FOREVER WITH PRIDE

SHINE 4U RECORDS

Swingathon

LEE MOBEY

Swiss Masage Therapy

1ST APRIL 2025
ISSUE 41

OUT LOUD

P·O·D·C·A·S·T

The OUT LOUD Queer Music Podcast is presented by The Q LGBTQ Creative Network. Hear great Artist interviews and conversations and discover the latest and greatest new music releases by LGBTQ artists from around the globe. Hosted by The Q founder Kenney Fitzpatrick. LGBTQ artists can submit their music at curatedbyq.com to be featured on a podcast episode.

Shine4U Records is a record label based in Portsmouth, UK. The label was set up by Richard 'Ricky' Palmer in 2021. The label has a motto, 'Shining a light by giving more than we receive.' It came about because Richard 'Ricky' Palmer wanted to release a charity single in support of The Florence Nightingale Foundation, called 'I will Shine4U.'

He didn't want anyone making a profit from the single, so he set up Shine4U records to ensure all profits are assigned appropriately.

Based in Portsmouth, UK, Richard 'Ricky' Palmer, is an independent singer, songwriter, performer whose music can best be described as an eclectic mix of genres, ranging from pop, reggae, rock, country to musical theatre.

He enjoys collaborating with other musicians, and has many local, national and international artists that have collaborated with him. The Shine4U Project is the name of the band which incorporates his musician colleagues. The band is fluid, and musicians are included as and when required.

He is planning to start gigging again to promote his new material and to highlight his back catalogue of songs.

He has released 9 tracks on the Shine4U Record's label and is planning to release his first album 'Back from Hibernation' which will include previously released tracks.

Ricky works as a Freelance locum Advanced Nurse Practitioner, and as a Respiratory Nurse Specialist. He works with several GP surgeries and out of hours clinics throughout the Hampshire area. He qualified as a nurse in the year 2000 and has enjoyed working in various areas of nursing throughout his career.

Shine4U Records

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Swingathon

Every year, hundreds of people flock to a quiet rural area of Britain in search of freedom. Swingathon is the largest Adult Alternative Lifestyle (AAL) event in the UK, with a full line-up of entertainment over three days. Now in it's fifth year, Swingathon promotes lifestyle freedom for all without prejudice; Swingers, LGBTQ+, Voyeurs, Performers, Fetish enthusiasts, Traders, the list is endless.

Director, Matt Cole, began Swingathon in 2020 to bring people together again following the restrictions imposed by COVID. It has grown more than he ever dreamed, and with his team, he has expanded the originally festival to incorporate all AAL to create a safe and inclusive social, play and learning space.

Passionate about normalising AAL sexual freedom, Matt and his team continue to strive against prejudice and adversity utilising every possible pathway, which cumulate in the festival. Swingathon 'on the road' offers events and promotional content days, working with clubs, photographers, models and publications from around the country. These are great fun, presenting models with the opportunity to experience the 360 camera and encouraging amateurs of all shapes, colours and sizes to showcase their beauty. This inclusive opportunity results in building confidence and awareness of our individuality, with some photographs featuring in magazines. Swingathon also works with social platforms and award ceremonies throughout the UK; Spicy Match, Pineapple, Fetish Awards, Alternative Awards, and more, building relationships throughout the community.

Exhibitors at the festival itself include a variety of performers such as drag acts, world class pole/lap/burlesque dancers, fire acts, DJ's, singers and bands. Traders include skills workshops and demonstrations, adult toys, clothing, jewellery, niche products, researchers, as well as food and drink vendors.

Gutterslut is Swingathon's LGBTQ+ ambassador;

"I was booked for Swingathon Festival as an entertainer in 2024. I wasn't sure what it was about or what to expect, though knew that I was all about it! I'd spent much of my youth as sexually fluid, open-minded, going to events and supporting people that were sexually liberated, particularly those in sex industry. Arriving a day before, my perceptions and preconceived notions were absolutely obliterated when I spoke to a wonderful lady, by the name of, Lady Red. This experienced dominatrix gave me the realisation of effort that people within this massive community endure just to live as themselves.

