

"Supermodel"
The Onset of Stardom
by
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***"If your life is worth living, it's worth recording."
-Anthony Robbins***

Dedication

"Power is worthless without control."
-Unknown

This book is dedicated to each and every one who has ever deemed it necessary to challenge themselves in the pursuit of excellence. It is for those who are willing to push beyond the barriers of mediocrity and into the realm of possibility. It is also dedicated to my dear friend, the late Warren T. Jeffries, and all of my friends with whom I intend to share my success.

Ideal Day

I will awake totally refreshed and vibrant after a long night's rest.
I will be in a king-sized bed or larger in the company of my beloved, sacred wife and my faithful, beautiful, healthy dog.
The sun will be shining through my large bay windows, and cool breezes will shake the curtains before whisking past my body.

I will wake my loving companion with kisses and compliments in mutual love and harmony.

I will exit my beautifully furnished living quarters each morning after a glass or two of mountain spring water to jog with my dog.

I will return to my companion to enjoy each other's company over a well prepared, healthy, lite breakfast (who prepares it is no matter).

Each day's itinerary will be designed by me.

My work for each day will be paid with incredible funds and enjoyment.

The amount of work I do will be of my choosing and I will have the utmost earned respect of all those working with me.

Everywhere that I go, I will be recognized and respected. I will be known by all to be the most famous, wealthiest man alive. People will request to have my autograph and photos taken with me everywhere.

My family members will be in my part of town if they so choose, but regardless, will be in frequent contact to wish each other well and to say hello.

I will eat in the very finest restaurants, lounges, hotels, casinos and other establishments of my choosing with my family members, friends, and companion for each meal as I choose. Reservations will always be made in advance or accepted with respect upon entering.

Any amount of money that I wish to spend on any given day will be O.K.. Never needing to feel, in any way, financially impaired.

I will know that on any given day, my family, friends and supporters will have all they deserve as a result of our association.

My dog will have all that he or she wants with plenty of room to run and enjoy life.

I will travel to any part of the world that I wish at any given time with an unlimited number of options to go, expenses paid, by people requesting my presence for work, friendship, meals, etc...

My family, friends, companion, dog and supporters will be able to see the world as a result of their association with me.

I will work out in health clubs, the very finest of facilities and will be immediately recognized and respected for having the finest, most refined body on the planet. I will be known to be serious, and intense in the gym as well as curious and helpful. I will relax frequently in saunas and whirlpools, Jacuzzis, etc...

My great wealth will afford me the opportunity to be extremely well versed in all aspects of the theater, opera, geography, business and people. I will see all and do all as I choose, always being able to relax and enjoy what my

tremendous accomplishments have returned to me. All sports and recreational activities will be open to me. All luxuries, whether car, boat, or other assets, will be easily within my grasp.

At night I will be in the company of anyone I wish to enjoy in the most exquisite locations and scenes the world has to offer, as will those who are in association with me.

I will always return to bed refreshed and secure with my companion's heart in unity with mine. We will share an enduring love that will never lack trust, faith, honesty and fidelity.

Our respect for each other will be unselfish and unvarnished and we'll always be forgiving toward each other.

I will both wake and go to sleep feeling energetic, wealthy, healthy, secure and excited about the day. I will never let adversity hold me back, but will maintain a level head and take positive actions. I will always accentuate the positives and eliminate the negatives. I will read and relax whenever I choose and will see editorial photos, prints, commercials, movies and every other medium of advertisement and communication bearing my image, whenever I look for them.

I will be able on any given day to frequent my assets, accounts, properties, etc. and find that they only grow larger, no matter how much I spend or my companion spends.

I will be massaged by a masseuse upon my request as often as I want and will be able to shower, swim, or just lay back alone whenever I want.

All who know me will be lavished with friendship, concern, assets and guidance if they believe I can give it to them, and happiness to know that they have a true friend in me.

Anyone and everyone who has ever so much as wanted to be of help or assistance to me shall be rewarded a thousand times if they so wish to be assertive enough to pursue it.

I will be reasonably charitable to all and willing to lend reasonable time, money and effort to all causes or missions I feel are worthy and deserving.

I will own anything I want but will never squander it for selfish interests.

I will know on any given day that I have the proudest friends, family, companion and dog in the world.

My co-workers, employees and associates in every major business will respect my ambition, drive, heart and willingness to accept being the best.

I will know and feel completely confident on any given day that I am the most recognized talent in the world, but will always be humble and never pompous or arrogant or demeaning to other aspirants.

My managers, agents, etc., will be fabulously wealthy, recognized throughout the world and respected for having represented me.

I will receive every honor known to man and I will deserve it.

My love for life, my dedication and hard work for excellence, my compassion and open mindedness will be world renowned, recognized and sought after, if not emulated by all.

I will be a damn good person to everybody, in spite of race, creed, religion, sex, sexuality, etc.

I will never be purposely judgmental.

My life story will be accepted, respected, revered and never challenged or second guessed by anyone. People worldwide will admire the skill, intelligence, and freedom with which my goals had led me. They will know only of the open-mindedness, the challenges fought, battles won, hearts won, attitudes changed, message of love, desire for acceptance and obsessive dedication delivered; the self-sacrifice of all one has had or would ever have for the purpose to achieve ones' goals, desires and mission. They'll know and recognize the unselfish and determined effort to be a communicator of success and accomplishment. They'll recognize sacrifice for gain, great sadness and deprivation for gain, freedom in thought and acceptance of the true meaning of purpose despite hardship. In essence, a communicator of will and its power to overcome any and all, bit by bit, but with the entirety in mind, body and spirit. A message communicated worldwide by one man in the human condition with the realization that this condition is determinable by only oneself and his desire to do so.

They'll find this message to include that no limit can stand in ones' way unless allowed; that all inhibitions and limits are self-imposed, and that we all live in an undaunted realm of possibility.

My ideal day will be engrossed with exciting bright colors and sounds and feelings of exhilaration. These will all be complemented with soft, delicate, peaceful and serene sounds; sights of elegance and calmness and feelings of passion and tingling.

Every fiber of my senses will be refreshed, sight, sound, taste and feeling.

Mind, body and spirit shall be completely in unity with all else, and shall remain so all of the remaining days of my life.

"To have great potential is to be heavily burdened with responsibility."

-Robert Burck

Introduction

"I wanna' be a movie star!" That's how it all began. I made the decision and the ball was set into motion. I hadn't a game plan and I hadn't a clue as to how to go about what was surely going to be an uphill battle. I'm not a quitter and I am not a coward, however, I knew going in that it had been done before by others. I said I was going to do it and I am. This book is not only intriguing because of the story it tells, but is also a bible of important information for any and all who are interested in breaking into the modeling and acting business. It is a firsthand look at my struggle to reach success in the industry. It is, quite frankly, the autobiography that I was looking for when I set out to realize my dreams of becoming a star. It's a book about determination, a book about dreams, and a book about life. If you are an aspiring model or actor, I hope that you will read diligently and search out all of the herein depicted clues pertaining to your potential. I hope that you will read my story and save your all important commodity; time, by neglecting to make the mistakes that I have made. If you are reading for enjoyment or general knowledge, I hope that you will be inspired by my tenacity and sacrifice as I strive to be on your television sets, your magazines, your radios, your newspapers, tabloids, and most importantly, your silver screens.

Chapter One

The Decision

Old Billy told me he could make me or break me. Of course he was just joking when he said it. I met him through an ad in the Sunday Enquirer which stated, "looking for nude male models." I'd never done anything like it but had no problem with it. I was in college and needed cash for food. Bodybuilding was my hobby at the time and I was eating quite a bit. You know, like twelve cans of tuna a day and eight to ten pounds of vegetables and shit like that. I called this Bill guy, we met, and soon started drawing on a weekly basis. Next thing ya' know I'm dancing for a gay male strip group called the Varsity Crew after being unable to get a job with any local stripping agencies for lack of experience. I met a lot of people; normal, and freaks of all sorts. I danced in Cincinnati's finest, like The Dock and The Subway. I did rounds at Gigis in Detroit, The Foundry and Little Mama's in Dayton, The Annex in Louisville, some bathhouses and a number of other bars in Cleveland, such as Detour and Memoirs. I believe I even made a few stops in Columbus and Springfield. I never knew what a gay man was, and then, all of the sudden, I was surrounded by them nightly. Crazy to say the least. I met Dan, who became my neighbor shortly thereafter in my grandparent's apartment building. The two of us danced together on a regular basis. We spent a lot of time discussing our new found, outlandish occupations. Mass cash was the name of the game, and I do mean mass.

I was dancing for Extasy Entertainment, a local stripping agency in Cincinnati, Ohio. I had to have been dancing for about four years when I received a call from the agency. It was Lorissa Nacommas. She called to tell me that a local talent agency, Hayman Halper, was looking for a tall blonde for a Proctor and Gamble commercial. I never really even considered myself as a model but it sounded good. I was told to call some guy named Scott and that he would fill me in on the rest. Well, I called the guy and went to meet him and all of that jazz. While I was waiting, an old friend of mine, Joel Garrett, came out of a room in the back of the building. Of course we were both surprised to see each other and so we were like hey, hey and all that. Anyway, he asks me if I'm modeling now. Tells me that he's working for Irene Marie in Miami. Says he's flying here, there and everywhere. Goes on to tell me that he's been doing it for some time now and that I should do it too. It all sounded good to me so I said, ...bet!

I get to meetin' this Scott character and he turns out to be extremely nice. He explains that I need to have some photos done and that with them, he can insert me into their marketing "promo" book. This is where prospective clients of theirs can decide if they want me to model for their products, whether it be in print or commercial. Of course by this time I'm just wanting

to be in the next major motion picture, but, decided to take it one step at a time. He had me read a few lines on camera in the upstairs quarters of the building and then gave me the name of a local photographer, Mike Ilyinski. Says this guy is the bomb and that he will take my photos for under two hundred dollars. Said that if I only worked one time in my life through him, it would pay for the photos. Being fairly confident in my abilities, I accepted and went on my way.

It was about this time period that I received a call from Phil at Extasy. He was calling to give me my list of shows for a particular evening. It must have been a Friday or Saturday night. Anyway, one of the shows was for Jim Simpson. It was Sweetest Day and he was ordering a dancer to come and dance for his wife, Sue. It was a sort of gag set up to embarrass her perhaps, or something like that. The show was performed on a house boat on the Kentucky side of the Ohio River. The three of us hit it off really well and vowed to meet again.

About a week later I called Mike and set up a shoot. Within, I'd say, about four days, I had the contact sheets back and I was ready to do more. I hated every shot but knew that I could do better. He and Scott both liked a number of them and from them picked out a head shot and a full body shot for Hayman Halper's talent book. I think that cost me about two hundred and forty bucks also.

In the following weeks I began shooting with photographers and friends like crazy. Billy Carlos, Jack Meuller, Mike Hall, Jim Simpson, Tom Lang, some guy named Dale I met at the Subway in Cincinnati, and Mike Ilyinski again. I shot at least once a day. Having stripped for nearly four years, I had all kinds of contacts with which to shoot and to gain financial assistance. I began enlightening others of the new dreams I was formulating of becoming a model and then a famous movie star and everyone was extremely supportive. It wasn't two weeks before I was believing it myself. I went out and purchased the book, "Unlimited Power," by Anthony Robbins. This book was the beginning of what would become an obsession. It's a book about success; about getting what you want out of life. Sure, I had never really sought after becoming a movie star before, but I did spend every waking minute of my day trying to grasp attention from anyone and everybody. The limelight, the center of attention, the ham if you will. This book helped to solidify for me a goal, an outlet with which to channel my existence, something I could truly look forward to and which to be proud. It helped me to realize a profession that would be worthy to have me. "Unlimited Power" is a book about communication, to oneself and to others

and how to bring out the best of each while enjoying it. It spoke of the advancement of technology and how with the existing mediums of exchange; television, radio, movies and how a person with tremendous courage and vision could speak to the world through these mediums. I would create a person, the most desired and ideal, with the mental capacity to back it up. A hero in friendship, discipline, perseverance but mostly sacrifice for gain. To give all, to be all, that's what I'd become.

A famous movie star I would be, and now all I needed was a strategy to get there. I was about four months from graduating from the University of Cincinnati. I wasn't rich by any means and knew that I would need money to pursue my goals. I was already starting to spin myself into a web of debt with photography alone. My plan at the time was to simply become a model, be seen, then be thrown into movies. Quick and easy like. No obstacles of any kind. I decided to open a stripping agency of my own to make money. I called it Sensations Entertainment and it opened a whole new can of worms.

I opened my stripping agency on May 20, 1994. I put an ad in the paper for dancers and an ad in the Yellow Pages for stripper services. I registered a trade and fictitious name with the State of Ohio and was rollin' real quick. My grandparent's apartment building on Dewitt Street in Greenhills, Ohio was thumping with hot chicks from morning until night. I lived at number thirty-six and everyone in our little mama's town knew and despised it. I ran into more damn trouble in six months than you could imagine. Between May 20, 1994 and October, 1994, Dewitt Street saw some real excitement. We had a barrage of girls, dressed to kill, hauling ass back and forth from their cars to the front door. We had parties and "rock and roll" around the clock. We had a police raid with ten to twenty officers taking everything that wasn't nailed down out the front door and hoisting it all on a truck. We had a break-in with death threats and we were on the news daily for about a week and a half as trouble continued to mount. We had a competitor agency representative come to the door with a sub-machine gun demanding to talk unofficial business at three in the morning. This particular incident ended with a line formation of police officers surrounding the idiot at gun point in the front yard and grabbing the attention of each and every peacefully sleeping neighbor. My manager, Chris Bales, and his assistant, Todd Jeffries, were both featured in the news with me almost daily. Todd and I made it a point to protest in our G-strings on Fountain Square in Cincinnati just for the hell of it. We finally met our demise when John Sellman of the Greenhills Police came and informed us that we had to move our business

out of the district. I'm telling you, we had it going on. Just me, my manager Chris Bales, and my buddy Todd. Todd danced and answered phones after he got the hang of it. His girlfriend Cre, alias Dynasty, and my girl Carla, alias Rio, were a team of four, able to handle all of the shows if any of the other dancers so decided to be unreliable. The four of us had a blast and were sorry to see it all end. However, I knew that the mission was complete. Sensations was opened to raise money to launch my modeling and acting career, and by that time, the money was available to make a good attempt to do so.

One of the many hair brained ideas I had was to make a poster of myself and to sell it all over the United States. The "Robert Poster." Why not? I would simply make a poster out of one of my best shots. I would then take it to a number of big poster companies and try to find a distributor. If it were in the stores, I reasoned, people would just assume that I was someone and buy the damn thing. Better yet, people all over the world would see and eventually recognize me. Seemed simple enough. With nearly all of the above listed photographers I did shoots in tree tops, golf courses, swimming pools and whirlpools. I even shot nudes in the creek bed at Beechwood Elementary in October. I must have shot at least one photo beside or around every landmark known to man. It was extreme to say the least. We even shot some on the dividing wall of I-75 during rush hour in ten-degree weather with snow pouring down. We were looking for the perfect shot. I eventually found an interested party, Gordon Geraci, a photographer, and owner of Elite Fashion Photography, who wanted to join the team and market the poster. The team at this point consisted of myself and three dear friends, Tom Lang and James and Sue Simpson. Gordon tried both Musicland and Spencer's Gifts. The Simpsons financed Gordon's flights and other travel expenses to find out if these two particular poster companies were interested in dealing with a poster company that sold only one image. They both stated that they strictly dealt with companies that sold whole lines of posters. The poster really did turn out cool. We all decided on a collage of about seven photos. Todd and I would give them out at strip shows. The ladies just loved them and thought they were something special. To date I still have over two-thousand of the bastards in my closet on 36 Dewitt Street but the numbers are dwindling as friends and loved ones request them almost daily.

Eight hundred and seventy dollars went to Barbizon International of Cincinnati, Ohio. My pal, Jim Simpson, decided that I should receive some formal education in modeling in order to gain some legitimacy as a model.

We had previously cut a deal that he and Sue would make me famous and I would make them rich. After financing the opening of Sensations for a total of three hundred and some odd dollars, I began returning about five to eight hundred dollars a week. I guess he began to feel richer and realized I wasn't any more famous so he wanted to kick the ball rollin' again so to speak. It took Barbizon about ten weeks to teach me what I could have learned in three hours had the entire class not consisted of fifteen year old kids playing tag in the halls and passing cooties. I did learn some necessary things there however, and at least, where I was concerned, I did feel that they had the best of intentions. I am grateful to know Pamela Smith, Diane and Debbie who have all been very supportive in my career endeavors. I write to them every couple of weeks and that's the extent of our relationship. I really don't think they ever expect anyone who goes to their school to really want to be a model. It's about personal development for prissy little rich kids perhaps. I tried to get Todd to join though, 'cause I did feel that it would look good on a resume, and like I said previously, I did learn what I believed was some valuable information. To walk and to talk, make-up and some vocabulary that I might have been out in left field if I had not been an active student.

Through Barbizon, I also attended the International Model and Talent Association in New York City in July of 1994. It was here that I got my first look at the modeling world. I'm referring to New York City, not the contest. The contest was simply a bunch of outside local nobodies like myself. Probably ninety percent utterly and completely closed out of the modeling scene forever. Their directors knew it too. Overweight, five-foot-two girls and guys with bleached blonde hair. Come on! Sure the big name modeling agencies were there. Possibly even the decision makers from some of those agencies, but, it's still a scam when roughly a thousand people show up at an event with high hopes and only a few even have a chance of ever being represented. I'm not saying that it's not a possible shot at the top, I'm just saying that if you and everyone you know don't say your the shit at least five times a day unprovoked, then don't spend all your resources trying to make it in modeling this way. Modeling is more realistically a job of self-promotion. The Cindy Crawford's are hard workers who listened and endured.

Towards the end of 1994, Todd and his girlfriend Cre, myself and my girlfriend Carla, and a chick named Mercedes, all went on the Jerry Springer show. We went on there with the understanding that we would say Todd and I were male escorts who had sex for money until we met our girlfriends. As the story goes, we met our girlfriends and made the decision to continue

escorting, however, without having sex with our clients. Three minutes to air time, Todd and I were confronted by the program assistants and told that we were to say that we still had sex for money despite our relationships with our girlfriends. When Todd and I insisted that this could not occur, we were threatened with law suits to the amount of the show's production costs. Needless to say our girlfriends flipped. Mine especially. And rightfully so. I played it as instructed and broke her heart. Another "get famous attempt" shot to hell. Lesson one never forgotten; don't ever compromise the one you love for anything. I found that I lost a great deal of my self-respect when I lost my love.

My main supporters and best friends, James and Sue Simpson, were obviously in for the long haul. They have been supportive since day one and have filled every void. They have loved and nurtured me and my goals since the day I met them. They have complemented every financial need and every emotional need and every whim. They became a good friend to Todd and had striven to assist us both. By December of 1994, James had printed hundreds of both business cards and lazer prints for Todd and I to pass out all over Las Vegas, our first modeling venture location. We had newly purchased portfolio bags and current shots taken in Cincinnati by a host of amateur photographers. Hell, by this time I had four industrial sized photo albums filled with over five thousand photos in them. I thought I was ready and was sure Todd would find the confidence. When we left, we assured ourselves that we were going to be "the shit" in Vegas.

Chapter Two

Las Vegas

I can remember my buddy Todd telling me how his mother and father were disappointed when he left for the big city. Only problem was is that they were referring to Cincinnati. Todd had gone off to become a stripper's bodyguard. His friend Chastity, a hotty with class, was going to dance. This is how I met Todd in the first place. This was the mentality. Todd's eyes

were as big as damn golf balls when we walked out on the Las Vegas Boulevard for the first time, with all of the lights and shit. Mass hysteria for the mind, it was January 19, 1995.

I guess we went to Vegas to hustle or something. Or maybe it was to be seen as models. I know that we were motivated to do something big because in the first night we walked for over nine hours. In and out of every Casino we could find. We hit The Rio, The Riviera, Excalibur, The Flamingo, Treasure Island, Frontier, Silver City, Barbary Coast, The Mirage, Caesar's Palace, shit you name it, we hit every damn one I swear. Our feet were destroyed the rest of the week and I mean that literally. We were intent on looking like models, so we only brought suits and dress shoes. Well, we did have hiking boots and G-strings in case we were able to find clubs to dance in, for cash, but those get-ups wouldn't have done us much good in public. Anyway, we walked and walked and damn well walked. Bone spurs to say the very least. It just made sense to go to Vegas. It was a relatively cheap trip, mass money is there, and rich, influential people are there. It also is known to be a hustle town. Young guys and girls go and make fast, fat cash dancing and turning tricks. Of course for Todd and I, a turned trick meant Cincinnati style nude shows, but we were good lookin' young lads so why not think we would make some dough.

