

“GIVE”

some explorations of submission

by Jeff Mach

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There is that beast again
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warm animal blood

on my lips.

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INTRODUCTION

Hello, and welcome to a bit of my mind.

This work is designed to provide a few explorations for those who like, or perhaps need, the feeling of being possessed by another. This is a complex subject, and GIVE is intended to be a relatively complex work. Please be forewarned about the following:

1. Like many others, I believe that submission is far too individual to nail down with anything resembling universal rules. With that in mind, I won't even attempt to provide a "path" of submission. My intent is rather to provide a few stones; you can pave your own path, or throw them at me, as you so desire.
2. "GIVE" generally takes the form of instructions and thoughts, as if written by a male dominant for his female submissive. She is the "you" addressed here; I certainly do not mean to make any assumptions about the reader's preferences and orientations.

"GIVE" is organized loosely into sections, each of which is a mixture of thoughts, observations, and potential exercises. I've intentionally tried to make this very subjective and personal. My intention is to give you a glimpse at some things that I think about; some parts of GIVE are my deep-rooted beliefs, others are theories or musings-aloud. I show you my thoughts and feelings because I hope they might be interesting, might give you more pieces of your personal puzzle—not because I necessarily expect or want you to agree with me.

To that end, I've specifically added dialogue that reflects conversations that I might get into, and sometimes conversations I've actually heard. I've used a lot of observations that are clearly pulled straight out of my own head. I've played with some dangerous subjects, which should be approached with discretion. And I've taken many approaches that might work well for some and won't even make a pretense of being right for others.

Your Mileage May Vary.

Enough said.

Jeff Mach
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PART I:

“There is that beast again”



Some traditional questions:

Why are we driven to these things?

What is the makeup of our cravings, what are the ingredients, the components?

What do we really need here, and what do we only want?

What is this voice that calls to us in the darkness? How do we answer?

And if we go to meet it, is formal dress required?

BEAST

“Head down”.

“Yes, sir”.

“Why do I want this?”

“Because my eyes shouldn’t meet yours?”

“Why not? And kindly address me properly”.

“Yes, sir. Because eye contact is a show of respect among equals, sir”.

“Are you saying I do not respect you?”

Why do we, as humans, look each other in the eyes?

I think a primary reason is assessment. We read a lot of emotion and thought in the eyes, and on the face in general. Turn your face down, and you can’t know what’s in my mind. I can’t see your eyes, either—but I can pull your face up if I want. You don’t have that option with me.

A second reason is range of vision. We rely on sight, take it for granted. Bow your head, and your world is cut off—all you can see is part of your body, the floor—and perhaps, out of the corner of your eyes, something coming towards you...

Third is basic, and it’s a theme: DOWN.

Low. Beneath. Below.

Under.

Humans denigrate “down”, cross-culturally, cross-historically. It is lesser, “weaker”, tamed. Submissive.

And that’s exactly where you’re being pushed.

Think like an animal. Watch the other primates.

An offered neck—exposed for a fatal bite. It says—“Do not hurt me. I expose myself. I am no threat. I am helpless”.

“I give”.

“Bow your head”.

Find a mirror.

Stand before it, arms at your sides.

Clasp your hands behind your back.

Look yourself in the eyes.

Slowly, bow your head, watching your face disappear from view.

Close your eyes.

You have lost your face. No-one can look in your eyes, as humans do when they communicate. You can't see. The part of you that meets the outside world is pushed away—it's pushed down inside you, signaling your loss of the ability to stand, head erect, under your own command, free.

Think about this.

Stay there a while.

And let yourself feel it.

“Arms behind your back”.

“Get those arms behind your back, because you've lost the right to use them unless I tell you to—and if I want to enter your space with my toys or my body or my presence, I will permit no barriers between you and I”.

“Open!”

This could refer to the legs, or the mouth, depending on the context.

“Your legs are to be apart whenever we are together”.

“Yes, sir”.

“Why?”

“Because I am yours, sir”.

“So?”

“So you should have access to me”.

“Pardon?”

“Sir! Access to me, sir!”

“‘Access.’ That's an interesting way of putting it”.

Access to what?

Access to your *sex*.

I like the Victorian term, because that's exactly what is implied. Sexual withholding is still a sign of “purity” in the vanilla world, the source of many amusing (and sometimes very ugly) expectations and cultural demands. In my games, I'm very aware that sex is still treated as a commodity that women possess, and men strive, often vainly, to acquire from them.

There is power in reversing that situation.

Access. Even if we do not do directly sexual play, the meaning is still there, the vulnerability, the opening, the exposure of tender, very sensitive flesh. And the symbolic

meaning of “open” can go deeper—the process of sharing, telling me your thoughts, making the inside mine to match the outside. Or the other side of the coin—a reminder that much of you is already open to me. I know how to read you, smell your arousal or hunger or fear.

From a normal standing position, spread your legs just a little wider than is natural.
“Wider!”

That’s better. Make it pronounced, visible, painfully obvious. Make it so you can feel a twinge in the muscles of your legs.

Think about how exposed you are in this position, naked or clothed.

Now step it up a notch.

“Open your mouth”.

A children’s game. “Open your mouth and close your eyes, and you will get a big surprise”.

What might go in there?

Perhaps a body part.

Perhaps a gag.

Perhaps an object.

Perhaps a cool drink of water.

