



Nick Joe Nagelberg by Nick Holle

FLYMF September 2004, The Back To School Issue, Volume 1 Issue 7

It may not be apparent just by looking at me, but there was a time a few years back when I was having a lot of sex. Ridiculous amounts. It's true. There I was, a hero to most, with handfuls of women, one and three at a time. Blonde and curvy, black and freckled, loud and upside-down. For a solid year, I learned, practiced and honed my craft in sexual antics and acrobatics. I was a personal pommel horse to tens of hundreds of women.

I hate to sound boastful. That's just how it was. Pat me on the back, shake my hand or ask me for instruction. But the truth of the matter of this marvelous good fortune is that I owe all of it to my good friend Joe Nagelberg.

I met Joe in college. I never went to college, but I fit in so well there that no one ever even noticed. But there was Joe, and we hit it off famously. Beers and buddies first, then friends for life. One helluva a nice guy. Joe Nagelberg. Great guy.

I had always wished Joe to my twin sister Bonnie. I really did. I'd have done just about anything for her to take Joe's hand in holy matrimony. That's how much I think of him. Unfortunately, I strangled her with my umbilical cord on our way out, so it never happened. But Joe was as fine a catch as anyone could hope. And he sure was nice.

The thing about Joe is—besides being one of the best guys in the whole world—he's a drop-dead ringer for Matt Damon. I'm serious. You could not possibly tell which one is which. From the left, from the right, with a baseball cap: Matt Damon. But when we started school, no one really knew who Matt Damon was, except for the few who saw School Ties and accused Nagelberg of being an anti-Semitic prick. Of course, anybody who knew Nagelberg, Semites included, knew he wasn't a prick at all.

Then the Good Will Hunting thing took off, and oh sweet Christmas did Nagelberg's life change. People were asking for autographs and pictures with their niece and yelling at him from across the street, "How do you like them apples?!" And Joe Nagelberg's suddenly an international superstar, though not really. Well, an international superstar of nice guys definitely.

It was a fun deal, and Nagelberg had a ball with it. In fact, most of the time he went right along with being Matt Damon, and he was polite and modest around the fans. Joe thought so much of Matt Damon that he was committed to not hurting his image. How many times you been stiffed for an autograph by some pogo-dick celebrity? Not here. Nagelberg always obliged with all the autographs and pictures and hellos. And Nagelberg even tipped his cap and listened constructively to the hotshots who thought that Matt Damon was a little frat fag who didn't belong on the big screen in the

first place. Matt Damon would've been proud. And that was important to Nagelberg. He really was a stand-up guy.

So right about that time, I had split up with my long-time girlfriend Mary. And Nagelberg was there for me. We hung out nearly every night, talking and drinking cold ones and hoping someone would boil Mary in oil. With Nagelberg's support and pep talks, I finally mustered the agates to start dating again. And while it sounded all well and warm in talk, it didn't go so well in practice. I'd fart away every chance I had with a girl, and when I didn't have a chance I felt like I needed some orthodontia and a bigger pair of shoes just to get a girl to notice me. I mean, I'm not bad looking, but I'm no Ben Affleck.

So soon enough, it was a crisis, and I was upset about it all the time. Feeling sorry for yourself and a cup of coffee will get you a cup of coffee. And it got to the point where I didn't care anymore. I just needed to get laid. You understand what I'm saying.

Fortunately, Nagelberg knew what I was saying too, and he decided to help me out. Now, mind you, Nagelberg as the spitting image of Matt Damon was having no problems whatsoever attracting the ladies. We could go to a bar and there'd be two dozen of them lined up, single file, to talk to him.

Nagelberg had a philosophy about this, and this is important. He would never, under any circumstances, take advantage of the situation. If the girl didn't take the time to find out that he wasn't Matt Damon, then he knew she wasn't the "one." He didn't waste his time with a girl like that. He wasn't talking to girls to get laid. No way. That's not Nagelberg's style. He is a true-blue nice guy. He wanted love. That, and he didn't want to go around letting the whole world know Matt Damon would stick his alpha into any chica that said hello to him.

I, on the other hand—well, Nagelberg got the idea for me to hang next to him. He'd talk to the girls who approached him, and if he wasn't interested, he'd introduce them to me and let me have a go of it. Well, I was ecstatic. I really knew this was my golden opportunity, and Nagelberg was nice enough to help me out because he really cared. And that's what I love about Nagelberg, dynamite guy. That he looked like Matt Damon, all the better because he was drawing in the kind of women that make your pecker sing.

And it was then that Nagelberg and I got an apartment together, and we made the search to find the women of our needs a nightly affair. This, of course, made for a lot of rejects on Nagelberg's end when you understand that most of these girls just wanted a piece of Matt Damon, preferably the piece between his legs. As for me, I was right there to turn the girls' rejection and disappointment into between-the-legs gold for everyone involved.

So nearly every night we'd go back to our place with a couple of great girls. And we'd have a good time, laughing and getting Pinot Grigio'd to the gills, and sooner or later one thing would lead to another. And I'd take my girl to my room, and Nagelberg'd take his girl to his. And I've got to tell you, having sex with these women was helping me finally come to terms with my breakup with Mary.

