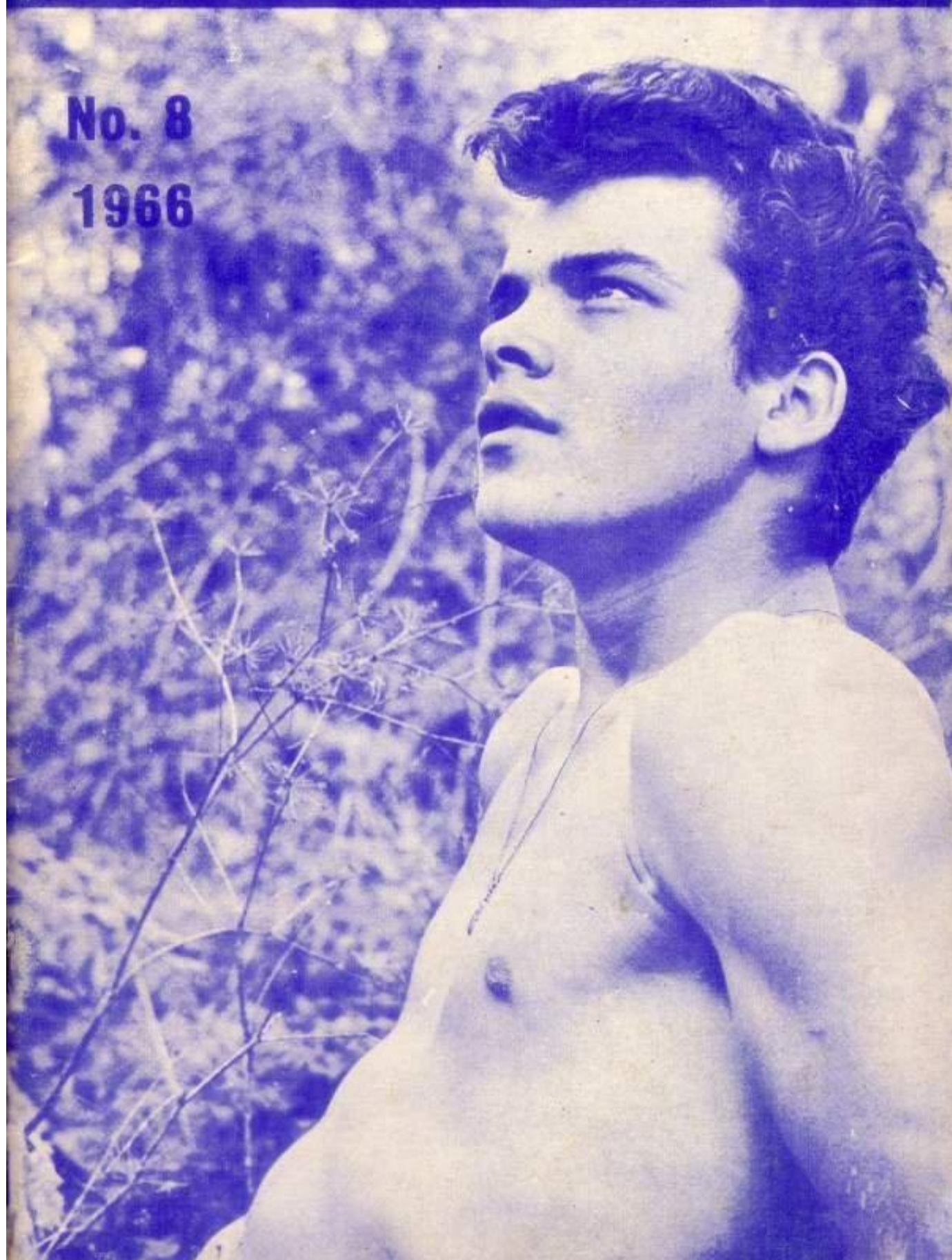


VAGABOND

No. 8

1966



VAGABOND

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*Published by DSI Sales, Post Office Box 1010, Minneapolis, Minn.
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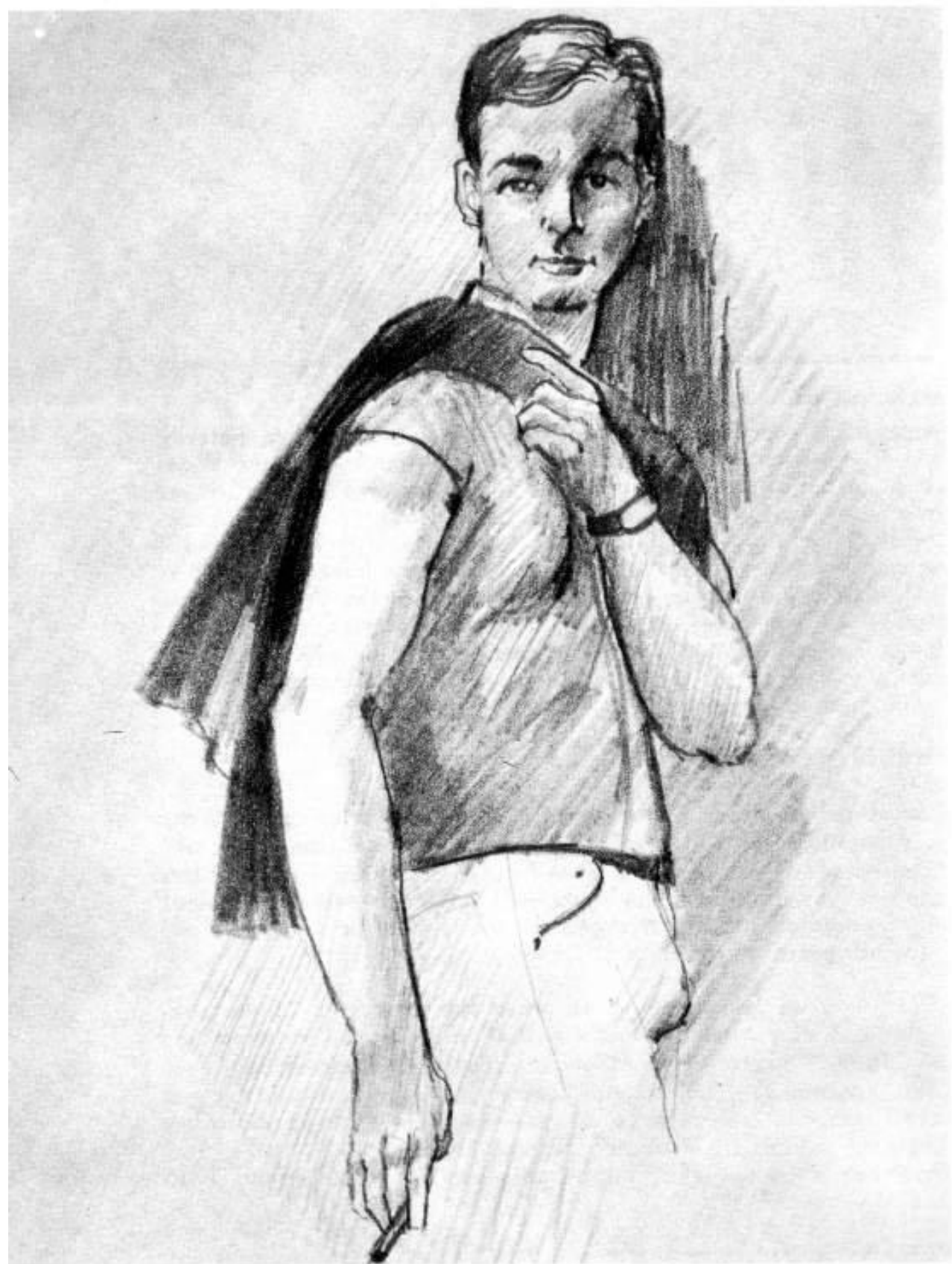
THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

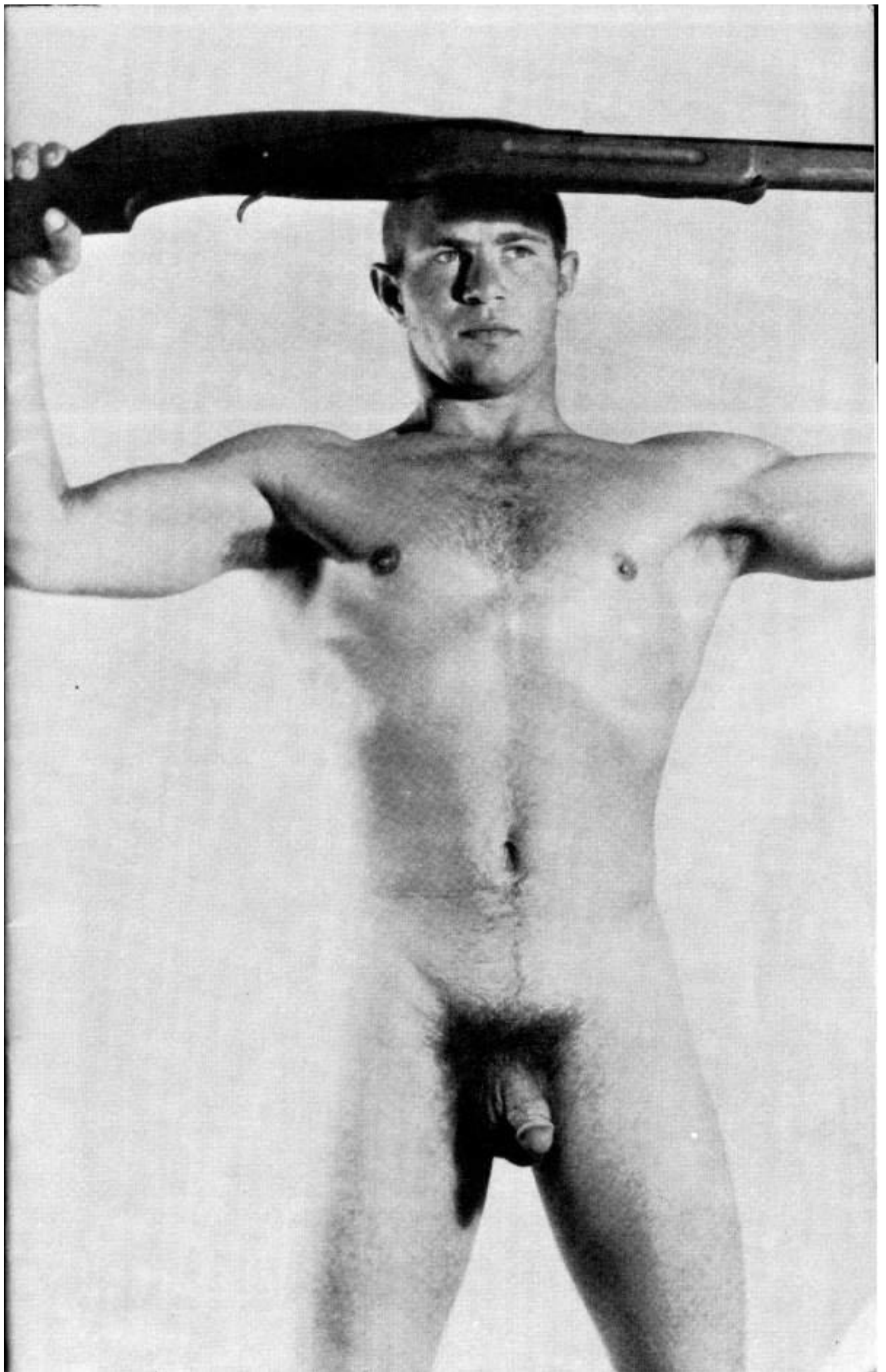
“Man was not made in a fixed mold. If a publication caters to the idiosyncrasies of a minority, why does it not have some “social” importance? Each of us is a very temporary transient with likes and dislikes that cover the spectrum. However plebian my tastes may be, who am I to say that other’s tastes must be so limited and have no ‘social importance’?”

“How can we know enough to probe the mysteries of the subconscious of our people and say that this is good for them and that is not? Catering to the most eccentric taste may have ‘social importance’ in giving that minority an opportunity to express itself rather than to repress its inner desires, as I suggest in my separate opinion in ‘Putnam’s Sons v. Massachusetts, ante, at--’. How can we know that this expression may not prevent anti-social conduct?”

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Mr. Justice Douglas, U.S. Supreme Court, (The United States Law Week, March 22, 1966).







TO TOUCH TOMORROW

A lean young man was sprawled on the back porch of an unpainted prairie farm house. He dug into his levi shorts, pulled out a kitchen match and lit a cigarette from the pack on the porch beside him. He shook the match out, raised up on one elbow and began jabbing its charred end into the cracks between the floor boards. After a few minutes, he violently hurled the match at one of the porch posts and muttered, "Come on, Ed, damn it, please!"

Across the yard from him, like a solid thing, a swarm of gnats moved and stopped, moved and stopped near a loose barbed wire fence which separated the yard from the harvested fields that spread west to heat shimmers in the distance.

When the boy had smoked half of his cigarette, he began

mashing the fire end of it on the porch, thoughtfully at first, then increasingly harder and harder. Suddenly he threw the frayed butt into the yard, sprang to his feet and went into the house.

His faded levi shorts ended in an inch of white fringe just above his knees. His legs were fuzzed with soft, gold hair. His bare feet were soiled with fresh turned earth and grass stains, the toes were long and thin, the nails cut straight across. A powder of dried sweat and dust emphasized the creases across his flat stomach and deepened the dark tan of his broad back and shoulders. His hair, a thatch of corn silk, was uncombed and slid a little this way and that with every move of his head.

The screen door made a stretching sound when he opened it, then banged a few times behind him. The kitchen air was pungent with the odors of farm-fresh foods; a wooden box of onions was under the table, varied crocks of homemade cheeses and a crock of fermenting flour-water stood on the cupboard, knots of garlic and bundles of dill hung from nails on the walls.

He grabbed the ear piece from the hook on the wall telephone and turned the crank a few times.

"Sarah, give me the Tanner residence . . . Mrs. Tanner? This is Jimmy Prater. Is Ed home? . . . Oh, how long's he been gone? . . . Yeah, we were going swimming. I just thought maybe he might of forgot . . . Yeah, well, if he's got his suit on, he's probably . . . uh huh . . . okay, Mrs. Tanner, thank you . . . What? No, Mom's in town this afternoon. You could call her at Aunt Lena's. She always goes there after she gets done shopping . . ." He stepped over to the window and pushed the curtains aside, then went back to the phone. "Mrs. Tanner? . . . I see Ed coming now . . . yes, ma'am . . . we will . . . g'by."

He hung the receiver back on the hook and went to the window again, this time not moving the curtains, but looking through them. An old convertible was bouncing and bucking up the rough, dusty road toward the house.

Jimmy stepped from the window toward the screen door, stopped and looked back at the old couch in the

next room just through the door. He went in and stood beside it until the front bumper of the car came into view through the screen door, then flopped down on the couch on his back.

In the convertible, a young man about the same age as the one on the couch – eighteen or nineteen – stood up in the driver's seat, hopped out over the closed door and walked toward the house yelling, "Jimmy? Hey Jimmy, let's go!"

Ed was less lean than Jimmy. His stomach bulged just slightly over his beltless khaki work trousers, but like Jimmy's, his feet were bare and he wore no shirt. His blue-black hair was roughly combed. His chin and cheeks were dark with the density of his beard. The hair on his chest was straight and short. It hung close to his skin and spread in the shape of a kite between his nipples; a smaller, diamond-shape of hair spread out from his deep navel.

Ed opened the screen door and walked in, looked around, then went straight to the couch. Jimmy's eyes were closed.

"Hey, Jimmy, you 'sleep?" The black-haired boy reached down with both hands and clamped them on the sides of Jimmy's waist. Jimmy doubled immediately and freed himself somehow by falling from the couch on to the floor.

"Damn it, Ed, what a way to wake a guy!" Jimmy reached up and pinched the back of one of Ed's thighs. Ed jerked his leg up and stumbled toward the center of the room. "You're gonna get it."

Jimmy sprinted into the kitchen, starting on fours, then gaining his balance. Not stopping, he grabbed a banana from the table, knocked the screen door open and bounded off the end of the porch. He hand-vaulted over the car door, settled into the front seat and started peeling the banana. Ed, close behind him, rounded the car, and with one hand on the door and the other on the windshield, lifted himself up and into the driver's seat. Before he started the car, he plunged wiggling fingers into Jimmy's side. Jimmy lurched against the door and

said, "Come on, cut it out!" Still, Ed held the fingers poised, pointing to Jimmy's ribs. Jimmy covered the ribs with his hand and said, "Let's go, Ed. Come on! It's hot as hell!"

Ed started the car. As he shifted the gears he said, "Got your suit on?"

Jimmy said, "No, where we going?"

"The lake. Finney's Neck."

"Let's go to the river. That bend on Stone's Place. Won't be anybody there."

Ed shrugged. "Guess it doesn't matter."

Jimmy threw the banana peel across the barbed wire fence, then broke the meat of it in half. He put one piece into Ed's mouth and took a bite of the other.

The old car rattled and roared and left a cloud of dust that quickly stopped billowing and hung in the still air over the yard.

When they reached the river, the sun was still above the tops of the great trees that leaned over the water. Everything in sight was either vivid greens, faded yellows or rotting browns. The water was high with upstate rains. The surface was just slightly textured by the deep, gentle current and accented occasionally by a smoothly moving leaf or twig or tuft of cotton-wood fuzz.

Next to a plank diving board, a small, sun-bleached boat dock floated on empty oil drums. Two rusted steel cables tethered it to two enormous tree trunks up the bank.

The two young men bounded down the slope and jumped on to the dock. It rocked and sank a few inches under their weight sending semi-circles of ripples toward the opposite bank.

Almost immediately, Jimmy unfastened his levis. He shoved them down to his ankles and kicked them back up on the grass. After a moment, he snapped his fingers and said, "Forgot my cigarettes," and went for them in the pockets of the shorts.

Ed pulled his trousers off and tossed them up by Jimmy's levis. He stretched and strutted around a bit, pulled the elastic waist band of his yellow boxer swim

trunks and let it snap against his skin. "Boy, that water's going to feel good! Come on, Jimmy, race you across!"

Coming back to the dock, Jimmy said, "You gonna wear your suit?"

"I got it on. Might as well.

"No point getting it wet. Nobody for miles."

"True enough."

Ed pushed the suit down his legs and tossed it back on the bank. It fell partly covering Jimmy's levis. Jimmy had watched every move Ed made. Ed glanced at him. Their eyes caught, then Ed looked up river. When he looked back at Jimmy, he laughed and said, "Hope some fish doesn't try to nibble my worm!"

Jimmy said, "Wouldn't call that a worm."

"Well, next to yours."

"Hell."

"If Betty knew what you've got, she'd probably rape you."

"She knows. She felt it once."

"She felt it, and you still didn't make out? Man, you're not trying."

"She didn't feel of it on purpose. Anyway, she wouldn't let me do it even if she wanted to. She's too damned religious."

"Ha!"

"She is!"

"Don't let that stop you."

They fell silent and Ed sat down on the edge of the dock and put his legs in the water. After a moment he threw a handful of water on Jimmy and said, "Let's get wet! Come on! Last one in's a sissy!" In one continuous motion he stood up and dived. Jimmy hit the water right behind him and two lines of bubbles made a V out from the dock. The boys came up rolling and splashing and shaking their heads, then immediately stretched their arms in graceful strokes and swam hard to the opposite side. They sprinted up the bank dripping water and flopped on their backs beside each other on the shaded grassy slope.

They were quiet for a long moment, breathing hard, looking up through the pattern of leaves and branches against the baby-blue sky, not moving, not speaking, then Jimmy, still looking into the trees broke the silence.

"Got a date tonight?"

"Sure. Pat."

Again they were quiet for several minutes, then Ed broke the silence. "You and Betty going?"

"To the dance?"

"Yeah."

"I guess so."

Another silence hung between them for perhaps five minutes, and when Jimmy spoke, he had to clear his throat after the first few words before he could finish the question. "Ed what's it . . . what's it like with a girl?" Ed didn't answer right away and Jimmy said, "I guess it's really great, huh?"

"Yeah, sure. Nothing like it."

"It doesn't look like I'll ever know unless I marry Betty."

"Crap."

"What do you mean? She won't never give in. I've tried everything."

Ed sat up. "You don't go about it right. I've watched you two. Everything you try, you're afraid she's going to stop you. So what if she says no? Don't pay any attention to her. You gotta just take what you want with a woman. With anyone." He glanced up at Jimmy, then back down at a mole he was now studying on his thigh. He added, "Anyway, she ain't the only fish in the pond."

