

Welcome to the first article in Gay Lib history
about the psychology of bondage...

MONDO BONDAGE 1978
Interview with a Top Who Knows the Ropes
Authentic Social Security Number
Blest Be the Tie That Binds
An Ultimate Reality

Written June 1978 from an interview conducted in December 1977,
and published in *Drummer* 24, September, 1978.

This interview with Gary Bratman, the Manhattan founder of S.H.A.V. E. (Shaved Heades and Various Erotica), is the first analytical, and personal, article on bondage in the heady youth of the liberated gay press. It was in *Drummer*, in this article that BDSM first became reflexive and instructional in a mainstream magazine. The “process analysis” approach of “how to” and “why” provided a base for future educational articles about the processes of BDSM, and certainly heralded the initial interest in BDSM workshops. About this time in San Francisco, Cynthia Slater founded the Janus Society which I featured Janus in *Drummer* 27, February 1979. My aim was to present and disseminate BDSM information and theory in this feature article style. This queer theory and practice was my point in inventing in 1979 the magazine titled *Man2Man Quarterly* whose masthead tag line in issue #2 was: “*Man2Man: The Documentary J/Ournal of Homomascularity.*” (The J/O in “J/Ournal” is not a typo.) By *Man2Man Quarterly* #3, the tag line was: “*Man2Man: The Documentary J/Ournal of Popular Homomasculine Culture.*”

This documentary how-to style came of age seven years later when Tony DeBlase purchased *Drummer* in 1986. Tony DeBlase also took that educational point of view into his *DungeonMaster* magazine, which then became *Checkmate* magazine, edited by Harold Cox whose take remains explicitly informational and documentarian. My follow-up article to this “Mondo Bondage”

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piece, “Life Is a Learning to Surrender Control,” appeared later in *Man2Man Quarterly*, July-September, 1981, and is included in this book as an article for “Virtual Drummer,” because in 1981, David Stein in New York endorsed this piece about the psycho-spiritual “transcendessence” of bondage and thought it important enough to be reprinted in the GMSMA Newsletter. Following this vein, one of the informative articles in Mark Thompson’s Jungian anthology of practice and documentation, *Leatherfolk*, 1991, was Joseph Bean’s “The Spritual Dimensions of Bondage.” Joseph Bean was editor of *Drummer*, issues, XXXX DATE.

Farther than I was ever able to push *Drummer*, because of John Embry’s in-house censorship defined by what the printer would print or the distributor would distribute, I was able to push Man2Man which Mark Hemry and I created when we saw where *Drummer* would not, under John Embry, ever go. We printed a wonderful sixteen-page companion article to “Life Is a Learning to Surrender Control.” This was in *Man2Man Quarterly* #7, pages 12-27. It was the main feature: a text with a 22-photo documentary. It’s title was “Other Hands, Other Intentions: Inside a Real 48-Hour Trip in Absolute Bondage.” It was very real. It was a documentary. It reflected the readers. It was written from the bondage bottom’s point of reference, and it was photographed from the bondage Top’s point of view. “Other Hands, Other Intentions” was the first photo essay in BDSM culture to feature catheters, breath control, inflatable hoods, and inflatable mummification. It was developed for *Drummer*, but was published in Man2Man Quarterly.

Having constructed this “Mondo Bondage” interview in San Francisco out of a four-hour telephone conversation with the New York bondage Top, Gary Bratman (who at that time wished to remain anonymous), I had to create images to make it magazine-worthy. Authors who write books with only text have it easy. Authors who write for magazines, especially erotic magazines, are always saddled with the need for relevant illustration, because erotic magazines are driven by the illustrations which most of the time wag the text. In *Drummer*, I always tried to balance text and graphics. In 1978, cameras were still as *verboden* as showing one’s

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face in a magazine was avant garde. I tried to personalize this article with photographs that David Sparrow and I shot of bondage players we knew, as well as with bondage-related pop culture illustrations from my collection, such as the poster from the anal *Edward II*, with a naked male hung upside down.