Or perhaps a different taste, altogether.

Imagine yourself in a moment, not when any of these things are happening, but when one of them, you do not know which one, is about to.

And you are waiting
waiting
waiting
for it to come.

“Kneel”.



There is no fast way out of a kneel.

I could say many things about a kneel; how, like the bowed head, it is “down”. How a disciplined kneel contains the self-control of excellent posture, which is strangely matched with the helplessness of a rigid, uncomfortable, sometimes hard-to-sustain position...

But my mind always returns to this single fact: it is perhaps as vulnerable a position as is possible without outside restraint...and you are more trapped in it than in any other position I know.

To rise, you must get your feet under you . If your knees are bent, you must straighten them. And to do that from a kneel, you must shift the maximum possible body weight. Worse, the only thing that might speed the position would be leverage from your hands—and in a kneel, your arms can’t reach fast enough to relieve your locked legs.

Granted, if you know how to rise from a kneel, the difference is measured in pieces of a second.

But power exchange is primal.

And to the primal self, fractions of a second are life. Fractions of a second are the distinction between a blow that falls to the side...and one which strikes, head-on.

Your kneel says:

“I am at a disadvantage.

“I do not fight you for dominance.

“You accept my submission.

“And so I show you that I am vulnerable to you.

“So that you see you do not have to hurt me

“To prove your control”.

“Face to the floor!”

From the kneel, put your hands in front of you on the floor, a bit less than an arm’s length away. Put your face on your hands.

Lift your ass. Spread your legs.

Feel like an animal, waiting to be fucked. It is from here that a cock would thrust its deepest, bury itself in you, hands on your hips to control motion, animal, fucked, mounted, taken.

Feel like a worshipper, body down, face down, awed, lost, before a power that owns you.

Feel like an object, frozen to the floor, exposed, faceless, your intimate areas no longer intimate, but displayed, serving the viewing pleasure of others, just a whore in her place.

Feel like a bitch, perfectly placed as the target of a hundred sorts of blows, endless variations of pain and sensation.

Feel the cum on your back the blow on your ass the presence of a master you must not raise eyes to see

Feel like what you are.

FUCKTOY

“And tear our pleasures with rough strife
Throughout the iron gates of life...”

-Andrew Marvell

Not everyone uses our world for what they consider erotic purposes. But it’s a starting point for many of us—due both to popular conception, and the closeness of those two ancient drives, reproduction and dominance/submission. It’s also where most vanilla people touch our world; even vanilla people understand “losing control” for eros.

And for us...

“Always Mine”

I remember this as one of the steps in my own learning. I came to it by instinct; the time simply seemed right.

Whatever stage you are at when you read or re-read this, always try to imagine yourself here:

We have been playing for a bit of time. You are becoming more and more drawn to our...games. So far, they have been restricted only to specific times, specific scenes—and so far, with me or with others, that is all you have known.

And then I whisper to you:

“You are always mine.

“You are mine to take at will”.

I have said this to you before, in scene, as part of the moment.

But now I add something:

“Tomorrow, you will have for me a password, and a safeword that goes with it.

“At any time, in any place, when I say your password—you are mine. Just as you are now. But this time...unplanned, unexpected, not known to you in advance.

“If circumstances beyond control require, use the safeword and apologize.

“If you have commitments, tell me—addressing me properly—what they are.

“Because otherwise, you cannot be sure when I might choose to release you.

“You will fuck me.

“You will be touched by me.

“You will take anything that I feel like giving you.

“You will be mine.

“Is that clear?”

“Any time”.

“Disregarding place or situation”.

“Mine”.

“Always mine”.

COINS

Here is a little game about control, about desire, about frustration and satiation.

Set aside two hours for me. Be sure you have a timer, or a reliable clock; be sure you won't be disturbed. You will need a pair of coins, preferably quarters.

Begin to masturbate. Use whatever stimulation you prefer; my only rule is that you never forget that you are doing this for me...not you.

Every twenty minutes, flip both coins.

If they are both heads, you may come.

Do not even consider coming otherwise, during this time.

When the time is over, reflect on what you have just done, what it felt like, and why.

You are forbidden orgasm for two hours following this exercise.

Found objects

I remember what I think of as my first scene...

It was with Renee, who was trapped in a relationship with a very, very possessive boy. She had escaped for the weekend because she'd told him she needed to leave for a few days... or else forever.

For two days, we had great sex.

But on the last night...

She was...the first person I had spanked, to make it simple. We knew about a mutual interest in bondage, and were, that night, watching "Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!" Perhaps it's a good film, but it wasn't what we had wanted, and I was growing frustrated with it. I think I said to myself, "That isn't what bondage is about!"

And...instinct?...took over. I grabbed my handcuffs, and my little toy riding crop, and a spare valise I had, and as she watched the movie, I ran about the house, picking up whatever objects I found...each one beckoning to me, speaking plainly of sensual uses.

The entire world was an erotic shop. It's probably a good thing the valise wasn't *too* large, or that night might never have found an ending...

I might describe that scene another time. I might not. But it was the beginning of my path. And I haven't forgotten it.

Use whatever triggers make you feel sensual; a bath, music, food, certain thoughts, pictures, what-have-you; not aroused, specifically, but aware of your body. Get yourself into that frame of mind.

This is an exercise in sensations.