But Nagelberg would get his girls on his bed, and they'd talk. Yeah, talk. And if they didn't figure it out he wasn't Matt Damon, he'd admit he didn't feel right about having sex with them, and he'd just talk to them and listen to their problems and things like that. Goddamn, how sensitive is that? What a guy! Has every opportunity to take advantage of a situation like that and doesn't because he stays one hundred percent true to himself. That is a great man, that Nagelberg. Each morning I'd wake up, and we'd see the girls off, and he'd turn to me and say, "Nice girl, but she couldn't see through me." And it'd be the same thing every time. "Nice girl, but she couldn't see through me."

This happened I don't know how many dozens of times. I was like, "Come on, Nagelberg, I'm having the time of my life banging these girls, and you don't want to have sex with just one of them?"

And he'd say with a straight face, "Nope. You and me, Sanchez, are in a different place. I want love." Absolutely amazing! And admirable!

Now this went on for damn near a year. I was having a blast, ending up in positions I never dreamed possible a few months earlier. Sex is not a thing you should deprive yourself of, just because some Johnny Jesus tells you it's sacred. It should be celebrated, like I do it. Well, Nagelberg. He should be celebrated too. His quest was noble.

But then this one night, it was sort of slow—it happened sometimes—and I ended up with this girl named Charlie. Charlie was this rag-tag piece of snot that I'd been with already a half-dozen times or so on nights such as that one. Not the finest catch. She'd brag about being bulimic. But I had to roll with her on this night because her friend was in from Cleveland, and her and Nagelberg had hit it off.

We went back to our place. I was bored, but I thought what the hell. Sex with Charlie was better than no sex at all. So we go into my bedroom and leave Nagelberg and Charlie's friend. The thing about Charlie is that she's a real blabbermouth, and she's talking about her friend the whole time. And she's saying her friend was really cool and that she really liked Matt Damon and that she was engaged.

And I said, "Engaged?"

And she said, "Yeah."

And I said, "Then what the heck's she doing over there with Nagelberg?"

And she said, "Nagelberg?"

And I said, "Matt Damon."

And Charlie tells me her friend's fiancé said he absolutely does not condone any cheating whatsoever; however, if they were to meet a certain celebrity that they would specify ahead of time, and if they somehow managed to finagle—that's what she said, finagle. If they were to somehow finagle them into bed, then it would be okay. Charlie's friend agreed. Her fiancé chose Pam Anderson. She chose Matt Damon.

I laughed. This was hysterical. Especially since I was privy to two very important pieces of information. The first was that Nagelberg wasn't Matt Damon, and the second was that he wasn't going to sleep with her anyway. He never did with these types. This was marvelous. Well, then Charlie finally shut up, and we hit the sack puppy style.

The next day, we got up and headed out into the living room. And there was something weird in the air. Nagelberg and his girl were sitting on the couch, just sort of waiting for us. And the girls leave, and Nagelberg is watching his girl out the window.

So I said to him, "How'd it go?" Because I always said that to him.

And instead of his "Nice girl, but she couldn't see through me," he said, "Not bad."

And I said, "What?"

And he said, "Not bad."

And I said, "What, did she figure out you weren't Matt Damon?"

And he said, "I don't think so."

And I said, "Then what the hell?"

And he said, "Exactly. Last night I just got fed up. The girl was cool. Cooler than most. And she wanted me so bad, so I said, 'What the hell!'"

I let this sink in for a moment. And I said, "What does that mean? It's not like you slept with her."

He smiled at me.

"You didn't sleep with her," I said. "Ah fuck, Nagelberg."

And he said, "What?"

"Ah fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck fuck," I said.

And he says, "What?"

And I started pacing around the room. "Nagelberg," I said.
"Nagelberg!"

And he screamed "What!"

And I stopped and shook my head at him. "Nagelberg, that girl was engaged."

And he said, "What do you mean?"

And I said, "She was engaged. Engaged to be married." So then I spilled the butterbeans, told him all about the little deal that girl made with her fiancé.

Nagelberg slumped to the couch. He felt so terrible. His night of lust broke the sacred bond of marriage. Sure, the girl and her husband-to-be weren't married yet, but they were in every sense except the word. Nagelberg broke the trust between that guy and his fiancé. He was sick. Morally destroyed. He was sorry he'd ever put his fingers in and all over that girl's body.

And I'm here to say he tried. He tried for a couple of days to live with it. He knew things would be fine with that girl and her husband if he'd just leave it alone. But it ate at him. I saw it. He was a wreck. He wouldn't leave the house. He wouldn't eat. He sat in front of the boob tube all day. Classic depressive.

And let me tell you that Nagelberg being at home all day and all night wasn't helping me out in the Poon Tang Department either. It was hard just pinching it off like that. I tried to get him up and get him out for a fish bowl and an autograph signing, but he sat there for two weeks.

Then he got up one day. And I screamed, "Rejoice!"