Jimmy sat up and concentrated his attention across the river and Ed lay back down to look again up through the trees. Suddenly Jimmy turned and looked directly at Ed. Ed rolled his head on the grass and met his glance firmly. Jimmy lowered his eyes, picked up a stick and began breaking little bits off the end. Not looking at Ed, his voice a little shaky, he said, "Remember when we used to go up in our hay loft?"

Ed took his time to answer. "Yeah."

Jimmy began breaking the stick more violently. Still

not looking at Ed, he said, "Is a girl much better than that?"

Again Ed took awhile to answer, and his voice broke a little as he said, "I don't know."

Jimmy kept breaking the stick and Ed kept looking up through the trees. Five, ten minutes went by. When Jimmy got to the end of the stick, he held the last two bits between his fingers and rolled them back and forth, rubbing the bark together. His eyes the whole time were focused somewhere before him in the grass.

Abruptly Ed stood up and slapped Jimmy's shoulder.

"Let's go get a cigarette!" By now, Jimmy had pulled his legs together and was leaning forward with his chest against his thighs. He said, "Okay," but he didn't move. He didn't change the position of his legs until Ed was into the motion of diving. Then, very quickly, he ran down the bank and dived, hitting the water before Ed surfaced. They swam slowly back.

The dock was shaded now. They smoked in silence looking away from each other. When Jimmy finished his cigarette, he flipped it into the river, turned and said, "Ed?"

Ed looked directly at him. "Yeah?"

Jimmy held the gaze for a moment, then looked across the river. "Nothing. I forgot what I was going to say."

"Go on."

"I forgot."

"No. What?"

"Nothing. It just slipped my mind."

They were both sitting with their legs in the water. Ed meshed his fingers behind his head and lay back flat on the dock and closed his eyes. Jimmy looked at him. His eyes stayed closed. Jimmy looked down Ed's body, glancing back at his eyes every once in awhile. They stayed closed. Jimmy's gaze intensified and his eyes quivered slightly. He studied every feature of Ed's body. Once, he moved his hand toward Ed, then withdrew it. Suddenly Jimmy slid into the water and swam out about twenty yards. Ed didn't move. Jimmy dog-paddled around for a few minutes, then swam back. When

he got back to the dock, he went straight up the bank and put his levi shorts on.

"Come on, Ed, let's go back. It's getting supper time."

"What's the rush?"

"Let's go!"

Jimmy left Ed to dress alone and went to the car.

The ride back was wordless. At the house, Jimmy got out and muttered, "Thanks. See ya." He turned to go in, but Ed said, "You want to go tomorrow?"

"Swimming?"

"Yeah. Let's go again tomorrow."

"You want to?"

"Why not?"

"Alright. Sure. What time?"

"About one."

"Take suits?"

"What for?"

Jimmy leaned on the car door and looked past Ed toward the gathering prairie sunset. "I'm going to clean out the hay loft sometime tomorrow. If I'm not at the house, I'll still be out there. Maybe you could come early and give me a hand."

"Sure. Why not?"

Jimmy looked at Ed. Ed was beginning to smile. The smile broadened and his scalp shifted back a fraction of an inch. He winked at Jimmy, roared the motor, spun back around and was gone. Jimmy was left facing the empty fields and the imperceptibly swirling gold and lavender across the western sky. After a moment he turned and went into the house.

Supper was on the table. His father and mother were eating. His mother said, "Have a good swim, son?" He said, "Yeah," and sat down, not looking at either of his parents. They stopped eating for an instant and glanced at each other. Jimmy put some food on his plate, but before he finished eating it, he pushed the plate back and went into his room. He shut the door behind him. His father said to his mother, "What's the matter with the kid?"

She smiled. "Can't you tell?"

"No."

"Well, I may be wrong, but I'd say our Jimmy is starting to act very much like a boy in love. It's almost two years, now, him and Betty's dated."

The father lit a cigarette. He watched the match flame and turned a little in his chair. "He is about that age, isn't he. What, nineteen?"

"Be nineteen this fall."

He blew the match out and said, "Yeah, guess maybe you're right."

The father smoked his cigarette while the mother cleared the table. By the time she was well into washing the dishes, Jimmy came out of his room. She glanced at his levis and said, "Say, you know what time it is? You better get ready if you're going to get to Betty's on time."

He didn't answer. He went straight to the phone and cranked it. "Sarah?" He turned and looked at his folks. "Give me the Murray residence." His mother went on washing dishes. When she did look up at him, he was looking at her and she looked back into the sink.

"Betty . . . Look, I'm not coming by for you. I've changed my mind . . . It doesn't matter why. I'm just not taking you tonight. If you want to go to the dance, call Norma and ride with her . . . Suit yourself . . . Go ahead. Dance with all of them if you want to, I don't care." He hung up and started toward the back porch.

His mother spoke up from the sink. "Jimmy, is anything wrong?"

He turned and faced her from the door. An indefinite expression eased his features. He said, "No, Ma, I don't think so."

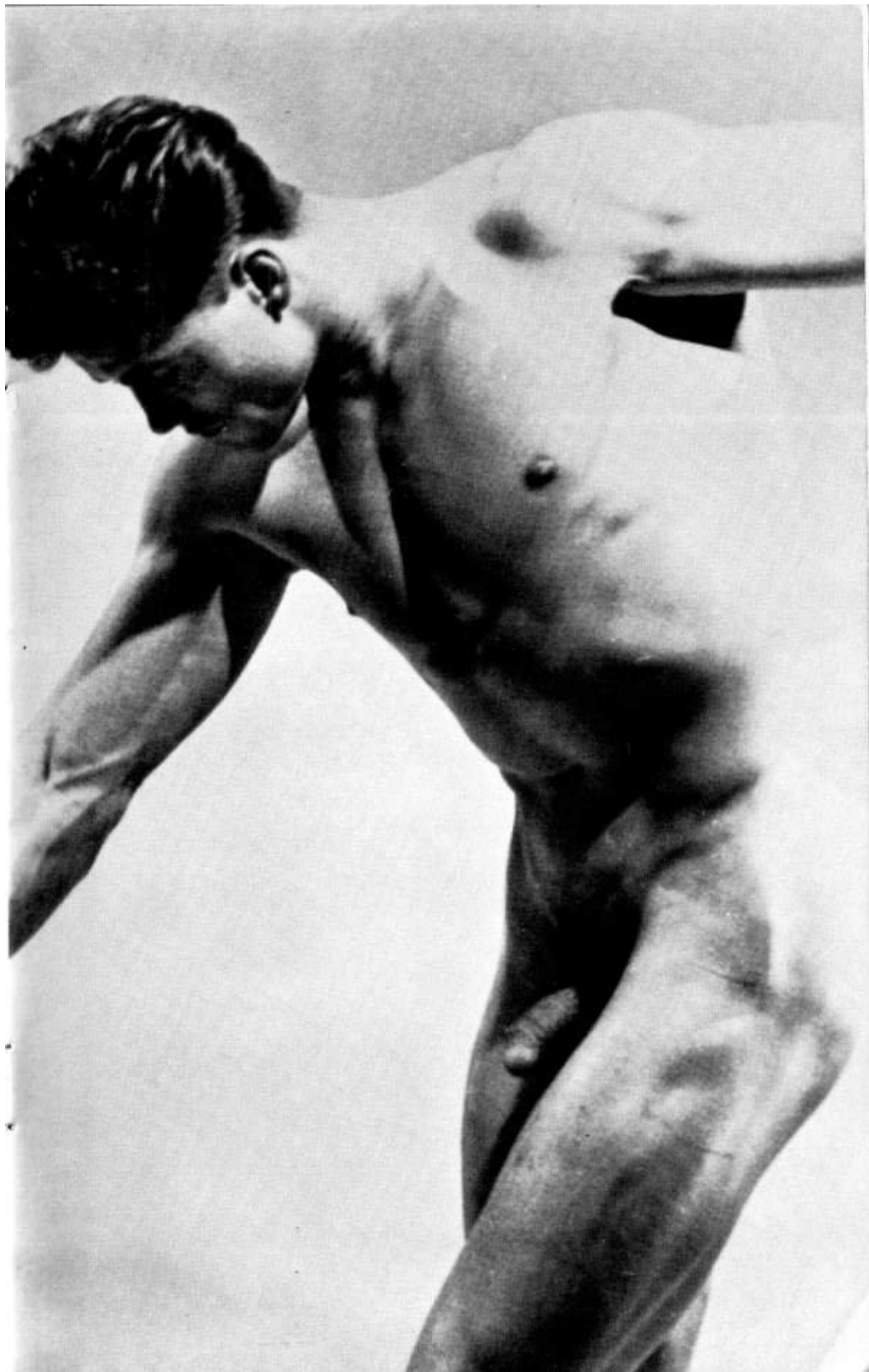
He went out to a rusting metal lawn chair under a tree and sat down. The light of the day was fading quickly. He watched the changing, dimming sky for a long time, moving just enough to light and smoke a few cigarettes. He stayed there and looked into the sky long after it was completely dark. When the kitchen light went out, he got up and went in to bed.



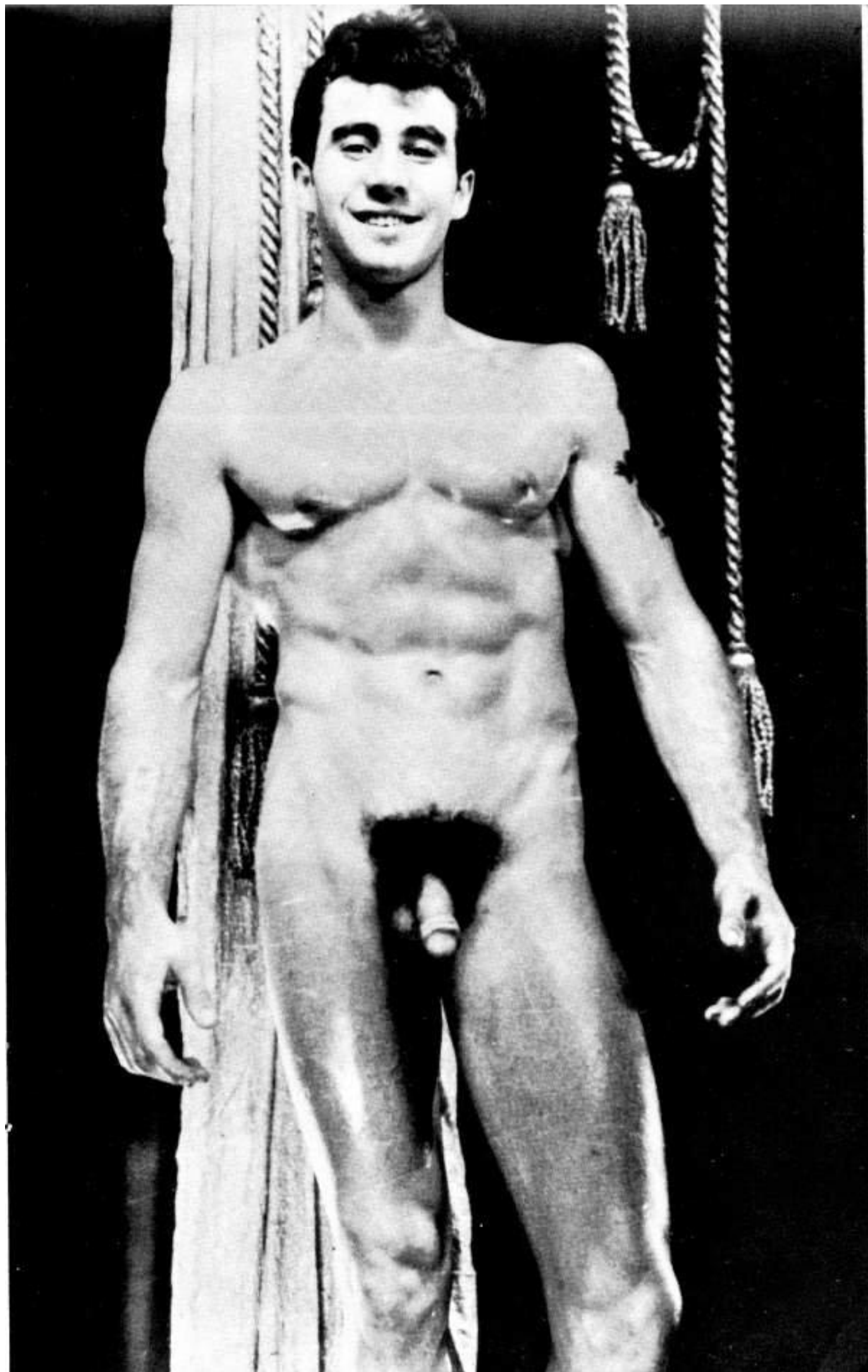




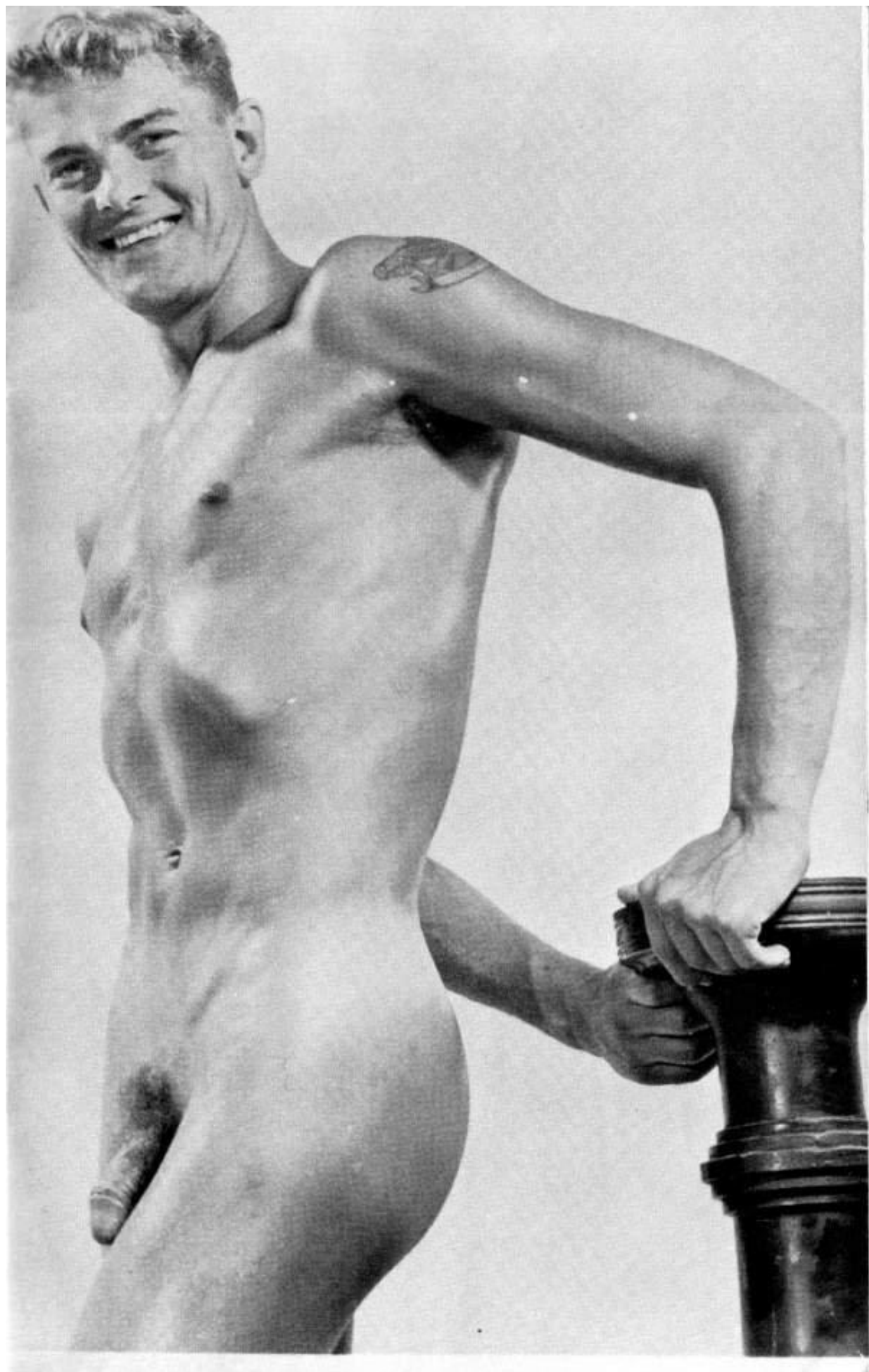








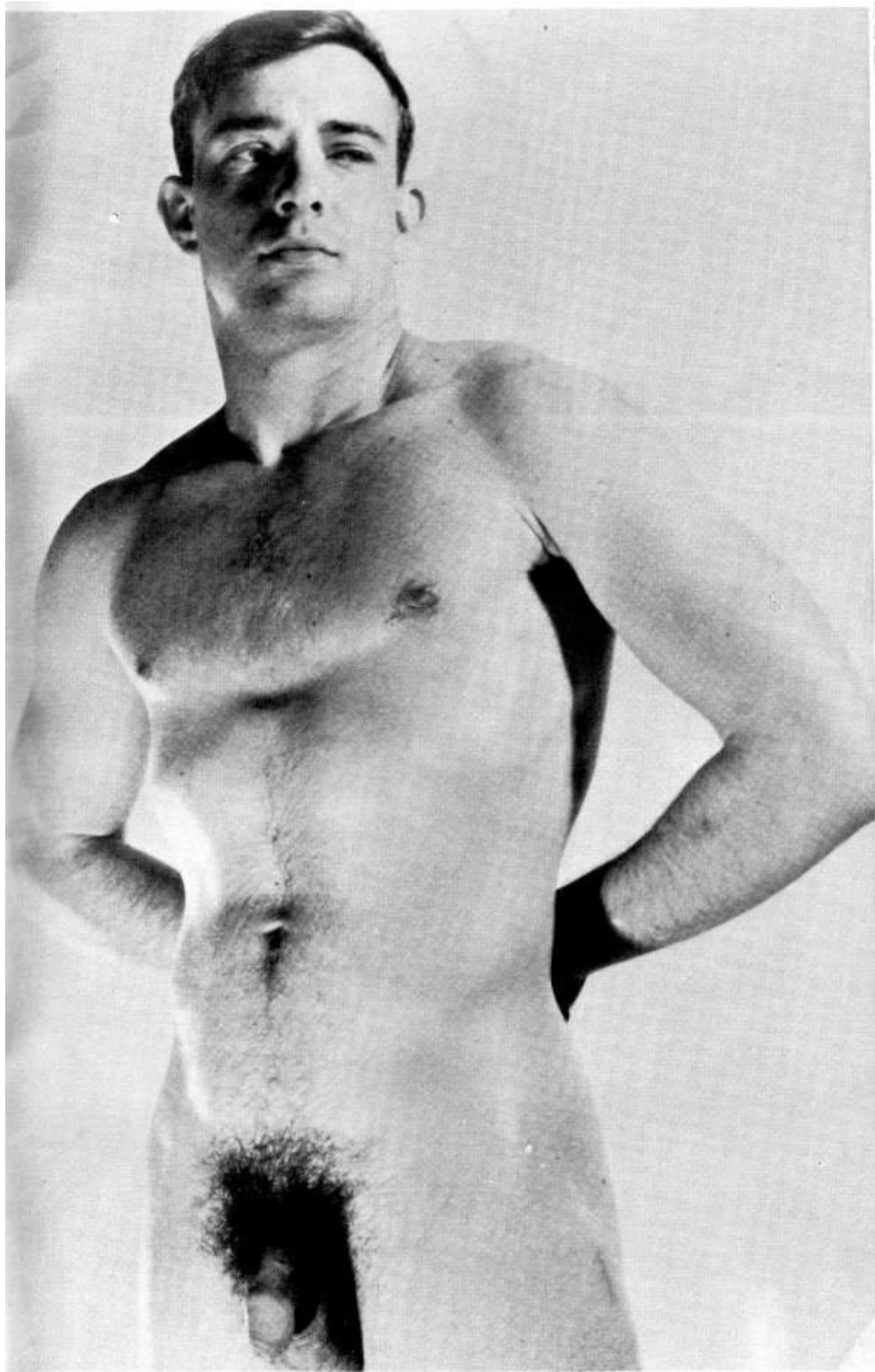














My Vow to You

*What shall I say? That you are wondrous fair?
A perfect awesome, dazzling sun? A dream
Of maleness crystallized? Shall I compare
You with a morning star, and swear I deem
Myself unworthy of your slightest glance?
Must I employ languid sighs, and moan
With lovesick air the vows that scholars chance
Upon amid the scrolls of Babylon?
Stock words, barren vows, a trite comparison
Make all lads fools. I know you as you are.
Your tongue is rather sharp; your features run
A bit awry. In you I see no star,
No animated dream, no faultless sun:
I see my friend. My life. My only one.*

— REX YORK

Personal Ads...

