

Shaking Hands With the Man
By: Cory King

Charlie McGough: The Facilitator; even-keeled
Tristan Ferguson: The First-Timer; shy
Brent Brassard: The Twitchy One; nervous/erratic
Harlan Kimball: The Intellectual; Committed to the Process
Jody Tooher: The Cynic; likes a good dick joke
The Woman: The Woman

5M, 1W

Lights up on a community center classroom with four men seated in a semi-circle, mumbling generic conversation. TRISTAN enters tentatively.

Tristan: Hello...I'm not sure I'm in the right place.

Charlie: Come on in. This is the weekly meeting of our support group but new comers are always welcome.

Jody: New cumers....that's one way to put it.

Tristan: (to Charlie) Could I speak to you over here for a second? **(Charlie crosses to Tristan)** Soooo, is this the meeting for...?**(whispers in Charlie's ear)**

Charlie: Yes, this is the place. Grab a seat, meet the guys. Gentlemen, this is...

Tristan: Tristan. Tristan Ferguson.

(All the guys shake his hand with general greetings)

Brent: Sorry my hands are a little sweaty. They're always sweaty.

Harlan: Social interaction always does that to him. He has no self-control.

Brent: Sorry we all can't be like Harlan Kimball... always composed, always so sure of himself.

Charlie: Guys, knock it off. We have a new member-

Jody: (Snorting) New member.

Charlie: AND he deserves our support. We all remember how hard it was for us the first time.

Jody: (*Snorting*) Hard the first time.

Harlan: Really, Jody?! C'mon man, act your age.

Jody: Sorry.

Charlie: Well, as group facilitator, Tristan, let me welcome you to the Greater Biddeford Chapter of Masturbators Anonymous. Who would like to start, to show Tristan how it goes?

Brent: (*Shooting his arm up*) I will.

Charlie: Alright.

Brent: (*Standing up*) Yes! Hello, my name is Brent Brassard and I am a chronic masturbator.

All: Hi Brent.

Brent: It's been 4 days since I've 'spackled the ceiling'.

Jody: (*Coughing*) Bullshit!

Charlie: Brent, we strive for honesty here, why don't you try that again.

Brent: Fine. It's been 14 hours since my last 'one man fist fight'. But I was doing well before that. I had actually gone all day and I was using some of the distraction techniques that we had talked about last week. I washed my hands in ice cold water, had chicken wings for lunch, anything to keep my hands from being useable. You know I hate 'flogging the dolphin' with dirty hands. I even made a big bowl of Smartfood and Cheetos when I was watching Jeopardy just in case. Then Alex Trebek gave the clue that "this actress liked her boots so much from her Best Actress Oscar winning performance in 1990 that she bought them for herself."

Tristan: Madonna in Dick Tracy?

Charlie: Demi Moore from Ghost?

Harlan: Whoopi Goldberg from Ghost?

Jody: The three-titted woman from Total Recall?

Brent: No. No. No and no, but I like where your head's at. Kathy Bates in Misery.

Harlan: You did the 'hand jive' to Kathy Bates from Misery?

Brent: No! I thought the answer was Julia Roberts from Pretty Woman...annnnnd at that point I didn't even care about the Cheetos and Smartfood. I 'cranked it all the way up to 11'!

Charlie: Brent you have come a long way. When you started with our group you couldn't make it 6 hours without resorting to self-gratification. M.A. is for people who are losing the battle to masturbation; those poor souls who cannot be functioning members of society because of their addiction to masturbation and you are becoming better adjusted to society. Let's say the choker's chant.

Brent: Too much masturbation
Is not good for my health
This is not what God intended
When he said love thyself

Charlie: Alright Jody, why don't you give it a shot.

Jody: Ok. My name is Jody Tooher and I'm a chronic masturbator- it's been 2 days since I 'made my last knuckle baby'. I broke down. I was working at my desk at lunch and realized I was alone, so I logged on to a few bookmarked pages, cut through a firewall and 'spilled white out all over my keyboard'.

Charlie: Oh, not at work Jody.

Jody: I had to test drive my new office chair, it's leather.

Charlie: That's disappointing, but you still should be commended on how far you've come.

Jody: All the way across the desk!

Charlie: Not what I meant, Jody. You are doing better every week but try not to slip into the old habits.

Tristan: What about you Mr. Moderator?

Charlie: Oh sure I'll go. **(Charlie stands)** Hello, my name is Charlie McGough and it has been 9 days since I 'wound up the toy soldier'. I'm very proud today because I think I found my root cause, and it may not come as a surprise to our regulars, but it's food. I found if I don't prepare it, and I use a fork and knife when I eat, that I kill that particular urge.

Tristan: The urge to masturbate?

Charlie: No, the urge to have sex with my food. I used to ‘crack nuts’ during every meal- it was kind of my thing. My food fetish got so bad that I could watch Iron Chef or Hell’s Kitchen on TV and I’d bust right in my pants. But stepping away from food preparation and taking out the act of actually touching the food has really helped. I’m hoping next meeting that I can get my two-week badge.

