

## S & M For Beginners

Revised from the Velvet Books 1997 Edition

We have had at times to suffer an audience with the nervous novice, the jaded thrill-seeker, and other know-nothings who have entreated us to offer them instruction in 'basic' practices of sadomasochism. I here admit my failure to do so; nor will I be the one to inspire the idea that anyone may blithely engage in that behaviour.

Sadomasochism is not a game. The activities related to it ought never to be divorced from the reality they have symbolically grown out of. Those who would play at S&M are like those who lip-sync to a song: they may briefly involve part of their passionate bodies, but they are not bound to the Art. It is so very like the moderns to seek a pleasure without acknowledging its potential fatal effect. We are not here to entertain the bored jade in need of variation, and we will not dispense with psychology, nor philosophy, nor with the mystic strain which is no mere idyll but the crux of the hard proposition that is sadomasochist sensibility. If we did lend ourselves to a banal 'how-to', offering simple directives, formulae for scenarios, sketches of bondage positions or kinky costuming, we would be as irresponsible as a surgeon handing over his scalpel with scribbled diagram showing where to cut on the dotted line.

Those who would truly be instructed, first look to your own inclination of instinct, to garner in private study this knowledge you think you do not already possess. To delve thus into the interior reaches of true desire I warn you is a constant in the life of We Abnormals. Even well-wrought knowledge of one's proclivities today may become obsolete in first enactment. As Jung put it, "a complete emptying of the unconscious is out of the question, if only because its creative powers are continually producing new formations." The ideal that brought one to perfect pleasure in the private study may in the Cathedral only darken the Altar. As apostates we cannot rest, spend our lives mostly unecstatic, hacking out beloved Approximations from what drifts our way.

Anyone who is set upon enjoying a Master-slave or Mistress-slave relationship must acknowledge they are tapping into a vein of primitive and explosive energy - what Freud termed a "death instinct," a theory much maligned. This instinct we might liken to a rapacious Will-To-Power, that vaunts itself and its needs above those of any other. In the sadomasochist this instinct is linked up with the libido, its energy thereby becoming a rapacious thing, amoral, satanic.

It is usually suppressed by cultural demands, and is the psychic current for creativity when sublimated.

To assume the role of Superior Mistress-Master has far-reaching, transformative, and at times highly disturbing consequences. The modern popularity of sadomasochist iconography in our fin-de-siecle does not signify that it is just another happy facet of sexual expression. S&M sex is not some other flavour, licorice instead of vanilla. It is a symptom of the profound dissociation between the body and what lives sensitively within, requiring love and nurture. Sadomasochism proves that there might be no chasm between the perverse imperatives of a Will-to power, and the capacity to love and be loved - as there ought to be. That there are pleasures to be had in our cold realm does not soften, or justify the reality that we of sadomasochistic bent suffer from a special anaesthesia of feeling. Certainly, when the dead senses are violently reawakened through the needed, severe methods, the triumphal jouissance can be so tempestuous as to be called 'better' than normal sex - hence the touting by some devotees that our pleasure is a superior one. No - it is simply much more difficult to achieve.

Everyone has within them some inclination to either dominate his fellow-man, or to serve him. This does not however mean that 'everyone is a sadomasochist'. One only achieves that distinction when active aggression, or pliant submissiveness, or a combination of the two is necessary to successful sexual release. The door into this pleasure is fantasy, whose material is wrought from trauma.

The spectrum of sadomasochism opens at one end with sexual intercourse, "the normal sex impulse is always bound to a more or less brutal element" as Stekel found - that 'more' in his statement pointing to the closure of the spectrum, towards the psychotic who must mutilate and shed blood to gain orgasm. One may cultivate pleasurable fantasies of subjugating the object of one's desires, or of suffering the control of a fascinating conqueror. But how these fantasies will obtrude into reality as an activity - for in some way they must - is a matter of serious and cautious consideration. Such thoughts and fantasies do not arise without reason - and as they are more or less urgent, they require resolution. They may serve merely to enhance the normal sex act, i.e. loving intercourse between same or opposite sex. Or they may obsess one to the point of nightmare, to feelings of demonic possession, undermining the ego-controls so that the constraint of their being criminal cannot halt an attack upon a child or other truly helpless being.