We were there one night before opening the Yellow Pages and looking up the local stripping and escort agencies. There had to have been about a hundred. Most probably rang in at the same location but it still looked impressive. Surely we could get hooked up with an agency and be on call by noon. I had a 800 pager and we could both be contacted immediately by the number. We had lazars and could be described to any caller. So we made a couple of calls until we got the bite. Took a taxi to an agency called Men of Vegas on East Tropicana and met some dude whose name escapes me. He took two Polaroid's and said he'd call us as soon as a show came in that fit either one of us. Easy as pie it seemed.

I kept telling Todd's punk ass to stop picking up all of those damn stripper cards. He just couldn't do it though. You see, in Vegas, the strippers are like gold. Rich men and women are just there to be reckless and extravagant. They want to spend money on gambling, expensive food and if they so choose, hot men and women. They'll buy ya' outright. Had a taxi driver telling us that some rich Russian millionaire paid over forty thousand dollars the night before to screw some young kid he had the "hots" for. What the hell is that shit? Back to Todd, he had at least fifty cards in his hands at any given time. "Look at this one, look at that one," he kept

hollering. Strippers in Las Vegas have these beautiful business cards with photos that look like they're straight out of Playboy magazine or something. Foreigners stand on nearly every corner passing out literature on the different agencies on top of that. It was stripper mania for Todd and he was anxious for the first show.

Push-ups and sit-ups till about sundown after a long day's walking again. We hadn't really done shit but to look around Vegas. We just couldn't seem to get anything done without a car and without wanting to spend a lot of cash on cabs. I never expected Vegas to be so spread the hell out. I heard about the strip from the Simpsons who frequent the place and I just got the impression that the strip was something you could jog up and down ten times in an hour and it sure the heck ain't.

Before exiting the Imperial Palace each night, Todd and I formed the habit of playing a few games on slot machines. You know, about twenty dollars wasted each time? We also began drinking pretty heavily as we'd mastered the gambler's busy look in front of the machines. When you had this look the little cocktail waitresses would bring em' to ya' for free. It became sort of a sport. Who could get drunk as shit for only twenty dollars or even less.

Todd and I had a blast dancing for a ton of ladies in Olympic Gardens. We got hooked up by a guy named Joe Lucione Hirsch. We got his name by hanging around the club and talking to employees. He said he hadn't had any dancers like us and would be happy to use us. We only danced for tips, but it got us both about a hundred plus bucks. Plus we had a damn good time. Serious chicks, all excited and ready for lovin.' It was one of those crowds where you can do no wrong and we didn't.

The Grand Casino Rio was also cool as hell. I liked it really just 'cause it was my girlfriend Carla's stripper name back in Cincinnati. The place was really cool though. It had wide screen T.V.'s all over the walls. The place was like a huge auditorium with seats spiraling around the perimeter and two dance floors. Todd and I danced our asses off there. Not for cash or anything like that. This place was just a club. We paid to get in, but we were up on the stage and projected on the wide screen televisions as we made spectacles of ourselves dancing. It was a good time. I met some dude named Fred Edwards there too. He was playing blackjack for a thousand bucks at a time. Turns out he was a Texas tycoon who dealt in ceiling fans for Southern International Inc. I chatted with him for a while at the blackjack table. Next thing ya' know, Todd and I were getting free drinks and allowed in Club Rio without any questions asked. Fred said he had an

account with the casino for over a million dollars. It turned out to be a good friend to have there. We got lit that night and had a blast. Didn't really have a choice, we were with Fred and everything was free.

Our first page and Todd and I were fumbling over the phone and fighting over who should do the show before we even called it back. We were both right. It was a call for a show and at Ceasar's Palace at that. A superbly dressed guy met us in the lounge and asked us if we knew what would be expected of us. We assumed we did and so said likewise. He said that the show was for five thousand dollars, five thousand for the company, and tips for us. I was stunned as hell. Couldn't even begin to believe it. Next thing you know this little oriental man is looking us up and down and then pulls the guy in the suit aside to talk about us. After about five minutes he leaves and the agency guy comes to tell us that the client isn't interested. Said he didn't like tattoos and that Todd was too skinny. Todd and I quit our Vegas dancing career then and there knowing the obvious that these rich sons-of-bitches were not paying that kind of fat cash for a strip show.

Todd and I found ourselves sitting at the bar in the Rio Casino again. I got up from my seat and sat beside a hotty whose name turned out to be Ronnie Ray. She was an entertainer at the casino. She was also a psychic. Before long, Todd had joined us and we were all shootin' the shit. She bought me at least ten Pina Coladas, my favorite drink. I had myself a good old time. She said that she could tell that Todd was destined to be a bartender and that she didn't see me as a model, at least not as a career, but instead saw me in the movies. This was all she needed to say to get me in the sack. Unfortunately, she wasn't trying to do that. She was being serious she said. Ronnie ended up giving me the names of a couple of local clubs where she thought Todd and I might be able to mingle with some influential people, as well as a couple of different talent agencies, and gay clubs in the area. She said that she knew a lot of straight guys who had danced in gay clubs to make the money to make it happen in strange places. I kissed her goodnight and it felt great. My first Las Vegas show girl. After that we walked about a mile back to the Imperial Palace in severe pain as our feet were surely close to their ends. We probably got to bed by three, right after another cash advance on our credit cards and a few spins of those damn depressing wheels with lemons.

I got up the next morning and called Lear Casting and Creative Casting. I also called a guy named Tim Conroy who worked with an entertainment news company called Dirt Alert. These were all contacts given to me by Ronnie Ray. The two casting agencies didn't answer their phones and Tim wanted

me to meet him at the Rio. I couldn't wake Todd so I went it alone. The guy was really down to earth and I enjoyed our talk. He said I was a fish out of water and that I needed to go to New York or Los Angeles. He said that he could get me to Japan if I was interested in stripping but that it would take a week or two of him introducing me to a number of Japanese men in Vegas before I could go. He said that he was confident I had what it would take to make it in the industry if I was only where the industry was. I returned emphatic and excited about going to New York and was telling Todd how we could do it. That night we went to all of the clubs that Ronnie Ray suggested; The Metz, The Piladium, and The Shark Club where we danced to the bands rendition of "Shake Your Bootie." It was another night of bonding with my pal. We were drunk, blasted and laughing our asses off as we got shot down one by one by the most extravagant bitches we'd ever seen. Surely the only elements in the bar more fried than our minds were our feet. It was January 21, 1995 as we stared into each others eyes grinnin' and knowing that we would be doing the same in my apartment in Greenhills the following day.

Chapter Three

First Composite

January 2, 1995 came along and I was extremely motivated. I'd already written a five page summary of all that had happened in Vegas and had my mind made up that everything had gone as planned. I made every little happenstance seem as though it were for a purpose. I thought of all of the things that had happened and decided that it was a tremendous learning experience. I knew that my efforts could be duplicated to great advantage, as soon as I could get to where the industry actually existed. I wrote everyone I'd met and thanked them for being whatever they were to me when I met them. I bought five books from Borders; "Screen Acting" by Brian Adams, "The Actor," by Eve Brandsten, "Building Character," by Stanislavski, "Fashion, Culture, and Identity," by Fred Davis, and

"Unlimited Power," for which I have read for about the tenth time, by Anthony Robbins, and began reading each.

My plan was actually pretty simple. Design the best look that I could come up with, have photos taken of that look, make the best composite money could buy, and send it to every modeling and talent agency in the world. Get a contract, go to the city that offers the most, and ride around in a limo for the rest of my life steadily getting more and more famous from there on out until I reach international stardom in the damn movies.

I shot with photographers all over Cincinnati, Mike Hall, Tracey Deaton, William Christos, Tom Lang, Mike Ilyinsky, Jack Mueller and of course Gordon Geraci to name but a few. I spent roughly four thousand dollars on film and developing. I had to dance nearly every night at all hours. Todd and I were training together almost every day, some days he would still miss despite my verbal lashings when he did. I started clipping out fashion ads from GQ, Esquire, Top Model, Mens Style, International Male, you name it, all of them. I set aside an album full of fashion ads to study the clothing patterns and what not. Even got Todd to look at the bastards. The plans seemed to be coming together.

After I got all of the photos that I thought were the best together, I sent them to a composite company called Comp USA. There they made me a three page, color composite. It had roughly eleven photos and was glossy as shit. Jim and Sue, Tom, Bill, Gordon, shit, all my friends and family thought it was really something. The cost was roughly three grand for the composites, plus I got some business cards that had my head shot on them. State of the art work. Now I just needed to get them out.

I began, again, to imprison myself in Borders and Barnes and Noble drinking coffee till I was blue in the face. My pal Tom was there selflessly assisting me in every way possible. We dug up every magazine editor for the fashion magazines depicting male models, the clothing manufacturers, health magazines, even gay magazines with the expectation of possibly shooting single nude pictorials if money got short before legitimate work came my way. I also ordered a book from a company called "The Model Mart." Herein I got a listing of every talent and modeling agency in New York City, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, as well as those listed in Italy, France, Switzerland, Japan, Taipei, and then some. It was all of these individual outlets that I wanted to send my composites. Just like my original plan, best me, best composite, best agencies, best deal.

Sue called the postal service in our area and found out the details of bulk mail and the rates for their services. She found that the service would enable

us to obtain special rates determined by the quantity and design of our mailings. Having discussed it with the post office consultant, Sue figured we'd save almost four hundred dollars by subscribing and so we did. My Dad, who was beginning to take a more active interest in my plans, began to amass piles upon piles of eight by ten envelopes from his supply cabinets.

My one and only love, Carla, was getting more and more insecure all the time. I was as well, only I was acting like I wasn't. I knew that leaving was going to be the hardest thing I'd ever do in my lifetime. I never had any intentions of staying gone for long, but the thought of leaving, or should I say jeopardizing my relationship with her, was all threatening. We weren't fighting, but were at peace and just kind of mello. It was something we weren't talking about but through body language. I hurt bad. I hugged her daughter Amanda twice as much as usual knowing that I would be deprived of her when I was away. I love Amanda.

I graduated from Barbizon International in Cincinnati while I was home. Todd and Carla went to my graduation at the Cincinnati Marriot in Sharonville. Jim and Sue were out of town I believe, and I think Tom was busy with his work. The graduation was small and kind of cheesy, if you will, but I guess I'm glad I did it all. The directors, Pam, Diane, and Debby were extremely nice to work with, and were very passionate when they encouraged me to stick with it. Debby, Pam and I really seemed to hit it off well when the three of us went to New York City for the International Models and Talent Association event the previous year. Pam especially wanted to make me her little boy. She went into meet Charmian Carl at Playgirl Magazine with me in New York. Charmian looked at some of my photos that I had previously sent in and she said that they wouldn't have considered anybody with lousy photography. Pam said that she wasn't too sure she wanted to represent someone that was in a smut magazine anyway. After arguing my point with Pam for about two hours, the way a couple argues over who loves who the most, she conceded and I ended up test shooting for Playgirl with Jean Pierre. To my knowledge nothing came of it. Maybe it had something to do with Pam making me insist on earning over five grand when Jean Pierre claimed that Jean Claude Van Dam only got two.

Gordon Geraci selected me as his Campus Calendar Man of the Year for 1995. Tom got his video camera out of his closet, found the address to Ed McMann's Star Search, and helped designed for me a video to send to California though it never reached completion. We also made a sensual male video of me by myself getting stupid with some baby oil. It, at the time, was thought to be one of a series of clips that would be in a whole

video line that we would produce and distribute ourselves called the Ultimate Male Video Series. Todd did one too but I never saw it.

Todd, my neighbor Dan and I went to Cooters and the Warehouse about four times a week. We were doing some serious dancing and experimentation with drugs. We pulled the red eye quite often for sure. Having good times and becoming the best of friends. Robitussin DM was a friend of ours. I ran into Joel Garrett again at Cooters one night. I showed him my composite which I had gotten in the mail that day. He said to do it up.

By the time Todd, Tom and I got to the bus station for New York I had spent nine thousand nine hundred dollars. It was spent on film, developing, prints, enlargements, postage, suit cases, books, supplies, long distance calls, portfolio bags and things of that nature. I'd done hundreds of visualizations seeing myself and everyone I know living the lifestyles of the rich and the famous. Meditation daily and yoga as often as time permitted. Todd and I had dropped off over two thousand composites to the postal service downtown the day prior. My face and body would be landing on desk tops all over the world in just a few days. Each composite had a marble designed insert with a resume' and personal statistics. The shit looked impressive as hell, at least I thought they did. I had new time lines and goal setter plans laid out in my hand bags and I was ready to rock. It was just the three of us on a Greyhound for New York City. I had what became the all too familiar tear in my eye as I had to watch my beloved Carla's heart break as the fuckin' bus left the terminal. It was February 20, 1995. I had spent four thousand six hundred and ten dollars in the month of February alone trying to kick things in the right direction.

Chapter Four

Get Out!

Our trip to New York and the objectives were fairly simple. We were simply going to come into the city and take it by storm, Todd, my buddy

Tom, and myself. Tom was basically there to assist me and to help make it happen, and Todd was going to duplicate my efforts and ride in on coattails so to speak. We had all of our shit lugged under our arms and were hiking towards Times Square from the Port Authority looking for our hotel. I was irritable as hell and bitching up a storm. As usual I wanted to get situated so that I could begin to formulate a plan of attack. The three of us walked for some thirty minutes before we reached the Quality Inn off of Times Square around Forty Third Street or something like that. It was miserably cold and the wind was gusty as all hell. It literally froze the nose hairs and made the lungs quake. Of course I had to do shoulder shrugs with my suit cases the whole way which left my shoulders stiff as week old toast for the entire trip.

Four days prior to leaving for New York I sent out my first composite. There were thousands sent out and they probably arrived, at least those in the United States, the day we arrived in New York. If they didn't, they would be arriving the next day I was sure. I felt certain that I would receive lots of calls. I mean come on, over three thousand and some shit like that. Hell, if one percent called, that's still a lot of calls considering the sources. So for me it was just a matter of time, short time before the sparks would ignite.

We checked into the Quality and took our bags up to our room. The room, or should I say cubical, was ridiculously small. It had a bed and approximately one foot of space on each of its three sides. The bathroom had a shitter, a tub and small sink too small to scrub a poodle. We were all excited and bickering 'bout getting out and doing something. There was a spirit of team work flourishing and I could tell my buddies had confidence in our endeavor. We chatted about how the composite was going to be a shoe-in and how we needn't rush things. Besides, it was nearly midnight and we couldn't do a damn thing at that hour anyway. The three of us went out and got some muffins and coffee before returning to the hotel again to try and get some rest. I left Todd and Tom to sleep and went for a jog in the coldest ass streets I'd ever ran in. Got back and began organizing my talent directory lists for the following day and finally fell asleep exhausted.

Morning came and I went for another jog after sit-ups and push-ups. I was thumping the Dimetadrine and as usual was hypersensitive and ready to accomplish that which no ordinary man ever sets his sights on. I heralded insults at Tom and Todd for not being up when I'd returned from jogging. Lazy this and that and whatever else you would call a couple of tired people who had not expected to awaken at six in the morning. The poor guys obviously didn't hear me when I told 'em I'd be back in an hour and to be up

and ready. It's just hard to take when your bustin' ass and looking for motivation among normal people. They simply wouldn't go for the six shit and so I laid down and sulked.

By nine or so we were in a coffee shop drinking coffee. The last thing I needed with amphetamines already pumping through my blood stream. I was a nervous wreck and there was little we could do being it was so early. I kept asking Tom if we had all the agency lists grouped by street numbers. Naturally we wanted to hit all of the agencies without walking our feet off as we had in Vegas. He said he had and so the march began. Todd and I filed into the agencies, one after another. It's just amazing how many agencies there are. Sometimes two and three in a building, probably more. The problem was that they were all talent agencies and wouldn't even look at my composite, much less take the damn thing. Needless to say they didn't want just a laser either from Todd. I didn't know there was any big difference between a modeling and talent agency, but there sure as hell was. These talent agencies didn't want models, they wanted actors. They only wanted black and white, eight by ten head shots. Nothing else and I mean nothing. Every agency had their walls loaded with head shots like the one I didn't have to give. I said I was an actor and they said that without a head shot it didn't matter what I was.

After about fifteen or so doors had been shut in our faces in one way or another, five or six hours had gone by. Exhausted again and pissed as all hell. I took it out on Tom and began asking why the hell we had walked all day and not yet reached a modeling agency. I bitched the poor boy into the ground over it. Called him stupid and everything else 'cause I was aggravated and hungry and lacking in manners and cool. Next I started screaming about missing the New York City modeling directory that I had bought for the trip. He said he gave it to me. I said he was full of shit. Came to find ourselves fighting over where we had just seen a Barnes and Noble and then we actually found it again. I purchased another directory, exactly like the one I bought before we left, and then bolted from the store leaving Tom and Todd to chase me throughout the streets of Manhattan. I was in the biggest hurry to get to God knows where considering it was after six in the evening and so too late to continue. Pissed as all hell, I was feeling the day had been wasted. I stopped in another coffee shop where Todd and Tom caught up with me. We sipped down some cappachino and then I bitched about how much the sappy black shit cost. Poor Todd hadn't uttered a word since I began my onslaught of moaning. He wouldn't dare cross me the way I was acting. Eventually I started feeling bad for him and

his feelings. I told him it was going to be cool and that I was just anxious to make something happen.

Sometime around eight I got a page from Pasadena, California. It was magic to my eyes to see the "818" page. The three of us had been back at the hotel, each sitting on a corner of the bed with our heads in our hands, waiting to die. A new spirit of vitality came upon us as we started joking about how California was already knocking on the door when we were just getting busy giving New York the opportunity. "Sorry boys, but we're getting famous in New York right now, can ya' call back latter?" I was the shit for sure I thought. The comp had worked. Had to have arrived the same day. California being four hours behind meant that the caller had probably just got it and decided to call right away. After 'bout ten minutes of speculation, Todd said I was the man and told me to call the bastard back.

All wrong we were. Turns out the caller was Gus Castaneda of International Model Management. He just called to tell me that he had never seen a composite as foolish as mine. Why on earth, he wanted to know, would I spend all that money to make a three page color composite without first obtaining good photography? He spoke of a hideous green background, and high school portraits. He said it was the most ridiculous bunch of rubbish he'd ever seen. Then he said that my nose was a damn joke and that I had to do something about it as soon as possible if I ever expected to do any modeling. It's so big and round. You must be kidding and shit was his general attitude. He also remembered to mention that my hair was shabby and that I looked like I could stand to loose about twenty pounds. He said he wasn't trying to be unkind but that whoever was telling me how to go about things was drastically wrong or just hated my guts. He ended by saying that my nose could be corrected without spending a lot of cash. I thanked him and hung up the phone.

I hung up the phone and told Tom to call Greyhound. I simply wasn't going to be seen by anybody in New York with my fat ass nose. The next bus out was at six in the morning. We walked to another muffin shop about two blocks from the hotel and sat down for some coffee. I got on the pay phone and asked Sue to make me an appointment with her plastic surgeon for the day upon which I would be returning. I then called Carla and told her that I loved her dearly and that I would be home the following day. I returned to Tom and Todd at the counter who proceeded to look at me as if I was from Mars. Neither of them were debating my decision, though I could tell it was all they wanted to do. I could only smirk as I tried my best to

keep my big nose out of the light out of respect of the other patrons of the restaurant.