One of the most flourishing of the newspaper introduction services is that offered by TAB, a weekly newspaper published in Toronto, Canada. This newspaper is not found on too many of the United States newstands, although it is certainly not banned and anyone in the U.S. can receive it regularly by subscribing to it for \$6 a year.

Persons seeking new friends place an ad (up to 40 words) for only \$2. Persons who want to answer an ad pay \$1 for each ad they wish to answer. The system used by TAB is quite simple: when you answer an ad, you place your letter to that person and one dollar in a stamped, unsealed envelope. Write the ad number on the inside flap of the envelope but do not write anything on the outside of the envelope. Then place that envelope inside another addressed to TAB'S Dateline Club, 91 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. TAB states that all letters are promptly forwarded to the advertiser and that persons may answer two, three, or more ads at one time, so long as they enclose one dollar for each ad.

In case you haven't seen TAB, below are some ads which appeared recently which may be of interest to you. If you wish to subscribe to TAB, place ads, or answer ads, please deal directly with TAB. We are printing this article in VAGABOND as information, only, in the hope that it will be of help to you in locating new friends, and we have no connection with TAB, its advertising, or replies.

A6234: Young man, 26, 6', 175 lbs., attractive and masculine. Would like to hear from uninhibited guys 25-35 interested in exciting friendship. Include photo and phone for quick frank reply.

A6237: Young man, 26, considered good looking. Would like to hear from very masculine Europeans between 25 and 35 (especially Germans). Will answer all letters anywhere. Am honest and sincere, so only same need reply.

A6238: Lonely youth, 20, 145 lbs., 5'8", considered good looking. Has problem of thinning hair. Need an honest and simple gay boy for long and lasting friendship, one who has the same problem. Only those between 16-22 need apply.

A6240: Colored male model, 20, would like to hear from he-man guys about 30 and on and who weigh about 200 or more, in the Buffalo area. Will also pose. Send snap if possible.

A6242: I am 33, but look a few years older. Slightly bald, but nice shape. I would like to hear from a male 26-30 who is interested in long term friendship only.

A6250: Broadminded male friend, teens, or early twenties, sought. Interesting correspondence. Exciting companionship. Enjoyment that is different. Am versatile, male and discreet. Frank reply. Photo if possible. All answered.

A6251: Masculine, quiet man in early 30's, 5'10", 150 lbs. Wishes to find sincere, loyal man interested in settling down. Will exchange photo.

A6255: Male, 33, 5'10", 150 lbs., average looks. Interests include music, theatre, movies, etc. Would like to meet sincere male 21-35 for close and lasting friendship. Photo and phone number if possible.

A6263: Sincere young man, 36, wishes to meet masculine well-endowed young men 19-35 for interesting meetings and lasting friendship. Interests include all mentioned subjects except the art of discipline. All letters will be sincerely answered. Phone numbers please.

A6268: Docile male, white, 45, 5'10", 150 lbs., welcomes friendship of dominant, strong-willed but gentle male. Also docile male welcome. Interested in discipline and the bizarre. Easy to get along with.

A6273: Trim, slim, 40, would like to correspond with and meet masculine young man mid-twenties who is sincere, sensible, affectionate, virile. Interests: books, films, photography. Photo appreciated.

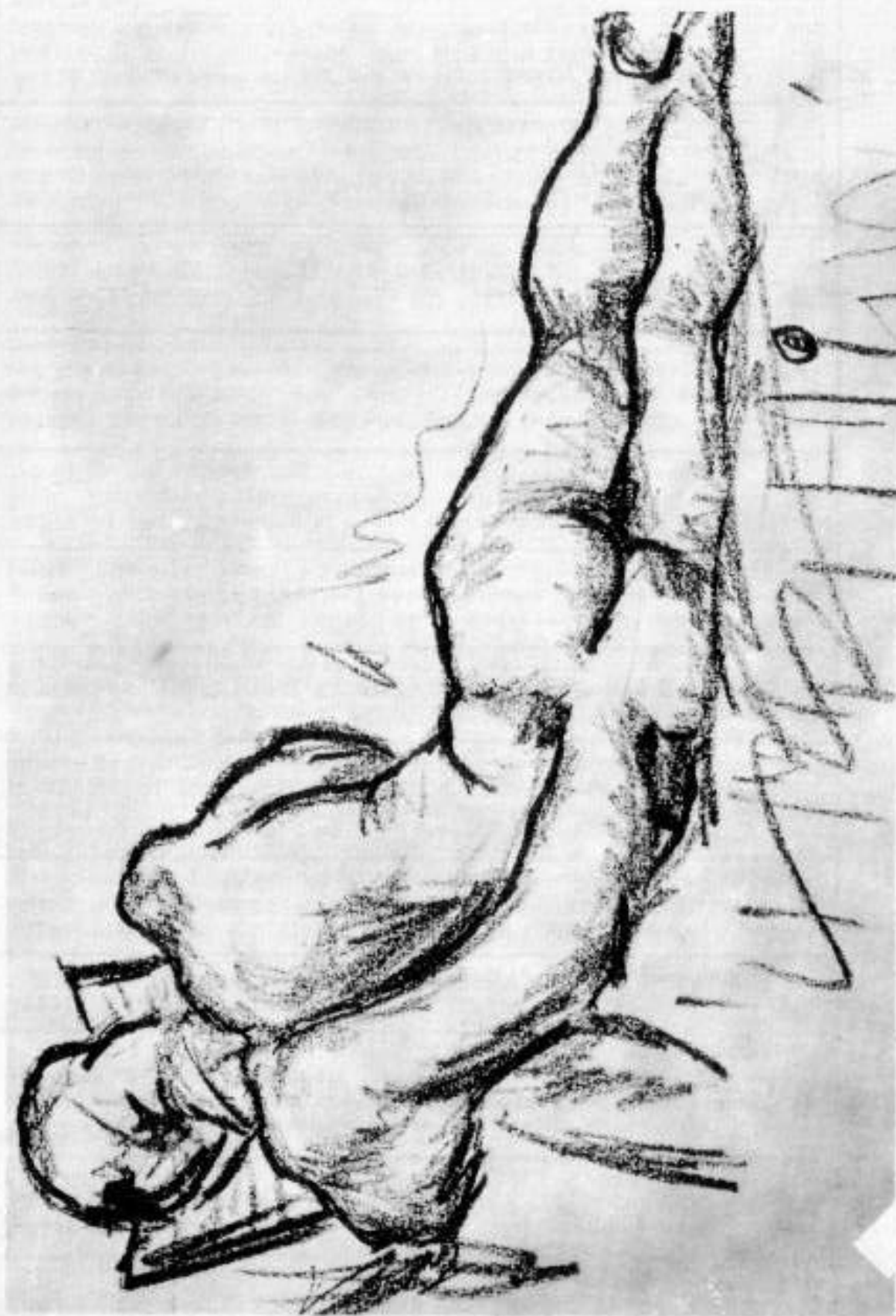
A6279: Male, 39, longing to meet sincere males for lasting companionship. Am singer, typist, homemaker. Like music, sports, sunbathing, traveling, loving fun, and that goes with living. Please write, men.

A6287: Attractive twenty-four year old man with pleasant personality desires correspondence with males. Friendship, photo, experiences, and literature exchanged. Would appreciate photo if possible. Will answer all letters.

A6298: Single male, 40, 5'4", 135 lbs. Seeks correspondence with congenial males 21-35 for lasting friendship. All letters from anyone answered. Frank letter and photo.

A6308: Gentleman, active, 49, 165 lbs., 5'9", private dwelling. Wants to hear from congenial males for weekend get-togethers. Give complete personal details. Photo appreciated. No discipline. Discreet. Out of towners welcome. Loyal and sincere. All answered.

A6311: Swinging male artists and physique model, 25, rubber lover. Interested in exotic and meeting other men with same interests. College graduate. Discreet. All letters with photo answered. Can travel and pose to suit.



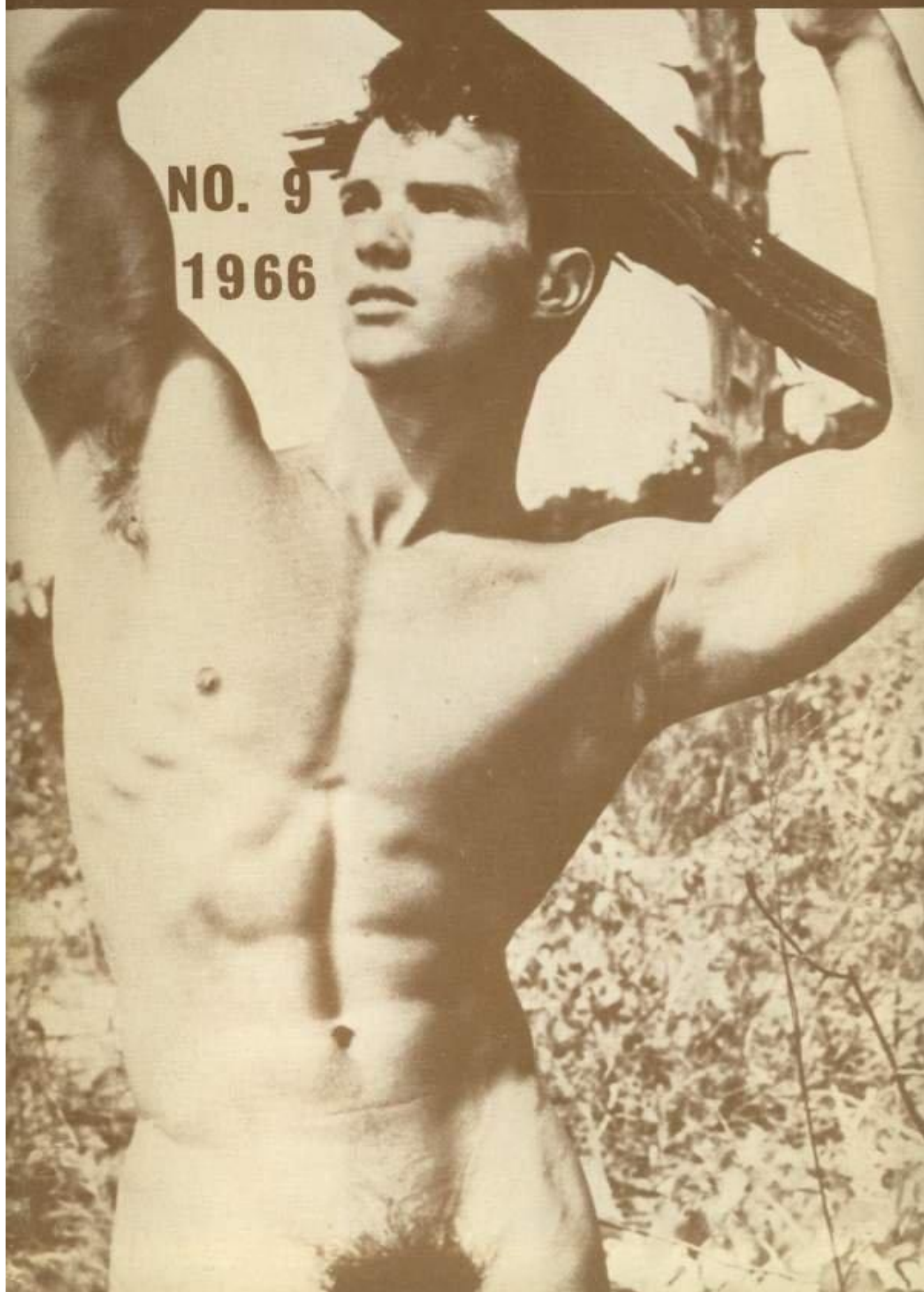


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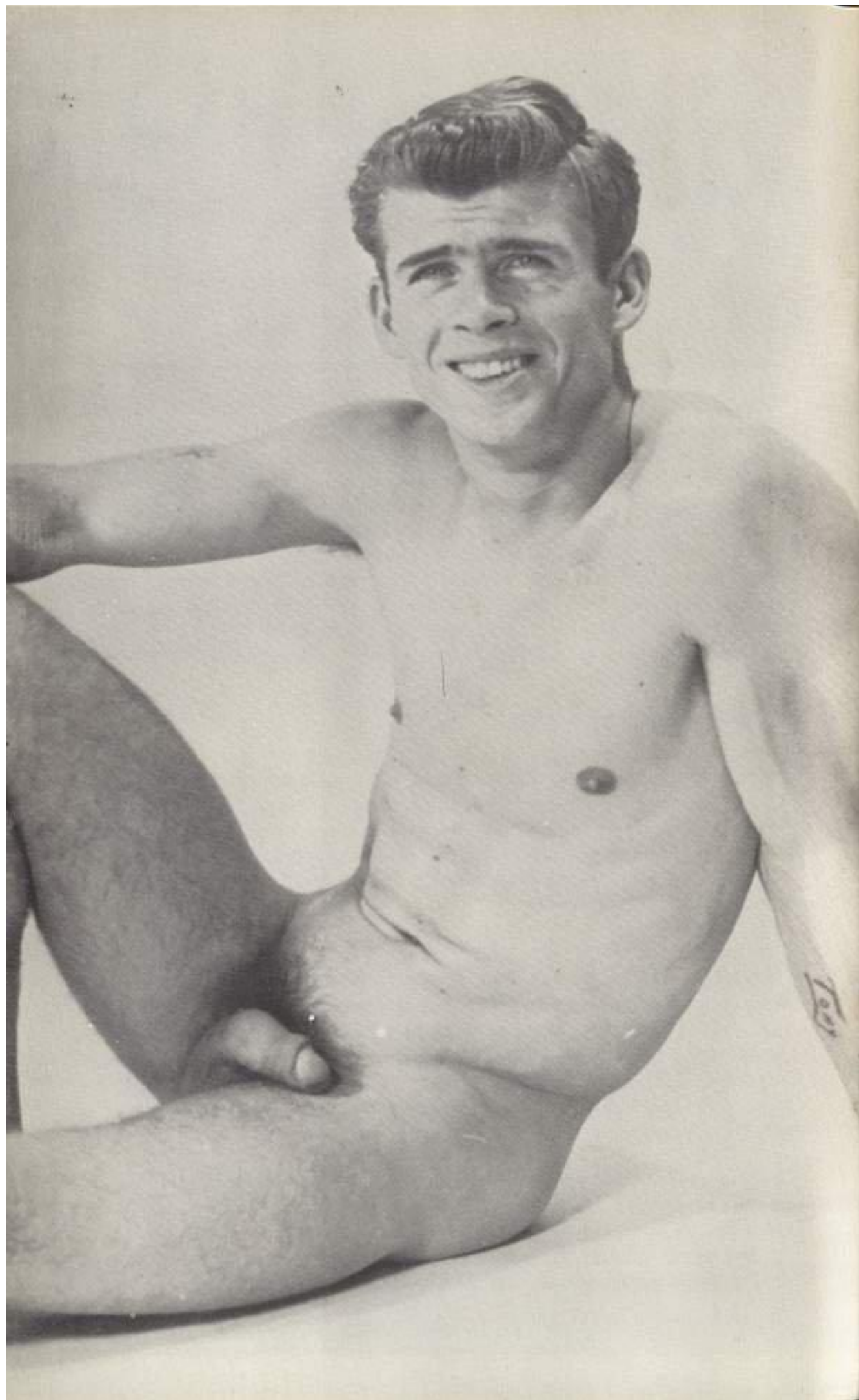
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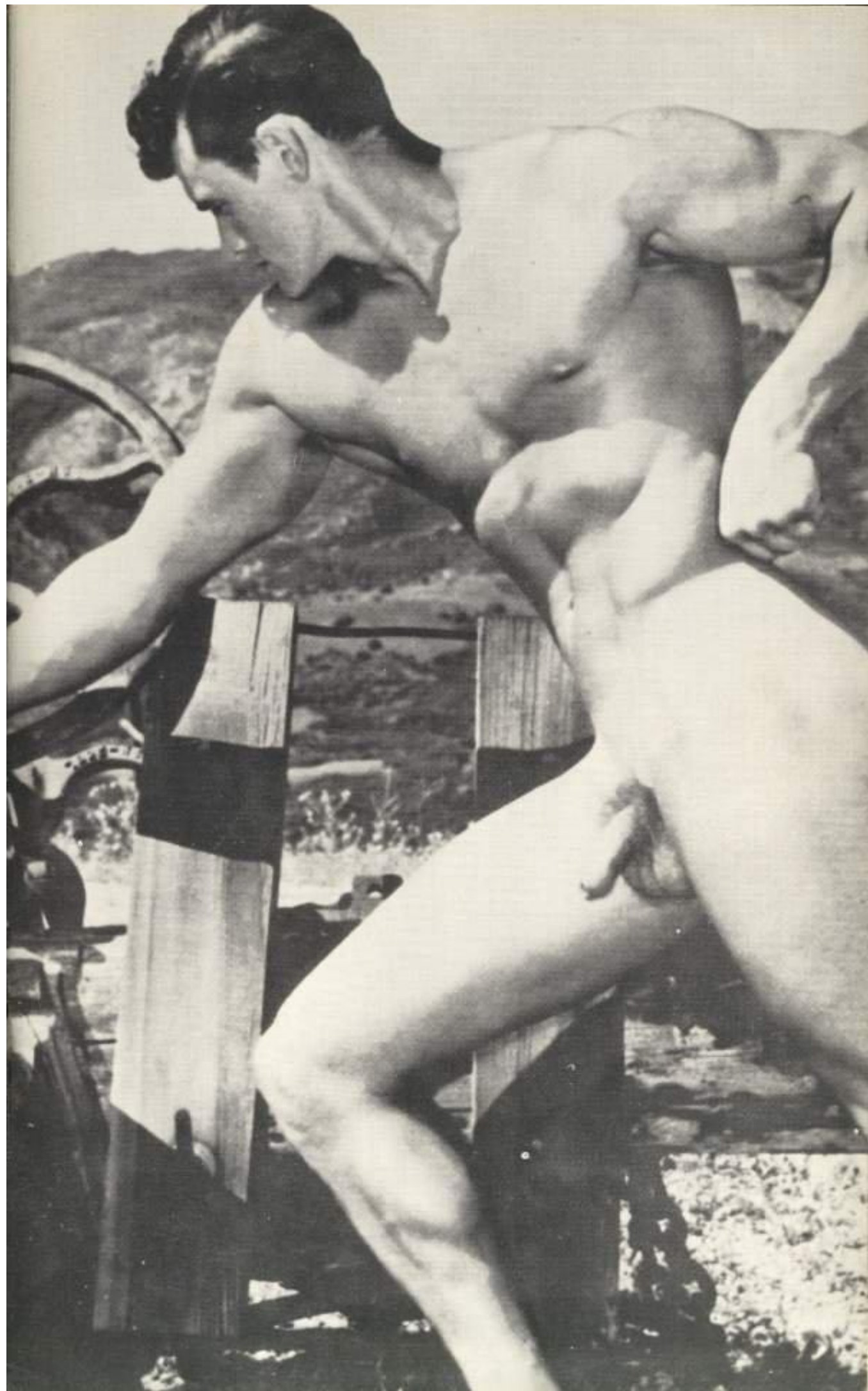
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Mr. Justice Douglas, U.S. Supreme Court, (The United States Law Week, March 22, 1966).







THE BOY

BEYOND THE VEIL

"You're sure a handsome guy, mister," a boy's voice said unexpectedly, as Harold Parker awoke. "I wouldn't mind taking you on, myself."

Harold Parker blinked and stared at the boy. The boy had wavy dark hair, limpid black eyes, the supple body of a natural athlete – and he was gloriously naked.

Harold had never seen him before.

"I guessed what would happen to you when you rented this room last evening," the boy said calmly. "I was watching you and your friend from the minute you came in here, you know. I broke my silly neck in here a year ago. I tripped in the shower during a wild party."

The poor kid was stark-raving crazy, Harold decided. But he was certainly a good-looking young kook, with the sort of perfect features and classical physique that the ancient Greeks had once ascribed to their best-loved

gods. Harold judged the boy to be several years younger than himself. Probably no older than eighteen or nineteen.

The boy came and stood at the foot of Harold's bed. "Your friend's name is - Don? I was never good at remembering their names. But I see him here often. Oh, yes, I know about him. That Don is bad news for any fellow."

Harold frowned vaguely, remembering Don's insistence yesterday evening that this motel would be the safest place for them to meet last night.

How wrong Don had been!

Slowly, Harold put a hand to his befuddled head. He sat up, surprised that his beaten body was not one great ache. Dawn seeped into the room between the blinds, behind the naked boy.

