

DRUMMER FEATURE ARTICLE

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**Introduction to Bodybuilding 101,
with a graduate course in Muscle Worship**

THE KICK AND I

Muscle Worship: How to Judge Bodybuilding on Stage and in Private

by Jack Fritscher

- This entire feature article "The Kick and I" is also available in Acrobat pdf.
- Author's [historical introduction](#)
- Actual [feature article](#) as published
- [Illustrations](#)

AUTHOR'S HISTORICAL CONTEXT INTRODUCTION



DRAFT VERSION



This is not just based on a true story.

This is a true eyewitness story.

The surprising thing about all this sex is that "suddenly" you fall in love! ©JF

Written Spring, 1979, and published in *Drummer* 124, December 1988, in an edited version, this is the original "Director's Cut" from which the two excerpts in *Drummer* were published as "How to Judge Bodybuilding: A Sensual Critic's Eye View" and one scene "From the New Novel, *Some Dance to Remember*, *Drummer*'s Sneak Preview of a Literary Event." This original "Director's Cut," drafted in 1979, was completed in 1984, and this August 21, 1986 edit was published in *Inches* magazine DATE by editor John W. Rowberry. During the twelve years I was writing *Some Dance to Remember*, I wrote many versions of various scenes which appeared in magazines like *Drummer*, *Inches*, and *The Target Album*. One of the problems with pornography—that is, erotic writing—is that the genre often is all physical sex and physical surface; I've always tried to add in the criteria of real literature: character development, dialog, narrative with story arcs, and human themes. The first line of *Some Dance to Remember* is, "In the end, he could not deny his human heart." That applies to all my writing: the human dimension, from suffering and abnegation to transubstantiation and transcendence. Some people call it S&M. I call it theology and existentialism.

Speaking of existentialism.... David Sparrow and I were nearly through our ten-

year marriage, and I was three-quarters through my affair with Robert Mapplethorpe when the bodybuilder Jim Enger entered my life. –JF, August 28, 1996

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**Introduction to Bodybuilding 101,
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THE KICK AND I

Muscle Worship: How to Judge Bodybuilding on Stage and in Private by Jack Fritscher

BODYBUILDERS AREN'T BORN, THEY'RE BUILT BY BOEING. (I know. I bought one.) Cameras do not simply love bodybuilders. Cameras grow weak with desire when competition bodybuilders flash their tanned pecs and oiled biceps, thrusting out the display of their powerful thighs behind the slingshot of their nylon posing trunks. I am a camera, or, at least, I shoot my videocam, from BB Lust's #1 position, kneeling, focusing up the hills, valleys, and mountains, shooting up the geography of the body, the only geography that matters when it comes to tripping on bodybuilders' muscle.

For men who love men with broad shoulders, sculpted arms, washboard abs, and jet-wing *Top Gun* lats, a bronzed bodybuilder is the ultimate incarnation of male-for-male lust. He's the ultimate hero, the All-American jock, a real California Cooler, body endowed by Dow, shaped from the sands of Muscle Beach. See Venice, and it's to die, motherfucker. [World-famous Muscle Beach, the mecca of physique worship, is on the boardwalk in Venice, California.]

You want to take the measure of a man?

Let's talk Dropdead Blond Southern California Bodybuilder.

Roll your tongue around the Adam's apple of his 21-inch neck. Lick under his shaved armpits and around his 20-inch baseball biceps. Kiss your lips across his bulked and ripped 52-inch chest slabbed with pecs tipped with responsive nipples. Nose down those rippled abs. Wrap your hands around his 32-inch waist.

Kneel down.

Wrap your arms around a pair of 29-inch thighs that can kick the muscle-flair-and-fetish into CHP motorcycle breeches like Zeus intended. Run your hands over his big bubblebutt and slide them down his olive-oiled thighs to his 18-inch calves, shaped into a pair of inverted hearts. (Yours and his, if you're lucky!)

Fall back on your heels and look up at his tanned predatory American jaw, his straight white teeth, his clipped moustache, his hair contest-groomed precisely for that v-e-r-y s-e-x-y one-armed pose when he touches his fingers to his forehead and fingercombs his Brylcremed hair straight back, turning his handsome right profile into his huge bicep next to his face, almost daring to kiss on stage, as he will lick in private, his own massive arm.

Those on whom the gods smile, they positively grin.

Check him out.

Chant the words of incantation. Turn him on with the words he wants to hear. Not: "Let me suck your cock." Rather: "Let me feel your arms." To a bodybuilder, "Show me your biceps," is a turn-on.

