



The Great Voyeur: observations on my sexual history
MC Radiance

Published: 2008

Tag(s): sexuality nonfiction psychology relationships love sex porn evolution

Part 1

Introduction

Some only need a spare hand to reach orgasm. Mechanical motion alone. But that has rarely sufficed for me: I need my mind in on the game!

It is said that, besides the skin, the mind is the largest sex organ. And its ways are complex and indecipherable.

Au contraire, it's very easy! It's all in your head! Close your eyes. Conjure up a memory or a fantasy while you play with your junk. That's how the mind-body ladies say masturbation works for them, and they assume it should work like that for me, although my chromosomes are different from theirs.

To them I say: I wish it were so simple.

Can my sexual imagination provide any worthwhile visual inspiration? Frankly, it's as satisfying as peering through sackcloth and guessing what might be there. Can't see shit!

Visualization's outlines are murky and they never reveal themselves just because I as director demand: "Now! Begin!"

In fact, my mind's movie screen doesn't even brighten into vividness until I'm falling over the edge of sleep. (That same stage from which Dali would glean ideas for his paintings.) Or until I'm deep in meditation. Such states of mind, of course, are no good for flogging the bishop.

Can I reach back for inspiration into my Pandora's box of sexual memories? No thanks! They're hopeless as an aid to self-stimulation. There are far too many emotional vines intertwined with those remembrances. It takes only one thread of dark emotion to lasso my flight of pleasure... and bring it crashing hard to the ground.

In short, it's been futile for me to "go inside" for the imagery required. If there's to be any pictorial help, it has to come from outside my mind's eye. Somewhere out in the 'real world'.

Part 2
The Great Voyeur

My first experience with sexual overtones took place outdoors. I was nine years old. One fine sunny day, my neighbor and I were playing out back. This cute little blonde was also nine. She was a lot more precocious than I, however.

Between my back yard and the cow pasture behind it lay a hedgerow. Old growth trees stood in a line along a dry, grassy ditch. Up in one of these trees, some prior tenant had cobbled together a wooden platform. A tree fort! The deck was only accessible by climbing up a fat ship rope that hung down. Any activity up there was well hidden from view by dense foliage. Well, I was aware that this platform existed but I had never even thought to climb up.

She and I were strolling along the ditch when she suddenly jumped onto that rope and shimmied right up.

I inquired, "How is it up there?"

"Fabulous!" she gloated. "Great view!" She strutted around up there on the wooden deck like a conquering pirate! We chatted on.

After a while, she decided she needed to pee. So she availed herself of a large hole in the planking. She pulled up her skirt and popped a squat. Little me, far below, stared up in amazement at pink female genitalia, urinating.

"Which hole is it coming out of?" I wondered timidly.

"Sometimes one, sometimes the other," she replied, clueless but without shame. "Why don't you come up and pee too?" she merrily yelled out, clearly wanting some pirate company so we could keep on playing.

Come up? Oh dear. Little did she realize the great gauntlet she had tossed down. I quivered. A girl had managed to scale this tree; now what

about me? To get to the next level I'd have to *prove myself* her equal. I stared at the rope, horrified. There was no way on God's green earth I had the strength to climb it. Any attempt would probably bring disaster and reap gales of derision! I had better not even try.

"Come on! It's fun up here. What are you waiting for, silly billy?" she challenged.

Oh no. I wanted to go up so badly, but I certainly couldn't just pee on demand for her! And moreover, now that I had seen *hers*, she was going to want to see *mine*, all up close and personal! What if she laughed at it? What if it was *too small*? I was mortally ashamed of my parts. (Who knows where that phobia came from... the Bread of Shame dates back to Adam and Eve according to Genesis.) So I concocted all kinds of excuses for staying downstairs.

Here was my first sexual image: a female high above me on a pedestal. A tester. A challenger. Distant, out of reach, unattainable. Quite a first impression on a lad's sexuality! Me, I was far below. Ashamed, tiny, inadequate, a childish failure, unable to compete. She, unconsciously a golden shower exhibitionist-me, a shy voyeur. (Touching a girl was not even on *my* radar.)

Her next question cut to the chase... and cut to the quick. "Okay then, why don't you just pee down there?"

I was still totally tongue-tied when my kid brother skipped up and, to my dismay, peed on command into the ditch with no hesitation.

* * * * *

Another girl my age lived up the street. One misty cold day, she and I were mucking about alone in my parent's daffodil garden. She stopped skipping, glancing all around furtively before she quietly popped that age-old question.

"Show you mine if you show me yours?" she breathed, mistily.

"Okay."

"Promise?"

"Promise. Ahem." I nervously planned how this exchange would work. "You first."

"No. *You* first."

"Same time?"

"Okay."

Like rock-paper-scissors, we counted down: "One, two, three, go!"

Standing there in her floppy woolen cap and puffy winter jacket, she whipped down her knickers and flashed me. It was over in a blink. Much too quick. I stood immobile in front of her, mightily confused. It didn't really look like much of anything! That certainly didn't look a bit like the amazing two hole pink thing I had seen up in the tree fort. Now that was something.

"You didn't pull yours down!" she cried out in dismay, staring down at my pants.

Uh oh. The iron fist of shame gripped me, and hard. I heard my mouth saying, "No."

"What? B-b-but... but... but you promised!"

I just shook my head.

"That's not fair!" She stomped her foot. "I'm going to tell your mummy on you!"

Then I laughed. A horrible, cruel, empty laugh. The laugh of one who seems to be in control, but who is really being crushed senseless in the grip of fear.

"Go right ahead," I smirked with false bravado as I played my trump card. "And what exactly *are* you going to say to my mum?"

The poor thing ran away in distress, weeping at my appalling betrayal. Oh, I felt like an ogre. I tried to console myself about my petty, pointless victory in which I had gained something without giving anything! Whoopee.

At least I hadn't had to pull out my john willy in public.

Yes, I know, I know. I was minutes away from playing all kinds of fantastic doctor and nurse games! Who knows how different my whole sex life could have turned out later on if I had been daring? But no, I had to go put some safe distance between us instead. I had to retreat into the safe voyeuristic zone, leaving her stranded as a distant, reluctant nurse wannabe.

* * * * *

Just before departing England for our new home in the States, my family stayed in a motor lodge for a couple of days. I was eleven.

I had no concept of money in those days. I had no real concept of retail or private property that morning when I felt drawn to those skin mags in their rotating metal rack, in plain view, in the motel lobby. I of course assumed they were free for the guests, like towels or bedding. So I just grabbed one, rolled it up and headed jauntily for the elevator.

My parents were not due back for an hour! Of course I knew I should not be looking at this sort of thing, but curiosity had gotten the better of me. It was dangerous and therefore exciting! I would just pop into the room and bring the magazine back downstairs once I had checked it out. I just *had* to settle this issue of what women's private parts *actually* looked like. I was betting that the professional exhibitionists in these full color spreads held a definitive answer.

Our room door, however, turned out to be locked. My little brother was lounging inside.

"Unlock the door for me would you?" I asked nicely.

He fiddled with the knob. All kinds of rattling noises were followed by a stunned pause. "I don't know how! I'm sorry! I can't figure it out!" He wasn't joking either.

"Come on, yes you can." I urged calmly.

Elevator doors opened far down the corridor. I glanced over my shoulder. *Oh shit.*

"Mum and Dad have come back early!" I hissed. "Open up! Hurry up! Right now, open the bloody LOCK, you STUPID-!!" I shut up and tried frantically to cram the wad of evidence under the door, but, of course, the slot was too narrow. Behind the door my brother simpered away like he was going to burst into tears.

But it was too late.

"What is that you're hiding behind your back, son?"

"Nothing... " I mumbled as my face turned a bright neon lobster-cooked red.

That same weekend, my nurse mum devised an allegedly 'educational' solution.

"Now, your Dad and I have talked this over. We're not going to punish you. We're just going to leave this magazine out on the rear dashboard of the car. That way if you feel like you need to look at it, it'll be right there for you."

She smiled. Perhaps she thought she was doing the enlightened thing by trying to defuse a volatile issue and take the taboo out of it, as it were. As far as I was concerned, they might as well have emblazoned a scarlet letter P for 'caught with Porn' on my forehead! My embarrassment would now be given the place of honor in our Sunbeam sedan, right behind my seat. Perfect. *I'll flip through the color spreads while my parents are driving, will I? Not without a gun at my head.*

That magazine finally disappeared one night, much to my relief. But the shame imprint of my initial three experiences was shamefully deep.

* * * * *

Seems like most of patriarchal history revolves around penis size. As George Carlin once pointed out: "My god has a bigger cock than your god!" An inane contest, complete with trickle-down effects, and surprises for everyone downhill.

The effects trickled down alright: down to my all-boys middle school shower room.

Seventh grade: several of the jocks at my all boy school had gone through puberty and were swinging around their elephant trunks to drive home the point. Nature had nominated them to be born leaders, obviously!

One by one, most of the others boys in school sprouted hair and man-penises, until by the end of the ninth grade it was down to the last three

holdouts. To my chagrin, I was one of the last three. The turtles, with the turtle-necks. It was mortifying to be the shortest guy in my class... in more ways than one. Brutal: now I was going to be heading into high school as a boy instead of as a man, goddammit!

I recall some of the horse-hung jocks joking around one day in the shower after gym. One stud stroked himself off for a couple of seconds with soap.

"Check it out!" Gales of laughter erupted and echoed all around the tiling! I hurried away as per usual to change in modest privacy, in one of the toilet stalls. Ha ha! I'd take my shower at home, thanks.

Later, I got a suspicion that Mr. Big Dick had been demonstrating masturbation. I wasn't clear however about how it worked. I'd have to test out the Theory!

Out in the biology field lab building, one afternoon, in the bathroom, I ran the test. I locked myself in the can and belabored away, imitating what he had done. I finally managed to milk a few white drops out of my erection. *Was that it?* It seemed like a whole lot of work for not much, and on the edge of painful too. Maybe the whole spanking the monkey thing was overrated...

Many months went by. Still no puberty! My genital shame grew proportionally. My penis was betraying me! What if my body never grew up? What if the cock never grew longer or the balls bigger? Didn't they have injections or something for this kind of problem?

My teenage body image was SUCKING, for sure. It was the very reason I stopped swimming at the civic pool, even though I was a good swimmer. Shrinkage plus late puberty? Oh no. I could relate to all the flat girls, bemoaning their lack of boobage.

Oh, please God, when would puberty ever come??

* * * * *

Not until we moved to Paris.

Wow! The big city, with all its tourist wonders... and urban vices! Mmmm.

Dairy farm cow patties and rural woodlands had been traded in for skyscrapers, subways and the hustle of the concrete jungle. I started growing up, at last. Maybe it was the environment that triggered it all off.

Pigalle was the name of the Paris red-light district. It shone in the night, and I was a moth. Whenever I had errands to do about town, I detoured up to marvel at this beacon. Les Follies Bergère! The XXX movie theaters! The newspaper stands displaying skin mags that stepped way over the line, depicting ladies with a finger up their poontang right on the front cover! Stuff that presumably never happened out in the sticks of New York State.

Actually, similar urban vendor stands could be found on sidewalks all over Paris. The locals didn't seem to notice much, or care. But if I were walking with my family back from Sunday mass and we passed a stand, I knew my Dad and me were in the exact same predicament. *Trying to sneak a peek...*

Still, hardcore magazines were pricey, even back then. Plus I couldn't just bring porn home: in the name of immaculate cleanliness, my own bedroom was regularly being inspected from top to toe, including my desk. (Not unlike when the warden goes hunting for shanks in a prison cell.) No secret stashes possible.

Unlike magazines, adult movie theaters were cheap. The ticket booth attendants in Pigalle seemed pretty lax about underage attendees; they never asked me for ID. Maybe they sympathized with how pent up I was? And I was! Puberty had caught up with me AT LAST.

Which just meant that I had traded in childish shame for Teenage Hormonal Chaos.

In my French high school, I was surprising myself. I was actually managing to ingratiate myself with most of the beautiful girls there. But I couldn't fathom why they all treated me as a brother, never as potential boyfriend material. Sure, they'd confide to me their personal secrets. Yes, we could talk all day and have a great time... and then they'd scamper off like rabbits to their real boyfriends.

So close and yet so far! Did I even have the right stuff, I wondered?

Or did the beautiful people only date the other beautiful people? And what did that say about my looks? Guess I wasn't a member of the club.

Back to Pigalle again. I'd get that nervous flutter in the stomach like I was going on a date. A date with evil! I was being naughty, and it was pretty exciting. I'd lurk near an adult movie theater, wait until no one was looking, quickly slap down a few francs and dart into the darkness. I'd find myself a seat, avoiding the sticky spots on the floor. (Yuck.) I'd kick back and finally relax, getting lost in the 15 foot tall shafts and 10 foot long slits towering over me. *Sex! There it was! Every fucking thing I couldn't get to in real life.*

One thing was inevitable. I'd take matters into my own hand, doing that thing for which Pee Wee Herman would later get pilloried.

There were also peep show arcades, back before home video. In case I happened to be seeking more variety... and more privacy. Watch out for those sticky floors, though!

* * * * *

I almost got myself a real girlfriend. It was my last semester in high school. A gorgeous Swedish brunette fell into my arms in miraculous fashion.

There I was, on the sidewalk outside the school. I had just opened my acceptance letter from Brown University and I was jumping around her like a pogo stick, all excited! My enthusiasm must have been contagious. I needed a congratulation hug from her. Then she waltzed me hand in hand to the lawn outside the school gate. We lay down in the grass. It was springtime! Oh, take me to first base, Swedish brunette babe! We started kissing. Her female touch was wonderful (and so overdue). The sun was warm upon our backs. And soon I was at second base, and holding. Copping a feel!

That's when I noticed that dandelion pollen, thicker than snowflakes, was clouding the breeze. I soon dissolved into an allergy attack. A giant ball of snot! My eyes poured tears. I coughed. I wheezed...

Was it because I'd built up this first kiss too high in my expectations with too much pressure on myself? Or was it just a cruel jest of Fate, to snatch away this moment from me, my first kiss with a beautiful girl... the first kiss of a very, very late bloomer?

The Swede was very gracious about the whole fiasco.

She visited my apartment once after. We sat in my bedroom. My mother barged in every few minutes, interrupting. (No locks on the bedrooms; no concept of privacy.)

"Would you like some biscuits?", "How about a cup of tea?", etc. Making sure that nothing too exciting happened to me that day. Not that it

would have anyway: this Swede was only wanting to let me in on a secret.

"I just broke off a long relationship," she sighed. "An older guy. He does not go to our school, you don't know him. It's just that... well, I've realized that I'm not ready to commit to anything. I'm sorry."

What? NO!!! Not ready to get busy? But I was lit to pop! How about third base? No? Second base again, that's my final offer. Okay, okay, I'll settle for first.

Fadeout and cue the soap opera closing music...

* * * * *

I passed my International Baccalaureate, and that summer I moved on, enrolled at the University of Sussex in England. There I flailed for nine months like a fish out of water. Another dry school year of flopping around, feeling pinned to the ground. A curse continued to weigh on my shoulders like a frustrating 10-ton weight. Virginity.

I also became the brunt of a lot of jokes-the local scapegoat if you will-because I had made the mistake of trying to 'fit in' with the Brits in my flat. They would have none of it! They were council tenement hard-arse socialists living on government grants. Or at least, drinking their government grants. I was the outsider, I didn't drink alcohol, I had a weird accent, and it was 10-against-1 any way you sliced it.

In one British lecture auditorium, I went to sit down next to a pretty coed during our freshman class. I tried to be super casual as I folded down the seat.

"Hey, baby! Mind if I grab this?" I whispered with a broad, twinkling smile.

She recoiled in feminist horror and gave me the stink eye.

"I am definitely *not* your baby," she spat. Uh oh. Landmine alert! Then she proceeded to give me her own lecture on languaging, the patriarchy and male oppression.

I kinda felt she was over-reacting. *Was it a bad day for her, or was she this prickly all the time? It's not like I actually thought she was a baby.* I mentioned that 'baby' was considered a term of endearment in the States where I was born.

