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# Mike and Natasha

## Meant for Each Other from the Beginning

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From the moment we started typing in the chat room things starting clicking.

**M**y name is Michael, I am a F.T.M. Transsexual. My partner is Natasha, an M.T.F. transsexual. This is our story ...

*The great thing about dating someone else that was transgendered ... we didn't need to rehash the painful memories of all the years and experiences lost being in the wrong gender.*

Depending on where we pick up our story, it all traces back to our high school years. Yes, Natasha and I actually attended the same high school around the same time as each other. Of course back then I was living as female and she was living as male. Natasha is a few years older than me, but our paths did indeed cross during our high school years. As Natasha explains, our lives were meant to cross. She calls our journey of getting together - fate.

We often talk about what it would have been like if we had actually gotten together in high school. Personally, I think we wouldn't have lasted, we would have killed each other (figuratively speaking of course), driven each other mad or the relationship would have fizzled out badly or mutually. The reason I say that is, back then, I know I did not know what I wanted out of life, nor did I have an understanding of who I was. Back then I was a very confused and conflicted soul. So I'm glad that fate played out this way, and we got together after we started on our paths to becoming the individuals we truly are.

The main part of our story happens when you fast forward past our high school years, our twenties and even most of our thirties. It fast forwards through relationships, military services, family births and family deaths, life's ups and downs and of course many years following our high school years. Our story doesn't start until we had both already suffered many years as prisoners of gender identity.

Our story, really picks up in late December 2002 and not in the small town where we both went to high school. Our story takes place in two separate locations and in front of our home computers.

In late December 2002, I decided to sign onto America Online (AOL) and access one of their chat rooms. The chat room was called, "Transland". A friend (Denise from Colorado) had told me all about the chat room. So I decided to give it a try. When I entered the chat room and introduced myself as Mike, a transmen, a lot of the girls began to cyber flirt with me. One of those girls was a Miss Natasha Foxx.

From the moment we started typing in the chat room things starting clicking. We asked each other what state we were from, Massachusetts was the answer. We asked each other what part of Massachusetts, Central Massachusetts was the answer. We asked each other what school we went to, Northbridge High was the answer. Everyone in the chat room that was witnessing this was in awe as each answer was identical. We asked each other what year did you graduate, I answered 1986, she answered 1984. We had the attention of not only each other but everyone in the chat room, even the troublemakers.

I explained to Natasha and the entire Transland chat room that I had the yearbooks from Northbridge High from 1982 through 1986. Just as I finished typing the words and click on the send button, an instant message appeared. It was Natasha.

She wanted me to prove that I had these yearbooks and of course prove that I went to Northbridge High. So in a private instant message away from the eyes of the other chat room attendees, she gave me her male name. She instructed me to scan the picture in the yearbook with her male name and email her the picture. To return the favour, so to speak, I gave her my female name. So part of the deal was for me to not only email her the picture of her male self, but to also email her the picture of my female self. The next day or so, I followed the instructions as they were given to me.

Natasha replied back later basically still in shock that I was indeed from the same high school and small town as her. She also mentioned that she remembered seeing my female-self in the halls at school and around town. I honestly didn't remember her; I did however remember two of her sisters rather well. One was the same age as me, and the other one I worked with. But I was honest in telling her I didn't remember her or the other members of her family (she was from a large family), just her two sisters.

After the exchange of the high school yearbook photos, we started talking online in the chat room, in private instant messages and emails. Our online chatting eventually developed into phone conversations and to an eventual first date. Our first date got cancelled,

rather postponed twice.

One of our dates was postponed when Natasha caught the flu and no matter how much I insisted on stopping by with soup and other remedies, she refused. She didn't want my first impression of her to be very ill with the flu. The second postponement was due to a death on her brother-in-law's side of the family. Natasha had to watch her two nieces while their parents went out of town for the funeral. As they say, third times the charm.

Our first date was on 25th January 2003, the day we celebrate as our anniversary. We were both nervous, I bought alcohol to help ease our nerves, and turns out I bought so much alcohol it lasted for about eight months. I bought too much alcohol, because as it turns out we didn't need any help with feeling at ease with each other. As Natasha says, our getting together was fate, as soon as we met face to face; it was like we had been side-by-side the whole time.

The great thing about dating someone else that was transgendered, was you didn't need to "waste" time explaining what transgendered is, how it feels. We didn't need to rehash the painful memories of all the years and experiences lost being in the wrong gender. We each knew exactly how the other felt; we didn't need to explain the turmoil of being trapped in the wrong body.

The only difference was she was going one way and I was going the other. Our journeys were the exact opposite of one another.

Natasha and I hit it off instantly; we already had the instant connection of understanding, of sympathy, of empathy. We were an instant fit. The rest, as they say, is history.

Okay, so you want more ...

Being with someone else that is transgendered is great. I have learned so much about my trans sisters being with Natasha. I think our relationship is a great way to help educate others, including members of our own community. I often come across M.T.F.s that don't understand F.T.M.s and F.T.M.s that don't understand M.T.F.s. There is one step that is simple and painless, just reverse your own journey. That alone will give you a better insight to your trans brothers and trans sisters.

Don't get me wrong though, having two transsexuals in the same relationship has its downside as well. I often hear other transsexuals speak of the pressures of finances and saving for surgeries. I just shake my head. If they think it's financially tough being the only transsexual in a household, imagine what our household is like. Natasha often tells people, "The day Mike and I got together we went instantly \$200,000.00 in the hole."

Other than the financial stresses of being a two transsexual household, most of our journey together has been one with understanding and yes even the occasional comical moments. Our therapist often tells us that we should do a routine at transgendered conferences of the comical moments we have had with each other.

One of the funniest stories was when Natasha came home from work and was telling me how painful her breast growth was at times. I was standing there going, yeah I remember. And her responding back, no you don't. It took like twenty minutes and several "I remembers" and several "no you don'ts" later before she finally was like "Oh yeah, you would remember ...".

Another funny story was when my voice was changing and all over the place from the testosterone, there were moments I felt like Bobby Brady from the infamous *Brady Bunch* episode. I remember talking to Natasha and she felt I was taking a tone with her. So she told me to stop using that tone. I remember standing there trying to defend myself saying, "I can't control what my voice is doing from one minute to the next."

Natasha and I as a couple are always a work in progress. We got together in late January of 2003, pre-everything. Pre-hormones, pre-legal name changes, pre-surgery and Natasha hadn't come-out to anyone, nor had she started to see a gender therapist. I was a few steps ahead of her, I had already started seeing a great gender therapist, Diane Ellaborn, and I had already come-out to everyone.

Our relationship as a couple and even as two separate individuals is a constant work in progress. In the time frame since we got together, we have legally changed our names, we have started hormone therapy and we have come-out to everyone in our lives, family, friends, co-workers, etc. We have both had surgeries. It's hard to imagine those first days in late January of 2003, pre-everything. The journey and steps we have taken to this point. And the journey we still have to continue on. Baby we sure have come a long way.

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