When we left the shop it must have been around eleven. That gave us about seven hours to get to the Port Authority which was only some eight streets or so away. Todd and I decided to drink some Robitussin and go crazy. Tom never had any complaints, he went with the flow. So we went to a deli and bought two economy size bottles and guzzled. From there on out things got nuts. Up, down and around Times Square screaming at each other and playing charades. We made a movie I swear. I just don't know who actually filmed it and I don't know where the film is. I can assure you however, if you ever get your hands on it, it will be worth a mint to you. We were the only three people out in the streets. It had to have been zero or below with the wind chill factor. Robitussin makes the body immune to the world and all its atrocities, but for the life of me I don't know how the hell Tom survived. He just hung right beside us with the endurance of a knight. It was amazing and I mean that. In the course of the night we hiked Greenwich, Soho, Chinatown, and were as far uptown as One Hundred and Twentieth Street. We were all over Manhattan and fuckin' goin' crazy. It was something to marvel at. Even had an incident with two New York City police officers. Todd approached their car outside of a deli in Greenwich and asked them what level of education a cop needed in Manhattan. I abruptly interrupted and said that a complete idiot could be a cop there and that it was, in fact, nearly a prerequisite, for who in their right mind would do it? Just after I shut my mouth the officer on the drivers side grabbed his club and began to exit the cruiser. That was our cue and so we started walking the opposite direction as the officer on the passenger side had said we'd better do. Next thing I remember we were barreling down Eighth Avenue in a taxi at seventy miles an hour, no lie. Crazy ass Arab laughing and shit cause I was bracing myself against the front dash. Got to the hotel and found ourselves, Todd and I, jumping up and down on the bed mimicking each other's every move. Tom was sitting on the window ledge writing something down. Todd speculated that Tom would be the story teller in the "get famous" adventure. That he and I would be too fucked up all the time to remember anything while Tom stayed straight. With that Tom said he was beat and wanted to sleep so Todd and I went back to the streets to scream and holler about who we were and what we'd come to New York to do before we found out my nose was too big. Come time to leave, Tom, Todd and I were in line at the Port Authority and Tom looks at me and says, "do you realize that about ten hours ago we were ranting and raving about

how bad you were and then some complete stranger four thousand miles away called and put you in your place!"

Chapter Five

Nose Job

The three of us returned home on February 24, 1995 and were picked up at the Cincinnati bus terminal by Jim and Sue. It was another demoralizing trip on the Greyhound. I hadn't eaten since departure in some eighteen hours. I was longing for my Carla who would be waiting in her trailer in Fairfield, Ohio. She was surely the most precious thing in my life to that point.

I had an appointment set up with Sue's friend, Laura at the Cincinnati Institute of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. She worked as a receptionist and was able to get a better than average rate. She got me in within two days of returning to Cincinnati. I was introduced to Dr. McKenna, a nice ass man, who made another appointment for surgery only two days later. I was taken to the hospital two days later by Tom who waited while I had my nose corrected. It was an hour or so procedure that involved no pain. The total cost of the operation, including anesthesia, was reasonable, however, it raised my expenses over four thousand dollars for this particular trip home from work.

While home I began reading a number of new books that I picked up at Borders. It was a casual afternoon when I went in to browse through the new fashion magazines and chug coffee. Before leaving for New York City I finished all three of them. The books were "Networking Smart," by Baker, "How to Win Friends and Influence Others," by Dale Carnegie, and "Think and Grow Rich," by Napoleon Hill.

After being home for only three days, I received a letter in the mail from Boca Talent in Miami. The letter said that they were interested in representing me and to call at my earliest convenience. Having decided to go to New York already, I didn't take up the offer. This response was one of

about twenty to date that had returned from my first modeling composite. This one was the only one, however, stating a positive interest. Every other letter received stated some reason or another for not being able to represent me.

I trained every morning and every night for a minimum of an hour and a half each. I felt that three hours a day would be sufficient, besides, I had to take it easy for fear of my nose stitches coming loose. My body was really tightening up though I still felt a long way from where I wanted to be. Sporadic bouts of heavy eating in moments of weakness were still interfering. An extreme inability to relax was all disempowering. The speed I was taking around the clock to keep both my metabolism up, and the smile on my face was surely not helping that end.

Throughout the week I was able to spend a good deal of quality time with my pal Todd. We went to the Warehouse and let loose a couple of times. Our neighbor Dan went with us too. The three of us got tanked on liquor and Robittussin DM and shared many smiles. We got high every day I was home, but not till nightfall, or at least till five o' clock, 'cause I had to take care of business first. Dancing for the four hour stretch was also considered work, you see I read in a book that dancing is an aid to physical development and that cluttered gestures are not appropriate for the stage.

Meditations and visualizations with Yoga exercises and stretches were done daily. I made sure I was drinking lots of water and keeping hygienically clean. I had a lot on my mind with my coming departure for New York. Having just returned after only one day, and being face to face with a thousand people with a thousand "no's," I knew that the coming trip would be difficult. Gordon called. I made contact with some of the Johns in my life, that's Whitiker, Hayes, Leach, Dixon, as well as a number of other friends like Poncho, Billy, Dave, Bill, Dave, and Gary. I wrote a contact letter to all my new friends in Las Vegas and I tried to see everyone in my immediate family nearby. I spent the majority of my days home hangin' out and organizing my business matters with Jim and Sue and as usual we shared some great dinners and moments.

Every night was spent sleeping under the plastic glow-in-the-dark stars in Carla's trailer. I made her breakfast everyday and never let a day go by without telling her how much I loved her. I cherished every moment I had with her, for I knew that departure would soon be imminent. Each night, the latest hours of them anyway, were spent listening to Sade, smoking pot, body rubs and sex to the sweet scent of incense that filled the air of Carla's little trailer.

After one full week in Cincinnati, Todd and I were prepared to leave for the Big Apple again, this time alone, and to be gone for a while. I had a new nose and a new confidence and was ready again to conquer. Carla again dropped us off at the Cincinnati Bus Terminal. In an effort to keep the doves from sulking, I held back my anguish. It was March 1, 1995.

Chapter Six

First Shot

Well, Todd and I were again getting off at the Port Authority on Eighth Avenue in New York City. Another eighteen hours on the bus and we were exhausted. Only problem was that it was morning and we had a long day ahead of us. We got in the cab line and hurled our way to the Portland Square Hotel. I had called before leaving, it was the cheapest place I could find. The desk told me that they worked in conjunction with the Hotel Newton so for the first three to six days we went back and forth as vacancies allowed. It was one of those one bed deals with no space around it and one bathroom per floor.

After we got all our shit together in our room, which I had to do myself 'cause it was only a room for one, we began to walk up towards Times Square to think about a strategy. We knew that we needed to find an agency that would consider us, and we knew that we needed to have some source of income in order to stay alive and out of the gutter. After about twenty attempts, we found a guy who told us that there were three good sources that could assist us in finding these three things. The Voice, The Backstage, and the HX Circular he said were all New York City publications that could be utilized to find such things.

Todd and I began to hunt through the three publications finding a list of all the gay bars in HX. We figured we could go to each and every bar, find out what nights they had male dancers for hire, audition, and then dance for fat cash on those nights. Figured we would have every night booked before long and would then be able to stay financed.

The second, possibly the third day after we arrived, we began to walk to the agencies listed in the New York City Modeling directory. It was the one I purchased for the second time when we came with Tom some two and one half weeks earlier. Like idiots we didn't bother to call and get open-call times, we just showed up and left our pictures with the receptionists. We did this despite being told by some chick, signed by Click Models, who told us that open-call was the only time any model would be seen by a prospective modeling agency. She also, having looked at what we were going to pass out, told us that without tear-sheets, New York City was the last place on earth any model would want to be. She said she didn't want to be cruel, but that our photos sucked. In the course of about a week, Todd and I personally walked and distributed photos with our contact information to Next, Boss, Zoli, World, Nytro, Action, Formation, Wilhelmina, Ford, Mike Amatos, Grace Del Marco, Partners, Click, Rogers and Lehrman, Maxx Men, Trouble Model Management, Gila Roos, and Mad Models. Every agency happily took our photos but made no response after our departure. Let me mind you, however that I was distributing a three page, color composite with high school portrait photography, and Todd was distributing laser prints done on damn near fly paper.

Todd and I jogged the streets of Manhattan every morning and every night making sure to make it through some portion of Central Park daily. It was beautiful there. The zoo in Central Park was especially nice. Todd and I would jog into the park, do push ups on park benches, and pull ups on tree limbs before stopping for a smoke or two. Then we would jog back to the base, or wherever we were living temporarily, and prepare for a long day of hunting. We tanned at The Beach on Christopher, and, in an effort to be in the right types of places at the right time, we would often hang out for coffee in the Iridium, Planet Hollywood, The Russian Tea Room, The Harley Davidson Restaurant and places such as these with a more upscale milieu.

Todd and I were both pretty depressed after being in New York a while. We weren't really seeing any momentous, quantum leaps toward success, yet we were tired as hell. We were both getting skinnier due to long hours of walking and my refusal to spend, or allow Todd to spend, too much of our money. The plan for meal times was always the same. Whatever you could steal and eat from the buffet before getting to the register was all you could eat, but don't dare put enough food on the plate to make the register go over three fourths of a pound. This figure was derived by myself after about four trips to the local delis which are configured about every third or fourth store on any given street. We usually did really well during the day, but by the

time night set in, we'd be at Big Nick's Burger and Pizza Joint hoarding down muffins and coffee till we'd 'bout puke. Then we'd go to the nearest pharmacy and buy two boxes of laxatives, one box a piece, so we'd dump it all out in the morning leaving our bodies undaunted by the caloric heaps of sugary acid accumulated. One night I woke up next to Todd hollerin' and shit all over him trying to cross over his ass towards the door to get to the one bathroom on the Belleclair's seventh floor. I shit so hard in the hallway that it snatched my shorts off. Todd never knew what happened till the morning when his jammies were stained. He threw them out the window of the Belleclaire and started calling me drippy. Eventually cocaine became the drug of choice 'cause it suppressed our appetites and made us happy. I guess it was just dumb luck that the one nice guy we met in the first week or so, a black guy named Andy, sold the shit. We met him at a restaurant called BBQ, where Todd and I consistently got tanked on Pina Coladas each day around noon. He would page us daily to hook us up. His page was always followed with the numbers 007. I remember Todd's dumb ass remark on our way back from HB Studios after our first acting lesson on Bank Street about how James Bond was selling drugs now and how he was going to use the number himself. It was just like Todd to use up someone else's shit rather than to come with his own. I'd lecture him about that kind of shit, you know, about being his own individual, each morning as we'd eat breakfast in this or that diner around the corner from the Belleclaire.

Todd and I ended up moving to the Hotel Belleclaire on Seventy Seventh and Broadway when the Newton and the Portland Square ran out of rooms. This part of town was nice as New York goes. We had roaches a plenty and mice for days. It was pretty extreme. Every time we went to workout in the room, whether it be push-ups or sit-ups, we had to scare the mice to the holes in the walls near the register and scurry the roaches out of the way temporarily. The roaches were the real problem. They were as large as all hell.

The night scene was really weird. Todd and I had made our way around gay New York like wildfire. Drag queens and just plain freaks were everywhere we went, although that is what we expected since we were in gay bars, however, no one in our shoes could have ever expected that the shit we saw existed. I can't tell you how many times I looked over the heads of twenty to thirty freaks and, through the haze of marijuana smoke, saw Todd smiling at me from a far away world created by heavy drug overdose. Our nights became experiments in overdose. Coke, Ecstasy, pot, and a host of unknowns as we met a host of characters from the underground gay scene.

A smile here and another there and the freaks were at our feet. We ended up dancing at the Roxy, Splash, The Tool Box, Cats, Coney Island's "Suckers," The Hangar, The Limelight's "Lick It," and Bobsi Colon's Asian Bar, Club 58. We also spent a good deal of time at the Sound Factory Bar, Pieces on Christopher, The Whiskey, Champs, The Pyramid, Jackie 60, The Piladium, and a place called The Royalton, where the advertisement claimed the "upscale publishing fags" hung out. Most of our connections in the go-go scene came from a guy named Rhonnie who introduced us to a well known go-go dancer named Andy Extasy. We met Rhonnie at a gay club called the Squeezebox the first or second night of our trip. Although Andy was too busy to help us out much, Rhonnie, a African-American homosexual was extremely giving and considerate of our inadequacies away from home. He'd just call the hell out of the blue and give us advice on where to dance and who to see. Said he came to New York in rags himself which I took kind of personal at the time thinking I had things under control. We made lots of cash, but spent most of it on our drug habits that were, more and more, making our lives of lacking success bearable.

Photography was a very important goal of ours. Having just gotten a new nose and therefore no current photos, and Todd never having any to speak of in the first place, we decided to look for someone immediately upon arriving. The catch 22 we were dealing with went something like this. If you have an agency that is interested in you, they will send you to their photographers to shoot you and build you a book. You can't simply get into an agency in the first place without a book of good photography. So how do you get the photos done? Well, it beat the shit out of us.

We began looking through The Voice and found listings for plenty of photographers. We also went to about twenty photo development labs where we were told we would find lists of photographers who were interested in testing new people. After calling for about two days and doing price comparisons, we decided on a photographer who sounded a bit less freaky than the rest and believe me we spoke to some freaks. Just before going to meet this particular photographer, whose name escapes me, we saw an advertisement for James Kreigs or Kreigsmann photography. Todd and I had just finished our fifth coffee or so at a Mc Donalds around Forty Seventh and Seventh Avenue or somewhere real close to there. We decided to run up to his studio to see what he had to offer. Within fifteen minutes Todd was getting shots done, I had called the photographer out of the paper and canceled, and I was preparing for my shoot. I don't know why other than the possibility that it was quicker that way with no risk of having shots

done that we would never see. When it was all said and done with this place, we both had an eight by ten head, and an eight by ten body shot.

After the two week marker we were nearly finished. Life sucked from morning till night. All of my calls home consisted of heartbreak. My friends seemed to think I was going to be dead soon, and Carla seemed to be drifting away. I remember one particular night when I called her and she was drunk playing quarters with Angie, Amy, Gene, her brother Tracey, and his wife Mishel. She acted so unenthusiased that I ripped the phone cord out of the payphone and threw the bastard through the second floor window of a building. The streets were empty and Todd sat across the way with a cigarette in his hand laughing hysterically saying, "are you ready to go home yet?" Todd, on the other hand, would just call home and tell everyone that he had starred in four, sometimes five, Broadway musicals and shit like that. By noon everyday we were operating at half tilt due to one drug or another or both or more than that. Auditioning brought forth some modeling work at Karen Atta Studios, some commercial work for Cupid Network Television, a hundred dollars cash for my winning and Todd's third place finish of the Budwiser Man of the Year Contest at the Hangar, and some sexy photos for a man named Stewart Benedict who worked for some publication in the Village. The jobs were nothing to write home about though I did write home about them. Nothing seemed to go right on any given day and on any given night, things were always worse. We had both gotten skinny as shit and by this time we were bingeing on muffins and taking laxatives to shit it all out in the morning, or in the hallway if I didn't make it. Our itinerary from eight o'clock on usually went something like gay bar happy hour to gay bar dancing for cash, to an after hour party till four or six a.m., to muffin shop to bed to shitter, to do it all over again only worse off than the day before. Speed and coke were the only things to date at that point that I could ever really remember being all that happy about, and Todd, to be honest, really didn't even seem that happy about that. I gave him more damn shit about not keeping his head up than you could imagine. I also gave him a ton of shit for answering the damn pages that Cre kept sending over my damn pager. If I'd have somehow been placed in front of her I'd have knocked her head off. She paged over fifty times in one day trying to piss me off. Ain't that some shit to deal with?

Lord Bobsi Colon, manager of Club 58, took Todd and I in for our last four or five days in New York. Lord you ask? Well, it turns out he is the Lord of the Imperial Court of Drag Queens. We found out one night when we were out to eat with him and a host of others at a restaurant called

Telephone. About ten to twelve, including Todd and I, seated around a large dinner table. Todd and I thought they were real Lords and Empresses as their titles stated. Shit, they were Asian and we didn't know. We later figured it out. Bobsi was cool as shit to us giving us a key to his place on Fiftieth Street and letting us dance in his bar on any given Thursday, Friday, or Saturday we wanted.

Mike P. Lyons, director of Lights, Camera, Flex paged me about a week before Todd and I both made it home. He called me up to his agency office and called me a pretty boy. Told me that we couldn't be fashion models and that I needed to concentrate my efforts on gaining a little weight and being a commercial model. I was quick to explain that I'd been a bodybuilder as a youth and had competed in seven amateur contests and that I could be any shape or design I so chose in miracle time. He talked about how he really wasn't interested in being an agent but instead a personal manager. Said he'd rather be the one negotiating between fourteen and fifteen million as opposed to getting ten percent of shit. Explained also how he was looking for a fifth man to send out to International Male and said that they paid about five thousand dollars a day. He said Todd was commercial all the way, said that was where the money was and that was the perfect direction for us. He was extremely polite and considerate to us and even walked us down to the street. He said that he would be out of town for a few days and that I should check back with him on the coming Monday. Our meeting was surely the first break in a long stream of silence and discouragement. Aside from my three page composite, Todd and I had only our portfolios from Cincinnati and our new head and body shots from James Kreig or whatever his name was, and Mike said it was all quite out of pace with the league we were getting into. In fact, he said what many came to say which was that if we were really interested in pursuing a modeling career, don't show anybody the damn pictures you got at all.

Having three days until I would see Mike again, and feeling much better about the situation, I decided to go home for a day to see Carla. I had gotten photo shoots set up for Todd and I with Willis Roberts for the coming day, but knew that if Mike was interested, he would have me test shot by his photographers. I left Todd in New York and took the Greyhound home. Carla picked me up and we made love all day. I spent the night with her in my arms and returned to the bus terminal for New York the following day. Eighteen hours home, twelve there, eighteen hours back, but I got to see my baby. I didn't even bother to tell anyone else. When I got back, Todd was

waiting for me at the Port Authority as we'd planned. He said his shoot went well and we laughed about nothing.

I went to Mike's office as he had instructed me to do. He was busy and sent me to see one of his photographers, Paul Rackley. I got there and he talked to me for about five minutes before turning me loose to go back to Mike's. Upon returning, Mike said that Paul wasn't interested and that maybe I should go home and come back in a couple of months. He said that I had a gay wall and explained that it meant that I would therefore probably come across camera shy. He said that all of the photos I saw for Ralph Lauren on Paul's wall were taken by Paul and that he respected his opinion. I told Mike that I also respected his opinion and that I would be back in a week in pristine condition. I explained that Todd and I had eaten out of garbage cans and had some really bad habits that could quickly be overcome. I said I'd call him in three days to confirm a day for my return. With that, Todd and I got back on the damn bus again and went back to Cincinnati. It was March 19, 1995 as I jogged my first hour at the Pittsburgh bus terminal during a layover around four a.m..

Chapter Seven

Transformation One

Things were getting very serious to me now. I felt that I'd had a break and wanted to make good on it. I decided I would revamp my entire look the best I could with time permitting. Mike had said I looked flat. Which means that the muscle looked dead, no pump to it if you will. It wasn't a mystery though, I hadn't trained or eaten and my tan had gone pale. It was nothing that couldn't be dealt with quickly.

I began by fixing in my mind a look that I felt would appeal to Mike. I started a training log to make as detailed and as dedicated an effort as I could. I rode my exercise bike for four hours a day, two in the morning, and two at night. I ate six to eight small meals daily to kick my metabolism through the roof. Each meal consisted of a lean protein and two sources of

carbohydrates, excluding all refined foods. I hit the gym for two hours a day making sure to lift as heavy a weight as possible to minimize any loss of muscle mass. I went to tanning every day and got all of my hair cut off leaving about an inch and one half on the top and half that on the sides. The rest of my day was spent with Jim and Sue as I made their home my own. It was clear at this point in my mission that they would be the ones who took me under their wings to nurture me till I reached my destination. Sue would massage me and coax me into relaxation which I so heartily needed. We'd play chess and conjure up cookies made with oatmeal, eggwhites, vegetables and other healthful goodies. At night I stayed at Carla's and as usual we shared the most delicate hours making love and kissing each other's waist lines. This schedule was maintained without deviation every day that I was home. On the bike I was able to complete three books, "Awaken the Giant Within," by Anthony Robbins, "Gone With the Wind," the movie script by Premiere, and "Brando, A Life in Our Times," by Richard Schickel. I really didn't see anyone else while I was home except for my mother and father and my older brother Kenny who I stopped to see at Riley's Greenhills Restaurant when I first got home. I also saw Gordon Geraci who called and wanted to see me to discuss my plans.