"Then why don't you go back there!" she snapped.

Startled, I apologized and nodded along to her scolding. I had been chastened.

Turned out later that she wasn't a complete man-hater. She was attracted to guys with handicaps! Indeed, her boyfriend was in a wheelchair. I'm sure HE wasn't threatening! And never called her 'baby'.

Fortunately, in the neighboring flat there lived a gay student. He (ironically) was about the only British student there who was *not* acting like a bitch toward me.

We became solid friends. While we were out at a party that last semester, he and I met an intriguing female. I found her adorable: very pretty, tall with wavy brown hair. She and I had many laughs throughout that evening, and the chemistry was flying. But with little time left before my departure to the States, it seemed completely futile to proposition her. I had to put her right out of my mind! So I left it at that.

"She was so hot. Wasn't she just so hot?" my gay friend asked me on the way out.

"Yes. Lovely! Brilliant!" I agreed wistfully. "Beautiful."

On the morning of my departure via train to London I was quite frenetic. With less than an hour to go, I was still packing. That's when this same statuesque girl suddenly materialized in my bedroom doorway.

"Hi there." She waved. "Looks like you're taking off then."

I was caught utterly off guard. "Oh. It's you!" She was still beautiful in the daylight.

"Your nice friend told me that... that you had... feelings for me. Is that true?"

"He did WHAT?" *The traitor.* "Ah... I, um, I mean, yes. But it's just-"

"I had feelings for you, too! Oh, why didn't you tell me? Why didn't you *say* anything?"

We looked at each other, lost in a terribly poignant swirl of sadness and tenderness. She picked a path across the open suitcases on the floor and hugged me. I squeezed her back, tightly. We kissed a little.

Two minutes later it was all over. I absolutely had to finish packing or I would be missing my plane.

Soon I sat on the Falmer station platform, there on the moors of Sussex. *It all seemed so bloody unfair. Oh, what sexual mysteries could have been uncorked for us in those previous few weeks? She was now gone forever. Oh, why the hell hadn't I said anything at the party?*

And the answer came to me. Of course, it was blindingly simple. I wasn't relaxed enough to ask girls out. The only time I ever felt free to ask was when I knew I would soon be far out of range-in case a failure

detonated! I was so pessimistic about taking my chances with the landmines, I mean the ladies.

* * * * *

I visited my parent's home in Florida during one college summer break. Without a driver's license in Tampa I was stranded, but a friend of a friend helped me out.

He was happily married. He had the night off and wanted to go hit up some bars. On the way downtown he proceeded to tell me endless details about his wonderful wife and their great house. We parked at a swanky joint near the airport.

Some fine ladies were already cozied up to the bar for happy hour.

"See those two? They're hookers," he pointed out, to my astonishment.

"But they look so classy," I replied, my stereotype of a whore getting sucked out the window. If you know what I mean.

He added, "Oh, they're expensive alright." I wondered how exactly he knew their prices.

We hit up a couple more clubs that night, including a drag show in Ybor City. I had a good laugh there! By then it was getting late, however, and we were almost tapped out.

Driving down deserted streets, we spotted an adult bookstore. We decided to pop in, just for shits and giggles. We browsed around. I got myself some tokens for the peep show booths. He did too. I was just stepping into a booth, minding my own business, when he put his hand on the door.

"We could save some money by using the same booth, you know."

I thought that was kind of weird. *I guess I won't be spanking the monkey tonight!* But he *had* driven me all around town *and* paid for drinks, so I reluctantly agreed and we popped a handful of tokens into the coin slot as we sat down on the tiny bench, jammed together.

The sex videos started rolling, but I just wasn't connecting the dots.

That is, until I felt his arm reach around me. He gripped my other shoulder. Tightly. I stared down at the wedding band on his hand, in total shock.

But- but he said he was married! WTF! He's bi? What makes him THINK that I'm gay? It's the long hair, is that it? Am I so naïve? I can't believe the bastard tricked me!

Like picking up a dead rat by the tail, I maneuvered his tentacle back to his side. Then I stormed out of the booth.

He apologized profusely... But it was a very, very silent ride home.

* * * * *

I wondered what I was doing wrong to be attracting gay men instead of willing girls. (Much later on I even found out that one of my close male friends at Brown had been gay the whole time, and I had never even suspected. I had no gay-dar at all.)

Yes I was dressing in new wave fashions, and yes I looked androgynous. Yes, I even had an earring. But that was all just for fun; I knew that I was not gay. Some lady needed to pick me up on her radar already!

I'm happy to report I finally got LAID.

Ahem... I mean I finally got a girlfriend! She was a bio major at my college, a senior. Not much fire in her belly, though. Lab work was grinding her spirit down. I seemed exotic to her because of my multi-culti background. So she perked up for a few seconds.

She even acted willing to get romantic... and we tumbled into bed. Where things got strange. It wasn't gonna be textbook sex. Not at all. We foreplayed forever because she said she couldn't climax from penetration, despite the greasy diaphragm with the spring coil which took 10 minutes to put in place. Climaxing in general proved to be a struggle for both of us. Was it lack of desire, or our lack of know-how? We had romance but not much *heat*. A bit lukewarm. Tepid.

Within two months my first girlfriend dumped me. She went straight back to her previous boyfriend, who had apparently been lurking in the wings. Man, that was icebox cold. Moreover, I could not avoid seeing them together in the school cafeteria, every day, having earnest conversations, making plans, looking deeply into each others' eyes...

God, now I knew what a broken heart felt like. It felt like... Oh crap, back to those fucking magazines again.

* * * * *

Starting in those student years, I always kept a small stash of hardcore in my closet. I'd replace a magazine from time to time just to keep things interesting. Their purpose was strictly as a masturbation tool. I never thought of them as discussion props or as conversation starters.

But a curious redhead friend of mine, a fellow student and housemate, checked out *The Stash* one day. We had a surprising conversation afterward about what had attracted her. She opened up to one particular couple's spread and pointed, saying, "I liked this shoot a lot."

I looked. Her choice made no sense to me. I mentally dissected the phallus of the porn actor in question. Teeny head, massive girth. Ugly veins bulging. Purple coloring. The porn actress could barely get her mouth around it. What use was that?

"That cock is gross," I said defensively. "It's abnormal. It looks like a fricking eggplant!"

"No it does not! What do you mean? It's *not* gross at all!" my friend protested-a little too loudly I thought. As if it were the spitting image of her own boyfriend's shooter.

Aha. I see! I get it. Eggplant. She was one of those notorious size queens! She, frankly, preferred her man to be hung like a frickin' eggplant. Too bad I had the hots for her! because it was now clear that I would never actually measure up, even if we ever did hit the hay.

Phew! A perfect excuse to save me from confessing my lust to her in person, live. Thank God she didn't view me as boyfriend material.

[That was twisted logic, eh? And this stupid miscalculation in the long run was just another excuse for a lack of assertiveness. A few years afterward, both of us were single and on the prowl at the same time. I had waited so long to become a free man, looking for the right moment to make a move on her because I knew she was a kindred spirit. I also knew she would be extra hesitant because she was chummy with my ex. Just a couple of days before I should have asked, another guy swooped in and swept her off her feet... and that was the end of that. They later got married. And I'm quite sure he wasn't hung like an eggplant.]

* * * * *

My second girlfriend was a wild one, theatrical, a partier, a real corker. Bisexual. Artistically diverse. The life of the party. When she was happy, she was delirious. And when she was sad, she'd call me up to tell me:

"I've got a razor and I swear to fucking God I'm going to slit my wrist!"

Ah, girlfriends. *Bipolar* was a diagnosis that hadn't been invented yet. So I independently acquired skills in suicide prevention on our private 3 a.m. hotline.

This British lass was also extra hefty when we met. She agreed to get healthier and trim down for me before we made love-it was a good incentive for her, and indeed a health kick was something she wanted to do for herself anyway. She set herself a target... and she achieved it too! I was so proud of her.

We began a decadent romp. I soon knew I was falling in love, again. Oh, I had so much catching up to do for all those years of frustration! She was no cold fish, that's for sure. She definitely loved sex. Loud sex! I discovered that's exactly what I was into as well. She was lusty and unabashed about it all and not about to tone it down for anybody! My neighbors downstairs hated her because the pipe holes for my radiator went right down through their ceiling... along with all the raucous sounds of our love-making.

One day she waltzed into my dorm in a right jaunty mood.

"Hi there!" she piped. "Remember how we were talking about what it would be like to have a ménage à trois?"

My ears pricked up; my heart suddenly raced. "Oh yes. Oh yes indeed!"

"Well, guess what? I just had one!"

I was flabbergasted. She gaily continued, "Remember that girl who owned the weasels? Her and her boyfriend. Although to be honest, he started reading the paper after awhile, because it was really her and me who were into it."

"Um, excuse me young lady," I protested, "but the ménage we were talking about was supposed to include ME!" *Like I should have needed to explain that...* Weasels on the loose!

She broke up with me some months later because she said she was bored. "We never go out. We never DO anything!" she complained. "All we ever do is fuck!

"Um... and the problem is?" I was genuinely bewildered.

She wanted more. The BBD! Someone who could splurge on her and finance a nightlife and keep up with her party lifestyle... Unfortunately, that just wasn't me. I was on the tightest of student budgets. I begged her to reconsider.

"Come on, hon! We love each other! Sex is free! The supply is endless... er, I think... Look. We're just bypassing all the stupid binge drinking, and cutting to the chase. Doing what everyone at your 'parties' would rather be doing. I don't see much appeal to those 'parties' anyway. To me they're the thing that's boring." (I'd often nod off at them.)

She was unpersuaded. After our breakup got finalized by her inner gold-digger, I spiraled down into depression. Couldn't concentrate on anything. Fell way behind in my studies because I had given this person my heart, and she'd told me I was BORING!! That was such a carefully placed knife... and try as I might, I could not pull it out of my ribcage.

* * * * *

I had a couple of flings after that, hoping to dislodge the dagger.

I remember working up a particular scene for theater class. The play: *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* by David Mamet. How appropriate. The couple scene in question was supposed to take place in bed, supposedly after sex. Maybe to increase our believability factor, the actress (a senior) and I figured we may as well screw beforehand as part of our scene preparation. Researching our characters, as it were. So we did! Back in my dorm room, she also turned out to be a bit of a size queen. But we had fun with our contrived situation, and she did say I had potential as a

lover, which was nice... Unsurprisingly, after we performed our scene for that class, she went right back to her 8" boyfriend.

Boyfriend. She had a boyfriend? Ouch.

Another weekend fling I had was with a non-student during summer break. I first ran into her near Brown. This shorty was hoping to manage my college new wave band. She took reams of photos of us. She was all like new wave too, hey! What with all those black fishnets, teased blonde hair, poofy sleeves and metallic fabrics. She even drove all the way across Florida to pick me up and take me back to her condo on the other coast. Maybe she wanted from me something more than business? She did. She molested me on an Atlantic Ocean beach, claiming that we didn't need protection cuz she was sterile.

I should have felt more attracted to her, but there was no spark in her eye. As if no soul were in there. Pretty vacant, basically. I found that very disconcerting, along with the long, awkward pauses in our conversations, but I just went along with the program anyway. Took a ride without arguing too much. At least she drove me all the way back home when she was done having her evil way with me!

On another night at Brown I got tipsy and shagged my female drummer, which was not the smartest thing I ever did. *Rocker lesson #1: Never sleep with your band mates!* It'll come back to haunt you.

* * * * *

Some feminists claim that girlie mags are the gateway to hardcore pornography. Maybe I skipped right past that first step. I just never had much interest in softcore girlie mags per se: for me, they just didn't do much.

Those spreads in Playboy, for example? They invited the viewer to step into the photo, to become the one boinking the hottie, so that the reader was, in a sense, getting off by projecting himself into the scene as the woman's lover. Externalizing his energy. (*All over the pages?*)

Often those same Playboy fans were not able to handle any hardcore imagery whatsoever. They'd all have a knee-jerk, homophobic reaction.

"I don't want to be looking at no goddamn cocks! Take that shit away!" To them, an erection represented male competition. Or even worse: it was a gay thing. To them, a red-blooded male certainly couldn't allow himself to be aroused by even the hottest women if the photo had any 'faggot' energy on it!

Me, I wasn't homophobic and I was much too shy to be able to "project" myself into a photo like that. I could only sit back, observe and do the old two-step. For me, split beaver itself wasn't the main draw, Sex was the draw. Takes two to tango! Penetration! The interaction between couples! (Or among multiple couples, why not!)

Intuitively, I felt I was tuning in on the Universal Sexual Energy, the electrical charge within all sex acts, a positive thing, sweetened by the aesthetic icing in which that charge was wrapped. I needed the imagery to be beautiful, to have appeal on some level. The specifics, they didn't matter so much. Certainly not during my first few years of exposure to hardcore. As long as there was a plasma ball of excitement implicit in the photographs, I was the voyeur, not the wannabe porn actor. And I was quite happy wanking at a safe distance! I could blow off steam (or something similar) and then go straight to sleep, or hit the books, or get creative. I had found my safety valve for stress and my relief for excess sexual energy! I had a coping mechanism.

* * * * *

Not everyone thought my coping mechanism was kosher. There were a lot of feminist women running around preaching in those years. Like it wasn't already hard enough for a shy guy to find loving. All that defensive feminism turned dating into a minefield. Maybe I could avoid the complications of dating by having a proper, steady girlfriend? Fortunately, not every woman was a blowhard feminist. But my next girlfriend? She certainly was defensive... and HOW!

She picked me up at an off-campus party. I had my eye on a Greek hottie in the corner who, by night's end, was legless and pitiful-a bit of an alcoholic, apparently. I was making a move to save her, when this other coffee-skinned girl swooped in, grabbed my arm, steered me out the door and made me walk her home.

She seemed perky. Maybe she was a better choice anyway?

She looked exotic. I courted her for a couple of weeks. The hope for steady sex dangled like a carrot above her head. I found out that she was an adopted child: maybe her genetics were Puerto Rican or Arabic, nobody knew for sure. She was also an only child who had been spoiled rotten by her parents, so she was used to *getting her way*.

A steady relationship? That alluring potential proved stronger than my doubt about her always getting her way. We started dating and... uh oh, she had thunder thighs under those long flowing skirts. My friends began to joke that I had a Fetish for Fat.

"I do not! I am just trying not to be *shallow*." I insisted I was striving to be a good feminist man, to see past all the svelte propaganda of Cosmo and porno. It was going to be a challenge, I knew, but I would not shrink from it.

Or maybe it was simply that beggars like me couldn't be choosers.

She also had a wicked temper and wasn't afraid to unleash it to get her way. *Did that alter the feminist equation?*

This first long term relationship of mine proved to be a four-year long power struggle. We fought like cats and dogs, in ways scarily reminiscent of my own parents. Sometimes I felt like I was dating my own mother. But I stomached it. I figured the high level of strife was normal: it's just what all serious relationships had to cope with. None of our mutual friends even had the guts to pull me aside and warn me that it wasn't *at all* normal, that we were totally co-dependent! So like a stoic,

through thick and thin I kept my hand in the fire. Just as my parents had always done

One night, my girlfriend told me that I was most attractive when my eyes were bloodshot from crying... *What kind of woman says things like that?*

My girlfriend had one comment for me before she took off to NY that summer:

"Don't you dare sleep with your roommate or your ex. Or else!"

But a summer spent off-campus in East Side Providence was long and dreary. The neighborhood was deserted. My ex was one of the few students hanging around, and she was at loose ends also. I didn't have any feelings for her anymore, but we threw caution to the wind one night and disregarded the taboo. Yep, we fooled around.

It was very disappointing. Not much fun at all. Memories of great sex didn't translate into much after emotional excitement had been subtracted from the equation. Quite a lesson for me in sexual chemistry.

And of course our fling came out in the wash once the school year started. Oh, I got punished hard for transgressing that law!

* * * * *

I took most of my junior year abroad. My girlfriend and I thought it best to separate while I was gone—just in case an opportunity arose.