"I stay here, do you understand?" the boy said, making the statement a joke. "Not that any of the guests ever mind. It's not as if they can see me. I was with you and your Don all last evening. Those were two very mean goons Don's old man brought with him to fetch Don home this time."

Beginning to shiver slightly, Harold looked dully at the blood on the pillow where the bullet hole had bled. "They broke in and started hitting me before I knew -" Harold jerked about, trying not to think about the blood on the pillow. "What do you mean, this time?"

The boy's white teeth sparkled. "Don's old man has caught him here with handsome young guys ten times in the past year. You're the first fellow the old man's goons have shot, though. Don's other friends were just beaten within an inch of their lives by the big brutes. I guess the old man was especially jealous of you." The grin widened. "I can see why!"

Harold made a determined effort to ignore what the kid was saying. Most of it didn't make any sense - he hoped.

Deep inside himself, however, Harold had suspected for weeks that Don was not so innocent as he had pretended. Yet Harold could not recall a minute during this incredible month of love when he had admitted outright

that Don might not be what he seemed: a beautiful, too-ambitious, money-hungry youth just beginning to loathe the "arrangement" with a much older man in which he'd let his ambition trap him.

"I pity these rich elderly fellows who fall for punks like Don," said the naked boy. "Don't you?"

Harold found abruptly that he did almost pity Don's old man. For the old man had been Harold's employer, and Harold had never really disliked him – despite his desire for the old man's young "friend."

The old guy must worship Don – Harold mused – if he had forgiven Don for playing around with many other young males before this, as the boy seemed to be asserting now.

"Were you the old fellow's chauffeur?" the boy said, smiling.

Harold managed a smile, also. "Not trite enough, kid. I was his new junior accountant in the office."

The boy laughed in delight. "That's an improvement. The Adonis Don was with in here before you, that one was just the old man's gardener."

Swearing at this revelation, Harold threw back the sheet and got out of bed. He remembered he was naked, too. He swore again as he felt the boys admiring eyes upon him, and he went on into the bathroom self-consciously.

"Lord," Harold said, shocked, realizing he had walked through the closed bathroom door.

A clammy sweat broke out on Harold's brow, and he thought for a moment he was going to faint. For the first time, he admitted to himself that the crazy nude boy might not be crazy.

Nervously, Harold looked into the mirror above the lavatory. By rights, after the beating the goons had given him, his nose should be smashed, and the right eye blinded. More than a few bones should be shattered.

Harold swallowed hard: he had never looked better.

"They did kill me!" he muttered, toying with the bizarre notion, too startled to be afraid. "What rotten luck!"

"It's all right, mister." The naked boy ambled through the closed door as if it were a normal thing to do. "We get along fine over on this side of the veil."

Harold was surprised to feel the boy's strong arms slip around him.

"Be sweet to me, mister," the boy whispered huskily. "I've not had anyone since I fell in the shower last year. I need someone."

Harold was even more surprised at how marvelous the boy's arms felt. He had never dreamed there could be another life – another world – like this! He caught the boy to him, and a minute later they were on the bathroom floor – and the boy's eager, throbbing young body was giving Harold back everything in the way of masculine affection that Harold was able to offer.

"I never dreamed ghosts could do that," Harold gasped weakly, when the strange and wonderful experience was finally over.

The panting boy lay on the floor, gave Harold a teasing wink, and chuckled. Unsteadily Harold went back into the bedroom to don his clothes.

"Everything seems to be still on the chair," he said, when he was fully dressed. "My underwear and trousers and everything!"

"Yes, we see both worlds on this side of the veil," the boy reassured him, sauntering back into the room. "But beyond that, and the fact that they can't see us, it's no different. We're the same people, with the same desires and thoughts and feelings that we had over there."

Harold glanced covertly at the still form on the bed. So he was on the "other side" now! Then that must be his –.

"Oh, that's not you any longer," the boy said cheerfully. "Forget it. Someone will find it and haul it off soon."

Harold shook his head in a dazed manner. "I don't know what is more difficult for me to accept: being a ghost, or the truth about Don."

"This has been Don's own special way of breaking off his various romances for a long time," the boy

said. "Don always knew his rich old man wouldn't ever let his goons hurt Don. You see, they've thrown such a scare into each of Don's friends that the fellows didn't dare pursue Don any longer. Whenever Don has gotten bored with one, ready for a change of playmates, he has let the old man scent what's going on. And with whom. Then there has always been this final scene someplace. The goons burst in, smash up the latest friend's face, and Don hasn't got hurt once."

Involuntarily Harold's mind returned to each dim cafe and bar to which he had been with Don this past month. They had been together every night Don's elderly "protector" had been engrossed in one of his endless business deals in Los Angeles.

And Harold thought grimly of Don's many vows of devotion during all that time.

"I don't like being made a fool," he said gruffly, thinking only of Don's treachery. "Especially by someone who swears over and over he loves me."

The boy shrugged. "Your Don is a devil. He's been destroying his friends in one way or another for years. That's why he's picked this motel to play the final scene with the goons, whenever he's ready for an end to an affair. I've watched the owner of this place being paid plenty by the old man to keep his mouth shut about what goes on here."

"I'll make Don pay for what he's done," Harold muttered sickly.

"He's sure not doing any paying today," the boy said. "Your Don is happier this morning than ever, I'll bet. Because he and his old man had a fight in the car - about you - as Don was leaving with him and the two goons who shot you last night. The old man's car swerved as they were pulling into the traffic out there beyond the motel court. A truck hit the car head-on."

Harold's eyes narrowed at the tone of the boy's voice. "Was Don killed?"

"Not him." The boy gave a dry laugh. "Don never suffers for his wickedness. The two goons and the old man died instantly, but Don walked away without a scratch.

So he's free of the old guy at last. You know, of course, the old fool made Don his heir last year? His money is Don's now, you're out of the way, and Don discovered a new playmate as soon as he saw the handsome young driver of the first ambulance to arrive on the scene. I watched everything from that window."

Not till then did Harold become really angry. Before, he had been too stunned by his transition into another existence. But now the rage against his betrayer came pouring in, as scorching as anything he had ever experienced.

"Don is going to pay!" he said fiercely. "I don't yet know how things work over on this side." He had an abrupt, mad idea. "Kid, is the old man still out there at the highway?"

The boy nodded. "The new old man is. He will be for a couple of more days, I imagine, before he moves back home. It usually takes that long for the elderly ones to become accustomed to this quick change. They've taken the bodies away, naturally, but the ghost car is still in the ditch. The old man and the goons are probably sitting in it yet, trying to puzzle out what has happened to them."

Harold went to an outside wall and, self-consciously, put a leg through. "I'll go talk to him," he said softly, shaking off the boy's restraining hand. "The old gentleman needs my help."

Three nights later, another boy – an ambulance driver by profession – kept stealing quick glances all around him, then looking up at the black sky in the wildest sort of fear. This boy was quaking so violently from sudden terror that he could hardly stand.

Harold could imagine how the poor kid felt right now, but he thought an ambulance driver should have more courage – even when not on the job.

"Who are you?" the young man cried, his smooth cheeks twitching as he tried to see who had spoken to him. "Where are you? I don't see anyone!"

The boy was slender, with thick brown hair and the large eyes of a panic-stricken calf. He stole another

fleeting glimpse around him.

"I'll not let you go to Don tonight," Harold said flatly. He ignored the instant scream from the boy that followed the statement. "Haven't you any pride? Don't you realize how low Don thinks you are, that he wants to meet you at this cheap place instead of at his home, although his old man is dead now?"

The frightened boy squealed again as Harold touched him, pushing him backwards. Relentlessly Harold took the motel door key to Cottage Five from the boy's nerveless hand.

"Go away before I become angry with you," Harold said.

The boy did not need further urging. He swung madly and almost flew to his parked car. Harold waited on the curb until the taillights of the boy's speeding old sedan vanished in a burst of terror down the highway.

Across the road a shadow of an automobile was partially hidden, in the ditch. A ghostly, battered limousine that looked as if it had been involved in a serious wreck.

Harold smiled and gave it a wave.

Behind him rose the dilapidated cottages of the motel where the goons had shot him. Above his head a neon sign flashed redly through muggy evening darkness. He turned and went across the court.

As he passed the motel office Harold glimpsed the elderly proprietor sitting beside a glowing window. The man did not see Harold. But Harold had known he would not.

Harold went past the room where he had been shot, and halted at the fifth cottage down from a circular swimming pool. This was where the frightened boy had been headed when Harold stopped him. Harold stepped inside the cottage, into the darkness. He stood there silently.

He had rather expected to find Don already in bed, but the mattress was bare except for the white sheet and a bulky pair of pillows.

The spread was thrown back invitingly.

Yellow light dribbled beyond the half-opened door to the bathroom, on the other side of the bed. Harold heard water splashing in a washbasin.

"Franky?" Don's voice said.

Harold gave a cold chuckle.

"Come in, kid," Don said.

Don stepped to the bathroom door. His blond, manly nudeness was framed by the dim light behind him. An unanticipated lump surged into Harold's throat at the familiar sight.

Don's trim body seemed to be silver and gold in the soft sheen, a perfect instrument of love as tempting and desirable as ever.

"You're late, Franky," Don smiled.

His eyes were apparently adjusted to the bathroom light. Harold realized he could not see in the darkness of the larger room.

"Hello, Don," Harold said softly.

He saw Don's flawless face contract: "Franky?"

"You're probably the most handsome guy I was ever with, Don." Harold sat down on the bed. "No wonder the old man was willing to kill to keep you."

He could see by Don's manner that he remained uncertain who was in the room. For a moment Don glared into the darkness uneasily. Then he strode forward with determination, his broad shoulders straight and arrogant.

"Franky, don't play stupid games!"

Harold laughed, mocking him.

He saw that Don was trembling, the sensuous lower lip puffed out like an angry child's. "Franky, what are you trying to do to me?"

Don was wearing his usual male cologne, and the familiar scent – bringing back a flood of memories – worked mischief on Harold's mind. He had to struggle to keep himself under control.

"Didn't you think you'd ever meet someone like me, Don?" he said quietly. "Someone who'd pay you back for what you did to everyone who dared to love you?"

Don was silent now, the long-lashed, angelic eyes dilated, attempting to pierce the blackness. The marvelous body shook with fury.

"Franky, I hate practical jokes!"

Harold put out an arm and touched him gently.

"Take your hands off me! I'm going to dump you for this, you ambulance-driving creep! I won't stand for--"

Don broke off, sputtering with surprise as Harold jerked him down on the bed. Don was a man of great sexuality, however – as Harold knew – and he did not try to fight Harold off for long. Soon he was clutching Harold to him passionately.

Don began moaning in bliss.

"That's the way, Franky! That's it! You've learned since the last time, boy. You're becoming as good as --"

Don's big blue eyes blinked wildly, then he shrieked in ever-increasing horror as Harold switched on the lamp above them – and Don saw no one with him in the bed.

Several minutes later, giving a faint sigh, Harold came out of the cottage slowly and went across the highway to the battered shadow of the smashed-up limousine awaiting him in the ditch.

Three persons were in the ghostly car. Two youngish, muscle-bound brutes up front; and in back, a rather attractive elderly man with silver hair. He looked up tensely as Harold bent to the window nearest him. The old man wore a conservative business suit. He was smoking a thin black cigar.

"You can go pick Don up now, sir," Harold said gently. "He's waiting for you."

The old man squinted behind the lenses of rimless spectacles. "I merely want him with me," said the cultured, hopeful voice. "I didn't want him to feel pain. I could never bear to hurt him even when he'd treat me so badly. That's why I couldn't do this to him."

"Not a bruise on him," Harold said. "His heart just stopped from fear."

The old man nodded and relaxed. His mild eyes were

moist with emotion as he looked at Harold.

"When you came to us after the wreck, after you were shot the night before; I knew I'd misjudged you, son. I admire a young man with pride! None of Don's other lovers would have come to me and volunteered his services as you did. None of them would have volunteered to bring Don through the veil, if we'd shot one of them."

A golden moon was creeping over the trees behind the motel. The court lights faded a bit.

The old man pumped Harold's hand fiercely as the limousine purred into action.

"The only thing important to you and me is that Don and I be together," the old man said. "Isn't this correct?"

"Yes," said Harold softly. "That's the important thing. I want you to have Don forever."

When the shadow of the old man's automobile stood in front of Cottage Five, and the three men had gone inside, Harold heaved a sigh of satisfaction and walked back across the highway. A boy was waiting for him there on the curb, patting a bare foot impatiently.

The boy had wavy dark hair, limpid black eyes, the supple body of a natural athlete – and he was still gloriously nude.

"Let's go to our room and get some sleep, fellow," Harold said contentedly. "I can forget Don forever now."

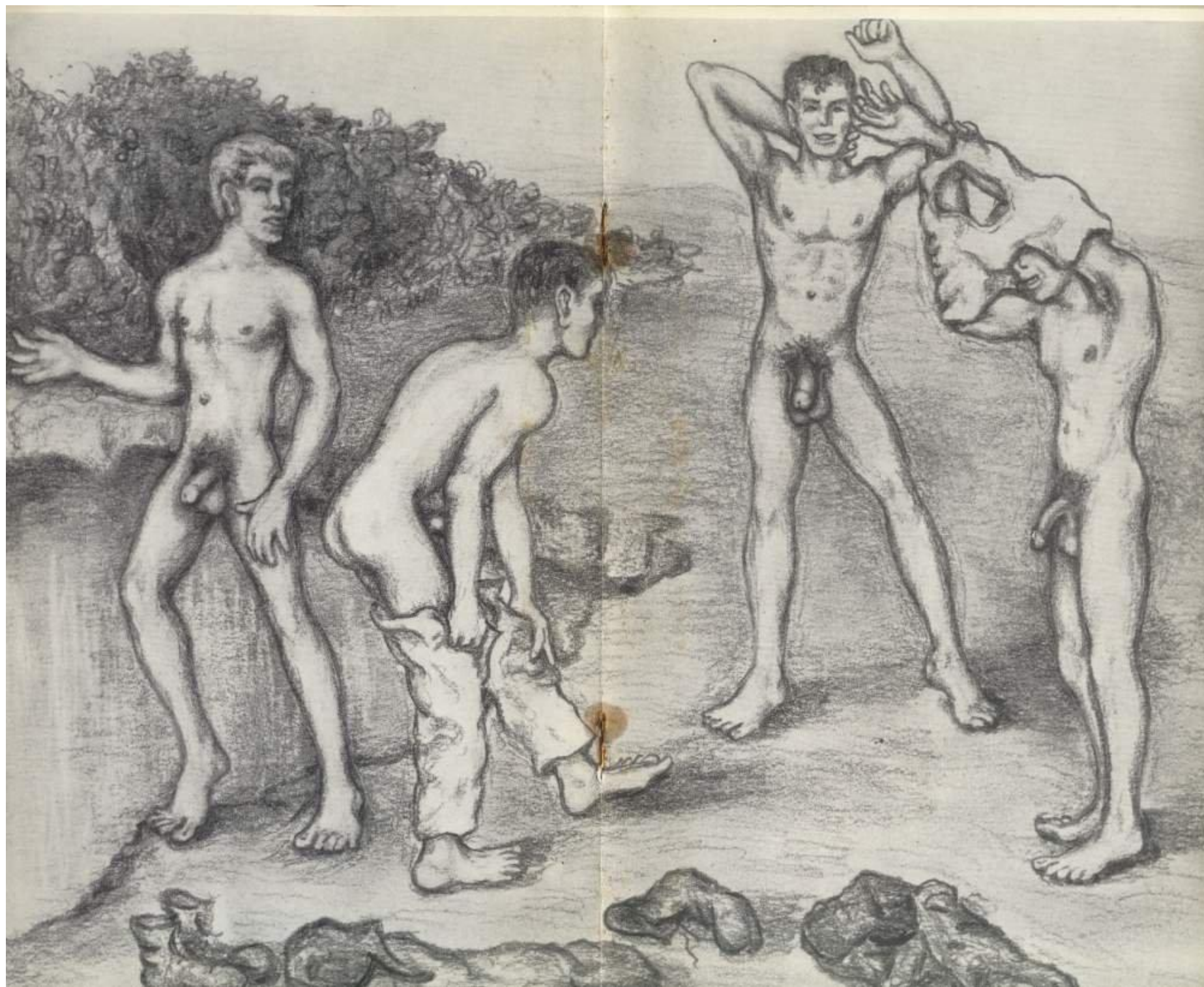
"It'll take a lot to make me forget you haven't paid any attention to me for three whole days and nights," the boy grumbled. "It'll take a lot to make me get over feeling rejected, after that one brief session in the bathroom."

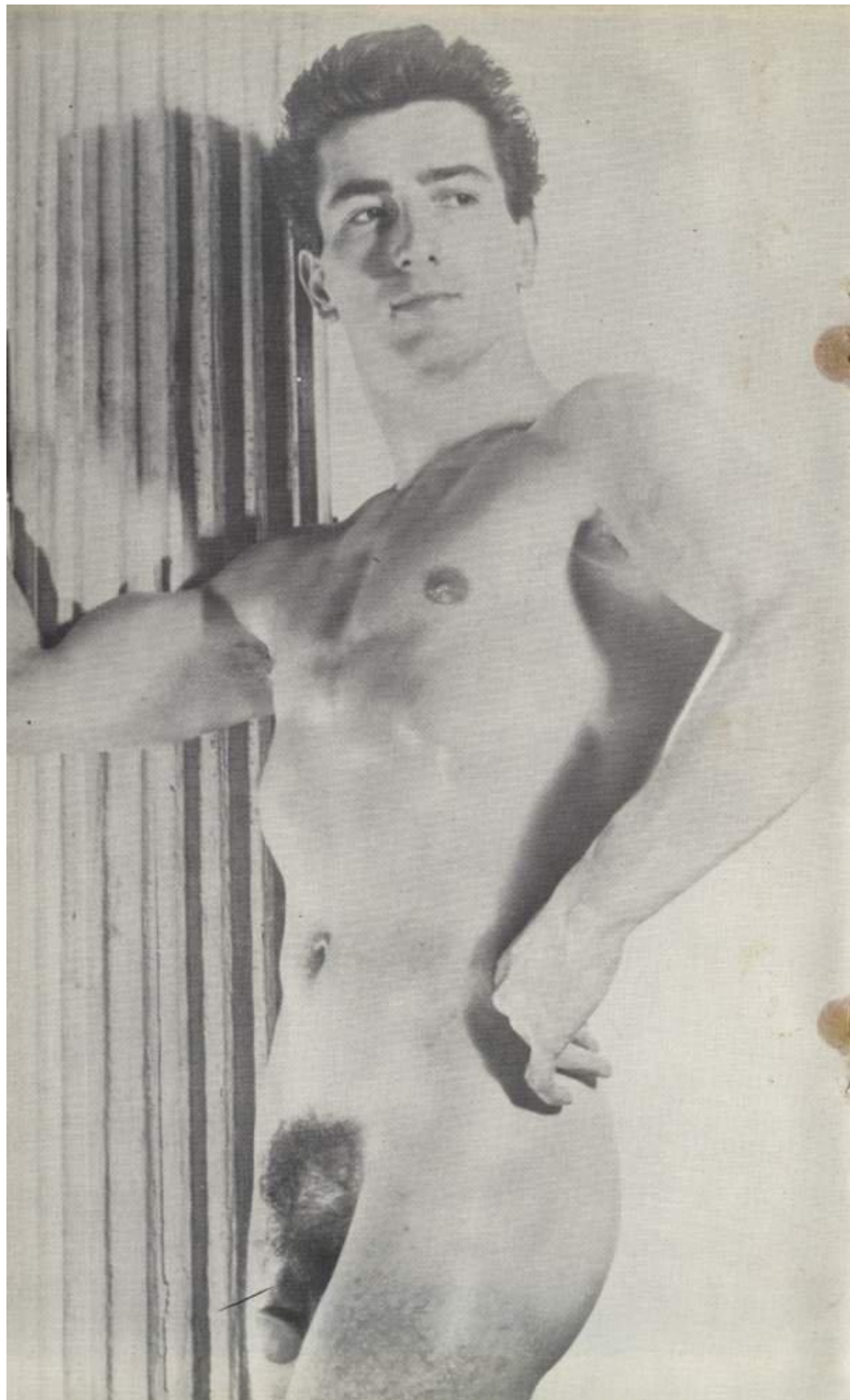
"Maybe I can give you a lot," Harold grinned.