It is the same as the queer fight for autonomy and sexual liberation, which has always been a part of Gutterslut's persona and her reason for being. She exists because I want to fight the patriarchy and liberate women. Attending Swingathon, I soon realised that we all have this same goal and I've never felt such an absolutely amazing sense of community.,,,ever! The people at the festival will change your entire outlook on life itself and there is so much love.

I discovered that many involved in the swinger community are queer, but they don't ever really get to express it. I am here to make it more accessible and to make it more fun for those in the queer community.

It is my privilege and honour to work with Swingathon, joining the fight for acceptance and inclusivity, because it is so hard. Bigotry still exists in 2025, but as a community we are on the same page regarding normalcy, liberation and love for individual uniqueness. I cannot wait for this year's festival."

The festival brings the 'cummunity' together for an inclusive positive experience, where friendships and relationships begin and flourish.

Fetish experts work closely with Swingathon to provide an excellent experience for all. Whether you are interested in exploring this side of your sexuality and want to learn safe techniques or are an experienced scene member looking to widen your interests or equipment.

Thirteen Events, headed by Kate Palethorpe, will be ensuring safe and artistic spaces for dedicated content creators, as well as timed access to Swingathon attendees.

Swingathon works with The Suns Sexpert Georgia, as part of their commitment to reduce stigma associated with the lifestyle, in the hope that one day anyone can enjoy AAL with pride. You can watch Georgia's report here

Social Media for Information and tickets

Website www.swingathon.uk

Email info@swingathon.uk

Insta swingathon.uk

Tik Tok @swingathon

Vixens socials

Website:
www.allmylinks.com/voltarivixen

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LEE MOBEY

Lee Mobey, a 33-year-old powerhouse vocalist has carved out an impressive career as a solo singer over the past 12 years. Under his stage name, Lee Anthony, he has become a familiar and beloved figure on the entertainment circuit, captivating audiences in pubs, clubs, and hotels across the UK with his dynamic performances and undeniable charisma. Born and raised in the industrious town of Wigan, Lee's roots have instilled in him a grounded work ethic and a deep connection to his community values that shine through in his engaging stage presence and relentless dedication to his craft.

For more than a decade, Lee has honed his skills as a solo performer, building a reputation for delivering unforgettable nights of music and entertainment.

His journey as an artist took a significant turn in 2017 when he courageously came out, a moment that not only marked a personal milestone but also deepened his connection with his audience. Embracing his authentic self, Lee found a renewed sense of purpose in his music, which would soon lead him down an exciting new path.

Three years ago, at the age of 30, Lee made a bold decision to reinvent his career and launch a fresh show that would redefine his place in the entertainment world. Enter *Ultimate Dance Club Classics*, a high-energy production that celebrates the timeless anthems of the dance music scene. This pivot proved to be a game-changer. With this show, Lee tapped into the vibrant energy of the LGBTQ+ community, performing at venues across the North West of England and beyond. His electrifying sets quickly caught the attention of event organizers, and he soon found himself gracing the main stages of some of the UK's biggest Pride celebrations, including Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Chester, among others. These performances have solidified his status as a sought-after act, blending nostalgia with a contemporary flair that resonates with diverse crowds.

The success of *Ultimate Dance Club Classics* opened doors to incredible opportunities. Lee has had the privilege of supporting iconic dance acts such as N-Trance, Cascada, Kelly Llorenna, Urban Cookie Collective, and Flip & Fill, names that echo through the annals of clubland history. Sharing the stage with these legends has been a testament to his talent and tenacity, as well as his ability to hold his own alongside some of the genre's most celebrated artists. Yet, Lee remains ambitious. While he continues to perform at large festivals, he has his sights set on expanding his reach, actively seeking new main stage Pride opportunities not only across the UK but also on the international circuit.

Beyond his solo endeavours, Lee is a key member of The Four D's, a four-part harmony group that brings a different dimension to his musical repertoire. Together, they deliver rich, layered performances that have taken them up and down the UK and onto the high seas, entertaining passengers on cruise ships around the world. This versatility moving seamlessly between solo dance anthems and harmonious group numbers showcases Lee's range as a performer and his commitment to exploring every facet of his artistry.

