

**My heart belongs to
Daddy...**

THE DADDY MYSTIQUE

When I see a young daddy, I want to eat his shorts.

At gas stations: Daddy, with his two or three tow-headed sons crawling all over each other in the cab of his 4WD pickup truck.

At supermarkets: Daddy, pushing his basket into his shopping cart with his son riding backwards playing with the buttons on Daddy's belly.

At swimming pools: Daddy, showering with a full-grown man's lingering pleasure in the hard spray, while his kid, wet, arms wrapped tight around his own body that's a small version of his dad's body, shivers, eye-level with the soapy big Daddy that four years before shot the kid into life.

Men who dare to father kids in this day and age are a special breed. They are The Seedbearers. They like to show off their sons: the living proof that the old man's a stud. Young Daddies have a cockiness. Older Daddies have a quiet pride. So when any Daddy has his stuff together, I'm a softy with a bone-on. Nothing, I mean nothing, gives me a hardon like a left hand with a wedding ring!

WHERE'S POPPA?

Lots of gay men are looking for Daddy. Not to get into all the psychologically heavy reasons, but to stay with the

lightly symbolic and physical pleasures, the Daddy Trip is a pop-fantasy as old as Telemachus looking for his Dad, Ulysses; and Annie looking for Daddy Warbucks. Showgirls in B-movies always wanted a Sugar Daddy. Gay men, as a group, relate more to show-biz sentiments than any other crowd. So we understood it when *Dallas*' J. R.'s real mom, Mary Martin, sang it all in the 1930s: "If I invite/ some guy some night/ to dine on my fine finnan haddie/ I just adore him asking for more/ 'cause my heart belongs to Daddy." And then she sang: "Daddy, I want a diamond ring, fancy cars, expensive things....Daddy, you'll always get the best from me." And then Debbie's Eddie, who is Carrie (*Star Wars*) Fisher's Daddy, sang "O Mine Papa! To me you are so wonderful!" He took the airwaves by storm during the Fifties when Eisenhower had been elected to be the Daddy of Us All, having led us to victory in WWII.

For the most part, American Daddies are leaving or lost. Tennessee Williams' fathers are dying of cancer in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, or, as in *Glass Menagerie*, working for the phone company where they fall in love with long distance, and are never heard from again. Daddies are an endangered species: that's the secret of their romance. If cancer or jobs don't get them, then Mommie Dearest will. In Edward Albee's *American Dream*, Daddy exists mainly to support Mommie who only wants to set her fanny in a tub of butter. Finally, Arthur Kopit's Off-Broadway title says it all about the shortage of fathers in America: *O Dad, Poor Dad! Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling So Sad!* There is a shortage of Daddies in America! And that which is rare is always that which is precious.

IN PRAISE OF MATURE GAY DADDY BEARS

Gay men use their sex lives to fill in the blanks of their backgrounds. As the Baby Boom grows older, lots of Gay Babies have reached their own maturity. To make a come-on out of necessity, the bar-street concept of Daddy Bear/Baby Bear cruising makes a match on both generational sides of the Daddy Trip. The Cult of Balling Mature Gay Men is in full

swing. In bars, when a guy sights a hot man in his late thirties or forties, you often hear the exclamation: “Daddy!” All this proves that gay tastes are maturing from chicken through veal and towards beef. After all, a hot man can be hot in any decade of his life—as long as he does that decade as hot as he can. Some men, like good wine and fine cheese, improve with age.

Creating our own extended families, we play sons and fathers in our sex scenarios. The “incest taboo” is often whispered quietly when a man sort of mumbles “Daddy” to another man while they embrace. If his partner picks up the fantasy-thread, all the excitement of breaking the taboo against incest occurs. One “Son” in San Francisco showed up at his “Daddy’s” in seersucker shorts, hightop sneakers with knee sox, a Marvel heroes white cotton teeshirt, and a Little League ballcap. Daddy took him out to Fleishhacker Zoo and tied a balloon to his wrist. They watched two leopards go at each other, and then Daddy and Son drove home and played likewise. Why not? Most of gay sex is psychodrama that feels good. Since we’re not “Procreational Chauvinists,” we can afford to be “Recreational Sensualists.”

IN PRAISE OF STRAIGHT DADDIES

Teaching full-time at an American university, I spent half my free time balling real genetic Daddies: young, hung, overheated and underventilated guys I picked up out of the gym shower room. Many were freshly returned Viet Vet students. Others were faculty colleagues who wanted to have a man-to-man experience. I took no ad out in the local *Gazette*; but I also lived my uncloseted life, so that any genteel colleague who wanted a discreet same-sex experience knew what number to phone.

At certain faculty dinner parties, with assorted kiddies playing on the stairs, and wives klatching in the kitchen, I had slept with several of the “experimenting” husbands. Life was something like *Virginia Woolf* where George advises Nick to plow a few pertinent faculty wives to get ahead. I never fucked to move from assistant to associate professor, but I certainly plowed a few pertinent faculty Daddies!