Harlan: Congratulations Charlie. If you make it to the two week mark, I will feature you in a short story. I will call it “Keep MY Hands to Yourself”

Tristan: Thank you all for sharing your stories. If it’s all the same with Mr. Kimball, I’d like to speak now.

Harlan: Go right ahead young man.

Tristan: Ok. Um- my name is Tristan Ferguson and I’m a chronic masturbator. It’s been 16 minutes since the last time I ‘played air guitar on a park bench’. I have this girl in my Romantic Studies class-

(In struts The Woman. She is provocatively dressed but very welcoming)

The Woman: Excuse me. I seem to be a bit lost--

Brent: Bathroom break!!!

Charlie: Shut up, Brent.

Harlan: Compose yourself!

Jody: Sorry, go on...

The Woman: Yes, sorry to bother you gentlemen, but I believe I’m a bit lost. I am looking for one of the classes here at the community center, but I think I have the wrong room, or maybe the wrong night?

Brent: CHARLIE! BATHROOM BREAK, PLEASE!

Charlie: I swear to God, if you don’t pull it together right now-

Harlan: What class are you looking for? I know they have the expecting mother class on Wednesdays in this room.

Jody: And I took a creative writing class here last year.

The Woman: Oh no. This is embarrassing, but I’m actually looking for Masturbators Anonymous.

Brent: Fuck it, I'm out! *(Brent hurries to the bathroom and shuts the door)*

Charlie: My, my, my- you have found us. This is the M.A. meeting here.

Jody: *(poorly whispering)* Ho-ly Shit!

The Woman: Great! It's so nice to meet people I have something in common with.

Jody: I'm done. *(Jody exits the meeting)*

(They watch him walk off and then The Woman crosses to introduce herself to the three remaining men. She shakes their hands)

The Woman: (To Harlan) Wow, that's quite a firm grip you have there.

Harlan: Thank you. Excuse me for a moment.

(Harlan crosses to the bathroom door and starts banging on it)

Charlie: Please have a seat. Won't you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Harlan: *(Yelling through the door)* Brent, you're not the only one who has to go.

Brent: *(Yelling through the door)* I'M ALMOST FINISHED!!!

Charlie: Guys keep it down. Please continue. So you are....?

The Woman: My name is Megan Somerville, and I'm a chronic masturbator. It's been 4 hours since I last 'double clicked the mouse', unless you count the bus ride over here. But that was mostly because I had finished my knitting and if I don't have something to do, I get bored. This handsome guy said he liked my boots as he was getting off the bus, and even though I still had four more stops, I figured I may as well get off too...right there in the back seat, just like in high school.

Tristan: Excuse me for a moment.

(Tristan grabs his chair takes it upstage facing way from the audience and sits with his hands in his lap)

Charlie: Tristan, are you ok?

Tristan: Yup. Go on. Don't mind me.

The Woman: So as he got off, I watched him walk away and I slowly slid my hand down my knee, under my dress, thinking about the things I would do to him with my boots on. I would make him my cowboy, and I would ride him with no saddle and no inhibitions.

Harlan: Oh hell, I'll do it in the car! (*HARLAN exits the room. TRISTAN begins to masturbate with his back to the audience*)

The Woman: Suddenly, the bus takes a sharp right turn and we are on Silver Street. They're doing some construction over there so the pavement is so rocky. You know how rickety those buses can be.

(Charlie stares at her intently, but despite the story he is relatively composed as she continues)

The Woman: The grooved pavement gives the bus a constant hum and as my hand reaches its destination, I realize I don't even need to do anything except place my three fingers just on the edge, and I let the bus do the work. I start to bite my lip because I don't want to scream in front of all of these strangers, they'd think I was a whore- and I'm not a whore. I just can't help but finish when I start.

(CHARLIE adjusts himself in his seat but besides that seems unfazed. TRISTAN is really going to town on himself)

The Woman: And just as the wave of my impending orgasm is about to crash down on me--- the bus suddenly stops and I lose all of my momentum...I hate it when I don't finish. Do you think you could help me finish?

(JODY, HARLAN, TRISTAN and BRENT all give a simultaneous groan of release)

Charlie: (still composed) I'm sorry Megan, but as facilitator of this group I just can't do that.

The Woman: Are you sure?

Charlie: Yeah.

(Beat)

The Woman: DAMN! I almost had it. Shit, shit shit!

Charlie: Excuse me?

The Woman: Fuck, man! Really?! That didn't work...

Charlie: What?!

The Woman: I do have an addiction, but it's not masturbating. I'm a chronic gambler and at our meeting last week I saw the flyer for this meeting. I bet my friend that for 300 bucks I could come in here and make all of you guys blow your wad. I got all of them except for you. What are you, a Zen Master?

Charlie: No, I'm a writer. What are you, some sick deviant?

The Woman: (*matter-of-factly*) No, I'm a person who really needs 300 bucks. I fucking work at a bakery, and make pies from scratch. I spend all day kneading dough, mixing sugar in the bowl and putting my hands into warm pie. I'm sticky as shit by the end of the day.

(*Charlie begins to shake uncontrollably coming to a climax*)

Charlie: Awwww, fuck!

The Woman: (*Running off stage*) WHERE'S MY MONEY, CHASSE?!

(*End Scene*)