I nearly missed the bus waiting for Todd. His bags were packed on my couch and he was supposed to be at my house by three o'clock. He wouldn't answer my page and nobody knew where he was. Totally unexpected and difficult to deal with I can tell you that. I was upset as hell. I had just gotten to my apartment from Carla's and was already upset to begin with. Tom took me to the bus terminal in Springdale and I left for New York a tan, short blonde haired, twenty pound lighter model. It was a drop from a depleted two hundred and ten pounds to a rock hard one-ninety. A night and day difference. I wasn't sure what Mike would think, but I did know that he would see my determination. I also knew that Carla had a giddish smile on her face when she saw me without my hair. I got it cut the day I left. Jim, Sue and Tom also liked it and I loved it. It was just the difference I felt could make the difference. Only about a week or so home and over eight hundred dollars spent on lasers and mailings to Las Vegas, New York, and California. Tom watched my bus leave on March 28,1995 for New York City again.

Chapter Eight

Pennsylvania Party

New York looked fairly pretty as I'd never seen it before. I was feeling positive, more than ever this time, and confident. I watched myself as I strolled past the windows along the Eighth Avenue shops. It was surely a new me and that made it easy to be someone else. It was too early to go walking into Mike's office so I just kind of leaned against this building and that. I knew he'd be happy to see the change. I called Todd at Sensations and told him that I was laying some good ground work for us. He wished me good luck and I headed towards LCF.

Mike greeted me with a look of disbelief. Had me come into his office and take off my shirt and said, "wow!" Next he told me that he needed me to get over to the Gordon Elliott show. Said he needed me to be on the show as a "boxer boy." Gave me directions and sent me off to Ninth Avenue. The show topic turned out to be men fulfilling their wives fantasies. One particular guy had apparently stripped for his wife when he was drunk and had just met her. The chick wanted him to do it again on national television before she would say "I do." I was on to dance for his wife and to give the guy some pointers. The show went well and I think I got fifty or a hundred bucks or something.

I returned to Mike's and waited till he was done in the office. He said I'd be staying at his condo in Woodbridge, New Jersey. We took a train to a station in New Jersey and then got into Mike's car to drive the rest of the way. Mike told me that he would be sending me to Robert Dinero's voice coach Sam Schwatt and to a number of photographers to test shoot with. He also told me to see John Blair at American Fitness for access into the club. "Just tell him your with the Lyon's Group," became the words of the month. I'd previously met John when I auditioned for him at the Roxy with Todd a month or so back. He apparently did a lot of promotions for such clubs.

Mike set me up spankin' cool with my own room and a king size waterbed in his condo in Woodbridge. I was introduced to Kim Rogers, a Ford model, whom Mike was assisting in her career. I later met some other prospective models and dear friends, as well, of Mike's. Doug, Steve, and Tracey were their names. These guys were hard-core with solidified

dispositions of malehood. Really cool and honest. I mentioned Playgirl Magazine 'cause I had a meeting set up with the editor and Steve said it was a magazine only a "cheeseball" would want to be in. It just wasn't a big deal if you were from there, like it seemed to be living in Cincinnati where nothing of that sort takes place. Everyone was exceptionally courteous and friendly. I was treated as though I'd lived there my whole life. I unpacked and reciprocated as though I was making Mike's home my own.

I got up and jogged everyday in Woodbridge and did push-ups on guard rails along the freeways. The first night I was there it was raining cats and dogs and I got lost as all hell. I called Jim and Sue from a gas station parking lot to tell them I was doing great. I ate breakfast at the condo and, on days I was there alone, I vacuumed and dusted the entire place as a means to earn my keep so to speak. One day I emptied out the refrigerator and freezer and cleaned the shit out of it. I made a lunch for Mike and took it to him at LCF when it was convenient. Some days I'd take the train into the city with Mike, other days he'd be gone when I awoke and so I'd go it alone. Some days I'd go in with Steve, Tracey, or Kim. I met Rick Day almost immediately and made plans to shoot with him shortly thereafter. I met Richard Larson, Kim's commercial coach, and Ann Joan Hymann, another voice coach from New York City Speech Improvement Services. Each day I worked out at American Fitness on Thirty First and Lexington and returned to Mike's office in time to return back to New Jersey with him. I was just getting my body in mint condition for my shoot with Rick Day so that my photos could do the talking.

Mike told me that he'd be taking me with him and the guys to Pennsylvania State for a modeling contest where he hoped to find some prospective models. We left one afternoon and drove there. It took some four to six hours from Woodbridge. We stopped to eat a couple of times and arrived before nightfall at the Penn State Scanticon Conference Center. It was a really nice place with swimming pools, saunas, hot-tubs and amenities such as those. We unpacked and settled in. Steve, Doug, Tracey and I all huddled around Mike everywhere we went, carrying Mike's belongings and serving as a sort of protective band for Mike's person. It was obvious to any onlooker that Mike was the shit when he was out.

We ate three meals together and hung out each day. Mike paid for everything and had a great time doing it. We went out one night and tried to get into a number of clubs but one of the guys in the group, a Hispanic kid, and prospect of Mike's, was underage and unable to get in anywhere we went. Tracey damn near started a brawl with about six security guards at

one bar. Testosterone jokes were flying amongst the group as we began to head back towards the Scanticon. With Mike ahead of the group, Tracey, Doug and I made plans to get high before meeting the rest of the group back at the Legend's Pub in the Conference building's lower level. That Hispanic guy had the hook-up. We met as planned and got fried. Well, Doug and I did. Doug and I crushed about four boxes of Fig Newton Fruit Bars after the "munchies" kicked in. They were awesome. That evening we all crashed out in the hot tub and I slept like a damn baby.

The next day we watched the modeling contest. It was like all others I'd seen. Young talent trying to strut their stuff for their families and a few people who could actually do something for them if they didn't already represent talent at a far greater level. It was probably set up like most of these things are. A local talent agent or group gets twenty-five bucks or more a head for talent, then some ten or twelve bucks a person to watch the talent. These people consist of the talent's family and friends who are also led to believe there are some great stakes involved. A chunk of this money goes to a person like Mike Lyons who is paid to be a judge. The talent knows that such and such a big name will be there and that they can make it big in the process of competing. Sure the possibility is there, but it's all about money and a good time ain't it. Surely far more money is dipped from the pockets of the "no-chancers" than is ever even possibly contributed in the name of making a "possibility person" anyone special. The whole thing is legit, but it's a fine ass line in my book.

I drove the five of us home from Pennsylvania and we got our shit unpacked. Tracey and I jogged in a recreational park that night in New Jersey somewhere. He told me of his aspirations of getting in fabulous shape and his desires to become great. He was a great guy with a lot of ambition. I think he came to believe I was crazy one night when I ate a bit too much and decided to lap the track some forty times making eleven miles. It was really no sweat however, something I was well accustomed to.

Mike gave me a photographer's list so that I could go and meet more photographers to test with other than Rick Day. The list included the names Willis Roberts, Dorothy Shi, Mike Tammaro, Paul Rackly, Robert Cusido, Greg Weiner and Ed Taylor, a sports photographer. I told him I would do my best to shoot with them all but that I was really interested in shooting with Bruce Webber 'cause I'd heard Mike say before that Bruce was at the top of the pyramid of photographers in New York. To this Mike laughed and said I'd never meet Bruce Webber. In my spare time I wrote a letter to Mike stating my interest in signing a personal manager's contract with him.

Nothing was ever really mentioned of it after that though he said we'd discuss it at a later date. Mike also sent me to meet J. Michael Bloom. Bloom was a big name who had offices in New York and California and possibly other cities, I'm not sure. I was able to pass ahead of a line of about eight with the "I'm with the Lyon's Group" line. I remember the receptionist laughing at me when I said I was there to see Jay. Apparently the initial J. wasn't for Jay. Mr. Bloom had me undress and then he told me I had a nice dick. He told me to get some photos and that he would look at me again. He was a really nice man and I felt that he was sincerely willing to consider me if I would be willing to get the photography that would be necessary. I believe his interview with me was his way of testing my ability to withstand what would surely be thrown my way working in the industry. He wasn't rude or out of line, just honest.

I made it a point to call Todd and bitch at him for not being back in New York and making head way though I concurrently assured him I'd make it and let him be my gardener as he had asked so many months prior. Called Carla almost nightly as well, and as usual, I cried. I spent a lot of money on long distance calls talking to my closest friends Tom, Mom, Jim and Sue. I wrote to my other buddies and family members as time permitted. One afternoon I confided in Kim, told her that I was happy with myself and what I was doing, but that I was so saddened to have not yet made it. That I was pissed that I wasn't doing well enough, yet, to be able to fly all over the world as I pleased. I explained that this would make it possible too for me to see my baby anytime I wanted. She told me that I was out of my mind to think that things would happen that quickly and that I needed to realize that it takes some people years and years to hit the top. I still don't believe that pertains to people like me, but I love her for the compassion and honesty she showed me that day. She was the first person I'd met to date that kept a goal log like myself. The first one to actually read inspirational self-help books, the first one I felt had a fighting chance.

On April 15, 1995 I grabbed a Greyhound bus for Cincinnati again to refresh myself from the misery of being away from home. I told Mike I'd be back shortly and that I'd be shooting with Rick Day upon that arrival. All in all I had a great time with my new friends and already knew that I'd miss 'em. I left a letter for Mike and Kim saying thanks and that I'd see them both soon. I spent one thousand and fifteen dollars on this particular trip.

Chapter Nine

Untitled

Arriving late at night on the fifteenth, I went straight to Carla's house and embraced her. I knew I'd only be home briefly, and I knew I'd have to break it to her again. I jogged at every Greyhound terminal layover on the way back to Cincinnati and was exhausted to say the least. Carla welcomed me with open arms and could surely tell how much I needed her arms around me. We slept together tightly and I'll never forget it.

After departing her place in the morning I returned home and got on my exercise bike. I started riding and making phone calls simultaneously. I reached Todd and begged him to try and call Willis Roberts in New York to try and set up another photo shoot so that his book would begin to look like a well-put-together book. Different hair, clothes, whatever would make it look like there was more than one influence in it. I made no progress. I also tried to convince him that he should stop avoiding the gay shows he was given the opportunity to do despite his distaste for them. Gary, at Sensations, told me that Todd just wouldn't do them anymore and I knew he needed the money. I tried to explain to him that it wouldn't be a lifetime job if he would just get the money he needed to get out once and for all. A show here and there would only stagnate the process of getting out, but there seemed to be no convincing him.

I went to the gym after my four hour bike ride and spoke with the owner, Jamie, who was relaxed with my payments knowing I was broke and trying to get out of town again. I bought about a four month's supply of ephedrine to keep myself loaded with adrenaline and enthusiasm. I saw Jim and Sue both days I was home and noticed that Tom didn't seem to have much time to spend with me anymore. I read "Effective Speaking," by Dale Carnegie, and a few paragraphs from "The Last Take" a book about Marilyn Monroe to try and boost my spirits. The last night I was home Todd and I went out and got wasted on mixed drinks and he swore he would get his shit straight and begin to take the opportunities I was creating for him more seriously. I went to Carla's after riding the bike again for two hours. I had to stop due to the saddle sores on my ass cheek bones.

On the morning of April 17, 1995, Carla and Amanda took me to the Springdale bus terminal in my 1987 Mazda MX6. The bus hadn't arrived and so we sat and kissed till I had to leave. It was the first time I cried for over four hours straight. The bus driver told me that anything that hurt that much, must be wrong.

Chapter Ten

A Rick Day

It was the morning of April 18, 1995 when I arrived back at the Port Authority in New York City again. I was mentally prepared for some fine shooting with Rick Day. Mike told me that my shots were very important and that they would serve as verification as to my ability to look as he felt necessary for his agency. It would be approximately one week before I'd actually shoot with Rick so I still had time to better tune my body to what I felt would be perfection, which at this point was getting even more obsessive.

I met Mike at Lights, Camera, Flex when I arrived and he and I went back to his condo in Woodbridge after meeting some of his friends at Fridays in Penn Station. On the train back, Mike again reiterated the importance of seeing a commercial coach and getting some voice lessons. He said he'd take care of the initial costs and that I'd have to make due with what I could learn in the consultations. He was extremely cool and told me that he was often depicted as a man after young guys for reasons beyond professional purposes yet assured me he was completely and unequivocally professional and only interested in his percentage of his talent's fees. Mike is the only man I'd met to date in the business who I felt certain had not a gay bone in his body. It's not that it mattered, but it was unusual in my experience.

I stayed in New Jersey for the entire week until my shoot with Rick Day. Previous trips to New York and time alone in the city had only spelled mischief and drugs as loneliness and depression seemed eminent. Too many

people and no friendliness. Even the sanctuary of Central Park could break a man's heart if he's been alone too long. Sure I'd just seen Carla, but things were not the same. The long periods without her in my arms at night seemed to spell separation as my ability to cope with it threatened my heart's infrastructure. I kept myself busy by cleaning Mike's entire house which included the kitchen, two bathrooms, Kim's room, Mike's room and the one he gave me to stay in. I worked out at a gym in New Jersey however the name escapes me. On a couple of occasions I worked out with Steve, a prospective model of Mike's, and on a few nights, I jogged with Tracey. Kim frequently said she wanted to jog in the morning but frequently changed her mind when the morning alarms went off. She was sweet but snappy and had a mind of her own for damn sure. On most mornings and nights, however, I jogged my two hours each alone. Tracey took me to a grocery store and I bought groceries for the week. In my spare time I wrote another series of letters to Bruce Webber stating my extreme interest in shooting with him. I said I was a young boy interested in doing nude shots. I said I knew that I would come across most comfortably with him because I had great respect for his professionalism and reputation. Again Mike and the guys told me I'd never meet the guy. That he only shot "big namers," if you will? I also read my Anthony Robbins book, "Unlimited Power," again, and wrote as many letters as I could to my friends back home. I was trying to keep up with their interests to keep my mind off of my own.

I shot with Rick Day a day or two before I left New York City on April 24, 1995. I managed to spend only three hundred and seventy dollars the whole week which was an enormous difference from previous trips. Mike took care of any costs that may have been incurred by Rick though I'm not sure there were any. Rick did an awesome job and I'd never seen to date a better photo of me. He was blatantly gay and cool as shit. He didn't play games. He said he found me sexy and that he would shoot me sexy. He made me feel sexy and comfortable by not putting on the false heirs that I'd become used to from others who would try to cover up so to speak. We shot on the roof-top of his building on 208 West 23rd Street. We also shot our way down to the Hudson River bank. We talked a lot and made promises to shoot together again. Rick was just a tremendous guy with an even more tremendous talent for photography. I want very much to repay him some day for the respect and kindness he showed me.

I went back to LCF after my shoot with Rick and went back to Woodbridge with Mike again. I told him the shoot went great and that I really appreciated his getting me started. I told him I was sure he'd like the

work we did. I then told him I was bolting home again to get some rest, get some more clothes and try to get my buddy Todd. I really felt that he could capitalize on the opportunities that seemed to be coming my way. I already missed Carla again despite only being gone for about a week or so. It seemed the longer the whole modeling career thing went on, the less the one and two day trips home did to relieve my home-sickness. I was starting to feel like a hopeless, small town pussy who didn't have the heart to get the job done. I left for home again on April 24, 1995. Another eighteen hours on the Greyhound bus.

Chapter Eleven

Come Back Kid

On April 25, 1995 I returned home with the weight of Rome on my shoulders. Everything had gone right for the first time and it was hell. Clearly I knew that I wouldn't be living in Cincinnati if I wanted things to continue. It wasn't going to be a week or a month or any short term shit like that. Being alone was hard and making friends was too damn easy. I always said I'd live in Cincinnati and that I would fly in and out of New York City to work. Just not so. I was beginning to develop ties away from home making it difficult to decide where to be and what really mattered to me. Carla was going through hell and she was clearly distancing herself not only from the pain of our separation but from me in general. Todd was scared shitless and wanted nothing less than to deal with my obsessive, maniac style routine of getting things done fast without patience or time for recuperation. He was beginning to get comfortable again with working for Sensations and was nearly out of debt which seemed to be his greatest fear. Being the main man at Sensations got him all the chicks he wanted, and he wanted and had most of them I can assure you. I corralled him constantly about taking responsibility for his life and encouraging him to do and be more. I'd tell him there was nothing significant about being the king of a hill if the hill was made of infected shit. He was always singing some damn Tom Petty song about how it felt good to be king for a day. He just didn't

seem to be willing to see himself as a potential for much and he could have been.

I stayed on speed twenty four hours a day to keep myself alert and busy. Contact letters went to Las Vegas, friends as if I were still in New York, California, and New York. I'd send them for no apparent reason other than to say hi and that I hoped all was well. I made a few calls to a couple of family members and to one of my dearest friends in the world, Tonya. She was an ex-girlfriend who I've always loved dearly and been able to count on for support when I felt like I was getting in over my head. I worked out each day and rode my exercise bike for four hours daily while writing letters and re-reading "Effective Speaking," by Dale Carnegie and "How to Win Friends and Influence Others," by Dale Carnegie also. Tom had done flown the coup by this time. He was tirelessly managing my business affairs in the day and working his night job as a Hamilton County Sheriff's Deputy from eleven P.M. till seven A.M.. Bitching up a storm is all I could do for him as all his efforts were inadequate for my needs. In other words, I wanted everything to happen then and there and he was my scapegoat for lack of character on my own part. New mailings to talent agencies, modeling agencies, clothing manufacturers, and magazines of all sorts would now be back in my hands.

Carla and I mysteriously had little contact. Her frustration level had probably peaked and I represented it to myself as her bailing out. Communication was failing on all levels and I was so stressed out I just couldn't seem to muster the enthusiasm to bear another slammed door in my face. For the most part I just shied away from confrontation and pretended things were cool, though I could sense they were on the fritz. I guess I felt peace in time of turmoil would be better than war when we'd say and do things we really didn't mean.

I set up photo shoots with Willis Roberts, Rick Day and Robert Cusido while I was home. I also got a date scheduled to be coached by Richard Larson, the commercial coach and Ann Joan Hymann of New York City Speech Improvement Services. Richard Larson referred me to Diane Anesly, an acting coach with her own school, and I was able to get an appointment for Todd and I to audit her class. Our old buddy Bobsi, the manager of Club 58, was hosting a Centerfold Man of the Year Contest at his club and asked us to participate. It would involve some runway, bathing suit and fashion wear, hosted by dragqueens and crap like that, but it was a small favor we'd have no problem with for sure.

Refusing to take no for an answer, Todd, Carla and I were on our way to the Cincinnati Bus terminal for another eighteen hour bus ride to New York. The plan was simple. I would stay at Mike's place and Todd would stay at Bob's if unable to stay at Mike's. We would attend Anesly's School of Acting for fourteen weeks, shoot with all of the photographers I made appointments with, see the commercial and speech coach, and come back home in approximately fourteen weeks. We would have good books, agency representation, our second acting school experiences behind us, and head shots. We would then use these assets to start delving deeper into the realm of acting and auditioning. We would take whatever modeling jobs came our way as a result of our bouncing back and forth on go-sees. How could Todd not want to go when the road was so delicately paved, maybe by a neurotic freak at that point, without having to lift his finger. All I wanted was some company. I wasn't asking for much. Oh and some real determination on the fucker's part.

Carla and I separated with not much more than a peck good-bye and I was fine with that this time. I'd been bustin' my ass and wanted support. She was too and I wasn't quick enough to realize it. Todd and I talked a great deal on the bus as we'd done so many times before. Eighteen hours is a horrendous amount of time to be on that thing. He told me he really respected me for being so strong and not letting my emotions get in the way of my dreams. It wasn't like Todd to say a thing like that. He usually wasn't that deep. I told him that I wanted nothing more than to see him follow in my footsteps if I could lead him to the success he wanted, but told him to use caution in following my example in dealing with Carla 'cause I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing where she was concerned. I told him sometimes being a man is better done by being a coward and accepting that we need people close to us and that mental separation from emotion can be dangerous.

Chapter Twelve

Heaven's Crack

It was April 27, 1995 when Todd and I again arrived together in New York. It was hot as shit as should be expected in New York that time of year. We went to Mike Lyon's office at LCF first thing from the Port Authority on Eighth Avenue to see what kind of living arrangements could be made. I had only one bag with me since I had two or three already at Mike's place in Woodbridge. I had my fingers crossed Mike would welcome Todd if I could manage the right sales pitch.

