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**The Faggot's Claim to Name,
or Deconstructing the Breeding Game**

by Beth Harris
Seattle, Washington

On a dismal, Seattle winter day,
two women sat far away
from each other
in the dimly lit Roma Cafe

But the harried dyke
on a short work break

and the bedraggled teen
on the run

both read the advice
from the same sex column¹

¹ Letters inspired by Dan Savage's column in Seattle's The Stranger, December 1994

Hi, Faggot,

*(The liberated woman addressed
the famed gay sex columnist)*

*I am afraid that you have misconstrued
sex for modern het womanhood
When you call us all "breeders"—
it is not true
for the conscientious few*

Yes,
I must confess,
I am naturally born
a het

Nonetheless,
despite my attraction
to the masculine faction,
you should not assume
I will contribute to
the population boom

Signed,
Het, Yet Childless

Dear Het, Yet Childless

*You are still a breeder
in my book
Although breeding
you forsook*

*When you have sex,
you must protect
against producing little tykes
—unlike the faggots
and the dykes*

*Lighten up, Ms. Het
embrace the "breeder" name
When you write, "Hi, Faggot,"
I do not complain
Although we both clearly know
I am not
a bundle of sticks*

Forever,
Faggot



Reading the heated exchange,
the dyke thought,
I'm neither a het
nor childless

Though a homo,
I can clearly claim
the disputed breeder name

but to become a mama
without a family man,
I needed a plan

The sperm I got
was caught and donated
by a generous faggot

The homeless youth cried inside—
Het or dyke,
it made no difference
in my plight
when I got raped
on that night

"Old enough to bleed,
old enough to breed"

Beware—I am bearing more
than a child now
I'm breeding perpetual rage
Next time someone fucks with me,
they are going to burn

by Beth Harris
January 1, 1994