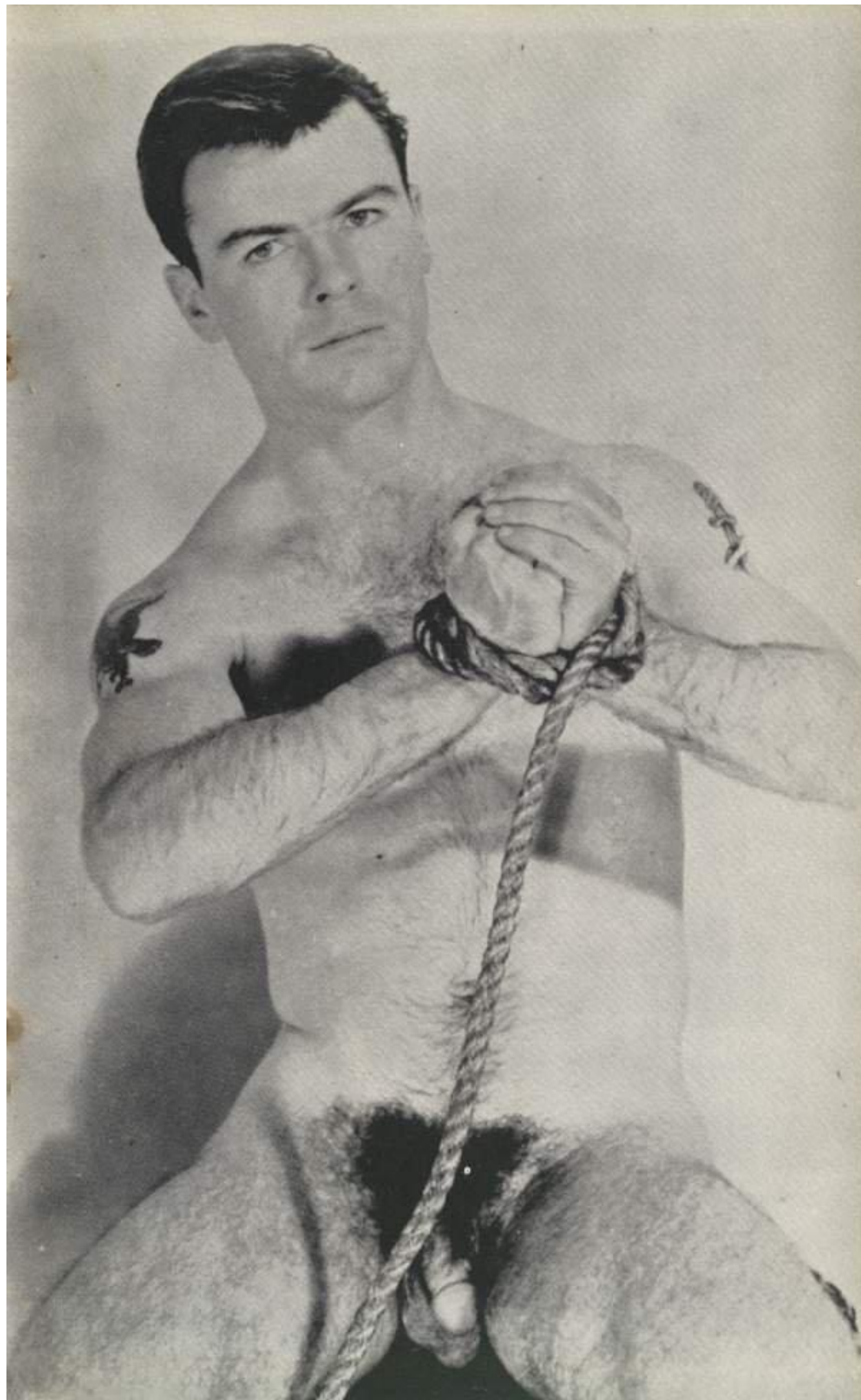
The boy frowned, trying to be angry, and then the pattern of his resentment broke. He laughed as Harold grabbed him about his lithe waist and swung him easily toward the cottage that would now be theirs for as long as they wished.

"I'll just bet you can!" the boy said.







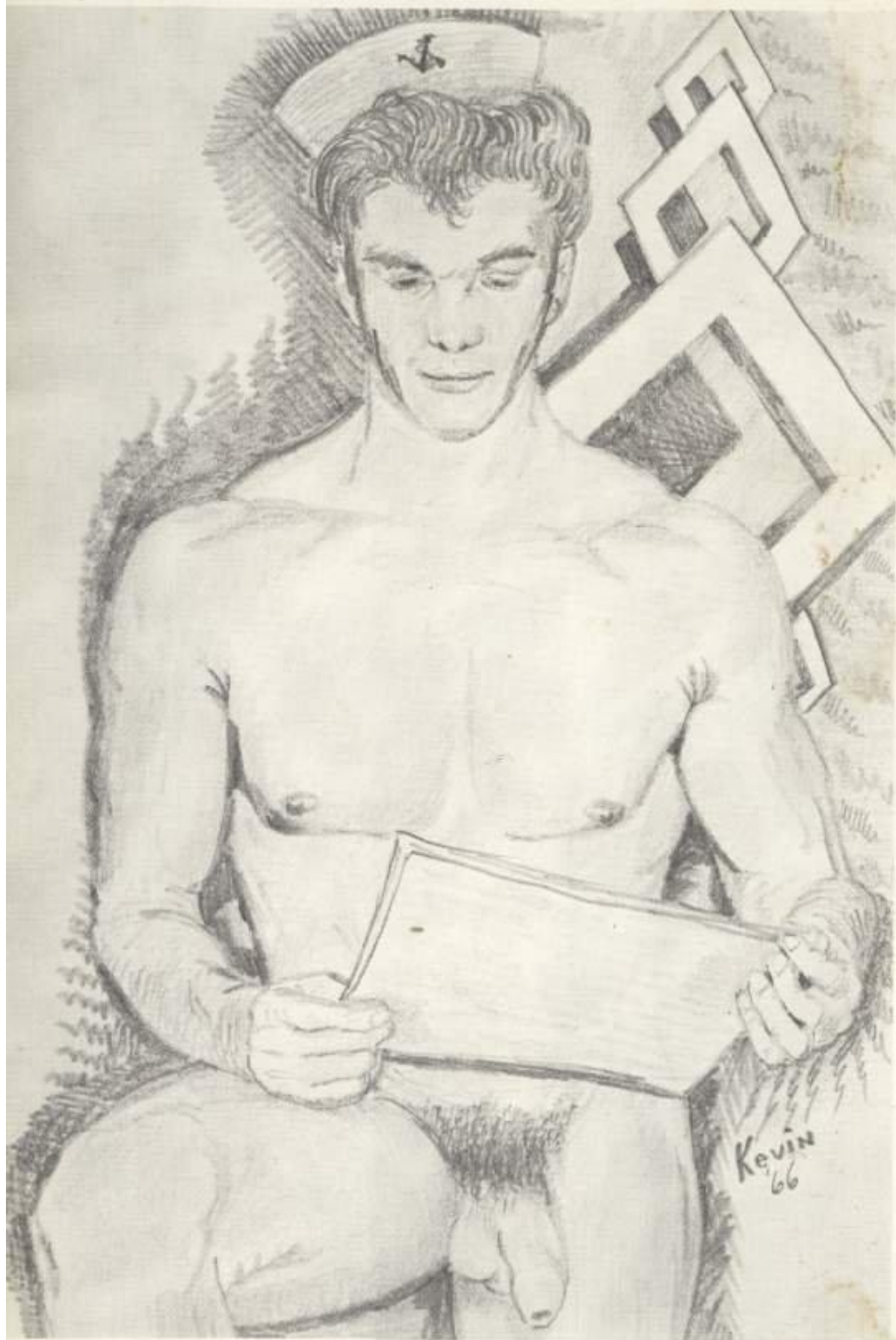




















The Silent Boy

*Many a guy could say it better,
And many could speak as well,
And why my tongue must wear a fetter,
Friend, that I cannot tell.*

*I only know there is no meaning
That does not come from you;
And what my voice can give no gleaning,
My heart holds ever true.*

*Ah, dearest friend, a mighty oak tree
Has never said a word;
And yet who doubts the roots go deeply
Because they were not heard?*

— REX YORK

Personal Ads...

One of the most flourishing of the newspaper introduction services is that offered by TAB, a weekly newspaper published in Toronto, Canada. This newspaper is not found on too many of the United States newstands, although it is certainly not banned and anyone in the U.S. can receive it regularly by subscribing to it for \$6 a year.

Persons seeking new friends place an ad (up to 40 words) for only \$2. Persons who want to answer an ad pay \$1 for each ad they wish to answer. The system used by TAB is quite simple: when you answer an ad, you place your letter to that person and one dollar in a stamped, unsealed envelope. Write the ad number on the inside flap of the envelope but do not write anything on the outside of the envelope. Then place that envelope inside another addressed to TAB'S Dateline Club, 91 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. TAB states that all letters are promptly forwarded to the advertiser and that persons may answer two, three, or more ads at one time, so long as they enclose one dollar for each ad.

In case you haven't seen TAB, below are some ads which appeared recently which may be of interest to you. If you wish to subscribe to TAB, place ads, or answer ads, please deal directly with TAB. We are printing this article in VAGABOND as information, only, in the hope that it will be of help to you in locating new friends, and we have no connection with TAB, its advertising, or replies.

A6342: Masculine male, 35, 150 lbs., 5'9", would like to meet other masculine males between 30 to 45 years old for lasting friendship. Am honest and sincere. Photo and phone number please.

A6348: Docile young university student seeks summer position with demanding master who expects hard sweaty work, boots, levis, boot camp routine and is an accomplished disciplinarian. Am very fond of being disciplined. State qualifications. Will travel for suitable party. Photo appreciated.

A6352: Professional man rather shy but fun, early 50's, reluctantly decides to settle down. Has town house and island in northwoods for summer holidays. Looking for slim masculine fellow, 25-35 for lasting association. Should like books, music and outdoors.

A6355: Am fair and slim, 33 years of age and like to cultivate mutual interest with any man of similar age or older. Am sincere and willing to learn more.

A6357: Truckers, cowboys, laborers, servicemen, salesmen, farmers, ministers – one and all – any age, color or creed – any locality – would be welcomed as friends by bachelor, 50. Desirous of contacting others with similar interests. Sincere, discreet, broadminded. Will answer all.

A6358: Male from Europe, 33, 6', 180 lbs., blond. Would like to meet correspond with guys 18-35, any race. Interests include all mentioned in these columns. Reply with photo and phone please.

A6366: White male in late thirties, 5'11", 190 lbs., Canadian. Seeks broadminded male friends, 21-40 years of age. All replies answered.

A6368: Man, 40's, nice apartment, interested in travel, home movies, theatre, etc. But not discipline. Seeks affectionate and possibly shy male companion up to 30. Phone number and photo appreciated and returned. Nationality unimportant.

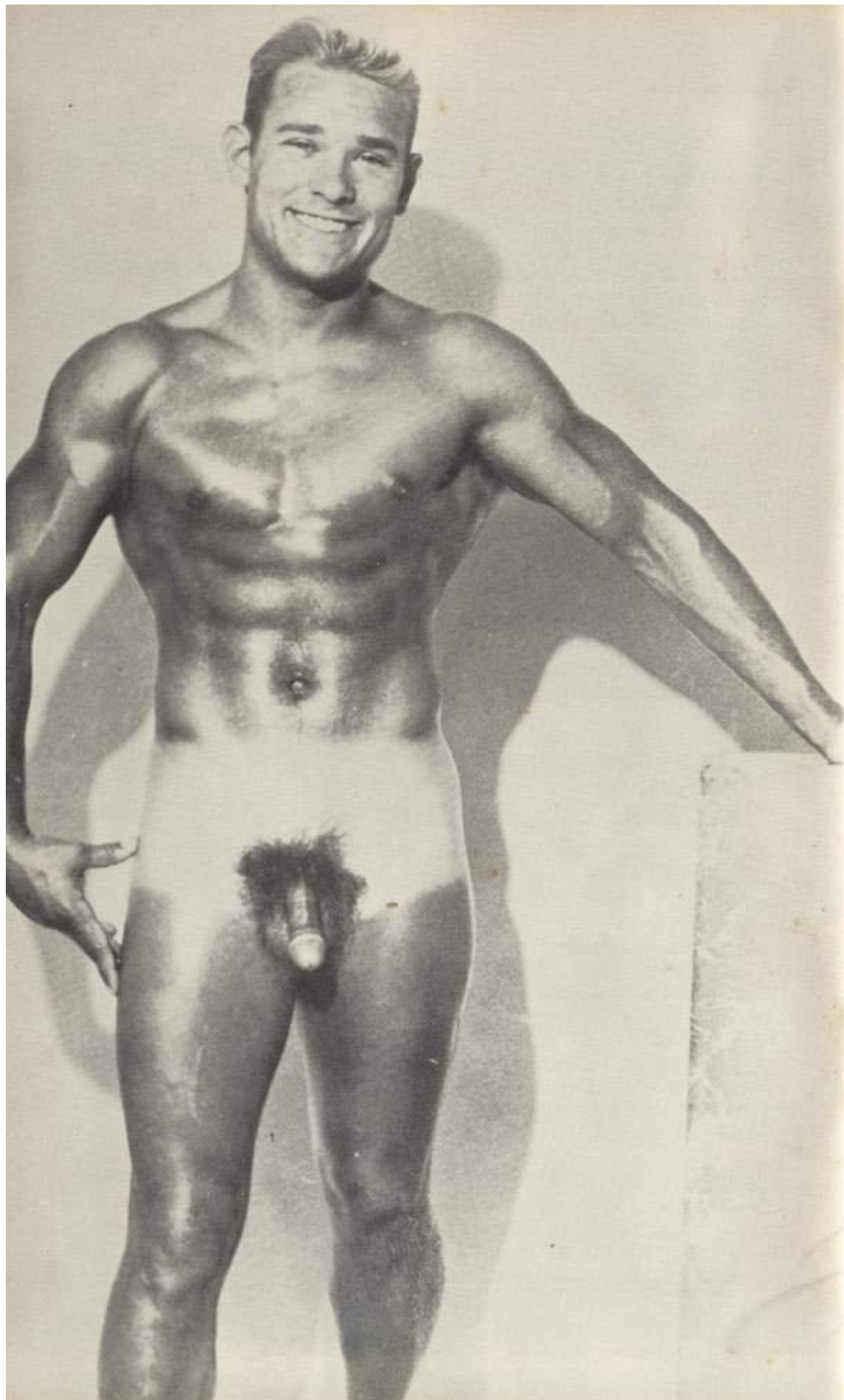
A6378: Male, age in forties, well-endowed. Would like to meet another male also well-endowed, age between 30-45 for occasional meetings. Discretion assured and expected. Whites only. Photo and phone number if possible.

A6383: Young female impersonator, white, 21, 5'6", 130 lbs. Friendly and cheerful would like to meet with other people interested in female impersonation. You won't be disappointed.. Will answer all.

A6385: Are you a masculine young man with exceptional qualities who likes to enjoy life to the fullest? Maybe you just haven't found the suitable friendship at present. Let's see if we can develop a mutual interest in each other. Write or phone, frankly giving full details, interests and attitudes. I am 36 years of age. All letters answered and returned. Strictest confidence.

A6389: Young man considered good looking, single, 34 years of age, 6 ft. tall, brown hair, blue eyes. Looking for a close sincere friendship with other gentlemen to share mutual interest and hobbies. Nationality, etc., immaterial. Photo not essential. No effeminates, please.

A6391: Young man, mid-thirties, interested in meeting young men around own age or younger. Interests are varied. They include photography, sun-bathing, swimming, T.V., music and subjects mentioned here except the subject of discipline. Would like someone who is lonely and who really wants a friend. Phone number and photo appreciated but not necessary. Please reply. Will answer all letters. Dollar refunded.

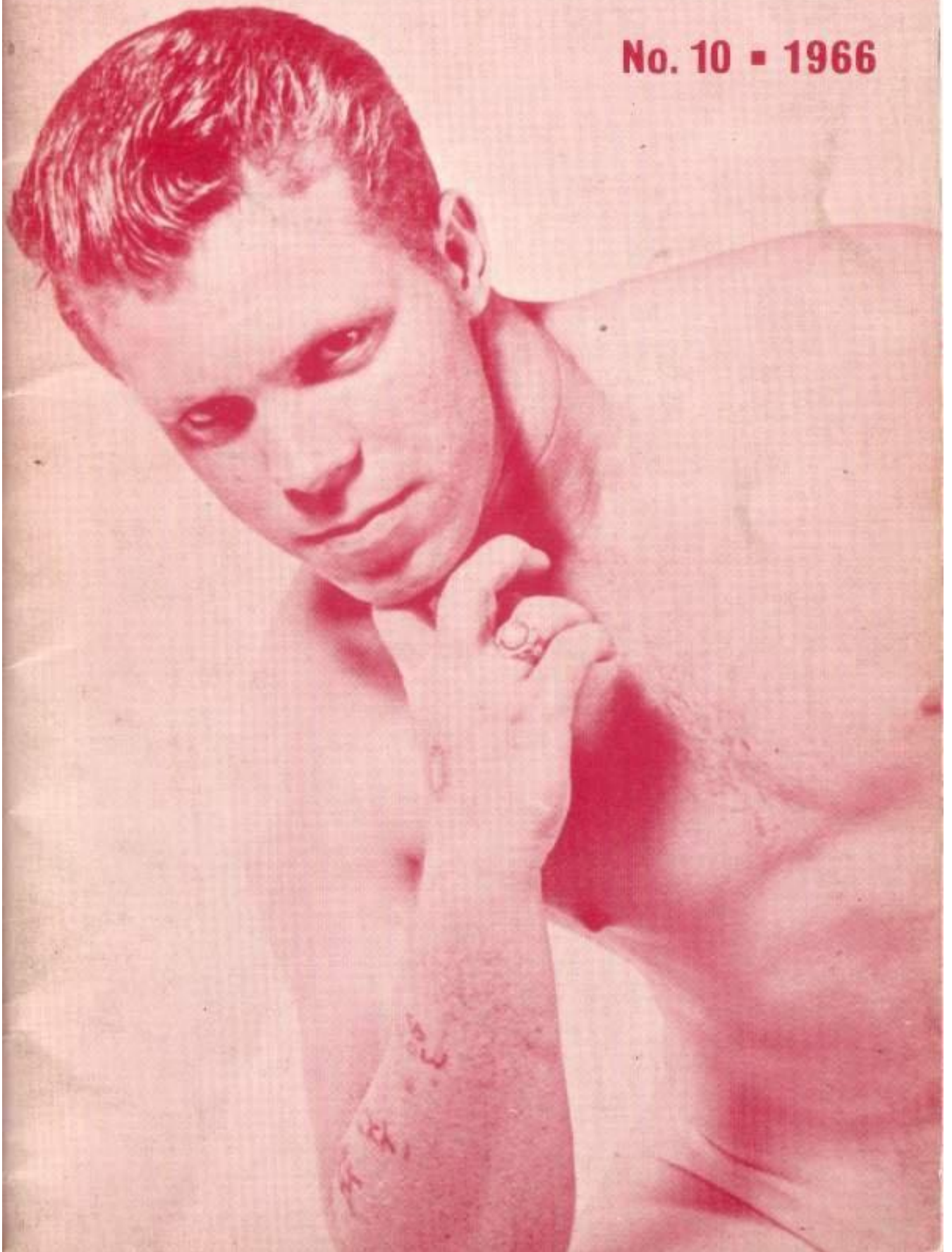




VAGABOND

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No. 10 ■ 1966



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VAGABOND is dedicated to the furtherance of realism in art, photography, and literature – without confining itself to material which will offend no one or avoiding that which may offend some. It is our belief that freedom of communication shall not be denied to any segment of our society even though that group may be anathema to the so-called “normal” majority. If we were wise enough, we might know that communication may have greater therapeutic value than any sermon that those of the “normal” community can ever offer. ■ And if the communication is of value to the so-called “deviant” community, how can it be said to be without any redeeming social importance? Redeeming to whom? Importance to whom?