In 2024, Lee's career reached new heights when he was invited to bring his *Ultimate Dance Club Classics* show to Corfu not once, but twice. These international performances marked a thrilling milestone, introducing his signature sound to sun-soaked audiences on Greek Isles. The experience was so rewarding that Lee is already planning a return to the Greek island in the summer of 2025, eager to reconnect with fans and continue building his global presence.

At 33, Lee Anthony stands at an exciting crossroads. With 12 years of solo singing under his belt, a thriving new show, a harmony group that's making waves, and a growing international profile, he's an artist on the rise. Whether he's igniting Pride main stages, harmonizing with The Four D's, or bringing club classics to life in far-flung destinations, Lee's passion for music and performance shines through. As he looks ahead, his goal is clear: to keep pushing boundaries, inspiring audiences, and leaving his mark on the world stage one unforgettable performance at a time.

To follow Lee's journey, find him on Social media.

Ultimate Dance Club ClassicsLee Anthony
Male Vocalist

Linktree*

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From Switzerland to Cardiff: A Journey in Massage Therapy

Born in Switzerland in the small town of Steckborn—home of the famous Bernina sewing machines—I have always had a deep curiosity about movement, healing, and the human body. My career journey has been anything but conventional, with my passions leading me from music to fitness, and eventually to medical massage therapy.

Early in my working life, I trained as an assistant nurse before switching to sales in a CD store, drawn by my love for music. Teaching Hip Hop and Zumba, performing on stage, and sharing the joy of movement with others became a huge part of my life. But after seven years working in an office, selling CDs and DVDs online, I knew I needed a change—one that would reconnect me with my passion for the human body and how it functions. That's when I decided to pursue medical massage therapy.

Expert Training & Experience

My journey into massage therapy started in 2015 when I enrolled in a prestigious program in St. Gallen, Switzerland. After two years of rigorous study, I earned a Federal Diploma of Higher Education in Medical Massage, a qualification equivalent to the UK's Level 4 standard. My training covered a range of techniques, including Swedish Massage, Myofascial Release, Trigger Point Therapy, Lymphatic Drainage, Electrotherapy, Reflexology, and Sports Massage.

After graduating, I worked in a leading Swiss hospital, becoming part of a skilled physiotherapy team specializing in rehabilitation. My role involved treating patients recovering from surgeries, injuries, and chronic pain conditions. Over the years, I deepened my expertise with advanced training in myofascial release, orthopaedic lymphatic drainage, and medical fitness training.

In 2022, I moved to Wales to be with my now-husband and to be closer to his family. Working for the NHS as a therapy assistant in stroke rehabilitation further solidified my commitment to healing and recovery.

This experience gave me a deep understanding of neurological rehabilitation, mobility support, and pain management, and inspired me to take the next step—opening my own business.

Swiss Massage Therapy: A Unique Approach in Cardiff

In February 2025, I launched Swiss Massage Therapy proudly at the Hilton Hotel Cardiff, offering expert massage treatments that blend medical knowledge with holistic healing. Unlike traditional spa services, my treatments are tailored to individual needs, whether it's for chronic pain, post-injury recovery, sports performance, or just for pure relaxation.

Located on the second floor of the Hilton, my practice is a haven for both hotel guests and local residents. Customers can enjoy a professional, welcoming

environment with a. tranquil treatment room designed for comfort and relaxation. I'm proud that many guests who initially book a single session end up returning for multiple treatments during their stay.

A Safe and Inclusive Space

As an LGBTQ+ business owner, I am committed to **creating a welcoming and non-judgmental space for everyone**.

Swiss Massage Therapy is built on inclusivity, respect, and understanding—meeting every client at their unique point of need. I also support LGBTQ+ initiatives on social media and am eager to collaborate with Cardiff's LGBTQ+ community in the future.

Looking Forward: Growth & Community Engagement

My vision is to grow Swiss Massage Therapy into a well-known name in Cardiff for expert, results-driven massage treatments and to continue educating people about the benefits of medical massage, helping more individuals experience the power of hands-on therapy.

To those looking for a massage that goes beyond relaxation—whether it's for pain relief, sports recovery, or general well-being—I invite you to book a session and experience the difference.

