


Antlered Does and Cactus Bucks

DON UNGER @DON_IN_MEMPHIS

MY EARLIEST MEMORIES ARE OF BEING IN THE HOSPITAL.

I WAS 4.



I WAS THERE FOR SURGERY.

The Charlotte Observer

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LOCAL

What is a cryptorchid buck? Hunter just killed one of the rare creatures in Tennessee.

BY MARK PRICE
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ON THE MORNING OF THE SURGERY, I CALLED MY PARENTS AT 4 AM.

Cryptorchid bucks are healthy but abnormal animals that suffer from a birth defect involving their testicles, leading people to mistake them for "antlered does," the state posted on Facebook on Saturday.

As a result, the creatures have traits of both genders, the strangest of which is a full growth of hair, or velvet, that remains on their antlers throughout their life, experts say.



I WANT TO GO HOME.

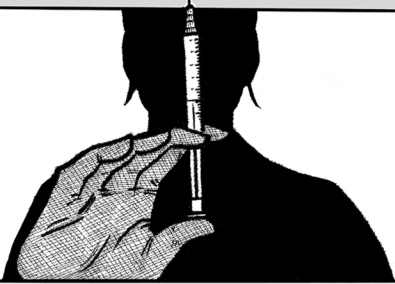


DONNIE, GO BACK TO BED. WE WILL SEE YOU SOON. WE LOVE YOU.

INSTEAD OF GOING BACK TO BED, I WENT TO THE PLAYROOM.



MEMORIES OF THE SURGERY STICK WITH ME, BUT ONLY FRAGMENTS.

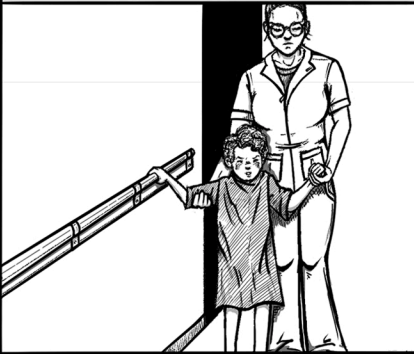


BEFORE SURGERY, A NURSE STUCK ME WITH A NEEDLE OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

CAN'T YOU SEE YOU'RE HURTING HIM!



THE DAY AFTER SURGERY, THE NURSE WALKED ME AROUND THE HOSPITAL.



WE GOT THIS FOR YOU.

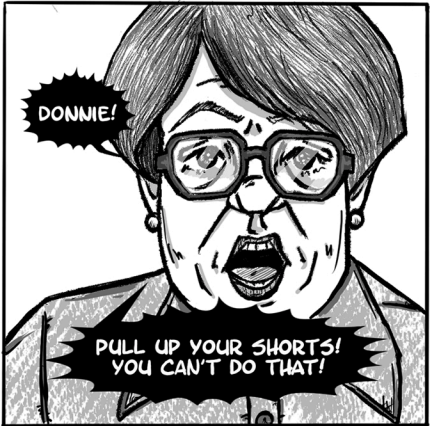
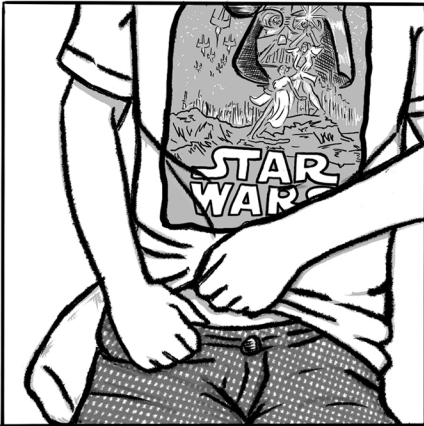
WE'LL BE TAKING YOU HOME SOON.



HAN SOLO!



I DIDN'T THINK MUCH ABOUT THE SURGERY UNTIL I TRIED TO SHOW THE INCISION SCAR TO MY FRIENDS.



THEN, I LEARNED THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT MY SURGERY THAT WASN'T "NORMAL."