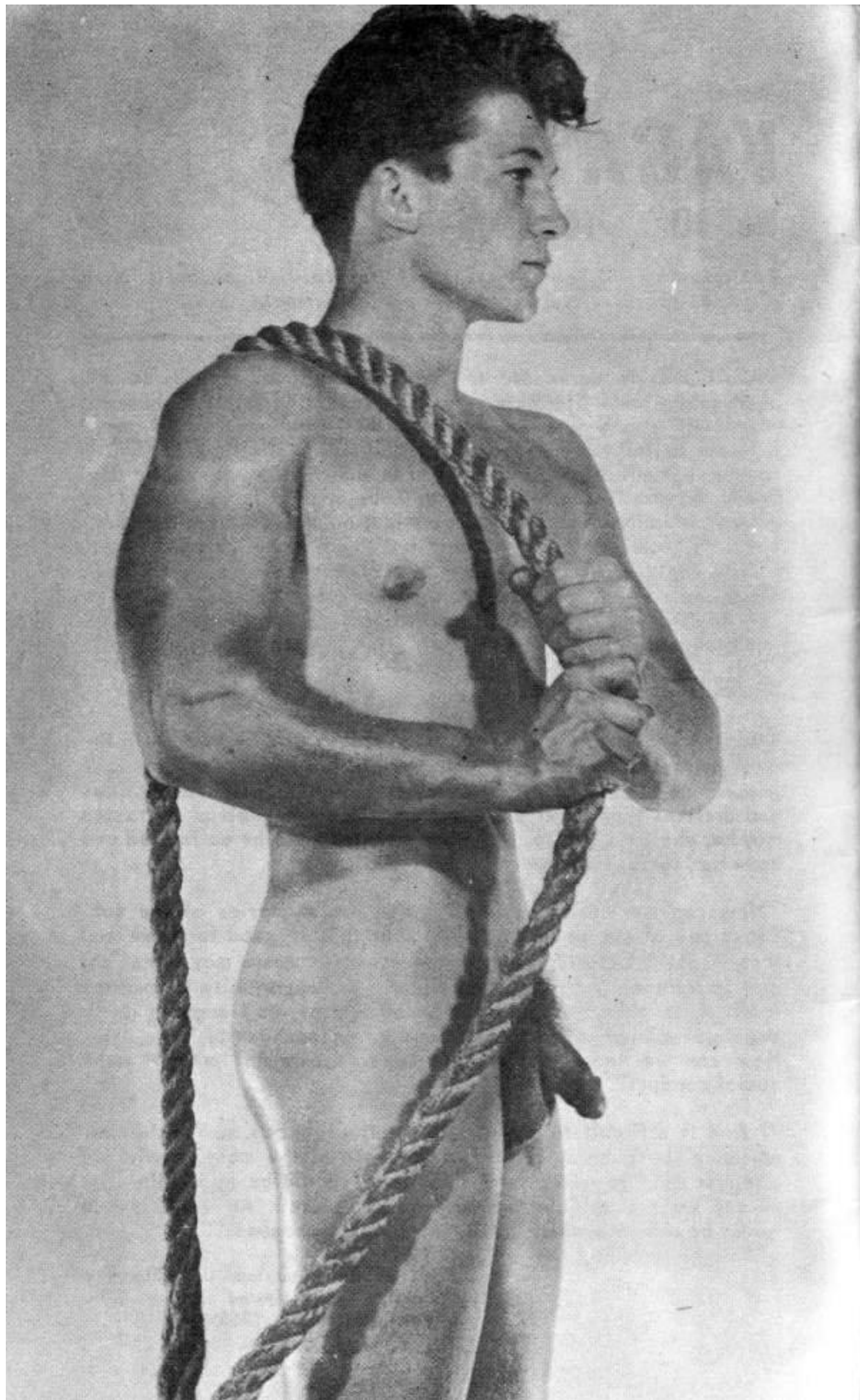
THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

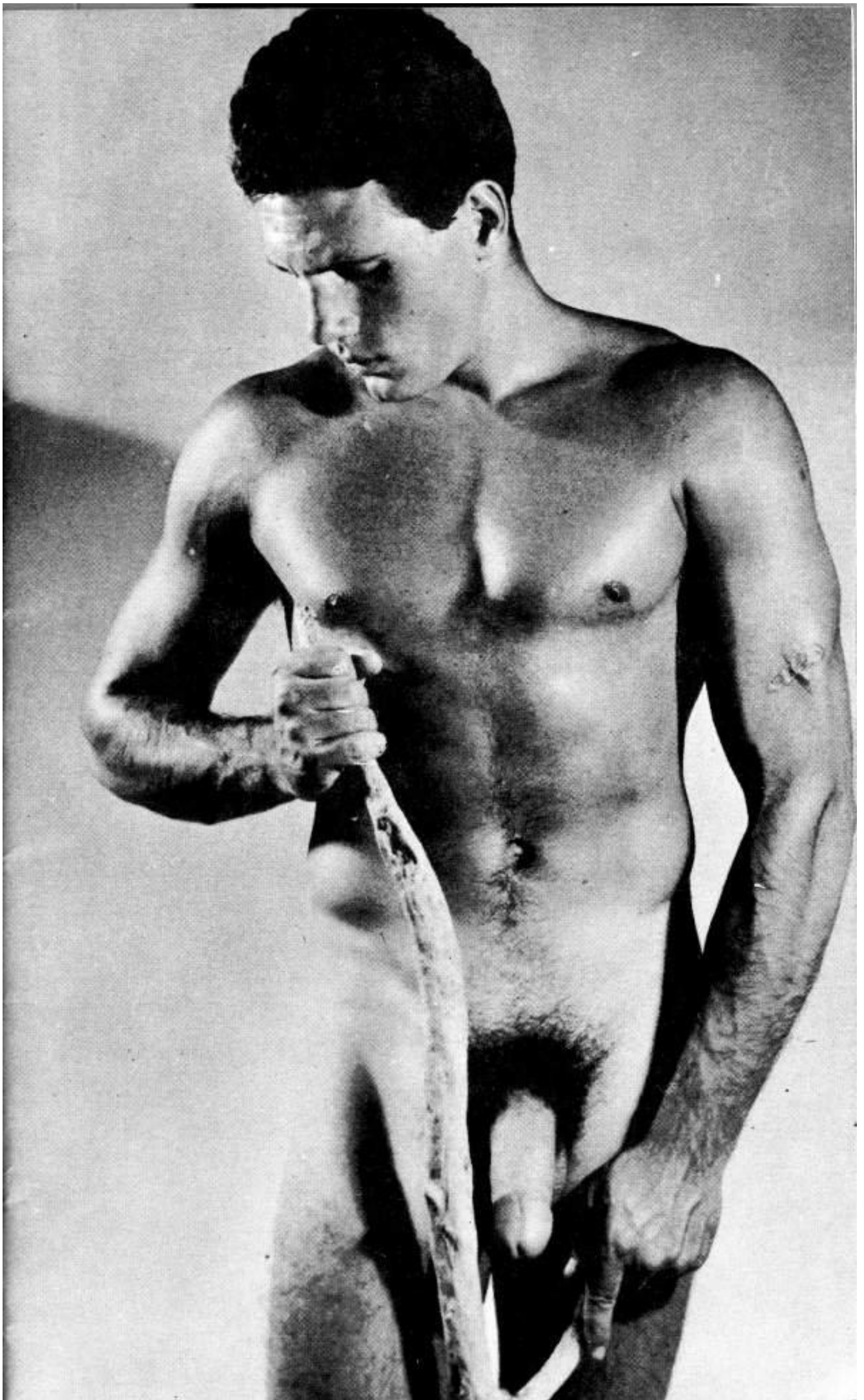
“Man was not made in a fixed mold. If a publication caters to the idiosyncrasies of a minority, why does it not have some “social” importance? Each of us is a very temporary transient with likes and dislikes that cover the spectrum. However plebian my tastes may be, who am I to say that other’s tastes must be so limited and have no ‘social importance’?”

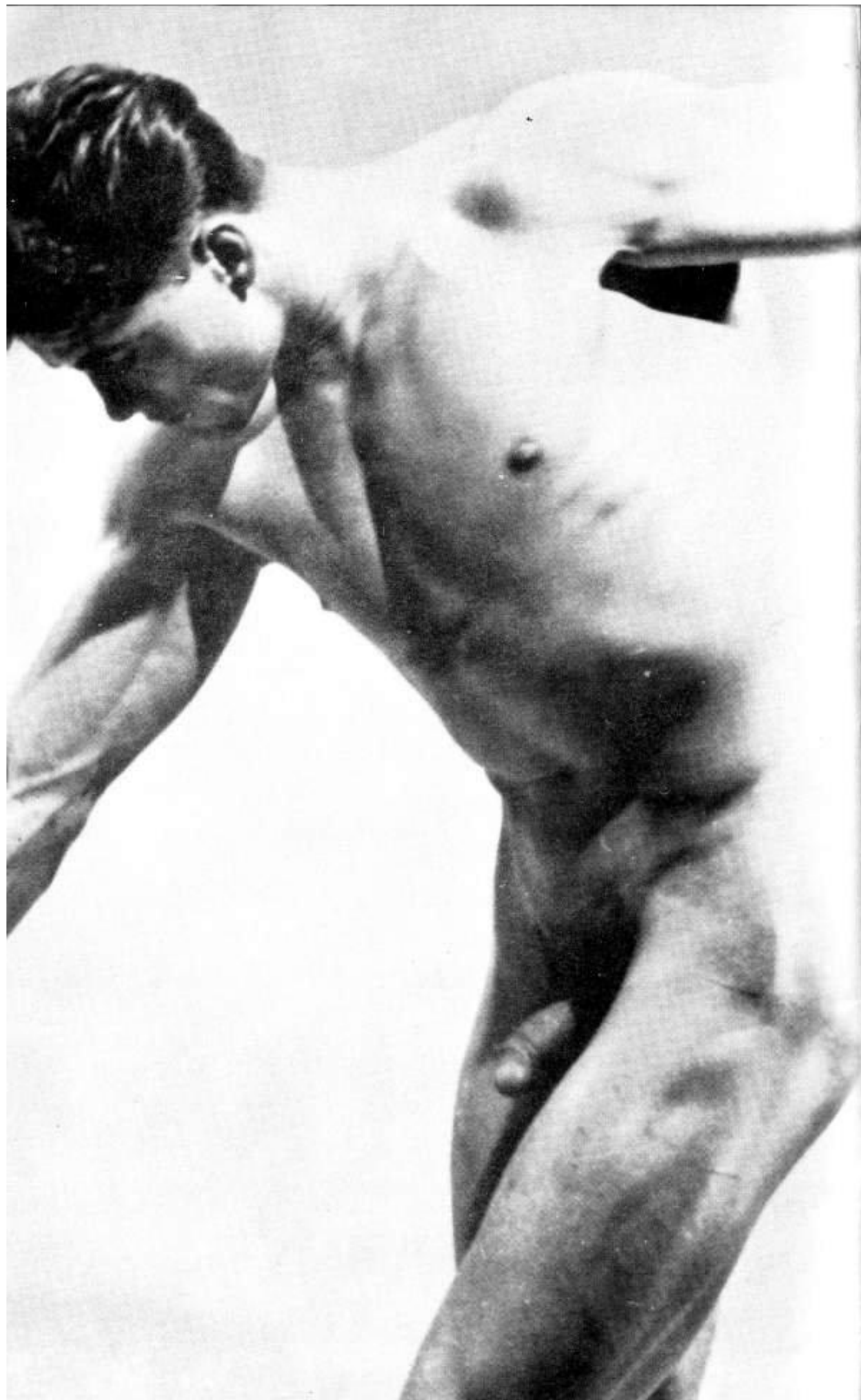
“How can we know enough to probe the mysteries of the subconscious of our people and say that this is good for them and that is not? Catering to the most eccentric taste may have ‘social importance’ in giving that minority an opportunity to express itself rather than to repress its inner desires, as I suggest in my separate opinion in ‘Putnam’s Sons v. Massachusetts, ante, at--’. How can we know that this expression may not prevent anti-social conduct?”

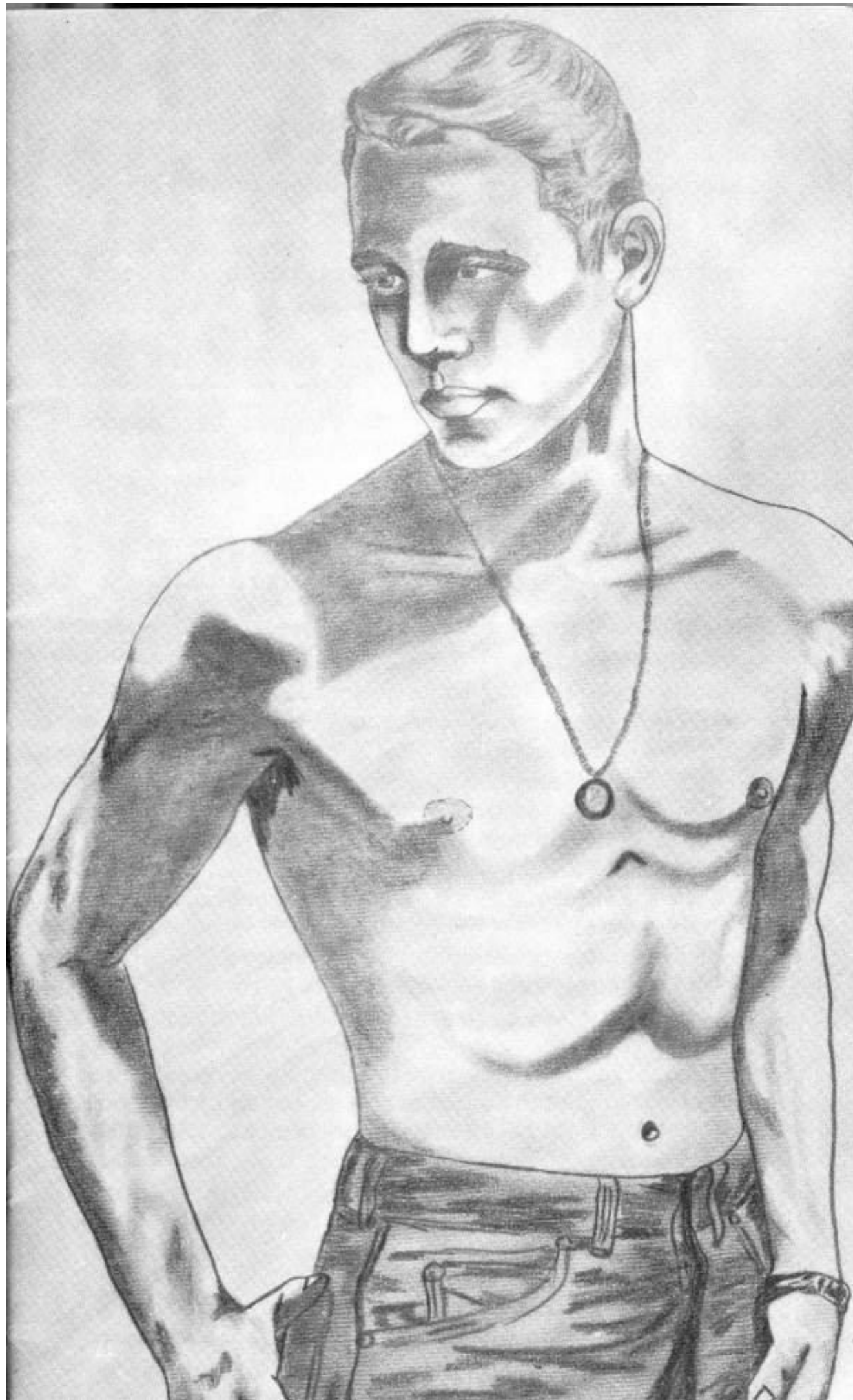
“I find it difficult to say that a publication has no ‘social importance’ because it caters to the taste of the most unorthodox amongst us. We members of this Court should be among the last to say what should be orthodox in literature. An omniscience would be required which few in our society possess.”

Mr. Justice Douglas, U.S. Supreme Court, (The United States Law Week, March 22, 1966).









THE



COMPLEX

Hello . . . hello . . . hello . . . hello.

So often, for no imaginable reason, he found himself practicing hellos. He'd laugh at himself for being so stupid, but – nevertheless – he'd go on whispering . . . hello . . . hello. And that wasn't all; he'd also walk over to the phone, turn the instrument under-side up, and with his thin fingers flip and flip again the knob controlling the bell sound. He'd then dial the weather number, saying it aloud as he did . . . WE 6-1212 . . . and listen to the recorded answer.

United States Weather Bureau forecast for New York City and vicinity . . . 8 o'clock Central Park reading . . . temp-er-a-ture . . . 50 degrees, south to southwest winds . . . rain tonight.

He'd have the voice repeat its story several times. Yet, how he hated the automatic, impersonal, New York sound of her. He'd laugh at himself then too.

It's because the phone is so new . . .

Three days new; the latest addition to his little apartment . . . his fifth-floor-rear apartment . . . the place holding the few things he owned . . . his home.

There was a second-hand sofa covered with a noisy plaid blanket – bought for football games and kept with him ever since. There were books, mostly textbooks – these too from college days – in a bookcase built of planks resting on bricks; a portable phonograph, some L.P.'s – Judy Garland well-represented – sketches arranged, thumb-tacked to the walls.

It's still transient looking, but great – just great. In a little while he'd get ready to walk to a movie, one on 42nd street. He loved movies . . . some of the stars he considered best friends. But right now, he just lay back on the sofa – cracking his knuckles, one finger at a time – and watched the clothesline, outside the window, jerking abruptly and repeatedly in the wind. Movie night . . . every Sunday since he arrived in New York.

God . . . thing are tough.

The agents and casting directors all said the same thing. Get into a show, and let us know about it. We go see everything. He'd give an embarrassed grin. Get into a show . . . yes . . . get into a show . . .

To attempt this, he'd answer any open casting call. These affairs were most often at mid-town rehearsal halls, centrally located in this city's busy, busy theatre district. There'd be a room with a mirrored wall, sometimes a ballet bar, sometimes benches along a wall, sometimes folding chairs; but always a sameness. The waiting rooms would become incredibly crowded. Actors, actresses, would-be actors, would-be actresses sitting, standing, leaning, pushing . . . There'd be an over-flow into the corridor and stairway long before the auditioners arrived.

Well, I'm sure going to keep trying.

He saw Shane again.

It started to rain and as he walked home, feeling himself deep and protected in his raincoat, he thought about the movie. She doesn't make movies any more . . . too bad too . . . but she certainly had her day . . . last I read, she did "Peter Pan" on Broadway. Palance takes twenty minutes to take off those gloves . . . what a

great bit.

It was a Tuesday, and walking hurriedly down Lexington Avenue – not that he was going anywhere in particular, but it was the time of day when the hectic pace of the city is infectious – he met a fraternity brother, Gordon. Gordon McElroy who had been a 'big wheel' in that organization when he'd pledged. That first year in school, Gordon was a real help to him. That had been wonderful, having such a top man on campus interested in helping him. During those great-for-the-ego rushing days, Gordon was always in the Sigma Nu group who had wine and dined him and his friends in an attempt to win their favor. And it was Gordon who laughingly – but constantly – cornered him on campus, adding to his pledge demerit card when he couldn't recite that never-to-be-learned Greek alphabet. They had never become very friendly because, after all, there's a world of difference between a freshman and a senior. But they did chat amicably at chapter meeting and he'd always thought Gordon 'a great guy' . . . one of the few in the frat to be admired and emulated. Following year, he'd seen Gordon briefly one Homecoming Weekend. Year after same weekend, even more briefly. That was when Gordon waved to him across the dining hall. And now, here he was, in the middle of Manhattan, looking so at ease and comfortable, so prosperous. Gordon was first quite surprised and then seemingly pleased with their chance meeting. As for him, he was just overwhelmed with pleasure and a strange gratitude.

Elaborating on his timid suggestion that they stop in somewhere for coffee, Gordon insisted they have supper together and talk. They ate at a French restaurant, where they ordered chicken cooked in wine . . . and Gordon talked. He was in 'advertising' . . . whatever that meant. He had been here since graduation as an executive trainee, and was slowly getting comfortable in his job, in his apartment. Gordon told him of the 'old gang' that he no longer saw nor even wanted to see. It was agreed that harping on campus doings, and the old days was a

ridiculous thing; therefore they both laughed good-naturedly upon confessing that they received and read avidly the Alumni News Quarterly.

He was interested in everything Gordon said. He wanted to be even more interested and he wanted this interest to show. He mustn't push or be overbearing . . . he'd be animated and vital. He was so lonely . . . it seemed silly . . . but he was. He couldn't recall ever having had such a nice time . . . never before. Never before had he had so much fun. Absurd? He knew the thought was absurd but yet it seemed true. Because the past weeks had held so little . . . it was true. I'd love to help. You mean, you just put it up like wallpaper? Is it a difficult process? I'll wear old clothes and work like a bastard . . . sounds like fun.

He was so glad they hadn't just met, talked, and parted. He wanted to cement this friendship.

All day Saturday they worked; glueing sheets of tan burlap to the living-room walls of Gordon's apartment. He thought it was fun. Gordon was all business, Mister Efficiency himself, giving directions and being very particular about how good a job they were doing. A wide selection of records was played and some people from neighboring apartments came in to kibitz and comment. He enjoyed meeting these people, chatting with them, and then hearing Gordon's lengthy and intensive 'scoops' upon each one's exit. When the job was done, Gordon went out and shopped for groceries, while he returned the ladders to the janitor and cleaned the living room. They had supper, watched television and talked.