It is to the work of those who, without injuring others or themselves, can aid in the expression of potentially fatal ideas, that I address myself - and it is their work - my Work - that I here reveal - that middle, creative field of psychodramatic action, as wrought in the Theatrical Dungeon: our modern Purgatory of transgression and trial, judgement and punishment.

Now distinguish between our Know-Nothing applicants: the thrill-seeker who is merely bored with sex as he knows it deserves no further consideration; but the poor nervous novice who is sincerely in need of fulfillment faces a first great difficulty in knowing whom to trust with his terrified confession. He does not know enough to even judge if a Master-Mistress is a true one. Even as We evolve in self-knowledge, this task becomes no easier.

Though in large metropolitan areas one will find social-clubs set up for like-minded perverts to meet, some find such gatherings a special kind of torment. The highly individualized nature of one's S&M complex almost invariably precludes its finding satisfaction in vulgar cocktail-party milieux, open to the public and overrun with exhibitionists, whom are seen to be quite happy there. Not only do I resent being made their voyeur, the debasement inherent in attending such routs is not to be tolerated, as one is set upon by a pack of naked fools or overhung by drunken bullies.

Too, there is the danger of meeting up with your executioner. I was made party once to certain information: that so many dead men, left in bloodied bondage, had last been seen trolling at a notorious gay leather-bar, that Manhattan detectives had to themselves become regulars and cruise its pungent precincts undercover. Masochists are earnestly enjoined to fail to bring home the handsome passing stranger - even should he command you to.

Many male masochists receive their initiation into S&M rite from the hands of the Dominatrix, or professional female Sadist. In this way they may exert some initial control over their experience, which is advisable. They do arrive as strangers at the shores of an unknown. To submit within the confines of an hour's time, with perhaps not fullest submission, enables him to apprise himself of the Mistress' experience and style, and whether she may be relied upon to care about him at all.

If the first scene is satisfactory to both, a relationship can be developed where the limits of the masochist/submissive may be expanded or refined. He may wish to learn what pleases her, too, and mould himself to serve her pleasure. In this earliest relation to the slave - of service - there is no submission for the Mistress, as some may snigger. Without these accommodating trials, grievous psychic error or physical injury could be the result. The Dominatrix as psychologist, therapist, nurse and business-woman will manifest a high level of responsible behaviour towards the slave. She understands the experience he is to have may mark him indelibly, and will not wish to damage further an already volatile, uneasy psyche. Under these restraints, determined to a practical degree by the maintaining of 'the business', she will observe safe and conscientious methods. Though a professional Mistress may not be one's ultimate and loving ideal, she provides a hygienic service and the not-to-be-maligned opportunity to further one's private self-study.

Let us imagine now that you are of a submissive nature, and are involved in a so-called normal relationship. You have not revealed your bent to your chosen partner, but one reason that you became involved at all is that you believe your Beloved to harbour the rare seed of the Mistress-Master.

You have considered a hundred times in a hundred ways how you might draw this relationship into the theatre of your perversity. Your understanding of the mechanistics of sado-masochism now forces you to realize that you must take the initiative if anything is to occur. Much as you may loathe it, you shall one evening take on the role of the dominant! But as your favoured position is the bottom, you will thereafter almost immediately enjoin your lover - to do to you as you have done. Do not overdo this exercise! Terrorizing your partner by strange and insistent demands is not only improperly submissive, but clumsy. By degrees you will discover how much or little of such activities they will tolerate.

If you are fortunate, and certain roles develop between you, still continue with that oscillation of dominant with submissive. For if you rush too eagerly into your submissive role, not to be budged from it, your less knowing partner will not be granted the leisure to peruse the elements of a pleasure you pray they will concatenate.

It is no small matter to introduce the strictures of dominance and submission into a relationship. Though I have been able to train both men and women to be my slaves, I have not had much success in finding one who could grant me the pleasure of deep submission. The level of sophistication, technical and psychic, I have attained through the ardent practice of years does make it close to impossible to meet my match and equal Master-Mistress.