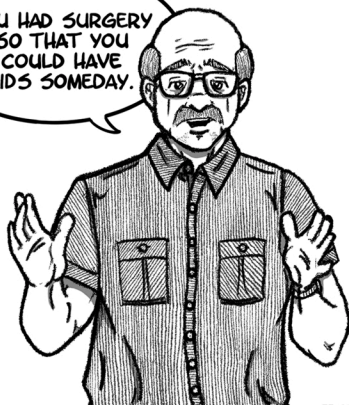
SOMETHING I SHOULD KEEP TO MYSELF.



WHEN I WAS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL,
I ASKED MY DAD ABOUT THE SURGERY.



YOU HAD SURGERY
SO THAT YOU
COULD HAVE
KIDS SOMEDAY.



WHAT DOES
THAT MEAN?

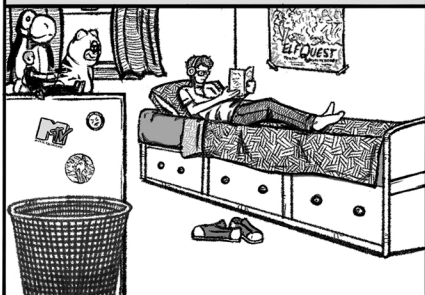
ASK YOUR
MOTHER.



AT THAT POINT, I KNEW I LIKED BOYS,
WHICH WASN'T "NORMAL" EITHER.



GROWING UP, I CONNECTED
MY ATTRACTION TO BOYS TO
MY SURGERY. I DIDN'T KNOW
HOW THEY WERE RELATED, BUT
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT A LOT.



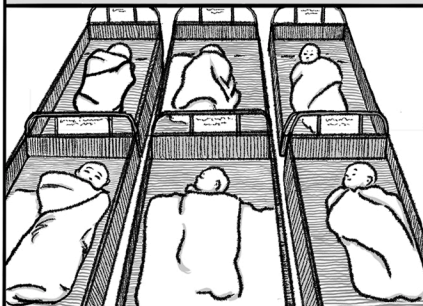
MY FIRST BOYFRIEND HAD THE SAME
CONDITION, BUT FOR WHATEVER
REASON, HIS PARENTS NEVER
PURSUED SURGERY.



CRYPTORCHIDISM IS A CONDITION WHERE ONE OR BOTH OF THE TESTES DO NOT DESCEND INTO THE SCROTUM PRIOR TO BIRTH.

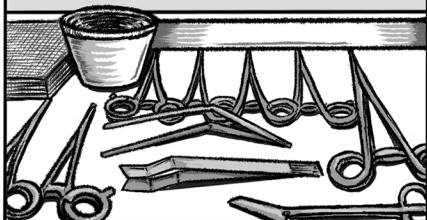


IT IS THE MOST COMMON "GENITAL DEFECT" IN BABIES BORN WITH A PENIS, AFFECTING 3-4% OF THESE CHILDREN ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.



DOCTORS TELL PARENTS THAT IT INCREASES THE CHILD'S RISK OF TESTICULAR CANCER AND CAUSES INFERTILITY IF LEFT UNTREATED.

TREATMENT MEANS AN ORCHIOPEXY, WHERE A DOCTOR MOVES THE UNDESCENDED TESTIS OR TESTES INTO THE SCROTUM.



THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY DOES NOT CONSIDER CRYPTORCHIDISM ALONE TO BE AN "INTERSEX STATE." THEY DEFINE ORCHIOPEXY AS A "REPAIR SURGERY."



THE INTERSEX SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA (ISNA) TAKES A DIFFERENT APPROACH, ARGUING THAT INTERSEX IS A SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED TERM MEANT TO REFLECT THE VARIATION THAT OCCURS IN NATURE.



AS ISNA NOTES: "NATURE DOESN'T DECIDE WHERE THE CATEGORY OF 'MALE' ENDS AND WHERE THE CATEGORY OF 'INTERSEX' BEGINS, OR WHERE THE CATEGORY OF 'INTERSEX' ENDS AND THE CATEGORY OF 'FEMALE' BEGINS. HUMANS DECIDE."

BANG!

SPECIFICALLY DOCTORS, PARENTS, AND HUNTERS.