I flew off and traveled the Middle East. For months I was constantly surrounded by men. Men and boys. Their wives and daughters were all locked up indoors, out of view.

When I finally returned to Rhode Island, I got back together with my girl. She was quite impressed with my new set of kibbutznik pectorals! But I kept getting this odd suspicion that, while I was gone, an opportunity had indeed arisen. That she had been doing the whole hockey team! One day while she was out, I could not contain my curiosity one second longer. I did the unthinkable, the forbidden.

It's true: I flipped through her diary. *Lord, was I ever sorry I did.* For while the cat had been away, the mice had indeed played! So many different guys, she needed a diary just to keep track! She had even joined the mile high club while I was overseas living like a chaste monk.

I was devastated! The ugly green monster was born. It gnawed at my guts, around the clock, like the larva of an ichneumon wasp chewing up the insides of its caterpillar host. Meanwhile, I couldn't breathe a word without incriminating myself.

Jealousy utterly consumed me for three long weeks-until the day I awoke and realized that I had been reduced to a pathetic shell. I saw that the person putting me through all this hell and misery was not her, it was me. ME!! Jealousy was just my own insecurity!

I further came to understand that I wasn't *jealous* of her other men. I was *envious* of her social charms and her seduction skills. I was envious of her ability to score at will!

Still, I decided that I had suffered enough in the previous three weeks. With a colossal effort of will, I put it all behind me and I resolved: *Never again will I torture myself like this. Never!*

The last year of our relationship was a maelstrom. I was trying desperately to edge my way out. She made damn sure to block all my exits. If ever I started to chat up a new girl on the other side of campus, she psychically picked up on it. Somehow she knew what I was trying to pull, and I'd get the 3rd degree. She was like a black witch and far too

powerful for little old me to handle. There never seemed to be a good time to break it off, and she aimed to keep it that way.

I did manage to end it with her one afternoon in my last semester. That instantly put the spring back in my step. I was suddenly in a great mood: what relief one quick taste of freedom could be! I hit a party that spring weekend and even seduced a lovely girl whom I met on the dance floor. I felt like a new man. I felt the sun shining on me again!

My prison break was short lived.

The ex was heading into hospital for a short visit to get a small but painful cyst removed. I was the one she expected to nurse her back to health at home. Instead I had gone and broken up with her, ruining her entire plan! She felt crossed, betrayed. She got on the horn and quickly turned all of our mutual friends against me, manipulating with guilt. They in turn ganged up on me and forced me to grovel back to the queen on my hands and knees, begging for her forgiveness...

I don't know exactly what she told our friends, but they continued backing away from me even after their peer pressure coup-leaving me stranded with no confidantes. No confidence either: my spine had been reduced to jelly.

It wasn't until I landed my own apartment in Brooklyn after college that I finally summoned up enough spine to terminate this pseudo-'marriage'.

And I cried for two days before even realizing that I wasn't sad. I was ecstatic! The four year long knot that had been tied in my stomach quickly melted away, proving to me that it hadn't been a normal sensation all this time.

Woo-hoo! I was a free man again! Were there indeed other fish out there in the sea, as people had often advised me? Only one way to find out. Go fishing!

* * * * *

There was a pretty Italian secretary who worked down the hall from me in Manhattan. She batted her long eyelashes bashfully when I passed, but I couldn't find the balls to ask her out. Not until the day I quit my job in that building. I would be safely out of detonation range if, after I rolled the dice, it went over badly. So I scribbled down my digits, put them on her desk, and hurried out in case it all blew up in my face.

To my surprise, she called me! We went out on a date. She got very flirty over dinner. She took me back to her place: an art deco, one-bedroom apartment in a doorman building.

Soon she had the bathroom all lit up with candles... and me soaking in the tub. Like in Hollywood movies, she materialized nude and tipsy in the doorway. Then she just climbed on into the bath and made love to me. What could I do? Resist? Not likely. I swallowed her bait: hook, line and sinker. *Now here was a real sexpot!*

How could I know it was all a brave front? How could I know that she would never strip her clothes off in front of a man without getting drunk on liquid courage first? How could I know about her anorexia-bulimia? How could I know her Catholic parents had treated her like worthless dirt while placing her brother high on a golden pedestal? How could I know that a 'friend' of hers only two weeks before had date-raped her? How could I know that she was walking wounded and years of therapy hadn't helped much?

I couldn't know. I wasn't psychic. Those stories would have to emerge over time, once I had become a committed, trustworthy partner.

Perhaps we were on a spiritual journey and I was her protector while she nursed her broken wings. Through her, I was being called to acknowledge the importance of sexual injuries, of the need for healing. I was entering a different phase of my sex education.

Apparently a woman's body doesn't always work according to the factory specs. The nipples and clitoris, for example. Those areas that were supposed to supply sexual joy and ecstasy to a woman's soul, she had made them strictly taboo.

"Never touch them, please! Never kiss them, or lick them. They're much too sensitive. Borderline painful," she exclaimed, as if she were painfully over-sensitive in general.

I couldn't believe my ears. How was her lover supposed to operate within such restrictions? She had obviously made a decision: she did not deserve any pleasure in life. And she had somehow rewired her sexual nervous system to *enshrine that fact*.

Intercourse was no erotic thrill ride for her, either. No more than a very intimate hug. So our encounters revolved entirely around my own satisfaction, with precious little feedback from her. Sometimes I felt like I was just masturbating inside another person's body. I mean, if she wasn't turned on, didn't that make me a rapist? How could I even turn on a lady with this much baggage? I couldn't! I even suspected I was absorbing her hang-ups, and that wasn't cool.

On the other hand, I was learning. I could connect a few of the dots. I could see how the Catholic Church had fucked her up! And fucked up her parents, too. I could see how depriving women of sexual pleasure was integral to Big Religion's mind control system. Destroy a woman's root chakra: that created submission, and this submission would get passed down domestically from mother to daughter. Like an evil gene of female unworthiness.

Just as had probably happened in my own Catholic ancestry.

Her inferiority complex meant that she was constantly terrified. Afraid of being just a stepping stone. And this fear surged outward sometimes. It didn't manifest as angry-jealous wildfires. It revealed itself as weepy-jealous tidal waves... especially after a couple of glasses of her favorite bubbly.

To be fair to her, she wasn't 100% timid. She gave me a BJ in the last car of the A train for a minute one night... until we were interrupted. And she did rope me into posing with her for black and white nude photographs.

"I want something to look back on when I'm old and fat and gray so I can remember," she explained cheerily.

We visited the studio of a friend of hers and stripped down. For half an hour we got misted with a spritzer as we froze in many combined poses. By then we were both pretty comfortable... and I was feeling mischievous. All that body contact and rolling around, you know. The gleam in my eye quite unnerved her friend, the photographer lady, who was prim and proper in an artsy fartsy way. She pulled the plug on our shoot just before we could start acting out anything too kinky!

My girlfriend and I did walk away with some sweet shots of our romance that day, but we both knew that we were not really on the same path. She longed for traditional white picket fences and 2.5 kids in the yard, and of course therapy. I was already married to Music, but this point was something she just didn't get. She was always afraid of being discarded for another woman. Without any provocation from me, she harped on her fears so frequently and so hysterically, that eventually, I couldn't take the stress any more.

I dissolved our connection. And that, my friends, is exactly how self-fulfilling prophecies work.

* * * * *

Where does a guy go for relief? Manhattan had porn theatres on 42nd street and peep show booths and magazine vendors and oodles of sexy vices to go around. I visited a Live Sex Show once. On 7th Avenue, I think it was. The last of those venues to get shut down. It was *quite* an experience.

First of all, a warm-up dancer came out. Did her bump and grind. Then an older Latina stripper came onstage and her act involved puffing on lit cigarettes with her mouth... and her vagina. The members of the audience applauded politely. Impatiently. I spotted a gaggle of Japanese tourists all packed into the right side of the front row, like they knew more than I about what was coming next.

The main act finally began. Two fine black models slinked onto the stage. *Oh, this was going to be good!* He, a muscular god; she, a tall sleek goddess with hair extensions. I felt lucky to even be there.

A shabby mattress lay on the stage floor by the Japanese, but that didn't matter to me. Every movement the actors did was choreographed to look graceful. Obviously they both had stripper backgrounds and some dance training. They got around to laying down.

Like a good gentleman, he warmed her up for many minutes with his tongue. Then they switched it up. She strove to do the same on his long horn of manhood, while lying on her belly, bumping her pumps against her tight ass.

They were both surprisingly quiet. In fact, you could hear a pin drop in there.

And when it was time for fucking, she grabbed a couple of fingers of Vaseline and lubed herself up. *Was that because he was too big? Or was it because she wasn't very turned on? Or was this just a normal procedure for some women? Who knew?*

She lay back and he plunged into her pussy. Live Sex indeed. No faking here! He stroked away like he was a gymnast going for the gold. She writhed appropriately like an MTV video vixen.

They switched positions a few more times, that gorgeous pair. In fact, I couldn't help stroking along to the shenanigans. There was no cum shot to signal the finale of the mating dance. They just stopped after awhile

and stood up together. The pair bowed to surprisingly loud applause. It was suddenly just a regular Broadway show that happened to star two nude actors! They smiled coyly and skipped off behind the curtains.

I hadn't noticed the petite woman who had slipped down my row. Who now sat down next to me, leaning her tits up against my shoulder and trying to put her hand on my jacket-covered hard-on.

For hookers, fishing for clients after a show must have been easy. I'm sure many men succumbed. But I was a voyeur, not a john. Big difference!

"Looks like you could use some company there, sugar. Whaddya say?" she whispered softly into my ear.

Man, I almost jumped through the ceiling! I jetted out of that theater as fast as if the vice squad itself were after my ass.

* * * * *

I vowed not to get hooked up to any more women with sexual hang-ups. I was still young and full of sexual vigor, so I ran my flag proudly up my flagpole. I dressed colorfully, outlandishly. I rode a motorcycle. I wasn't bad looking. *I deserved to reel in some true happiness, didn't I?*

A year later, the Universe let me cross paths with an equally colorful woman from Brooklyn. A redhead who was into music just as much as I was. The electricity between us was crackling, palpable. It could all have been perfect.

Except for the fact that she was married with a 10-year old son.

We flirted carefully during business hours. A couple of months passed and I couldn't stand holding myself back any longer. I invited this athletic MILF back to my place one evening... and I rolled the dice. By God, I pounced. And... it worked! My first completely successful seduction with mutual chemistry! Nothing short of a miracle.

We quickly succumbed to our deepest need for each other. Oh my goodness gracious. She had *no* sexual inhibitions at all. We were each other's fantasies, incarnate. She praised me up like a god, probably because I was only her second lover. She also discovered that she could orgasm repeatedly, far into the morning hours until she had to drive home, exhausted, with a new alibi in hand.

I fell head over heels. Madly, crazily, stupidly. She was all I could think about and fortunately, she was cuckoo for me too. Ironic that my intimacy with this 'adulteress' took me right through the doors of Heaven, sometimes melting into the White Light...

"You know this relationship of yours is doomed."

A wise friend of mine was warning me to bail out. I tried to block out that advice. How could Love be wrong? Follow your heart, right? I didn't have a problem sharing her with another man. Was he jealous? I didn't know. Their marriage was on the rocks anyway. She definitely deserved some appreciation too, just as much as I did. Happiness! It was almost too good to be true.

From another point of view, of course, none of it was true. It was all false, because it was cheating. I was just the slimeball opportunist, the backdoor man. There was no legal place for such a usurper in the eyes of her extended Italian family, all raised as Catholics. No such thing as a mistress, or a lover on the side, or an open relationship. No way!

We obviously had to operate like spies. Undercover. Very, *very* carefully.

However, by taking this chance with me, by allowing herself to be exalted through my love, she showed a willingness to extricate herself from Catholic brainwashing. I felt that was a great sign for our future prospects.

I think her sister started to suspect us, although she never could dig up any evidence. Does a twinkle in a person's eye count as evidence? Indeed, gleaming brightly from a terribly big, joyful secret? Which added to the thrill of our encounters... At first.

For me, Reality sank in very slowly.

As the months rolled by, it became harder and harder for her to schedule me in. My lover had major duties and family obligations, naturally, while all I had was a dull 9-5 and songwriting and anxious anticipation of her calls. She was obligated to do a lot of last minute erasing, more and more frequently until I felt that the hammer of the marriage god was driving a slow wedge between us.

The strangest of reasons prevented our dates... or were they just excuses, knowing that our parting of ways would be inevitable?

Don't wait for me. That had always been her fatalistic mantra. Along with its self-deprecating corollary: *You really should be with someone younger than I am.* I brushed those cute mantras off and told her to stop worrying! That I didn't want anyone else.

But what did *she* actually need? She didn't want divorce. For the child's sake... Would I step up as a surrogate father if she did get divorced? She knew I wasn't ready for that... Would her husband get custody if her unfaithfulness got uncovered one day? Probably.

How she must have felt torn! And trapped. Her choice in the end probably boiled down to a mother's choice: she could either keep her son, or keep me.

She went with the blood tie.

And so she told me goodbye! The worst heartbreak of my life was looming. It would take me a couple of years to shake off that pain... and that was well into my next major relationship.

* * * * *

Before that next relationship would begin, a major high school crush of mine from ten years earlier abruptly crossed my path, now that I had a studio apartment of my own. She had become an artist. Va-va-voom in a Euro feminist kind of way. I was still so hot for her! I was a devout non-drinker, but the only solution that sunny afternoon at my house that I could foresee was to ply us both with alcohol.

Several drinks later, I was still in a knot, still couldn't blurt out my crush. I took all day until after sunset when, out on my tiny balcony, I finally confessed to her how much I wanted to kiss her. And the strange thing was: she melted right into my arms. But with her head thrown backward, I realized she was a lot shorter than I thought.

"You're a great kisser. And a lot taller than I remember," she stated, admiringly. As if, simultaneously, we had both realized that she was now down off her impossibly high pedestal-the one I had put her on as an adoring teenager. And this gave her permission to take a lower road.

We headed indoors quickly, straight for the futon sofa-bed. It was in the upright position. (Still not properly fixed from an over-strenuous romp earlier in the year with my ex. A bit rickety in fact.) Anyway, she pushed me backward so I sat down in it. Then she pinned my hands back against the futon, straddled me and started grinding her pelvis through her thin jeans against mine. I could feel her hot lips radiating through the fabric. My dream was about to come true!

I tried to touch her glorious melons. However she wrestled my hands down, like she wanted me to focus on her grinding. Aha! The sexual power game. I was loving that she knew what she wanted and felt confident enough to just take it. I bared my teeth at her.

The phone rang. The message machine speaker clicked on. A male voice began.

It was her boyfriend. Her what? She had left my number over at their apartment so that he could give her a reminder call about getting on that last train back from Brooklyn...

NOOOO! Why hadn't I disconnected the phone? As I cursed silently and squirmed hopelessly, she hurried around the apartment, grabbing her things. Out the door she ran.

[Years later she offered to visit me again. Overnight. Oh, you can just imagine to where my eager mind flew. And yes, she did come. Just not how I had hoped. As she breezed through my front door a second time, she announced there was one thing I had to understand. "We're not going to be having sex," she pronounced with finality. Like an elbow block thrown by a fullback that took me by surprise and bowled me right over. Her body language backed it up, how the topic was no longer up for debate.

For me, an excruciatingly sleepless night ensued: the forbidden fruit was at last laying within my very own bed, for 7 near naked hours... yet she was out cold, and no longer interested in my erotic potential. Ah cruel, cruel Fate!]

I'd have a couple more one night stands, trying to slap a Band-Aid on my aching heart.

A Latina secretary and model wannabe from my company was one such long shot. She was very tall. She was so very indecisive that it completely flustered me. Stop, go, stop, go. Yes, no, yes, no, yes, no. I wasn't used to this. *What the hell do you want from me with all these silly mind games, girl?* I suspected she had a disease and was paranoid about not passing it on, so when she finally said Let's Let's, we used lots and lots of protection. But between all her hemming and hawing, my appetite evaporated! Once out of her padded bra, her chest was flat as an ironing board. Not like that was her fault or anything. Let's just say I couldn't quite appreciate the esthetic-my mind kept tricking me into seeing her as a boy rather than as a tomboy. Too freaky for me!