Go and gather objects—anything that might brush or rub or burn or cool or wet or blow air on or heat or scratch or otherwise cause tingles in your skin, without risk of harm.

Take some time.

Disrobe.

Begin trying your newfound toys against your skin...both the traditionally erogenous areas, and more mundane spaces. Try your hot spots, try your neutral areas. Open your eyes, close your eyes, be fast, be slow, alternate, *feel*.

This is an exercise in using your body as an instrument of reception. It's a piece of the sweet, perpetual rediscovery of the potential of your flesh. You might call this another opening—an opening of your body and mind to more stimulus, making you a more knowledgeable, more prepared receptacle for pain and pleasure and surprise.

Adjust these things to your level of ability.

If this exercise is difficult, take it slow and try more conventional objects, like ice and warm cloth.

If this is familiar or easy, challenge yourself.

girl in the box

Just a box, in a darkened room. It is not high, not as tall as you crouch. It is not long, no longer than your body when on all fours, uncomfortably compressed. It is barely as wide as your hips and has a hole in the front and a hole in back. It is nailed shut and you are bound inside, your mouth open—it had better stay open—against the first hole; your pussy, concave, sweet, pressed up against the second. If there is ever a moment when your holes do not line up easily with the holes of the box, you will fucking learn lessons in regret.

On all fours. Imitate the posture of the girl in the box.

Make yourself uncomfortable. You are a hole, to be used; you should not expect comfort. Visualize the anonymous patrons of my box, my friends, my paying customers, people on the street with whom I choose to share my property, to demonstrate that it is mine. Visualize the penetration. Try hard to find a pleasure spot in your mind, to enjoy this, and the moment you do, STOP.

PREY

I remember the moment when it no longer mattered that the cross was handmade and plastic, clumsily chained to a towel rack. When it was not important that you were standing on a little dorm chair, amidst a clutter of books and papers and the tangible evidence of all the things I needed to do between that night and tomorrow. I remember drawing the knife from my valise, its blade longer than the span of my hand. I remember the way your eyes followed it as I lifted the thing in my hands, and the sound sucked from your mouth as I brought it, slowly, within a breath of your eye...

“Sick”

Let’s play ghoul for a little while.

What is the worst thing you want to have happen to you?

“Want”, of course, is a flexible term. Our desires tend to be a little blacker than our realities, and for many, “liking it rough” grows into a spanking, which makes an easy transition to paddling...having bought one toy, you buy another, and begin to unlock flogging...as flogging swells, hungrily, greedily, into a leather hood, a long knife, and a quiet, steady flame...

I started with newspaper accounts of sexual assaults. It was that age-old combination, so well known to us—repulsion, and fascination.

My first submissive was a rape survivor—from not long before she and I met. I’d like to say I helped her recover—but I know she did that on her own, and I wasn’t able to help her nearly as much as I wished I could. I gained a little empathy, a small understanding that survival. Sometimes, during what I do, I push consent limits. Sometimes I push them hard.

The only thought I know which could make me consider suicide is the idea of misjudging the line between consent and—otherwise.

And yet I fantasize, I am turned on by these things, still. By games too dangerous for me to consider in life. By victim and prey, by blackmail, the mind of a sociopath, the spectre of the S.S...

Did you, like me, have a time when you wanted “bad” things—when you did not know this place, and looked for it in the aberrations of the outside world?

Do you think of things no-one has dared do to you—that you might never try—perhaps that you never could try, because they cripple or kill or strip away any hint of the outside world—perhaps they are not possible at all?

Look around. Search books, associates, newspapers, other sources. Look for something that frightens and draws you. Find me what the pulp novels call “your deepest, darkest fantasies”.

Then dig deep into your head.
And find me something worse.

Dread

Making you afraid is not pleasant or thrilling, really.

No. The proper word is “delicious”.

So many flavors...so many, many flavors.

There is *realization*—a sudden moment when it clicks in your mind that something nasty is going to happen to you, has already come so close to happening that, as you are finishing that thought—

There is *waiting*—the simple knowledge alone that you have something to fear, something coming soon, too soon and not soon enough—

There is *force*—a space of time when I show you a side of me that was born to hurt and violate you.

There are options, variations, an orchestra of beautiful games.

We’re not necessarily going to play any right now.

You’re just going to sit down for a moment, and close your eyes. Think about things we might do. Run over your fears in your mind, as if you were groping for something you could not see, trying to feel its texture, its ridges and curves and sides, knowing you might cut yourself; think of things you’ve read, things you remember; think about “Sick”, and imagine being awakened, suddenly in the night, by someone with exactly *that* dark desire...



“Pushing social limits”

Probably the best description I’ve heard of humiliation play is that it “pushes social limits”. Such a clinical phrase, that is, descriptive and academic and safe.

So very different from the application.

What are your “soft” social limits?

There are things you can do in public, easily and without fear.

There are things whose mention can send you into a bad place in your head, afraid or furious or worse.

And there is my home, right in between.

Where are you vulnerable...but not *too* vulnerable to touch? Places first. List five of them. A public park? A church? A restaurant? The home of a friend or ex-lover? Of course, vulnerability depends on visibility of activities...and the nature of said games. But there are likely to be particular places where the practice of our secret life, hidden or visible, sends a tremor through your gut, makes you bite your lip, or swallow hard.

Which viewers make you sweat? Police? Clergy? Parents? Teachers? Peers? Five, again.