As I have written many times, for all the sex in the 1970s, very few people were taking pictures or making films or drawing images. Sex was primary. Documentation was way down below even secondary. Also, technology was difficult. The 1970s was the last pre-tech decade of the world before computers with word processing and video cameras with sound. If a photographer shot still photographs, the difficulty—if one did not have a darkroom the way Mapplethorpe was the prince of darkrooms—was getting the photos developed. When I shot photographs of the March on Washington, two days after the US government massacre of students at Kent State, photo labs would not develop the pictures because protest marchers in the photos were carrying signs that read “Fuck Nixon.” I was given the negatives, but had no way to get prints. As Virginia Woolf said about DATE that on that date people changed, so in 1982 did the world change with the advent of video, HIV, and politically-correct fundamentalism.

For all the universal fantasy about bondage—being tied up and forced to have sex—and maybe because of the fantasy of force, bondage has always borne the stigma of coercion and rape. Local and federal laws are very precise about depicting someone tied up in a sexual situation. For this reason, *Drummer* was constrained by law and censorship to rather much present bondage as sculpture, pretending that it was not just one click in the multiple frames of sex.

In this bondage-themed *Drummer* 24, David Sparrow and I shot the nineteen bondage photos for the feature “The Quarters” as well as for “Mondo Bondage,” pages 16-23. My friend, Ed Holder, invited David and me to use his playroom. Ed Holder is featured hooded and in foot bondage I designed in five photographs on page 16, in two photographs on page 19, and in one photograph standing in a duo on page 20. The hooded and hoisted figure on

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pages 17, 18, and 20 is me doing my Hitchcock appearance—out of necessity—because the second model did not show for the shoot. We needed suspension bondage that Ed Holder knew how to do in his playroom where we were shooting.

From my personal collection came the other graphics. I obtained the “cop restraint” photograph, page 21, from the San Francisco Chronicle; the “Mad Doctor” drawing, page 22, from Rex; the illustration of Nancy Grossman’s famous leather sculpture, page 23, from the Las Vegas Sun; the San Francisco Ballet photograph, page 23, from a press kit from the Ballet; and the poster, page 23, for the play *Edward II*, of a naked, booted male hanging upside, from the Theatre Workers group in the Goodman Building, 117 Geary; the bondage trio, page 76, was from I don’t remember where; the bound boy, hanging by his wrists from cellar pipes, page 76, is one of my honeymoon photos which I took of my lover David Sparrow in July 1969; and the hooded and harnessed man, reclining, page 76, is one of my shots of my friend Skip Navarette whom I sometimes hired to review music for *Drummer*. I also included a bondage photo of Richard Locke on page 75 because he put across the versatile idea of “a captured Top.” My point in these collected images in *Drummer*, and so stated in the actual article, was that the subtle depictions of bondage are everywhere in pop culture, because people find bondage endlessly fascinating. In fact, Hollywood movies up through the 1970s, squeezed their knees together everytime the hero or heroine was tied up. See my *Drummer* pieces on bondage-stars, Lex Barker and Steve Reeves. In fact, in 1982—which was the last year of the 1970s—Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger went head-to-head into BDSM. Stallone’s *Rambo: First Blood* raised the bar for muscular male stars tortured in bondage so high that he was only topped by the naked muscular Schwarzenegger crucified nearly naked on the Tree of Woe in *Conan the Barbarian*, written by the most hypermasculine screenwriter ever, John Milius.

Because in the three degrees of separation, everything that rises must converge, on page 23 of “Mondo Bondage,” I promoted two bondage magazines that pre-dated *Drummer* and influenced my

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presentation of bondage: *Action Male* and *Gay Bondage*. Both magazines were created by Master Tau, House of Milan, Los Angeles. What makes the circle complete is that Master Tau was the famous bondage Top, Jim-Ed Thompson, who became editor-in-chief of *Drummer* for awhile in the 1980s. Jim-Ed was a highly functional editor, but his tenure was not as free-range as mine when as editor-in-chief I had unprecedented autonomy. Jim-Ed was also the lover of the popular blond bondage-and-fisting porn star, Chris Burns, whom I shot in a martial arts sex video for Palm Drive Video. Both Thompson and Burns died in the 1990s. Chris Burns, hallucinating, I think, called me toward the end of his life and wanted to come to an outdoor studio I had at the time so I could film him taking drugs and committing suicide with an assortment of dildos, tools, ropes, and nooses. He had that presumption of an hysteric in extremis that other people would aid his escape no matter how illegal or immoral. As we all had to say to so many of the dying who were rightfully hysterical during that horrible period where a hundred men died daily, I tried to dissuade him, calm him down. I tried to let him down easy, but it was the last call he made to me. –JF, October 13, 2000

“I’m not interested,” he says, “in the casual trick who wants to get tied up for three hours, fucked, and then be untied and let go. I do bondage best from referrals. I want to know the man really likes to be tied up in a prolonged scene. The first bondage training session should last a minimum of 36 hours. After all, this is not a game. Bondage is a lifestyle. A day and a half restrained in rope, chains, or mummification is not a major commitment. A full scene should last ten days.”