The next day we decided we were better off just flirting at work.

Similar situation with a witty redhead from work. We had flirted for months. But as soon as the clothes were coming off, I found myself inching away! Her pubes were as spikey as a Brillo pad. Her breasts were scary too: they each dangled like a tent from a single thumbtack... We too decided that flirting was better.

Then there was a night I slept with a very down-to-earth girl from western Pennsylvania. Her job was restoring copper street lamps. She was a mellow sweetheart with a great body and no pretenses. A good sport. She let me shave her, too! But we both knew that she lived much too far away from me... I'd need other ways to fill my free time in Brooklyn.

* * * * *

Let me pause to recap. 15 years of periodic exposure to adult materials had gone by. A reasonable question arises: how did such exposure affect my sexual expectations?

Well, there's no short answer to that.

The illusionary candy of porn probably conditions one to stretch one's definition of normalcy in certain directions. Directions like:

<

ul type="disc">

Gigantic penises are the norm

Being a voyeur and living out your fantasies vicariously instead of trying to chat up an actual person, that's quite normal

Virginity is bad and it's abnormal (it's almost a disease that needs curing)

Verbal seduction skills are abnormal. Look! Girls hardly need to be romanced before they spring eagerly onto your cock

Hassle-free sex is normal: no strings attached, no emotional downers, no regrets, no ugly aftermath-that is all normal. (So it's Real Life that is abnormal!)

Having a variety of concurrent sexual partners, that is perfectly normal.

20 minute sex, that is sufficient and normal

Ever since movie soundtracks: loudly vocal sex is the norm

Stilettos in bed are, of course, perfectly normal

Depending on the video, cunnilingus seems to be not too common

Not mentioning or even caring about getting STDs is the norm

Sexual partners getting paid under the table or off-screen, that becomes the norm

Adult entertainment (.com) is basically free, and that's now seen as normal

Male body hair is icky and considered abnormal

Untrimmed pubic hair is inexcusably abnormal

The athletic, pumped-up build of most adult performers is the yardstick to measure yourself against to check if you're anywhere near normal.

* * * * *

Is porn normal? Some of the argument about porn is not unlike that over video game violence. Is a brutal video game an alternative world that doesn't exist? Is it the cartoon version of a lifestyle that does exist? Or is it a template to be imitated, one that you will *make* exist in real life?

My feeling is it depends very much on who's watching and what mindset she brings to the table. Is the viewer the imitating kind (monkey see, monkey do)? As long as she can distinguish in general between an illusion and real life, I doubt that she's playing Grand Theft Auto and then going out to steal cars and run over pedestrians.

Two players out of 100,000, however, might have built-in psycho-killer tendencies. Playing a violent game might indeed add fuel to their

psychotic fire... and who would know how hard they were stoking that fire until it was too late?

However, all visual media are like that. They're very persuasive in their eye-candy illusion. If a person watches too much of any channel, she's going to absorb that channel's parameters and that channel's energy as if those were the norm. Like the bling on BET, or the violence on Extreme Cage Fighting, or the easy sex in porn videos.

Moderation in all things, as the Greeks used to say!

* * * * *

Both genders can get body image issues from soaking up too much porn. Just as they could get distorted from perusing too many beauty magazines at Barnes & Noble. After all, everyone wants to feel sexually attractive and no one enjoys feeling inadequate. It's a challenge not to compare one's own equipment and performance against those idealized models and actors who get hugely exposed, up on their publicized platforms.

But comparisons are deadly. Too many self-deprecating comparisons can destroy your self-esteem! *Just don't go there.*

Of course, that's easier said than done.

After the Brooklyn girlfriend's goodbye, I escaped the city for a weekend getaway in Nature with 3 male friends. To hell with women. Male bonding! Bros before hos!

On a nice summer's day we explored a shady New England lake. It was decided that it was skinny-dipping time... *Uh oh. Flashbacks to middle school shower time.* I suddenly got so afraid of 'shrinkage' that I actually separated from the pack and took the long way around the lake before undressing. ("Oh, that crazy guy just HAS to do everything different.") Then some fast penis-enlarging exercises behind a tree so I could emerge

from the foliage into the public eye feeling normally hung, like a man. Not like a boy.

Sliding all the way into the c-c-cold water, I discovered to my satisfaction that one of my other white buddies had some shrinkage issues of his own! But so what? Back at home he was used to defusing tension about this subject with comedy.

"Curse of the Irish!" he'd grimace. "It's okay, though. Girth! Girth is where it's at!"

We glanced carefully over at our black friend on the shore. Damn him. No shrinkage problems there...

Still, I thought I was past all this measuring up silliness. I now knew that my manhood was better than average size and plenty big enough for its job: I now knew that I had only been suffering from skewed perception-not unlike what anorexic girls develop. But I'd gotten past the distortions, right? I had no problem being naked next to women in bed. So why was I still ashamed of being inadequate in men's eyes, once the usual clothing was taken away? (I hope it wasn't the horse-hung example of pornography, like an impossible yardstick in their minds.)

* * * * *

4 months after the lamp-cleaning girl breezed past, I went on my first ever blind date.

She was nicer than expected. A charming, slim Celtic moonchild with a waterfall of wavy auburn hair. We shared a couple of drinks at a pub near Central Park. I threw volleys of probing questions at her all night, which she thought was too much like a police grilling, but hey, I was kind of wary! I had been burned several times before. I had to know up-front *exactly* where she was coming from. I reviewed the mental list of experiences that I had no intention of repeating: No husband and kid off in the wings. No manipulators. No sexual hang-ups. No suicidals.

(Ah, the negative list: less helpful than writing a list of the qualities you actually desire, but that was something I didn't yet know...)

This whimsical fairy lass fielded my questions quite well. Must have passed my audition because eight years later we were still together!

After drinks, we did some kooky dancing over at the Limelight nightclub until it was too late for her to catch a train home. So she hopped on to the rear of my motorcycle and we headed straight to my bed in Brooklyn. She was psyched to be rolling with a biker. We shagged a few more times that week, my birthday week. Too bad it was also my final week in New York City! I was in the middle of packing, ready to relocate to Philly.

And my colorful ex resurfaced during that same week. She wanted to make contact with my body and soul again before it was too late... Hallelujah! But now I only had every *other* evening open. It never rains but it pours. (And how my cup did overflow!)

* * * * *

Was my budding relationship going to be doomed by my departure? I took a chance and invited the Celtic lass down to spend New Years Eve with me in West Philly. That went great! All was not lost. She started visiting by train every other weekend. We were having tons of fun together... and we were falling in love as well. But it was expensive for her. She needed to be rid of the pricey inter-city commute. She confidently avowed that she could manage the world rock band I had since joined. (The rocker's girlfriend-manager! That's a new one!)

After six months, she threw her NY job to the winds, just so we could move in together.

Major commitment, that... This would be the first time I shared a lease with a girlfriend.

We scored an adorable little one bedroom in downtown Philadelphia. A narrow brick courtyard behind us was lined with elms. 8-foot tall windows let in floods of sunlight. Ornate moldings, chair rails, original dark wood flooring. The neighborhood itself was picturesque, though not a place to leave anything on a car seat: smash-and-grabs and broken car windows were a nightly event. We didn't care though. The hoods respected my wheels, which came with a chrome kickstand and a V 2-stroke.

A year and a half later: after a brave run at breaking into the music scene, I folded the band-along with my girlfriend's hopes of managing it. At the same time she received an offer from a TV station across the Pond. We were an RCH from decamping to Amsterdam, which would have been awesome. Sadly, that didn't pan out. So we moved to the second bohemian city on our top 10 list: San Francisco.

It would be more than another year before the skeletons started tumbling out of her closet.

My girlfriend announced one day that she was declaring bankruptcy. *Oh my.* There had been a criminal husband in her past, you see. By going off to jail, his mountain of debt had been shifted onto her shoulders, and she was now crushed. Her financial world lay in ruins.

She hadn't told me this upfront because she didn't want to "scare me away." *Perhaps she didn't want me to be able to make a fully informed decision either.*

Her adoptive parents were beyond furious about this fall from grace. They totally disowned her over the debacle. *Were adoptive parents even allowed to do that?* And they stuck to their guns afterward: they never talked to her again! Not even once. Unsurprisingly, my girlfriend sank into a number of depressions and would stay swirling down there, usually around holiday time. The one feather in her cap was the discovery that she had been born in a psychiatric hospital. For her, this fact seemed to explain SO many things. It became her reverse badge of pride.

Meanwhile, I was living as a neo-hippie and wondering if open relationships might be more fun than the traditional, closed kind. (Was this the influence of porn? Or was this the influence of San Francisco? Or was this just intuiting that my girlfriend had some-thing even more drastic than bankruptcy on her mind?)

She did. This was the moment that she decided she wanted... a baby!

She did get pregnant too.

"There's a special soul I have been nominated to bring into the world! He's going to be the next avatar! The next world savior!" she raved around the apartment.

"You sound nuts, ya know." I shook my head. "Who is going to pay this kid's way? Food, clothes, diapers? Daycare? Will you? Look, honey, we're *barely* solvent as is."

"Unbeliever! Infidel! Don't you know that a way will be shown?"

No, I didn't. I wasn't relishing the whole Mary/Joseph axis of her reasoning. After discussing it further with our feet planted more firmly on the ground, she realized I wasn't going to get dragged into anything I didn't want... Instead, we had a medical problem to face. We couldn't splurge on an abortion so, ever-resourceful, she went ahead and did something quite amazing. She prayed. She summoned the spirit doctors... and the spirits responded by precipitating a free miscarriage for her, right on cue!

She knelt on the kitchen floor afterward. She wept horribly once that deed was taken care of. Apparently saying goodbye to the soul in question. I just sat off to the side in my basket rockingchair thinking *Damn! This sure is wacky, wacky stuff.*

As for evolving into an open relationship? She wasn't excited to get dragged into anything she didn't want to do, anymore than I was. Maybe if I let her have her baby avatar? But certainly not before...

Bartering a baby savior for an open sexual relationship. Hm. That just didn't seem right. But I think in the long run it was a defining theme of her journey with me, during which neither of us got what we really wanted.

* * * * *

I was in an SF peep show booth one afternoon. I was flipping video channels, when I got this nasty, creepy feeling. I glanced down to my left, behind my pant leg, expecting to see a tarantula.

Instead, a male eyeball was staring up at me.

YIKES! A gloryhole. That bastard is ogling me through a gloryhole! I resisted the urge to poke his motherfuckin' eye out with my finger. Other gloryholes in the same wall had been boarded up, but whenever management sealed one off, some queer would show up with a drill and make a new opening... at the perfect height for fellatio, of course. *No thanks, pal!* Anyway, a few more holes and that whole booth wall would have come tumbling down.

No more peep show booths for me! Done.

No great loss, however. The dark, grody adult movie theater had gone the way of the dinosaur and drive-in, but the VHS era had arrived! And my girlfriend had no problem with porn, which I thought was cool of her. She could get off on it just like I could. Sometimes we'd watch adult videos at home together while fooling around. (Which I found infinitely preferable to visiting seedy booth arcades.) Did she ever sit and watch them alone without me? I doubt it. But now and then they did spice things up for us.

* * * * *

Here's another porn question. What sexual activities might an adult video watcher with a partner be expecting the partner to perform? (And be expecting her to enjoy, or at least tolerate?)

I think I'll save that question for later on.

* * * * *

My hair grew ever longer. I was embarking on a New Age exploration of my inner world. I felt that I was getting more in touch with my feminine side again. I wasn't sure, however, that this was even where I should be going. *Hadn't I done this already?* Hadn't I been passive from childhood all the way up to college? How was this tactic going to help me get my creative voice out there? Still, "get in touch with your feminine side", that was the wisdom being aimed at West Coast men at the time, so I went with it.

60-40, that's what my girl started calling me. As in: 60% female, 40% male. Presumably, she too was exploring her masculine side: did that mean she was 40-60? Maybe we were getting a little lopsided.

Or, perhaps she had discovered how to steer my reins. If I would just stay submissive to her arch visions...

And I think she ushered me down that road on purpose, knowing that womanly women are not attracted to feminized, 60-40 men. They are drawn to manly men who look and act like men! That's the energy complement to a womanly woman; 60-40 is only going to pull the tomboys. Becoming 60-40 was like taking on a major handicap as far as attracting other hotties into my world... *So she was clever like that, wasn't she?*

We edged closer to the open relationship experiment.

One night we went to a techno nightclub. It was packed with rich hotties. We had previously been to lots of raves, but they were democratic and kooky. This nightclub scene was not a trippy hippie stomping ground. Inside, it was obvious that flashy young monkeys ruled the hierarchy of the techno jungle. Babylon with bling and beats.

It was all about the grabby hands. When it's too loud to hear yourself think or even hold a conversation, the only communication left is via grabby hands. My hands? They weren't at all grabby. I couldn't do that! I was incapable of pulling them from my pockets. (Long years of being trained to respect women's space, don't ya know.) I actually emerged from that discotheque sobbing! In the parking lot I wept like a little baby, even though I was feeling like a dinosaur compared to the other clubbers inside. My time had come and gone for this kind of scene! It was so hopeless.

Plus I was now scared to death to 'bust a move' on a total stranger. What was wrong with me? I would have loved to explain away this and similar mysteries. Like:

Whatever happened to the Summer of Love? That techno night made it painfully clear. Picking up hotties for free love these days required material success and an expensive detour through the world of glamorous nightclubbing. This was not the spiritual way at all.

* * * * *

We answered one ad in the Wild Side column of the local paper. A couple looking to have sex in the same room as another couple. Same-room sex: that sounded intriguing!

The couple drove a great distance to get to our apartment. They eagerly sat down on the edge of our black futon sofa. We were attractive enough for them, apparently, and fit the bill of what they were hoping for.

The woman, she was sizzling hot. Very fine indeed. The guy... well, not so much. Looked like a white haired J. Peterman from the Seinfeld show.

That wasn't the big wrench in the machine, though. My girlfriend had chosen this particular day to get into a major snit, a sour funk. Her wet towel attitude sabotaged the delicate experiment in optimism. (It's always easier to tear something down than to get something started.) She went off to sulk in the other room.

The rest of us had a sobering chat about how incredibly difficult it was to work a situation as unusual as this. In fact, they had tried the swapping partner thing, but they had found that someone would always blow a jealous gasket! So, as a couple, they had instead been downgrading their lustful expectations.

* * * * *

Around this time of diminishing returns, Penthouse magazine went hardcore. I was probably one of the few who thought this was a major step forward. Finally, some high end photographers were going to get put to the task of defining sex in a beautiful, quality way! But even a giant company as big as Penthouse was feeling the pinch. Various new cheap media were crowding into the market.

I had seen enough porn of course by this time to know that most of it was pure crap. Low production values. Bad soundtrack music, not remotely synced to the action. Tepid acting performances. The deluge of adult video after 1980 had dragged ambitions down to the lowest common denominator: making a fast buck. The graphic packaging of the videos was becoming grotesquely overdone and tasteless. There was now precious little attempt to strive to create beauty at all. The idea of a plot was being considered laughable. Every video seemed to follow a mandatory series of circus stunts with little thought or mental effort expended. Anyone in L.A. with 20 grand to spare and a couple of video-cameras now thought he was an adult video director! The lion's share of such a video's budget naturally got sucked up by the starlets, the professional female talent. The crumbs of the remaining money then had to get

divvied up somehow between stunt cocks, crew, catering, pre-production, editing, replication, distribution and advertising.

No wonder the shit was looking trashy!

I had an inspiration one day. Not exactly a vision, although not dissimilar. This adult industry needed a reformer. A savior. Someone to drag it out of the mire! Someone really creative and talented on a lot of different levels. Someone like... me! Why not? One life to live.

It was time to go do some investigative research.

