



Simply Service

A publication dedicated to those in service relationships

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Special points of interest:

Don't miss slave jean's article on Ritual Routine Recommitment which shares her intimate bonding with her owner through the ritual of shaving and facial grooming. I'm ready to run out and buy supplies!

Please welcome new contributors: Wolfspet from New Jersey, Haydee from New Jersey and California, and slaveboi Carlie from California

Resilience as Service

jezzie

There are many service skills that we can learn to please our owners, tops, and dominants... leather care, tea service, gourmet cuisines, dance. But some of the most broadly useful skills are difficult to think and communicate about. They're internal, subtle, psychological. We learn them organically and experientially, so it's challenging to grasp and elucidate them well enough to teach them to others. And yet, they're vital. One such skill that has been critical to any success I've had as a slave is the subtle skill of resilience.

During the rockiest periods of our learning curve, my owner often remarked that he was troubled by the perception that I seemed "fragile" to him. For some reason, that particular accusation really struck at my core and bothered me. I didn't want to be fragile! I didn't think of myself as fragile! And yet, back in the real world, I was certainly *acting* fragile. I was reacting dramatically, sending mixed messages, feeling hurt over things I claimed to want,

behaving unpredictably and sometimes crazily, and engaging in lots of other behavior that could definitely be described as fragile.

A few days ago I was talking to a friend going through a rough patch in her own D/s dynamic, and she used the exact same word to describe her bottom: "It's like he seems so... fragile. It makes it daunting to step out there and take charge and take risks and give him the control he says he wants, when he seems like he falls apart over everything I do."

Resiliency hadn't seemed very salient to me as a girlfriend in an egalitarian dynamic. It hadn't really come up. I don't mean to imply that it wasn't important... I'm sure it was; resiliency is a helpful trait in any relationship. But I wasn't inviting my partner to intentionally do potentially traumatic things to me, so my resiliency wasn't really put to the test in the same way that it would be by my owner.

But as a 24/7 submissive, my

ability to absorb shocks and risks and bounce back, basically undamaged, is critical to our success as owner and pet. This doesn't mean I'm unaffected, by any means... it just means I now know how to be affected without falling apart.

For example. There was a time when I was the poster child for Unhelpful Reactions From A Bottom When A Scene Goes Awry. I think most perverts know the pattern. Scene starts to go a little flat. Bottom starts worrying and getting uptight about scene going flat. Top notices bottom's angst and starts to question his own judgment. Scene goes flatter. Scene fails, sputteringly or spectacularly. Bottom begins self-flagellating for failing to take it. *Bottom's self-flagellation makes entire incident exponentially worse than a mere activity that didn't happen to pan out.*

I've done it, what, a dozen times or more. I know I'm not the only one.

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Head Space, Slave Space, Sub Space and Other Places We Travel

E. Missy Hall

People talk a lot about "space". What is it exactly and how do we get there? Sub space is always a journey for me. Whether I am the bottom, or am topping another person I am always looking at it as a journey to an alternate place in the head. I think the other "spaces" we occupy are also a journey of the mind. It takes a

concerted effort between the Master and the slave to achieve, maintain, and nourish.

We get to sub space during a scene. It can come at many points during scening. I know for me it does not necessarily take a great deal of pain to get me there. It does take some psychology from

the top, along with the pain to get me through this wall where I come out on the other side and my mind changes. I am floating. I am more animalistic and primal in my thinking there. Sub space is a very pleasant though sometimes scary place to be. I like the primal feeling of my existence

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Resilience as Service

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Talking to my friend, I recounted my own experiences with learning to recognize my fragility, wholly accept my own responsibility for it, and learning to value resiliency.

I had to overcome my knee-jerk insistence that I wasn't fragile in order to truly examine my own behavior and observe if it *looked* like the behavior of a fragile person... it did.

I had to accept that I was capable of more than one reaction when I perceived that something was an "issue," and that if I chose to react by falling apart, then at the moment that I stopped obeying and started falling apart instead, I was taking back control and therefore absolving my owner of responsibility for my fragility. My fragility was entirely my own responsibility. He had never ordered me to act in any fragile ways.

I had to decide that resiliency was a desirable thing and that it was worth prioritizing over the temptation to allow myself to fall apart. I had to alter my values. Resiliency had not previously been a salient concept that I'd held in the front of my mind when I was evaluating my options for behavior. I had to decide it was important, accept it was important, dwell on its importance enough that it began to naturally have weight in whatever equation I used to decide on my reactions.

Recently, my owner decided to take a risk in scene. He'd used the cattle prod on me twice before, and he knew I'd barely taken it then. He told me that he intended to use it again in our scene that weekend, so I knew it was coming and I was terrified but I was determined to try. But the moment that he knocked me onto the floor and disappeared into the room where the cattle

prod lives, I knew I wasn't going to be able to do it.

After all this time, he knows the difference between a panicked "I don't think I can do that," that he can push through and an honest, "Daddy, I'm not going to be able to do it." He got the latter, and he put the cattle prod away, and that was that. He doesn't tend to like to switch gears when something that he really wanted to do falls through. He'd often rather end the scene.

There was a time when I would have promptly fallen apart, which would have required him to take the supportive role in order to be a "good top" and help fix the damage he'd done with his imperfect judgment. But I'm finally starting to figure this stuff out. Of course I was tempted to spiral down the path of self-recrimination and inadequacy, and then a single failed scene would have evolved into The Same Old Relationship Issue that required Serious Reassurance.

Instead, I was disappointed.

I didn't have to be cheerful or pretend that it didn't bother me. I didn't have to be unaffected... of course I felt a some angst after a failed scene. But I was able to separate my disappointment from any sense of recrimination or inadequacy... I can be disappointed about how something turned out without wasting energy on accusations toward either of us. I took a bath and felt my angst and told him I was disappointed, then I dried off and we went to lunch and thought about the next thing in our day.

I wasn't impervious. I just... bounced back.

And so it wasn't a crisis that he'd taken a risk that didn't work out. He didn't have to spend hours cleaning up afterwards. And that means that he didn't regret taking that risk. And so he could feel

free to continue to take those risks, and enjoy the ones that work out and are hot, and know I'm probably going to continue to bounce back if a few of them don't.

Which frees him to actually be sadistic and controlling and demanding in ways that are riskier, edgier than what he could do with me when I was fragile. Which is how all of this comes back to service.

I'm still not as resilient as I wish to be. And I sure as hell have my fragile moments, but fragile moments don't have nearly so high a cost when they happen within the context of fairly consistent resiliency over time. I'm starting to see the payoff. I remember watching my owner's hesitation as he calculated the potential costs of the demand that he wanted to make, and I remember how badly I felt about my submission that he had to weigh those costs. Now, my slowly-increasing resilience is reinforced every time he makes a demand that he's not positive that I can handle. Sometimes I *can* handle those demands. Sometimes I can't. But I serve him by being able to keep it together either way, freeing him to make those demands without fear of my fragility.

Anton's girl jizzie has been in service to him for more than 7 years. They reside in San Francisco, California. She maintains a website at <http://www.jizzie.org>



"I had to decide that resiliency was a desirable thing and that it was worth prioritizing over the temptation to allow myself to fall apart."