Be ready.

What you're looking for is looking for you.

Worship him.

You know what I mean.

Strange gods before you.

This is primitive, primordial, primal stuff. Primal? Shit! It's Neanderthal by way of the artistry of Marvel Comic's Stan Lee, sci-fi heroic painter Frank Frazetta, Boris Vallejo, Tom of Finland, the Hun, and Rex.

Jerk your dick at what's real, standing a dick-length from you, posing over you.

Conjured with your cock as surely as magician Aleister Crowley conjured the muscular rebel angel, Lucifer, who had been the most powerful angel of all.

Big, bulked, huge, fucking, MUSCLE BEAST hooking his iron-calloused thumbs in the waist of his red posing trunks, peeling the breathe-through nylon down his massive, veined thighs, flopping out a long nine-inch uncut hose, hard and veined and vascular from his total bodypump.

(That crap about bodybuilders compensating with hypermuscle-for-short-meat is crap. They're hung no better or worse than any other group of men.)

Stripped muscle-cock naked, the bodybuilder is the stuff of classic fantasy. "This could be heaven." Play the Eagles' album *Hotel California*. "This could be hell." He is the answer to prayer. He is the stuff of blasphemy. He is the multiple-choice of your Id, kid. He is the tall/short, dark/blond big man, with Command Presence, for whom every man in every bar almost every night has kept vigil until 2 AM hoping he'd show, striding into the bar grinding out his patented bodybuilder hip-and-butt-roll Attitude Walk, the most romantic of heroes, to sweep you up in his Big Guns (his Big Arms), and top you every which way your perverted little heart ever wanted, because no matter what your sextrip is, it's always better with a bodybuilder who truly understands his own muscle.

By now, you either got it or you don't. So if you got it, a moment's indulgence, please. There will be a quiz at the end.

American sports tend to be objective and subjective. In objective sports, the basketball drops or does not drop through the hoop. The Tight End either catches the football or he doesn't. The tennis pro makes his serve or he misses. Objective sports may have referees and umpires, but they are mostly yes-or-no athletics. Everyone basically sees the same results: a home run over the fence is indisputable.

Subjective sports, all of which have especial appeal to gay men, like gymnastics, ice skating, fencing, and bodybuilding determine winners and losers not by definitive touchdowns, but by judges' opinions. Of all sports, bodybuilding is the least understood in America because it is the most subjective. If gymnastics has a right way to move on the flying rings, bodybuilding has several right ways to execute the mandatory poses that display the bodybuilder's various muscle groups separately and together.

Who wins a physique contest is often as much a trick question as is which is the best art form: literature, painting, music, or film? The results depend on subjective values and sexual enthusiasms. Most Americans like their sports cut and dried. For that reason, bodybuilding has been slow in coming to national acceptance as more than a cult sport. Someday it will, perhaps when Calvinism dies, and when it does, men's bodybuilding (if it survives the burly-cue advent of women's bodybuilding) will finally become an Olympic event.

Physique presentation is a sporting objectification of self that is art and science, logic and feeling. A bodybuilder, like a gay man, needs to know his body. He is dancer, actor, salesman. He is a contradiction in terms: a romantic existentialist. (What courage! He spends his whole life sculpting flesh that time itself will certainly undo.)

Sometimes he strides barefooted across the stage with a dozen other *world-class* professional bodybuilders with famous straight names like Pete Grymkowski, Matt Mendenhall, Dave Draper, Bill Pearl, and the handsome mustached Mentzer brothers, Ray and Mike. Amen. Or, on the way up, he must muscle his way past other young *regional* bodybuilders, nameless, hungry, and hot for their place in the Pantheon of Muscle where all bodybuilders admit what we mere mortals better believe they really are: gods incarnate.

Pro or amateur, the bodybuilder, competing in teens' or men's or masters' divisions, takes his place in a line-up more existential than even *A Chorus Line*. He stands pumped and oiled and almost naked, nearly 200 pounds, in his tiny 3-ounce posing briefs. Under the judges' initial scrutiny, he poses without movement. A perfectly sculpted statue. Total Platonism. The Ideal. He radiates victory. He asserts his Command Presence under the hot lights. He calls the eyes of judges and audience to the quality edge of his muscle. Size. Symmetry. Power. Proportion. Bulk. Definition. Striation. Vascularity. Grooming. Look. All metaphors of the Life Force. His transcendent Command Attitude reduces the other highly competitive muscle to beefcake, \$1.19 a pound. His posture, the hyper-masculine, but nonantagonistic, antidote to *La Cage aux Folles*, states HERE I AM WHAT I AM.