Now activities. Secret games. Misdirections, things which look innocent to outsiders, but bite you inside. Blunt, open play, where your subservience is visible. Draw on life, on fantasies, on things you've read or seen or thought about.

Now catalog your emotions. Mix and match combinations, bring them together in your mind.

What do you feel?

Fear?

Anger?

Desire?

Shame?

A little bit of them all?

Harm's way

Tonight, I am going to hurt you.

I am not punishing you. I am not playing with you.

I am going to take the knowledge that you have given to me, your fears, your discomforts, the things that make you wish you could escape from your head and body, and use it. I will not break you. I will not betray your trust. But I will hurt you.

Because I care enough to take that power from you.

I care enough to make you brave for me.

I am strong enough to give you something you do not want, because it is a part of what you need.

And I am going to exercise my right to give you pain.

GHOST

...and then it's all gone

That other world slips away

And I have come home.

“Let go!”

Mark off a little space, just big enough to hold your body in a kneel. Give it a roof in your mind, make it a little box, perhaps a cage. Don't go in.

That space belongs to me. When you enter it, you may bring nothing with you.

Stress eats at your vitality, tears at your nerves, makes you hard when I want you to yield and weak when I need you strong.

Leave it outside.

Fears and worries from your daily life are valid, important. But right now, they are inappropriate.

Leave them outside.

Hatred, anger, pain. Release them.

Make it practical. You don't have to be perfect. And you don't need surroundings of total serenity. Take distractions, smile at them if you can, shake them off, make them a part of the strength of this place. Not always possible. Do your best. Don't worry.

Bow your head.

Know that you're entering a different space, a place where you serve. Everything is secondary to that.

Come in.

Breathe.

You're mine.

Let go of everything else.

You're mine.

Anything else—forget it.

Don't think about it.

You don't need it right now.

Let go.

Focus

An old exercise, borrowed.

Light a candle. Focus on the flame.

Stay there. Keep your mind there, keep your eyes there. Keep your attention there, held in one place.

Focus is more than patience, better than patience. Like patience, it's the power of waiting, using control to reach the right moments. But focus is active. Focus is intense. If the candle were to change, alter itself, you'd know the instant it happened. You'd react. You're awake. Concentrating.

See into the flame, separate it into colors. Make the experience as rich as possible, find a depth and meaning, invent one if you wish. Don't lose your concept. Pay attention to the flame. But expand.

Push everything else aside. If you need a secondary focus, concentrate on breathing, slow.

Stay with the flame. If you're having trouble, relax, try to push the trouble to the back of your head, if you can't get rid of it. Don't think too much about the trouble focusing, just look at the flame.

When you can't concentrate well, or you feel you've done enough for now, blow out the candle. Focus, just for a moment, on the last puff of smoke.

Control

“Somehow, it feels more important than being a simple sex slave. The mindless and mannerless can be gagged and restrained. How much more elegant to be a slave who can restrain herself mentally for her master”.

-Quinn

Submissives who lack self-control are energy vampires.

They're tiring. They're stressful. They're not worth my time.

I'm not talking about submissives who fight or disobey. I'm not talking about those who are micromanaged because they crave it. I'm talking about those who must be micromanaged because they're willing to give me nothing.

When I was in college, I visited a certain s/m club. We were a group of four: myself, another dominant, and two submissive women. Now at this club, most people were more than twice our age, and the largest group consisted of older, theoretically-submissive men. The women in our group were in their early 20s, and happened to be very physically attractive.

Almost as soon as we entered we acquired an entourage of horny men, crawling after us the whole evening, begging to touch my date (“No”) and masturbating near our playspaces.

This was not, in my eyes, a submission.

Lack of self-control can take many forms. Inability to focus, for one. Inability to handle minor discomfort or simple denials. Inability to speak or act properly.

Understand, fighting, arguing, intentional disobedience, etc. for the sake of testing one's dominant—these are, to me, normal and healthy. But I'm not some kind of masturbation device, and I really don't have the desire to be treated that way. I may fulfill your fantasies, but I'll do that at my discretion, in my own way, depending on our negotiations and relationship. I have my own desires and needs, and failing to acknowledge them isn't simply bad submission; it's disrespect for me as a human being.

If you don't care enough to control yourself, you surely can't expect me to control you.

Gone

Today, you are a ghost.

Lie down in darkness, close your eyes, let go. Pretend the breathing you feel is someone else's breath, the heartbeat you hear is disconnected from your body. Float in your mind, float and let go. You can't feel your hands, your mouth, your skin. Let go.

You've lost touch with the life you knew, it's ephemeral, translucent, intangible. Half-real, half-remembered, fragments of an uneasy sleep.

Find something you love to taste and hold it on your tongue. Taste it with need, as if you were going to die in a moment, this is the last sensation you are allowed. Taste it with urgency.

You glow, you shine, you've broken out of a human body. This body is like your old one, but more vivid; every movement you make now recalls layers and layers of memory and desire.

Look at your hand. Curl fingers, make them into slow shapes, move your arm. Become aware of the way your body moves, become intimate with the connection between body and mind, the complexity of a single motion.

It hurt, becoming a ghost, and then you felt a void for a little while, where there was nothing, a starving blankness. Now your hunger is past reason, past control, as you throw off the taste of that cold place.