Resilience as Service

From the Editor

Linda "Bootpig" Hall

Welcome back to a third month of Simply Service. Its continuing its growth curve, and again, I have to thank those of you that have taken the time to write and offer your feedback and well-wishes, it is all greatly appreciated. For those of you that pass it on to friends, there is no great compliment, thank you.

February found me battling asthmatic bronchitis and pneumonia for most of the month, my thanks to the contributors that merrily turned out their articles without a ton of reminders on my part. At

the end of the month though, Sir and I had the opportunity to attend South Plains Leather in Dallas, Texas and present a class on Poly Dynamics.

If you have not had the opportunity to attend this event, PLEASE put it on your calendar for next year. What a warm and welcoming environment for the service-oriented person. The International Master/slave contest takes place during this weekend, so service is a shining part of the weekend and celebrated.

We have new contributors join-

ing us this month. Accountability and Responsibility tend to be recurrent throughout the various articles, and I'm happy with that. I believe that the service person does have to have an enormous amount of accountability and personal investment or they never will progress past being an errand runner and task doer. Accountability opens the doors to the spiritually satisfying aspects of service, and the peace that can accompany such a life.

I wish you all well and continue to hope we will cross paths at

various events throughout the country. I'm looking forward to a weekend of learning at May's Servant Retreat in Las Vegas. It looks like we'll be at Southeast Leather Fest in June in Atlanta and also Great Lakes Leather in Indianapolis, Indiana in August. Hopefully, we'll be back in Dallas in September for Beyond Vanilla.

As always, my well-wishes are with each of you on your journeys and I hope to hear from you soon.

In Leather Service,

Linda "Bootpig" Hall

Service-Oriented and Protocols...Me?

Wolfspet

Yep, that is the first incredulous thought that I have when I think of being service oriented. No way I am, I think to myself. I am not selfless enough, I have my own priorities that come first.

Protocols? HAH, I do not call him Master, I do not kneel when he enters. Protocols are just a waste of our time.

Then I think of all the things that I do throughout the day.

- I do maintain and clean the interior of the home
- I do all the laundry
- I do prepare all of the meals
- I do all the shopping
- I am responsible for maintaining the hygienic supplies

Well, damn, it looks like I do perform a lot of service doesn't it? Occasionally Wolf helps with things, but that is of his accord, and occasionally I ask, especially if I need to do something like shampoo the carpet.

Then I examine the little behaviors that are just part of the rou-

tine in my life.

- Wolf is served first at mealtimes
- I do get up and stop what I am doing if he calls
- I do wait for a snap of his fingers before entering bed for the night
- I do ask him before I leave the house
- I do ask before I make any social obligations
- I do "know" what he needs based on a hand signal, be it a cigarette or a drink.

Damn, it looks like I do follow protocols too.

Sometimes our outward perceptions of what can be defined as service & protocol behavior lessens with time. As with any behavioral pattern it can become ingrained. After a time, it does not seem like a service or protocol aspect, it does become a second nature.

Granted what many do see as protocols have fallen by the wayside, but I think that is just a

casualty of focusing more on developing a family over a strict sense of M/s. Once the roles were clearly established, the boundaries set, and I proved my ability to act within those boundaries, there was no need or desire for the more structured behavior. For me it shows that while many can doubt what outward behavior they see, the core dynamics are still in place, and enforced. I learned how far I can go, and what the consequences for passing that line are. Once again, something that comes with time.

Wolfspet is a 40 year old woman who has been in and around the lifestyle all of her adult life. She and her Master/husband have been together for 16 years, have 3 children, and live in Vineland, NJ

"Once the roles were clearly established, the boundaries set, and I proved my ability to act within those boundaries, there was no need or desire for the more structured behavior."



If He told you to jump off a bridge...

Linda "Bootpig" Hall

If I had a penny for every conversation with a person that ASKED me about my service but wasn't willing to hear or understand what my personal perspective on my slavery was, that disintegrated into extremist questions like "If He told you to jump off a bridge, *would you?*", I'd be rich.

What I have come to realize, is that the answer they're looking for is "No, I would never". It reassures them that I'm still in the real world, according to their perspective. Perhaps they feel safer about their own dark thoughts and dreams by hearing that someone else is being logical. I am still being logical, but at this point in my life, my answer is, "Yes, I would." I've discovered trust.

It sounds like such a simple thing. I've been in service for years, chances are trust should have been there all along. There was, there is. Trust changes and morphs given time and support. I think the extremist conversations happen when a veteran of a long-term slavery situation is speaking to someone with less time in service. There are service learning curves just like there are SM learning curves. They simply haven't had the time, or the inclination in some cases, to peel back as many layers, expose as many wounds, develop a greater trust. It isn't about being better, but there comes a time when the lessons of experience cannot be denied.

I can watch CSI all day long and think I understand the experience, but until I take the time to educate myself about crime scene investigation and actually move within a crime scene, I have no way of really relating to the dynamics. I can only attempt to understand it.

One visual that seems to work when I explain this thought is to tell someone to picture a long hallway with 20 or 30 doors. If they open the first 4 doors, 5 times, it is not the same as going

all the way down the hallway and opening 20 different doors.

I think the phrase "I trust him/her with my life" is overused as a romantic exclamation in relationships that haven't begun to test the theory. One amusing anecdote in our relationship, about a year into it, we were driving to coffee with friends, having left a playspace for the evening. Phoenix has its rough areas and we were driving through one. Gunfire started from a vehicle near us, and he moved in his seat and blocked me. That action told me much more than any words could ever tell me. The experience stayed with me over the years when doubt would creep in, my ego would creep out, and I began wondering what the hell I'd gotten myself into. But still, it has taken years to get to this point where I am now.

I was pondering this the other day as Sir and I were walking somewhere and crossed a street. He jokingly said, "Now look both ways" and wagged his finger at me. I smiled back and said, "I don't need to. You stepped off the curb, that's enough for me." The answer came with no thought, but the gravity of it came to me later. Does it mean I think traffic common sense doesn't apply to me? No. It does mean that I've come to this place of trusting in following him without double-checking his every decision or move to be sure I'm still safe. If I'm not sure of that by now, I'm in the wrong place.

It has made obedience so much more natural and fluid. I don't have to evaluate every situation, every possible response, his response, what response I would have chosen, etc. I just do. It is peaceful. When a difficulty arises, a quiet conversation can take place rather than an emotional vomiting session involving every ghost in my history, and

having little to do with him or the current situation. Resiliency as a skill, just like in jessie's article this month.

It has helped our SM deepen as well. I no longer stop to think of what I will or won't do, I just think "Well, if it goes all to hell, we'll get through it together". The word "can't" has nearly left my vocabulary in regards to service and SM. If he thinks I can, that's a great vote of confidence.

This knowledge frees the mind to be present with the sensations the body is experiencing. It doesn't matter if the sensations are physical or psychological, presence can be maintained and welcomed with gratitude. It is this presence that can increase pain tolerance in a scene, or allow fluidity and grace to develop in service movement.

It may be a simple epiphany, but it is what has been on my mind this month.