Winners know how to peak for the contest day. Three weeks before competition they cut carbohydrates from their high-protein diet to remove the last micropinch of bodyfat that might obscure muscle display. Workouts intensify to carve out the lean definition of each separate muscle in the bulked muscle groups. A week before, for the first time, the entire body is strip-shaved, down to near the dick, to allow any cuts or shaving rash to heal. In the last forty-eight hours, diuretics drain the minute layer of water between the muscle and the skin. The skin, paper-thin, form-fits the striae of each muscle, showing the most minute furrows like tiny grooves on granite. The vascularity of the

veins snakes around the muscle almost on top of nearly invisible skin. The tan, by contest day, must be perfect and the body smoothed to a final shave before it is oiled backstage.

Contests are grueling twelve-hour affairs. The Pre-Judging, where the contest is actually won or lost, begins at nine or ten in the morning, and, depending on the classes, Teenage, Men, and Weight Divisions, can last until the early afternoon. By the evening show at eight, the judges, of whom there must be at least five, have tallied their votes. The Pre-Judging audience, smaller and more hardcore than the evening's crowd, can only have guessed at the winner. The audience for the evening show is larger, fans and friends and family, hot to party and cheer the parade of muscle bodies and wait eagerly for the names of the four finalists and the winner.

But in the morning, ah, the morning, the physique contestants arrive early. They saunter into the Green Room. They check in. Their muscle is disguised in thick jogging suits and bulky nylon athletic jackets. They carry enormous gym bags and sweat-stained leather lifting belts. Some arrive alone. Some have the company of their training partners or their coaches who wait on them as attentively as adoring lovers. Even straight bodybuilders arrive with a buddy to oil them up. No questions asked.

The room is silent. Voices whisper. Iron weights drop. Brows furrow with concentration. Tension runs high. They psych each other out. One by one they begin the slow strip of their jackets and gym shoes and sweatshirts and teeshirts and sweatpants. Each reveals his stuff slowly. Each man takes measure of the other men. The *offstage* competition posing has begun!

Arms, Big Guns, appear. Broad shoulders. Huge pecs. Washboard abs. Thunder thighs. Big, naked, edible bubblebutts. Always in a room of naked musclemen runs an undercurrent of muscle-sexuality. Alive in unshaven groins, penises, sprung from undershorts, sprout straight-out, tight with tension, or hang long and thick with languorous confidence. One young bodybuilder, "pulling a number," giving attitude, tugs half-discreetly, and half-in-challenge, on his dick that would be lead-dog dick, skinning back his thick foreskin, baby-oiling the head of his cock, knowing everyone is sideswiping their eyeballs, because, even though it's not a muscle, a big dick never lost a bodybuilder a contest; and it's even won a few, but we don't want to talk about the judges.

Attentive buddies fold the contestants' gear into the gymbags. They pool their hands with baby oil and begin the even slicking slather of the huge muscle bodies. The bodybuilders slide into their nylon posing briefs. Most pull their penises straight up toward their navel and let their balls hang low in the pouch. They pin the small white paper with their contest number on their briefs over the front left hip.

This is ancient display of warrior muscle, of manhood—raw! Men's bodybuilding and interest in muscle as body armor has grown exponentially in direct proportion to the women's movement. Politically, the more strident the feminism the more outrageously massive have become the bodybuilders who are imitated in every sport. Check out the size in the average physique contest, the football field, and in the rings of the ultimate muscle warriors of pro-wrestling.

Bodybuilders are the last gladiators of postmodern America.

In their sexual arena, where you can hire a bodybuilder, if you can pay the price, you can play "Colosseum" as a Christian kneeling before a top gladiator, or as imperious Nero giving thumbs down to a muscular slave who must do your bidding and show you his body.

To achieve admittance into this pre-contest bodybuilding ritual with any bodybuilder, much more your own lover, is as indescribable as, well, orgasm. Vicariously, the closest most men can come to this ritual is the combustible Frank Vickers in *Pumping Oil*. (Vickers deserves an Oscar. His is the most honest revelation of a bodybuilder's psyche ever put on film—and fairly close to what a man can expect in a body worship sex scene.)

In the Green Room, to warm up for the Pre-Judging, some contestants play tug-of-war with their coaches or training partners, pulling white towels back and forth to bring up the day's glossy pump on their years of hard muscle building. Others move to the ton of iron delivered for the day to polish their muscle, most often their arms, one last set, one last rep, before marching out on stage for the real competition of group comparison, flexing out mandatory poses in unison, then individually, each one mounting the dais alone to pose to music of his own selection.