He’s real. He’s totally real, sitting here in his Los Angeles apartment. He’s got my attention. Now if he can only hold my interest. “You mean then,” I say, “some guys come to you here in LA and spend their entire vacation in bondage?”

“That kind of major scene is not uncommon, but the shorter 36-

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hour trip is a valid training period. In and out of bondage. Say four hours of rigid, total, immobile, bondage, broken with short extreme periods of even more intense and tighter bondage. Good bondage style alternates the basic immobile states with the heavier intense state, and then adds in periods of light restraint with leg irons, wrist cuffs, and a collar. Even some duties to perform. Bondage reinforces the master-slave relativity. When a man is immobile for eight hours, he learns to know his place. Restraining his body binds his mind, locks him into a space of servitude.”

He knots and unknots a long length of rope greyed from much use. His knotting motion is not nervous. He fondles the rope casually, expertly in his big hands. He stands six-feet and weighs well over two hundred. He is blond and heavy with one tattoo on his muscular right forearm. He is a beefed up, matured version of the surfer he once was.

“During a 36-hour scene,” he says, “the bondage master must exercise enough sensitivity to know what *light*, to *medium*, to *severe* restraint his bondage slave can handle.”

“Some guys,” I say, “have some idea how much bondage they can take; maybe restraint as simple as handcuffs; as medium as a spreadeagle stretch, ankles and wrists, standing up or lying down; as severe as a total body-harness suspension, hooded, blindfolded, gagged, and covered with a gas mask.”

He looks at me. “Some men prefer total mummification.” He opens a drawer. “Wrapped completely in Ace bandages or leather or rubber. Tied into a straightjacket, then rolled into wet sheets, and strapped down with leather belts.”

“Tied into a ball, hooded, dropped in a canvas sack, nailed into a wooden crate, buried in a ventilated hole in the cellar.” I touch my crotch. “Is this supposed to be making me hard?”

“That’s one of the seductions of bondage. A man has some idea of how far under he’d like to go; and as I take him there, he finds that he wants to go farther, heavier, than he first believed.”

“Bondage is addictive?”

“What fetish isn’t addictive?”

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“Bondage is a kind of wonderful downer. A relaxant from the world’s fast pace. Bondage is by its nature meditative. Once a guy acquires a taste for restraint, he automatically moves into a higher level of sensual sophistication.”

“Do you mind if I hit my popper?”

“Why not? If a guy needs a joint to calm down on arrival or to swallow something before he arrives, that’s his business. Once I put the first restraint on him, the slave has no movement he can call his own. As his bondage master, I control what goes into his body. I’m no prohibitionist, but I don’t use drugs. I need to be clear enough to monitor my immobile slave’s condition.”

“What if a guy needs poppers for pain?”

“That’s a variation on a theme. Like adding a suffocation trip into the bondage, putting his breathing into bondage in a Gasmask Scene. I can fill the rubber gasmask tube with whatever I want my slave to breathe or rebreathe. Popper. Cigar smoke.”

“Shit!”

“If it’s on the menu.”

“What if a guy chickens out because he’s being coiled and wrapped and bound more completely than he bargained for?”

“Bondage is not necessarily the S&M of sadism and masochism. I subscribe to the definition of S&M as *sensuality* and *mutuality*. I have a printed contract. My bondage bottom signs it before the scene: ‘From such-a-time to such-a-time, so-and-so is the property of so-and-so,’ namely me, ‘who has my uncoerced adult consent to do the following’ and then we spell it all out: thick ropes, thin ropes, heavy chain, dental floss bondage of every single tooth in his head, hand and foot bondage, barbed wire around his chest and dick. Whatever is his fantasy. Whatever is our pleasure.”

“Sounds like a pre-nuptial agreement,” I say. “Very civilized.”

