

q life: with GABRIEL TABASCO

Gabriel Tabasco: The Greek Ambassador's Son Chapter 14: The Gay Porn Star Appreciation Club

I bought my first porn magazine in my early teens. I never intended to buy it. It just happened. I was on my bike, riding by a neighbourhood kiosk in my neighbourhood when I decided to buy an orange juice and flip through the magazines. I approached the adult section and decided to open up a magazine called Man2Man. On the cover was a beefy man in tight shorts. I slightly tore the wrapping open and took a peak at the inside cover which revealed a slim, white man, with floppy blonde hair, sitting by a swimming pool holding his erection which was pointing proudly upwards. I stared at the man at what seemed like hours before I heard some shuffling. Someone was coming. I put the magazine away, paid for my juice and left.

The following couple of days were a haze. All I could think of, at school, at dinner and especially at gym class with all the men in shorts around me, was the slender young man by the pool with the erection. I was in lust. It was summer and my hormones were breaking out like a rash on a warthog. It was not good. I wanted that magazine.

Two days later, I took my bike and went to the kiosk. I was careful not to bump into anyone I knew or who might have known my family and went to find the magazine. There it was like hidden treasure, dusty and half-covered in the wrapping I tore open during my initial look inside. I took it and went to pay. The cashier was a young man in his 20s. He had a cigarette dangling from his mouth. I handed it to him. He took a look at it and then looked back at me.

'It's not for me,' I said as if in protest.
'Sure it isn't,' he said and put it in a plastic carrier bag.

Looking back, I should have just downloaded porn. Magazines felt so 1980s. But I was enamoured with the floppy haired man by the pool with his erection that I wanted to gaze at him longingly in the privacy of my own room. I loved the adrenaline of buying the magazine. It was painful for me not to buy it, not only because I wanted the magazine and because I wanted to do something taboo but also because I wanted to be that man. That slender, white mid-western, American man inspired my love of porn. It was he who made me want to be a porn star.

When asked what I do, I say that I am a porn model, (porn star sounds so much more glamorous than it actually is and porn actor sounds a lot more serious) people have one of three reactions.

The first is that they immediately become perkier than a moment earlier, interested in how I got into the porn industry and eagerly lean in to me to hear the porn industry secrets. They whisper their questions as if asking them is too shocking. They would ask to see my website. After typing my site's address into their phone they peer at my photos, such as me posing by a pool holding up my erection, look at me, then look back at the photos, back at me and so on, unable to believe that this person sipping a Whiskey Sour, who looks like the boy next door, is indeed... gasp... a porn star!'

'It's no big deal,' I would say motioning to the bartender to bring us another round. 'It's not like I'm Beyoncé. Or even one of her back-up dancers for that matter,' I reply. And it's true. I am not.

The second reaction is that they do not believe me giving me a look that says 'you? Really?' Yes, Really. We are not all super-hunks or wear thongs at all times of the day. Most times we wear trainers and do our shopping at the mall.

The third and rarest reaction, which is the most unsettling one is that they do not believe me and when I prove them wrong, they turn away in disgust only to tell their friend that and then the rounds of disgusted looks are repeated all over again.

A few summers back while still living in Athens I was single, bored with stripping and whoring around just as I was bored of my job at the law firm I worked at. It was a Saturday afternoon and I had no plans to go out that night. After dinner, I sat on my balcony at my apartment and logged online to check my emails. As always with these bouts of boredom I drifted over to porn sites. Instead of clicking the 'Our Models' section I clicked 'Apply to Model'. The MuchMen.com website said this:

Are you interested in becoming one of our models? Do you want to make extra cash? Do you keep in shape and are you comfortable in front of a camera? If yes then fill out the attached form with your details, send in the requested images and if you are what we are looking for we will be in touch. Before beginning read the pointers below:

General Details:

Age group: We only work with models in any age range.

Sexual Preference: We work with all sexual tastes: gay, straight or bi. We like to know what model prefers so as to arrange each scene that is as authentic to their tastes as possible and where they can have the most fun.

Race: All race groups are accepted.