Once upon a time, I penetrated into the heart of bodybuilding as far as a non-bodybuilder can go.

In California, you have to be careful what you wish for or you'll find yourself, as I did, driving with a dropdead blond bodybuilder in a red Corvette laying down tread to a physique competition in San Diego. I could only guess what lay in store.

That first morning of his first contest, when Kick Sorensen and I entered the Green Room, I thought I had died and gone to heaven. I was surrounded by more than twenty naked major-league, but refreshingly non-pro, bodybuilders. I tried to keep custody of my eyes. I folded Kick's clothes.

(He was nicknamed *Kick* in his high-school shower room when his wrestling coach sidled through and said, "That ain't no dick, boy. That's a kick-stand!")

I knelt at his feet, oiling up his legs to his shoulders, shying away from his big cock I had oiled up every night for a year. Once, during a scene of musclesex, we replaced baby oil with olive oil, because its sheen was more lustrous on his blond body and its essence more classic. So we stuck with it.

"Whatever you say, coach."

He always called me *coach*. I loved him for his being a generous man as much as I was berserk for his muscles.

Anyway, Kick was really up. He thought it was a good omen that his assigned contest number was *One*.

The morning Pre-Judging ran nearly three hours, from nine till noon. I sat beaming in the audience, listening to the crowd fall in love with Kick: handsome, blond, groomed like a Marine become a motorcycle cop, powerful, tan, nearly 200 pounds in a 3-ounce posing brief. I wanted to shout to everyone that I had worshiped and adored and licked and sucked and fucked and, yes, sexually coached after a hell of a lot of sundowns, every flexing, bulging inch of his top-to-toe muscle. On stage, Kick had "It!" He glowed. We met during a break backstage.

"You look great out there," I said.

"I feel great out there." He motioned for me to move in closer. "Spread some more

oil on my chest.” He pointed toward the watch pocket in my Levi’s. “Give me a hit,” he said. He reached into my pocket for a small snifter of “vitamin C.” He blew two lines. “Now you,” he said.

“Not me,” I said.

“Come on.” Kick put his huge arm on my shoulder. The heady smell of contest sweat and olive oil made my tits ache. “We’re here to have a good time.”

So I swacked off the snifter.

“Again,” Kick said.

I hit another line. Bodybuilders have a way that makes me give them whatever they want, however they want it, anytime, anyplace, anywhere.

“It’s good for the vascularity,” Kick said. “Like ‘roids are for bulk.” He thrust his arms, fist-down, alongside his thighs, flexed, and popped his veins. “Nice, huh?”

“Sexy,” I said. “No wonder you drive the fistfuckers crazy.”

“I want you to know,” Kick said, “how much fun it is to be inside this body.” He chucked me under the chin like a slow-motion punch meant to cold-cock me. “But then you *have* been inside this body.”

“Every man on that stage would like to be in your body. They might as well go home. You’re going to win.”

“I know.”

After the Pre-Judging, I drove Kick in the Corvette to a coffee shop so retro-Fifties, you could forget the *retro*. Kick ordered an orange juice with four raw eggs. They served the eggs raw, as a side, in a dish on a saucer. I turned into Jack Nicholson in *Five Easy Pieces*: “For god sakes, blend them into the fucking orange juice!” I was too excited to eat. I was consumed by high-grade muscle lust. This was our first contest. He called it that: *our, ours*. We were going public. He was going up on stage in an auditorium filled with hundreds of cheering men, to stand on X-marks-the-spot, to show off for the first time in public the commanding muscle display, the Look of the Complete Bodybuilder, he had worked out before our mirror and my eyes and nose and tongue and hands and dick.

“Keep your strength up,” Kick said. “You want to shoot a terrific video tonight.” He stroked his high-top Reebok up and down my leg. “Our own MTV,” he said. “MUSCLE TV.”

That night at 8, Kick was triumphant in his evening posing routine. Through my video monitor, I caught every graceful nuance. I knew the choreography I had coached by heart. Kick had even let me select his music. He was bored with uninspired muscleheads posing one after the other to the cliched themes from *Exodus*, *Rocky*, *Star Wars*, and *Superman*.

I chose Tchaikovsky’s *Marche Slav*. Its thunderous power matched Kick’s smooth and commanding posing routine. The music, unexpected, jolted the crowd, cued them quick into the classic number Kick was going to lay on them in 90 electrifying seconds.