Linda "Bootpig" Hall has been in service relationships for more than eight years. Currently she is an alpha slave in service to Whipmaster Bob Clark. She believes in service as a spiritual calling, akin to the religious devoted pursuing life as a monk or a nun, and its responsibilities ripple far beyond the individual relationship of Master/slave and into a greater realm of constant mindfulness of service.

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Comments, feedback, questions and comments to article contributors can all be sent to me at

msolym-pusleather2003@cox.net

I'll be happy to forward them to contributors for you.

Thank you again for joining us on this adventure.



Head Space, Slave Space, Sub Space and Other Places We Travel (Con't)

(Continued from page 1)

then. It is a comfort for me to feel the power of the top to be able to feel his primal thinking and react with my own. In my best scenes there is in this the free flowing of the power exchange and it is awesome.

Slave space is the same way for me. It is triggered by the Master. It happens not in scene, but on occasions in daily life where there is a sudden assertion by the Master that gives me that feeling of dominion from him. My reaction then is to go into my slave space. It is also a very primal state in my thinking. It is during this time I can feel my humility and my state of being becomes very centered and focused on the Master. It is like I have tunnel vision and all else is tuned out for a while. He then fills my universe.

Head space is wrapped up in all these spaces. Without proper head space to begin with we will not reach the others. I will write about head space as a full time endeavor because that is how I experience it in my relationship. Master expects me to maintain my head space as a part of my being, as part and parcel to my slavery. My training has been to foster proper head space and it is on going. Through ritual, imprinting, and personality modification, Master has instilled this head space in me. I through my training have responded and have there fore also put him in that right place to feel his dominion over me and have his proper head space also.

I believe the centering of the slave on the Master is key to maintaining head space for the long term lifestyle slave. I will refer to things I learned during my initial training period to bring forth some of these concepts in creating and finding proper head space. Here is a quote from a petition I wrote during training:

“The slave understands that she has no identity without the own-

ership of the Master. The slave cannot accept ownership because from her initial submission to his collar she has had no real or implied rights as property.”

Imprinting is very important in creating head space. Whether a Master puts his slave in formal training such as I received or whether he trains through day to day living, the imprinting of the slave’s identity on the Master will happen. When the slave accepts the ownership of the Master she becomes his property. That concept in and of itself is a heady thing. As property then we become plastic and malleable to the Master’s will and will there fore begin to seek out our identity through him.

Part of this imprinting happens through the humbling state of being owned. The largest part of it in my mind comes when we begin to make him our center. I find that centering is a very spiritual thing. It creates head space. Master made it his third rule for me:

“My Master is my center. My focus will always remain on him, my relationship to him and my belonging to him. I will never forget that I freely came to him as clay to be molded to his uses.”

There is one thing that has always struck me about this rule. The fact that I must never forget that I came to him freely. That I gave myself over to him. That I was a free person and it was my choice to put myself in his hands. Master makes time for my centering on him. Whether it is just time to sit as his feet, or bathe him, or some other meditative service that puts me in that right head space. For myself, I find I also achieve this during body worship. I find the act of worshipping the Master to be very centering for me. After worship I can go out into the world focused on my duties to him as his slave and not on my own egotistical

incentives that can be bombarded on a slave in outside situations.

Master named me. When you own something it is a powerful thing to name it. My name in it’s own way also maintains my day to day head space. While I always feel his collar around my neck, hearing the name Master gave me from others as well as him rings in my brain that I am owned. I answer to no other name now. If I have occasion from an old friend to hear the name of my free self it sounds foreign. In the beginning of our relationship, because of ego issues Master found it necessary to take away my name. I spent a month with no name. I had then to earn my name as I had earned the collar. In many ways earning back the name was more important to me than earning he collar. I was owned, but with no name I was just a thing. In order to not be a thing I had to learn to react and think like a slave.

This is an excerpt from one of the essays I had to write during that training period. The personality modifications Master deemed necessary for me are evident in this writing:

“Over all, in my headspace, this seeking out the pleasure of the Master becomes a duty. It goes with all other duties and should be there whether you are in the role of pleasure slave, domestic or engaged in body service. It is part of all service to Master. his removes a lot of anxiety I have had in wondering about my over all capability to ultimately be able to please Master and fulfill my role as his slave. I have found that through this day, I have found a way to lead myself deeper into submission to Master by gearing my creativity and natural out going-ness to my devotion to his pleasures. In this way I can feel that my strengths do not hinder my submission, but enhance it. I feel that today particularly I have accepted fully his total control, not only that but have the sense of want-



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Head Space, Slave Space, Sub Space and Other Places We Travel (Con't)

ing to give up not only what I apparently have, but what I may find in myself in the future. This is a comforting prospect for me as it means that not only can I give, but can also give what is potential in myself. In anticipating that what is not yet there is already his my his entitlement to my person as his property I can maintain my headspace as property indefinitely. Which gives me a security I needed as a slave to be fully open and fully owned.

So on this 4th day of training, I feel I have succeeded in overcoming the obstacle of ego, in understanding that anything Master shares with me is a privilege, that every thought and action I have must be by my nature geared towards Master's pleasure and comfort, that as his property I must lead my thoughts and use my creativity and talents for him, and that it is my duty as slave to indulge Master in any inclinations and whims he has. Also, that as property Master not only owns what is apparent and true of me as I am, but also what I may be in the future. The knowledge that everything now is truly out of my hands and in the hands of Master, that his entitlement to my person is inherent and it will be abolished from my mind that I was ever a free thinking person."

It was important for me to know that in my surrender there would also be a future. Also, that head space would and did eventual become part of my nature and would not be something I would have to strive for on a daily basis. I feel as though time and training are the ways to achieve this.

There have been times over the last four years were either he or I lost head space. In my opinion

when a slave loses proper head space it compromises the power exchange. I spent some months last year without a collar because of this. So, in the past months of regaining that head space, I can see more clearly what it took to create it, and what it takes to get it back. Fortunately in long term M/s relationships, if proper head space has been established than it can be created again without much difficulty but it still requires some training.

Being a lifestyle slave for me is truly an alternative lifestyle. It permeates everything I do, how I think and my own head space in how I relate to the world. While I can do scenes where there is definite sub space, and I can go to BDSM functions or occasionally just walk around a mall and get into slave space, head space is by far the most important and the most difficult to maintain.

Master has created for himself and his slave protocols, rituals, and certain personality modifications that allow us to maintain head space. My role as slave has been to be obedient to his dominion and learn how to use my creativity and talents for his use. My life is centered on him, I am much less prone to feel the tugs of my own ego that can drag me out of my proper head space. I find when most slaves begin having issues with their slavery, it is not because of any lack on their part, but from losing that head space.

Everyone has this "space" this place in their head where they maintain their identity and how they move around in the world. For Masters and slaves it is considered the alternative, the perverted at times....and definitely it is spacey.

E. Missy Hall has been owned by E. Carroll Hall since 2001. Missy has been actively writing about her experiences as a slave, her concepts regarding the Master/slave relationship, and erotic literature and poetry. With her Master, they have written a volume of poetry about the first year of their relationship called Beyond Dominion. It is a view of the internal emotional development of both the Master regarding his own mastery and the enslavement of his property.