Book your treatment today at:
www.swissmassagetherapy.co.uk

Find us inside Hilton Cardiff, 2nd Floor, next to Flex Cardiff Gym

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If you have answered yes and would like to share it here in Forever with Pride each month we would love to hear from you.

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CAUSEWAY

FREE TO LIVE

March 26th 2025 marked ten years since the passing of the Modern Slavery Act.

Whilst support and enthusiasm for fighting modern slavery and supporting survivors hasn't always been consistent, the creation of the Act, and its first decade of implementation, we believe, has on the whole, been beneficial to people caught up in exploitation and human trafficking.

The 2015 Act was designed to give greater protections to people who had been victims of exploitation.

One of the main areas the Act has seen success, is in raising awareness of the prevalence of modern slavery in the UK. This increase in public consciousness helped, and continues to help, drive an increase in referrals into the National Referral Mechanism, the government funded support system for people identified as potential victims of modern slavery.

The Act also created new protections for victims, including the potential for a statutory defence for those coerced or forced into criminal activity as part of their exploitation.

Whilst the implementation of this protection is patchy, it does offer some support to people forced to commit offences by criminal gangs or individuals. This has been especially important for young victims of exploitation who are targeted and groomed into drug dealing; an exploitation type which is on the rise.

The Act also increased framework and expectations for businesses to be held accountable for modern slavery in their supply chains and amongst their work forces.

Companies with an annual turnover of £36 million or more must make annual reports on their efforts to eliminate forced labour from their supply chains.

We were encouraged to see new Government guidance published this week that encouraged 'a race to the top' approach for businesses tackling modern slavery. Smaller businesses and public bodies are also being encouraged to publish modern slavery statements even if they are not legally required, and a reminder that the emphasis on 'risk' in modern slavery risk assessments should start with risks to workers rather than risks to the business.

The Act also created the role of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC) whose remit includes highlighting the needs of survivors in government, preventing further victims, and increasing prosecutions of those who exploit others.

Despite the role being a legal requirement under Section 40 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, it was left vacant for 18 months between April 2022 and October 2023, a period which also saw a rise in hostile rhetoric confusing modern slavery survivors with people coming to the UK on small boats.

The constant conflation of people smuggling with human trafficking led to support for modern slavery survivors being undermined, both in financial support for the sector, and in public consciousness.

Causeway CEO Helen Ball, said: "The past ten years has seen support for modern slavery ebb and flow with the political mood of the day, but thankfully the change in government has seen a change in tone in how modern slavery survivors are discussed.

Modern slavery is often described as a crime hidden in plain sight, because, whilst it's true that some people will be physically held against their will or their every move monitored and watched, for many victims, it is psychological fear of their abuser keeping them in place.

Latest figures from 2024 reveal that 19,125 people were referred into the NRM for support, a 13% increase on the previous year, which saw 16,990 referred.

As a sector we know that is only the tip of the iceberg. The real number of people (both UK and foreign nationals) thought to be experiencing forced labour, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and domestic servitude on any given day in our country, is well over 100,000.

That's 100,000 people working for free, or for wages as low as 20p an hour, because they're scared, trapped, or unable to leave because they believe the alternative is a life on the streets, deportation, or threats of violence against them or their families.

As a sector we continue to rise to the challenge of supporting individuals suffering from the trauma of having their lives taken over by others, and Causeway will continue to passionately advocate for the rights of modern slavery survivors.

We hope the next ten years will continue to see the Modern Slavery Act benefit the people it was designed to do, bring people to justice who exploit others, and ensure that the needs of real people are put before political point scoring." www.wearecastaway.org

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April 2025

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April is here! Now we can get busy in the garden at last. I know some of you will have started already but for people who have to wait until the weather warms up, this is the month to get your seeds sown. They will catch up to ones sown earlier due to the better quality of light and warmer temperatures. You will still have to protect from night time frosts but you can cover tender plants with fleece to help with that. If you have a glass greenhouse you can also add a polythene cover over the seed trays and tender plants to give extra frost protection.

Lots of bulbs have brought my garden to life already and the hedges have already started sprouting with green shoots. People are even getting in their first grass cut of the year so things are growing quickly. Even the fish in the pond are swimming around more so the water is warming up with the early sun we keep having. If you time it right you can be pricking out your seedlings over Easter this year.

