

7th August 2009

## LEROIE LEANED ON THE CLOSET DOOR AND FELL OUT!

DEAR DIARY, my cousin is gay, but for some reason he chose to stay in the closet for over 30 years. I use the term "stayed in the closet" very loosely because it's been quite obvious since he was about seven that he was gay. I'm the type of person who doesn't like stereo typing at all. I believe boys should be allowed to play with dolls and girls should be allowed to play football. I don't mean forced to, but if they so wish. But on this occasion, if there was an archetypal gay black man, LeRoie (pronounced Leroy) would be it. In every way using every cliché.

First of all my cousin changed his name which was Leonard to LeRoie when he was about 13 and made sure that everyone used the "correct" spelling. I was too busy doing my own teenage thing for this to be something to raise the eyebrow about but now that I'm an adult with two sons, if one of my children at aged 13 wanted to change their given name, I'd expect it to be something like a tag like these young men have these days; you know the type of thing like Dizzee Rascal, Lethal Bizzle, Wiley or Kano – you get what I'm saying? Something street and cool! But LeRoie's choice of moniker reminds me of RuPaul who so happens to be a female impersonator!



To be honest with you, LeRoie's closet thing has been a bit of a mess simply because everyone's been waiting for him to admit out loud that he is in fact gay. The speculation has been there from the beginning of his life and as time moved along, he never had a girlfriend and most of his friends were gay. I personally saw him several times at gay establishments. I'm not gay but my friend Paul is and we used to go out together quite regularly so when I saw LeRoie the very first time at a gay club, I asked him what he was doing there and he said to me what are YOU doing here? I said I'm with a friend. He said well I'm with a friend too so there - and stop looking at me like you're Lieutenant Colombo!

But alas, LeRoie fell in love and wanted to tell the world. You know how it goes when you're in love and you think it's the best idea on God's earth and you want everyone to know how happy you are and who's making you so happy. LeRoie felt so happy, he had to introduce his boyfriend to his mum and dad.

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He told me it was one of the scariest days of his life when he sat his mum and dad down to let them know that their one and only son was gay and he felt that he was gaining a boyfriend and losing his parents all at the same time. He finally said to his parents, mum, dad, I need to let you know that I've always felt like an apple in an orange tree!! His mum jumped in and said are you trying to say that you prefer boys to girls Leonard? And he burst into tears. Everyone guessed that LeRoie was gay; some people just thought he didn't know it himself, but he was happy that his mum and dad already had a good idea and didn't die of shock. They were just waiting for him to come out and tell them personally.



So everyone's happy now, or should I say much happier. LeRoie can really be himself now, there's no more whispering and speculation and that's all that matters.

*August Mayfield*