Missy enjoys mentoring other slaves. She believes the best way to promote a better understanding of slavery is through the mentoring of others. She has found the Internet a great way for lifestyle slaves to network, communicate and share experiences.

Missy currently resides in Richmond, Virginia. She enjoys music, plays the guitar, and theater. Richmond is a new area, and she is currently enjoying meeting others in the community.

Welcome to all of our new readers this month—including our international friends and family. I enjoy watching the growth of the list and the far flung places we're all gathering from.

Please let me know if you're interesting in contributing to a future issue!

Submission from Strength

wonderwoman

I grew up the daughter of a German military officer and a southern belle, which I am positive greatly affected my outlook on service and on relationships in general. Because I grew up moving around the world, without an affiliation to a particular geographic locality, my loyalties are to family and to the core values of loyalty, integrity, honor and service.

I grew up conflicted in part, having been encouraged to excel in school and to have a career, but also having been encouraged to be deferent to men, especially if they were at all. .commanding. It always seemed as though the bigger and stronger and more competent the man was, the weaker and more disorganized I was. I thought it made me seem more feminine and more appealing – according to mama, men LIKED taking care of us helpless women. Several failed relationships later, I began to explore the lifestyle that includes dominance and submission, and realized that I have a profound orientation to service. Unfortunately, I first approached my submission from the same position of weakness as I had always done – after all, wasn't submitting really about being weaker than the Dominant? I knew that because I desire deeply to please my partner, obedience comes naturally to me. I freely bought into the notion that it was through a Dominant's setting up rules and structures for me that I could learn to manage problem areas of my life in ways I had never been able to before. I happily prattled off the notion that if I failed, it was really a failure on the Dominant's part for not providing the proper guidance, structure, rules, attention, etc. With the guidance of a good dominant, my weight, health, communication, relational and financial dysfunctions would simply go away. And they did, for a few months, with several

different dominants.

What I quickly discovered is that the kind of man who sought that level of constant micromanagement was usually one with far too much time on his hands, from either being under- or unemployed, or one with a tendency to obsessive and abusive behavior. I understand that this may not be *your* experience, but it was mine. I was seeking and attracting dysfunction to me. After several excursions of this sort, I went into my cave to do more self work, to see what and how I was straying off the path. Once I identified the pattern, the right teacher appeared. This teacher, a dominant man named Thomas and whom I called Master, taught me to fish instead of just fed me.

Under his tutelage, I began to clean up my act, literally and figuratively and I became accountable for my day to day behavior and demeanor. Instead of using my online banking system to check a balance to know whether or not I could write another check that week, I learned to use Quicken to manage my finances and to produce weekly balance sheets. Instead of having an entire closet filled with unpacked boxes from a move two years ago, I cleared them out, established a filing system and tackled my house from the top down. Yes, I wanted to please him. Yes, I wanted him to be proud of me. Those were still reasons I worked hard – but the difference was that he taught me how much more valuable I am as an extension of his own power and strength. He taught me that a competent slave is a valuable slave. How valuable could I be if he had to follow along behind me, wondering or worrying if I was functioning properly? How valuable could I be if I was not physically strong enough to carry out my tasks, because I was not

taking proper care of myself physically? Under his tutelage, I came to see that my job as slave is to make Master's life easier, not more difficult. What a simple, but not easy task for me to put into practice at first! Years of conditioning me to respond to strength with helplessness had to be reversed. I discovered that not being frail and weak and small and helpless was work, a discovery with which I was not enamored at first! Waiting to be told what to do all of the time was intellectually and energetically much easier. Damn, this slavery thing is HARD, I thought.

But it worked. My life worked. Not only was I a better slave, but I was a better mother, employee, daughter, sister and friend. And I kept learning.

What I have learned in the past few years is that my model of slave encompasses several military concepts (surprise!). As I wrote last year "I believe that as slave, I should be the eyes in back of him, that I should be able to cover the territory not covered by his eyes, to be able to say at any moment, 'I've got your back, Sir.' Furthermore, knowing and trusting in my skills and abilities, he can go away and do his job and I can competently handle home and hearth until his return, not falling apart because a tire goes flat or the toilet overflows. Being slave means knowing enough leadership skills to handle life affairs until his return from the front. Being slave means representing his interests competently, and with the same values of honor, duty, loyalty, service and trustworthiness that he exhibits and is invested with every day."

I no longer serve Thomas. For the first month or so after we parted ways, I lapsed into laziness again with regard to my home, health, finances and emotional well-being. But I did not

"How valuable could I be if he had to follow along behind me, wondering or worrying if I was functioning properly?"

Submission from Strength

Submission from Strength (Con't)

stay there. When I was crying one night to a friend that I needed to serve, she suggested that I could – that I could serve my future Master by continuing my progress and by not letting go of the things I had learned. I blinked and thought. And blinked again. It made sense to me.

In the past year I've changed careers and am doing something I always wanted to do. An added bonus is that it also allows me to spend more time with my own

children. I moved to another house and was set up and organized in very little time. My bank account is still balanced. Physically, I have lost even more weight and I am now less than ten pounds from my dream goal. Life is good, because I am strong. While I'm still not perfect, I'm not a broken doll in need of fixing. Submission from strength has allowed me to grow and to actualize my slavehood in ways I would never have envisioned, much less achieved, by submitting from weakness.

Serving a Switch

slaveboi Carlie, U.S. boy 2005

"How do you deal with watching your Daddy serve someone?" This is one of the many questions I get at play parties and other leather functions. My answer is simply "there's nothing to deal with." To me serving a switch is no different than serving anyone else. Very often at functions you can find me sitting at the feet of my Daddy, who is sitting at the feet of His Master. It doesn't make my service any less because He is in service to someone else, He's my Daddy regardless. Whether He is blacking boots, in slave space, boy space, little space or pup space, He is still my Daddy even in those moments. The dynamic is always there and I am always in service to Him. Sometimes that service means that I make decisions without consulting Sir first, but I do this out of service to Him, and always within the parameters of my service.

All of this may sound simple to some people, but getting there is an entirely different story. Sir has told me from day one that His core is slave and that someday He wished to be owned. Being completely new to the lifestyle at that point I didn't see anything wrong with that, it made perfect sense to me and still does to this

day. I think the biggest challenge I had was finding my place as His slave while He was in active service to someone. There is one person who Daddy serves occasionally as time permits and during such trips I would try my best to give them their space because it was all about Daddy getting His needs met. I usually came home from these weekends with a warm heart, because I was able to see Sir get a need met that I couldn't possibly take care of. It made me feel good to see Him happy.

When Sir started negotiating with someone to be a collared slave things changed a little. I found it more difficult to find my place when we were all three together. Before it was a temporary service thing but now He was going to be in service to Her 24/7. Where did I fit in? How should I act when they are together? Was I still going to get my needs met? These are some questions that came up for me when I realized that the woman Sir was dating was going to become a part of our family.

Having someone that Sir was going to serve full-time was different than someone we would go see on the weekends. It took me a while to work through what my

role was in the new relationship. Of course Sir was a big help in that. Every step of the way as the new relationship progressed He checked in with me by asking was I ok with the direction the relationship was going and how fast, so when the time came that they were talking about a collar, I was already prepared for that step.