Todd was outside waiting so as to not add any pressure on Mike in making a decision. I met Todd with the unfortunate news. Not only did I not get to ask Mike if Todd could chill at the place for a few weeks till we could find something suitable for him, but that also some model from Ohio, of all places, had moved into my room at Mike's. He said that he was paying rent and that I would have to find somewhere else to live. He also said he'd bring my remaining suit cases to the office sometime that week. Todd looked at me like I should have been pissed. I was, don't get me wrong, but I didn't want things to seem problematic already. You just don't know what a heart-bleeding plea I made to get him to come in the first place. I wasn't gonna' let any shit hit the fan yet, that's for damn sure. Todd asked me if Mike ever even asked me if I'd be willing to pay rent and I said as was fact, hell no!

So with only the bag in my hand and Todd with his, we started walking and pouting and looking for a place to live. I called Bobsi at his Fiftieth Street apartment and asked if Todd and I could bunk there until the Centerfold Man of the Year Contest was through. He said yes and we cabbed over. Bobsi was a dear friend with whom I'd kept frequent contact since our first meeting. I knew he'd say yes, however I hated to impose so early being I figured we'd be in even greater desperation by the time fourteen weeks had come.

Within about two and a half weeks Todd and I were already broke and depressed despite much progress and effort. Maybe we were just plain tired, I don't know for sure. We both shot with Willis Roberts and I had shot with Robert Cusido and Rick Day. Todd had, by this time, received invitations to test with both of them as well. I had been to a lesson with Richard Larson, the commercial coach for LCF and Ann Joan Hyman, the voice coach, both of whom treated me very well. Richard, who after spending the afternoon with me, said I could stay at his place anytime if it would keep me off the streets of Manhattan. Todd and I also got to audit Anesly's School of Acting but on the first day of actual class we were five minutes late after hauling ass way up town to get there in heavy smog laden traffic. Todd went into the

deli next door while I rang. She came down and said we'd have to come back next week 'cause she'd be setting a bad example to the class if she let us in despite being late. She went back upstairs with the door locked behind her. When Todd came out of the deli he looked at me with the fear of God in his eyes. I was extremely pissed off. He asked what happened, I said we just graduated from Anesly's School of Acting. Asked him if he felt any better and he smiled and said yes. We laughed and spiraled in and out of reckless traffic for about an hour before ending up with cigarettes in our hands on a rock pile in Central Park. We basked our half starved bodies in the sun till night fall.

Todd and I continued to dance at Club 58 and do a little hustling at different night clubs, Cincinnati style, for food cash. Bobsi was pleased with us and got us some free photos done by a photographer named Chris Caioli, a little Asian man who shot us for a couple of hours on Bobsi's Fiftieth Street apartment top. The pictures were all out of focus as had our mission seemed to be getting. Yeah, things were getting harder day by day as it became harder to eat Bobsi's food without it being noticeable. I knew he wouldn't complain and Todd just kept insisting that we had to eat, but I just refused to take advantage any more. We were both beginning to get emaciated looking, but I assured Todd that all fashion models looked like that and that it would be to our advantage. "Shit dude, shut up, we can take another cigarette in a few minutes!"

The Centerfold Man of the Year Contest took place at Bobsi's Club 58 and Todd and I were tanked on Robitussin DM. It was crazy. The crowd looked like a big bowl of rainbow colored jelly as I paraded down the twelve foot runway to the all too familiar gay theme song "YMCA" by the Village People. Todd almost fell off the damn stage twice. We had a blast. I won a trophy for most photogenic during the fashion clothing segment and I heaved it at a closed garage door on the way back from Club 58 at about four AM when Todd said he was proud of me. We had just gotten done eating lettuce and dry ass white rice out of a deli garbage can that had just been thrown out that night. We had eaten there about four nights in a damn row. I lost it this time, it was that simple. "How the fuck can you be proud of a skinny ass drug inflicted punk whose eating out of a damn garbage can." No other words were spoken between us that night. If he had opened his mouth, my second wind would have broken it.

I woke up the next day near death I'm sure. I was vomiting and had a severe case of diarrhea. Sitting on the pot and heaving in the tub for hours on end. I couldn't eat any of Bobsi's food without throwing up. Todd kept

running back and forth from the apartment to wherever the hell getting me water and shit, comics, you name it. Like a little kid trying to save a bird out of the nest. I called home and said good-bye in a round about way to my friends and tried to let them know that I loved them. This shit carried on for four days. By the time it was all over, the sides of my mouth were cracked and jaded from dehydration and my body never looked thinner. It reminded me of the time I was about ten years old starring in the mirror, clutching my sides crying and then seeing my mother beside me off in the hall crying also. She asked me what was wrong and I said I was so sad cause I was so fat. She was crying 'cause she thought I was going to die. That was during my childhood battle with anorexia nervosa, this time I wasn't trying to die but to live. I think I was just run the hell down. Todd and I had bought mountain bikes and had been making quadruple time to appointments, interviews and auditions. We also rode the bastards around the perimeters of Manhattan Island each night. It literally took six to eight hours sometimes. We stayed on speed around the damn clock and on nights we'd dance, we kept money aside for cocaine. Things had gone awry I guess, and then there's that damn Robitussin DM. One night we discussed killing a hundred or so odd people and filling an empty apartment with 'em, in our name of course, and then walking around with our portfolios and playing dumb the next day or whenever someone would be sure to find the carcasses. We figured the whole world would see us and nobody would suspect us 'cause we would seem so unaffected. This was the same night I saw Todd kiss a drag queen named Surely Delicious. Todd and I decided no more Robo nights.

Todd and I got into an argument about five weeks into the trip at Bobsi's. He said he was broke, starving to death and unwilling to watch me starve or eat out of garbage cans again. He also said he was tired of training like a triathlete despite being used to the blisters I'd put on his damn feet. He was tired of playin' gay and smoozin' favors from drag queens. He said there just wasn't enough money to buy enough drugs either. I whipped a four sided ash tray at his head just missing to the right. When I went for round two, he was out the door of Bobsi's Fiftieth Street apartment with his suitcase in his hand. I waited about forty minutes so I wouldn't kill him and then I rode his bike to Willis Robert's apartment where I sold it to him for the cost of my photos. I drank a coffee at McDonalds around Fifty Seventh Street then I went to the Gaiety, where a friend told me they were looking for dancers.

I got to the Gaiety and met a pleasantly plump lady named Denise. She said I should watch a show in the auditorium and decide if I was willing to work there. She said if I was willing, I was hired. I went in the other room

where approximately forty guys were watching a very detailed porno. It was hard to stomach at the time for some reason. It was all male of course and so contrary to my sexual appetite which had disappeared since I last saw my Carla. Next the show began. One guy at a time comes out and dances for one song which ends with him taking his shirt off and maybe revealing some butt cheek. Then he disappears and comes back with a hard-on approximately one minute later. Simple enough I thought, so I went into the other room, got hired and went down to the Port Authority to get Todd.

I looked and looked and no Todd in sight. Started up the elevator from gate sixty eight and heard the punk yell, "Hey, Rob." I ran down the up elevator and found him sitting on a bench with a bunch of hobos, his bag packed between his legs the way a dog hangs his tail when he's chewed up the living-room couch or something. I told him about the job and that I was sure he could get on. Five or six odd shows a day a piece would be one hundred to one hundred and twenty a day. He said no way so I called him a loser and left.

I grabbed a pack of smokes and some more dimetadrine from my pocket and went up Eighth Avenue. After about eight city streets I turned around and went back to the damn Port Authority again. Told Todd if he left I'd knock his fuckin' head off and to come the hell on. He said no so I grabbed his suitcase and ran up the elevator with it. He didn't budge so I put it in between the up and down elevator and let it slide down to where it plummeted to the floor about ten feet from his feet. Then I gave him the finger and left the Port Authority again.

I walked up Eighth Avenue again about eight city blocks and then turned around to go and get Todd again. It would be my last. I begged him to stay and told him I couldn't do it alone. He said he wouldn't do it for a million dollars and so I left again, his suit case where it had crashed the last time I was there.

I went to the Gaiety again and thanked Denise for hiring me and told her I'd be reliable. I had no idea what my job really entailed yet, but a job is a job when you're hungry and have an expensive drug habit and big dreams. I then hauled ass across town to Bobsi's apartment, told him I ran Todd away, packed up my remaining bags and mountain bike, and said farewell to Bobsi. I went to the curb, called a taxi, and had him take me to the Belleclaire on Seventy Seventh and Broadway where I stayed before with Todd. There I hung a clothes line across the ceiling after I washed my clothes in the sink in dishwashing soap. I wrote letters of encouragement home to friends.

Gordon Geraci called and asked how I was doing and I said I was debating blowing my head off or doing a sailors dive from my seventh floor window.

It was about this time period that I called Bruce Webber's studio. I'd gotten his phone number from Willis Roberts on a previous trip to New York. I asked to speak to Bruce Webber and they got him after I said it was Robert. I'd sent so many damn letters that they all knew who I was. He told me his place was located on 135 Watts Street and to come on down. I jumped on my mountain bike and did just that. When I arrived I was told to come up to the fourth floor. Bruce's studio was really large. There were two or three golden retrievers running around the place and you could see the Hudson River and the many boats upon it outside the large bay windows on the western side. Everyone was really nice to me and told me Bruce would be out soon to talk me. When he came out he was extremely nice. We talked for about ten minutes or so and he told me that he could tell I had a lot of ambition. He said he was sorry he'd be unable to shoot me because he was preparing to leave town, but that I could call his studio on the following Monday or Tuesday and he would have the name of a really good photographer who would shoot me. He told me that I needed to relax and take things slower and that if I did that, things would begin to happen for me. Knowing full well that I only wanted to shoot with Bruce Webber 'cause he was Bruce Webber, I didn't call for the name but continued to send Bruce letters to keep contact.

I started working at the Gaiety the following day, whatever day that was. Things worked like this. You did five or six shows a day with a finale. The show consisted of dancing one song and removing your shirt. Then you go in the back and grab a porn magazine of choice. All the guys I met were straight. Anyway, you had thirty to forty seconds to get a hard-on and return to the stage for a show, another song. A crowd of about fifty men would clap according to size and erectness. After each show, each dancer would go into the lounge area where chips and drinks were served and the clients of the Gaiety would purchase the dancer outright for sex or whatever the dancer was willing to do. The dancers got ten dollars a show working six shows a day with a finale and was allowed to work one week only. The finale was a runway show to about a half a song with all fourteen guys on stage at once with hard-ons after the last show. Just picture the site before the finale. Fourteen guys back stage in their own little worlds with a magazine in one hand and their dicks in the other getting erect and watching the clock and counting seconds. The dancers came from Canada, Miami, California, etc. and made about three to five thousand dollars a week. Most

dancers booked rooms together across the street or in other nearby hotels where they did private shows. This usually consists of blow-jobs, hand-jobs, sex, who knows. I danced with some real die-hards with no concern for life or death that I could see. My shows of course were Cincinnati style, I'd jack off with them but no contact. For that I could get seventy five to one hundred dollars a show. It was more than I could make anywhere else, but twelve hard-ons a day was extremely taxing, especially on cocaine. My pecker was raw every night for the whole week and my morale was at an all time low. I just had a conservative sale. I was just a damn rookie compared to guys I worked with. Shit, they'd do anything for three hundred, maybe two. I wasn't charging shit, but I wasn't giving what was wanted either. Hell, in New York, especially at the Gaiety, dudes were coming in for one damn thing and expected to pay for it. These weren't poor men. We're talkin' suit and tie patrons, some of which fly into New York just for this shit. Here's my ass selling a nude show you could get in any city and I had to haul with 'em up to Seventy Seventh and Broadway, some thirty streets to a rat infested dump. The other guys were going straight across the street to the deluxe style hotels. They could afford it with their pay. By the end of the day I'd be so fuckin' drained I slept on the sidewalk in front of Timothy's Coffee Shop on Times Square, most nights too drugged up to walk up to the Belleclaire and too broke to afford cab fare. It was cooler outside and more suitable to my demeanor which was horribly low. I believed I was worthless by almost all accounts and made a million and one "paying my dues excuses" for the life I was living.

I was making progress, however and did have some purpose still. I had all of my photography developed and had taken it to Devron Technologies to have a professional modeling composite designed, as well as a head shot. The composite would be laid out using photography by Willis Roberts and Rick Day only. They did the best work. Willis Robert did my head shot. This would be my second modeling composite and, incidentally, the one I would send to Gus Castaneda in Pasadena, California. He was the one who told me about my nose months prior.

In my second to last day or so at the Gaiety I met Sam. He was a gentle little Asian man who I saw sitting with friends almost daily at the Gaiety. All of his friends seemed to cluster around him and pay some sort of homage to the guy. He looked important, so I made it a point to talk to the guy. He turned out to be a nice, pleasant guy, so I ended up talking to him all night till the finale was over. His friends told me to do a show for him last and that he'd take care of me. He didn't seem to have any dilemma with the way

I sold my show, so I went with him at the end of the night to his Fifty Seventh Street apartment. His place was small, but very eloquent. It had lots of hand-carved trinkets and a large wooden carved elephant next to a marble cut dining table where he served me an awesome home cooked dinner of swordfish and steamed vegetables. His place was air-conditioned and cozy as shit. He constantly told me that I didn't know how to be a hustler and that he would teach me. Said he hustled his way across all of Europe and showed me pictures of himself in too many countries to name, laughing and saying, "dis guy fucked me and dis guy fucked me and dis ho dam family fucked me." We watched "Midnight Cowboy" and some movie with Warren Beaty called something like Mrs. Stone or something. They were movies about hustlers. He wanted me to do well and to stop the shit all together he said. I'd already told him my modeling and acting plans and showed him my book and all of that shit. He said the Gaiety was a good place to find contacts and that a guy who was staying with him, a kid who he said broke his heart, was then modeling for Versace. He showed me pictures of the guy and all but of course I don't know for sure if it was all true. I believed him and still do. He said the guy lived with him every time he was in New York. He claimed that he "cooked for the boy and gave him money, and as soon as he got signed by Versace, he just took off and never even called poor Sammy again." He said constantly that he didn't ever want to care too much and that I was to know that "I had a friend in New York."

Sammy and I fell asleep watching "Midnight Cowboy" and when I woke up in the morning, my first night without overdose, Sammy had breakfast all cooked up and ready at the marble table in the six by six foot dining room. I never had to do a show, but he had one-hundred dollars by my plate at breakfast. He said he wanted me to get my stuff from the Belleclaire and to stay with him while I was in New York. Of course I said yes knowing that if I ran into problems I could just check into the place again. Besides, I never stayed there anyway and I didn't believe no matter what happened, Sam, knowing how much my "career" meant to me, would do anything to jeopardize my portfolio, which was the only real reason I had to have any sort of safe haven in the first place. I really only needed protection from myself, and I wasn't going to get that no matter where I stayed.

I stayed with Sammy for the remainder of my trip. Every day and every night. He worked all day in White Plains, New York at a Blimpie and I even went with him to work one day which was a long ass ride upstate. I had my own key and everything I could ask for in an apartment and was being paid to do it. I finished out my two days at the Gaiety and even got to do an extra

half week as a result of Sammy talking to Denise, who was a good friend of his, being that he was a regular. Sammy continued to talk to me till the late hours of the night about how to hustle, the psychology of something for nothing on the sympathy card. He was having all sorts of financial difficulty, despite the horrendous sums of cash he had in foreign accounts. I took the liberty of discovering this while he was away one day. Bangkok, China had a fortune of his there, though he tried desperately to make me believe he was broke. Within about a day he was paying all my cab fares, food, clothing, anything I whined about. I went to movies, expensive restaurants with him or alone, and did lots of coke since money was no longer an issue. I became a regular customer of the dealers in "Cats," a gay troll bar on Forty Ninth Street or something like that. Almost every day my skinny ass would take a cab with this black dude to Tenth Avenue, a coke and crack hot spot, and get some blow with the guy. Then I'd get him a forty ounce and five change and go back to "Cats" for some smokes after we'd snort. The smoke would feel incredible as it crisped down the coke numbed windpipe. Each morning I snagged Sam's credit cards out of his wallet and bought clothes, then used the cards to Fed Ex the shit back to my apartment in Cincinnati, always planning ahead. All the while I maintained a mellow high from Ecstasy interrupted often by spurts of adrenaline from cocaine. It was all I felt I could do to ignore and excuse the way I was behaving. Sammy and I would lay in his bed and watch heterosexual pornos and jack-off together and that was it. Other than that he was my nanny and I just played the fool who was learning to hustle while I hustled him. The day I left New York, I took his credit card in the morning, used the pin number I'd gotten the day prior, standing behind him when he used it himself, and withdrew one thousand dollars in cash. All twenties. You know I was shittin' bricks when the machine started rollin' 'em out. I took the card back to Sammy's before he got up, like every morning, and went to Devron and paid for my second modeling composite and my first acting head shot. I then got a money order, sent five hundred bucks to my credit card, caught a cab back to Sammy's, got my shit, said I'd be back soon and booked to the Port Authority sweatin' bullets that someone at the credit card agency would call Sam as a result of the activity on the card. I caught the bus to Cincinnati at terminal sixty-eight as usual, did three lines or so of coke, the rest that I had, and sat up wide awake on the bus all the way to Cleveland. In Cleveland, I got the idea to call Sam and see how he acted. He sounded fine, so I knew nobody had called. I was thinking about cabbing to the airport in Cleveland, only four hours from Cincinnati mind you, flying to La Guardia,

going back to Sammy's by morning and using that card to the thousand dollar daily limit again. I passed out on the bus in Cleveland wishing I had the strength and will to work ten to twelve more hours. When I woke up I was in Cincinnati and dying to see Carla, though she had seemed to dismiss me from her thoughts. I had my second modeling composite done and my first acting head shot. It was June 24, 1995. With only the receipts I happened to keep, I spent seven thousand, four hundred and eighty dollars in a little over a month. Beaten and unwilling to accept I had a friend, I paid thirty dollars and took a cab home from the Cincinnati bus terminal.

Chapter Thirteen

Second Mailing

It was June 25, 1995 when I got my motivation back up. I had one hundred modeling composites made up from Devron and another hundred on the way. I resurrected all of my old modeling contacts and mailing lists from my first composite mailing. I was extremely selective this time knowing that roughly two thousand of the avenues I sent to the first time were unnecessary. I sent only to the best this time, the ten biggest in New York, like Fords, Maxx Men, LCF, Click, Grace Del Marco, etc.. I sent the same level of competition in Miami like Irene Marie, Michelle Pommier, Fords, etc., and also their affiliates and same level competitors in California, being sure to include International Model Management in Pasadena where Gus Castaneda reigned. It was the way it should have been done the first time. High expectations prompted me to get a passport which took roughly twenty-one days to arrive.

I got ahold of Todd at Sensations the first day home. I talked him into calling Devron and sending his photos in to have a composite made. He bitched at first about the money as usual, but then put it on his credit card. Within about a week and a half they had arrived. He used my pager number since he wouldn't spend the extra ten or twelve dollars a month to have his own. He said he would buy some eight by ten envelopes and begin copying

my mailing list so that we could do everything simultaneously. That way he wouldn't have to do any real work. Surely he could manage this much I thought.

The time period after my arrival back was very harmful to me. I was extremely depressed and withdrawing badly. I made no effort to see my friends or my family except for Amy and Jean who lived downstairs. They got high with me every day and nurtured my wounds with their close friendships. I saw Jim and Sue but not as much as usual when I'd come home. Bill, Norb, and Tom probably saw me one time a piece in almost a whole month. I didn't call the stripping agencies to be put on call as was customary for me to do when I got home from being away. I told myself I would be a model and work only as a model. I couldn't bear another show for any damn body. My buddy Chris Bales came over the day I prepared my composites to go out in the mail. He said he was proud of me and that no matter what, he knew I'd make something of myself someday. I trained hard as ever every day at Jamie's House of Iron Gym and rode my exercise bike for the usual four hours a day, reading and completing a new book I had purchased called "Wishcraft." I don't think I talked to Carla, but one or two times while I was home. Our separation had truly broken my heart. I knew also that not having Carla would mean not having anyone. Who was going to want a guy who was always leaving. It reminded me of Arnold Schwarzenegger's autobiography when he discussed how he knew he could only be with girls for sex. That his dreams prevented him from being stable. That he had to concentrate all his efforts on getting big. Sex wasn't my interest at the time, perhaps if it were, I'd of been able to "screw anew" and forget Carla once and for all.