Well, that was much easier said than done. I had no idea how this industry worked on the other side of the TV screen. But I would find out.

* * * * *

I got an invitation to a *bukkake* shoot. For those of you who don't know, it's a bizarre Japanese invention, a ritual involving one stationary female starlet and about 50 naked guys squirting sperm all over her face and head. Trust those Japanese!

Allegedly, *bukkake* was the 'other way' into the industry for men. The main way, of course, was to have a girlfriend who was already a porn actress, and she would pull you in.

Well, there was a third way: go to Jim South's World Modeling Agency in L.A., get a Polaroid photo snapped of you and your wang. They'd put you in the casting book and you could wait to be summoned by some director. Good luck! Assuming you ever got called, you would likely start at the bottom of the porno barrel. You'd have to work your way steadily up through the ranks of unattractive has-beens before you ever got to fuck any beautiful starlets. This meant you had to keep wood no matter how horrifying the partner you got thrown in with! You, as

actor, had absolutely no choice and no control. If beauty was your motivation instead of orgasms, this process would quickly weed you out of the talent pool-and the pool of reliable male porn actors was tiny in those days. The men in it were already busting their nuts just to keep their schedules filled; they didn't want any more competition from the likes of you...

This particular *bukkake* was held in a bare, cold warehouse in Van Nuys, California. The 50 men were told to strip and sit on the concrete floor. Not unlike prisoners of war. The female's name was Harley. She did a short, acceptable striptease for us men. Personally, I've never really gotten a boner from watching a striptease from afar, but everyone else around me did.

Then all the male actors were told to form a line.

"Shoot your loads on her, one after the other, then step to the side... Don't block the cameras."

The director made it sound like a factory. I couldn't imagine anything less erotic! It was even more gross in person as this chick got jizz frosted all over. Soberly I put my clothes back on and walked away, wondering about what motivated these wannabes.

How are you supposed to get ready to shoot your wad while looking at the naked butt of the guy standing in front of you on line? I don't know. How could you possibly be ready to come without any physical contact with the woman whatsoever? Beats me!

I was definitely not one of these guys. Oh no. Touching was absolutely crucial to my excitement. Being touched was a pre-requisite! The desire for skin contact, wasn't that the whole driving force behind sex anyway (apart from the DNA-reproduction factor)?

This bukkake wasn't about skin contact. This wasn't about sex. This was just hideous! I scratched it off the list of possible ways into the industry.

* * * * *

I did worm my way into a couple of hardcore shoots as an 'extra'. I would not be having sex or doing anything very exciting, I would just be hovering around the movie set as a background character. And getting a small check at the end of the day.

There would be no voyeuristic ya-yas involved, I found out to my chagrin! As soon as there was any sex imminent, the director would yell:

"Close the set! Any crew or actors not directly involved, please go sit outside or in the cafeteria." This is apparently the normal operating procedure for higher end productions these days. I'm guessing it's less distraction for the performers? My advice: if you want to watch people have sex, go buy a video. Don't bother being an extra on a film set.

As directed, I went to sit outside on a field... and found some unexpected enlightenment there.

About thirty crew and cast members were milling about, waiting for the end of the closed-set scene that was being shot in the barn behind us. I remember one dowdy, forlorn woman sitting on a short stone bench under a tree. This woman's boyfriend was the lead, the starring porn actor. He was inside the barn, in the midst of a torrid threesome with a tall blonde and a howling redhead. Man, you could hear that redhead through the walls of the barn, wailing like a banshee, her yelps echoing up and down the hills. *How IS one supposed to react to that? Who knew?* But that porn actor's girlfriend listened along to every squeal and never flinched. She just sat there stoically, staring dead ahead. I kind of felt bad for her. Why on earth was she here, punishing herself? Was she secretly enjoying this?

Meantime, two of the other starlets started flirting across the campfire like we were at a Lake Havasu party.

"... Baby, you are SO fucking hot!"

"No, no, YOU are so fucking hot! Honey, I'd do you in a second. Uh huh. Oh yeah. I mean it! In a SECOND." Fingers were snapped to demonstrate the speed of the proposed seduction.

"Yeah? I'll do you right here, right now, bi-otch!" The crew's ears pricked up, but the two merely dissolved into riotous laughter. *Sorry, all you tongue tied extras, it was just idle banter after all.*

When the movie scene was at last in the can, Mr. Big Dick emerged in an understandably buoyant mood. He passed by me and, putting his arm around his mousey girlfriend's shoulder, walked her out to the parking lot. Off into the darkness...

I wondered how healthy the dynamics of that relationship were.

And I recalled where I'd seen that expression on a stoic woman's face before. It was when I ran into my first girlfriend, the biology major, just after I graduated college. She was living in a loft with her 'lover', who apparently was out every night fucking other women. Never telling her where he was going. Or when he was coming back. Strangely, she wouldn't move out of the apartment. Maybe a money issue? She had a faraway look in her eye too. And the rest of her body told a tale of resignation: her pasty, pale skin signaled to me that some hard boozing was going down...

* * * * *

Mr. Big Dick left, so I couldn't pull him aside that day for questioning. But he was not the only one I could glean information from. I soon located another adult actor. He was sitting in the audience at a feminist performance art show by Annie Sprinkle.

I interviewed Mike Horner at my apartment one day. Not a media interview, just a personal research interview. The guy was a relatively famous porn actor from the old school. The main things I wanted to know from him were: *what's it really like?* And *whatever happened to quality productions, man?*

He was a pleasant fellow and well read, eager to talk about the Arts. Mike owned a worldwide collection of masks, for this was a big passion of his. He had started out his career in the performing arts, in dance & theater. (We had that in common!) Against the grain, he had managed to cut a unique path from those traditionally gay-dominated art forms into hetero sex films. Years had passed and he was slowing down his output because he had settled down with a steady live-in girlfriend. His market niche was now strictly couples movies and adult sex education flicks.

Mike didn't think that being an actor in adult videos was so fantastic. It did not make him one of the luckiest men in the world.

"It isn't like winning a Nobel prize or doing something useful." He was kind of jaded about it all. "Pussy just feels like pussy. There's not that much difference really, once you're working."

Straight from the horse's mouth. What a let down.

A couple of years earlier, however, he had felt the exact same way as I did about the decline in the adult industry's standards. He already had a famous name and was well positioned to *do* something about it. To set a better example! Was he the savior and prophet of the industry, instead of me? He was one of the few who remembered first hand the golden days of Hollywood porn, when certain directors were still trying to make artistic movies with character development, plot and proper lighting (with attendant complications).

Maybe he could play savior. Mike decided it was time to create and direct an ambitious adult video project from the ground up. Something

beautiful, with fantastic production values. Something meaningful, something *really* artistic!

He wrote the whole script. It went into development. He got producers to back him.

Unfortunately, his money people were scurrilous operators. They completely dicked him over and stole his masters! Burned him. He had to dig himself out of a deep money pit afterward. Not surprisingly, he was not about to try changing the tastes of the mainstream again. Not this lifetime! Anyway, his big artsy-fartsy porno gamble was getting crushed under a tidal wave of so-called *gonzo porn*: the very first reality shows. These flicks blew Art right out of the water with their cheap, hand-held documentary look.

But that's what the viewing public started to beg for: a DIY feel that lets you know that, *Hey buddy, this is totally possible... and you could try it too. You've got a video camera and a penis at your house? Hey, even YOU could do it!*

* * * * *

I had a couple of one night stands with tomboys around then. At 5 in the morning after one Venice Beach house party, I was the only one left soaking in the hot tub with a young, light-skinned black woman in braids and beads and nothing else. We smoked one, and then she invited me in.

By our third date, however, it was clear that this pretty hipster was childishly superstitious. She was afraid of bugs, darkness, afraid of almost everything, really. Way too neurotic to be around!

The other woman was petite: a dancer, artist and fairy girl. Up in her attic studio, she told me one afternoon that she had broken up with her steady boyfriend. Yay! Soon we had danced our way into a smiling, sweaty pile on the ground.

The next day she stopped returning my phone calls. I must have been clingy and needy at the time because I took that very personally. The ex-boyfriend pulled me aside a few weeks later:

"I'm mad at you."

"What's the matter, brother?"

"You slept with M. And you know she's my life partner."

"She told me that you guys had broken up."

"Come on. You knew that's not true."

"Huh? No I didn't. I believed her. So you're saying... you're saying she lied to me?" That really took the icing off the cake.

[A year later this same dude had some other words of advice for me: "You're kind of obsessed about the whole ménage-à-trois thing. Instead of talking about it, why don't you just go ahead and *have* it already?" I tried to point out it wasn't as simple as an eye-blink on *I Dream of Jeanie*. But he just dismissed my excuses...]

* * * * *

I was now living in a commune. Friends referred to me as Shiva, and that's the name to which I responded. One night, my friend was hoping to visit a Chinese temple ceremony and I decided to tag along. We were heading down to his van when I got waylaid by two female members of the commune: a portly, wacky trailer mom with a Southern drawl and a sexy young woman I barely knew whose business card said 'spiritual counselor'.

The Mom had just had a revelation for us, apparently. "We are the triad from Hindu mythology, right here, standing on this doorstep. You are

Shiva, obviously. Louisa is a reincarnation of Vishnu. And I am Brahma!" She beamed. The second part of her revelation was emphatic: "And you two must now have a baby together!"

I had grown jaded from hearing commune residents make epic, off-the-wall statements. *Whatever...* I didn't know at this point that the reincarnated Vishnu in question had several screws loose. She seemed hypnotized. She ate up every word of Mom's demented vision. Suddenly, she grabbed my hand and literally dragged me back into the house, up to her bedroom loft and onto her bed. She was determined! She started whipping off her sweater and trying to get me out of mine. Presumably getting ready to make a baby with me, as ordered. With her bra removed, she did have amazing tits.

Now, had I been cut from a different cloth, I might have let her jump onboard. I might have used her sexy body for an hour and tossed her aside the next day. But she was all muxed up! both emotionally and mentally. Everything she said and did made it obvious that she wasn't remotely balanced or making sane decisions about reality. *The last thing either of us needed was to intend to create a pregnancy.* Even sex with her started seeming like a bad idea-and I never say things like that!

I talked her down out of her mania. I got her to land the plane and hit the air brakes.

Thus it was that I walked away from a night of hide the salami. It was very hard to do, but I knew it was the right thing. She actually thanked me the next day, before she informed me, in all seriousness, that an atomic bomb had recently detonated on Venice Beach: that's why everyone's wristwatches had stopped. (Well, that was news to me!) Also she assured me a tsunami was coming from overseas and it was going to hit very soon...

This girl was in a kind of metaphorical trance. Interestingly, her vision proved prophetic. Unknown to her, her parents had been alerted about her mental breakdown, and were already in the process of driving down from British Columbia to reclaim her, sweep her out of this 'psych ward'

and take her far away, to a proper rest home in the Canadian countryside.

* * * * *

I was lounging one night at a small house party, in the Venice Beach hood. It was being thrown by a gaunt chap who had AIDS, who probably felt he didn't have long left so he had better party up like it was 1999! (Denied sex, people seem to gravitate to drugs.)

I met a Persian dyke that night. She was plump and warm and very soft spoken.

She checked me out and... decided to switch 'teams' for a night, ya might say! She drove me all the way down to her pad in Long Beach, where we dropped E before she sucked on my toes and then took me to her white lacey bed. The E proved a bit much for me. Besides sweating profusely and wanting to chew out the inside of my cheeks, I was squirmy all night.

"Oh, I drop E all the time," she stated casually, as if she had a wooden leg for such things. That sure didn't sound to me like an optimal lifestyle decision.

Considering I was her first guy, she did very well in bed.

The next morning she told me all about her telephone job in Credit Repair. She confessed that the whole concept was a total scam! She felt very low about screwing over these people who were already in dire straits. *But a job's a job.* I can't remember if her guilty feelings led to the following conversation:

"Hey, I really want to tell you a secret, but you mustn't judge me for it," she began bashfully.

I acted offended. "Of course I won't. Tell away!"

She looked calmly out the window. "I like to be... beaten... with a crop..." She unloaded a quiet explanation. "See, I'm into S&M. In fact, I have a guy come around here every other weekend. A real sweetie. He ties me spread-eagled out on the balcony, naked, standing up! Then I have him beat my back until it bleeds. Until I scream, too." She checked for my reaction. "I really like that."

"Okay," I replied as non-judgmentally as I could. "Different strokes, different folks?"

We went out to examine the bloody beating balcony. It was clean. There was the gear alright. It wasn't an enclosed area, either. I looked up at the neighbor's deck.

She read my mind. "Oh yeah. They can hear everything." Her smile was coy... But why was I here? She and I lived far from each other, and I didn't have a car. Plus I was no match for an E-dropping lesbian raver-girl into S&M. So! That was the end of that adventure.

* * * * *

By sheer coincidence, I have had two roommates who were porn actors back in the day. These two men could not have been more different...

There was the polite, old school, Hungarian gentleman who periodically turned into a slaving boyish lecher. He was far down the slope from his glory days as a porno double for Burt Reynolds: there just wasn't much call for that look anymore. He counted it a good day when he got a call to fuck a Latina midget on camera.

[His porn industry best friend was Ron Jeremy. Yup, the Hedgehog. Another bottom dweller. Came over one day and crashed on my couch-bed and proved to be a fat slob whose personality was even less impressive and more crude in person than onscreen.]

But oh, how proud my Hungarian was to stand at the front of the line at every *bukkake* shoot. One day he squirted some blood, which really ought to have shut the whole shoot down, but didn't. Which tells you something about the morals of those producers! And the Hungarian can be seen squirting away at the Houston 500 Gangbang, a video which broke the world gangbang record (though not for long).

Now, at the other extreme from the old gentleman/lech, I had a roommate who was a Native American rebel. Here was a guy who had started out as a male model and stripper. He then performed in a series of adult flicks in the early 1980s, including the art-porn movie *Café Flesh*. That's when he wasn't playing the iconoclast at the Maharishi University in Iowa. Or pursuing his shamanistic tribal roots. Or shooting music videos or driving limousines or boinking rich men's wives while they watched.

He also set up solo-girl photo shoots. He'd sell the shots to Hustler and similar magazines.

He described to me the system he had developed. Here's how he handled a model as she walked through the door, before she could freeze or get an attitude, before she knew quite what to expect from the handsome photographer. He would say:

"Hi! Welcome, so-and-so. On the table I've laid out samples of three different kinds of photos we can shoot today. This kind we can sell for \$200, this one for \$400, this kind for \$600. See, you can make a lot more money the more pink that you show. It's all up to you, of course; you just let me know how much money you want to make. While you're thinking about that, you can go ahead and take your clothes off here. Or in the bathroom up the hall, if you prefer. But you're going to be butt naked in here anyway in a couple of minutes! Ha ha! So you may as well just relax and take 'em off here."

The model would of course disrobe. He'd set to fixing her hair, which helped her relax more, while she was doing her own makeup exactly the way she liked it.

Then he'd have her paint her fingernails. While the polish would start drying, he'd remember something:

"Okay, we need to trim up your pussy, and mist down the lips with the atomizer. But it looks like your nails haven't dried yet. So I guess I'll do that for you, then when your nails are dry we'll be all ready to shoot and make you some big money!"

Within 5 minutes of her entrance, the model was butt naked and he was touching her pussy! Very efficient. He told me he would usually wear loose, revealing sweatpants to his shoots. Just in case the girls got too horny and wanted more... Allegedly, that happened from time to time. And he was hung like a mammoth, so the models could tell *exactly* what they'd be getting.

What to make of the Hungarian and the Native American? Both these male porn actors were characters in their everyday lives, too. But one of them was way more creative and had it a lot better figured out than the other, if you ask me.

* * * * *

My next girlfriend was a passionate dance teacher. She drove around in a VW hippie van and had a taste for travel and adventure in general. Bit of a farm girl. A very fit bisexual blonde.

She said she was strictly monogamous in relationships, and warned me that she had a jealous streak. She was wrapping up a long, solidly lesbian phase of her sex life. That's when she signed up at the commune I was living in... I met her on the sidewalk. Love at first sight! (Or close enough.)

