

Transplant
a monologue



Gordon Blitz

A teenager is flipping through pages in a book. He stops and addresses the audience.

TEENAGER

I've been studying Triphyllums or Jack-in-the-Pulpit plants. I've always been fascinated by them. As the plant grows and changes, it develops from a nonsexual juvenile plant to a young all-male plant, then to a male-and-female plant and finally to an all-female plant. This means that these plants are changing their sex from male to female over the course of their lifetime as their size increases.

This has been bothering me for a long time, and I'm hoping you can help me. Something is wrong with me, but I'm having a hard time explaining it. I am so scared. I look in the mirror, and I don't recognize the person who is staring back at me. At school, I don't feel comfortable hanging around the guys. It's strange because all the guys want to be my friend because I am so good at sports, and they are amazed that I work out at the gym. And the girls want to date me. Sometimes they'll come up to me and ask to touch my muscles. It's embarrassing. Shouldn't I be happy that I'm so popular?

It started right around the time that I was preparing for my Bar Mitzvah. All that stuff about becoming a man. Something about it didn't feel right. That I would be a phony. Dad was always teaching me stuff about being "a man", but I didn't want any help. Maybe he just wanted to be sure about me.

I would only feel okay confiding in girls, but now girls scare me. Seems like they don't want to be just friends. They want to kiss me. I don't like that. Does that mean I'm queer because I don't like girls in that way? See, it's something inside me that feels wrong. Like I'm a ghost. As though I'm in the wrong skin. It's frightening.

If I was gay, wouldn't I be thinking about guys?
Wanting to have sex with them? And I don't look like
the other queers; sorry, I mean other gay students
who are almost girlish. That's not me. Look at me. Do
I look gay to you?

When I go to sleep at night, I keep wishing that when
I wake up the following morning, I will recognize
myself, that I will feel "right." But it never happens.

I'm afraid to tell my father. He thinks I'm perfect. A
real man who doesn't worry about feelings. He
wouldn't tolerate me being unhappy. You don't
understand. I thought you would.

You know, when we talked about the Jack-in-the-
pulpit before, and I said the plant kept switching from
male to female? I think that is what's happening to
me. That even though I look like a man, I don't *feel*
like one. That maybe I'm really a woman. Is it really
possible that I feel so displaced? As though I was a
male whose body needed to be transplanted to a
female? That isn't possible, is it?