The types of models we look for:

Twinks: Young, pretty, slender and smooth. Usually in their early 20s.

Manly: Usually over 30 years old. Handsome and muscular.

Daddies: Men over 40, rugged and hairy but can have any look.

The type of physical attributes we look for:

Body: Must be fit and toned.

Face: Must be attractive to be very attractive.

Dick: Must be within the range of large to very large. If the model has a small dick he would be a bottom.

We require at least two of the three above physical attributes to be met for consideration for our movies.

The type of work we do

Each video has five to six scenes with a range from two to 20 models per scene (depending on the plot of the movie). One scene can take up to three days to film for a 30-minute segment. Photo sessions are also required for publicity, which is done before filming begins. All models can select what they are comfortable with, such as kissing and touching, sucking dick, rimming and fucking or be fucked. For rimming the anus needs to be fully cleansed. Our models are expected to fuck with condoms.

Photos to submit

Photos must be recent and not retouched. Models should not be wearing make-up. Photos need to be shot in good light. We require at least one photo of the models' portrait, profile, standing nude, nude front, nude side and nude back. Photos with and without an erection. Information should include, age, weight, sexual preference.

Casting

If you are selected we will invite you for a casting call for which you will be paid. Most new models have an initial problem getting hard and ejaculating. Make sure you come ready and prepared. Treat the casting call as an actual porn shoot.

Growing up I loved porn and whenever I watched it I always wondered about these people on camera, who they were and how they got to be on screen, legs akimbo and moaning into the camera. 'They are just like you and me,' I told myself, trying to snap myself out of the spell. And yet they weren't like me at all. They had sex on camera for our pleasure, entertainment and judgement. They enjoyed being watched. They led semi-secretive, semi-celebrity lives. The following week I kept thinking of the advert on the porn site. I forgot appointments. I forgot to take out the rubbish. At work I make errors thinking about it.

There were two porn stars, which had relative success, the more successful of the two, Ari, I knew personally. I had met Ari through Sakis when we used to go clubbing together. Over the years Ari gained a reputation on the gay circuit, winning the Mr Gay Greece competition as well as Mr Mediterranean the following year after he bulked up. Ari had a nice build but he was boring and truth be told, he was not very smart.

'But isn't that what we love about our porn stars?' wrote one porn blogger on his site about Ari. 'That we love them for their looks but not their smarts.'

It was Sakis who told me about Ari's career by showing me his videos. There on Sakis' phone was Ari, on his knees, looking up at the camera longingly, with a thick dick by his mouth. Saying I felt intensely jealous was an understatement.

By then Ari was living in Madrid, contracted under a Spanish porn company and when he was not working he was teaching English as a foreign language and performing as a go-go-boy at large industrial-sized gay venues or doing porn. I tried contacting him to arrange a time to speak to him about the industry, but he did not answer my calls or acknowledge my texts. I reached out to him on social media but he did not respond. He deleted me from his friends list and so I left it at that. Through Sakis I learnt that he eventually left porn, moved to London where he worked at a company that made weapons. He lived in a spacious London apartment and made a decent salary. And then he eventually got back into porn after leaving that job. Ari did everything wrong and got everything right.

The second porn star I got in touch with was Adonis Silver. He kept Adonis, which was his real name, and one that was apt for porn, and Silver was a translation of his Greek surname, Argyrides. For someone who loves porn I was surprised I never heard about him when the Bull told me about him.

'We've made it as a country,' he said 'we even have Greek porn stars now,' he joked. That night I googled him. He was of average height and had a good build. His profile mentioned he worked as a personal trainer. Had he stayed away from the gym and not stayed away from carbs he would have been rounder in the middle but he was in decent shape for a second tier porn star. From Athens he spring-boarded to London where he worked as a personal trainer before switching careers appearing in a few gay films. In comparison to Ari, he was not as sought after nor as successful. Of the two men Adonis was definitely the budget porn star, B-List at best. Maybe even C-level. He was a changeable, almost forgettable bottom when compared to Ari's strapping chest and big penis.