I remember one particularly intriguing story she told me later on. About her sleeping with a couple. How one night she and her girlfriend had double-teamed the other's boyfriend. That didn't sound so very monogamous! Did she make exceptions to the rule now and then? *Hey, she just might be up for anything!* Maybe that's what I was thinking as she and I cruised up to the Burning Man Festival.

Burning Man, as some of you in-crowd know, is absolute creative craziness! It takes place on Labor Day weekend every year out in the Nevada desert where the barren landscape feels like Mars. My girlfriend and I were part of the 'Debbie Petting Zoo'. The DPZ was a theme camp from West L.A. who was also heading up to the festival.

Y2K-mania would prove itself a fizzle, but that was just the regular world. We, meanwhile, could not wait to get up to the Surreal world of the Burn!

I was shortly to learn a lot about freedom, and sexual freedom, and their unforeseen consequences. Indeed, like Y2K, I too was about to fizzle...

At the previous year's Burn, I had quickly located the epicenter of decadence. I have memories of dancing in a thong and top hat, gyrating to the beats at Bianca's Smut Shack. The left side of that theme camp tent had been virtually cordoned off by naked gay men who were humping and bumping in semi-privacy. They were definitely much bolder than the straights. (I could almost understand why some guys switch sides, just to cut to the chase faster!) But their energy of aggressive sexual freedom was alienating to Burning Man ladies, very few of whom stayed in the tent for more than a few seconds before exiting again. I found that sad.

The central room area, where a few old porno magazines lay about, held a demonstration of hetero tantric love that afternoon. A naked girl lay on a massage table while a young man, perhaps her boyfriend,

stimulated her clit slowly. She made no external sign of appreciation. (Some internal activities feel more exciting than they look!) Then they left. I'm not sure the pair convinced anybody of the importance of their sexual techniques...

Afterward, little happened until a behemoth of a woman in a floor-length skirt entered the central sitting area. She was by then the only female in Bianca's Smut Shack—and so immediately became a lightning rod for male attention.

She chatted a while with a guy who was sitting on the couch there. As I overheard it, their subject was the swinger's lifestyle. I was not surprised when his giant salami went thwack! up into the air, and her mouth went down around it.

Next thing I knew, there were overeager monkeys-I mean, men-in all directions whipping off their pants in order to crowd around and masturbate to this fellatio scene. *Or maybe get some sloppy seconds?* It was weird.

She did mount her brand new friend, but self-consciously maintained her privacy skirt cloaking, defeating all the voyeurs' built-up expectations. Not that such modesty slowed them down!

When I exited that tent, I found that somebody had stolen my new bicycle.

* * * * *

At the next year's festival in the desert, I was laying next to my girlfriend in our pup tent. Both of us were nude and sweaty in that still, sweltering afternoon heat. We were trying not to move around very much.

The Velcro flap of our tent ripped open. In poked the head and the shoulders of a pretty girl from our theme camp. She was all tightly

wrapped up in a costume sari. I knew she was here at BM with her own girlfriend-who was nowhere to be found at this moment.

"Oh my God, you're both naked! Sweet!" she cooed. "Hey, I know it's a weird question, but would you guys wanna have sex with me?" She matter-of-factly looked into my eyes. "I mean, I'm lesbian and all but I've given blowjobs before so that's not a problem."

She hardly waited for an answer before crawling through that flap. To my surprise, my girlfriend-dancer offered no resistance at all! Well, to be honest, we had previously talked about situations like these ... My girl-boy-girl ménage à trois fantasy ... *Could it really be happening? At long last?*

As you can imagine, I was grinning wickedly as the sari girl crawled toward us. (I guess she did not have any conscience twinges about cheating on her own girlfriend.) Oh my God. Within seconds, the sari girl was going down on my lady. My jaw hit the floor. Wow! Pretty fucking ballsy! I mean, I had had to court my dancer for three weeks before she let me take her to bed. But that was then. No beating around the bush now!

It certainly got hot in there in more ways than one. My girlfriend responded to the oral stimulation by rolling her eyeballs back in her skull...

In her ecstasy, she began turning off any awareness of me. She was losing track of her boyfriend and his desires.

The lesbian smooching alternated with oral sex. They were relentless. Time ticked by.

And it kept on ticking by. And ticking by even more! *Uh oh. This stranger is a dominant one, and she has seized control here.* I longed to caress her skin, but she would not undress at all. *Was she so self-conscious about her body?* I knew that some women were. And her long sari was not at all silky; it was all rough and not much fun to the touch.

I stroked, kissed and petted on them both, but my loving participation was not being reciprocated. Their body language said it all: seemed the third wheel now was *ME!*

My male heterosexual appetite began to go sour.

But I had welcomed her in. How can they both be acting like I don't exist, goddamn it? That means... Well, I guess it means for one that this chick is not gonna have any sex with me. It's like she doesn't actually want me at all. She just wanted to score my hot babe! She lied just to get to HER, that's it!! What the-

But whoa, dude, slow down. Isn't every guy supposed to want to be in exactly this situation? Naked, next to two beautiful women who are making love? Wasn't I just being way too impatient?

I voted for the latter. I tried hard to cool my jets. So hard, so hard, so hard!

The pup tent was sweaty and now crowded as well. The seconds throbbed on like hours.

No, no, come on, man, it ain't all just in your head: they are both totally ignoring you, and that's bullshit! I couldn't help but feel like I had arrived at the gates of ménage heaven but been locked out.

Inside me, my stomach began roiling like snakes wrestling in hell.

Or maybe I'm not sexually attractive enough, is that it? The mirror of self-doubt about my own worth became all encompassing. This was NOT how my fantasy was supposed to go down. Not at all!

I knew I had to say something. But what? I didn't want to come across as negative. That wouldn't fix any imbalance of desire. Quite sincerely, I did not want to ruin *their* moment, either. I needed my girlfriend to cherish this experience of an open relationship, for future reference. Like if I

messed up the ménage à trois here, there could at least be a redux somewhere down the line. But what the heck to say now?

"Why won't you ladies touch me!? Sniffle... sniffle..." No.

Oh what were the magic words for this situation? Must not sound too whiny, neurotic, annoyed, pathetic, angry, sullen, stupid, clinical, over-eager, unmanly... My brain swirled, utterly unable to solve the seduction puzzle. I could barely eke out a sound, except for a couple of throat-clearing "Ahems."

Meanwhile, the snakes silently churned around ever more violently inside my gut. They were having the World Extreme Wrestling Championship Finals, while my fantasy devolved into a nightmare. O cruel woman!

So easily tricked! Of course I was aware that our intruder was a lesbian: and I had believed what she had said to me. But duh! Why the hell WOULD a lesbian like that want to have sex with some guy? Like me...

She doesn't like me, everybody hates me, I'm going to eat some worms!

I couldn't stand the rejection anymore. *Aargh!* To my utter amazement, I got up and exited our tent. Yessir, I crawled out and stood up, muttering. *They better be damn well grateful that I'm such a fricking gentleman.*

I stumbled down that blazing hot road in a blazing hot mood and tried desperately to calm my stomach down. Feeling so very envious of all the attentions and pleasures that were getting lavished on a hottie *who didn't even have to solicit it*, who didn't even have to lift a finger to make any of it happen.

Later that day, the sari bi-otch pulled me aside by the elbow and confessed the truth: "I was just so concerned about my sexual performance with my own girlfriend, you see. Worried that I might not be doing it 'right'. So I just needed to compare, you see. With another woman. But

you! Thank you so much! Thank you for being so wonderfully generous with her, and understanding! I had *such* a wonderful time."

Great. Just fantastic.

Years later, my girlfriend said, "You had your chance. But you ran away, you ran out of our tent that afternoon. I just figured you'd gone out to fetch a condom... "

No, she had no clue at all about my snake-wrestling hell.

The following day at Burning Man I was a bit numb, but I managed to push the whole fiasco out of my mind somehow. At least I hadn't tossed my cookies from all of my self-inflicted pressure. At least my insecurity was still a big secret, right?

Not for long.

Late at night as the Man got Burned, the mostly well-to-do members of the Debbie Petting Zoo were all feeling a bit frisky. Some a little drugged out. Some quite randy!

We were all lolling about on the wall-to-wall futons. Beneath the DPZ Big Top Circus Tent we were nodding along to loud, pumping DJ beats.

But, oddly, nobody seemed to be instigating the kind of orgiastic decadence, the very libertinage! implicit in the name of our theme camp: the (Heavy) Petting Zoo. *What was wrong with these people?*

Eventually, my girlfriend and I decided to take a chance. *Let's go for it.* If nobody else would do it, we would lead the way! So we began making out... and heavy petting, and further, until we were actually having sex, right there on the floor, amid our friends.

Hooray! We had broken on through to the other side of the Big Taboo! We had created a swinger's club vibe.

This was a major initiation for me. But ya know, it's funny the way we learn things about ourselves during our biggest moments. Sometimes ya go for the big swing, and it's just a big miss... and a big mess.

See, while I was having sex, my inner voyeur kicked in. Full force. And although my girl was astride me, I could not stop craning my neck around, trying to spot any other couples that might be taking the hint and following our lead. And indeed, sex *was* breaking out. A triad had formed twenty feet to my right. He was already taking his lady doggie style, while she was being kissed and fondled by a third girl in front of her.

Yeehaw! Oops. I mean, Jolly good show, old chap!

I felt myself splitting into two. It was unnerving.

Over here, I was a lover who was obviously performing sexual calisthenics with my fine girlfriend while people watched.

But I was also a keen voyeur scanning for sex scenes. Who was just dying to go pop over and watch that trio, up close but conflicted because my girlfriend would be jealous and super mad if I ogled another sexy woman right in front of her.

I couldn't stop myself. My eyeballs kept popping out of their sockets and most of my energy soon got stuck inside my head.

I tried frantically to refocus on my own lover. *Look how lucky I was! What was wrong with me that she was not enough?* On the other hand I already knew what sex with my girlfriend was like... but what that trio were up to? That was all brand new to me.

The lover-exhibitionist within me began sinking into the mud, losing the control battle to the voyeur... and soon enough I had a wilting problem. (Long before I ever heard of Viagra.)

Well, this was a first! Wilting had never even been a concern. *But of course not, I was saving such a priceless moment for when my friends would be watching!* Yes, my penis betrayed me in public. It was embarrassing. Nay, humiliating! If I had ever planned on being a porn actor, this sad acid test debunked that theory.

I suppose my girlfriend and I gave up after a bit. We kicked back and cuddled, content to observe instead. Some guy came up to us after a while and offered me "psychological counseling if I needed it". I guess it was his turn to think: *What is wrong with these people?*

"Um, thanks, dude. Not right now, but it's a kind offer anyway."

Fortunately, my girlfriend soothed away my anxieties. "Oh, you're just being silly. I don't think there's any problems here at all."

And thank God she was compassionate, for I knew I had stubbed my toe on a very hard lesson. Despite my fantasies, I wasn't much of an exhibitionist after all! Just another geeky voyeur.

It's a whole different skill set, you know.

I thought back to that lesbian in my pup tent, with her blunt offer. How she had wanted to prove something to herself, all because she was so unsure of her performance with her own girlfriend. And I realized that I had caught a bug from her! Not the usual STD kind. It was a FEAR bug. Her performance anxiety had been contagious. And it had infected me!

Was I just not measuring up!? I hadn't thought such thoughts since being in college... or had I? Was I unable to go the distance!? Was I choking under pressure? Was I failing to prove something to somebody!? What did people think of me?

These are periodic insecurities for everybody, so I'm told.

* * * * *

My girl and I would have a few more experiments in the open relationship zone, but one thing became clear. Just because we had agreed to test out the theory didn't mean the reality would work out. I didn't want to watch her getting busy with other lovers, especially if I had none myself. I didn't seem to have the skills to go out and 'score' on my own, and it certainly wasn't her job to go out fishing and bring bi ladies back home to me! The experiment could only work if we were both getting some... Yet her power to attract lovers was far, far beyond mine.

I seemed destined to keep pulling the short stick. To feel like the lone, ugly duckling while she was busy swatting off unwanted suitors. Her response: "This was all your idea, remember?"

I now think the open relationship ideal can only work if both partners are more fixated on the other's happiness than on their own pleasure... It isn't so much a way for *me* to fulfill my own fantasies as a way to help my lover fulfill *her* fantasies. There must be clear guidelines, too, and no fears of abandonment lurking around. Opening a heartfelt relationship takes strength. It's definitely no solution for a couple having any emotional trauma-instead it'll become the shortcut to a complete separation.

My dancing gypsy lover flew away for her extended spiritual tour of India, just as planned. When she returned to California 14 months later, she was a different woman. For starters, she no longer wanted me! I could have predicted her change of heart, but still... it ached.

My love life got pretty dry for a long time after that, down in San Diego. Only two events to report. At the art commune I lived in for a while two ladies seduced me, at different times.

One gave me a professional grade massage in my room. A lovely full body rub on top of her massage table. And I was so relaxed and appreciative that she just kept on touching until it turned into a blowjob.

It's really hard to say no to that level of compassion.

At some point she stripped and lay back on the towel atop the cot, ready for some action. She mentioned something exciting about squirting in her ass, not in her pussy, as a kind of birth control. "But just the tip," she smiled. My ears were all turned on.

Yet it was impossible to focus on what she was saying because my eyes were feeling assaulted by the jungle of black vegetation in her untended crotch. Whoa. Monkeys could have swung on those vines. Too me it seemed way too much beard and not enough clam. Kind of threatening actually. Hairy dentata! Not even a little trim? I love giving long and tender cunnilingus, but yikes! My appetite shrivelled. Instead of diving in, I started concocting excuses to escape from the whole situation. Not sure if I even got around to mentioning shavers and scissors... .

As to the other lady, I recall her awesome rackorama. Pow and Pow. And what was great about our one night stand was that I wasn't inside her for more than thirty seconds when she climaxed hard.

Wasn't that more like what guys allegedly do? Premature ejaculating? When women come that quickly, however, it's supposed to be flattering to a guy... Unless it has nothing to do with the guy and the lass is merely pent up and super horny that day.

"Sorry, did I come too quickly?" she wondered out loud. It was so cute, in her brisk, British accent. You just don't get to hear those words every day.

* * * * *

One of my roommates in San Diego was a strip club bouncer. At first, I imagined that such access would spell all kinds of excitement. I'd never had a stripper as a girlfriend! But no. His strong advice was *Never date strippers. All they are interested in is your money.*

I went to a Xmas party at his gentleman's club, but instead of introducing me around, my roommate was far more interested in hanging back and checking out my 'game', watching me flail and fail. I guess I was his comedy for that night!

He was one of a clan of NLP brothers who had calculated all the psychological tricks required to nail a stripper. For talking women into bed, period. They used 'speed seduction' tactics. I didn't know their Casanova tricks, and even if I did, I wasn't about to start spouting canned speeches and pick-up lines. *The end justifies the means?* That just went all against the grain for a creative artist who values his integrity!

Thus I found myself on the horns of a wicked dilemma, and I couldn't win either way. If I sucked at introducing myself to girls in general, it really didn't make any difference if they were busy soccer moms at Macy's or half naked dancers in a strip club. It was all about communication skills, just like he said.

Anyway, he and I went backstage at his gentleman's club with a video-camera that night, just because he had access. For fun, he interviewed a couple of the dancers on tape. In the background, one of the girls was shaving another's privates, but neither flinched when we hit the Record button. There was much laughter and camaraderie in that brightly lit dressing room... and lots of booze to make their job more palatable.

I tried doing an interview, but I sucked at it. 'Being myself' just wasn't helping.

I realized afterward that part of my ongoing communication problem with women was that I still had a deep motivation to 'fix' people. My built-in tendency was to want to cut through their bullshit. So I would break the ice with negative, probing questions about what was wrong in

their lives. That angle tended to quickly shut down the easy flow of conversation.

Why couldn't I just keep it light and fluffy, like a good socialite would?