Under the down-shining cone of hot white light stage light, he flexed. He shined. They cheered. He was pure, hard, blond muscle. His hair and face and jaw accentuated the blond brush of his moustache, groomed trooper sharp. His physique flowed from his head. He hit each pose hard, and locked it down. Unnnh! Everyone loved him! He had Universal Appeal. There was no quiver from the muscle exertion of posing or from the vitamin C. He displayed every body part, always alternating with the dozen ways he powered out his arms for show.

The crowd called out for more.

He hit the Most Muscular pose three times and threw his arms up over his head in victorious salute. He bowed. The muscle crowd rose cheering to their feet.

Here was a man!

Honest manliness is never half-revealed. When it's there, it's all right there in front of you.

To understand man's sexual worship of bodybuilders, start from the beginning. Start from before that innocent prehistory in those Druidic eons when men consorted with the gods. Consider those ancient fables celebrated by the classical Greeks. Consider, not Michelangelo's *David*, but his magnificently oversized marble *Hercules*. Consider the naked bruising statue of Vulcan, Forger of Steel. Then you can better understand men's heroic sexual passion for men's heroically muscular bodies. (Consider Mishima.)

When I first saw Kick Sorensen, I dare say, my fantasy spanned a million years.

"Alright, gentlemen," the head judge said over the loudspeaker. "We're calling the five finalists out on stage for a posedown. This is the final comparison, man for man, to determine the winner. Ladies and gentlemen, these are our five finalists. Number One, Kick Sorensen...."

I heard no other names.

The five finalists strolled, as only bodybuilders can strut, out on stage. Each picked a spot and hit a pose, playing to the cheering audience. Kick owned stage center. He threw a double biceps shot and then crunched down into the popular Most Muscular crab shot. The crowd went wild.

"Give yourselves some room, fellas. Spread out. Make sure you're in the light."

The finalists sought their places. Kick held center stage with two musclemen moving to each side. They all stood heels close together, toes pointed out, elbows extended, arms hanging down.

"Alright. Let's do a double biceps pose on 3. I want you all to hit exactly the same pose at the same time. On 3. 1-2-3. Hit your pose."

Kick raised both arms. His biceps peaked under the hot light. He was arms and more than arms. He worked his pecs. He tightened his abs. Always he was working his massive legs. Contests are won or lost on legs.

"Okay. A lat spread from the front. On 3. 1-2-3."

Kick positioned his thumbs behind his waist and his fingers front pointing down

his hips. He swung his elbows out, lifted his chest, spread his shoulders, and opened his lats wide, holding the pose, then twisting slightly from the waist, left to right, catching the best play of the light.

Now a side chest pose. Your favorite side. Take your positions. 1. Quiet, please. We want a side chest shot. Rotate the sides. 1-2-3.”

Kick stood on his left foot and the ball of his right with his right knee bent to display his right calf development. He turned his head right to face the judges head on. He clasped his hands above his right hip and pulled his left shoulder toward the audience. His arms read like an awesome frame around his massive pecs.

“Now a side tricep. Your favorite side. Take your positions. On 3. 1-2-3. Hit it.”

Again, standing sideways, yet facing the judges, Kick rested on his left foot. He placed the ball of his right foot behind him, flexing his calf. He shot his right arm down his outside thigh, displaying the horseshoe definition of his triceps. Then reaching his left hand behind his butt, he shifted the pose, taking hold of the hand facing the crowd to pop his tricep even more. He always found the extra flourish to show off the fine detail of each muscle to its best advantage.

“And relax. Turn toward the curtain, please. Give yourselves room, fellas. Spread out. Okay. Double bicep from the rear. On 3. 1-2-3. Hit it.”

Kick was born to show arms. From the backside, his biceps mounded like twin baseballs on the girth of his huge arms. He powered into the biceps shot, spread his shoulders, and kicked in a rear-view of his left calf.

“Gentlemen, let’s have a back lat spread. On 3. 1-2-3. Hit it.”

Kick thrust his butt out toward the crowd. His perfect glutes caught the light. A woman behind me screamed. Kick tucked his thumbs behind his waist and opened his elbows wide, spreading his back, slightly at first, and then opening the left side to its full plane, and then the right, both wings from his waist to his shoulders in perfect symmetry. The back of his blond head glowed atop the phallic column of his thick neck.

“Relax. Face front, please.”

The crowd had settled on a favorite. Someone set up a chant of “Number One! Number One!” The number I had pinned on Kick’s red nylon briefs.