*Find a physical pleasure, resting, coolth, masturbation, music, or what-have-you. Enter into it as if nothing else existed. Race towards it, feel it slow, let it swell into you—whatever you most need to do to absorb this sensation, **do it**.*

Little spirit—
I'm coming to chase you down.

PART II

“Such sweet blood”

For years, I was fascinated by, but never could grasp, play that had, as its primary expression, neither orgasms nor bruises.

Eventually, I came to see power exchange as a drive in and of itself. It was a totally freeing concept for me, which helped me understand a lot about my own desires...and some things I'd already done.

And that's when I became truly intrigued by submission for the sake of service, by those who had the strange and captivating desire to please.

GIFT



“Today, you will give something to me.

“A small thing, of your choice.

“A pleasure.

“Take a single moment from today.

“A break from work. A piece of meal or snack. A song you like to hear.

“Something you enjoy.

“Today, just once, skip it.

“Turn away from it; have the choice of enjoying it, and leave it alone.

“Not as a punishment.

“As a gift.

“You are giving up a little pleasure for me.

“You are saying, `My Lord, I would rather please you than enjoy

this moment.

`I want to suffer, today, just a little bit.

`For you, my Lord.

`For you.’”

Theft

We like to speak of submission as a gift, we use phrases like, “The most precious gift, the gift of yourself”.

And in many ways, this is true.

But in our hurry to see the consent, the willingness behind the bond—we insult you. And we insult me.

Your submission is given.

But so, too, is it stolen.

So, too, is it taken.

And so, too—most of all—it is **won**.

Stolen—as I learn more about you, learn how you react to me, learn what I want to know, push your buttons, find cracks in your armour. I find what makes you tick and use it to steal you away from belonging to yourself...and into belonging to me.

Taken—as I push you, as I demand more of you, as I extend my dominance by putting you in situations where you *must* submit, or back down...when my instincts tell me, this time, though you don't know it yet, you *will* submit. You'll give me what I want to take from you.

Won. As I prove myself to be someone you can trust...someone who wants to share this world with you, someone who can give you what you need...and pull from you what you need to lose.

Keep me a journal.

Write in it every day. Give me those moments of your day; give to me a piece of your time.

Every day, take a little while to think about your submission. Never be afraid to question what we do. Never be afraid that you will write something “wrong”.

Your time is your gift, and it is my due.

This journal is my gift to you, in return.

Whose?

Kneel.

Face to the floor.

Stay there.

Balance your ass on your heels.

Turn your face to the right, so that your left cheek kisses the floor.

Now pull your hands out from under your face, and clasp them behind your back.

Stay there.

To whom does this body belong?

Not you.

It's mine.

Bring your hands to the blades of your feet, right hand to right foot, left to left.

Touch them with your fingers, feel the skin.

Think about how these things are mine.

Trace a path over the body. Go slow, be steady. If touching a certain place excites you, think about how, were it your own body, you might linger. But it is not, and you will not.

Trace legs, ass, pussy, clit, asshole, thigh, stomach, breasts, neck, jawline, cheek, upper back, spine. Return arms to their previous place. Lock them there, as is proper.

The first time you do this, stop there.

The second time, and at your will afterward, continue thus:

Stand up—bring your hands to the floor on either side of you, raise your head, push up with your arms, unbend your knees.

Spread your legs.

Straighten your head, face forward.

Push your arms out, straight, to either side, fingers together, palms down.

Close your eyes. Don't move.

Begin tracing your body again, using your mind and not your fingers. Try to feel the touch of your mind on each part of your body.

Go slow.

And think:

`This is not mine`.

And think:

`This is yours, sir.'

Breathe

Breath fills, suffuses, infuses.

It changes with our emotions, our exertions, our state of wake or sleep.

Breath can be used to change moods, give us strength, help us drowse.

Breath is powerful.

Take a deep breath. Feel it, feel it lift your shoulders, watch it swell against your chest, let it swell your belly a bit as well.

Slowly, let the air out of your body. Try to take at least twelve seconds exhaling.

Hold it, the emptiness.

Slowly inhale, at least seven seconds.

I want you to do this for me a few more times. As you do so, think of me. Think of how this, too, is an offering to me. Try to feel the air as a part of me, filling you, subsiding, filling you, subsiding.

Disrobe

Isn't "disrobe" a lovely word?

Strip for me.

Do not be fast, shedding your clothes without thought. Do not be slow, like a stripper.

Be *aware*.

Removing clothes, putting them on—this is something we do every day. It is automatic.

Today, don't let it be.

It's not your nakedness I want. Let vanilla boys hold their breath for that. I enjoy your nakedness--but fully clothed, you are more naked before me than any erotic dancer they might hope to purchase.

Today, as you take off each piece of clothing and set it aside, reflect that you are doing so because you have been told to.

Think about how your nakedness belongs to someone else. Think about how clothes serve as a buffer, as a requirement for public life, as a barrier to sex.

Think about how that barrier does not exist for me. Think about how, when we are in private, the difference between you, clothed, and you, naked, is a single word from me.

Think about how, in essence, you are always naked to me.

Always.

PRIZE

"You are too good to me, pet".

"I know, sir. But I'll come to my senses eventually".

Beautiful

Today, be beautiful for me.

Don't let this be too easy or too hard. If you already find yourself beautiful, today you must excel. If you do not believe yourself beautiful, take today as a journey, not an exercise in frustration.