* * * * *

At Cheetah's, the most risqué strip club in town, I got a couple of my fantasies fulfilled one night. All-Nude clubs are far healthier than topless clubs, I say. It's my theory that topless clubs caused the deluge of strippers with comic strip, over-inflated breast implants: the 48DDs, etc. In All-Nude clubs there was no pressure for breasts to be the be-all and end-all: there was plenty of other flesh for the client to feast his eyes on. The girls could have more normal bodies because they didn't have to look like breast circus freaks.

The first lass I chose was a delight. She was tall with long, straight blond hair atop a European body. Could have been a Swedish model. I had her straddle me and grind slowly against my crotch while I flattered her. That worked for both of us. Technically, this was more body contact than we were allowed in the main room, but she was a good sport about it. She was the spitting image of a Dutch gymnast I had lusted after hopelessly back at my French high school. I imagined us naked in a Parisian park, fucking after dark...

She took my hand when she was finished. As she walked away, she looked longingly over her shoulder at me and let her fingers trail all the way down to my fingertips, as if unwilling to let go. Quite a performance, and persuasive too! Of course, when I bumped into her outside later on, she couldn't quite place my face... Ah, the omnipresent reality check.

The other girl I selected was of similar build, but a tawny brunette model. She led me into the darkened back hallway for a 'private lap dance'. I sat on a long bench in between other guys and the dancers who were tending to them. It was so easy to lose track of time back there. The dopamine started surging in my veins. I vaguely knew that songs were

zipping by. \$10 a song meant that my wallet was emptying itself like a pail with a hole in it. Still, this brunette acted so happy to stroke her tits against my face and chest, to nuzzle her lips against my stomach and my crotch-and that was more than I would have even asked of her. Especially considering I was wearing the thinnest of shorts.

* * * * *

In SD, I had a couple of (fortunate) near misses with delinquent white-trash hotties who were on the edge of homelessness. Both of them were circling the drain. Both perennially broke. I almost recommended they go make some cash in the adult industry.

But then I thought better of it. Weren't there enough dangerous, toxic girls like them already in the industry? Wouldn't it be like passing on a hot, radioactive potato?

It's a sobering thought for any wannabe porn actor. Who knows what kind of energy your fellow performers might expose you to?

The first girl could not stay off the booze. She was immature for her age, and a raging angry drunk, to boot. To prove she wasn't a boy she unzipped and flashed her bush at a friend of mine within 3 minutes of meeting him. That certainly did show him... something about her.

The other girl was huffing so many household chemicals that she could no longer put together a coherent sentence. She kept running away from home. Her pretty face was getting all messed up with crystal meth potholes. Her mother's last-ditch attempt at bringing some happiness into her daughter's life was to stage a ménage à trois with herself, her boyfriend and her daughter. That didn't quite work out as planned. The boyfriend got over-attentive to the hot daughter. Mommy sourly shuffled the girl off to rehab, but even that didn't work. A couple of months later, the vapid babe took a rifle and blew off her grandmother's head. Jail sounded like a better option than grandma's, I guess.

* * * * *

On the beach wall by the SoCal ocean, I was watching the sun set and minding my own business one afternoon when I fell into a conversation with an interesting lass. A very lissome, mocha-skinned girl who wanted to share her tale of heartbreak with me.

She had fallen in love. With a couple. *Say what?* I begged for details, of course.

The pair had taken her under their wing. They all loved together and lived together. She was in love with both of them equally. Nestled in bed between them, her affections were returned in kind. They had basically formed a permanent ménage à trois.

No kidding! I thought such heart-centered arrangements could only be ephemeral, if not impossible in real life. Here was proof to the contrary! Here was a triad that were just as happy as clams...

Until the time came that the original couple wasn't quite so excited about her anymore. There must have been some backstage politicking when the skinny girl wasn't around. Two years into their non-traditional love triangle, they unceremoniously booted the girl to the curb. Turned off the Love Tap! Just like that.

I could see the pain welling in her eyes. Her whole emotional world had been shattered.

"Try and understand! I've lost not just my closest friend in the world. I've lost BOTH of them. What am I going to do? Now I have no one! How could God do this to me?"

Whoa. There was a whole downside to my three-way love fantasy that had never crossed my mind. Even if it did work out in the long run: once the curtain fell, it would be *twice the heartache*.

* * * * *

One day, a married swinger dude with a silly 70s moustache was in my living room, yukking it up while he and I were looking at hetero porn pics on the web. I didn't realize that he was getting way too horny.

"Why don't you do ME!" Who on earth was he addressing? I looked around.

"Excuse me? Um, I don't know what you're talking about."

Like a fat kid on the playground, he demonstrated his fun idea. With repeated stiff-armed motions, he pointed his index finger at his own asshole. *This greasy, hairy married man wanted me to butt-fuck him? Yeesh! I'd rather be dipped in honey and staked to a red ant hill.* He was serious though.

"But... I thought... you were talking about swingers, so I just assumed-" he sputtered.

"That I was bi? You've got to be kidding me, dude!" I was incredulous. "NO. You're fat and hairy and I'm not now nor have ever been attracted to other men! For starters, you've got all the wrong equipment, man... Look." I tried to calm down. "Tell you what. We're just going to pretend like this conversation NEVER happened... "

* * * * *

For a while, I did edge into a slightly uncomfortable 'booty call' arrangement with a chunky, chatty mother with platinum hair. She was sitting at the bar at one of my gigs and kept smiling her doll smile at me all night long. Now, contrary to the propaganda I had absorbed as a teenager, music hadn't ever been a shortcut to getting laid. This would be the first time I ever 'got the drawers' from being a performing musician.

I became her regular. She had me penciled into her schedule. Weekly sex at my house, between 3:30-5:00 on Friday afternoons. No strings attached.

An ideal setup? I thought so, in the beginning. She even let me switch to her ass once and didn't miss a beat of loud moaning... (Anal sex. That was a first. It had never really been on my agenda, so I probably got the idea from watching porn movies, I admit it. I didn't really know what to expect from it. It got no resistance from her. It didn't feel that different to me either. It just was not a big deal for either of us.)

She certainly was an avid sexual partner... for 90 minutes a week. But the moment her alarm bell rang at 5 o'clock, her squealing stopped and her smile vanished and she snapped right back into law office mode. Woosh-and she was out the door, to go pick up her 2 year old from day care.

I felt like a john! A bit empty. Where's the afterglow? Not to whine too much like a girl, but, hey I need some snuggling afterward! What was I supposed to learn from this arrangement of convenience?

Don't look to a booty caller to fulfill your emotional needs. How about that! I discovered that even a chap like myself had emotional needs.

* * * * *

In Oakland, I got myself into a taxing relationship with a black woman who had a bottomless pit of emotional needs. In the beginning, we joked wryly about how she was an Oreo and how I was a reverse Oreo. But her world was no laughing matter. This poor woman had no social life. She was constantly bummed out. She had become the abject slave of her terminally ill mother-who completely refused to die, year after year. The prime of the daughter's life was fast disappearing under the gurney wheels of a tyrannical mother witch.

Meantime, all day long in her Cinderella job with the City, she dealt face-to-face with the worst elements of society. Trying to rescue the ones

who were sick in the head, violent, non-functional, toxic. The ones that even rehab couldn't help. The ones who were living in the gutter or circling society's drain. The ones who messed up over and over and over again. The ones that made life seem futile. The ones (not unlike her own mother) who kept clinging on for dear life at Death's door.

Her job involved the kind of darkness that clings, that follows one home from the office like a stench, that hangs in the air, that coats everything nearby with a depressing film. Her own home was so sapped of energy that it felt like an opium den, minus the opium.

It hadn't always been this way. She had been a decadent fashion model, back in the day. She even claimed she had slept with a couple once: she'd had a bisexual night with them. But it was only because she was completely blasted out of her head on *cocaine*. Caretaking her mother was, she felt, merely the karmic punishment for her own years of jet setting self-centeredness.

My pity for her lasted awhile, but not forever. She wasn't making *me* happy in the way I wanted to be happy.

* * * * *

For fun, my drummer took me down to San Fran's Market Street. To a huge strip club there. We paid our \$20 cover charge and entered the main theater area. An act was already underway on stage. We hadn't even picked a seat yet when two black girls spotted us, zoomed up the aisle, grabbed us firmly by the hand and dragged us toward the rear of the theater.

"Ho ho, where are you taking me?" I chortled, playing along amiably. I think mine saw I was wearing a blazer so she erroneously concluded I was a cash cow.

"You'll see," she replied mysteriously. We passed through some heavy curtains.

In the back was the 'other area.' The security man behind the desk there wanted another \$20 entrance fee for this area.

"Come on, pay the man. You'll be happy you did. There's an ATM right here if you need it. We accept credit cards too." The girl winked. We were now standing next to a row of booths. Like photo booths in a mall except bigger. Then she prodded again, "You gotta put a \$20 bill in the slot to open up the booth. Gimme another \$20, come on."

"Damn this place is expensive." I still didn't know what I was getting into, although I had some suspicions. "All I wanted was to watch a stage show... "

Inside the booth were a short bench and a half bed. She sat me down on the bench and did a personal show: a two-minute bump and grind in front of me. She was bored and just going through the motions. Then she had me switch places with her. She patted the mattress like she was signaling a good doggie to come and jump up on it. She lackadaisically tossed a black condom package at me and headed out through the curtains.

"Put that on. I'll be right back." Not one ounce of seduction in her attitude. "Oh yeah, it's \$80 for a blowjob, and... " I can't even remember the rest.

Whoa. I'd never paid for sex in my life and I wasn't about to start! \$80 for a simple blowjob? I couldn't believe it. My curiosity was getting overtaken by my indignation. I put the condom on, as commanded. But she didn't come back and I didn't fancy her officious attitude anyway. I waited; my boner deflated. I didn't want to be here. It was time to cut my losses! *I'm out of here, bitch, fuck this! Or rather, I won't be fucking this bitch.*

* * * * *

My housemates at the time were a Jewish swinger couple. Both smart cookies: he, a computer geek, she a plump accountant. They loved to get decked out and hit the goth clubs, fetish clubs and the 80s parties. He

would trawl for a chick to bring home. His fiancée would have the final say on his choice, Yea or Nay.

To my surprise, this wasn't just talk. They did score themselves a pleasant if plain girlfriend for a few months while I lived there.

But the grass is always greener... Even as he was getting his ménage à trois fantasies realized, my roommate's real obsession was the one thing he was being denied. And man, he could never stop talking about it! Like my own previous girlfriends, his fiancée had drawn one sexual boundary line: her anus was Exit Only. End of discussion.

So of course, that became the forbidden fruit.

I tried to explain to him that he had created a dead end through his ambiguous languaging. He interchangeably used the phrase "getting fucked in the ass" to mean "anal sex" as well as to mean "getting painfully taken advantage of". It was little wonder that his fiancée had come to feel afraid of it. However, he couldn't or wouldn't stop himself: his frat boy lingo was no easy habit to break... But no sermonizing! For I had habits of my own to break.

I was on the dance floor at the Cat Club one evening in my black vinyl trousers. 80s night. Nearby, a curvy hottie in jeans and a thick sweater was leaning back into an Asian guy she'd just met. Astonishingly, he was feeling up her tits through her clothing, and her arms were reached around the back of his head. It was quite erotic, there on the dance floor. She was definitely going home with a new guy tonight! (Was she O.P.P.?)

I started getting a boner. *Should I cover up or just ignore it?* I ignored it and kept on dancing. Suddenly, the girl "lost her balance" and stumbled a few steps, right into me. Her hand cupped my somewhat conspicuous boner through my pants in a way that seemed rather intentional. She apologized, but backed away slowly, keeping eye contact.

Knee jerk reactions can be so telling, can't they? I should have reciprocated and jokingly grabbed some part of her... but my hands were still suffering from grab-o-phobia. Instead what did I do? I made a silly gesture-rolled up eyes, fingertips over mouth, like a prim nun catching a priest doing the unthinkable. And then I went back to dancing alone.

Yes, I had somehow missed her most unsubtle of hints! I didn't even realize a splendid opportunity had just been lost until after the moment was gone. *Now that's too damn slow on the draw...*

* * * * *

I spent one strange night with a 30-something who had, until recently, been a *madam*. That's right: the madam of an undercover brothel! She sure didn't look like one, though.

My roommates were holding a house party that night and, during our shoulder massage conga line, this woman started nibbling on my ear from behind me. A sign? Up in my bedroom, however, she was a different energy altogether. She was folded up like origami. *Completely* freaked out about AIDS. Presumably from having worked in the brothel. God knows what she had seen. Perhaps people that she had cared for were now dead and buried?

I, on the other hand, had come to the conclusion that having no sex is *far* preferable to wearing a condom! For me, wearing a condom guarantees an anti-climactic experience. It's no good. It's like trying to appreciate music through ear muffs, or trying to sing through duct tape, or trying to read a tiny font in a dark basement.

I knew that this principled stand of mine would doom any detours into multiple sexual partner land. But this was how my body felt about the issue, and that was the bottom line. Condom-free, please... or I'd just as soon pass on the sex.

I tried to appease the ex-madam by 'reading' to her for a while with her condom on. Then I gave up and we decided to have a nice snooze together instead.

* * * * *

In retrospect, I had started spending too much time on the Internet surfing for porn. For all the obvious reasons. It was free, it was available 24/7 without leaving my house, and it was a mindless antidote to loneliness and stress. Endless peep show variety, courtesy of servers worldwide.

One way or another, I was getting into a major habit. Given my long history as a voyeur, some might say that upping the dosage was inevitable.

I've never actually purchased membership to an adult website. That just seemed much too obsessive, not to mention that \$30/month was beyond the reach of a musician counting his pennies. I did spend an afternoon researching the 'webcam girl' thing, but that seemed too pricey as well. Why bother with all that expense when so many jpegs and mpegs and wmv's and avis were floating around for free?

And if you are trying to access the real thing, why bother with paying monthly fees at AdultFriendFinder.com anyway? All you'll meet is made-up profiles-mirage women-who are soliciting traffic to other adult websites, and various professionals fishing for johns.

I suppose the alternative is 'vanilla' dating websites like Match.com, but they are just as hard on a struggling musician's pocket, not to mention dissatisfying except to a mainstream audience with vanilla tastes.

Clearly, web-surfing was the cheapest solution. Cheaper than a typical night on the town: i.e. paying a cover charge at a club, feeding a parking meter, buying pricey drinks, going deaf while unsuccessfully trying to lip-read... Then still going to bed alone. A guy on the prowl had to have

mad game to compete at a nightclub, and frankly, I was no spring chicken. The likelihood of me hooking up in any club atmosphere was getting slimmer each passing year.

With lowered expectations, however, I could just stay home and at least "love" myself. It sounds pathetic, of course, and it can't be good for one's self esteem in the long run. Getting used to settling for less...

And I knew I wasn't the only guy feeling this way. Around the world I could sense plenty of other men giving up on the idea of real, live girlfriends, and making do instead with technology's 'virtual realities'. We were upsizing our fantasies while downsizing our realities.

This merely reflected where I'd gotten to in the rest of my life: I was settling for less on many other levels as well.

* * * * *

I did have one fantastic weekend fling. An ex highly recommended me to her closest girlfriend. She even said I was a fantastic lover! (How cool is that, coming from an ex?)

So her friend drove up from a faraway city for a much needed mini-vacation... hoping to experience some great loving with me.

She turned out to be my own fantasy come true! She was gorgeous, spiritual, affectionate, willing. One Friday morning under the shade trees out back, a mutual seduction began in the hot tub... and steadily migrated to the living room couch.

How I fell for her. Fast and deep. Too deep! My heart ran far ahead of me, far ahead of what was possible, for I had been lonely so long. Alas! ... But she, happy and satiated, drove away that Sunday night, exactly as planned.

Why the hell did she have to live so damn far away?

After her departure, my heart forgot to come home. It just hovered in empty space out there, twitching. Like Wile E. Coyote in that moment after he's run far past the cliff's edge. The moment just before he looks down... Of course I had nobody to blame but myself. I had let my emotions run wild and they had stomped all over my common sense. I had lost my sense of perspective about the very real distance between us. I now would pay the price of love as I reeled my reluctant heart back in.

