

Authors note: I have learned, post-publishing this story on my blog, that I have mischaracterized and misrepresented the person in the story referred to as Curt. As someone who respects the "truth" and does not want to stray from it I feel I should be up front with this new information. For me it was a case of not being aware of the depth and the complexity of the relationship between Curt and Bob. As a memoir writer I know that is always dangerous to assign feelings to other people. It's difficult enough to honestly portray my own words and feelings. I sincerely apologize to "Curt" for my error and am relieved to know that he does not harbor any resentment towards me for this. Instead, we have recently engaged in some interesting conversations about the nature of truth and how elusive it can sometimes be. I would encourage the reader to think of Curt in the story to represent some of the more typical attitudes of the day. Embarrassingly and ashamedly I all too frequently represented those typical attitudes in my own works and deeds.

The Big Tits

A curse of my growing older. Fifty years of life approaches and I find myself with true tales only I can tell. A survivor while others have met the end of their incarnation.

For me, I like to read real stories about real events that happen to real people. Now, I am the only real person left with the story of The Big Tits. If Andy and Bob were alive, they too would remember the story but perhaps they would remember it in a different way, with a different description and a recollection of details I don't possess.

Sometimes I think I recall objective truths. Andy was eighteen, Bob was seventeen, and I was sixteen. We went looking for a place where we could smoke some pot and get high after school. We found a place near a new development of houses in west Bloomington Minnesota. We found two dirt piles, next to each other, and Bob or Andy, I don't recall which one, described them as "The Big Tits".

I remember that I didn't think of the name, that type of crudeness I had not yet developed, I was too much of an innocent boy to see them as big tits on my own. Sure when one of them said something like "Look at the big tits!" or "Let's get high in

the cleavage of the big tits!" I was able to see those firm mounds of earth in a new way.

Maybe Andy or Bob would remember for sure which one of them could claim the discovery as their own. Now, I think it was Andy because he had been discovered so many times in a darkened room with Nicki, both in various stages of undress and rapid breath. Bob was gay. He described himself later as bisexual and he certainly did go out with attractive women, including taking my future wife to their Senior Prom. Probably, in my world where I preferred not to think too much about sex between males, I only thought of him as gay, not a fag, even though he had some effeminate characteristics that my brainwashed mind still could fear and lash out against with the wrong provocation.

When Bob was kicked out of the army years later for homosexuality my friend Curt (also in the army) – who's mother took Bob into their house in his senior year after his stepfather tossed him out of the house for being gay, talked about "kicking his ass" when he first heard he was gay. Curt, in the same school as us, in the same high school theater where everyone seemed to be good friends, the theater where so many homosexuals seek refuge with lifelong credentials for acting by being forced to "act" straight didn't ever figure out that Bob was gay. He was either blind or didn't want to see the real world.

We sat in the cleavage of The Big Tits and smoked from a pipe burning some good grass. It was the spring of 1975 and I was figuring out who I was by seeing who other people were. Andy and Bob liked to smoke pot. I had discovered earlier that I liked to smoke pot too.

Andy looked like the stereotypical pot smoker that one would see on an episode of Cannon, or Hawaii 5-0. Tall and lanky with long frizzy blonde hair that hung to just below his shoulders. His eyes always seemed to be half-shut with reddish whites. He was as smart as they came in school. His nickname was "Egg" and that was what all his

friends called him. Egg, short for Egghead because of his intelligence. I think that school probably bored him, maybe that's why he hung out with Nicki in the dark. It was obvious that she didn't bore him.

Now, over thirty years later I would like to ask him about his experiences at school and get his thoughts about what happened at The Big Tits and see if they affected his later years. I heard from my friend Curt, who to his credit had done a total about face with his feelings about others who are gay, told me that Andy had apparently "... committed suicide in March of 2005 in New York. Did I remember him?"

After sharing the smoking of one bowl, we smoked our own cigarettes, me a True, Bob a Winston, and Andy a Marlboro.

If I could ask them they might remember what brand they were smoking then. Maybe Bob was smoking Kool's then but do the real details matter anymore? Would it make a difference to my story if we were smoking out of a stone, metal or wood pipe? Maybe the cop would easier see the metal pipe glinting in sun after Andy frantically tossed the baggy with the weed in it behind us as the cop drove up. Maybe a wood pipe would blend in and I would have a different story to tell, a story where the three of us were let go with a bit of a lecture, but that's not this story. That "let us go" story happened over and over with me and alcohol during my teenage years but it wouldn't be the story of this day in the cleavage at The Big Tits.

Whatever kind of pipe it was – the cop saw it near the pot filled baggy after he had asked us "what we doing?"

"Smoking" was our answer.

"Smoking what?" Was his response as he picked up and briefly inspected the pipe and baggy.

We were silent as he walked down the hill formed by the cleavage. Looks of fear and hope passed between us as well as some unspoken "fuck" and "shit" looks.

As the minutes went by with cop down at his squad car occasionally on the radio. Bob was becoming visibly upset with some tremors in his arms and legs. He brought his knees up to his chest and wrapped his arms around his legs in a sitting fetal position to try and calm the trembling.

Less than ten years later Bob would be stabbed in the heart while walking home with his lover in San Francisco. A near death experience on the operating table after he heard a nurse say "we lost his heartbeat" and a being of light giving him the choice whether to stay alive or remain dead. He chose to remain alive so he could watch out for and take care of his sisters who were still living with his evil stepfather.

Another squad car pulled up with a female police officer getting out. The two chatted and the male cop walked up to us.

"How old are you?" he asked me.

"Sixteen" I replied.

"How old are you? He asked Bob.

"Seventeen" Bob says through chattering teeth.

"How old are you?" he asked Andy.

"Eighteen" Andy responded.

"You're busted" the cop said and Andy then followed his instructions and wound up in the back of the squad car in handcuffs.

Bob has entered full shaking mode next to me on the cleavage. He started rocking to try to steady his nerves but that didn't work either —he was both rocking and shaking. After a few minutes I start shaking too.

The police officer walked back up to us and gave us a lecture about how contrary to popular belief smoking marijuana is still illegal. Of course we knew it was illegal but we weren't going to talk back to a cop. Andy might have had he been in our position but he was secure in the vehicle trying to figure out where he could stash his

other baggy filled with pot that was stuffed inside his sock. On the way to the police station he would cram it in-between the seats without being detected.

The officer asked Bob and I if we needed a ride home since Egg's car was being impounded. We assured him we didn't need a ride and would walk from there.

We began walking home and before two minutes were up our friend Dusty drives up with Bob's ex girlfriend Cheryl next to him. I told you he claimed to be a bisexual man.

I wonder if the guy who stabbed him would have cared about his bisexuality. Would that have made a difference in his polluted and violent mind and stopped him from stabbing Bob.

Bob was given the choice to live or die on the operating table but the choice to live also carried with it a death sentence. AIDS was a new problem at that time and it wasn't known that it could be passed along in the blood supply. Bob was given a transfusion with blood from a donor who was infected with AIDS virus. That sentence would be carried out between Christmas and New Years in 1990. I remained friends with Bob until his premature death.

I hope that in the afterlife that Bob, Egg and I will get a chance to share our own personal versions of what transpired that day. With a bit of luck, we'll get to share them while passing around a pipe filled with some really good stuff.