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SAVAGE LOVE

VIRGIN TERRITORY
 BY DAN SAVAGE

I'm an American woman living abroad and have started a relationship with a wonderful man from a Middle Eastern country. We are having a great time exploring what is a foreign country for both of us. The looming issue is sex, of course. He is a moderate Muslim, but he grew up in a strict conservative family and country. He's 25 and has never even held hands with a woman. He is excited to change this now that he has broken away from his family. I have had many partners, both men and women, and am quite sexually experienced. I am curious about what to do when the time comes. Do you have advice on how to best go about taking a man's virginity? I want to avoid as much insecurity on his part as I can.

Going To Be His First

Be gentle, GTBHF. Also, make it clear beforehand that you're his girlfriend and not his counselor or spiritual adviser. If he's still struggling with the sex-negative, woman-phobic zap that his upbringing (and a medieval version of his faith) put on his head, he needs to work through that crap before he gets naked with you. He may have some sort of post-climax meltdown or crisis—like the ones so many repressed gay dudes have the first time they have sex with a man—and you'll be kind and understanding, of course, but you won't allow him to lay responsibility for the choice he made on you. As for the sex itself... Take the pressure off him by letting him know that this—his first time, your first time together—is about pleasure and connection, not about performance and mastery. Let him know that you don't expect him to know what he's doing at every moment, that a little fumbling and adjusting are normal even with more experienced folks, and that you're both allowed to stop the action, talk about whatever's going on, and then start again. And finally, GTBHF, let him know that you're going to take the lead and reassure him that there's nothing emasculating about being with—and being led by—a sexually empowered woman. Quite the opposite: A truly masculine straight man isn't afraid of a woman who knows what she's doing and what she wants.

I am a 37-year-old man, and I sometimes get unbidden erections in public. They aren't glaringly obvious unless maybe I'm wearing a swimsuit at the pool, but of course, regardless of the situation, I feel like everyone can see it. I've heard people say it's rude or could even be perceived as predatory to sport a visible woody under your clothes in public. There are countless websites devoted to shaming men with boners in public, and that doesn't help the situation. Despite being mortified, deep down I want to believe that it should be okay to go about my business as long as I'm not being creepy. Is it okay to just go about my business until my hard-on subsides?

Bummed Over Normal Erotic Raisings

The only people who'll notice (or linger over) your unbidden erections are the ones staring at your crotch—and they're the creeps, BONER, not you. So go about your business... unless you're at the pool, in which case find an open poolside lounge and lie on your stomach until the crisis passes.

I have an open FWB thing going with a guy. He is my primary sex partner. We recently stopped using condoms when we're together because we both passed STI tests several months ago and neither of us has been with anyone else since. But we are both free to have sex with other people, and it's bound to happen sooner or later. If we always use condoms with the other people, is it safe for us to continue having condom-free sex with each other?

What's The Risk?

Condoms—when used consistently and correctly—greatly reduce your risk of acquiring a sexually transmitted infection. They provide excellent protection against HIV infection, gonorrhea, and chlamydia (diseases spread by genital secretions); they're slightly less effective at protecting you against herpes, HPV, and syphilis (diseases spread by skin-to-skin contact). The condom-free sex you're currently having with your fuck buddy can be regarded as risk-free because you've both been tested, you're both STI-free, and you're both not having sex with other people. But some risk will creep into your condom-free sex after you start having sex with other people, WTR—even if you're using condoms. Your risk of getting an STI will be much, much lower if you use condoms—consistently and correctly—with those other partners, but sex with other partners will introduce some risk.

I'm in a BDSM-centered relationship with my Master/boyfriend and wear his collar. We have a tumultuous relationship and argue often. The center of these arguments seems to be that I see myself as a strong female and in control of many aspects of my life, and he'd rather have me just go along with whatever he says. I like some BDSM play in the bedroom, but he wants me to be submissive to him 24/7. I've wanted breast augmentation for many years. He joined me at the first consult and was talking about the smallest implants possible. I have a small chest, and he is attracted to small chests, but I knew I wanted something more substantial—especially since I am paying for it and it's my body. I ended up going bigger than what he wanted without telling him, and he's expressed anger about what I did to "his body" (he believes he owns my body) without his consent. I couldn't be happier with my boobs. He hates them. Now I just don't know about my boyfriend. I love him, but I feel like he can't remove himself from decisions I make for myself.

Tits In Trouble

Your Master/boyfriend wants a slave/girlfriend—he wants (and seems to think he's in) a total power exchange relationship. But you want a guy who's your equal out of the bedroom (and can't dictate implant sizes to you because it's not "his body," it's yours) and a fun BDSM play-partner/Master in the bedroom. You two need to have an out-of-role conversation/renegotiation about your interests in kink, and your limits and his expectations—and if you can't get on the same page (if he can't dial it way back), you'll have to end things.

I agreed with most of your response to ADULT, the woman whose boyfriend has a thing for diapers. She said she didn't enjoy diaper play but mentioned that she got wet wearing a diaper. You wrote: "Something about being put in a diaper turns you on." I have to disagree. I just finished a great book called Come as You Are by Emily Nagoski, and she cites some compelling science in support of the idea that what our genitals do is NOT always indicative of what we find sexually appealing. It's called "arousal non-concordance." Nagoski uses the example of a college boy who witnessed a rape: He was physically aroused by what he saw but emotionally disgusted. In the case of ADULT, it may be important to understand that just because your genitals are responsive, that doesn't mean that you are "into it" on some level.

Longtime Reader And Fan

Thanks for writing, LRAF—and I'm going to pick up Emily Nagoski's book!

On the Lovecast, it's Dan vs. Cheryl! Strayed in Advice Clash of the Titans: savagelovecast.com.

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