“May we have some quiet, please. Face front, please. May I remind you, Number Three, that these are mandatory poses. If you’re not sure which way to turn, look at the men next to you.”

The crowd cheered and hooted.

“Alright now, fellas. Flexing the legs, display the thighs. 1-2-3.

Kick locked his hands behind his head, elbows wide, armpits rampant. He flashed his washboard abs and thrust one leg and then the other out for judgment. The thickness of his thighs broke up into distinctly displayed muscle groups. The contestant on his right moved his own leg toward Kick’s, daring closer comparison.

A challenger.

The crowd went wild. Kick lowered his hands to his waist, thrust his leg toward his competitor, flexed it, looked at the other bodybuilder, then pointed, grinning, to his own thigh, bulked, carved, cut, vascular, and tanned. He looked up from his leg and threw the crowd a devastating so-what-do-you-think smile.

“And relax. Fellas, we’re going for your favorite ab shot on 3. 1-2-3. Hit it.”

Again Kick locked his hands behind his head. The crowd was with him. He kicked out his right leg, resting his foot on his heel, working his leg length, giving more than required, expelling air, locking his abs into the tight ridges my tongue knew by heart. He pumped his abs tight, then tighter.

The crowd chanted “Number One!”

Kick’s whole posture, arms up, leg extended, belly displayed, seemed to focus the light on the full pouch of his red posing briefs. Funny, at the last minute in the single toilet off the Green Room, “For luck,” I said, I had slipped Kick’s balls and cock through his brass cock ring to accentuate his big package in his red posing trunks. “I want them to see everything you’ve got,” I had said. We wondered how much a big cock and balls registered even subliminally with the judges. On stage, Kick radiated pure sex. Women in the crowd were shouting, “We want Number One!”

I shouted into the din. “You can’t have him!”

“And relax. Catch your breath, fellas. We’re going to do the Most Muscular now. Your favorite Most Muscular. On 3. 1-2-3. Hit it.”

Kick raised his arms wide, elbows above his shoulders, then slowly, hunched, leaned over, powered down into the Most Muscular crab pose. His right leg led his left. His arms were Most Muscular. His chest pumped like a barrel. His head was up. His face back. His chin out. The cords in his neck spoke power. The crowd loved him. He broke the pose and hit it again. Then again. This last time in full lockdown, adding in a killer move, he revolved his fists one around the other to emphasize the writhing brute force of his upper body and massive arms.

“And relax. Now there will be sixty seconds of free posing. Remember, fellas, this is a posedown. This is your final chance to show why you should be Mr. Western Pacific Coast. Take your sixty seconds. Use it, please.”

The disco music came up over the cheers of the crowd. Each contestant tried to outpose the other. They moved, freestyle, pose against pose, topping each other: arms, chests, backs, abs, and legs. They moved sideways. They turned front and back. They knelt. They stood on their hands.

Kick stayed confidently in place.

He had found the best light.

He was center to the group.

They were good.

But he was Power.

They were bodybuilders.

But he was a blond muscle beast, his hairy blond body shaved down to pure bulk, definition, vascularity, symmetry.

Symmetry.

They were competitors, but he was brooking no competition. He ignored them jockeying into position around him, imitating his poses, trying to upstage him, trying to lure him into following their competitive routines. Instead, he grinned, thrust out his chin, and floored his Corvette body! His blond hair and his blond moustache glowed. He played straight to the audience, straight to the judges, straight to me behind my video camera in the first row. Kick was surrounded by bodybuilders, but he was more than a bodybuilder.

He was a Lord of Light.

The crowd turned to near riot. Fans with cameras rushed the lip of the stage. Applause. Whistles. "Number One!"

The minute of blasting music stopped. The crowd rose cheering louder. The head judge called for quiet. The auditorium soothed down expectantly. Finally, he named the fifth and fourth and third runners up. The three men moved off to the side.

Kick flexed his pecs and ran his fingers down his rippled belly, flicking away sweat and oil that made me hungry for his sweet juices.

The hall grew tense. Expectant. Kick and the last remaining competitor stood in the hot burn of the stage lights. One would be second and one would be first. Kick stood next to Number Nine. Calls shouted out from the hushed crowd. Kick reached out to shake Nine's hand. A call for "Number One!" flared here and there from the orchestra and balcony. What you get is what you see. "Number One!" Time stood still.

I knew there was no God if we came this close and lost.

In the pause, Number Nine hit his best Most Muscular. Kick raised both arms into his best double biceps shot of the night and killed the guy with his arms.

