Oh, Daddy!

The first black HIVer to win “American Leatherman” wants a word with you.

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How did it feel to win? I was elated. I knew a black man had never won, so I wondered, “Is it possible?” My friends tease me; they’re like, “You’re like Vanessa Williams!” But as soon as I won, I thought, “OK, what do I have to do to live up to it?” I didn’t want to be a titleholder who just wore cute outfits.

How is Blackkat—your leather persona—going to live up to his title?I ran on a sexual-health platform. I want to do safer-sex outreach at leather events [visit www.blackkatsalley.com]. It’s tricky because leather is about liberation, and there’s a fine line between offering a resource and dictating behavior.

You’ve already created one anti-crystal campaign for leathermen.
I was at a meeting about crystal meth, and none of the organizations for black men were there. And I advocate. If I’m in a room, I’m going to advocate for somebody. The groups there told me, “We want to do something.” The rest is history!

How does the leather community deal with HIV? The conversation happens a lot quicker. If you’re already telling somebody,“Hey, I want you to piss in my mouth,” then you’ve gotta tell them “I’m HIV positive!”

So...are you single? I have a leather family. I have a leather daddy, and I have a boy—spelled b-o-i—who is my life partner. And I have three “sons,” who I mentor. Our family is not about sex. We all have responsibilities—but my daddy does spoil me real good.

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