The support from Sir continued even after the collaring. If He was going to spend time with His Master, He always makes sure that I would have plenty of tasks to do while He was gone. And I know that if something was to come up all I would need to do is talk with Him. I know from experience that He will take time out as soon as possible to talk with me. Sir's Master is also aware of the relationship that I have with Sir so that helps as well. She has promised that their relationship will in no way change or alter the relationship that Sir and I have.

What it all boils down to is trust. I trust that Sir will take care of me no matter what space He happens to be in, and I trust that Sir will always be there for me when I need Him. Time has proven this to be true.

US boy 2005 is Sean Michael's slaveboi, Carlie. She lives with her Daddy and her big bro, patch the puppy, in Los Angeles as Head Boi of the Dawg House. You can read about her work as US boy 2005 at <http://www.livejournal.com/~usboy2005>



New Studies show Diamonds Cause Irritation in Slaves

dancerkt

I've heard more than one person espouse this basic sentiment in more varieties than I can count. Sometimes it's just that blatant, other times I don't think the person is even aware they are expressing that they believe there is a chasm between marriage and slavery. I suppose any one given stance on this topic all boils down to what you believe about relationships in your life in general.

What I've found is that each and all my relationships are their own entities in and of themselves; dependant upon and born from the people involved and sustained or killed by the same. In essence, I visualize three parts to every relationship I have: myself, the other person and the relationship itself. I have power over each of these relationships, as much as the partner does. What we do or not for each other directly affects the existence and value of the relationship. As much so, what we do or not for the relationship, is directly influenced by the value we each have of the other.

My slavery and his mastery are the same entity in my eyes; they are The Relationship. I do not see my slavery as something I possess, encompass, exude or present. I do not view it as something of me. I view it as what has been born of us. His mastery is the same type of intangible item. While we each are most certainly capable of being a master or slave to a completely different person other than each other, my slavery, as I know it at this very moment in existence, is completely dependant upon his presence in my life. I really see no difference between the terms slavery and mastery save for the angle at which The Relationship is viewed, and therefore, which components are then more visible.

Because I view all my relation-

ships in the above manner, I have never thought that applying the words marriage, husband and wife to The Relationship was a concept that created uncertainty or angst. I do not possess the dichotomy of a Hollywood espoused picture and a self-created non-conformist's stance on power transfer. Perhaps I'm lucky in that regard. To me, marriage is a contractual agreement endorsed and legally recognized by state and federal governments, insurance companies and other assorted corporations. Once upon a time not so long ago, slavery was a state recognized by the state and federal governments, insurance companies and other assorted corporations. At no time did any of the recognizing parties say that a participant's enjoyment was required for either to be recognized.

Because I view enjoyment as the purpose of The Relationship, my brain does not allow the legal definitions of marriage to affect it. Marriage is another choice made to solidify our security in the goals we have placed for ourselves regarding how we plan to enjoy life in the future and based on what is required for certain corporate allowances. In all its legality, marriage is a 401 (K) of joy, an IRA of happiness, a savings bond of smiles.

The only reason I can say this is because the emotional meanings of marriage, husband and wife are things that I can apply to The Relationship without their legal recognitions. The commitment and effort I associate with these images are processes, which I do not believe need be governmentally endorsed to exist. It is with that philosophy that I can securely say I do not feel there need be any suspicion or conflict when a couple with a master and slave dynamic choose to become husband and wife in the eyes of the law.

To say all that: I must also add that my intent is not to diminish, in any way, the romantic image of marriage. I hold a romanticized picture of a wedding, the vows, the reception and the feelings surrounding each myself. I simply believe that the desire and ability to commit yourself to a relationship for as long as you both shall live are not created by the legal option to do so. You either can or you can't and your decision on whether you should or shouldn't ought not to be contingent on the ramifications set forth by a governing body. I think neither Master nor I would be in our relationship if we didn't believe we were exploring, aiming, hoping, trying for something that we wanted to last for the rest of our lives. That we already have these wishes and feelings that we associate with being married is what allows us to take advantage of the ability to be married.

He proposed on Christmas Eve of 2004. We're looking at a date range of sometime in 2007 for the wedding. Some time in 2008 I will read again what I've written here. My belief at this moment is that no feelings about each other will have been monumentally altered because of the wedding ceremony. I do not foresee that being told by the state of Washington that I am entitled to half of his worldly goods should make me take ownership of them. In that vein, I don't expect that being told by the state that I hold an equal share of power in the relationship would make me any less likely to give over that power to him. Just because certain liberties are afforded to me does not mean I wish to take advantage of every one of them. I have no expectation that becoming his lawfully wedded wife will change, need to be integrated with, resolved or layered on top of my slavery. Being in a relationship capable of sustaining a

life long commitment has less to do with who awards the commitment and more to do with those that are able to uphold it.

I look forward to finding out if that's true.

Dancerkt is a female slave from NW Washington where she lives in an M/S dynamic with her master of 4 years, Aaron, and their beloved cat.

Working Outside the Home

Lady Wyllo

Due to our world's economy many submissives need to work outside of the home. These positions often require them to hold a dominant personality during their work day and many of them state how hard it is to get out of that mode when returning home. This is not easily fixed but can be with some will power.

One suggestion that I find works best is to start thinking of your home environment on your ride home. Doing this starts directing your thoughts as to what is required of you once you enter the door. Are you tired from your day? Of course you are. But with some ingenuity you can maintain a smooth transition from work to home by starting with directing your thoughts.

What chores need to be done? If you have children that can help designate some of the chores to them. They need to learn responsibility as well and what better example than to be helping out at home? Do you have no one to designate things too? How about having a list that you follow each week? Mondays vacuum, Tuesdays clean the bathroom, Wednesday ..., etc. By spreading out your chores you can still do your everyday chores such as cooking and doing dishes much more successfully as well as still maintaining time to spend with your dominant.

There is no shame in a dominant assisting with chores either. Do not be afraid to ask for assistance when you need it. Many are more than happy to lend a hand with certain chores. One dominant I had designated the living room as his to maintain. He liked it to look a certain way and preferred

to do it himself while I was designated the kitchen, bedroom, dining room and bathroom. This did help immensely as that was the room that was used most out of all of them. With us both working his assistance balanced out a large amount of time that helped us spend more of it together.

Another option for preparing for the transition into submitting at home is to change. Change your clothes; take a bath or shower, do something when you get home that takes you out of the office and into the home. Make this a ritual and it will help put you in the right mind set for your home life. This can work in reverse as well. Changing from home clothes to office clothes can set you for your day at work. It is very important to separate both areas.

You need to find a way that your work stays at work so as not to interfere with your home life. At work the last thing you need to be concentrating on is what you need to do for chores that night. Your focus should always stay on the task at hand. This will make you more successful in both areas. This does not mean that you are not thinking of how you are serving your dominant while at work.

When at work your actions speak for themselves. What you do, how you present yourself and how you handle each situation is what shows your dominant how much you appreciate them. Show your respect by being respectful. This is easy enough. Your bringing in a second income is also helping your dominant with alle-

viating some of the burden of the finances.

Wyllo is a Canadian currently living with her dominant in the United States. A 20+ year veteran in the Leather lifestyle, she has experience primarily in service-based relationships, many of them platonic in nature.

