

Consumer Culture

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He was arrested on the 15th of May 1992. Exactly three years since he had bought his first copy of "Contacts".

It just sat there, among the skin mags on the top shelf of the magazine rack, in the convenience store. When he went in, the shop was busy, so he just grabbed it, without looking too closely, paid for it and left.

It was a twenty minute drive back to his own part of town. He never did this kind of shopping in his own neighbourhood, just in case he ran into someone he knew. All through the drive it sat on the passenger seat, in its brown paper covering. The promise of revelations. The potential for new excitements. He was sure that anticipation was half the pleasure. The hopes and fantasies of what it could contain, working on his mind. Twenty minutes of low arousal later and he was back home, and safe.

His disappointment at his mistake was a real anti-climax. No pictures, no stories, no sex. Just pages and pages of personal ads. A short message followed by a Box number.

As he flicked through it, dejectedly, one or two of the messages started to catch his eye. And as he read them more carefully, he began to wonder.

There were so many people willing to advertise for sex with a total stranger. Willing to ask them to perform acts they couldn't bring themselves to ask of their partners. So many unfulfilled desires, unacted fantasies laid bare for inspection. And selection. He had to confess that they were compulsive reading.

After half an hour he decided that his personal fantasies were far to pedestrian, to normal. After an hour he decided that he would write off to one of these people. He took a further five hours to make his decision. The winner was Marie, Box 25697. She described herself as short, Brunette, young and slim, and claimed that "I need to be controlled because I'm so out of control". If he was going to do this then he wanted to really expand his horizons. Marie wouldn't let him down. He wrote the letter there and then, trying to sound as domineering as possible.

He mailed it the next day, and got his reply in three weeks later.

Marie wanted to meet him.

The first meeting went well. Expensive restaurant. He tried to look as cool as possible, which for him wasn't very. She turned up in a Ten year old T-shirt and ripped Jeans. Almost wasn't allowed in. But even before desert, they were fucking in the toilets. It was a kind of hard wild sex that he had never experienced before. Marie might not have been in control of herself, but she was definitely in control of him.

As time went on the sex managed to get even wilder, but there was never anything else to their relationship. He obsessed about her, but there was no love between them. He didn't care what she did for a living and she never asked about him. All they talked about was sex. What they had done, what they were going to do, what they wanted to do. Their fantasies became more extreme. There was nothing they wouldn't do to increase their own personal pleasure.

Then Marie came up with something new. She wanted to die during orgasm. She wanted him to kill her while she came.

It would be the ultimate act of Masochism. They would experience the orgasmic flash of life and death together. The universe encapsulated in a single moment.

Marie was out of life. When all else failed she had turned to sex to fill the void. But the void was still there. The limits the world had created for her were crushing the life from her, and she didn't want to be confined any longer.

She knew that he had to accept. The seed had been planted. He had to know what it would feel like. Like her he had become an experience junkie. They were far beyond the world of mere morality. Right and wrong were alien concepts, stillborn ideas of a decaying culture. Now all that existed was the two of them. They were all that had ever existed, everything else supported them and their quest for ultimate pleasure, ultimate gratification. They knew they were sensual pioneers, blazing a trail for others to follow.

There were mundane aspects which dimmed, but never broke, the illusion. Marie had to buy a gun. He had to get a Video Camera to record the great event. They had to create their own ritual so the act retained its sense of purpose. As the days raced by their sex became frantic and brutal. They were a Jet, out of control with afterburners full throttle.

Everything else took second place. Jobs and family were jettisoned like ballast. The pleasure had to be given enough room to rush in. It got to the point where he would come just thinking about the act. Marie could sit opposite him and let orgasmic waves of anticipation wash over her.

Then the day arrived. The preparations were over. They went through their ritual. And as they fucked he waited, and resisted, and held back, till they were both coming together. Put the gun to Marie's temple and pulled the trigger.

Marie's body was disposed of in the river, weighed down with the sex toys they had bought and used together. He cleaned the room and buried the gun far out in the wilds of the woods. He reported Marie as a missing person, sat back and waited.

Now the fear of being caught was providing the adrenaline rush. But as the weeks passed these began to fade. He still had the video of their last moments together, but this was not enough to quell the nagging thought he had. What if it could have been better? What if they could have squeezed out another drop of pleasure? What could he have done to intensify the effect?

Two months later, he bought another issue of "Contact".

He tried another fifteen times, but nothing matched the first time. His frustration only strengthened his resolve to keep on trying. It was this frustration which caused the errors on his part. In truth, they were the only reason he was caught. At the trial, which he enjoyed immensely, his defence was simple. He wasn't a predator preying on women, as the prosecution claimed. He was a consumer, only taking advantage of what was being offered to him. He did not stalk, did not coerce, did not physically or mentally abuse anyone, who didn't specifically ask for it first. His lawyers argued that he was not a threat to the population at large. His activities were limited to a very small fringe of sexual experimenters. The women he killed were offering themselves on the altar of extreme experience. Most were already suicidal, depressed or just bored with the idea of living. He claimed they got as much, if not more, out of the killings than he did. When women rejected his suggestions he left them alone. He stressed that he never took anything which he wasn't on offer.

His confession, and his version of events was accepted, and after five years in a mental health facility he was pronounced both sane and sane.

The May, 98 issue of "Contact" carried this message.

"Consumer, Box 26748"

There were two hundred and eighty one replies.