Do you like the way you take care of your body? Take care of it today with pride, knowing my pleasure in it. Do you feel otherwise? Do a few things different, watch your eating and your habits and activities. Don't try to be perfect, don't try, within the scope of this exercise, to begin a new lifestyle. Pamper your body today, just today, for me.

Do you have clothing that brings you pleasure? Wear it today. Carry yourself well, not stiff and unnatural, but remembering that your motions today are for me. You may be graceful or not; on this day, it doesn't matter. Walk with an inner strength, hold your head high, express your pride in being mine.

When you bathe, when you comb your hair or when your hand brushes against your skin, whenever you touch your body, know that your body gives me pleasure. Know that your flesh is lovely in my sight, sweet to my touch and taste.

Be beautiful today.

"What did you bring me?"

The outside world will tell you, if asked, what slaves bring masters: their bodies. Maddened by lust, you allow the most unspeakable torments and degradations, helpless, bending to my every whim.

Apparently, you're supposed to be some sort of anatomically correct blow-up doll, accessorized with manacles and bruise marks.

Is that what you are?

No?

Then what have you brought me to prove otherwise?

Have you brought me a will? Can I ask you to do things that are difficult and challenging, and expect them to be done? Have you come to enhance my strength and knowledge and life, or to drain those things from me? If we are emotionally joined, can you comfort me if I am hurt or afraid? Or do you demand from me a constant appearance of invulnerability, some myth that because I'm your dominant, I'm infallible?

Have you brought me a mind, the ability to make choices and judge circumstances? If I require a service from you, are you helpless if I do not provide every step? (We may or may not *prefer* that I do so, but that is a different matter.) If I want to know more of your thoughts, your feelings, your reactions, are you prepared to analyze them for me? If I do something stupid, will you be able to correct me? If I suggest something unwise, might you be able to point it out to me?

Have you come to be my partner? Our partnership may take a thousand forms, but everything we create is a mutual process. What skills do you bring? What knowledge? What are you prepared to teach me? Are you prepared to offer me some patience, allow me some of the imperfections of a human being?

Have you come here with only your fantasies about what I will do with you?

Or have you come for the much more difficult, far more powerful realities of *what you and I could be*?

"Everything"

"Why did you stop?"

"Sir?"

"You were singing. Why did you stop?"

"I was just singing to myself, sir".

"Well, go on, I'd like to hear it".

"No, sir, I can't sing, I just sing to myself sometimes. I'm sorry, I won't do it again".

"But I like it. I think you have a really pretty voice. Sing for me".

"No, sir, really, I can't".

"Excuse me?"

Many submissives say that they want to give "everything".

Usually, they also seem to feel that "everything" consists almost exclusively of things they don't have. They want to give me an inhuman grace, an unquestioning obedience, an infinite knowledge of how to please me. In the meantime, they somehow feel that aspects of their actual lives and selves are boring or silly. Apparently, I'm not supposed to like who and what they are—I'm only supposed to like what they will be, some day, when they stop being so damn human.

You may have much more to give me than you would think. Little things that you do, little skills that you have, little quirks of your own...offer them to me. Yes, I may not love absolutely everything, but I will be proud of you for showing me that side of yourself. It's difficult, it makes us vulnerable, to show off our humanities instead of our supposed perfections. It is a powerful act of trust.

My submissives will find me singing, sometimes badly, sometimes in public. I'll tell truly poor jokes. I wear funny clothing sometimes.

Why? Because I'm secure in my dominance. I am just as dominant wearing fuzzy bunny slippers and a comfy bathrobe, carrying a cup of tea, as I would be in a leather jacket and pants, carrying my singletail. And so I intend to be comfortable, to do what I like and be who I am.

If I don't want you to do certain things, rest assured, I'll tell you.

But if you truly want to give yourself to me—then give me yourself...not some bondage novel's conception of what you should be.

INTERLUDE: "A nature of submission"

I. Needs

I see submission as a drive, like the drive to eat or sleep. Yes, I believe submissives tend to gain fulfillment through pleasing. But I think it goes deeper; I also believe they have a restless energy inside them, which seeks use, needs an outlet. And like the sex drive, with which it's often confused, the submissive drive is that most frustrating of needs: a passion which can only really be satisfied through contact with others.

To explore the needs, the demands of that drive, I'd like to discuss the words we use to describe some of our socializations. In my experience:

One falls in love.

One has sex.

And one is trained to submit.

Here is what that implies to me.

From the sound of it, love isn't voluntary, but it's internal. "Falling" only requires one person; that person may be helpless, but she's capable of flying solo (or plummeting solo, to continue the metaphor; but I digress.)

In contrast, the individual is seen as having much more power over his/her sex life. Hell, we possess sex, we own it, right? We *have* sex, we don't *make* sex.

But submission, by this criteria, is something that has to come from the outside. It's implied that someone else has to be there to fulfill that need. And then the words go further. "Training" is a process of being taught something in such a way that doing it become reflex, involuntary. And it often implies a harsh process; one trains a combat soldier, a disciplined athlete, a dog.

II. Dominance

This leads to my personal definition of dominance: "Taking from you that which you need to give, but without me, cannot".

Because you can't simply *give* me an offering of yourself, and find you've submitted. First, I must accept it. And I, personally, might do so. Transfer of power has always made sense to me, even in its crudest forms—when I first heard the phrase "sex slave", at around the age of nine, it made perfect sense; who wouldn't want a sex slave, who'd do everything he wanted?