So unfair, how the Lord giveth and The Lord taketh away-three days later!

* * * * *

It was dawning on me that my goal of having a steady girlfriend was not nearly ambitious enough. I wanted to be in love again! I needed someone extraordinary, not unlike this woman, to be in love with. And for her to be in love with me too. Somebody I could get genuinely excited about.

Ah well. At least I got a good song out of all my pining.

* * * * *

Back in the day, I had taken a few artistic snapshots of my ex, the gypsy dancer. On a spring day she had been romping in and around a freezing cold mountain river. She loved being nude in Nature. She was a great model, for she was not self-conscious in the least.

One particular black and white shot featured her naked body arched backward over the flowing, sparkling waters. It was a classic. The shot was so good, it was ready to be framed! That's what I thought. When I got around to building my website, I proudly put this photograph of her up, in a gallery amid other arty photos I'd taken. As an example of my cameraman abilities... and an ode to her feminine beauty.

In the following years, we lost contact with each other ... until the day she discovered this image of her on my site. She was furious! Partly because she suspected I was exploiting the pic for selfish financial gain (not true), but mainly because she had never given permission for it to be exposed to the public in the first place (true). To her this was humiliating.

And thus I learned about the perils of not getting a 'Model Release Form' signed! The issue of Personal Privacy moved to the front burner of my stove. I sadly took the jpeg down, as demanded.

* * * * *

My Internet porn dosage continued to remain high, into my current relationship.

I live with my girlfriend, who works in the juvenile court system. She's a statuesque figure, svelte, with modest doe eyes, lovely cheeks and immaculate posture. We fell in love rather quickly over a tarot reading I did for her.

Our sex life was steamy right out of the gate. And despite her obsession with getting a ring on her finger, we arranged it so that I could move in without us getting legally bound first. It was a challenging proposition for both of us.

Yet I found life surprisingly sweet, living with a hot single mom.

During school vacations, she had custody of her 12-year-old daughter. This girl was very jealous of me, a male intruder who was busy 'stealing' away mama's attentions. Not that I was trying to play papa, or replace her real dad. The situation eventually resolved into a truce; I settled into my new role as a sort of big brother to her.

And another awkward tale starts:

On our household computer there was no password security required to access the three Windows accounts... I hadn't given a thought to

potential disasters, perhaps because I had never lived with a child before.

One day, it was too late. The girl had sat at the computer and hadn't bothered accessing her own Windows account. I had apparently forgotten to exit my own account. So, as she went to open my media player, which hadn't been configured for privacy, and it automatically booted up the last video I had watched... (You can see where this is going.) That's right when Mom barged into the office-and walked in on her daughter watching video porn.

My girlfriend was horrified! The daughter, on the other hand, didn't think it was that big a deal. She was punished anyway.

And behind closed doors, World War Three broke out. I was told I had to move out. The next day.

I guess the situation didn't really parallel my own childhood experience of getting caught with porn. (That had been nobody's fault but my own.) My parents had tried to downplay the issue back then, but my girlfriend was Maximizing the issue now. This was no comedy of errors in her eyes. I, as a responsible adult, was supposed to shield children from exposure to adult materials. I was therefore the heinous guilty party! Her gavel came down and cracked me on the skull.

I thought that a heartfelt apology should have been sufficient. It wasn't. I had stepped in doggie doo of colossal proportions, apparently! I was banned from the computer, banned from the house, and, worst of all, banned from my lady's affections.

This last was the hardest part to understand. Why did she care so much? It was just pictures of sex, after all. What's the big deal? Everybody does it.

And as far as Internet porn, it seemed that almost all the guys I had ever talked to about it were guilty of watching too. So what was the big problem?

I would have to learn to stand in her motherly shoes in order to come to grips with her reaction.

We slowly got back together. *This must never happen again.* We agreed on all kinds of password and security between our accounts to protect the child.

But certain habits are harder to break than others. After a few months, her dire warnings were fading from memory. Operating within my own internal parameters again-according to which my girlfriend was uptight and there was nothing inherently wrong with my actions-I drifted off course.

The next explosion came soon after we installed a webcam. My girlfriend was setting up her personal webcam settings. The program asked her to browse around for a picture to use... The program (mysteriously? maliciously?) browsed over into my password-protected account. Straight to my secret XXX folder!

That started World War Four.

Why did I still have this stuff? she wept. I didn't know.

After that battle, she had me swear off downloading all adult material from the web. And I was true to my word... for a few months. I didn't 'download' anything, i.e. save it to the computer. Although eventually a sneaky thought came to me. I could still go web-surfing when nobody was around. No one would find out, as long as I never 'downloaded' any of it to the computer.

Bad logic! World War Five erupted late one night when she caught me jerking in front of the computer screen.

Wow, that was utterly humiliating! She was beyond appalled. It was terrible. We had to go through the whole cycle yet again.

For the first time, I saw the light. I understood that we would never get out of this torturous cycle unless something changed. She was a Taurus: she was never going to get more tolerant. If I was waiting around for her to become unthreatened by porn starlets and male libidos, I was just daydreaming.

Under scrutiny, my various rationales for my own behavior began collapsing in every direction.

There seemed to be only one road left: *I had to admit that I had a problem.*

I was going to have to be the one to take the initiative this time. To instigate the change that we needed.

How big was my problem? How chronic was it? Did I have a psychological addiction? Was it just a sad habit? Was it a dark core identity, impossible to alter or was it just a switch that could be flipped off? Was this Internet porno as vile and perverted and filthy and pathetic as she claimed it was?

I decided that all such dissecting questions were too judgmental. They were not going to motivate me to *want* to change my voyeuristic intake in the future. I needed positive reasons!

* * * * *

The transforming incentives I eventually dug up were these:

Imagine that the behavioral change will be easy and painless.

Imagine that I've seen enough porn already this lifetime. My quota has been happily filled already, thank you.

Imagine reclaiming the unproductive time and energy I might otherwise spend on it.

Imagine myself channeling all this reclaimed energy into new, profitable directions!

Imagine how my relationship, which means a lot to me, could improve if my trustworthiness weren't coming into question every few months.

Imagine my own peace of mind without regular World Wars.

Imagine being more physically active instead of virtually passive.

Imagine the diseases lurking inside those sexy starlet bodies!

* * * * *

In days of yore, there was only one way to guarantee that your potential partner was STD-free. You had to marry a virgin.

In tradition-bound areas of the world, STDs probably triggered the virginity mania that is only recently fading. Purity equaled honor! If you (a woman) ever passed on a disease like syphilis, for example, you had corrupted a man for life, and for this crime you would have to be killed. Domestic capital punishment! (Of course hypocrites absolved men from guilt in these two-gender diseases.)

Boy, has the pendulum swung. Nowadays, irresponsibility seems to be the norm. I read recently that one in three American teenage boys has an STD. Do the math, and it's clear that the teenage girls can't be far behind. Half of our adult black population allegedly has herpes. Yikes! I also read an interview with European stunt cock Rocco Siffredi in which he said that the worldwide adult video industry has a dirty little secret:

"Everybody in the industry has herpes. If you are a porn actor or actress and you don't have herpes, you can reasonably expect to get it on the job."

They all know it's the gift that keeps on giving, but nobody in the industry talks about it because they fear reprisals, stigmatization and losing income.

The hitch: you'd only find out this compromise was expected of you once you got inside the walls of secrecy. Or after you'd caught it yourself... and were demanding an explanation.

Siffredi's attitude surprised me. He didn't feel that herpes was a big downer or that he had a responsibility to stop spreading it. He didn't even feel this was a serious problem. No more than, say, dandruff. It was like contagious dandruff. Or like athlete's foot. Not very serious. Just another price of doing business... And it seems our latest generation of American teens is equally cavalier. Hey, they don't even think that a blowjob counts as sex!

A couple of major US production companies, by contrast, have become conscious about their role in stopping the spread of STDs. Especially after a couple of AIDS scares in recent years made them require the use of condoms during shoots. They have been obligated to set a mature example of safe sex.

However, they know they are going up against human nature. The men who are forced to wear condoms in real life fantasize about NOT having to wear them! *That's* what they want to see onscreen: an alternative heaven. They want the illusion of a disease-free sex life, of a utopian place where boinking cute strangers never has bad side-effects, a place where men and women are unafraid to exchange bodily fluids. Seeing a condom in a video is a reason to quickly click through to something else, which translates into lost dollars for those companies trying to set a responsible example.

Meanwhile the porn actresses and actors overseas continue putting themselves in harm's way... (That is, assuming you frown on Rocco's glibness and agree that herpes is 'harmful'.)

I've been lucky. Never had herpes or any STDs.

Some would say STDs are an argument for avoiding sexual contact with members of the adult industry. But fear of STDs could cause you to avoid all new sexual partners... in real life.

There are even more STDs off-screen than onscreen. Who knows where your blind date has been, what infections she has previously contracted, or how truthful she will be about it all after a few drinks cloud her judgment? Horny people have lied their way into the sack for thousands of years. But now the price of a lie can be AIDS, and the results can be fatal. (Though smallpox and syphilis were hardly better.)

Mating is scary stuff on this planet.

The irony is this. If the whole dating scene is perceived as riddled with viruses and disease, a prudent and sensitive man will simply retire to a secure, disease-free zone... In front of his computer screen!

Your hard drive might pick up a virus from Internet porn, but you definitely won't. At home, you can safely masturbate away to imagery of actors and actresses who are taking the harmful risks instead of you, maybe getting infected with real diseases, all the while appearing to be healthy role models of sexual vigor.

You might safely come to the conclusion that you're better off alone than risking sexual contact with any other human beings.

Some women already agree. It's little surprise that a popular site from San Francisco is fuckingmachines.com. Future starlets testing the waters of the adult industry can bypass the whole issue of men, with their cocks and their male flaws. The newbie actresses won't have to worry about catching herpes or AIDS at work, because there are now antiseptic machines that have been designed to get the job done as well, if not *better* than the real appendage. The women themselves adjust the controls, you see, to continuously maximize their own pleasure. They achieve solo

more and bigger orgasms than male actors typically would provide (which is often none). The cameras roll, the actresses stay clean, the mpegs are uploaded to the web, and... ka-ching!

Who needs men around anyway? Men are all fucked up in the head. As long as invisible guys continue paying their membership fees and keeping their problems far away, women can do just fine without them. It's a sign of the times, ain't it?

And so the wedge of Fear gets another hammer blow, driving the sexes further apart. Where's the solution?

* * * * *

And now, a moment to think about moral limits vs. laissez-faire capitalism. There's a recent porno court case that seems to reflect a certain axis of my life, given that I have had feet in both California and in Tampa. The Max Hardcore case.

Max Hardcore is a Californian producer/director/cocksmen. He once had the US anal video market locked down. But anal acts have become mainstream in the adult video industry, so Max was squeezed out of his 'specialty market'.

In response, he pushed the envelope down into the shock-and-disgust markets. Videos that have little to do with sex. Humiliation, brutal blowjobs meant to induce gagging and vomiting, golden showers-all courtesy of Max and various 'urinal sluts' dressed up as if they were children. Pseudo-pedophilic rape...

Can't imagine how he manages to hire anybody to perform in his ludicrousness, except by lying to them. Meanwhile, there are freaks out there who keep buying his videos. Max feels his job is to utterly gross all of them out.

He has succeeded. 9 members of a Tampa jury watched more hours of his stuff than they could stomach. They thought about it and handed down a major obscenity conviction against Max.

Tampa spanked Los Angeles' ass.

And I, erstwhile porn defender, have little sympathy for the guy. He's just the kind of sick puppy that gives all erotica a really bad name. Not to mention that his case sets a precedent; it's a crowbar that might pry the door open for yet another crusade against the whole adult industry.

Thanks a lot, asshole.

* * * * *

Sometimes in life, my Higher Power has made itself felt in unavoidable ways. When my soul has wanted to go left and I've kept going right, I've had some klanging wake up calls. Like when it's come time to shed a porn philosophy that has been operating since my teenage years, yet it's taken several World Wars for me to decide to turn off the voyeuristic intake.

Sometimes there are no open doors left in life except that great leap of faith, off the cliff into the Unknown, armed with nothing more than a simple trust and the knowingness inside me that the Universe doesn't want to see me go Splat. Rather, it would like to see me perform a record-breaking swan dive!

My higher development requires new lessons, downriver, closer to that great ocean of Love.

I do have a basic trust that the Universe is preventing me from reaching too far in the wrong direction. That It has been actively protecting me through the risks I have had to take. It's been teaching me the lessons that I require, in the order I need them... no more and no less. Strange as the resulting road may look! And that's the only way out of the prison of an isolating fear of disease, or fear of rejection, or mistrust of the new contacts I run into while expanding into the social world. There is surely

a reason for meeting the people I meet! It's not just a random roll of the dice. There is a method to the madness, provided you believe it to be so.

My ex from San Francisco says: "Just scan their aura. You'll know which lovers to avoid." In business as in her polyamorous love life, this is how she does it. (Her technology is different from my own, which relies more on gut feelings and on digesting the messages given to me through the dreamtime. But the results are probably the same.)

Why did I never get STDs? I'm sure it's no accident. It's because I'm not vibrating on that frequency.

And perhaps the overriding frequency I have operated on in my lifetime is my numerological birth path: 23. The challenge for 23s is, so they say, *balancing whether to observe or to participate*.

Thus, the Great Voyeur.

As the observer, I have indeed wielded my journalistic eye, and often. I have reported on the underbelly of my imagination and on the colors of my awkward experiences. I've brought back tales from the sexual fringes of society. (Perhaps places where angels fear to tread?) All in the name of my own enlightenment, and to dig up raw fuel for my burning creativity.

And because it is what I believe an honest man should do: he exposes for you the interesting parts of Life As He Sees It...

The rest is in the eye of the beholder. In the mind of the reader!

Will you cringe in the shadows there, too?

THE END * * * * *

DEAR READER: Hope you enjoyed *The Great Voyeur*! If you did, please show some love by favoriting this book back on the Feedbooks website. I'd love to hear your comments, critiques, testimonials, etc.

SCORPIOCRAFT is my multimedia website and it's really cool, check it out when you're surfing the Internet! I have to market myself, so I'm trying to figure out who my digital fanbase is and what my technical and marketing strategies should be. If you would like to help out this author further, I have a couple of quick survey questions for ya:

1. Which file format and/or reading device did you use to access this e-book?
2. Do you often read e-books on your personal unit/computer?
3. Do you listen to audiobooks at all?
4. Would you find an e-book longer than this one to be taxing on your patience?
5. Are digital books catching on among anyone you know?
6. Assume I had a book available in 3 formats: digital e-Book; Audiobook chapters on mp3; or read/performed by the author for YouTube-type videos. Which format would you first gravitate toward?
7. What in particular intrigued you enough to want to read *The Great Voyeur* in the first place?
8. Where in the world are you located?
9. What are your gender and age (roughly)?

I've got two other non-fiction ebooks uploaded to feedbooks.com: *My Life as a Gypsy*; and *Everything I've Learned from Hallucinogens*. (Two not necessarily unrelated topics.) Most of my other works are fiction... should you care to do more ambitious digging!

Peace, MC Radiance
info@scorpiocraft.com

From the same author on Feedbooks:

- "*Bad Voodoo: a true story about hitching a ride to New Orleans*" (2003)
- "*Ultra Menage-a-Quatre*" (2003)
- "*Bittersweet Symphony*" (2003)
- "*It's All a Fabrication*" (2003)
- "*Beyond Desert Storms*" (2003)
- "*Freakshow at the Carnal Carnival*" (2004)
- "*P.S.I.: a novel about Pressure, Sex & Intuition*" (2005)
- "*Everything I've Learned from Hallucinogens*" (2005)
- "*Gently Psycho*" (2005)
- "*The Uncanny Adventures of Hellodali*" (2007)
- "*My Life as a Gypsy: a rocker blown by the wind*" (2008)



www.feedbooks.com
Food for the mind