to go commando beneath your pants."

I dug up a suit and found a conservative tie to match. With my front side turned away from Todd, I slipped off my jeans and underwear, then put on my suit pants. Ugh, if I was already feeling this timid about Todd seeing my assets, I wasn't sure how I would handle letting it all hang out while he photographed me.

I asked Todd, "The photograph is black and white. How are we going to get this picture in black and white, too?"

“Problem solved. This camera has an option to take black and white photos. We can take your picture, then cut and paste it into the scanned photograph. We'll have to use software to adjust the shading so it all matches, but that shouldn't be too hard to do. Don't forget, Eric, we just need you to blend into the photograph so it takes effort for people to notice you don't belong. It doesn't need to be a perfect hack job.”

“I'm glad you feel more confident about this than me,” I said. Then I moved and stood in front of the door.

Todd looked at the scanned photograph on my computer screen, and said, “The seven guys in the picture are standing upright, hands to their sides. Some of them have smiles on their faces, while others look a little more grim. My vote is that you keep a serious face for your photograph. You're always smiling, and just in the odd chance someone at the University who knows you sees our altered photograph, it might not be as easy to recognize you when you look serious.”

It made sense. I stood with my hands at my side and gave the best poker face possible. I waited for Todd to take some pictures, but when he didn't budge, I asked him why he was waiting.

Todd gave me a blank stare. “Aren't you forgetting something? Like the only reason why we're doing all of this?”

I looked down at my crotch. My zipper was still up.

“Oh yea, I guess I should open the barn door.”

Todd smiled and shook his head. I unzipped my pants and pulled out my cock and balls. The whole situation was really unnerving to me, but I mustered up my courage and stood against the door. I wondered what was going through his mind. But Todd just snapped away with his camera, seemingly oblivious to my meat hanging out of the fly, taking ten or fifteen shots in quick succession. He handed me another beer and told me to stay in position while he checked out the pictures on the viewing screen. I chugged my second beer, hoping that the pictures were acceptable enough so I could zip up.

“Not bad, not bad. I think this is going to work just fine, Eric,” he said. “I say we take a few more just in case, though.”

“You're not going to blackmail me with these pictures, are you?”

“I promise, you can reformat the memory card yourself if you're worried about these photos getting out.”

Todd snapped a few more shots of me against the door. Then he suggested, “Why don't you try dropping your pants all the way down. When we edit the original

photograph, I think we should try to do it so that you become the eighth man in the picture. In other words, we want to add you to the photograph. But if it doesn't come out right, we might have to airbrush your head and crotch into one of the seven original guys."

This was certainly not what I wanted to hear from Todd. Not only did I think it would look cheesy for my body parts to miraculously appear on someone else, but I wasn't comfortable with having my pants all the way down when someone else was taking pictures of me. I would die if I popped a woody while Todd photographed me.

Todd could see the hesitation in my face and tried to reassure me, "I think we should be fine with the photographs we've already taken. But I don't want to mess up, seeing as to how we might not get a chance at pulling this off again in the future."

When he put it like that, I could see his suggestion had validity. I was about ready drop my drawers all the way when Todd said something that surprised the hell out of me.

"If you feel awkward being in the buff in front me, I can strip down, too. That way the pressure isn't just on you."

"Really," I asked. The way it came from my mouth made it sound like I was agreeing to his suggestion. In actuality, I was just surprised that he would make an offer like that.

"Yea, I already told you, I'm in this with you all the way," Todd said. Without saying another word, Todd put his camera down on my futon. He took off his t-shirt and tossed it on the floor. Then he unbuttoned his jeans, hooked his thumbs around the waist of his pants, and in one move, removed both his underwear and jeans. Todd stood in front of me, stark naked.

There had never been any doubt in my mind that Todd was straight. But he was also comfortable with his sexual orientation. He was one of the few guys in the house who would always stand against any conversation that could even remotely be perceived as homophobic. Right at that moment, though, with him naked in front of me, I would have given anything if he was gay.

I had seen Todd with his shirt off plenty of times and I always admired his body. His muscles were well developed, with good-sized arms and a broad chest that tapered to a fit waistline. But completely naked and just inches away from me, he was really a sight to behold. I resisted staring at him, a task that took all of my willpower.

Todd grinned at me and said, "Are you more comfortable now? I'm in the buff, too. You won't feel out of place."

Actually, with him naked, I felt even more uncomfortable. I was turned on by him

and by the moment. I could already feel a little rise in my cock and I hoped he didn't notice. If I wasn't feeling tipsy from the two beers I downed, I would have been able to think logically enough to find a way to back out of this idea. But, as it was, the alcohol had its effect on me and I followed Todd's lead.

I dropped my pants all the way down, and took off my jacket, tie, and dress shirt. Then we were both naked. Just me and Todd. Alone in my room. With a camera. What a surreal moment.

Todd smiled at me and said, "Alright, let's get this done."

He grabbed the camera and continued taking pictures. I wish I would have just focused my attention on looking directly into the camera lens. But instead, I let my eyes wander Todd's body. Big mistake. I started getting hard.

"Todd, sorry to do this to you, but I'm getting a woody. I guess I'm not used to standing naked in front of a camera. It must be a secret fantasy of mine," I tried to joke.

"It's alright, let's just keep going. It's not like you're fully hard," he said. Oh God, I thought, he's looking at my cock.