Her strengths include protocols, masochism and the role of "alpha slave" for large gatherings. She offers training one on one about basic protocols and pain tolerance (using spirituality as the anchor) for beginners and experienced slaves. She believes that BDSM can be a very spiritual experience for many people and using this as a technique in helping newcomers to pain play. She is aiming at learning as much as possible about every aspect involved in this chosen lifestyle and then sharing it with others (<http://leatherandlight.com>) as she considers knowledge only second to spirituality.

She is currently self-employed developing adult alternative websites, focusing on sales and promotion.

"What you do, how you present yourself, and how you handle each situation is what shows your dominant how much you appreciate them."

Working Outside the Home

A Feminist Perspective on BDSM

Haydee

He beckoned for me to get on the stage. I was so nervous that he had to wiggle his finger at me again and take a step in my direction. My heart was racing and the image of Dianne whimpering, her bleeding back turned to the crowd stood vividly in my mind as I walked past her, onto the stage and into the spotlight. I can picture what the audience must have seen: two ominous looking men, both six-foot something, dressed in black. The taller and bigger of the two, Stephen, was wearing white face paint with a black design that resembled the stage make-up worn by the band, Kiss. The one that beckoned to me, Richard, was wearing a red bandana; his face was colored with red and black paint and had a similar design as the first. He unzipped my shiny black corset, leaving me in the black electric tape that went horizontally and vertically across my breasts and towards my back.

As soon as I felt the cool air from the fan blowing on my back, Stephen held my hair out of the way with one hand and cut the electric tape from my back with the other. I knew what was coming and excitement surged through me as he led me to the chair. I sat turned away from the crowd with my back exposed... expecting... listening to the murmur of the crowd.

Suddenly, Richard grabbed my hair; making me gasp involuntarily and sending shivers through my body. I felt the needle from the tattoo machine begin drilling itself into my back. Involuntarily, I clenched my teeth and closed my eyes sinking into the pain. He wasn't thinking of being gentle, in fact the point was to draw blood, not a pretty tattoo, so there was no ink in the machine. He was outlining the letters to the word 'love' and going over the wounds repeatedly, roughly, painfully.

My head was swimming; there was no escape from the burning pain. No escape from the prying eyes of the audience. And no escape from the buzzing needle in my back. I started silently cursing myself for having agreed to this in the first place and questioned how much more I can take. My limited experience with pain told me that my tolerance level was rather low, so my mind wandered back to the moment I first spoke to Janet about the show and how excited I was at the mere mention of doing a scene on stage. I had no idea what I was getting myself into...

The sharp jolt of pain snapped me back to reality - the pain got so bad that I started to try to squirm away from the needle. It seemed like an eternity had passed when the needle was finally lifted. I breathed out a sigh of relief and looked up at the audience, drunk with the pain and high from all the attention. At that moment I remembered why I wanted to do this - it was the satisfaction of having endured and persevered, the spotlight, the sweetness of the bitter pain and, of course, the slight smile on that dominant man's face that made me tingle with the knowledge that he was pleased. With those thoughts running through my mind, Richard helped me get to my unstable feet and walk off the stage.

~~*~*~*~

BDSM - what a taboo in our society, especially for a woman who claims to be a feminist. At first glance, it does look like a paradox, doesn't it - a submissive woman who enjoys being objectified, used for pain, pleasure and service to another? Well, as a woman who is deeply involved with BDSM, as I happen to be the woman who bled for the pleasure of another and a service oriented polyamorous slave, and who

considers herself to be a feminist, I'd like to show that these two seemingly contradictory 'lifestyles' can, in fact, be reconciled.

I wasn't always sure how I could be sexually submissive, masochistic, and willingly serve a Master in a patriarchal society and stay true to my ideals about equal worth of the genders. My desire to submit and give of myself went against everything I believed in as a feminist. Yet, it turned me on and gave me curious inklings of a satisfaction that I would not be able to achieve elsewhere. As long as I can remember, I have had fantasies of helplessness, victimization, and pain. Now I understand that these fantasies have a very real basis in our society - the distinctively different upbringing of a girl versus a boy. Good girls are brought up to be passive, demure, submissive, and useful; that makes up our femininity. We're taught that in order to be beautiful we must endure pain - tweezing unruly eyebrows, waxing your legs, wearing high heels, tight corsets, etc. - it all becomes internalized and eventually transfers to other aspects of our lives, in fact, it invades *all* aspects of our lives, including the sexual and relationship realm.

I was not always aware of feminist thought and was taken aback by some feminist writings that expressed the attitude that women who merely 'sleep' with the enemy, i.e. men, are betraying the cause of progress for the feminine gender. This would cause any feeble minded woman to sweep her desires under the carpet, have many internal battles because repression of our desires only cause us harm, emotional and mental discomfort and, essentially, create the same

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"I wasn't always sure how I could be sexually submissive, masochistic, and willingly serve a Master in a patriarchal society and stay true to my ideals about equal worth of the genders."



A Feminist Perspective on BDSM (Con't)

(Continued from page 11)

oppressive environment that these feminists are trying to avoid.

I also ran into a few contrary views, as expressed by Samois, a feminist organization of sadomasochistic women (who also identify as lesbians). Samois have produced literature that encourages women to embrace and explore their sexuality, instead of alienating and resenting that part of themselves. For feminism is not about creating limitations for ourselves, but overcoming them.

Speaking as a slave who serves a dominant couple, I can say that my submission and service to them is a constant choice, which parallels feminism – as feminism, to me, is about choices and equal opportunities. I can choose to be a brain surgeon or to preside in Congress, but the goldmine I found in feminism is that I can just as easily choose to be a stay-at-home slave, who cooks and cleans for her Owners in return for their dominion over me without diminishing my worth. The idea of feeling empowerment

through the chains of slavery and service is something I strongly identify with, because, ironically, through being humiliated, made to do things that were extremely challenging and realizing that saying “I can’t!” was not an option, I learned that I could. In the hands of a powerful and honorable Master I found myself – my identity, ambitions, and confidence. This in turn, makes me into a better human being; I am happier, more pleasant and upbeat, as well as, more hard working, as I know that once I apply myself I will achieve. In my case, I take this and apply it to my school studies, career aspirations, friendships, and even how I relate to my domineering family. Whereas, I used to allow them to push me around and tell me that I am helpless, clueless, and inept, now I see through their manipulations and set my own standards for myself.

So, in this context, women who choose to become slaves and/or service oriented submissives can represent a step forward for feminism. It’s very liberating to know that to be submissive, provide service, and be

masochistic is okay, without it compromising you as an individual, because you are still seen as strong and are valued and respected throughout. Yet, it must be seen as a choice of an individual woman, not the role of all women, as this can easily be warped into “a woman can *only* find strength through submission,” which is not the case.

Haydee is an owned slave in a multi-dominant, multi-slave, bi-coastal household. She has been in the lifestyle for three years, but only found her slave calling a year ago when she met Master and Mistress.

