

**Now that it's finally years from then,
and you're speaking of it,
you can be kind...**

The Princeton Rub

Once upon a decade in a time-warp far away, guys in cotton polo shirts—nubbed with the deep pile of a hundred fresh washings—cruised carefully, eyeing the khaki-chino baskets pulled tight against inseams that shot down slack-legs with creases carefully ironed into place, right down to the pegged cuffs. They checked, with guarded sidelong glances, the Ivy-League straps buckled in the center of the small of the back, right above the rise of undergraduate butt that showed twin mounds when first one foot, and then the other, was raised up, putting the Blue Suede Shoes up for a brushing on a campus bench.

BLOND SWIMMERS

Men maybe never looked better than they looked around 1960. A check through old mags like *Tomorrow's Man* and *Sports Illustrated* is a hardon reminder of what us kids back then wanted to be like when we grew up. Olympian Don Schollander had the original blond swimmer's body: thick-shouldered, deep-chested, all white-teeth-and-big-smile in baby-blue nylon Speedo briefs. Schollander himself confessed to *Time/Life* that he shaved his body hair—all his body hair—to cut its slowing pull in the pool.

JOCKS AND JOCKSTRAPS

There was something in the air in those days before liberation: a delicious secret quality that dared not scream its name. Guys looked at each other maybe more than they touched; but finally when they worked their careful way up to touch, the touch meant something. Not that those days were better. They were just different: more innocent, more ...more...sniffing, yeah, more sniffing around the pertinent edges. More excitement wondering if anybody else felt like you did. Wondering if your best friend—and

all our best friends were team captains and class presidents — would blow the whistle if you told them all that you dreamed about some of them at night, but that the dream was okay, really, since you didn't dream about any of them completely naked (because that was the sort of stuff queers did), but you dreamed about a lot of them exercising wearing JOCKSTRAPS!

JOCKSTRAPS! A word calculated to turn the softest dick hard. JOCKSTRAPS! Getting a hardon reading the Bike Athletic Supporter ads in *Boy's Life*. Looking up JOCKSTRAP in Webster's Dictionary during study hall and getting a roaring bone on. Hoping none of the other guys would notice the bulge in your khakis. Hoping Kenny Kehres wouldn't notice how you sort of leaned in toward his gym-locker with his JOCK-STRAP hanging at your eye-level as the green metal door swung past your face, and he turned fullchested and naked to you and said, "Excuse me," sort of absently flipping his dick up off his balls, and reaching close to your face with the smell of his privates on his hand to take his JOCKSTRAP off the door and pull it up first one leg and then the other, carefully straightening the flat rib of elastic—so white against his berry-brown tan.

Then alone, late one afternoon, finding his JOCKSTRAP lying forgotten on the locker-room bench. Alarmed by it. Staring at it. Getting hard looking at it. Not daring to touch it. Almost cuming in your pants at the excitement of seeing it—and the fear of being caught standing stock still alone and staring in a locker room empty except for that white cotton JOCKSTRAP.

SEE YA LATER, ALLIGATOR

Grooming then was a high art. Saturdays, every week, called for a trip to the barber who carefully clipped and trimmed your Brylcremed hair with medium sideburns and a long sweep back both sides to the slightest suggestion of a DA that drove school teachers mad.

Saturdays you could feel the white shaving lather dabbed hot around your ears, followed by the scrape of the straight edge stropped on a well-worn length of leather, and then the slight shaving of the hair around your ears and down the back of your neck.

You knew the nape of your neck had to be perfectly cut to look good against the blue oxford-cloth button-down collar of your open-neck sports shirt with the inexplicable loop right between the shoulder blades and over the pleat that ran down to where the shirt tucked into your slacks. You wanted your hair to look like Ricky Nelson, or like Troy Donahue, or, if you sneaked looks into bodybuilder magazines like *Iron Man*, then like

the incredible Jim Haislop, or best, like the classic chiseled blond Tab Hunter incarnated in the movie *Lafayette Escadrille!*

1957 CHEVY BEL AIR

Sex, when it happened, was sometimes no more than buddy-talk after a double-date ended up (after the dates were delivered back to their front porches with the lights on), sidling into a double jerkoff, talking about the hard time we had getting the dates to put out and how we were, like man, so horny, and wasn't that a couple o' nice pieces, and, jeez, I'm so drunk I got a lover's nut that won't go away, and, shit, man, you tell me what you think about the other one, and we'll just sort of each take matters into our own hands, and, you know, without touching or anything, sort of cool down a situation too hot to ignore, and, cripes, we'll have to use the towel you got in the backseat to wipe up all this, jeez, fuckin' load, so fuckin' big it's a good thing I never got to home plate or I'd be somebody's daddy nine months from tonight, cuz look, man, both our loads are about the same caliber shot, and, hey, yours stays harder after you shoot, but mine's longer before and after, and I don't give a dip-shit if yours is thicker.

And all the time sitting there together in the 1957 Chevy Bel Air, you were sure that you might get ferchrissakes *caught!*

PRINCETON RUB

Going all the way with your best buddy wasn't something you exactly talked a lot about. Buddy-rubbing was sort of what happened when some hot summer afternoon found you both alone together at his house with his parents gone, the air conditioner humming, and the transistor radio counting down the Top Ten.

You both smelled like chlorine from the swimming pool in the park. He was pink with sunburn and, sort of for a joke, showed you where his tan line left off and asked you if you wouldn't maybe rub some Copper-tone over his shoulders.

You guessed it made sense when he dropped his Speedos and walked bare-ass to the window and snapped the venetian blinds closed. He turned around and his naked hardon greeted yours bunched up in your trunks.

"Come on," he said, and he lay down on his single twin bed, not even bothering to pull the shiny bedspread down. He tucked his dick into the bed and spread his legs, lifting his tight swimmer's butt into the air. His wet hair was fresh cut on his neck. The sun-heat rose like a sweat-vapor from his trim body. "Are you going to?" he asked.

“I’m coming,” you said.

And you both meant the Coppertone-rub and something else.

Face down, he forced no look back at you. Only your swim trunks and jock stood between your hardon and his skin. You had no question about anything except lying down on top of his sun-burned body, straddling his legs, dropping your cock between his thighs, feeling his legs closing in on your dick, his well-muscled thighs tightening around your prick with perfect control.

The slick of suntan oil, greasing your rod, moved you slow through the soft hair of his inner thighs, dragging the top of your shaft along the rim of his moist crack, not daring to be so bold as to brown him, thinking about touching the head of your dick to his hole, then thinking politely better of it, pulling back, slipping your dick into place between his legs, feeling the moves of his warm cheeks against your lower belly, riding the smooth rhythms of his legs flexing around your dick until his rhythms became your rhythms, and together you moved, long and leisurely, through the Princeton Rub until you both came and messed up the shiny bedspread, which seemed to matter so much later when you tried to clean it up to cover the evidence of your pecker-tracks from his hawk-eye of a mother.

Now that it’s finally years from then, and you’re speaking of it, you can be kind about it all—with maybe no more than an ache in your dick for times when so little could seem to be, and really was, so much.