But he said, "I've got to find her."

And I looked at him.

He said, "Or him, the fiancé. I've got to find him and tell him."

And I said, "Wait just one minute, Nagelberg."

And he said, "Nope. It's not fair. He's getting himself into something big. A marriage. And I slept with his wife."

"His fiancé," I said.

"It doesn't matter. He needs to know before he makes a big mistake. It may not be a mistake. But he needs to decide that himself. I am not Matt Damon. Their trust was broken."

"That's a crock of crap," I said.

And he said, "And besides, I got Matt Damon into this thing. Now I have to get him out."

"Come on. What's he care? He's got an Oscar. And we know damn well Affleck didn't write that thing."

"Don't argue with me. I get you pussy."

"Run-offs," I said.

"It doesn't matter," Nagelberg said, "Pussy's pussy."

Now Nagelberg was being irrational. This was not the dynamo of nice guys I knew of old. That guy never would've said the word "pussy," let alone two times in one sentence. There was a madness to him. But I couldn't do anything about it. He tore through all my stuff, trying to find Charlie's number because I wouldn't give it to him. He found it, of course, and tracked Charlie down.

Charlie wouldn't tell him the girl's fiancé's name either. At least she had some sense. But in tears, Nagelberg reminded her he was Matt Damon, and then he looked at her with those eyes like he had to tell her friend something important, something about life, something that mattered.

Of course, Charlie, the slut with the heart of gold, gave in in perfect romantic comedy style. He came home with the name Pete Smith. He had booked a flight to Cleveland, and he was about to walk out the door.

Well, I placed myself in front of him. "No way," I said. "Nagelberg, you're not thinking with your head on straight. You're thinking like a world-revolves-around-you Hollywood hotshot." I told him, "You're gonna get to Cleveland. Fine. You tell this Pete Smith what happened. You feel better. That's great. But what do you think he's gonna do? Christ, Nagelberg, you slept with his goddamn wife. Fiancé, whatever. Do you realize that? He's not gonna slap you on the back and say thanks for stopping by. You walk into a world of trouble when you start cheating on fiancés, beknownst or otherwise." I let this sink in for a second.

Then he said, "I don't care."

Sometimes with affairs of the penis, you act like a moron no matter how nice of a guy you are. So I pleaded, "Nagelberg, come on. Pete Smith could be a jealous lunatic."

And he said, "I'm leaving."

And I said, "Nagelberg, you look a helluva lot like Matt Damon, but that doesn't make you immune from being a victim in a crime of passion. Besides, how can you trust a guy who picks Pam Anderson as the only girl he'd have sex with other than his fiancé? She's hideous with that scowl and the makeup and those two etceteras."

And he said, "Bye, Sanchez." And I thought it was the last time I'd ever see Nagelberg again. This great man. This morally sound young man. And no pleading was going to change his mind.

I'm indebted to Nagelberg. Joe Nagelberg is a hero to me, just a Class A nice guy. And that's why I saved his life, and I would do it again, for the sake of mankind, with or without all that amazing sex.

So I said, "Oh, fuck it. I'll go for you."

And he said, "What?"

And I said, "I owe you, Nagelberg."

And he said, "No, Sanchez."

And I said, "Yes, I do. I owe you for everything. I'm going to Cleveland."

I didn't care about me. This Pete Smith guy could lose it when I tell him his wife banged Nagelberg, and he could chop me up and Fed Ex me to Myanmar. But I could risk that for Joe. I could risk life and limb because the world needs a man like Joe Nagelberg. There are not many nice ones like him left out there. And while nobody would blink if I was out of the picture, losing Joe Nagelberg would be like losing, well, like losing Matt Damon himself.

And Nagelberg relented. "Okay. You can go."

And I said, "Okay, now you're thinking like Nagelberg again, Nagelberg." I grabbed his bag, his car keys, punched him in the shoulder, and told him I'd take care of everything. I believe the words I used then were, "Nagelberg, go get yourself laid." And if I would've have gone to college, I could've told you that that was irony.

That day, I saved Joe Nagelberg's life. I flew to Cleveland, went to the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame and came home. I never saw Pete Smith. I looked him up, yes. And there were thirteen Pete Smiths in the Cleveland area. Didn't sound very lucky to me.

Of course, I told Nagelberg that Pete Smith had been one of the nicest guys I'd ever met. And, it turned out, he had accidentally been at an orgy with a Pam Anderson look-alike the previous weekend. Pete Smith agreed that all was forgivable and the wedding would go on as planned. I lifted a barrel of monkeys off of Nagelberg's back.

Things returned to normal for a little while, but as it turned out, Nagelberg found the love of his life soon after. He married a real catch, a girl I surely wouldn't have minded giving a good once over had he passed on her. But Nagelberg got her and kept her, and what do you know, she pooped out a beautiful little boy just this past year. And Nagelberg is one helluva father. But I always knew he would be.

As for me, I haven't had any sex since Nagelberg got hitched, but that's okay. I'm obviously grateful and humbled by the abundance I had before, else I wouldn't have needed to tell the story. I still think