I got two replies from my second modeling composite. The first was a letter from Grace Del Marco which stated that they were interested in representing me and that they wanted to meet with me. The other was a call from Gus Castaneda. He had received my second composite and couldn't believe the difference. He said he was very impressed that I'd listened to him and that he wanted me to come to California where he could have his photographers shoot me and get a suitable book together. He also mentioned that he still didn't like my look, but that it was determination that made it in the business, not always the look. I left from Indianapolis on a flight to Los Angeles on July 17, 1995. Jim and Sue drove me and wished me good luck as I walked down the entrance ramp to the plane. I spent one thousand and thirty five dollars while I was home in preparation for California.

Chapter Fourteen

Hollywood

After conversing deeply with my new cohorts on the plane, I exited the oversized mechanical bird and called a "no-gunner" with a uniform to tell which bus I needed to take to the Pasadena Inn. I stepped out of the airport's cover and took the first steps of my life on California soil. It was July 17, 1995 when I ended up in an Apollo Airport Shuttle bus which took me to my hotel. It was nearly two A.M. so I decided not to try and get away with swimming since the pool was closed and instead I jogged through the streets of Pasadena. I checked out the bars that were open still from the windows and I searched out health clubs and supermarkets so that I'd be better prepared when day broke. I went to sleep in my new home with the air conditioner blaring out frost.

The next morning I went swimming as became customary every morning and night from then on out. I went down to Budget and got a new Mustang. It was awesome. Before calling Gus, or anyone for that matter, I took my credit card to the Armani Exchange and bought some nice threads. Then I took off for the expressway and went into Beverly Hills. I parked and walked through the nice areas pretending to be the movie star that I knew I will soon be. Next I went into Hollywood and did the same thing. Remembering my other objectives I returned and left a message with Gus' receptionist letting her know to tell Gus I'd arrived.

Gus paged not long after that and said he'd be coming to the hotel to meet me. Gus was a handsome man who walked and talked like Speedy Gonzalis. Very quick and with a Spanish accent. He was extremely polite and was a rational thinker. Said I needed a little work and asked if I had any tweezers. He paged through my book taking out all of my New York City "go-go-dancer" lookin' photos. He asked me what my life was like in New York and then said he didn't care but never to repeat it to anyone in the industry. Said that legitimate people didn't handle things that way in the business. I wanted to ask him what business he was in.

Within an hour and a half of knowing Gus, he had colored my hair brown, cut it and plucked my eyebrows. He said that he wanted to send me to Tai Pai, Taiwan or to Germany. "Two of my most recent hand picked models had gone there and made lots of money and gotten tear sheets," he told me. He said that people only really made it in the industry when they were willing to listen and to hang in there. He said he was really impressed that I was willing to do what he had told me from the start and that was why he had confidence in me. He told me the story of a few other models that he knew who went straight to work in Germany and Tai Pai and whose phenomenal, instant successes worked against them as they bombed out in Milan. He said that everyone had a hard time in Milan and only those who have had to work to get there are able to appreciate it. Those and only those are able to withstand the initial door slams that everyone experiences there. It's the most competitive market in the world, it's what's to be expected. At this first meeting Gus told me he'd call me daily and let me know when and where to be to shoot and to get the necessary clothes from the local clothing outlets on and around Colorado Boulevard.

Each day was about the same. I'd swim in the morning, tan, shoot somewhere with someone, and then go hang out all night in Beverly Hills or Hollywood. One day I went swimming in the Pacific, another day I went and climbed that huge ass set of mountains on the eastern side of California. There was never a dull moment. I never did a drug and I never minded it a bit. All was cool and cozy in Pasadena. I shot with Eddy Robles, Gus himself, and a photographer in Beverly Hills whose name I can't recall, but I guarantee he was someone bigger than life. His portfolio had nobody in it I didn't recognize, though I couldn't tell you any of their names. All famous people that were recognizable by their images. His studio was in his house and both were beautifully designed and coordinated. They were just incredible. I paid two hundred dollars and a silk vest for his services.

One night Gus and I went to eat at a little diner that served food that could normally be found at a Perkins or a Steak and Shake. He told me how he helped to train different girls for the Miss America Pageant and other stories about models. He said Cindy Crawford had a nose job in the beginning also. We talked about diets and health extensively. He said I might want to look into a book called "Fit for Life." That night after I got back to my hotel and went swimming, I went to the Barnes and Noble and bought the book. I stayed up the whole night reading it. By morning, I was a fruitarian, one who eats only fruit, having taken the book to the extreme. I never felt better in my life and I would be hard pressed to believe that

anyone on the planet had ever been more than one percentage point leaner than I was by the time I left California. Every vein was exposed in my legs, chest and arms with the slightest strain. I don't know what led me to believe this would be desirable other than obsession. If lean and muscular was good, then the leanest and most muscular would be the best. Again I was giving too much credit to the whole industry as being the most critical in the world as I had grown to be on myself when, in fact, these were ordinary every day people having their photos taken. Nobody I ever met cared all that much about modeling. It was just a way of making a little spending money to them. I wasn't after money. I wanted fame and perfection in a game where effort ain't worth squat, and a connection is worth it's weight in gold.

By the end of the week I'd shot with all three photographers in the best of Armani, Banana Republic and the Gap. I maxed my credit card out twice before returning my last bunch of clothes. Spending only one thousand and one hundred some odd dollars, I'd been to the Beverly Hills Hotel four times for coffee and I'd been all in and around Hollywood and Beverly Hills. I saw "The Viper," a bar that Todd was infatuated with cause River Phoenix died in front of it. In short, I saw and did a lot of neat shit in California. I cleaned up my act and was greatly refreshed having done so. I kept frequent contact with Tonya who got hold of a new eight hundred number at her work that I was able to call her on for free. The week's training was phenomenal and I came to be built like a statue, so damn lean and with black hair and eyebrows, having taken Gus' initial steps to their extreme. I would surely come home a different man. I was feeling extremely confident that Gus was going to provide my ticket to bigger and better things as I wrote him a thank-you letter and dropped it in the mailbox as I took my hotel key back to the hotel's front desk. The night before I left Pasadena I sat up for over two hours laying on the concrete staircase that led to the second floor of the hotel where my room was. I thought about how much I loved my brothers, Andy and Kenny, and my sister Julie, and how I wanted them to have everything they ever wanted. I gazed at the bright stars in the crystal clear California sky and wished upon each and every one of 'em. One for Mom, one for Dad, Grandma and Grandpa, Grandma and Grandpa, one for stardom, and the biggest prettiest one for my god damn beloved Carla Matheny.

Chapter Fifteen

Geraci's Way

On July 23, 1995 I was sitting on my exercise bike in my apartment reading a personal favorite of mine, Niccolo Machiavelli's, "The Prince." A book about the necessary characteristics for a prince in order to remain in complete control of his principality. It also details the relationships that the prince must maintain with his ministers if he expects to remain in complete control. I fought with correlation as I wrote out an updated plan for dealing with all of my contacts who had to that point helped to make things happen for me, as well as my overall goal's objectives and current direction. Things on the surface seemed rosy, but I'd not felt so helpless in quite a long time. Things had gotten out of my control again. I was to wait. Just wait. Do nothing and wait. How the hell was I going to wait? It could be a whole week, two, who the fuck knows?

Two or three days went by and I was quickly becoming a wreck. I called Gus and was only able to leave messages with his secretary. I told her to tell him that I was ready to go anywhere he wanted to send me. He had said he planned on sending my photos to both Tai Pai and to Germany. I just wanted to get started. Getting out of the country seemed to be a mark of success anyway I looked at it. Gus said that tear sheets are the name of the game and that Milan was no longer where budding young models necessarily should go first to get them. He said that it used to be that way, but that anymore you needed tears there too if you expected to work. He told me that the developing markets for male models was far more accessible to beginners in Taiwan, Japan, South Africa, and Germany. With the tear-sheets I could get there he told me I could fare far better in Milan. After Milan, and a book of tear-sheets, you can work anywhere. You're a model at that point. You're exposed. Now you're in a position to be recognized when you're going on auditions as an actor. You've got a high-profile job that you love, and one that supports your long term goals of being a movie star. Baby steps is all I was after at this point. World recognized status as a "supermodel" at least. It was what I was after and I wasn't willing to wait for a phone call. I figured he could page me and I'd already be there working if that was the situation. I decided to give him a week. If I hadn't

heard from him by that point, I'd go straight to Milan and write off Gus and the detours.

On the home front things weren't going too well. I was too busy to do all that much with friends so I stayed away from home and pretended to still be away. I wrote contact letters to everyone as if I were still away. I made a few trips back and forth to my parent's houses to say hello and let them see what I looked like in case I died, I wanted them to recognize me on the news. I lived with Jim and Sue the whole week. They both spent lots of time catering to my loneliness and discussing my mind's confusion. They treated me like they always did, as if nothing had changed. Never even allowing a hint of recognition as to a difference. They didn't make me feel like a freak just cause no ordinary person would recognize me from the person I was a few months ago. They recognized my determination, not its spoils. They trusted my judgment and never second guessed me.

I went to Carla's as soon as I got home with Chris Bales who had become sort of a covert personal confidant in my arrivals home. Carla looked at me in disbelief as it was obvious she didn't recognize the guy I'd become. There wasn't anything wrong with her, I simply wasn't the Robert she had ever known either physically or emotionally. The guy I became didn't know her either. I only spent five to eight minutes with her the entire week I was home and I was too busy trying to discover who I was to try to understand where the other Robert she knew and her fell into place amongst it all.

Gordon Geraci called me out of the blue and asked me to meet him at Hooters in Springdale. I did and we had a long discussion. He asked me what my plans were and I told him. I told him everything that had transpired in California and that I was planning a one-way trip to Milan, Italy.

"I ain't waiting for Gus. It's been over a week, I've already compromised my integrity by waiting this long!"

Gordon just looked at me in the same disbelief that Carla looked at me with. He said he just wasn't sure if I was going to survive the coming meal without first dying of starvation.

"I've just never seen a model that looked like you. I know you wanna' be different, but Robert."

He went on to ask why the hell I wasn't going back to New York.

"You said all the agencies told you the first time you went there that you needed good photography before they'd even see you. Well, you got it now. They wanted the product and now you've got it. You're willing to spend a few grand to go to Milan, surely you're willing to spend two hundred and a bus ride to go back to New York. I'll bet you could get over to Milan with

an agency in New York now. You've also got a response from Grace Del Marco. Fuck Milan, that's crazy. Go to New York and cash in on the work you've already done. You've paid your dues Robert, go get your reward."

I knew he was right. He had a way of seeing the obvious, and had a great many times before this. He said he would discuss a partial funding of a New York trip but wanted to first discuss a contract between us if things were to go this way. I wanted all the advice I could get and was surely inclined to give compensation if it ever came to it, but after spending nearly forty thousand dollars towards my modeling career to date, I couldn't rationally sign any kind of contract towards representation and percentages paid for a couple hundred dollars in assistance at this point. Besides, with the regular contacts I kept in Cincinnati, and my sporadic stripping engagements through Sensations, money wasn't an issue, at least not in these sums. Gordon knew it wasn't out of disrespect that I declined, but out of my obvious interests in preserving future revenues. Gordon gave me some plastic wraps for my "Robert" posters and told me to think things over.

I rode my bike for four and a half hours and decided after reading highlights from Tony Robbin's "Unlimited Power" that I would leave for New York in the morning. I took a wild shot and called Sammy, my roommate from my most recent trip to New York. He was happy to hear from me and asked when I'd be back in town. Realizing that he hadn't found out about my recent scandal on his credit cards, I told him I'd be on his doorstep the following evening. He made sure I still had my key and things were set in motion. The following morning Jim drove me to the Sharonville bus terminal where I hopped on the Greyhound for the tenth time. It was August 1, 1995. I was full of anticipation and expecting to make something out of Grace Del Marco. I never heard or saw from Todd the whole time I was home despite him knowing I was home.

Chapter Sixteen

Shot-Gun

It was August 2, 1995 when I saw the face of Sam again. I came into his Fifty Seventh Street apartment to a warm meal of steamed oysters and baked potatoes with sides of steamed carrots. I was a fruitarian now, but, for hospitality's sake, I ate it. His friend was over whom I'd met many times before. They remarked that I was so skinny they couldn't believe it. "You look fabulous," they insisted. We ate and watched the television and discussed going to France together. They were interested in my plans and I explained what I was going to do while I was in New York this time.

My plans were actually pretty simple this time. I simply wanted to have Gus send my photos from L.A. to New York. This would make my book current. I'd have both black hair and blonde hair shots in my portfolio. I'd then take my book to Grace Del Marco's open call and get some form of contract and start working. Most preferably, I'd suggest to be sent over seas. If Grace Del Marco failed to pan out I'd simply try all of the other agencies. I was only trying Grace Del Marco first because they sent a letter asking me to come. I'd called prior to arrival in New York and a guy named Bracey was extremely nice to me. My other objective in New York this time out would be to get some kind of representation from a talent agency or two and hopefully work on that front as well. I'd at least try to get some kind of rapport going with one of these agencies to work with in the future. I also wanted to refresh my already existing contacts, people such as Mike Lyons, Bobsi, Willis Roberts, Rick Day, Robert Cusido, just everyone that I'd met previously.

A few days passed and I couldn't get hold of Gus in Pasadena. He wasn't in the office and he wasn't returning my page. Finally I went to open call at Grace Del Marco where I met Bracey and Dee Simmons. They were very kind to me and took care to look at my book. Bracey said that I needed some updated shots with my black hair and that I should return when I got them. I told him about the L.A. situation and that I'd return, probably in a few days, with my newest shots. That, we decided, would probably suffice.

It was hot as fuck in New York every damn day. It was making it extremely difficult to stay level headed about anything. I was walking everywhere and my feet were sore as hell. My bike was stolen the last time I was in New York when I parked it outside of Karen Atta Studios. I had a job there where I made a hundred dollars. My bike cost me one hundred and forty for a net loss of forty for an hour and a half of work. The more my feet ached, the more I hated everyone I saw riding comfortably along at eight times the speed I was going. I had gotten a hold of Gus and he said my

photos were on the way but after two weeks, I'd still not gotten them. I'd become damn near livid.

Giving up on Gus I called LCF and asked for Mike Lyons. They said he was out of the office so I said I was supposed to be calling for a list of photographers who would be able to test shoot. The guy on the phone gave me a couple of names, one was Dorothy Shi, an Asian woman. I called her and said I was with LCF and needed some shots done. Bracey had said he wanted to see some more color and more pizzazz and so I told her that was what I was looking for. We set up a time for a shoot and I went to The Gap with my credit card to buy clothes for the shoot that would be returned immediately afterwards.

Sammy was being cool as hell and I was using his credit card daily. It was my most lucrative time ever in the Big Apple. I called Bracey and told him that I was re-shooting with black hair and that I'd be in soon. Meanwhile I started going around to the other agencies. I walked to Fords, Maxx Men, Click, Boss, Formation, all of the them all over again. Formation said they'd love to represent me and had me leave them some of my composite cards. I did and never heard a word from them. I also got word from a guy on the street who looked like a model who I engaged to see what he could tell me. He told me of Rage, a modeling agency on Seventh Avenue. He gave me the number and the name Daren. I called, got an appointment, went in, and Daren said he liked me and that he'd represent me. That simple. He sent me to Vidal Sassoon where I met a charming young lady who gave me a haircut on Rage's account. Within a day, Daren set up a shoot for me with one of his photographers, Kerry Mason. We shot and came up with some interesting photos. Daren had me make a card through Devron and began sending me on go-sees daily.

Meanwhile I went back to Bracey at Grace Del Marco with my new shots from both Dorothy Shi and Kerry Mason. Bracey liked my book now and said he'd represent me. I went to Devron and had a card made for him as well. Both Daren and Bracey chose the photos for each agencies cards. Their logos were put on both of them as well.

When I went to pick up my cards from Devron for Grace Del Marco, a guy at Devron said that it wasn't proper to work for two fashion agencies at the same time. I confided in Daren and told him just how things had come about. I'd come to see Daren frequently and he was sending me here, there and everywhere. I felt that it was in my best interests to deal with him for no other reason. Daren took care to call Bracey and let him know what had happened and that he would be representing me. I went to Grace and

apologized and got my cards so that Daren could use them. Bracey said not to worry, that ten models just like me would come in the door before the day was through. I spoke to Gus again and he said that the photos had arrived back to him with a note saying that the address I gave him was bogus. He then asked if I just wanted him to send them out to his contacts over seas and I said sure. I didn't care at this point. I was just happy to know that someone, somewhere in the world would at least say they had the bastards. I couldn't bear to believe that all the money spent in L.A. could be gone somewhere in the mail.

Two and a half weeks into the trip and Sam told me that his sister was coming to New York and that he would be moving to his home in White Plains. He said he would help me find a place to live and he did. He got me a room in the Hotel Washington Jefferson. It was a pit with a serious roach problem and mice. I was on the first floor so my window was just about four feet from the garbage. It was about ninety degrees outside and hotter inside so I had to keep the windows open to survive the heat. Horns and hollerin' kept me up most nights till I thought I would go crazy. When I pulled down the sheets at night roaches scurried everywhere. I never saw Sam again.

I turned my little room into an office where I began to send out my acting head shots to every talent agency whose address I could find. I reproduced a head-shot taken by Dorothy Shi at Jim Dandy's Copy Center, a few streets from my room on Fifty First. I continued going on go-sees for Daren and came to find some work. I did a shoot for Young and Modern Magazine through Sara Gaynor and I was in an Alanis Morissette video through Propaganda Films. It was on this shoot that I met a girl named Norma Jean who gave me the address of her agent Stanley Kaplan. I bought another mountain bike and began to make faster time on everything. My friend and business coordinator at the time, Gordon Geraci came to New York City to shoot me. Being an agent himself, he was interested in going to the big New York agencies and meeting people. He was able to test shoot for Fords while he was there. He got some pictures of me and a Ford model named Danielle getting cozy in Central Park. This short pleasant interruption was brief however, and it wasn't long before I began to feel so alone again. With these feelings I began to deteriorate. I was working out at Mid-City Gym but was lacking energy and enthusiasm something awful. I'd sent a number of packages to Carla's daughter Amanda and I wrote all my family and friends often, but I was loosing grip with the world again. Somewhere between the heat, the roaches and the isolation, I just lost control of

everything again. I became a familiar face at "Cats" again and was like an addict with coke. My buddy Todd called me for the first time in probably a month and said he was either going to come back to New York or blow his head off. Pissed off and unwilling to listen I told him to blow his head off. The next day, at approximately the same hour, I received a page from Sensations. The voice on the phone was Andy. He told me that Todd had been found dead of a self-inflicted gun shot wound to the head in room 108 of the Fort Mitchell Holiday Inn just south of Cincinnati the day before. That day was August 16, 1995.

That night, after calling a few friends, I got on the subway drunk with my fourth forty ounce in my hand. I spent my last dollar and my last quarter. I'd been crying and my face was swollen. It was probably about eleven P.M. when I passed out. When I woke up I felt like hell. I got out of the subway and went above ground to see where I was. I was way the hell up-town. I found out that it was eight A.M. Having no money I had to walk back. It took me thirteen hours. I was starving and tired. I thought my fuckin' feet would fall off. My credit card company had called two days prior and said that there was strange activity taking place on it. Turned out that my number was being passed around like a bitch in three other states. I had it canceled and was really starting to believe I'd die of starvation if I didn't eat soon. Nobody threw out their food until night and I wasn't willing to beg just yet. I thought about Todd and who I thought he was. I thought about his childish demeanor and his delicate personality, his fear of the unknown yet his limitless curiosity. Todd was an extremely friendly and lovable guy. His southern twang and his down home manners were most prevalent. I thought about his progression from the county landscape of Lawrenceburg, Kentucky to the City of Cincinnati. His exposure to the stripping world, to the big lights of Vegas and the non-stop hustle of New York. I watched him deteriorate from a military man to a drug addicted whore as the pressure mounted throughout the changes. Todd never stopped being a good guy though through it all. He was simply trying his best to win the approval of the crowd he'd fallen prey to and he never lost respect for anybody in it. He was always good to me. He was caring and very open to everyone. He said he'd be my gardener if I made it and the son-of-a-bitch backed out on me.

