After a week of bad news about my pal Michael Alig, a bit of good has finally happened. He seems to be leaving the un-comfy confines of Southport Correctional Facility and is on his way to greener pastures. They probably won’t be too green, but when you refer to Southport, the grass is always greener on the other side. For those who care, Southport and Michael are a bad fit. He recently received yet another ticket. This latest setback was a positive test for THC. Friends and family were scrambling to raise money to challenge this ticket as he swears he is innocent…or at least not guilty of this latest infraction. A homophobic guard with a history of bad blood and other factors were cited, and a letter campaign to prison officials ensued. The result was a transfer to a not-yet-disclosed new facility. The logical choices are Attica, Marcy Hospital, and Five Point. Southport is a nine-hour drive to us respect-the-speed-limit types. Then, you have to stay over in a motel and have all your papers in order and hope that no other friend of his gets in before you and the trip is in vain. Hopefully the new ticket will be squashed with the transfer and hopefully Michael will be freed sometime soon.

It’s been over 14 years since he walked among us. He has never used a computer or cell phone. Last night, we rushed
home from "Tranny" BINGO at the Bowery Poetry Club, where my pals and I won an insane five games, including two in the "naked round." I came home with a puppy dog doormat! We had recorded RuPaul's Drag Race and were dying to see who had won. I bet on Sharon Needles and was spot on. Back in the day when Michael Alig and I were partners, we opened up a joint in Union Square called the Palace de Beaute'. It was supposed to be called Yeah, Yeah, Yeah – but our other partner Larry Tee hated the name and went to Michael Musto unilaterally and gave him the Palace. It was in print and that was that. Larry brought in a few of his pals from Atlanta to host and DJ and do assorted club work. Larry's band of merry "women" included LaHoma Van Zandt, Lady Bunny, and RuPaul. RuPaul stopped the music nightly and took to the mic on Tuesday Nights for Larry Tee's Love Machine and asked the audience to say "love" with that multi-million viewer smile. She was a star in the making and everyone knew it, except in those days, drag queens didn't become stars. Gay didn't often break out to the world at large, and to all involved it seemed nightlife stardom was all any of that crew could hope for.

Michael Alig didn't buy into this. He believed that those who surrounded us were ready to break out into mainstream America. He saw them as the future fashion designers, photographers, artists, stylists, etc. Appearances on Geraldo and a half a dozen shows and in hip magazines announced the Club Kid Movement as a force. Michael, with help from thousands of friends, led the way. RuPaul is huge, and somewhere in that success Michael must be credited. Ru worked in the clubs that Michael had hustled the owners of to support his vision. The Sharon Needles look and shtick was born in the clubs and the movement that Michael created was cultivated. RuPaul has taken things to heights that I never thought possible in the late '90's, but Michael knew it was.

I'm never going to sit here and feel sorry for Michael's fate. I don't sugarcoat it when I am with him either. He killed Angel and chopped him up and discarded him in a river, and he won't get sympathy here for that devilish act... that cowardly act. It's been a decade and a half in hellish places and Michael is a man now, not a Club Kid. He is remorseful and aware of his terrible actions. I can't see him dressing up like...Sharon Needles or his old self when he hits the streets again. He is a middle-aged man. He has no delusions and no hopes to get a second chance from many quarters. I remain his friend and will be there when it counts. I loved Sharon Needles' look, and rooted for her and screamed when she won, but to quote the great Yankee Hall of Fame catcher Yogi Berra, "It's déjà vu ... all over again".

Tags: Angel, BINGO, Bowery Poetry Club, Club Kid Movement, Good Night Mr. Lewis, legacy,
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