"I went to see Shane again last week. It's always playing somewhere and I never get tired of it."

Gordon laughed when he heard this.

"Why are you laughing? Now don't tell me you didn't like it . . . it's a tremendous movie. Alan Ladd was never better . . . a perfect mating of star and role."

Gordon laughed again with an all-knowing grin.

"Stevens is a great director . . . one of the greatest. I thought Place in the Sun was another all-time . . . now,

what's so funny?"

Gordon took him by the shoulders and sat him in the leather chair near the fireplace.

"O.K., O.K., Shane's a great movie. I agree. Don't get so intense. The reason it struck me as funny was because of this fellow I know . . . lives in the Village. He once explained to me why – supposedly – so many people like the movie so much. He's a nut . . . he's got a theory for everything. About Shane . . . he said it particularly appealed to people who had something lacking in their father-son background. He said these people get a bang out of such a story, because they're making Shane a big father image."

"Alan Ladd . . . a big father image?"

"Quiet . . . anyway, the father image of the father or somebody who's going to ride in and take care of all the problems and the difficulties in living . . . and make things easy for the poor baby who couldn't quite get things moving for himself."

Gordon was obviously joking, but he was serious in thinking it over. What an interesting way to think about a Westerns appeal. No longer do people just like to see good guys beat up bad guys. It's now all in the subconscious or something.

He was even more serious when he said: "Could be so about me . . . my father died when I was a kid. You are really a character!"

Gordon laughed at him again.

On Sunday, he went to Gordon's again and helped paint the tiny kitchen. Gordon put up the newly cleaned draperies which stretched across one full wall of the living room. The bookshelves around the red brick fireplace were polished, with the books, vases and pictures re-arranged on them once more. He thought Gordon's home was lovely. It's a very warm room . . . the feeling, I mean . . . is one of warmth. Gordon would treat him to a movie for being such a hard-working assistant.

"We'll go see Shane again," Gordon teased.

"That type movie is too deep for you," he retorted.

He was working part-time again. He'd heard from the employment agency on Monday morning; would be typing for a Northrop Corporation on West 57th Street for the next two weeks. He was free, mornings, to visit the agent and production offices in quest of theatre work. This he did not do, but slept late instead. Gordon called him Wednesday morning.

"Hi, did I wake you?"

"No, been up for quite a while."

"How's the job?"

"Oh, the same old junk. The people there are nice enough, though. I have two tickets for a play in the Village. Summer and Smoke is being done down there."

"Yes, I've heard that it's tremendous. Geraldine Page is this new actress, that's a great new talent, they say."

"Oh, you know all about it."

"God, yes . . ."

"Want to go?"

"I'd like to very much. I've been wanting to see it . . . thanks for asking."

They both loved the show – discussed Williams, the new actress, that particular theatre. Gordon had arranged for them to meet some people he knew at a small bar nearby. They were very nice – a married couple, two years in America, from England where he'd been a radio actor, she an interior designer. Both were very friendly, talkative, and anxious to see him again.

They taxied to Gordon's apartment to have some coffee and to see his latest decorative additions. The coffee was good; Gordon had an expensive electric coffee-pot. The new pictures were small 5 x 7 clown drawings – four of them arranged on the wall above the phonograph. He looked at them and thought them pleasant and colorful.

"Now, look at them again . . . one of them is quite clever." Gordon looked directly at him.

"One is really a drawing of a phallus . . . the clown's form is a disguise . . . Look . . . which one is it?"

He was a little shocked and more than a little embarrassed. "Well . . . I . . . oh yes, my god . . . this one is . . . the blue one."

"Nope, it's the red one."

"But this one looks like it is . . . and so does the red one, right? This one too. Geez, I seem to be seeing them all over."

He laughed feebly.

Gordon was very close to him now – holding the buttons of his jacket. "Kiddo, you've come to mean an awful lot to me these last few days. What do you think about us?"

"Well, I don't know, Gordon . . . I mean, what do you . . . mean?"

"I mean . . . the two of us. We can be very good for each other."

He felt Gordon unbuttoning his jacket and felt the pressure of Gordon's thumb jabbing lightly into his waist.

"No, Gordon, don't start anything like that." He wasn't sure he was in control of his voice.

"Like what?"

"Like that."

"Really?"

"Really."

"Well then, you better just go . . . that's what I want and now you know it."

Very well then, he'd go . . . but he didn't want to leave. He did and he didn't. He had hurt Gordon . . . that he knew. Gordon stood immobile but for that twitch in his cheek that almost caused a laugh. He couldn't help it . . . it did cause him to laugh . . . that funny twitch. He laughed lightly.

"What is it?"

"Nothing . . . I . . . Gordon, can't we . . . I mean, let's be . . . just friends."

"You silly . . ."

Gordon's arms were around him.

"We're already friends . . ."

He left the apartment late in the morning after

Gordon had rushed around to get to his office by ten. He decided not to go to work, and about noon, he walked the long distance back to his place. He walked very slowly . . . looked in every shop window . . . saw scampering pups, unintelligible paintings, imperturbable mannequins . . . saw a nude one who, even though abandoned for the lunch-hour, wouldn't lose her look of disdainful hauteur.

He called his supervisor and pretended an intense headache. He roamed around the apartment . . . slowly ate a sandwich . . . never really allowing himself to think . . . neither about what he was doing and certainly not about what had happened. He just roamed around his apartment aimlessly. He decided to write a letter to his mother, but then wasn't amused by the completely false picture it conveyed of his New York life. It was late that afternoon that the phone rang. He let it ring awhile, standing over it; finally he picked it up with the slowest movement.

"Hello . . ."

"Where the hell were you?"

"I was just . . ."

"Haven't much time. Just want to tell you . . . I'm having some office people over tonight and would like to have you there. I'm going to show off the apartment. They're really great guys . . . and it'll be fun . . . O.K.?"

He didn't answer right away.

"O.K.?"

"Sure, love to."

"Say, now what's wrong?"

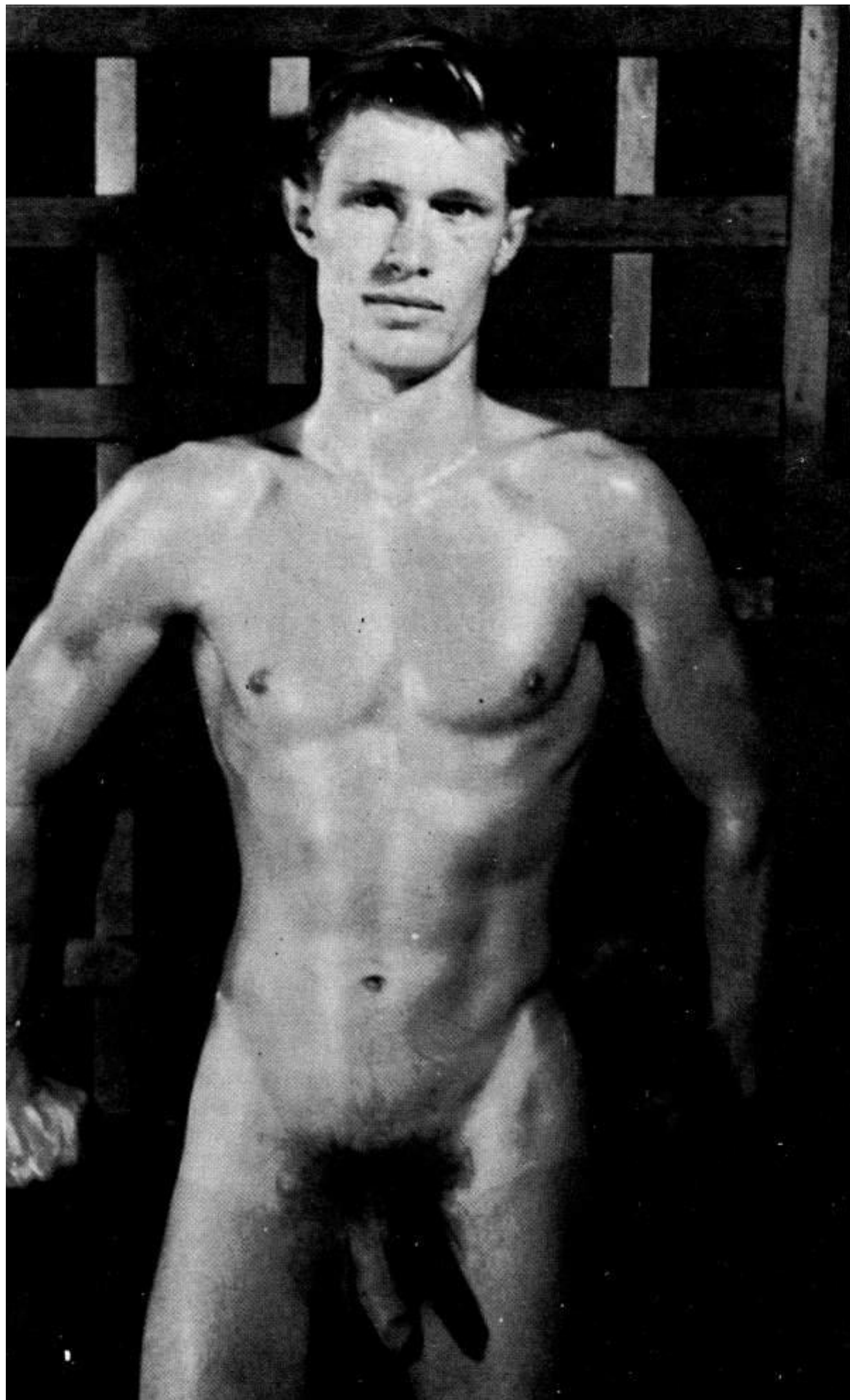
"Nothing . . . I'm just feeling low cause I didn't get to work today."

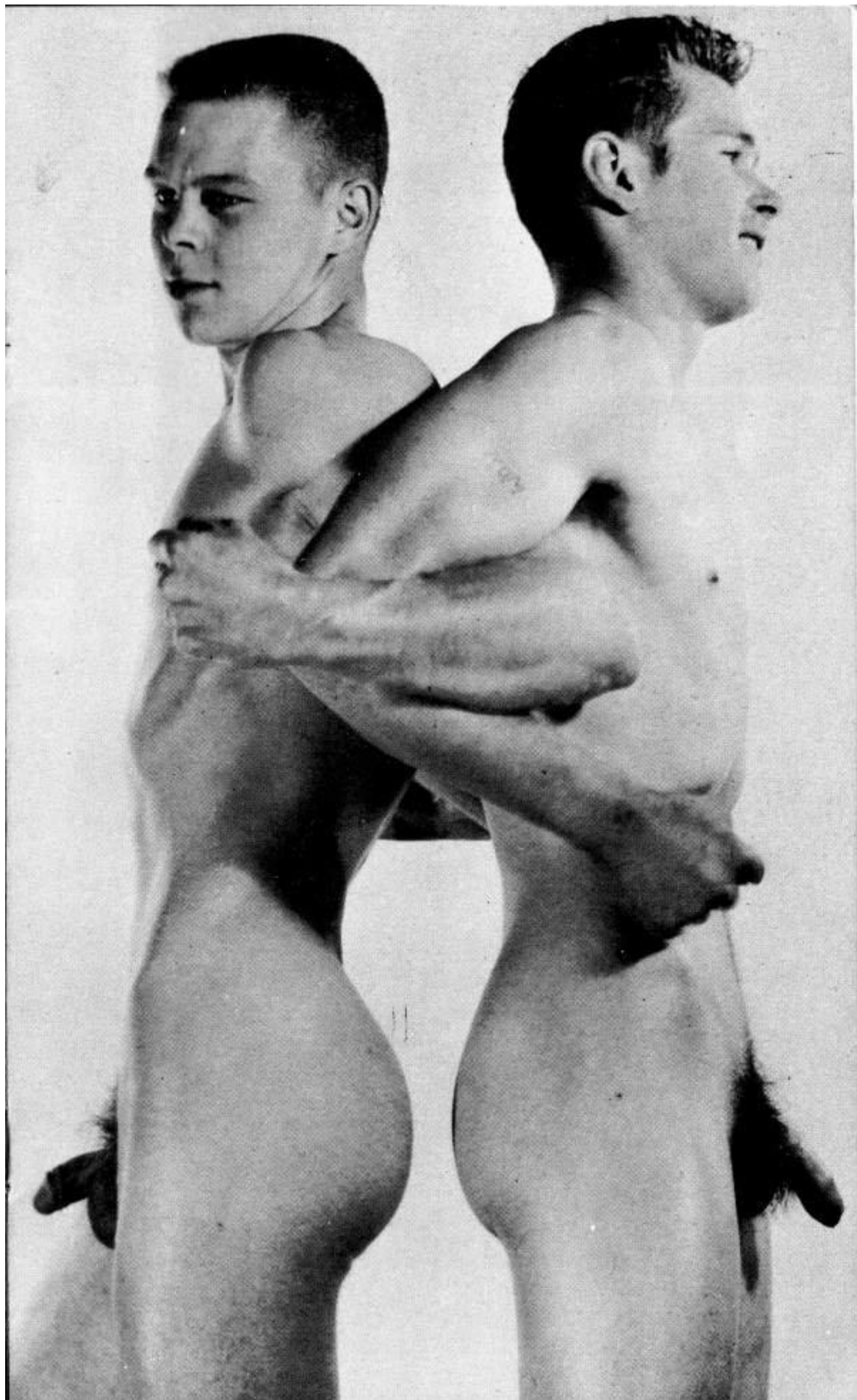
"Well, what the hell . . . of all the goddamn things to worry about. Perk up . . . See you at about seven . . . you come early. Wear that bulky wool sweater. O.K.?"

"Yes," He smiled a little, . . . "Shane . . ."

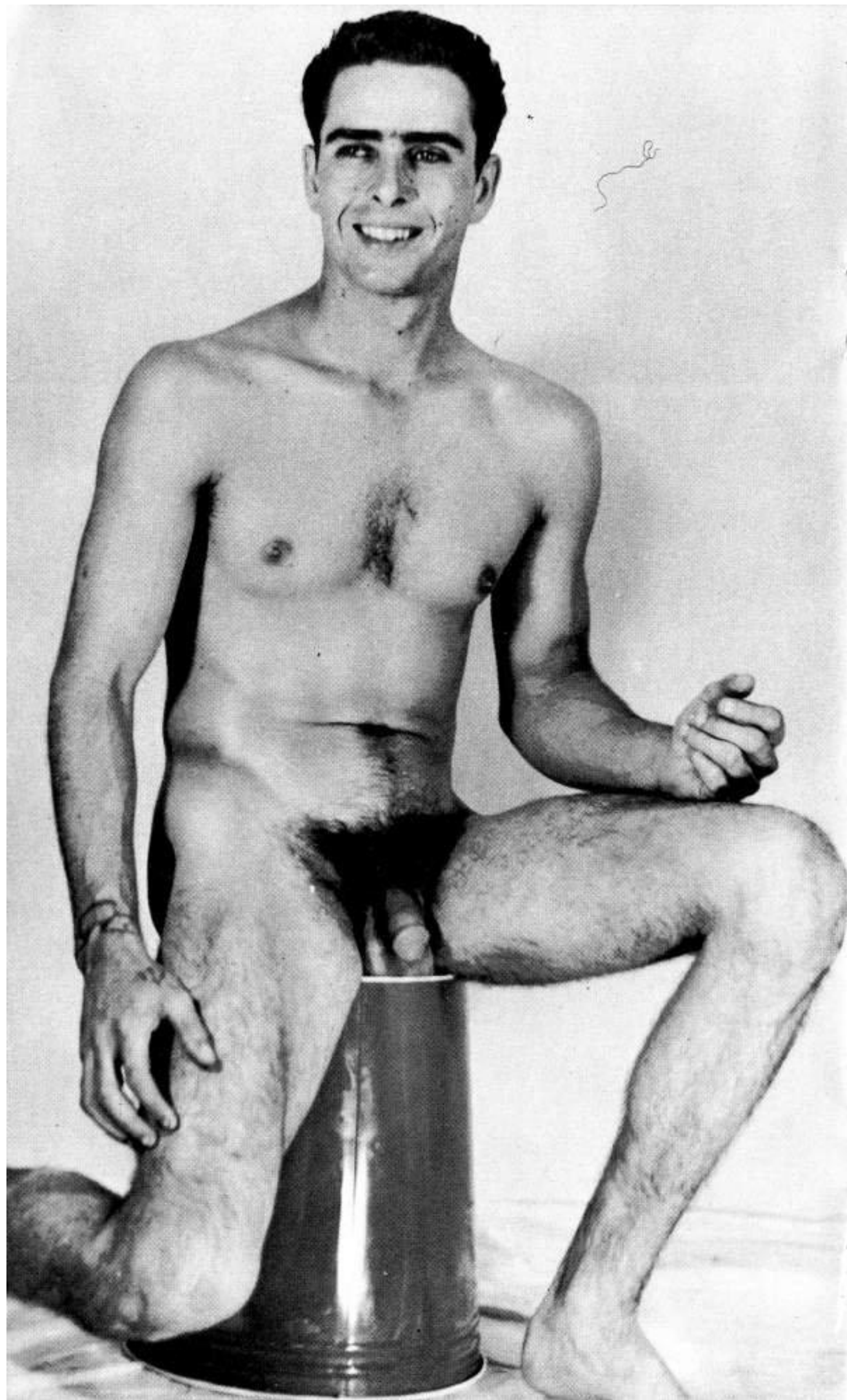
There was a slight pause before Gordon burst into hearty laughter.

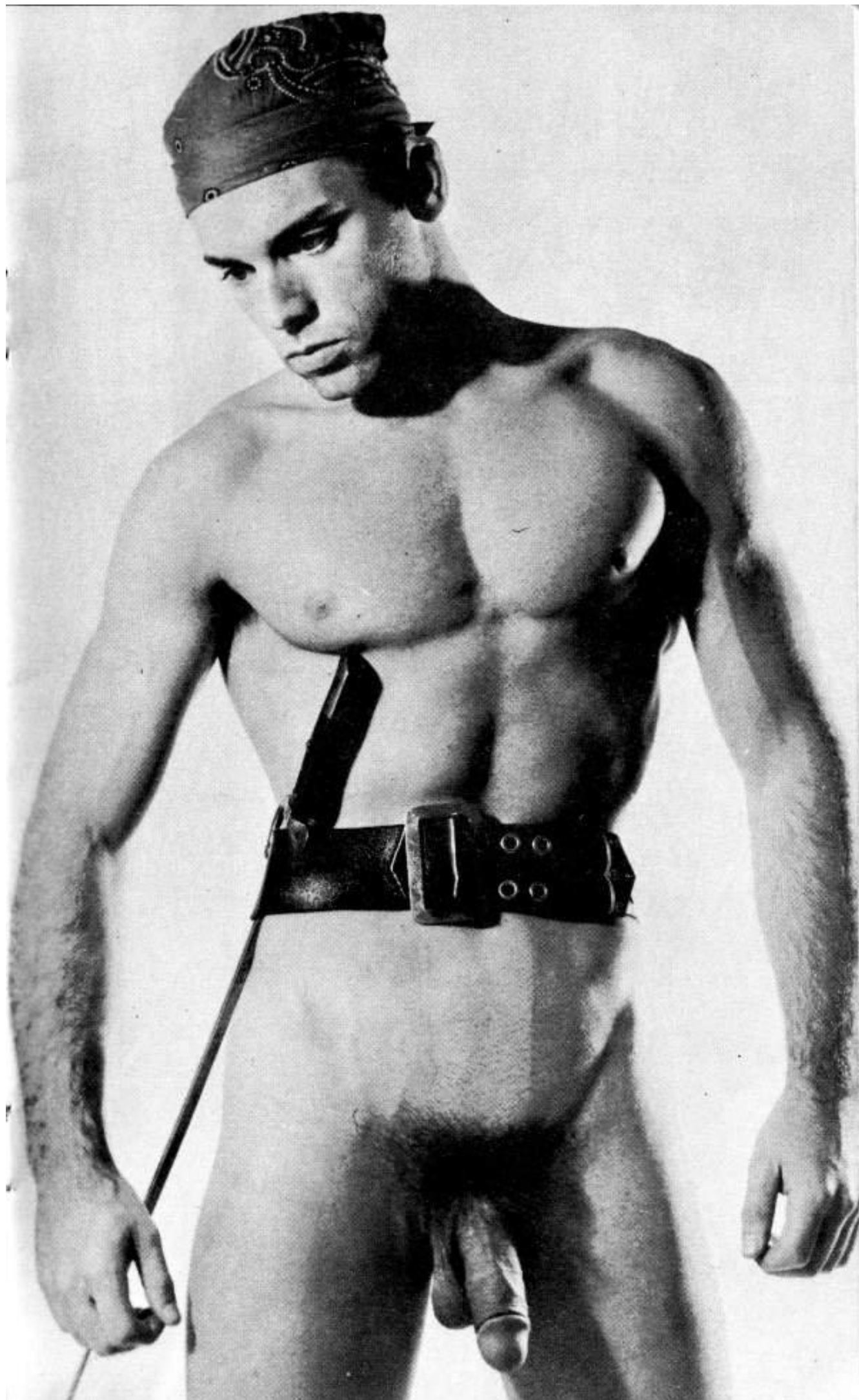
He laughed too . . . and slowly put down the phone.