Who wouldn't want one? Many people. Sex slaves themselves, for one, excepting those who switch. People who believe that what we do is "wrong", for another. The significant others of altogether too many people, it seems. Many people, confronted with the possibility of having

a “sex slave”, can’t or won’t handle it...and they certainly can’t handle someone who is a slave flat-out, outside the bedroom.

Can they learn to want it? Do they secretly want it, and have repressed the desire? I don’t know. But right now, it’s a simple fact: I am willing to accept submission. And I’m in a distinct minority.

There is a second matter: I must know what to do with that submission. I’m not speaking simply of learning skills and techniques. I’ve seen plenty of people who have technique and opportunity, but not dominance. I remember, for example, this conversation, overheard near the grease trucks at my college:

“Yeah, last night, I didn’t just fuck Vanessa. I got some rope and I tied her up so she couldn’t move a muscle”.

“Yeah? What’d you do then?”

“I fucked her”.

Had my fat cat with ketchup not arrived at that very moment, I probably have turned to him and said, “That’s *all*?” I mean, I have nothing against fucking, but good God, what a lost opportunity. I waited, vainly, for him to brag about the tortures, torments, and acts of debauchery which followed, but his only comment on the matter was a shrug and, “It was okay.”

There’s nothing wrong with that, I guess.

But it’s completely foreign to my world. To borrow a metaphor from Daniel Pinkwater, it’s like having a chance to drive a Lotus Esprit, coming back, and saying, “That car had a pretty good radio.”

The third piece? Courage. It is no easy thing to raise your hand to another, especially if you would rather kill yourself than do her any harm.

I can give you the core of my art in a word:

Push.

III. Give!



And I feel there is a piece of you which doesn’t belong to you, and never did. It may be integral to you. But it’s also alien to you. You may poke at it with thoughts and feelings and experiences, you may even take hold of that same piece when you find it in others. But your own piece of it, you cannot touch. It is crosslinked, perhaps, with the instincts of submission—fear and hunger and fight-or-flight. It manifests, when not controlled, in dissatisfaction, incompleteness, emptiness. Need. And I have to reverse the world to get it from you. I have to frighten you, intimidate and scare and shake and paralyze you into giving it to me. I have to beat and push and force you to give me what you want to give me.

I have to stun and shock and system-overload you.
And most of all, I have to earn your trust.

It's easy for a psychopath to do those things, and make you hate it.
My art is that, in my hands, you accept those things. And, whether outwardly or not, you smile.

If I go past your consent, I become psychotic.
If I do only what you want, I have no control.

So I push you.

"You know you want it, bitch".
"You simply didn't *know* that you knew. Until now."
"You're welcome."

CONQUEST

give
me
what
is
mine.

"She almost cries"

*I can conceive, in my heart of hearts, a moment where my slave so desires to give me everything that **she needs me to take her life.***

I can feel my vision pull away, until I can't even see her, I can only know her bowed head, sense her eyes, blindfolded, still seeing me. She is not pleading, not crying out, not speaking, but her skin whispers to me, her slow, deep breathing is a language of urgency. The connection between she and I is pitiless, clear and certain and distant and, at the same time, part of our flesh. Her sweat is on my body and in my bloodstream and her neck fits perfectly into my hands.

My hands are all of me, and they are gentle and unstoppable and harder than stone and they are taking the life from her. And she is not screaming and her body ebbs as if into sleep, jerking once, ebbing, already becoming stiff, yet it seems her whole skin is surrounding me, she is holding me, she is needing me.

And it is just the ridge of my hand, the webbing of flesh between my first finger and thumb tight and taut against her throat and my hands are closing and as she goes unconscious in my hands she knows that I am going to finish it.

*And when she wakes,
she almost cries—*

because I did not.

Silencings

At the time of this writing, I've used six methods of denying my partners speech. I've used a thorough gag once or twice. My partners are often very eloquent in their speech, and it has pleased me to silence it, in an ugly manner, with brute force. I've gagged some with their undergarments, in games of sex and humiliation. I've used the words, "Be silent". And that obedience is sweet. I've used my hand, and the force of my body. And that violence is sweet.

And, sometimes, I've used no implement, no obstruction, no command. I've taken them to a place, inside, where they have no more words. And that is best of all.

Knife and eye

When I held the knife, a few hairs from her pupil, I know she wanted to tremble, but she couldn't; she was locked in place. All she could see was the knife, and all she could do was hold her eyes on the knife...

Hands can do so many more horrible things than knives. At least, under the right circumstances, my hand does. And my partner knew it well, that night.

But the knife locked her in place.

Why? My balance is good, my arms are trained; there was less chance that the knife would slip than there was, say, that she'd be hit by one of the town's many reckless drivers, later on that night. We had negotiated no blood. She certainly had to know that, pushing limits or not, her eye was safe. The knife was an empty threat.

But it wasn't an empty threat. Because at that moment, she was *mine*.

And there was no place where her mind could go to remember her safety. She was in too deep. She told me, later, the knife had filled up her world, and all she could do was know its nature. And her nature.

Knives *cut*. Knives *draw blood*. Knives *kill*. Knives *maim*.

And she was helpless. Her body was bound. She knew I was stronger and faster than she, could cover her mouth with my hand. She knew I could punish her harshly, and she knew I *would* do so, if given reason.