Through his social media account I tracked down Adonis' email and I wrote to him. He responded a few days later answering my questions with a blasé message that could be summed up with this: porn is fun, the guys are hot and the cash could be better. It was hardly career advice. I wanted to know how the industry worked from someone actually in the industry. There was only so much I could learn online. I emailed him back again, asking for more information but I received no response. 'Are all gay porn stars this fickle?' I thought.

In the end I still decided to apply for a job in porn and did as was instructed on the site. I found various photos I had from the various photoshoots I did, both naked and clothed and along with my personal details, ticked what I was willing to do. With a brief description about myself I sent off the email. As quickly as I began obsessing about porn I forgot about it. A week later I received an email from the people at MuchMen.com. Without a proper salutation the email went as follows:

Hey. We liked your photos and your boy-next door look. You're in good shape, nice ass and dick. You're versatile which is great for us but with an ass like that and the fact that you like older men you'd be a perfect bottom. We're casting next month. Can you fly out for an audition in LA? Travel costs are your own. If it goes well we would contract you for three to five films to be shot this summer with the option of more films if you do well. Remuneration to be discussed in due course. Let me know if you're in. Thanks. Scott

I read and re-read the email over and over. I went outside and inhaled some of Athens' fresh air and

a lot of its pollution. I had a whiskey then read and re-read the email. LA? As in Los Angeles? Possible contract if all goes well? With shaking hands and a fast-beating heart I responded an hour later.

Hell Yeah I'm in!

Giving it a moment's thought I deleted the message and re-wrote the email.

Dear Scott. Thanks for your email and great to hear that you are interested in my application. Please find my flight details below. Please confirm that you are available during these dates and I will book the flight. Regards, Gabriel

The dates worked for Scott and a week later I was leaving for Los Angeles. During that week I resigned from my job. My boss was shocked. He was further shocked when I told him that I did not have anything lined up.

'In this economic climate?' he said 'you have no job after this?'

Of course I was not going to tell him that I was flying to LA to do porn. I settled my bills. I closed the apartment's shutters. I gave a spare key to my neighbours. I said goodbye to friends and had a few people over for drinks.

'But why LA?' a friend asked with a cocktail in his hand.

'Why not?' I said with a shrug.

He agreed.

'But do you have a visa?' someone else asked with a cigarette in hand.

'It's in process' I said half-lying.

He agreed.

The hardest person to tell was Sakis. He was the voice of logic and reason. Of course he advised me against my move to LA as well as the move into the porn industry.

'They have no shame,' Mike said to me one day when I told him, years earlier, how I wanted to be a porn star. 'They are nothing but whores, actually they are even worse than whores. They want people to know that they are whores and have people watch them get fucked.' Mike continued. 'No one will take you seriously when they know you did porn. You will be nothing but a punch line in a joke. A footnote at the end of someone's conversation. In Athens they will point and say to their friend 'wasn't he a porn star?' and the friend will reply, 'I think he was'. And then they would say 'he wasn't a very good one if he is not doing it now' and then they'd laugh.'

Sakis painted a rather convincing picture but I still wanted to do it. It was like an itch I had to scratch. It was the extra layer of clothing I needed to take off on a hot day.

Being a porn star meant exposing myself to physical, health and psychological dangers in an industry that has grown manifold in recent years but remains largely unregulated. And if everything goes well then doing porn is fun. But what happens afterwards?

I read a blog about a man who had a porn blog where he discussed the antics and movies of porn stars. On one of his blog posts he had a picture of a cute 20-something twink with tidy hair, a necklace, a slightly soft belly and perfect white skin. The 20-something man was naked on a bed exposing his butt hole and holding his erection. The man writing the blog asked in a caption below the photo: 'he's hot but like can this guy become president? What job can he get?'

'Indeed... what next?' I wondered a few months later as I walked on set as the bright lights warmed my naked body, as the camera began rolling and as the crew began filming the porn film.

***Gabriel, you're a deluded fantasist
Hunky men on film, you could never resist
They won't go for you in LA
I'd stay in Athens, where you remain a second-rate gay***