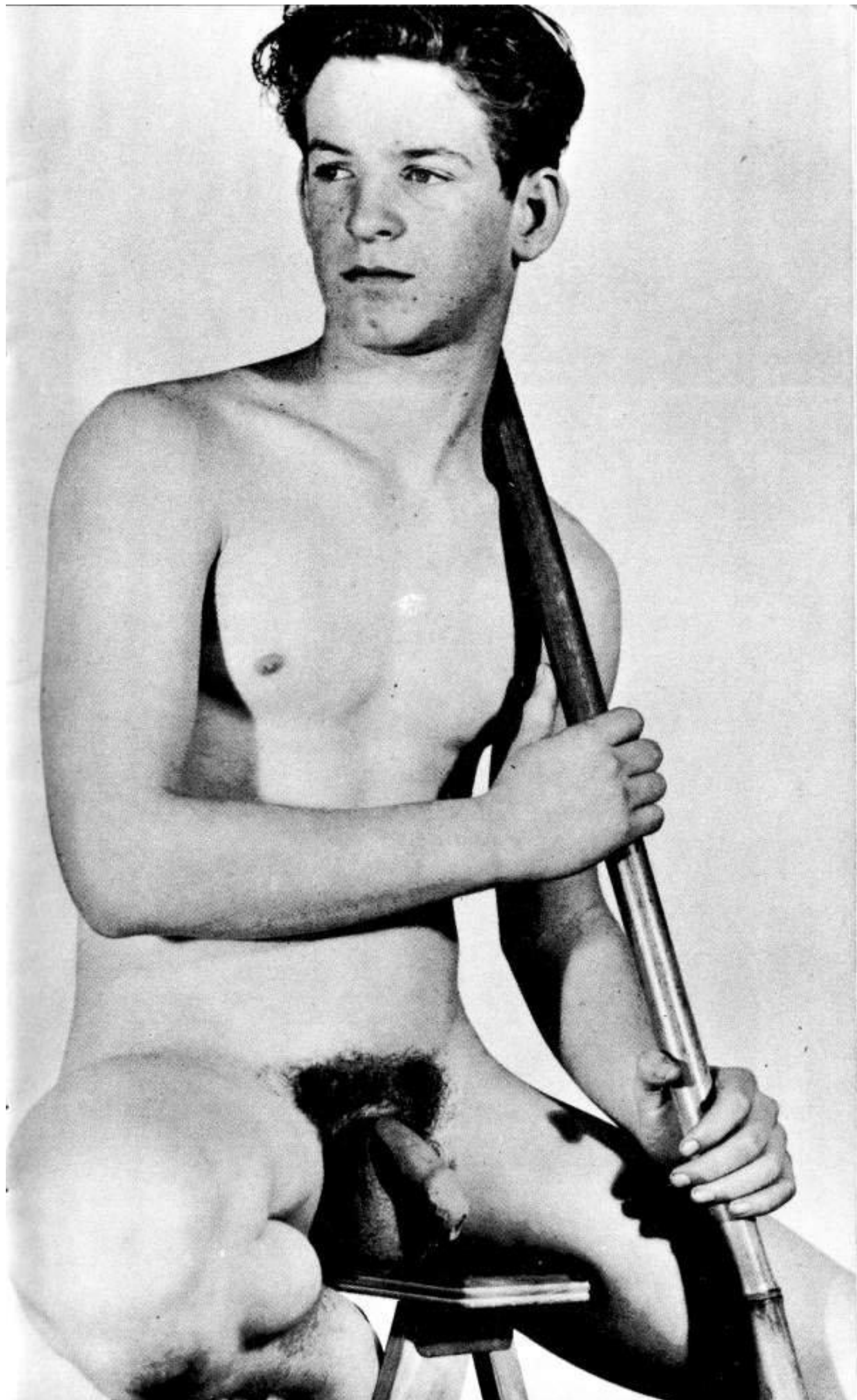






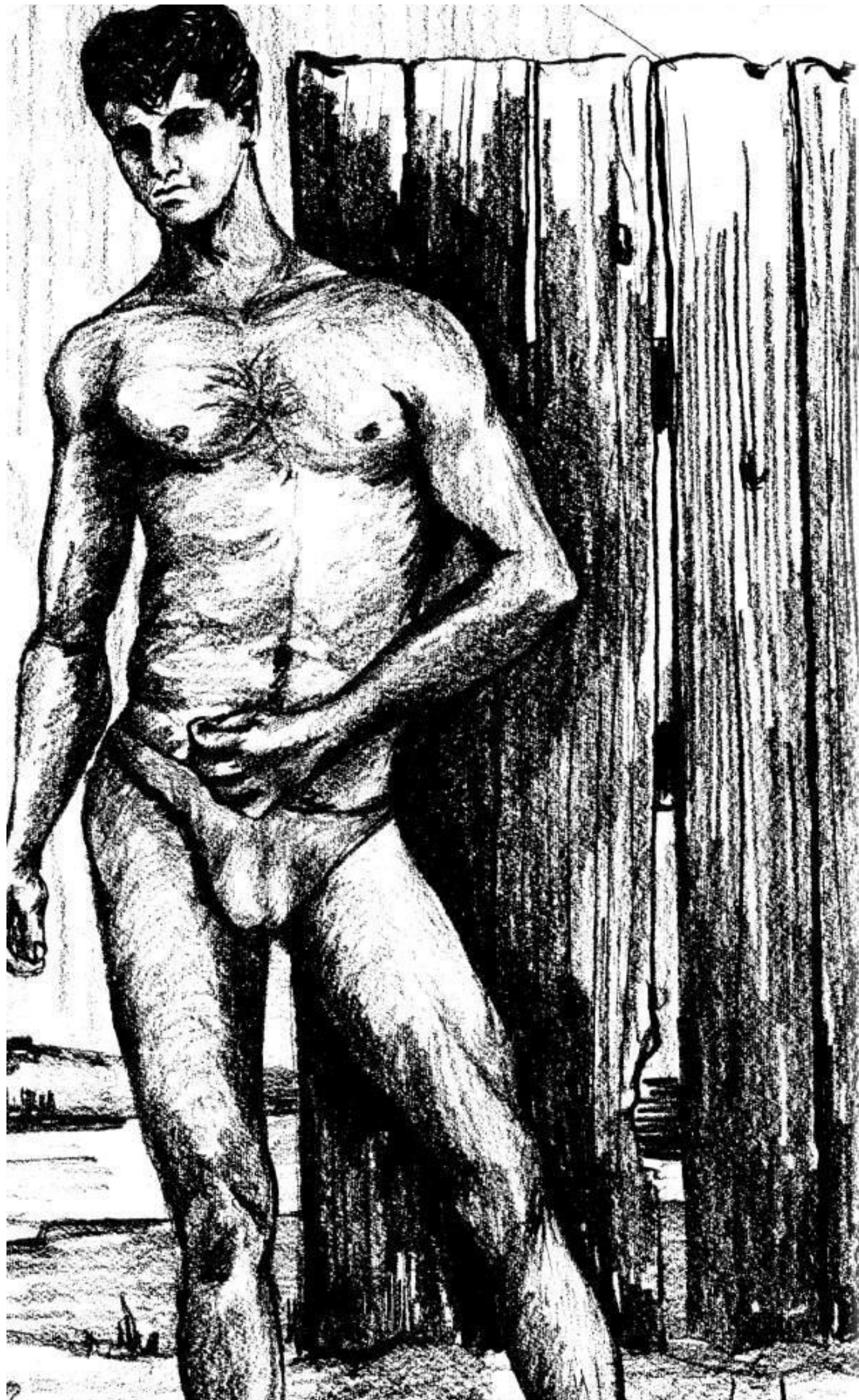




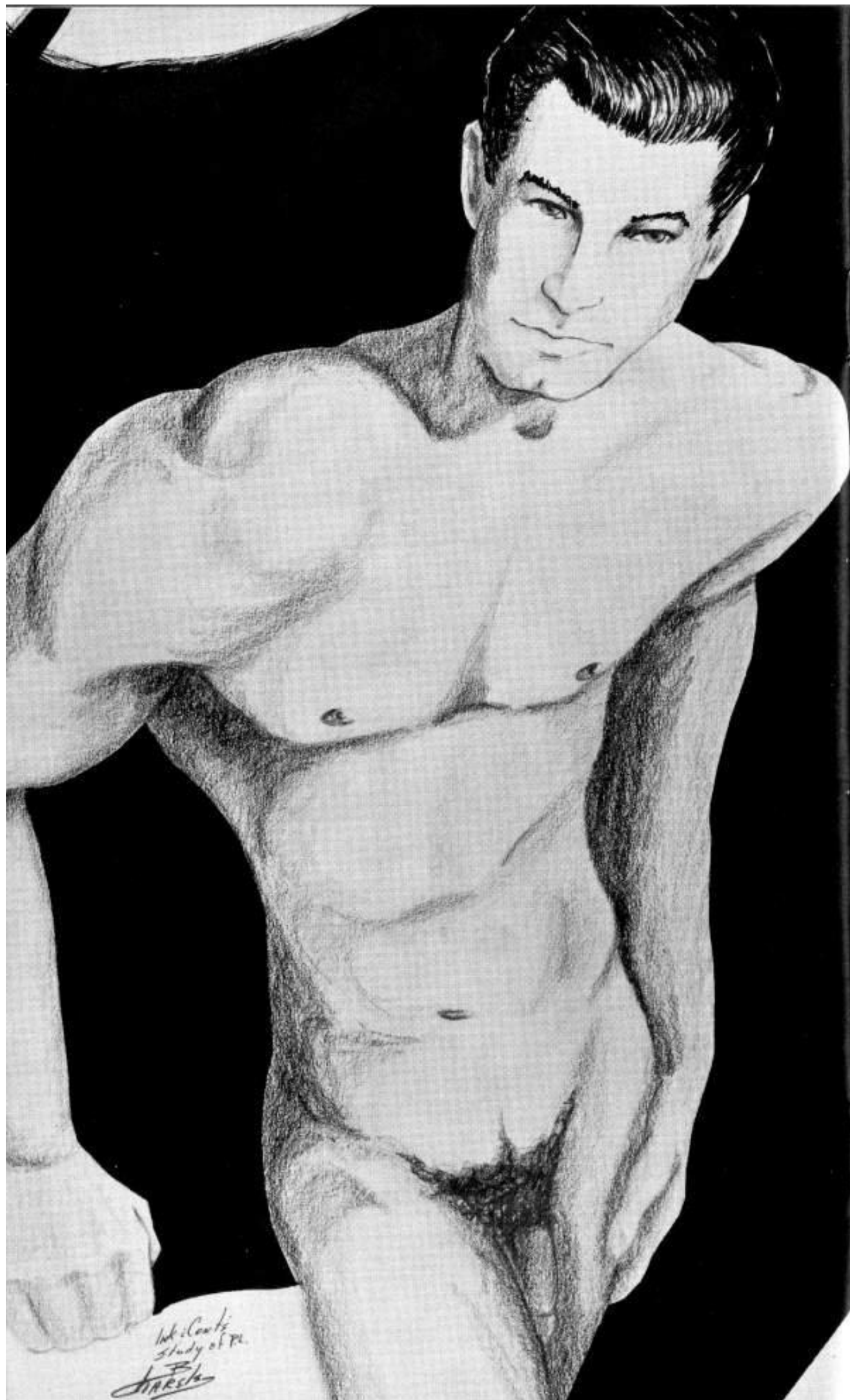




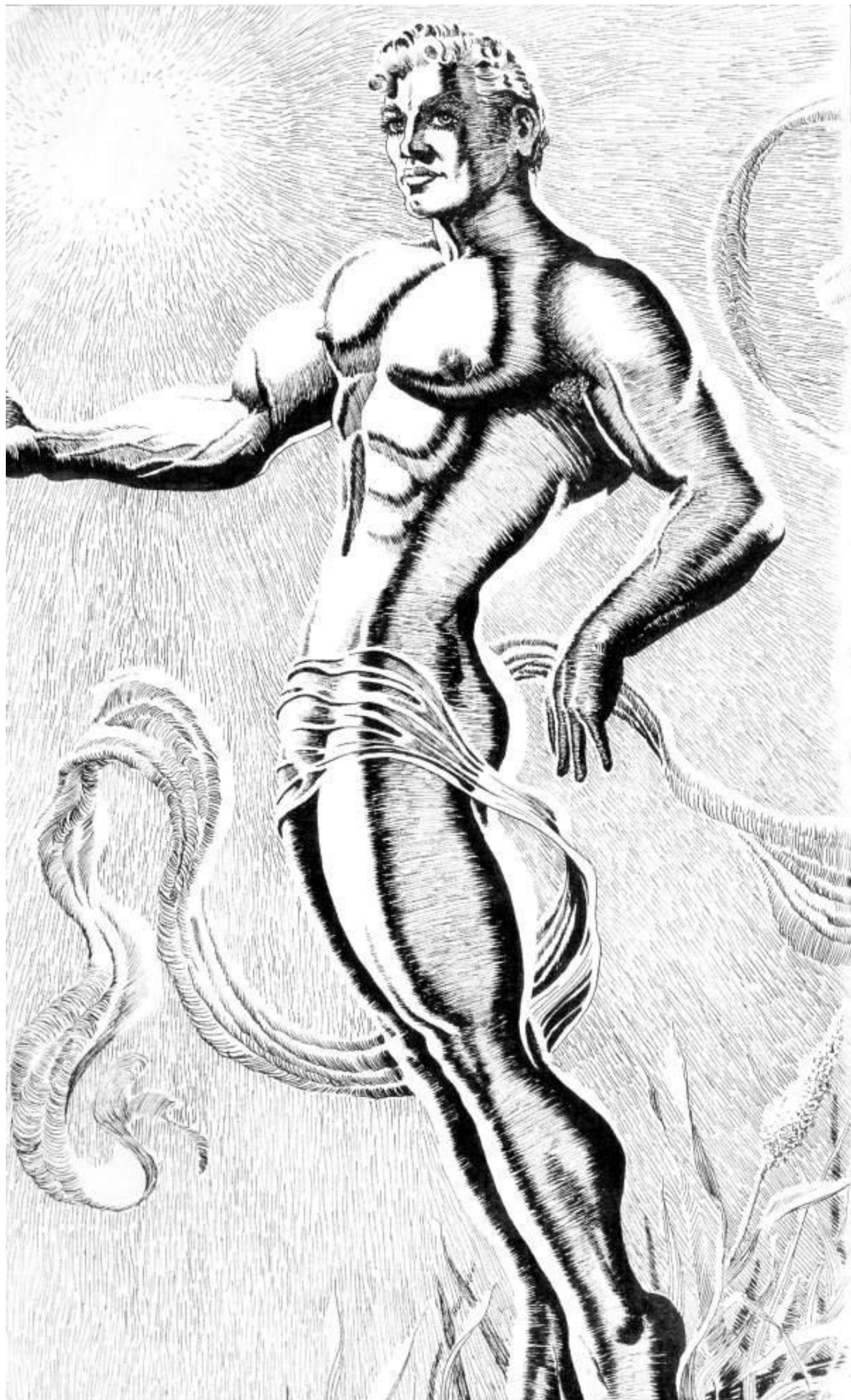












SONNET

*But let me sing a lighter song and speak
Of days when first we met, my pretty love
And I. The sun had driven us to seek
Cool shadows; branches low lay close above
Our heads and hid us from the world without
How quiet and sweet it seemed to each of us
To have a friend alone. No man could doubt
Our friendship then, nor be but envious
Of liberties our youth allowed us there.
Our conversation tore apart the world
We knew, revising all to suit us. Where
We doubted, we destroyed, and ruthless hurled
Into the chasm of our ignorance
What concepts did not fit our circumstance.*

Personal Ads...

One of the most flourishing of the newspaper introduction services is that offered by TAB, a weekly newspaper published in Toronto, Canada. This newspaper is not found on too many of the United States newstands, although it is certainly not banned and anyone in the U.S. can receive it regularly by subscribing to it for \$6 a year.

Persons seeking new friends place an ad (up to 40 words) for only \$2. Persons who want to answer an ad pay \$1 for each ad they wish to answer. The system used by TAB is quite simple: when you answer an ad, you place your letter to that person and one dollar in a stamped, unsealed envelope. Write the ad number on the inside flap of the envelope but do not write anything on the outside of the envelope. Then place that envelope inside another addressed to TAB'S Dateline Club, 91 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. TAB states that all letters are promptly forwarded to the advertiser and that persons may answer two, three, or more ads at one time, so long as they enclose one dollar for each ad.

In case you haven't seen TAB, below are some ads which appeared recently which may be of interest to you. If you wish to subscribe to TAB, place ads, or answer ads, please deal directly with TAB. We are printing this article in VAGABOND as information, only, in the hope that it will be of help to you in locating new friends, and we have no connection with TAB, its advertising, or replies.

A6965: Young man, 28, 6 feet, 3 in., 180 lbs., extremely handsome. Just returned from Hollywood where he did fashion modeling. Love to hear from Italian and Greek men between 25-35.

A6977: Young man, 26, two years in Canada. Very new to swinging life. Would like to meet other men for friendship and companionship. Very broadminded. I enjoy anything in which there is an element of congenial fun.

A6979: Agressive male, 24, white, 6', 180 lbs., eager to contact Negro or white males ages 18-35. Must have good shape and be well-endowed for lasting friendship. Interests: physique photos, tight pants, music. Photo and phone appreciated. Will answer all. Hurry!

A6980: Male, 38, white, 6', 160 lbs., would like to meet man 24 to 40 for congenial, lasting friendship. Wants a companion to live with. Will answer all. Please, phone number.

A6982: I am 27, 6'4", have my own home, two cars, good job. Looking for male 20-25, attractive, well-built, to share all this. Will enjoy the congenial company of anyone who will come to New Jersey. Photo with letter.

A6985: Male, 21 years old, blond, blue eyes, 150 lbs., craves congenial company of males. Photo, letter, phone number please.

A6988: Business executive, in the early fifties, would like to contact a gentleman around same age for friendship and to share mutual interests. Must be sincere. Appearance and status unimportant.

A6989: Male, 19, dark hair, eyes. Wishes to relocate. Meet males 19-40 with own apt. for permanent companionship. Interested in most items in column, except leather goods, female attire. I am a swinger, but wish to expand interests. Recent photo, please.

A6993: Quiet male nearing 30, seeking affectionate quiet and possibly shy male. Honesty and sincerity an asset. Age and nationality unimportant. Interests: travel, movies and home life - lasting relationship. Phone number and snap necessary in first letter. No phonies, please.

A6997: White, virile, discreet, young male, 26, would like to meet a congenial white male, 20-25 in the New York City area for sincere friendship. Interests: photography, movies, music etc., Weekend get-togethers. Send frank letter, photo and phone number.

A6999: Good-looking male, early thirties, longs to meet sincere, discreet males in the Atlantic provinces and Toronto or attractive males to 45 visiting Newfoundland for friendship. Varied interests. No color barrier. Send photo.

A7000: Successful bachelor, early forties, slim build, 6' tall, 175 lbs., wishes to meet masculine (no effeminates) good looking, neat, honest and affectionate lad or older type to accompany me my winter vacation to the Caribbean or Mexico. Send photo.

A7001: Male, 36, 6'2", 200 lbs., brown hair, blue eyes, very lonely. Wishes to meet sincere masculine men 20-50 for true companionship and lasting friendship. Hobbies: Swimming, fishing, sun-bathing, physique photography, and nudism. Please send photo for quick reply.

A7004: Attractive, well-endowed, gay gentleman, sincere, middle forties, very affectionate, versatile, financially secure. Masculine in appearance, well-dressed, well-adjusted, cultural and athletic interests. Wishes discreet meetings with similar male aged 40 to 50. Can travel. Frank letter and photo exchanged. No phonies or effeminates.

A7012: Attractive, sincere young man, 27, white, 5'11", 160 lbs., dark hair. Wishes friendship with sincere, masculine young men under 30. I can travel anywhere so all replies will be answered. No effeminates please. Photo appreciated, but not necessary.





VAGABOND