On two occasions only I attempted to seductively train and sensitize my lovers to dominate me as I require. In the exercise of this rare privilege of ruling me, both behaved badly under the supersensual thrall of what they suddenly, strangely considered absolute ownership. (Among professionals, such mania is termed 'New Mistress Syndrome'. It manifests as the inability to stop ruling: constant bossing, bitching, and generally carrying on in ways not in the least charming outside the Theatre.) If I enjoyed a certain physical strenuousness, or some symbolic humiliation in the boudoir, it did NOT follow that verbal abuse, public humiliation or emotional manipulation would be as passionately embraced.

Of course I cannot utterly castigate those two souls I would have made Masters. Based on the evidence of the bedroom, they felt they had the right to torment me anew and interestingly. For some reason, both were entranced by the idea of putting me on some kind of display, to perform for them before a crowd. They did not care that I found this worse than noxious. Their intoxication with the Rule put them out of their heads, and my refusal to submit brought rage

and rejection, which of course failed to seduce me further. Soon was all pleasure destroyed in the sad undoing.

The bleeding over of the physical sadism into an emotional sadism I would say is the greatest argument against the introduction of S&M 'games' into your love-making. It is logical: once your fiancée has seen you creeping, wagging your tail and begging, not to mention barking or worrying your shoe, how will she love you in the same way? If she is not instantly filled with contempt, she will certainly pity you. "Why are you doing that: DO YOU HAVE TO DO THAT?" Well, yes.

If their love is truly unconditional, and they are enough enlightened to hear in your barks the happy catharsis, you may be the lucky dog who wears the gilded leash, never to fear you may be turned outdoors to scabble gutter-wise with the mutts.

There is a cliché that a good Dominant ought to know that other side; and as much as We hate to admit to our past as slaves, We owe much of our present power to some long ago Initiator. Early in my life as a Dominatrix I found that to oscillate between the two roles was essential in order to maintain a certain level of mental stability. The constant of being worshipped does induce a kind of insanity, in which one can believe that one is infallible. To truly be convinced that "Nothing I do is wrong!", as someone once shouted at me in a restaurant, is all the more reason for them to pick up the check. Yes, whatever you say - but pay.

The determination of the Mistress-Master to keep sensitized may be illustrated by Mistress Ava Beaumont, who once offered me much in the way of wise instruction. I then thought her slightly mad to act as she did on this one occasion, but I now comprehend how she required some strict reminders to assure her continuing efficacy as a working Dominatrix with some species of soul.

The place where she and I had our employ was owned by a man who rather voyeuristically enjoyed a certain possession of us, but had enough to occupy himself with in a number of 'straight houses', so that he left us to work alone. But about once a month, he would take us shopping at the warehouse of a large S&M supply. We would run through the place, taking what we wanted in the way of new and advanced torture equipment, amongst other delicate devices. Then, when Ava and I got back to our Dungeon, she would have me try out every instrument upon her. We did not assume dominant or submissive roles, though I felt strangely submissive to her as she insisted I truly hit her with the fresh bullwhip. When I balked at turning on the electro-prod, a mild shocking-device, she glibly urged me, "Don't you want to feel it too?" I was yet inexperienced, and too obsessed with my dominant persona to let it

drop that far, but I admired her willingness to know every sensation that she was to later artfully inflict upon our clients. I was thus introduced to one of the hygienic methods to be employed by the correct sadist.

This is not to say that one must be willing to suffer everything, or anything your slave might endure. Obviously certain refinements of penis-torture cannot be known by the female sex (thus making our own sex our own best tormentor). If we can feel no slight reverberation of their pain within ourselves, we cannot fully control what they will feel. Trust can only grow, and submission be assured if you are able to relent the pain at that instant before they cry for mercy. Eyes will shine with wonder and respect at your sensitive perception ...

The experienced Master-Mistress can often 'read' a slave, determine almost by instinct what he or she may desire. After five years, when my practice was wide and had refined itself, I began to notice not only an increase in this intuition, but an unusual, developing faculty. When the slave knelt before me, in first submission, I not only anticipated what the fantasy would be, but I felt on my own body where he needed the pain. I experienced it as an itching or tingling. More than once, when I developed scenarios that too closely approximated early trauma, I did cause some fear, "Who told you? How did you know ... do you know her?" as I spoke of a relative, ex-lover, even once or twice 'guessing' the woman's name.