“To my bondage-top mind, the bondage slave presents himself as a gift to be wrapped by the bondage master.” He smiles a smile that makes you want to blow him. “To many men, just beginning bondage, to some intermediate rope-freaks, and even to heavy restraint addicts there comes a surprise.”

“The best surprise is a thrill.”

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“The gift gets a gift.”

“Silver threads? Golden needles? What?” I try not to show how much I appreciate any man who has his trip together not only physically, but also has scoped his fetish out analytically. A lot of guys can get at a man’s body, but lack the “head” to take over his mind.

And isn’t that what guys stand around bars for until last call?

Just waiting, not for the Perfect Body to walk in, but the Perfect combination of Head and Body that can sweep them away, even for just a night toward an unusual destiny.

Just to let go of your head and body.

Just to know a force outside you has taken over the responsibility of your body so totally that he restrains your brains.

Just a need to let go. Just a need to surrender control.

At least to glide into a space of trust for a while.

“Men have a need to give.”

“Especially in a world with a shortage of *takers*, of guys who have a talent to take—in the best sense of the word.”

He knots a perfect noose.

Signs and omens are everywhere.

“Bondage is not just sexual stimulation,” he says. “The bondage top is father, teacher, lover, disciplinarian. He takes control in a world that seems out of control. The slave gives his very being. To be tied up is to be totally helpless.”

A kind of sweet claustrophobia runs down my spine. Would George Plimpton allow himself to get tied up at this point for the sake of journalism?

“To be tied up is to be totally helpless, totally dependent. Lots of adult American males really ought to get themselves into this space: to physically and mentally surrender to somebody. By being a slave, a man finds out that there is a master. By giving up control, he finds a controller. By letting go, he finds ways of hanging on.”

“There are holes in your logic,” I say. “Maybe existential holes.”

“Why?” He loops the rope into knots no sailor ever knew.

“Because I want there to be holes in your logic.”

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“Are you afraid I sound like I want to tie you up.”

“There’s not a body on earth that doesn’t look better when tied into bondage sculpture.”

“The strain on the muscles? The chest heaving deep for breath?”
Am I leading him on?

“You don’t like that?” He caresses the ropes.

“My head is afraid of it.”

“What about your cock?” He smiles. He looks awful good.

“It’s hard.”

“You let your head do all your thinking?”

“I should maybe just follow my cock around?”

“Sometimes,” he says, “maybe you have to trust not your head, but your cock.”

“Maybe I’m just outside your fetish area. Maybe I’m like most guys who are afraid of the sexual activity that seems far out to them. Maybe a guy has to be a natural-born bondage freak.”

“Any man can learn the sensuality of bondage. Just like guys learn the erotic sensuality of their earlobes, assholes, tits. A lot of sexual things, high sexual things, not just garden-variety blowjob sex, are the result of working at something to learn it, to acquire a taste for it.”

“So,” I say, “a guy who never thought much about bondage maybe ought to play out a scene to see how his taste might develop?”

“I look for that kind of guy. A man willing to learn something new. I like to work with, work on, seduce a man into enjoying something he never thought he’d like. Take Lawrence of Arabia getting tied down, whipped, and fucked. That had never happened to Lawrence before. The Arabs thought Lawrence would hate it. Lawrence thought Lawrence would hate it. Lawrence got a surprise. He liked it!”

“What about the American POW’s in Nam? The Viet Cong used heavy and prolonged bondage on a lot of them. What do you think of that situation?”

“I think,” he hesitates. “No. I know that out of all those tied up young fliers, sheer percentages mean that at least a few got off in their heads and their cocks on the bondage despite what their

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straight patriotic programming was.”

“You think a lot of men need restraint, want bondage, and don’t fully realize what it is they’re looking for. You think bondage would directly relieve the tension of the lives they’re living?”

He looks hard at me. “How do you spell real *securing*? Real *security*?” he asks.

“B-o-n-d-a-g-e is the answer you want.”

“Men need to know the limits. Especially in a totally permissive society. Bondage is a very physical means of limiting a man’s activity. Some criminoid types are criminal for a main subconscious reason: deep down they really like, and need, to get handcuffed by a couple Big-Daddy cops who tell them they’ve gone too far and who toss them naked into a dark isolation cell in solitary. “

”Madness takes its toll.”

“Think about it,” he says. “Think about those cops. Anybody who is a cop gets off on it. Cops like bondage. They study restraint techniques. They practice handcuffing each other. They get off on steel-mesh cages. Guys don’t do jobs like that unless they’re getting off on it at some level.”