"Number One! Number One! Number One!"

"Quiet, please." The judge was a sadist. "We have three trophies to award before we announce the winner of the Mr. Western Pacific Coast contest."

I knew the way you always know about your own lover. I knew the verdict.

"The trophy for Best Legs goes to Number One, Kick Sorensen!"

Kick hit a severe leg pose, then threw his arms up in salute. Number Nine reached to shake his hand. A young blonde woman carried the Best Legs trophy to Kick. She leaned forward to give the winner his customary kiss. I watched Kick deftly turn his mouth away. The blonde bussed his cheek. Kick set the trophy down at his feet.

"The trophy for Best Arms," the trophy Kick coveted most, "Number One, Kick Sorensen."

Kick hit a single side-biceps pose. The crowd cheered. He was sweeping the competition. Number Nine realized he was going to place second. Kick received the

second trophy from the blonde girl and placed it near the first.

“Number One! Number One!”

Kick was a generous poser. He obliged the cheers, rolling a double bicep shot down into one last Most Muscular pose. Number Nine, a sport to the end, followed suit. The audience screamed.

Under the roar, the judge’s words were lost as he named the first runner-up. Number Nine heard. He was second. He raised his arms in valedictory and turned to shake Kick’s hand.

The audience rose screaming to its feet.

“The winner of the Most Muscular trophy and the Mr. Western Pacific Coast title is...Number One! Kick Sorensen!”

I nearly died. I felt like Jackie Kennedy on election night. All I could think of was *West Side Story*: “I love him. I’m his. And everything he is...I am too!” Didn’t I just wish!

Kick pumped off a succession of killer poses. He raised his prize-winning arms high over his head. The cheering rose as he accepted his First Place trophy and headed toward the posing platform. He mounted the dais and placed the four trophies at his feet. The four other finalists grouped themselves on the platform’s lower levels with Kick in top place. Photographers crowded to the foot of the stage to shoot the winners with cameras and flashguns.

I toyed with my own anonymity. “Wasn’t that Number One somethin’?” I said to a small group of three huge powerlifters.

“Yeah,” they said.

“I hear this is his first contest.” I cast bread on the water. I wanted to hear what they thought.

“You’re shittin’ me.” The guy unraveled his big arms off his powerlifter gut and curled his twenty-inch bicep up to stroke his thick moustache.

“Me? Shit you?” I said.

“Then the guy’s even more of an okay dude.” He turned to his partner. “Hey, Doyle. This is the Sarge’s first contest.” (Jeez! They’d nicknamed him *Sarge*.) Then he saluted me with his big meathook. “Yeah, buddy.”

That night I drove Mr. Western Pacific Coast, himself, in the red Corvette, crammed with the four enormous trophies, back to the Hotel California where you can check in, but if you’re lucky you can never leave. Laughing and exhausted, I stripped and lay back on the bed.

“Lay still, coach.” Kick arranged the four muscle trophies carefully on the sheets around me.

“Uh-oh,” I said. “Now I know,” I was hot with anticipation, “what Oscar winners do when they get home.”

Kick, smiling, moved back from the bed. In motion slower than slow motion, he

sensually stripped himself out of his green Adidas warm-up suit. His tanned body still glistened with the olive oil and sweat of the competition. With his thumbs, he pulled his tailored red posing briefs down from his waist, down past the brass cock ring circling the root of his big blond uncut dick and balls, down his Best Legs in Ten Western States.

He was Mr. Western Pacific Coast.

He had become very serious. For a moment, he stood, in all his pumped muscle, totally naked, and studied me, like he was thanking me, like I had something really to do with his winning, with his looking like this. His big uncut dick was hardening, no hands, until it was top mast. I was awestruck at his physical endurance, at his offering this heavy-duty intimacy following so quickly his public physique presentation. The applause was nothing compared to the triumph we saw, really saw, in each other's eyes. In all our private nights of making muscle-love, no night had begun with such a wide-open celebration of Kick's exquisite manliness. The world for the first time had acknowledged what we had privately known and pursued and rehearsed so intensely for so long together. The victory belonged to him, but he was about to give it to me.

Naked, in his All-American prize-winning glory, Kick moved toward the bed. He lowered himself slowly down the length of my naked body.

"I've wanted all my life to do this," Kick said. "This way. This time. On a night like this. A first contest. A first win. Tonight's a special one. Tonight's on me."

For the first time, we didn't have bodybuilder sex with his body and my sextalk. Instead, he made love to me. The man inside all that muscle, who *was* all that muscle, made love to me and buried me tender in the oiled bulk of his muscular embrace, our hard cocks stroking together between his carved abs and mine (uncarved).