You can start off your potatoes in growing sacks and start them off in the greenhouse then move outside so the leaves don't grow too quickly. Wake up your Fuchsias and Dahlias by moving to the greenhouse and giving them a water. Dahlias take quite a lot to get them moving so put them in full sun but keep the soil around the tubers moist and they will send up multiple shoots that you can turn into softwood cuttings if you want to increase the number of plants you have.

If you're using heated propagators be sure to keep a watchful eye on them and take the newly emerged seedlings out otherwise they will go leggy and be no good. You can still divide herbaceous perennials if you haven't already done so before you replant in the garden border.

Valuable pollinating insets should have emerged by now so you should be safe to tidy up any leaf litter or debris you want rid of. Remember the nest birds though – they need plenty of straw etc. to construct their nests so don't tidy up too much. Fill up the bird feeders and make sure you provide a water supply for them to bathe in and to drink from, a pond with small stream of course is ideal.

If you're about to cut your grass, make sure you raise the cutting height for the first cut otherwise instead of a green lawn it will likely be yellow. You can add a spring weed and feed this month if you need to. Some even have some grass seed in so you can rectify small bald patches in your lawn. Water in if rain isn't forecast for forty-eight hours.

Don't rush out for hanging baskets unless they contain tough plants such as primroses or winter pansies. If you didn't follow my advice and prune your roses in the autumn, April is the month to do it. Don't prune Forsythia until it has finished flowering. Don't remove the leaves from bulbs once they flowered, leave them until they start to go yellow and you will have good flowers next year. Remove them too early and the bulb won't regenerate itself enough to flower next year. I'm going to leave the softwood cuttings photos below as a reminder what to do with Dahlias, Fuchsias and the like.

Left – a typical Fuchsia cutting taken from the mother plant with the bottom cut just below a set of leaves. Remove leaves, as in left picture, dip in rooting powder and place in the seed and cutting compost and water. Place in a plastic bag or ideally, a heated propagator. They should root in a few weeks.

- Plant of the Month -

Magnolia

There are lots of plants I could have chosen for April but one of my favourites is the Magnolia, it's a true sign of spring and looks beautiful in the early sunshine. They do like a slightly acid soil so you may have to add iron sequestrene to give it a boost if it is showing yellowing leaves. You can successfully prune Magnolias and they can

get rather large if you allow them to grow unchecked which is fine if you have the space but otherwise keep them to a smaller bush and they will flower well.

There are plenty of summer bulbs you can plant and if you shop around you will get some good offers for bulbs, tubers and plant plugs. Plugs are a way you can forget having to buy seed and use propagators to get them to germinate. You can get some great offers both for flowering plants and vegetables and it can give you a head start without the need for expensive electricity. It also takes away the risk of poor germination with expensive seeds.

Left – Magnolia soulangeana just coming into flower. They can be pure white or often have pink mixed in depending on the cultivar. Left – Fritilliaria imperialis a beautiful bulb that come in a red/orange or yellow on long stems that tower above most other spring bulbs. A good talking point.

Put those assets to good use now the worst of the frost has hopefully disappeared and give them a good airing!

LGBTQIA+ mental health mind

Being LGBTQIA+ isn't a mental health problem. And it doesn't cause mental health problems.

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Dreams & FEARS

LOVE & LOSS

I think one of my biggest fears is losing the ones I love…

I really wanted to make an album before my dad passed away. He was terminally ill and he loved when I played for him… One time, my fingers were burning and I'd thought he'd fallen asleep so I stopped playing, but then I heard him say, "one more, Blakey." I played on.

It was extremely difficult for me when he passed; I sunk into a deep depression. Weeks later, my friend's mother passed and I knew she would be devastated. I wanted to help her avoid the darkness I got sucked into, so I got out my pen and my notebook. The result was "Song for the Departed" which was the closing song on my debut album, *Dreams & Fears*.