“I’ve read about military bondage in the Navy recently.” [“The Hog-Tied Prison Rats of Camp Pendleton”]

“Supposedly, at the USMC brig at Camp Pendleton, the guards hogtie the military prisoners, hands behind the back, wrists tied together and pulled down, then tied to the ankles pulled up behind the butt. Then they wrap the prisoner’s head with white adhesive tape. Think about it: a young Marine, stripped to his skivvies and boots, with his head mummified completely except for his nostrils. He can’t see. He can’t yell. He can’t move. He’s left in an isolation box. What’s he gonna do? Go crazy with claustrophobia, or, when he can’t beat it, join it and get off on it? You think those MPs don’t get off on doing that surgical-tape number? Hell, they don’t do what they don’t like. They just wrap their activity in God and Flag and anything goes. Overt sex may be very subliminal, but it’s there just the same.”

“Last summer,” I say, “it wasn’t so subliminal. Seven USMC

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officers were court-martialed for bringing Marine recruits into LA for sex acts and to make sex movies.”

“Not much has changed since I was an MP.”

“So what kind of guy do you prefer to tie up?”

“A decent body. A good head. A willingness to be sensual. An ability to trust. Mostly, I look for a sense of vulnerability.”

“Vulnerability?”

“Vulnerability. That’s what most bondage masters want, because the master is going to make the guy even more vulnerable. Bondage is not just a bedroom game. Bondage is an actualizing of fantasy. Bondage is living a lifestyle. It is living. It is *the* reality for the time the slave is in service. It is symbol of man’s real place in the whole universe.”

“A friend of mine says bondage is unnatural,” I say. “He says movement is the essence of life.”

“A typical American attitude: movement for the sake of moving. Of course, he’s right—if *gross* movements of arms and legs and running around is what he means. Jesus! The religion of the 1970’s is jogging. What’s everybody running to or from? A little more contemplative restraint, a little more bondage, and people might find out a bit more about themselves.”

He wears full leather, and sits like a man who knows his way around certain night-time worlds.

“Your friend is right,” he says, “if he defines life’s essential movement as the flow of blood inside the body, as the run of electrical impulses through the nervous system. Bondage restrains the arms and the legs, slows down a guy’s run-around attitude, so he can tune in to the more subtle of his being.”

“What is this?” I ask. “*Zen and the Art of Bondage Maintenance*?”

“Close to it. The Orientals are masters of bondage.”

“I wouldn’t know,” I lie. I’ve never been a rice queen.”

“Our mutual friend said you spent part of last year in Japan.”

“He spilled the egg rolls, huh?”

“Everything.” He coils the rope around his big hand.

“Everything.” I consider that a minute. “I spent a night at a Samurai House of Bondage outside Tokyo.”

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“Then you know.”

“I just pinned on my Downed-American-Flier fantasy and let the Samurai bondage master do his trip for the assembled group.” I’m gaining his interest by the minute.

“You liked the quality of the Japanese bondage?”

“I liked the exhibitionism of being a six-foot 160-pound American male displayed immobile in a roomful of small Oriental men.” I look at him. I try to read his face. “How’s that, I ask, “for a true confession?”

“Did you cum?”

“What kind of question is that?” I get indignant fast when the answer is *yes*.

“A revealing one. The answer will tell me where you head is.”

“Where my head was—for the appropriate occasion.”

“Did you cum?” Insistence shines in his dark eyes.

“Yes,” I surrender. “I came. Yeah. The bondage master ordered one of the other men, a very young well-muscled Yakuza type...”

“What,” he interrupts, “is a Yakuza?”

“A Yakuza is a member of the Japanese Mafia. The guys have tattoos on both shoulders down past the biceps, down the sides of the torso, and around both thighs. Hot.”

“Very hot.”

“This Yakuza with the ritual tattoos held a vibrator against my fundoshi.”

“Fundoshi?”

“The Japanese underwear, about six feet long, that wraps tight around your crotch like a jockstrap. The bondage master wanted the Yakuza to make me cum.”

“You didn’t want to?”

“The Japanese are very polite. The bondage master would have been insulted if I hadn’t shot.”

“Are you polite enough to allow me to restrain you completely, supposing I wanted to?”