I quickly laid Todd's death to rest in my mind in order to carry on. I'd let things get so horrid again that I became selfish and worried only for my own life. I was on a staple diet of garbage and tap water from restaurant sinks. I was keeping organized, however, and getting finished with my plans. By the time I left New York, approximately two and a half weeks after Todd's

death, I'd gotten my foot in the door with Stanley Kaplan's talent agency and Frontier Booking International. Both agents, Stanley at Stanley's and David at FBI, were hospitable and willing to represent me and begin the process of getting me work. I had improved my relations with Mike Lyons, and I could not have asked for a better working relationship with Daren at Rage Models. I'd met a girl named Alexis at Mi Nidito, and was beginning to hang around her once and a while. Again however, I couldn't seem to make a home of New York. The streets were rough and with my time all run out at the Hotel Washington Jefferson, I wouldn't fare well long on the streets. I sent my portfolio home Fed Ex in a box along with my remaining head-shots and resumes. The few outfits I had left I gave to a poorer man than I who always begged for money on the corner of Fifty First and Eighth Avenue. I walked down the street advertising my bike for sale and had it sold for fifty bucks within twenty minutes. I stayed in New York two more days with nothing but the clothes on my back waiting for the call so to speak. On September 1, 1995, I walked into a unisex barber for a hair-cut. We looked at my black dew in the mirror and without reason, but for disgust, I told him to shave the shit all off. I called my friend Alexis and told her to meet me at the Port Authority in twenty. I called Daren at Rage, David at FBI, and Stanley at Stanley's and told them all I was going home for a while to save myself from the jaws of the concrete jungle. Each knew what I meant and said to hurry back and take care and all of that. Alexis, when she finally recognized me, gave me a hug and said not to give up. I went to gate sixty-eight and pictured Todd sitting on the bench where I'd last seen him pinched between two distraught looking African- Americans with his suit case at his feet as he was preparing to return to Cincinnati defeated. In like fashion I walked through the doors which would lead to the bus.

Chapter Seventeen

Loose

Carla picked up my bald ass at the Cincinnati bus terminal on September 2, 1995. She was as beautiful as ever and it nearly hurt my eyes to look at her. Her long flowing blonde hair and her big round blue eyes were as stunning as ever. She palmed my head with her hand and rubbed it asking, "what have you done now?" We spent the whole day together. We got her daughter Amanda and went to a park located about midway between my house and hers. It was a magnificent day as the sun shined, and the cool September breeze soothed the senses. By night fall Carla and I were on her couch and kissing ever so passionately. We began to stir our bodies in an upright manner of sexual conduct when she stopped me and said that the first time should be special. The ever so familiar halt of a good time to be saved for a tomorrow that never came was again solidified.

On September 3, 1995, I went to the Lawrenceburg Cemetery where Todd was buried. I walked heavily between stones searching for a fresh grave. When I came across Todd's, I tilted my head as my mind went blank. It was dark as hell out. It was almost twelve midnight. After thinking to myself for a while, I raised my middle finger to the sky and cursed the only God I know for snatchin' my pal.

I remember sobbing outright and heaving as I rolled the paint on the walls of the apartment under mine. My grandparents owned the building and so maintenance often fell into my hands. I wanted to paint a red goodbye on the wall with my brains the way Todd had. I thought of the reactions of the ones I loved and was only restrained for their sake and sanity. I also thought of the coward in Todd that allowed him to die with a thousand plus modeling composites that could have sparked the beginning of the modeling career he told me he also wanted. I'd become a monster to myself and could not seem to regain my perception of the world as the spectrum of endless possibilities that I had grown accustomed to seeing. I'd sold everything not nailed down in my apartment, as well as my Mazda and my motorcycle and had acquired a mountain of debt over eight thousand dollars. I had no way of getting around, and no food to eat unless I walked to my Mother's.

I quickly got a job at Red Lobster and then, not satisfied with their format, I went to Friday's in The Tri-County area of Cincinnati. I had no car and so I did everything on my bike at first. Within two weeks or so, my buddy John helped me pick out a car to get around in for a while. I began eating at an alarming rate. The image of myself in my mind was of a huge, muscular, long blonde haired man who had the resemblance of Arnold Schwarzenegger's "Conan." Within three weeks of coming home, I gained sixty pounds. I knew that I would have to get heavy at least twice to make

the gains that I was after. My exposure route to Hollywood changed from being the skinny, suave model in the fashion magazines to being the big blonde bombshell in the muscle and fitness magazines and commercials. I'd get a new head-shot for each stage of the new body developing process and send them out to see if I could hit the right look at the right time as I went. Without response I'd simply continue in fast forward progression to attain the new me that I'd envisioned in my mind. I brought out Arnold Schwarzenegger's "The Education of a Bodybuilder" to get me back on that track. Having been a two-hundred and sixty-three pound bodybuilder at the age of eighteen, I knew it wouldn't be hard to get it back. I decided that I would play professional football and fight Mike Tyson the first chance I got. I boxed every morning and jogged. I hit the gym like a tyrant, and I ate like a horse. I was eating everything without dietary or caloric restrictions just to put on a heavy base to work with. A sample day would be twenty five "Whoppers" from Burger King. I'd done this many times when they had the special for ninety-nine cents each. I also did the Arby's roast beefs. Twenty five, five a meal for five meals, no problem. Many of my friends have seen me do it. Professional wrestling was another consideration. Just something to gain exposure that I could build into something far greater. The plug that would allow the electricity to flow through so to speak.

My personal life became like that of a continuous party. One hundred plus bar tabs at The Cheyenne Cattle Company every Thursday night. Beer till no end. I couldn't seem to do any damage to myself anymore. I became indestructible and proud of it. I saw Dan, Gene, Rob, John and John almost nightly. I hung out with Jim and Sue all of the time as well. We shared some of our best times as my wall of dietary discipline was relaxed for time in tale. Sue told me often that she often worried for my life as the ever shrinking man that I so recently was. It was hard to understand as I stood before her at two hundred and fifty pounds. Out of spite and curiosity, I decided to fuck all of Todd's ex-girlfriends so I could see just what in the hell he actually was giving up his dreams for. Cindy, Stella, the one who provided him with his chosen poison, heroin, and his all-time favorite Cre. Cre made it easy by confronting me with a "what can I do to help" letter signed, "Love Cre." I wouldn't give up my dreams for em', but they were all charming girls who Todd understandably found comfort in. Cre was my favorite too. Cre and I both knew the other was a lunatic, and despite awesome sex, and getting along so damn well, neither of us really wanted to pretend we could get anywhere together. Surely half the reason for sleeping with Cre was to hurt Carla 'cause Cre was her friend. I contemplated

fucking 'em all but deep down just simply loved my baby with all I had in me. Besides, I knew Carla knew me well enough to know that having sex wasn't shit to me anyway. What I wanted was sex in a union of hearts with her, Carla, only her. Fucking every girl in the world wouldn't have brought me any closer to that. Shit, Carla stopped calling and participating from the second day home. She said that the more time we spent together, the more she would fall in love with me and she was scared. Scared to be smothered in the depths of my love. After pondering over the psychology of that one, I decided to stay clear of all cowards of the day. Only "lifers" would I surround myself with. For it was only too recent that I wanted to die, it was surely time to live. I concentrated solely on friends. Again I hid from all women. I needed support to pull myself out of the hole of hate and shame that I'd put myself in. Though Carla sternly fixed her heart a great distance from mine, I felt I'd cheated in the worst way. I danced for Sensations, as well as did private parties for my regulars. Again I began to lose my respect completely and just continue to sleep with a different girl almost nightly. I became as Todd had and took solace in the sexual whisps and moans of the females I was, in my mind, conquering. I was without a "lifeline" and grasping for security. I stopped counting after twenty and for the umpteenth time in a couple of weeks, I decided that girls would have to be out. I pissed off so many so fast. My morale became broken and spit upon as my answering machine berated me with distaste. My back was killing me from picking up my self-esteem each morning. I was using my art of persuasion in a way that was even making myself sick.

My work at Friday's was really going well. Everyone was really nice and sincere towards me. Shawna who's going to Nashville and her boyfriend Tim, Howie, Chris, John, Bob, old Jim Mills, Shorty, Darel, Thomas, B.J., Jack, Abbie, Scott, Kyle, Cat, Shotwell, Toya, Mark, Neal, Becky, beautiful Carolyn, Sexy Shawna, Amber waves of grain, Bernadette, Parker, Lance, Dan, Dave, Shorty, Doc, Kathy, Will, Bam Bam, Kurt, John, Keith, Brian, Will deal, Deb Meister, Sally, sunset at Dawn, wild-man Fetti, Christopher, Bill, Joe, the eyes of Audra, Helen, Drakester, Warren, Karen, T.J. Gennie, Tina, Holly, Terry and anyone I could have missed. From the front of the house to the back of the house, Friday's had a staff of good damn people. It was cliquish, but O.K. with me. I like the clique like I like the clack. I really wasn't interested in making money there, I knew I'd make all of my money through my contacts and dancing. It was simply stability. I could work only days, no more than three hours usually. This left time to organize and work on my real life. I remember endless nights of partying with many

of them. From the stoned Wednesday nights at Ripley's with Beer-dog to the drunk Tuesdays at the Village Tavern. My job at Friday's had a lot to offer and I would stay with the company as both a stable job referral for my professional resume and for its passport. Friday's passport allows an employee of Friday's to go from one Friday's location to another without missing work. This could come in handy when arriving in Hollywood.

Where my "get famous" scheme was involved, I made a lot of progress. To begin with I lived. I overcame my desire to die which I felt had to be the first step. I was moving along as rapidly as ever at getting big as shit, strong, and with as little added fat as I could under the circumstances of extreme weight gain. It was the foundation I'd need to get back what I lost and then some. My hair was its original color and growing. I continued to increase and refresh all of my existing contacts with letters and phone calls. I gained a far better friendship with Gordon Geraci as he continued to nurture my dreams with ideas and encouragement. He used me in a Professional Models and Talent Association radio spot that aired on local radio station Q102. He shot all of my photography. Head-shots, that were going out to the talent agencies in Los Angeles, about where I felt I'd be in given time. I was gaining a new spark of interest in acting over modeling as I read and re-read "Unlimited Power" again. I also read heavily in Og Mandingo's "The Greatest Salesman in the World" and some success stories in a book called "Chicken Soup for the Soul." On the fourteenth of January, 1996 I decided I would go to New York to see my contacts, or should I say, to let them see me. They'd have to get a kick out of the change. I knew I was in a transitional phase that would do me no justice from a physical standpoint, but I know from experience that letting others in on your experiences brings them closer to you. The depth in the contacts I was after would require just such a visit I believed. I would go and see Daren at Rage, David at FBI, and most importantly, Mike Lyons at LCF. My neighbor Dan said he'd like to go and so we left on the Greyhound on January 16, 1995.

Chapter Eighteen

Fat Pig

Dan and I arrived in New York City in the early morning hours of September 17, 1995. It was Dan's first trip so naturally he was wired more than usual. He had bitched up a storm the whole eighteen hour way claiming I was taking up two seats. Said he felt like a god-damn squashed grape. Everybody on the bus hated us 'cause between the two of us, we ate twenty cans of tuna fish on the way. We'd bust open our cans and drain 'em in the john. Every two hours the people in the neighboring seats grimaced from the scent of fish. We arrived at the Port Authority and called Bobsi Colon. Bobsi said we could stay with him so Dan and I jumped a taxi and went to his place at The Strand on the west side.

Bobsi took us in like he said he would and gave me a key as he usually does. He said he couldn't believe the change and insisted on calling me "a fat pig." I took these assaults personally though I said nothing and smiled. He showed us where everything was since I'd never stayed at his new place. He gave us the phone numbers where we could reach him, as well as the locations he'd be managing in case we needed to see him for anything. With all of our primary concerns taken care of, I began to make an itinerary for the following days. By the time the first day had ended, we managed to see Mike Lyons at LCF, and Daren at Rage. Both had difficulty believing I was me though neither of them seemed too concerned. Mike said that I would be far more marketable at a heavier weight, but that I'd need to tone it up obviously. Dan and I walked up and down Times Square and jogged all over mid Manhattan before retiring after our first day in New York.

After returning from our jog the second morning, I called Doug McClemon at MMG Services, Inc. He had sent a letter prior to my returning to New York the third or fourth time. The letter had said that he would be interested in having me shot for his magazines. I know that the one in particular he suggested at this time was Playguy. They were gay mags but he said they would only be single male pictorials. He also said that the photographer, Chiun Kai, was not customarily shooting for magazines such as his but that he had a strong desire to create some artistic, still life nudes that were not the usual trash. He wanted to use someone who actually worked as a model so that the work would come out clean and fashionable. It sounded sophisticated enough for me so I decided to do it. Chiun Kai was an excellent photographer who said he worked as Bruce Webber's assistant on many occasions. He had a book of tears a mile high. I got three hundred bucks for the shoot which was already spent to cover the unaccounted costs

of the trip that I wouldn't have receipts for. I saw David at Frontier Booking International, and called Stanley Kaplan at the Kaplan Agency the following day. With this, the business I wanted to handle was done. My best contacts in New York had seen a transitional me. Next they would see me at my arrived destination. The remainder of the trip was spent fuckin' around in China Town, The Village, Club 58, and an assortment of different restaurants, delis and coffee shops. On the way back to Cincinnati, Dan sat squished in his seat another eighteen hours begging for sleep as I taunted him with my elbows asking him over and over again if he was asleep yet.

Chapter Nineteen

Castaneda Revival

On January 20, 1996, I came back to Cincinnati a charged individual. I'd contacted with my most valuable contacts in New York and knew that I had to return to my goals. I wanted to be famous, I wanted to be a success at my chosen endeavors. I'd stepped back from the scene long enough to put things into perspective. I decided it was now surely time to get the ball rolling again. I wanted to be huge, I wanted to be ripped, I wanted to have my long blonde hair and I wrote out a time-line and strategy for getting it all. Los Angeles, California would be in the making so I began gathering more publications that listed agencies so that I could increase my mailings and contacts therein.

Two days after my arrival home I received my long lost photos from Gus Castaneda in Pasadena. I never thought I'd see the day, but at last I had. I was psyched as shit. The pictures depict me as I'd never be again, but which also symbolized to me a person I did so choose to be at one time back on a hot California summer day. The pictures inspired me more than Gus may ever know and so I called and thanked him for sending them. It was at that time that I increased my mailings to twenty a day or one hundred and forty a week.

Personal life back in Cincinnati was exciting for the first time in a long time. I worked at Friday's every morning, and after my personal business was complete, I went out every night. I spent the majority of my night time slammin' beers and smokin' Js with Beerdog and his pals, Johnny and his girl Erin, Johnny, Johnny, Gene, Rob, Allen, Dan and many others. It was great doing visualizations while being out with my buddies with an altered mind. The night life was chaotic and reckless, but sex was again obsolete as I again began to repress all desires to be held for Carla at a later date. Country music reveled in my ear drums daily as I held fast and confident in my heart's chosen sorrow.

My training from the end of January, 1996 to the beginning of March, 1996 consisted of two hours of aerobics, a minimum of two hours of free weights, and a minimum of two hours reading. Again I had become intense and willing. On February 28, 1996, I received a call from Paul Rackley, the creative director for Men's Style Magazine. He was also a great photographer, well known in New York City, with whom I attempted to shoot many times prior. The first time was when Mike Lyons sent me, the second, third, fourth, and fifth times were simply individual efforts on my part through letters and phone calls. I couldn't get him to shoot me to save my life so it was a real surprise to have him calling me. I knew he shot for Versace, Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein and a host of others so I was there. He said that he wanted me to come and shoot with him and I said I could come whenever he wanted me to. After a moments discussion I told him I would be in New York City to meet with him for photos on March 3.1996, four days later. I then called Bobsi Colon to let him know that I'd be on his doorstep in need of a "couple of days home" on March second. I couldn't reach old Bobsi so I decided I'd wing it.

Chapter Twenty

Paul Rackley

Dan said he'd drive me to the airport at the last minute and so I was rushing to get out of town in usual fashion. His truck was puttering out despite full throttle as we approached the outdoor bag check-in. I didn't have but a handbag so the two of us raced to the gate where we needed to be only five minutes before. I got winded and Dan had to save the day by hustling up the stewardess and making her halt the plane which was pulling out from the entrance ramp. When I caught up to the gate I had to walk down a flight of stairs and actually climb up a ladder to get onto the plane. It was a small ass plane that allowed only a cramped position. I was fortunate to have made it this time.

I got to LaGuardia and snagged a bus to mid-Manhattan. Then I jumped a cab to Bobsi's and just happened to arrive when he and his brother-in-law were moving Bobsi's shit out of his studio at The Strand. I was tired as shit but ended up carrying one pile of furniture after another to a jeep parked outside. Bobsi was moving to the Village and said I could stay with him. The three of us went to Bobsi's new pad on Second Avenue and finished the work. I was tired as shit but went on to tell Bobsi what the hell I was doin' in New York. Bobsi had to work at Club 58 and I was gonna' go the hell to bed.

My pager went off at eleven thirty and it's Paul Rackley. He wants me to come to his studio on Eighteenth Street I believe. I mustered up my enthusiasm, grabbed my book and went out on foot since it wasn't far to walk. Half way there I get a page from Club 58. Bobsi tells me one of his dancers had backed out and that he needs me to dance. "I got a G-string," he tells me.

I get to Paul's place and ring the buzzer and while trying to be certain that I get the door open when he returns the buzz, I hastily push the door open and rip the fuckin' skin off my damn thumb. So I'm chuckin' up three flights of stairs and bleeding all over the place. Paul lets me in and his place is the bomb. All wooden and scenic to say the least. His entertainment center was nice and he had plush couches and really nice shit. I told him right off that I had to get to Club 58 in forty-five minutes and he said cool. He checked out my book and told me that he wanted me to do some nude shots which would be displayed on the Internet. Some computer solicitation where he said that any assortment of influential people might come across my face or body and want to hire me for work. I told him I was bleeding and he put my finger in his mouth and sucked the blood off it clean. He then told me that he was looking forward to doing the photos and that he'd call me the following day to let me know the time.

I danced at Club 58 till three damn o' clock in the morning. I was tired as hell though I kept an iron smile on my face the whole time for my dear friend Bobsi's sake. Two of the dancers that danced at the club invited me to an after-hours party and not wanting to be a puss I went. I got home at seven the next morning and was up at nine when my pager went off. This time it was some French sounding guy who asked if I had any interest in shooting nude photos with an erection on the Internet. He said the program was called "Nomads of the Wind." I told him that I was in New York to do such work but that I'd heard nothing to that point about any erection. I mentioned Paul Rackley's name and he said he couldn't believe that Paul hadn't mentioned my name since he was in charge of making the decisions. He then told me he wanted me to meet him at his place and that he'd page me back to set up a time. He told me not to mention the call to Paul Rackley.

Paul paged and had me come out to do some photos. I told him everything that had transpired like I was told not to. Paul couldn't get over what the guy had said and told me that he wasn't going to deal with the guy again since he was obviously, in Paul's words, a freak. Paul still wanted to shoot me and did. During the shoot Paul came over and whispered that had he known I was still heavy, he'd have told me to come a week later. He liked me I guess 'cause he damn near pinched my nipples off in between shots. Some gay and bisexual men for some reason like to pinch other men's nipples and I really don't know why. It hurts and it's hard to smile and pretend to be turned on with the pain that is inevitably involved. A very harmless exchange for such an incredible photographer's services. He said that I would come across heavy on film. I looked like a football player compared to a model. Despite having dropped a good deal of body-fat since my last trip to New York, I was still not skinny by any means. We finished the shoot by five in the evening after shooting about five rolls of film. I shot in some shit by Versace V2 Classics, Ralph Lauren and Joseph Abboud. The clothes were sharp but they were all snug. Paul had a co-worker staying with him and said he'd try and call me the next day so that we could get together and chat. By the time I got back to Bobsi's place I was getting drilled with pages from the Nomads freak. I didn't return them and instead went out for some grub. I had some pasta deal at a local deli and then went to a wild ass club by Bobsi's place called Webster Hall. After that I went and got my penis pierced at a local body-piercing joint. The guy who did it said it would bleed and hurt for a day. In the wee hours of the night that followed I took two pairs of scissors out of Bobsi's roommate's medicine cabinet and pryed the loop apart and out of my damn dick. I have no

fucking idea what possessed me to do that to myself. I was peeing out two holes the next morning and they both burned like white coals as the urine trailed and dribbled out of my urethra. I forgave myself.