Routine Ritual Recommitment

slave jean

History
Currently
Tools
Preparation
Process
Closure

History

While the title of this vignette and service-based ritual is embedded in a most serious event in the relationship that my Master has designed for and with me, the beginning of this most necessary recommitment ritual for us has its roots in one of my “not so glorious moments of service or slave-protocol”.

The first 2 years of our relationship were blessed with extensive communication opportunities via all technological manners (phone, computer, phone-line-via-computer, letters, e-cards, digital images, and so on) with 3 day weekend life-crammed visits every 4 weeks. Yes, a heavy percentage of our budgets were given to the phone, computer, and airline companies.

During one of those communicative opportunities, the interim period was stretched out to 6 weeks. My body itched for the ability to serve in person, rather than the lessons and orders given via the many other ways and the proof of my obedience shared via the same way in return. I awaited at the airport gate gangway (pre-9/11, obviously) craning my neck, dancing from foot to foot, unable to keep the poise of a 40+ year old woman, while trying to catch a glimpse of my Master emerging from the gangway. I looked and looked and then, omigod, there he was! But he wasn't as I had EVER seen him before! He was wearing a baseball hat and sunglasses – okay, those had been worn before. But the only other facial feature I could see was a nose! He had grown a full - and I mean Grizzly Adams Full -

beard and mustache! This beard and mustache were so full that people purchase fake beards, mustaches, and glasses to look the way he looked. I was so shocked that all decorum left me and I began tittering, then giggling, then laughing and laughing and gaffawing so badly that I couldn't stop to even give him a kiss! It definitely wasn't one of my most glorious moments of slavery-welcoming.

Shall we say that the first order of business when we got to my home was my hair in his fist and my knees hitting the ground? I was given to understand that since I found my Master's facial fur so funny, I was to “fix” it. And I better not nick him at all. Gulp!

So, okay, the matter was no longer funny since I was not a trained barber and had never shaved a man before. Besides, how does a person start removing over two inches of fur off of a face --- and yet still keep a mustache and a beard or something between similar the two?

Currently

That first shave surprised the hell out of me and brought back pleasant memories for my master of being served getting his haircut at the barbers (when he had no choice in the matter as a young boy, so found something to enjoy about the event). I was in immediate service-space, frightened about not doing a job well because I wasn't prepared to do the job at all (the sad fate of the over-achiever after all – and one who had dishonored her master in public with her inability for self-control).

We talked about the shaving-event afterwards and the enjoyment it gave for both of us – okay, even the fearfulness was enjoyable to me for an extent as a

masochist finds fear fun. But – the ability to touch my Master's face in such intimacy. His trust in my touch and the choices began to set aside the fear with each additional shave. At that time, we began each visit with the shave. When life finally allowed him to make a home for me to join him, we no longer had 4 weeks to wait for each other. Now we had day-to-day careers that kept each of us at work for 10-13 hours. My Master decided to reinstate our ritual-shave as a first event Friday-after-work activity to recommit our relationship, re-center our roles and our time to ourselves – letting go of the week's woes, works' responsibilities, worries and refocus our relationship and time on our recommitment to each other on whatever we do for the weekend. The routine of the ritual has been, at times, the only way I have been able to clear my mind, my body and relax and focus on what is important in life – us and how we negotiate our ways through it in this service-based relationship.

Tools

My Master is Master Miser (lovingly said and meant with all respect – as it is a great gift he brings with that title – and I thank the Furies who brought us together for that gift of his... even when I mouth unsaid curse words because his gift is the best, right, and most appropriate road. I am grateful for his fiscal finnickiness.) It meant that collecting the tools for the ritual took planning, hunting, and inventiveness, however, aren't these gifts that good service calls for? It just also took quite a bit of time and experimentation.

“It meant that collecting the tools for the ritual took planning, hunting and inventiveness, however, aren't these gifts that good service calls for? It just also took quite a bit of time and experimentation”

Routine Ritual Recommitment

(Continued on page 14)

Routine Ritual Recommitment

slave jean

(Continued from page 13)

For a fairly furry facial Master the following are basic tools:

Technical Gear

Electric Beard Trimmer (with multiple trim heads)
Nose Trimmer
Small Sharp Scissors
Small Comb for Beard/Mustache
Electric Shaver (optional)

Soap & Lotion

Cup
Glycerin Shaving Soap
Boar Bristle Brush (preferable)
or
Can of specialty shaving cream
Aftershave cream/lotion (preferable to high % alcohol liquid aftershaves)
Final Razor Gear
Razor
1 Blade/shaving
or
Strop (fun to have for décor even if can't use)
Straight Razor (ditto)

Facial Preparation Towels

Large Cotton Towel (like for kitchen)
Steamer
and/or
Hot Water Bowl

Environment Preparation

Dedicated Candle
Incense
Music

Chair Equipment

Chair (Desk Chair on wheels that reclines works well, unless your Master wants to fork out about \$2500 for a used barber's chair on ebay and has room for it in the home someplace)
Foot rest (helps with his reclining to put up his feet)
Beach Towel or Bath Sheet
Hand Towel

Preparation (Time: 10-20 min)

Preparation pertains to the ritual environment, my own body, mind, and spirit, and then notifying my Master that all is ready for his shave.

In the ritual environment, at my Master's instructions I was told I could choose between candle, incense, or both for setting my inner needs in this recommitment ritual. I collected (this took a long time – remember \$\$) incense cones, sticks, and oils for water cups with votive warmings. The scents run the gamut from heavy earthy sensual, to light crispy harvested and includes relaxing, stimulating, calming, heady invocations. The candles I have collected don't necessarily carry scents because I enjoy the incense and like the candle glows. But I have one trio of candles that when I light I call upon the past, the present, and the future to bring the best to our recommitment. I select the music to match the scent and lighting glow.

I wheel the desk chair from the den to the Master's bathroom and position the footstool in just-the-right place, then lay a beach-towel over it to catch any wayward stubble. (There's ALWAYS wayward stubble with a furry facial Master).

I then lay out the Technical Gear, the Soap & Lotion, the Razor Gear, and the Preparation Towels on the counter – all straight and ready in order of use. Then I begin to run the water so it will be hot and ready when needed. Once it is hot, I put the kitchen cotton towel into the basin.

I then ready my body to be sure it is cleaned, hair brushed, teeth brushed, and a final inspection in the mirror assures that I am ready to go before my Master.

Process (Time 20 – 30 min)

Depending on what my Master has instructed me, I either call to him that all is ready or I go to him and let him know that all is ready and then return to the Chair and Shaving Environment, standing at attention, hands behind my back, legs spread, head up, eyes down.

My Master comes into the room and I sense him examining the preparations, checking that all is ready. He then touches me, pulls me to him, and asks me if I am ready to give him service and to give him myself once again. Am I fully his and ready to rid my body and mind of the week's detritus? He puts my face into his throat where I can feel the stubble that I will shortly remove, where I can smell the sweat of his work efforts, where our hearts' beat together – his carotid and my temporal vein – and I breathe faster knowing I am about to once again enter that realm that he permits me – to reaffirm my service to him. He is about to expose his throat, his lips, his cheeks, to the blades that I will wield and trust me to not damage him - to give myself, my service fully with affirmation, with confidence in him, in us, in time, in working together and in obedience to his vision. He breathes a kiss on my hair, slaps my ass, then takes his place in The Chair.

