



My Letter To Me, A Real Gay Cowboy

by Tex

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Dear Tex,

I haven't seen *Brokeback Mountain* yet, but I feel comfortable saying it's full of shit, because I know what the real Old West was like, and it wasn't full of a bunch of sissies who went around scared all the time that someone would catch them in an act of man love.

Everyone in the Old West was gay! Why, I remember being at the Stiff Cactus Saloon in Tombstone one time and seeing a veritable role call of cowpokes—outlaws and lawmen alike—all shirtless and having a good time.

Billy the Kid, Pat Garrett, Doc Holliday, and an entire Pony Express crew were all giving each other body shots, and Frank and Jesse James were both tickling Wyatt Earp's whiskers in the one of the back booths. Wild Bill Hickok was dealing a mean game of strip poker too, getting everyone down to their skivvies in a matter of minutes. If you got a Dead Man's hand, you couldn't walk right for a week—and you loved it!

The good times weren't just in Tombstone either. In Butte, Montana there was a place we'd go to—Curly's—where you had to come in wearing chaps...and nothing else. Wichita had their infamous dingus march every May. And don't even get me started on the prairie: cold nights, a warm fire, and a little whiskey gave us plenty of reasons to snuggle up. Why do you think we never packed tents?

Still don't believe me? Just look at the way we all dressed. Matching hats, bandanas, shirts, pants, belts with big buckles, chaps, and boots, all of it polished to a shine. We were all lean and strong from moving cattle and fighting Injuns in the open air. And when I close my eyes, I can still see all of the pink and paisley we used to wear. We were some pretty sons of bitches, I tell you that.

Hell, the only reason Calamity Jane started dressing like a man was because that was the only way she could get some drunk cowpoke to sleep with her. Oh, we'd make fun of the fella after that happened. Mistook the mountains for the prairie, we used to say.

So the next time anyone feels like making a movie about man-love in the Old West, how about taking the time to get it right? We weren't no self-hating fellas; we were out, and loud, and proud.

Sincerely,

Tex