I left New York on March 4, 1996 knowing that something would eventually come from my shoot from Paul Rackley though I had no idea what. I clamped my palm over my ailing penis the whole flight home thanking God for allowing me to keep it.

Chapter Twenty-One

Why Not Miami?

Somewhere between the dates of March 4, 1996 and March 30, 1996 my pal Tom asked me why I hadn't considered Miami. I don't know what he was getting at really 'cause I thought we were on the same wavelength about where my career objectives were. I listened to him tell me that Miami was the "new Hollywood" and that the modeling industry was hot there for muscular men. He reminded me about how to properly submit composites and for which agencies. It was then that I let Tom in on a little secret of mine. That for the last ten months, I'd told everyone and their brothers that I was definitely shifting my focus from modeling to acting. That I would do modeling for money on the side and as often as I could, but that I would now define myself as an actor and nothing less. Since he took the time to tell me what he thought was best under non-existent conditions, I listened and agreed that going to Miami before taking off to California might be a good idea.

On March 5, 1996 I began writing every contact I had ever known. Jim Simpson was able to get me over two thousand head-shots and two thousand body shots printed up. They were done on crisp, heavy paper stock with my resume' printed on the back. I wrote and sent photos to every magazine editor, every talent agency, every modeling agency, and every personal friend contact that I had acquired. I also sent mailings to the talent agencies in Cincinnati: Cam, Creative Talent, and Hayman Halper. Before leaving to

Miami on March 30, 1996, I had sent out over two thousand photos, fifty percent current, fifty percent past.

On March 7, 1996, Bill Christos called me over to his house to give him a massage. While I was giving him his massage he told me that he would be going to Southbeach in a couple of weeks or so. I told him I'd been wanting to go to Miami before California to check out the so called "new Hollywood." Damn well I was lying horribly. I was just caught off guard man, I can lie better than anyone. I asked him if I could go and he said yes. I planned Miami into my scheme of things and left with Bill for Southbeach on March 30, 1996.

It could have been one day after or five days since I'd arrived home from New York when I called Carla. She was in a frenzy getting ready to leave with her girlfriends for Florida. She said she was sorry but had to go. I wanted to fuckin' scream, but just refrained. My eyes watered heavily and dripped red tears of fury and frustration as I stared at my reflection in the mirror crying.

It was the night before I left for Miami and Carla and I were somehow lined up to hang out together at her place. We sat and laughed, smiled and groped each other with our eyes as we got high and chilled out. We were closer than we'd been in a very long time. I made love to her twenty times with my eyes. Enough to make her walk funny in the morning. When I left we kissed sweetly at the crack of her front door. Carla was again embedded on my mind. This time at Carla's, the above mentioned, and a time when I was just somehow there and she was telling me about her Florida trip, were the only times I saw Carla the whole time period between March 4, 1996, and March 30, 1996. How fuckin' stupid that when we were together like this in three short visits, she has to keep us the fuck apart when my front door is only two point seven tenths of a mile from hers. I swear if I'm ever in a situation again where we're a couple and she even hints at how I spend too much time with anything other than her, I'll have to break my arm to keep from using all these examples, with dates, against her.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Southbeach

On March 30, 1996 I arrived in Miami after flying alone. My buddy Bill had left on an earlier flight. I got pretty close to a chick on the plane who made a date with me for the Thursday after my return to Cincinnati. Bill told me to page him when I reached Miami but I decided to just go to the Hotel Washington where we were staying. When I arrived, Bill, his friends Paul and Possum and I, went to the 11th Street Diner for dinner. The weather was awesome with a light breeze at seventy-eight degrees. I was on the high fat diet so my meal of two plain beef patties became the topic of discussion at our meal. I filled out an application to open up a possible option in the event that I'd decide to stay in Miami after the week's end.

Our first day in Miami was interesting to say the least. It was hot and sunny as shit and I started out my day with a long swim in the pool. I tanned and then met the boys at the News Cafe on Ocean Drive. It was just down the street from Versace's house. I'd went and looked at it several times the night before. We talked of our plans for the day and about the prospects for work in the local gay night festivals. Bill and Paul had been to Southbeach before and were very helpful in knowing the ins and outs of making money on Southbeach's gay scene. I also picked up the gay circulars that were available, "Florida's Hot Spots" and "Scoop Magazine." Bill and Paul hadn't worked there or anything like that. They were on the other end of the stick, no pun intended, putting money in the local go-go boy's G-strings. Since it was Sunday, the modeling agencies were closed and I decided to wait till Monday to get down to business. We went to Haulover Park's nude beach. It was crazy walking around so many people with my pecker hanging out. It was worse swimming in the Atlantic constantly worrying about it getting bit off by a fish. Sunday night I took my Miami Modeling Directory and hunted out all of the modeling agencies in Southbeach. Nearly all of them were located on Ocean Drive or within a mile thereof. I was weighing almost two hundred and fifty pounds at the time so modeling, per say, wasn't exactly up my ally. I figured, however, that since the weather was always superb, and the emphasis was on health and muscle, the big agencies would have a heavy demand for outstanding physiques. I mapped out the scene in my head as I jogged through the streets of Southbeach that night.

Come Monday morning, I already had a routine that I'd follow for all of the days remaining. I swam in the Atlantic each morning with my new Speedo swimming cap to keep my hair out of the water and sun. I ate each

meal with at least Bill, but usually Paul also. On Monday morning I called every listed modeling agency in Southbeach's Art Deco District and got their open call times for interviewing new models. I sent a head-shot to all of the listed talent agencies. We went to the nude beach every afternoon and I worked out at the Clevelander Hotel's gym on Ocean Drive. Between the beach and the exercise bike at the gym I read David Schwartz's "The Magic of Thinking Big," Napoleon Hill's "You Can Work Your Own Miracles" and Denis Waitley's "Being the Best." I danced at the Boardwalk every night. The Boardwalk was wild. Dragqueens hosted the strip shows on the club's lit up runway which consisted of fifteen or more guys nightly. Everyone I danced with was straight as usual and very friendly compared to New York. It was odd because three of the guys I danced with in Miami also danced with me in New York City. Two of the guys were featured in the gay pornos that played nightly in the club on the T.V. screens that hovered over the four corners of the bar. The Boardwalk was the hot-spot for strippers in Miami because you could go there any night of the week, by six for happy-hour or ten for the evening show and dance. Nearly all fifteen guys would be swarming through the crowd of gays hustling for tips. I went nude as always so I could fist my dick in my hand and limit all groin contact to the absolute minimum. Bill and Paul made it out most nights and when they couldn't, Bill let me drive his rental. I met a lot of cool guys who were also searching for nude "influentials" to help them get work. One of the guys I danced with, Johnny, was really cool. We bullshitted 'bout all kinds of shit, but mostly steroids, diets and bodybuilder "wanna-bes." He said he'd done the high-fat diet before and also enjoyed eating nothing but beef for two and three weeks at a time. He said he'd never heard of eating seven pounds of strictly beef in one day, but that he admired my dedication. Having a partner in crime, so to speak, made dancing in the Boardwalk much easier than it had been to dance in similar situations alone in the past for sure. Johnny told me of another bar like the Boardwalk called 825 in Fort Lauderdale. He said they only let big muscular guys dance there and that the money may be better. I'd never been there so I went and danced there one night with Bill. Turned out to be only an audition and so I only got to go around the bar once when it wasn't crowded. I made two bucks and had to wait about thirty minutes for Bill cause he decided to go to another bar with a crippled bar patron who tried to kill him. A very panicked Bill came by and took us back to the Hotel Washington. The two of us K.O'd on generic valium for about the third or fourth night in a row.

Throughout the week I went to open-call for every modeling agency in Southbeach that had them. Ford, Irene Marie, Page Parks, Michele Pommier, Trouble, shit, all of them. They were either uninterested because I was too damn big, or they wanted current photos before making a decision. I expected the prior and the latter so I wasn't at all surprised. I filled out applications in every restaurant on Ocean Drive for waiter positions to no avail. I was told ahead of time that they were the hardest places in Miami to get a job. It only made sense. Each and every restaurant was right on the damn beach and were packed with people the entire time they were open for lunch and dinner. You'd have to make a killin' in 'em. On top of that the modeling agencies were located on the second floors over the restaurants. Talk about a place for a budding young model/waiter to be discovered, these jobs were ideal and it was obvious. I continued to look and call however, for in the event that I would stay. I found a friendly old queen named Les at The Palace, a restaurant on Ocean Drive, who said I could pay a hundred bucks a week to stay at his place with my own room and entertainment center. It sounded great, but my objectives for Miami, in general, weren't going that well. I really wasn't interested in going through the whole modeling composite procedures again, and the talent agents that I had the opportunity to talk to said they got most of their talent from California. On top of this, I dropped a one hundred and ten pound dumbbell on my quadriceps doing shoulder presses and was having a terrible time walking as the swelling persisted between handfuls of anti-inflammatories. Everything sucked and I was quickly discouraged. I only wanted to be able to walk at this point. Moviestardom meant squat. I left as scheduled on April 7, 1996, praying that the plane would crash in the fuckin' ocean.

Chapter Twenty-Three

Grindstone

I was home from Southbeach on April 7, 1996. Again sitting in my apartment and praying for death feeling impotent against the world of

achievers. I wanted to be there, wherever there was. I behaved as a sulking child and dreaded over the negatives in my existence. I reached for the usual anchors in my life, my family and friends. I cried and I cried and I cried for reprieve. I continued to train like a beast and determine where my body would take me next. More than anything else I just wanted a new direction or route with which to acquire my goals. I wanted a new outlook and a strategy for the fulfillment of another effort. All of my determination was intact and I still had, as I will always have, the will of Alexander the Great, but I needed to sort out a way to go and a reason for believing it was where I should go. I began to question who I was and who I wanted to be. Who I could be, and why it was me who should be it. Bound never to give up, I was now back to the drawing table to re-formulate another plan of attack.

I sat down with pen and paper and hours to decipher. I began with my "Ideal Day" in hand again.

Ideal Day

I will awake totally refreshed and vibrant after a long night's rest.

I will be in a king-sized bed or larger in the company of my beloved, sacred companion and my faithful, beautiful, healthy dog.

The sun will be shining through my large bay windows, and cool breezes will shake the curtains before brisking past my body.

I will wake my loving companion with kisses and compliments in mutual love and harmony.

I will exit my beautifully furnished, owned by me, living quarters each morning after a glass or two of mountain spring water to jog with my dog.

I will return to my companion to enjoy each other's company over a well prepared, healthy, lite breakfast (who prepares it is no matter).

Each day's itinerary will be designed by my own choosing.

My work for each day will be paid with incredible funds and enjoyment.

The amount of work and duration will be of my choosing and I will have the utmost earned respect of all those working with me.

Everywhere that I go, I will be recognized and respected. I will be known to all to be the most famous, wealthiest man alive. People will request to have my autograph and photos taken with me everywhere.

My family members well be in my part of town if they so choose, but regardless, will be in frequent contact to wish each of them well and hello.

I will eat in the very finest restaurants, lounges, hotels, casinos and other establishments of my choosing with my family members, friends, and

companion for each meal as I choose. Reservations will always be made in advance or accepted with respect upon entering.

Any amount of money that I wish to spend on any given day will be OK.

Never needing to feel in any way financially impaired.

I will know that on any given day, my family, friends and supporters will have all they deserve as a result of our association.

My dog will have all that he wants with plenty of room to run and enjoy his life.

I will travel to any part of the world that I wish at any given time with an unlimited number of options to go, expense paid, by people requesting my presence for work, friendships, meals, etc..

My loving companion, family, friends, dog and supporters will be able to see the world as a result of their association with me.

I will work out in health clubs, the very finest of facilities and will be immediately recognized and respected for having the finest and most refined, healthy body on the planet. I will be known to be serious, and intense in the gym as well as curious and helpful. I will relax frequently in saunas and whirlpools, Jacuzzis, etc..

My great wealth will afford me the great opportunity to be extremely well versed in all aspects of the theater, opera, geography, business and people. I will see all and do all as I choose always being able to relax and enjoy what my great accomplishments have returned to me. All sports and recreational activities will be open to me. All luxuries, whether car, boat, plane, etc., will be easily within my grasp.

At night I will be in the company of anyone I wish to enjoy the most exquisite locations and scenes the world now has to offer as will those who are in association with me.

I will always return to bed refreshed and secure with my companion's heart in unity with mine. We will share an enduring love that will never lack trust, faith, honesty and fidelity.

Our respect for each other will be unselfish and pure and we'll always be forgiving toward each other.

I will both wake and go to sleep feeling energetic, wealthy, healthy, secure and excited about the day. I will never let adversity hold me back, but will maintain a level head and take positive actions. I will always accentuate the positives and eliminate the negatives. I will read and relax whenever I choose and will see editorial photos, prints, commercials, movies and every other medium of advertisement and communication bearing my image whenever I look for them.

I will be able on any given day to frequent my assets, accounts, properties, etc. and find that they only grow larger, no matter how much I spend or my companion spends.

I will be massaged by a masseuse upon my request as often as I want to be and will be able to shower, swim, or just lay back alone whenever I want despite the mad craze to spend time with me.

All who know me will be lavished with friendship, concern, assets, guidance if they so feel I can give it to them, and happiness to know that they have a true friend.

Anyone and everyone who has ever so much as wanted to be of help or assistance to me shall be rewarded a thousand times if they so wish to be assertive enough to pursue it.

I will be reasonably charitable to all and willing to lend reasonable time, money and effort to all causes or missions I feel are worthy and beneficial.

I will own anything I want but will never squander it for selfish interests.

I will know on any given day that I have the proudest, woman, friends, family and dog in the world.

My co-workers and associates in every major business will respect my ambition, drive, heart and willingness to accept being the best.

I will know and feel completely confident on any given day that I am the most recognized talent in the world, but will always be humble; never pompous or arrogant or demeaning to other aspirants.

My managers, agents, etc., will be fabulously wealthy, world recognized and respected for having represented me.

I will receive every acting, talent, honor known to man as so I will deserve it.

My love for life, my dedication and hard work for excellence, my compassion and open mind will be world renowned, recognized and sought after, if not emulated by all.

I will be a damn good person to everybody despite race, creed, religion, sex, sexuality, etc.

I will never be judgmental purposely.

My life story will be forgiven, accepted, respected, revered and never challenged or second guessed by anyone. People worldwide will admonish the skill, intelligence, and freedom with which my goals had led me. They will know only of the open-mindedness, the challenges fought, battles won, hearts won, attitudes changed, message of love, desire for acceptance and obsessive dedication delivered. The self-sacrifice of all one has had or would ever have had for the purpose to achieve one's goals, desires and

mission. They'll know and recognize the fulfillment, unselfish and determined, one's responsibility to be a communicator to the world for hope in efforts to accomplishment, sacrifice for gain, great sadness and deprivation for gain, freedom in thought and acceptance for the attainment of sincere understanding and love of purpose, despite hardship. In essence, a communicator of will and its power to overcome any and all, bit by bit, but with the entirety in mind, body and spirit. A message communicated worldwide by one man on the human condition with the realization that this condition is determinable by only oneself and his desire to do so.

They'll find this message to include that no limit can stand in one's way unless allowed. That all inhibitions and limits are self-imposed, and that we all live in an undaunted realm of possibility.

My ideal day will be engrossed with exciting bright colors and sounds and feelings of exhilaration. These will all be complemented with soft, delicate, peaceful and serene sounds. Sights of elegance and calmness and feelings of passion and tingling.

Every fiber of my senses will be refreshed; sight, sound, taste and feeling. Mind, body and spirit shall be completely in unity with all else and shall remain so all of the remaining days of my life.

With my "Ideal Day" in mind, I thought about the characteristics I'd need to be that man and I began to emulate them. I put friendships first and worked in a circular motion from there on out. I began to do more for those around me in order to forget all that was eminent in my own life for a while. I needed time to clear my head and to regain and re-examine where I'd gone, where I was and where I was bound if I wasn't willing to adopt a wider sphere of options and/or avenues to where I wanted to go. I wanted everything I'd always wanted and more. I decided that the surefire way to success would be to no longer concentrate all of my energies on just one thing. My goal was fame in the highest degree but my route was acting alone. My goal was to never say die and to march onto the screen. I would never knock it as an effort, but I have decided that for me it wasn't the most sensible thing to do. My strategy was simply to go and audition and to play the waiting game for small bites of success which would lead the shark of stardom to me. It was with great enthusiasm that I realized that my talents were being wasted on this strategic endeavor. Surely I have learned to audition, surely I have learned to act far better than had I never tried, surely I can pose and model for anything or anyone and surely I will continue to build upon these talents. I don't believe, however, that these are my truest of

talents to date. I knew I had far greater strengths and that each had their seed of opportunity for the same heights of success were they capitalized on. Even the greatest of actors must wait to be called upon and I will never wait to be called upon to proclaim to the world who I am and what I am worthy of. I went to college and succeeded effortlessly and, therefore, I will delve into greater pools of success in that sphere for it is known that higher education makes for a more formidable man in all respects. I performed my best as a muscle bound, bodybuilder type in the physical realm. Having competed many times with relative success, it was surely my first real dream to become Mr. Olympia. I was strong, uninhibited, and in a process of growth that seemed to transcend itself into all of the other areas of influence in my life and, therefore, because I have found a vast audience of influences who find these characteristics novel, I will pursue them hereon. I started my own business at the age of twenty three and was an instant success in both making and conserving money and in encouraging and nurturing my staff of friends and, therefore, since these are honorable traits to be admired, on top of being profitable, I will hereon make them a sturdy fixation in my life. I fell deeply in love and learned what it means to be a man in the face of defeat. I stood strong in times of depression and raised my chin to be kicked again and again and again without losing hope. In effect I learned the true station of pride far below that of the enduring principle of love and, because this is a quality to be admired, I will hereon incorporate this characteristic into my life as well. I have come to find a true talent in writing, and because this is a form of artistic expression to be sought after, I will display it also to the world. Most of all however, I came to understand the power of a friend in times of strife. I learned the hard way by losing many of the ones I'd worked hard to acquire. I learned that taking advantage leads only to one's stark disadvantage. It goes without saying that making a habit of doing what is right leads one to righteousness and because one must be righteous to find true success, I will adopt this characteristic from hereon. I will continue to vent my strong points on the world's chalkboard of success, never neglecting to find more and better ways to continue until my goal is reached and my ideal day is repeated daily for the remainder of my days here on earth. It is in knowing and believing that I can do this that it shall come to pass.

Between the dates of April 7, 1996 and May 15, 1996, many new things began to transpire. I sent in my application to Xavier University in Cincinnati for the opportunity to get my Masters in Business Administration. I wrote and made many new friends, through mailings to California, New York, Chicago and Miami. I harnessed several old friendships in my

hometown and have worked diligently to turn enemies into friends and friends into brothers and sisters. I have re-strengthened my family ties and have striven to become more than I have ever been through reflection and projection. I have taken my raw determination level to new heights through the art of bodybuilding and hope to become a professional in the near future. I received a certificate of mixology from the International Bartending Institute and plan to make more money at night in an effort to invest in my most luring prospect as it comes to the surface. I have learned to listen and to be flexible and it is with these characteristics that I will find my plug into the realms of the extraordinary. I have erased my debt and have money to save and will continue to do so as it is important to have reserves for security and opportunity. I have buried my sorrow and forgiven the creator for the death of my dear friend, Warren Todd Jeffries. I have made Carla my friend and will speak of a love between us no more. I will take each moment of today and make more of it than I did in previous days. No longer will I wait for success, I will grab it with both hands and wring from it all of it's enduring qualities. I will continue to believe in myself and my genius and will never hark a moments peril. You will see my name in lights. Mark my fuckin' words!!!

Alone

Every man will surely walk the plank of life alone.
Every man must face himself and know that he alone must succeed or fail.
Every man must realize that if he is, in fact, a man, he is probably alone.