I asked one professor, who had known all his life that he preferred men, why he had married and fathered a family. “I’m just enough older than you,” he said, “that I didn’t have the climate of liberation. At the time I could have come out, to be gay meant a life of bars and nelly queens. I hate both.” He meant that pre-lib limpstyle wasn’t for him. I liked him. He was an honest, sensitive man, a real fathering Seedbearer, who looked the way Daddies are supposed to look, and who sported one of the biggest uncut cocks in captivity!

Straight Daddies, whether professors or plumbers, are available only on a limited basis. Blue-collar Daddies, for instance, show up at rest stops and bookstores around 3:30 PM when the shifts change at factories and construction sites. The day before Mother’s Day and Valentine’s Day, like the days before Christmas, are good hunting for Daddies, because they can use the holiday as an excuse to go out shopping for a few hours to buy some presents. Alone. At the Mall. At your apartment door. Daddies, since their time is taken up by work and family, want their nut off *now* when they call or pull in the drive and ring the doorbell!

DADDY-FIX

Daddies are real Men-in-Authority. So in a sense, a Daddy is the Ultimate Male Role Model. No matter what else our parents raised us to be, doctors/lawyers/chiefs, they all presumed, maybe without saying it, that we’d all be Daddies. But we’re not. So we are fascinated by the Daddy Mystique. I stare in wonder when the Gay Fathers march in the Gay Pride Parade. Do they have a secret? Daddies are supposed to know everything, and be able to fix anything.

It’s natural for gay men, most of whom live the Peter-Pan Syndrome, to have a thing for grown-up men who’ve dared to assume their place in the adult male world: coaches, cops, DI’s, construction workers—all the men of erotic fantasy fit in here. They’re all Men-in-Authority. And authority, after all, is the Ultimate Attitude. Authority is what comes when a man assumes he has power/potency until someone else informs him otherwise. A man who assumes authority

in America is rarely told otherwise. He's an Ideal. A Man-in-Authority is a man in charge, in control; he is the pitcher, not the catcher; the Top, not the Bottom; he leads in the dance.

MY DAD CAN WHIP YOUR DAD!

Seedbearers walk with an attitude only a Breeder can have. This one Daddy I ball up in Sonoma County has four kids and two dogs. He won't breed one of the dogs because he dislikes its temperament, and he's blowing off about giving at least two of his kids away. All his talk about his rugrats boils down to both a brag and a bitch about his male potency. 'Sokay with me! Seedbearing Breeders carry rich loads of sperm in their ballbearing, big-basketed Daddypacks. Balling Daddies is like balling a man who's into procreation as much as recreation. His wife gets him for the former; you get him for the latter!

My most unusual Daddy lived across the way from me on Prosper Street, a small one-way lane in San Francisco. My second-floor studio looked directly into his second-floor flat. For six months I watched his wife leave for her shift as a nurse while he babysat their fourteen-month-old son. Alone, with the kid asleep in the other room, Daddy, without pulling the shades, stripped himself naked, pulled on his jockstrap, and faced sideways to the window into a mirror, jerking himself slowly off. For six months. Long, lingering, solitary JO sessions: Daddy rubbing his own body, cupping his jock, playing his own tits.

He never pulled the shade. I don't think he ever thought to. He never even looked across the lane into my apartment.

One summer afternoon, his wife left, and he went at himself: jockstrap, oil, a clothes pin on each nipple. My kinky self could stand it no longer. I grabbed an extra jockstrap and some poppers and ran down the stairs and leaned up against my building, provocative as Cat Woman in the afternoon sunshine. I put out so much energy he had to notice. I willed him to his window. Sure enough, he came and looked out. I raised my jockstrap to my mouth, bit it, and walked across the lane,

up his steps, and rang his bell.

Would he answer the door? In a minute, oiled in his jock, his tits red where he had removed the clothespins, this hot Daddy stuck his head around the partially open door.

He looked at me. He said nothing. A question in his eyes. All I said was, "I've come to help."

We made love like tigers in the nursery with his baby son asleep in a toy-filled playpen in the living room. The fact he was a Daddy with his son asleep in the other room made the *Verboten Vater* hotter. Besides, sometimes, Daddies, for all their genuine love for wives and children, still need the kind of love and reassurance and play they can only get from another man.

MY OWN DAD

I worship good Daddies. I bump into them at flea markets and at athletic events just so I can physically touch them. I like Daddies not because I didn't have one, but because I had such a good one. My own Dad was strong and big, a varsity jock who married the cheerleader, my mother, and then went on to work construction. I like Daddies because my Dad held me on his lap, up against his big chest, swaying in a creaking porch swing on warm summer nights in the Midwest.

While the women, off in the kitchen making dessert, quietly laughed and talked, I sat with him and the other men, their voices deep and serious in the quiet dark. Rocking in my Dad's big muscular arms, smelling his breath, feeling the rasp of his 9-o'clock-stubble, I watched what seemed to me then to be the whole safe warm world, as we rocked back and forth on that porch, the lights across the street and down the block rising and falling like tiny ships brightly lit out on the dark sea of endless night.

And then my daddy died.

Nothing has ever, will ever, feel like that again. Like him again. But to come close to that feeling with another man who is a Daddy, or who plays Daddy, sometimes can be almost enough to keep those summer evenings, and him, alive forever.