“I came to Los Angeles to run around and see the sights and meet a lot of guys and go to the bars; 36 hours is a long time out of a week’s visit.”

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“I’ll bet you went to run around Tokyo too. If you let me tie you up, you might slow down enough to figure out that a long intense scene with one guy is better than superficial nuptials with 100 guys.”

“Bondage scares some guys. Bondage has a lot of implications: trust, betrayal, gagging, panic. Implications have consequences. Some guys could get scared and freak out. Maybe I’m too claustrophobic to share your trip.”

“I guarantee you’d feel good.”

“What if the building catches fire? What if you have a heart attack?”

“What if the sky falls?” In the corner, a complete suspension harness hangs waiting.

“So I’m playing Devil’s Advocate against bondage. I mean most guys don’t understand it. Explain it if you can. I’m a quick study. I like to think I’m a sensualist. But frankly, if you tied me up—hysteria.”

“Really?”

“Maybe.”

“Hysteria is an honest bondage stage to pass through. When the body is restrained, the mind starts doing a number on itself. That’s why druglessness is really a part of the sensitivity of the prolonged bondage trip. As you pass with full awareness through the bondage steps, you discover that the confining experience becomes an expanding experience. Since the bondage scene, immobile, gagged, and hooded, is essentially an external sense-deprivation trip, I find that not only bondage itself, but the longer bondage trip especially, appeals to guys who are more sensitive and aware of themselves. When you are tied three to four hours in one position, unable to hear, see, speak, or touch, and are touched only to be manipulated into a new position, your mind floats back into an almost womb-remembered state.”

“I’ve read John Lilly’s *Center of the Cyclone* about sensory-deprivation tanks and Ernest Becker’s *Denial of Death* which is about death which is what my doctor told me to avoid at all costs.”

“Maybe you read too much.”

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“They’re both good books. They say almost exactly what you say. They say about life in general what you say about bondage in particular.”

“No shit,” he says.

“There’s a life-lesson to unravel here in bondage.”

I’ll tell you a life lesson. A sperm shot down a narrow penis canal gets caught in an ovum bound to the wall of a womb. Life starts in bondage. We’re locked down in bondage by the gravity of this planet. We’re buried in bondage.”

“If you saw the movie *Coma*,” he continued, “you saw real Medical Bondage. In Washington, D.C. between January 8 and March 20, 1979, an Army mathematician by the name of Stan Wilks spent 72 days in suspended animation. Doctors at George Washington University Hospital intentionally paralyzed him with his consent. They used curare, the drug Brazilian Indians use on blow gun darts. For 72 fucking days, Wilks was totally conscious, but he couldn’t move an eye, blink, utter a single sound, move a muscle, or even breathe without a respirator.”

“Doctors are very kinky,” I say. “If we’re going to play ‘Can You Top This,’ I know of this straight bodybuilder in San Francisco. His father’s a cop. Ever since this kid—his name’s Mike Dayton—was twelve or so, his father’s been coaching his workouts: bodybuilding, tai chi. His dad, the cop, has been hanging him by the neck in the garage since he was a teenager. Mike’s the only guy alive strong enough to break a pair of regulation police handcuffs. A couple summers ago, when he was about 24, Mike was scheduled to be hanged by the neck at the Concord Pavilion. I was going to take the BART train, but Mike wasn’t allowed to be hanged in public because all those Bay Area suburban parents feared their kids might try it.”

“Bondage is as American as stocks in colonial Salem, and as contemporary as flogging teenage delinquents in Delaware. Bondage is necessary for a good whipping.” He pulls out a recent news photo of some foreign cop convicted of taking bribes, stripped, and being flogged by another heavyweight cop in a courtyard. The bondage rack, to hold the man secure for the beating, shows

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frequent use.

In turn, I pull out my scrapbook and show him the following items.

- o Police found a man bound to a tree in the woods early yesterday. He told the officers he had been tied for more than twelve hours. When police attempted to cut the chains, he refused their aid, saying that the men who had bound him were coming back, but had been scared off by the arrival of the squad cars.

- o On Hamstead Heath, outside London, men are frequently found tied to trees or staked out. One man, found crucified by police after midnight, refused their aid and they left him, since they knew the nature of the Heath after dark.