With that, I move behind him and begin "Barbering."

Now it probably would have been easier taking a course in how to do this. In fact, my Master even checked into that possibility so that I could learn how to use the straight edge razor --- but time isn't with us "yet". One day I will be able to receive that gift and then serve in that fashion. Until then, it has been a little

(Continued on page 15)



He is about to expose his throat, his lips, his cheeks, to the blades that I will wield and trust me to not damage him - to give myself, my service fully with affirmation, with confidence in him, in us, in time, in working together and in obedience to his vision.





Routine Ritual Recommitment

slave jean

(Continued from page 14)

coaching from my Master (every man does have his own way of shaving and so at the beginning he guided me by instructing me in what tool to use first, how to use it, when to swap to the next tool, what to do, and then where to shave first, second, third.) After 7 years of renewing in this ritual, I know that my Master prefers me to use the beard trimmer *sans* attachment to take off the heaviest stubble. It seems that that approach keeps the razor from ripping the stubble out of the flesh hair-by-hair. My Master isn't into receiving pain. Go figure.

I have the responsibility of deciding if he will wear a Mustache – what kind of Mustache- a fu manchu – a beard – a goatee – a van-dyke – how thick any of those will be – what style of angle they will shape. These were horrific decisions the first few times I had to make them. I found myself studying all sorts of magazines to see images of men with facial hair and what they looked like. THEN I had to analyze how to “get that look” since of course magazines didn't tell you how to get that. Of course, looking back on it maybe I could have subscribed to a barber magazine. Or maybe I could have even gone into a men's barber shop and seen if there was something there. Somehow those didn't occur to me? I'm a researcher by profession, but those details sometimes go out the window when I find myself in these odd situations. Luckily for me my Master is amused and pleased when he can flummox me in these ways. But dangit, if it doesn't leave me feeling like a goose years later when I realize how much more easily I could have figured out a solution to a problem.

So I remove the heavy stubble by the beard trimmer. I then use one

of the attachments to trim the mustache (and beard/goatee if one of those is present). You may have guessed that I've not chosen the Grizzly Adams look since given this ritual recommitment duty/gift.

I take the nose trimmer and buzz away the stragglers that keep on growing there just like fur grows everywhere else on a bear of a Master.

I then trim using the small scissors and small comb, my Master's mustache. I used to save that for last, but two years ago changed and began trimming that after trimming the fullness of the beard and or mustache – that way I can wipe out all of those previously mentioned wayward stubbles. Um, it may be pertinent here to mention that I, uh, wasn't fully paying attention one Friday. I hadn't done my personal preparation for my mind, body, and was watching the clock since we were to go out to meet friends. When I got to this area of the process, I clipped one side, the turned and squirmed and clipped the other side and received a lurching Master with a loud growl. Um, red isn't usually one of the colors associated with barbering. It seems that I had clipped a bit too closely to the corner of his lip. And blast it all if that lip didn't stop bleeding – not then, not even when we went to meet our friends (kink-kind) who took great pleasure in noting what I had done in my service. I wasn't very pleased with myself since it was solely due to lack of proper preparation and lack of attention to my service.

After all of the heavy stubble and trimming of what's left, I used to use an electric razor to then take off the remaining stubble before I shaved with lotion and razor. For my Master, that became too much flesh irritation. So now I take the hot towel out of the hot

water and squeeze it of the excess water then wrap his face in it. While his face is softening, I begin working a lather in the cup of glycerin soap with the boar-bristle brush. Many knife stores in middle-class malls sell these items (expect to pay about \$35-\$50 for a boar-bristle brush). The sound of the brush swirling in the cup and the foam it creates is as tactile and aural as the incense creates an olfactory sensation. Even if I can't use the straight razor, using the cup and boar-bristle brush gives satisfaction to us both of one more step closer to the full barber experience of service.

I remove the hot towel and begin in quadrants brushing the foam on my Master's face. Then, using the new razor blade, the hand towel draped around his neck, and the hot towel as a wipe clothe I begin shaving one cheek, one side of this throat. Then the other cheek and the other side of his throat, finally the adam's apple and any spaces above his lips and below his nose.

I finish with a wipe down of his face to free any straggling wayward hairs. Then I put the lotion in my hand and carefully rub it into his face to soften and help close the pours.

Closure

With that final application of lotion, I lean over him, remove the towel from his chest, wiping up more stubble-stragglers and kiss his lips, thanking him for the service and letting him know that all is complete once again.

He looks up at me with his eyes that have been closed up to this moment and says, “Thank you baby, you're mine.”

And with that, he gets up to hold me to him once again. That magic that slave alia spoke of in

February's edition of Simply Service is vibrant between my Master and me at that moment. I can't say what brings it forth. But the ritual recommitment routinely celebrated each Friday reconnects us spirit to spirit, Master to slave, moment-to-moment and ready for the weekend anew.

I ask myself – does this mean that our weeks are less Master-slave than our weekends? -I realize that no – it doesn't. This ritual recommitment means that each weekend we renew the energies, the relational roles and strengths that we each bring into this relationship. This permits me to serve him and renews the desire to serve. The need to serve is always there, but the desire is sometimes lost in the shuffle of the multiple duties that overwhelm in life. When the week's days drum onward filled with multiple activities that divide our time from each other – I look to the weekend past and the weekend to come and immediately know once again, I am owned, I serve at the pleasure of my Master, and am privileged to do so for another day - whatever the multiple wackiness of the world brings. He owns me and I serve him, blessedly.

Jean has lived as slave to Tom for 8 years. They own a home in AZ and both hold professional occupations. While she realized over the course of their first 3 years that those days were the prerequisite for becoming comfortable with the idea of a Master/slave/service-based relationship; it was the next 5 years that confirmed her desire to embrace service within the guardianship of one man, to the decisions, pathways, play, and ideas he endeavors and anoints.



A once-a-month newsletter/e-zine written for service oriented people, by service oriented people in M/s, D/s or Leather relationships.

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Past issues are archived in the FILES section of the group.

Current contributors are all slave or submissive identified, and in real time relationships where obedience and service are necessary, valued skills, achieved over time. I have been fortunate enough to meet these lovely people all over the country, and have delighted in great conversations, where we sometimes agree, and sometimes disagree, but are bound by a mutual respect of each other's choices. Occasionally, words from the "other side" might be included as well, as many perspectives will be represented.

Many current contributors are active in their own local leather communities, as well as maintaining relationships, homes, jobs and more. We know it can be a balancing act. We know it isn't pretty all the time. We'll be sharing our stories, tricks, tips, lessons learned (easy and hard), mistakes, and human foibles.

Every possible relationship combination will be represented, as this is about service, and can transcend gender and role orientations. Contributors are encouraged to write about issues they are currently facing, and as such each issue may go in a number of directions. The thought of "theming" issues has arisen, and is on hold at this time to allow for freedom of expression and creativity as this project finds a niche of its own. Philosophy, skill training, methods, and more may be examined.

Contributions will be accepted and reviewed on a per submission basis for addition into a future issue. Please include a bio, and any references you have and send submissions to msolympusleather2003@cox.net.

Thank you for joining us

Bootpig

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