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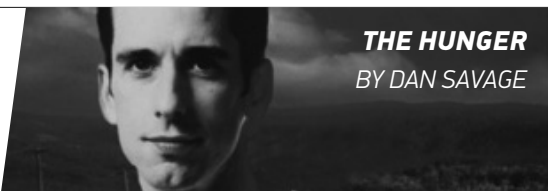
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SAVAGE LOVE



THE HUNGER
BY DAN SAVAGE

I'm a straight 18-year-old girl in my first sexual relationship. Things are a little awkward, and I could chalk it up to inexperience, but here's what I feel conflicted about: I have a vore fetish. It was a fascination for me as a young child and became a sexual thing around the time I hit puberty. I'm wondering now whether this is something I need to get off. It works well when I'm on my own, but I always thought "regular stuff" would work too once I was actually getting some. I've told my boyfriend about it, and he's more than willing to role-play with me. But these fantasies are in-my-head-only, as they rarely feature human beings (think anthropomorphic monsters and dragons, strange as this may seem), so I don't know if I could actually do this. Maybe we just need to hold out a little until we know what we're doing and regular stuff will cut it after all? I have a mounting suspicion that it won't, and I'm having trouble coming to terms with what seems to be a really warped, messed-up fetish. What if this is the only thing I can get off to? Am I doomed to solo sex forever?

Vore Only Really Excites

A quick dip into Wikipedia for readers who aren't familiar with the term "vore": "Vorarephilia (often shortened to vore) is a paraphilia wherein an individual's sexual arousal occurs in response to a fantasy of themselves, another person, or an object eating or being eaten... The fantasy sometimes involves the victim being swallowed whole, though on some occasions the victims are chewed up, and may or may not include digestion."

Makes you wonder how many of the people who were furious with the Discovery Channel after that guy wasn't "eaten alive" by a snake were secretly vore fetishists.

Anyway, VORE, you're not the only person on earth whose sexual fantasies revolve around or are completely dominated by something impossible or unrealizable. The lady centaur fetishist is not and never will be a lady centaur, the guy into giant women has not met and will not ever meet a 50-foot-tall woman on the subway, you are not and never will be a monster capable of swallowing another monster whole. While most people with unrealizable fetishes or fantasies enjoy "regular stuff" all by itself, a great many do not. The latter type—kinksters who can't get off to regular stuff—allow their impossible/unrealizable fantasies to play out in their heads while they enjoy the intimacy and physical sensations of non-vore/centaur/giantess stuff. Most aren't "checked out" during sex: They're enjoying regular stuff and irregular stuff simultaneously—they're fully present, getting into and getting off on their partners, all while their impossible/unrealizable fantasies play on a loop in their heads, sometimes in the background, sometimes in the foreground.

So while you may be "doomed" to go through life with this fetish, VORE, you are not doomed to solo sex. You can have your fantasies and partnered sex too.

But I don't think you've been at this sex stuff long enough to conclude that you're incapable of enjoying regular stuff on its own. Everyone has their go-to fantasies, and years of solo masturbation can carve a deep groove in a person's erotic imagination. Since vore was where you always went when you were aroused prior to your boyfriend coming along, your brain may have automatically gone there when you got aroused with your boyfriend. Don't mistake what may have been force of habit for complete dependence, or what you seem to fear most—complete dependence on your vore fantasies—could become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

As for your shame about your kink ("a really warped, messed-up fetish"), you gotta shake that shit off. Take it from Tynan Fox, a kinkster and public speaker: "We don't choose our kinks—our kinks choose us." You didn't choose your kink, VORE, your kink chose you. So give yourself a break, okay? Stick with sex- and kink-positive partners (like your current boyfriend), incorporate your kinks carefully and consensually, and don't neglect your partner's interests and possible kinks. You also might want to explore the furry/scalie community, a space where you can be (or meet) the anthropomorphic monster and/or dragon of your dreams.

You said you can't respond to questions that are too long, so I'm going to keep it short: I'm a 44-year-old divorced woman. An 18-year-old man who seemed attractive and confident approached me online, and I was intrigued. We hooked up for a one-night stand. We have now been together three times, and we're talking and texting about doing it again. The sex is amazing, the best I have ever had, and he says the same (I know—he's only 18). Is this bad? Am I bad? Should I stop seeing him?

Acting Young Again

My answer in brief: *If he's actually 18 (did you card him?), if you're honoring the campsite rule (you will leave him in better shape than you found him), if he intends to honor the Tea and Sympathy rule after it's over (when he speaks of this in the future, and he will, he will be kind), then it's not bad, you're not bad, and you don't have to stop fucking him.*

I live in a small city in a semirural area. I'm a single woman and am attracted to the idea of an underground swinger scene, or something similar, as a way to get some attachment-free action. But everyone around here knows each other or knows of each other, and something like this would be buried way underground. I'm convinced a swinging scene exists here, but I have no idea how to find it. Those who strike me as the people who'd know are people I wouldn't want to ask. So aside from Craigslist, which I do not trust, how does one go about finding the swinging scene in a small town?

Small-Town Girl

"It's a shame none of the 'swinger identifiers' that have been proposed—like white rocks in the front yard or a black ring worn on the right hand—panned out, because they would make finding swingers easier," said Cooper S. Beckett, author of *My Life on the Swingset: Adventures in Swinging & Polyamory* and host of the *Life on the Swingset* podcast (lifeontheswingset.com). "But the swinger scene isn't as underground as it seems, so she shouldn't have to dig too deep to find it—even in her small town."

Beckett recommends—and I hope you're sitting down for this—going online, STG, where you have options other than Craigslist. "The wonders of the internet make this far easier than it used to be," said Beckett. "She should sign up for one of the many swinger dating websites, like Kasidie or Lifestyle Lounge or Swing Life Style—but NOT Adult Friend Finder, which is full of fakes and cheaters (and they nickel-and-dime you for everything). She can get a free trial and search for swingers in her area. If there aren't many people, try the closest bigger city. Whichever site has the most locals, buy a month and go to town. Another great alternative is Meetup.com, which has been a real boon for kinky people—and it's free! She can sign up under a pseudonym if it helps. Then search for nonmonogamy or swinging meet-ups in her town or the nearest big city." Follow Beckett on Twitter @swingsetlife.

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