- o In San Francisco, a man was found dead, hogtied on Diamond Heights. The noose around his neck had been pulled tight by the rope around his ankles, *The Chronicle* entitled the article: "A Fondness for Knots Was the Death of Him."

"Everybody," he says, "is into our act. Nancy Grossman gets grants from the National Endowment for the Arts for her leather-bondage sculpture. She deserves it. Hot stuff. I've seen her sculpture used at West Hollywood orgies."

"The San Francisco Ballet," I say, "took bondage out of its closet. In its premier of 'Trilogy,' four male dancers raised a very muscular Gardner Carlson into total bondage suspension. In the finale, Carlson, nearly naked, was discovered slung high in a harness over stage center. The four men, manipulating the ropes tied to his wrist and ankles, jerked him up, down, around, every which way. The audience loved it.

"A reviewer called 'the mood tense and terrifying: man as marionette or a wild prisoner/animal. Caught in this cat's cradle. Carlson is jerked spreadeagle with excruciating force. Then he's spun around up side down.' And on goes the critical bullshit," I say.

"Rona Barret said on Mike or Merv or one of those clone-host talk shows that the reason *Roots* was so popular was that 'America has a love affair with bondage,'" he says.

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The Theater Workers of San Francisco presented Brecht's translation of Marlowe's *Edward II* with an ad of a naked blond man suspended upsidedown with chains." I like that.

"Everybody," he says, "needs such a large bush to beat around. Everybody tries to intellectualize everything. Why can't people just admit that bondage looks good and feels good."

"Tennessee Williams in *Night of the Iguana* has two hot Mexican boys tie the hero into a hammock. He pushes them away but their arms are strong and dark. They bind him tight with rope drawn through the weave of the hammock. He's screaming that 'People just want to see a man in a tied-up situation.'

"The boys wrap another 20 feet of rope around the man lurching in a horizontal stretch between two heavy wooden posts. They stand back and share a cigarette. They stare at their handiwork exhausting himself into a sweat in the hot tropical night. They laugh, turn, and leave him. 'Everybody,' he repeats until his voice is almost gone, 'wants to see a man in a tied up situation.'"

"Bondage is everywhere. The Nick Nolte movie *Who'll Stop the Rain?* has guys handcuffed to toilets and waterheaters and trucks. There used to be, maybe still is, although I haven't seen it for a while, a Canadian rag called *The Justice Weekly*."

"What's best these days, I say, "is the *Rigid Bondage Roster*." It has ads like:

- o Experienced white male Master, 30's, 6', into deep S/M trip; digs strict discipline, whips, heavy extended bondage, immobilization in leather, rubber, steel, boots, hoods, cages; seeks contacts with male slaves who dig being tied up all night.

- o White male, 40, enjoys lengthy bondage, leather, ropes, chains. Wants slave. No sex. No money. Only bondage: to be bound and to bind you.

- o Sam. S. Experienced in heavy bondage, seeks groovy studs to submit to extended periods of bondage and sex. I am fully equipped in rope, leather, steel, and genitoys to keep it all nicely together. There is nothing more frightening than ignorance in action.

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HOW TO LEGALLY QUOTE FROM THIS WORK

“Put your ass where your mouth is,” he says. “You read about bondage. You jerk off in movies to bondage. You talk about bondage. You study bondage. You write about bondage. You’re a bondage top. Maybe. But you’ll be a better bondage top if you, for one good time, were a total bondage bottom.”

“You know what you’re doing,” I say. “Our mutual friend respects you.”

“To quote your quote,” he says, “‘There is nothing more frightening than ignorance in action.’”

“You sure as hell ain’t ignorant.”

“So what do you say?”

I look around his apartment. Everything is in perfect readiness. I might say *yes*. I might say, “Let’s call up one of your regular bottoms and both tie him up. But then again if I only go around once in life...”

“So what do you say?”

“I say: You’re a big six-feet and two hundred pounds. I say: I’m easily seduced by a man who can talk his way into my head. I say: I like a man who tries to top a top. I say: I think we both have a sense of humor about this. I say: the essence of homomutuality is that we’re never into anything too far that we can’t turn back. I say: I notice you’re unplugging my cassette recorder. “

”You sure say a lot,” he says.

“I say: this is the sexy part in the movies where the camera moves away from the couple and focuses on the waves crashing on the shore, on the trees blowing in the wind....”

“And,” he says, “on the train rushing headlong into the dark tunnel.”

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