Song for the Departed

Looking out across the starry sky
Close my eyes & Say a prayer for you
And I don't know where it goes
When it leaves my mouth
But I believe it will make it's way through

In every dream, each song I sing
You live inside of me
The memories are bittersweet &
They sting

Even now I can feel your warmth
I feel the emptiness, too
And I don't know where we go
When we leave this place
But someday I'll find my way back to you

In every dream, each song I sing
You live inside of me
The memories are bittersweat &
They sting

But I'll cherish every moment
Every smile and every tear &
I'll find peace in knowing that
Part of you is here

In every dream, each song I sing
Every day, each breath I breathe
Your memory will live in me
I'll love you through eternity
Part of you will live inside of me

The song is short and sweet, but it was effective… Not only was it a source of comfort for my dear friend, but it also saved me from one of my lowest points. This one means a lot to me.

-Blake Rave

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Tim B

LGBTQ+ Film & Theatre Review

Clueless The Musical

Photo by Pamela Raith

Step back into the 90's with the totally fabulous and rad new musical 'Clueless'.

Based on the 1995 movie of the same name which starred Reese Witherspoon (and Jane Austin's classic book 'Emma'), the hotly anticipated 'Clueless the Musical' is full of colour, charm, humour, great music (by both KT Turnstall and Glenn Slater), great performances, fantastic clothes, very good direction and choreography (Rachel Kavanagh and Lizzi Gee respectively). It also includes a simply wonderful lead actress - Emma Flynn - who nails it!

Flynn seamlessly and effortlessly sings, acts and flows throughout the show - and she is in almost every scene as Cher Horowitz, the beautiful and popular high

school teenager at Beverly Hills High School who wants to do good deeds all the time, including matching people up, but who doesn't realise that her love match is closer than what she thinks!

Through so many catchy and finger-snapping songs, including 'Perfect' and 'She's All That and a Bag of Chips', Cher befriends a new girl in town and tries to match her up with a classmate, then successfully matches up two teachers at her school, and when she thinks she's found the right guy for herself he turns out to be gay! Chyna-Rose Frederick and Romona Lewis-Malley are good as Cher's best friend while Keelan McCauley makes the girls in the audience swoon as Cher's step brother and who has a fantastic number in the song 'Human Barbies'.

This musical reimagines everything that came from the movie, but gives it an extra twist by being live and in real-time, 30 years after the movie (and 210 years after the book was published), successfully bringing it back to life for a new generation. This show will remind the audience goer of their time in high school, with the good times and the bad times. 'Clueless the Musical' is a very very good time!

Clueless the Musical plays until Sept. 27th, 2025.

trafalgartheatre.com/shows/clueless-the-musical/

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Finding my Rainbow Family

Finding My Rainbow Family is a comforting activity book for children going through the adoption process. It offers a safe space for kids to explore their feelings, understand their new family, and find joy in their journey.

Features:

Guided Journal Entries: Prompts to help children write about their emotions and experiences.

Creative Activities: Fun drawing, colouring, and writing exercises to process feelings naturally.

Benefits:

Emotional Expression: Helps children articulate their feelings.

Healing Through Creativity: Engages kids in activities that promote understanding.

Building Connections: Focuses on positive aspects of their new family.

Supportive Environment: Provides a framework for meaningful conversations about adoption.

Finding My Rainbow Family supports your child's adoption journey, helping them find love and happiness in their new family.

Rainbow After the Rain

Rainbow After The Rain is a comforting activity book for children dealing with bereavement. It offers a safe space for kids to express their emotions, remember loved ones, and find hope.

Features:

Guided Journal Entries: Prompts to help children write about their feelings and memories.

Creative Activities: Drawing, colouring, and writing exercises to process grief naturally.

Memory Pages: Sections to honour and remember loved ones.

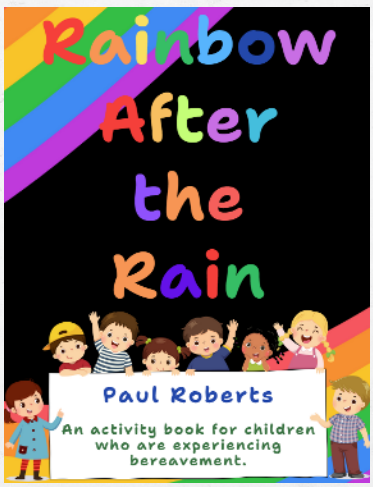
Benefits:

Emotional Expression: Helps children articulate their emotions.