Then the 'shadow pains' began: as I struck or tortured, or even spoke a cruel word, I felt on my own body a reverberation of the pain they were feeling. Perhaps the strangest thing in this is that it took five years to happen. This deadness overcome reminds me of a statement taken from one of the Manson women: she told police that when she drove the knife into the body of her victim, she felt as though she were stabbing herself.

I became convinced of my transparency one evening when I had enforced bondage upon an aficionado who was paying for the privilege of staying tied up all night. I had of course taken a great deal of time to insure that no knot was too tight, no angle of limb too awkward to withstand the hours he was to remain restrained. I was however a bit uneasy as I turned out the lights and locked the door. I was sound asleep at seven a.m. when I was awakened by a terrific cramp down the whole left side of my body. I was so numb I could barely walk to the bathroom, and my thoughts seemed centred upon the slave. How was he? I had to go and see, dressed, and achieved the Dungeon door.

As I came in, he called out in distress. As he had slept, he had twisted sideways, and lay with his full weight on his left side. His cramped and painful wrist reflected upon my own weakened hand. This faculty to shadow the pain of others I have used to inform myself of physical

needs, psychic disturbance, and the levels of tolerance for pain, which at times is mysteriously fluxuant. This psychism also manifests as receptive telepathy, so we sometimes know as a certainty when a special slave is to call or appear; these 'psychic sex slaves' being of course amongst our favourite devotees.

The aspirant to a position of Master or Mistress - or the brave adept who would be professional Slave for that matter - should place themselves early on under the rule of an excellent Tutor. You will of course know what your own proclivities are; but more than attaining to your private satisfaction will your task be to investigate and draw out in others whatever their own bent might be. Every client, submissive or dominant, should be treated as a special case, carefully interviewed and handled individually. Unusual physical conditions, unstable psychic states, emotional flaccidity or over-responsiveness will be looked for in the in-depth interview. As their self-acceptance, as well, of their parapathy is great or nil, you will remark on the varieties of private evolution.

There ought never to be, for the conscientious Operator, something known as a 'standard session'. This modern marketing of an essentially psychological service, under wholesale conditions of assumed uniformity is a dangerous abuse in the profession. You may mark the knowing thrill-seeker by his question: "What do you usually do?" One may of course be in a certain mood that day - wishing only for a decent foot-massage, so admitting only that devotee. What we 'usually do' is dominate, but rarely in the same way... the Whim is often the Will.

So ought the aspirant Practitioner to stand first in the way of considering their Ideals: what to them Superiority means; to become familiar with the Ethics of control; to research the literature; to listen to, and learn from the subjects who offer themselves up for study; to practice knots, polish up the diction, attend to wardrobe, and worry less at first about technique than the development of a Correct consciousness.

We will insist again that the nervous novice be cautious in his selection of his Superior. It may seem rude, or ironic to advise the slave to examine Us for defects prior to his kneeling. But the dangers inherent in submission will soon be forgotten in an early, wild subjection. As repression breaks down, over you rushes exhilarated relief. The probability of obsession can be high, and the consequences possibly fatal. When shame comes to you - and it will - let it wash your eyes quite clear. See yourself, do not forget anything, for one of the best effects of your passionate debasement should be an attachment that will ultimately aid you in the acceptance of your desires.

On the other side, the new Mistress-Master cannot expect from their subjects perfect submission at all times. Masochists, submissives and other menials tend to give their all, and immediately, and also to pretend they are. You will hear their anthem-cries of "Anything", which very often means nothing at all. Demand a total submission, and end up with crumbs and a crust. "Anything!" - if it were only so. For that positive, cathartic breakthrough that is the sadomasochist's ecstasy, slave and Superior must each in their own way lose control. The slave does this of course through the door of fantasy, but what We as aspirants to the ultimate Will seek is that one terrifying second, when We know We may truly do ANYTHING We want ... with our willing subjects.

... and as We come to the end of the pain, as We draw the rein in on the tormenting hand, We pause - pause in that exalted instant - yes let us add just one more drop of poison - and in those final cries we know our satisfaction: we have given up control at the height of control - we have let them live.

So we set you free to torture you another day.