He snapped a few more pictures as I desperately tried to think about something else in hopes of going soft. No such luck. To the contrary, I was getting harder and my cock wasn't far from being fully erect. I'm sure my face was red with embarrassment, but Todd didn't say anything.

Todd pulled the camera away from his eye, looked at his crotch and said, "Geez. I'm getting hard, too, Eric."

I glanced at his cock. Indeed, he was getting a chubby. I'd been so worried about my own situation, I didn't notice what was going on with Todd.

He laughed and said, "I guess I must secretly fantasize about being a photographer."

He put the camera down and said, "I think we have more than enough pictures to work with."

I exhaled with relief. Finally, I could put my pants on and end this awkward experience. But to my shock, instead of putting back on his clothes, Todd plopped down on my futon and said, "Sorry, but I gotta rub this one out before we get on your computer to edit the picture."

I stared at him, not really knowing what to say. He filled the silence by suggesting, "You can finish yourself off, too. Then we can both concentrate on finishing the photograph."

Again, had it not been for the alcohol lowering my inhibitions, I would have never sat down next to him on the futon to jerk off. It was just too intimidating being next to someone that had a body so much better than mine. I should have declined, but just like before, I followed his lead.

I sat down next to Todd, our legs just inches apart. From the corner of my eye, I watched his hand move up and down his shaft. His other hand was busy tugging on his balls. He moaned lightly and threw his head back. I subtly turned to look at his face. Todd's eyes were closed.

I let my eyes wander back down to his crotch. I could see he was now fully erect. I didn't dare stare too long, but during one of my sneak peeks, I could have sworn I saw a little precum forming at the tip of his cock.

I put my hand on my dick and started stroking. I moved even slower than Todd, full well knowing I was already close to busting a nut. The room was dead silent, except for the sound of flesh rubbing flesh and soft moans from Todd. For me, the sounds were a total turn on. I wondered if Todd was even aware that he was making noises.

"Are you all the way hard," Todd asked me.

Being next to him, pounding away, was intensely nerve-racking. My heart was racing and I could feel my body shaking. I was afraid if I spoke, my voice would crack. So instead, I muttered, "Mmm, hmm."

"Me, too," Todd said.

We continued stroking away for what felt like an eternity. Eventually, I heard Todd moan loudly, followed by cum splattering on his stomach. I glanced at him from the corner of my eye and I could see he deposited quite a load on himself. I thought for sure he was going to clean up and get the hell out of my room. To my pleasant surprise, he didn't move. Instead, he let his head continue to rest against the back of my futon, eyes still closed, catching his breath.

Not long after, I finished, too. I'd never felt that strong of an orgasm, nor had I ever shot that much cum. Todd noticed the big load and said, "Damn, big shooter."

Unlike Todd, when I was through, I quickly grabbed my t-shirt and cleaned myself up. Then I slapped on jeans and a sweatshirt. Todd was still sitting naked on my futon. He asked me for a towel so he could clean up. I tossed him a washcloth and he took his time wiping himself down. It took him another few minutes to get dressed. Apparently, he had much less inhibition than me.

Todd and I spent the rest of Saturday editing me into the photograph we scanned. Ultimately, we decided to add me into the photograph as the eighth man, as opposed to just replacing my head onto someone else's body. It took almost two hours

for us to adjust the contrast and brightness in my picture to match that of the other. But eventually, we were satisfied with our work. On the computer screen, it was easy to tell the photograph had been digitally altered. Our hope was that once it was printed on a cheap inkjet printer, our modifications wouldn't be as obvious to detect.

I loaded photo paper into my printer and hit the print button. While we waited for the image to finish printing, Todd said, "This was fun, today. I feel comfortable around you, Eric."

"I'm just glad you're willing to help me out."

When the picture came out of the printer, Todd and I scrutinized our work. It wasn't perfect, but it was definitely going to work. We put the new photograph into the frame and at half past two, we headed back to the library and up to fifth floor. The same mousy librarian was still busy at work, making it easy for us to replace the photograph on the wall. Amazingly enough, my image blended right in with the other men in the picture. If someone was paying close attention, they would notice my cock and balls hanging out of my suit. Otherwise, most people would probably walk right past it.

On Monday, when the other three guys returned from the Thanksgiving holiday, I paraded our group to the fifth floor of the library to view my contribution to our stunt. I got a little grief from Jordan, who didn't think I fulfilled the intent of the prank. He thought digitally editing my image into a pre-existing picture was cheating. But Todd complimented me for getting it into the special archives of the University, something he pointed out no one else was able to do. The others agreed and with that, I was the fifth man to pull off our stunt, finishing the prank our group set out to perform. Our unofficial fraternal legacy was complete.

The five of us finished our senior year without ever talking about the stunt again. Three of us graduated the following May. I went on to graduate school in Communication Studies, while Todd got a job teaching and coaching at a high school in a nearby state. Jordan was accepted into an Ivy League law school, where I'm sure he graduated top of his class. Andrew took a fifth year to finish his undergraduate degree and then moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in acting. And Paul severed all ties with the fraternity after our senior year, no doubt because he didn't want to answer any questions about what he was doing with his life.

To this day, anytime a camera is pointed at me, I think about my senior year in college and wonder what Todd is doing now.