Healing Through Creativity: Engages kids in activities that promote healing.

Building Positive Memories: Focuses on positive memories to foster connection.

Supportive Environment: Provides a framework for meaningful conversations about loss.



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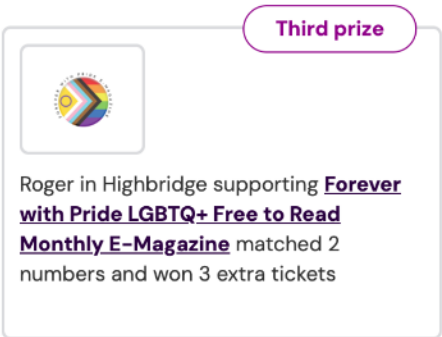

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FOREVER WITH PRIDE E-MAGAZINE

Tales of the Second City
Misadventures on Birmingham's Gay Scene

Easter Sunday Sweetheart

One Easter afternoon, my partner and I popped into our local supermarket to pick up a few things for dinner. I immediately headed to the shelves of discounted chocolate eggs.

"You don't need any more chocolate," my partner chastised me, like a disapproving parent. "Haven't you got enough at home?"

"OK. I suppose you are right", I sulked, slowly moving away, casting forlorn glances back at the tempting confectionary.

We meandered up and down the aisles, picked up what we needed, then headed to the checkout.

My favourite member of staff was on duty, so I insisted we join his line. His lovely eyelashes and a bright smile, means it's always a pleasure to check out this checkout guy. It was a textbook example of that classic queer dilemma... Shortest que or hottest staff member?

Checkout hottie and I had bonded several months earlier during an incident where a mouthy mother had been letting her unruly children run amok in a supermarket trolly.

When approached by security and asked to control her brats, as they were creating a ruckus, and in danger of falling out and injuring themselves, she snapped,

"That's 'ow kids learn, aye it (*That translates as 'Isn't it' for non-Brummies)?!!!"

My checkout crush remarked, "Well, I suppose she does have point."

"There is a difference between climbing a tree and being shoved in an Aldi trolly by a chav," I sneered, with arch distain.

His eyes bulged, and he clamped his jaw tight to suppress a snigger. "As a store employee, I couldn't possibly comment," he smirked.

From that exchange onward, he was always up for a bit of friendly banter and a bit of a bitch.

Back in that Easter Sunday checkout queue, I made a spur of the moment decision to dash back across to the nearby shelves and grab one of those discounted eggs after all.

My partner rolled his eyes when I returned, "You just couldn't resist the temptation could you?"

Checkout cutie came to my defence, "You can never have too many Easter eggs."

"Well, it's not actually for me," I explained.

"Then whoever it is for is very lucky," he commented, scanning the egg and placing it in the bagging area.

"I'm glad you think so," I said... as I gave a coy smile and handed the egg back to him. "Happy Easter".

After that sweet exchange, I was given priority privilege at his checkout.

It turned out to be the best £1.49 I ever spent.

I recently realised that I had not seen my Easter Sunday sweetheart for a several weeks, so enquired after him with another member of staff.

“He got a promotion and left,” she informed me.

“Oh no!” I wailed. “Who am I going to flirt with now?” Realising my tactlessness, I lightly laid a hand upon her shoulder and apologised. “No offence.”

I always knew he was destined for more than an Adli checkout job, but the weekly shop would never be the same again.

Find more tales from the gayside of the UK’s second city at:
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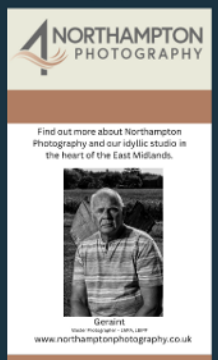

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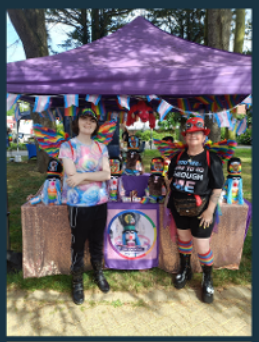

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