Skin Trade

M.C. Mars wrestles with a troubled lover's tempting invitation

June 1, 2004 By M.C. Mars

This crazy broad Lucia—the type of woman who gets sexier every time I see her—wanted me to fuck her without a condom. Of course, she knew the score. I found her in the Escorts section of the SF Weekly. The first night we met, in a hotel room reeking of cigarettes, I told her I was HIV positive.

Since I got PCP pneumonia two years ago, my two main "affairs" have been with prostitutes. (I'll admit it: HIV has slowed down my game.) The first was a little blond Italian chick named Carla. She worked out at my gym, and one day, she gave my crotch a real nice squeeze. I saw her until she got hitched to a vice-squad cop.

But Lucia was different. She had a playfulness about her. Smiling wickedly, she far outshined her picture. She had a tattoo of the Mexican flag on her neck—colors vivid against her brown skin—and a C-section scar on her voluptuous tummy. That first night, we fucked standing up, then tumbled onto the bed and kissed, tongues flicking. Prostitutes never kiss you full on the mouth—a reminder that this is business.

Over the next few months, however, our kissing turned passionate, and Lucia opened up to me about her wild, damaged past, especially the abuse she'd suffered at the hands of men: an uncle who molested her; four marriages gone bust; her most recent ex, Miguel, who stalks her and has, with a gang of friends, even tortured her.

Then, last November, Lucia called at 2 a.m., begging me to fuck her bareback. "All right," I said casually. "Come over." But my voice sounded like it was coming from another world.

Lucia isn't the first HIV negative woman to suggest barebacking, knowing I'm positive. Why? To be honest, I've never psychoanalyzed it. I just reject it. I've got my own integrity (plus possible reinfection) to worry about. "What comes around goes around," "The Golden Rule," whatever you want to call it—that's what I believe in. Driving a cab for the past 20 years, I've learned you can't hurt people without shit boomeranging back.

Yet I accepted Lucia's proposal—and felt liberated doing it. I may have removed barebacking from my lexicon in 1988, when I was diagnosed, but when Lucia called, hot damn, that whole dimension of sexual feeling came rushing back.

Thirty minutes after I hung up the phone, Lucia was on top of me, trying to force my pecker into her. In a haze, I felt the heat of her pussy, my mind melting like a fragrant candle as I enjoyed the forbidden friction.

And then I pulled her off me.

“Lucia, I can’t do this.”

“Why? Why are you teasing me?” she replied.

“I just can’t.” I reached for a condom.

“No,” she said. “All or nothing.”

“I can’t.” I paced around, my dick now as sleepy as I was. Then she spit the truth.

“Miguel’s been positive for three years! He just told me.”

Suddenly, I understood, whether I wanted to or not.

“And you want to get back at him by having unprotected sex with me?” I could have added, “And the other men who’ve hurt you.” Her silence as she pulled on her clothes and stormed out gave me the answer.

OK, I thought, fine. This hot tamale’s gotta go. Flings with hookers are dangerous, even when they don’t have crazy ex-husbands. Then Lucia called the next day. “It don’t matter,” she said. “Can I come over?” And I heard myself saying, as if from another world, “Yeah—but we gotta be careful.”

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