"It's you," he said to me. "This is my personal best. From me to you. There's no other man."

At the start, the only promise we had made was never to become ordinary to each other.

"I want to lay it all on you, coach."

The energy bonding us was stronger than ever.

Hours later, exhausted in each other's arms, in the quiet before the San Diego dawn, Kick whispered to me.

"You won't laugh," he said. His calloused palm rubbed my belly frosted with the dried glaze of our cum. "I mean it seriously."

He moved his golden face in close to mine and announced it like a mandate to me with my cheek resting in the fragrant undercove of his sweaty 'pit where all the muscles of his arm and shoulder joined his powerful chest.

"Someday," Kick said, "I want us to be a story told at night in beds around the world."

My hungry heart came running.

So....

Just so you know what's bull and what's not, after telling you to hit the bodybuilding contests or the gyms, the best tip I can give a man interested in muscle worship or flex-sex with bodybuilders is, if you don't know one, rent one through the ads. Otherwise, the chances of bonding with one are rare, and (this is not cynical), renting is much more cost-effective. Remember, if you pay the current going-rate for a competition-condition bodybuilder, your \$120 may seem like a chunk to you for an hour of bliss; but it will seem a pittance if you realize he spent maybe twelve hours a week, every week, for six months to twelve years to sculpt the muscle that turns you on. Consider yourself a patron of the arts at a private showing.

On the other hand, sometimes, bodybuilders like Kick find it necessary to advertise for noncommercial relationships with nonbodybuilders, because, "other bodybuilders are too competitive" when in bed with another bodybuilder. Lucky me. I was in the right place at the right time for once, when a medium-range bodybuilder friend showed me the Personals Ad (see insert), saying he knew the guy who called himself "Armstrong," and he figured we'd be perfect.

We were.

Until we weren't.

Those three years Inside Muscle were the best and worst years of my life. (But that's another story.)

And I owe it all to muscle.

So have Ronnie Raygun test my piss for addiction. I'm a Muscle Junkie. At least I found heaven, or what passes for heaven. I hope you find yours. Kick, or some young bodybuilder like him, is out there, right now, growing up in Kansas, or in Wyoming, or on the planet Krypton, dreaming of Muscle Beach, waiting, waiting, waiting, as all exhibitionists must wait, until we Now, Voyeurs, match up with them and give those big-armed, big-chested, big-shouldered, big-legged, good-lookin' bodybuilders the chance to strut their big-dicked stuff smack into our big-hearted souls!

The first night when I first saw Kick, I recognized one of life's long shots at the Perfect Affirmation.

He was a man.

He had a man's strength and fragility, a man's grace and intensity, a man's joy, and a man's passion. Touching his magnificent muscles, I recognized a chance to say *yes* without qualification to a man who was so classically, and personally, a man, that he was an Angel of Light.

His muscle was metaphor for every ideal ever in my head.

To him I could say nothing but *yes*.

One thing, you see, I know for sure. Nature very rarely puts it all together: looks, bearing, voice, appeal, smile, intelligence, strength, kindness, and physique. That's what I look for in bodybuilders: the chance to say *yes* to a man whose muscle promises everything.

Honest manliness is never half-revealed. When it's there, it's all right there in front of you. The hardest thing to be in the world today is a man.

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A PERSONALS AD
THE MUSCLE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS LOOKING FOR YOU!

BIG GUNS! Feel them: thick, BIG ARMS, muscle-bulked, heavy from sweaty workouts, their huge girth sported in a teeshirt, or subtly concealed by skin-tight shirt sleeves of well-washed flannel stretched to ripping across their mass, now stripped to reveal mounds of baseball biceps cabled with vascularity, and thick horseshoe triceps, growing bigger before your eyes, the pump of each successive flex further expressing the disciplined power of the life force that built them.

With those BIG GUNS lifted high in full frontal display of arm muscle, feel them again. Feel the density of each striation as it's gathered down into the depths of muscle armpits rich with the heavy male scent of bodybuilder muscle sweat. After a bit of smoke, if you can take that big muscular arm in one hand, and your dick in the other, and discover that between the stroking of the two you're cuming, then we're both gonna have fun. I'm on my way to the gym now. If Big Guns, and I mean REALLY BIG ARMS, with rap-n-jackoff make you break into a sweat you can't cool off by yourself, drop me a line. -c/o ARMSTRONG

ILLUSTRATIONS

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