But the undercurrent, the throbbing knowledge behind her physical helplessness was this:

Whatever I gave, she knew she would take it.
She knew she would thank me for it.
And she would kiss me. And she would want to give more of herself to me. And she would come back.
She had no choice.

She knew she was *mine*.

A measurement

Trust is not how close I can bring the knife to your eye.

Trust is the part of you that believes I might not stop the knife...and, because of that belief, wants more than ever to be mine.

PART III

“And you become”

This is a short section touching, just a bit, on the power of power exchange.

Some people find BDSM to be a permission; it allows them to act in ways that are ordinarily prohibited, gives them a chance to break out of some social barriers. I respect that. But I can't empathize with it. As long as I can remember, I've had a sort of blind lack of inhibition. It's not that I feel free from the constraints of social mores; rather, I seem to lack some basic ability to notice that many of them exist.

So when I first started understanding `power exchange', I found that my desires were very raw; I wanted the energy, direct from its source. I wanted to harness that force and use it in my daily life. Sometimes I succeeded, sometimes I didn't. Such is life!

ALTER EGO

“Well, my friend, what shall we be? Schoolmaster and pupil? Terrorist and captive? Lost child and abusive captor?”

“My Lord, if it please you, may we be you and I tonight?”

“Ah. You want to be the *scary* couple”.

“Mask?”

Ours is the first theater, a stage, not of performance, but of worship. We don't put on masks to represent; we *become*. We may have audiences, but they don't create our purpose. Theater didn't originate in performance, it rose from the drive to express something greater than individual human self, a need to summon godhead.

Isn't that what we do? We offer our sacrifices of pain and fear, exchange them for transmutation. We invoke powers that step beyond our day and night experiences. We scream, we spill blood, we are possessed by frenzy. We keep numinous secrets, and we feast on energy. We open, through ritual, a communion which bypasses our senses or communications. We bear gnosis, a gut-level understanding of the spark of divinity.

Do I really feel that way?

Sometimes, no.

Sometimes...sweet Lord, yes.

Something I believe:

We don't wear masks to avoid the real life we see and touch. We wear masks to help us contact an equally real world, one much harder to perceive. We aren't hiding our true faces with lies; we are attacking the lies which claim that our visible faces are the only true ones.

Our fear masks don't come from our aversions to the alien around us; they're born from the alien that we carry around in our pockets. Our lust masks are our own lusts, made huge. Our masks of god and demon and servant and magician...they're projections, yes, but they're also self-knowledge.

We are our own magick.

Playing pretend!



I love to roleplay because it changes interpersonal rules. I find that dominance opens up a special dynamic between myself and others, and within that dynamic, I have a beautiful freedom. For me, roleplaying's effects within that sphere are very subtle. I enjoy the imagination involved, I enjoy acting, I enjoy the experimentation with costumes and settings and other props.

But my normal dominant headspace is an extension of my normal mind; I feel like myself, only moreso. In contrast, when I roleplay, become someone else, it changes the *small* rules.

After all, we condition our normal selves to hundreds of tiny reactions, which are more or less automatic. We match certain stimuli with certain phrases, facial expressions, motions. We use certain phrases, we have distinctive gestures.

In roleplay, no matter how seriously we take our roles, we alter all of those things. We push, not big, conscious limits that we've negotiated—but small, unspoken ones, things we may never discuss.

And I love that freedom, too.

I remember her standing there, on that streetcorner, in her hooker's clothes. It was silly; I was half a block away in my car, we were in a suburban neighborhood, no prostitute would ever hang out on the street of that part of town. My girlfriend leaned back against a lamp-post, in awkward imitation of the stereotype.

And she turned her head, only a few inches...in a way she'd never done. Her profile, at that new angle, caught the light.

And I froze.

That night, for the first time, I fucked her *just like a whore*.

Grown-up toys

What is my favorite toy?

That would be you.

My French maid.

My chef.

My puppy.

My companion.

My whore.

My masseuse.

My billiard partner.

My critic.
My slave.

My favorite toy.

HUMAN

Heather demanded a section on reconciliation. She was right.
But I wasn't sure how to put it. So I made it into a conversation between she and I.
Why is "Ugly" here? Because it's my own reconciliation.
I took to D/s very naturally. But I didn't take to punishment for a long time. I didn't want to do it.
But I needed to do it.
It's only fair that you see me squirm, too.

Ugly

Yes, you can push me too far.
Not easily. Not often. But you can push me, test me on a level where you wake my fight-or-flight instincts.
It can only happen when I am in your head. Thank God for that. Because I lose compassion.
But I keep my empathy.
And I turn cold. And I turn away from you. And I'm going to hurt you now.
And I hate it.
And if I wasn't in your head, if someone triggered these feelings outside of that intimacy, I would walk. Because you wouldn't be worth it.
And I don't want to punish you.
And I don't want to punish you.
And I punish you.

Ugly (confessions)

And the right punishment is worth weeks, months of training.
The damage of the wrong one is always far too much.
And I know, too goddamn well, that I'm not always right.

"Reconciliation" (A dialogue)

"You have to include a part about reconciliation".
"Reconciliation?"
"Yes! Not everyone is you, you know. Some people have a hard time understanding that submission is okay, and doesn't mean they're wrong or bad, or that they're weak or something".
"I'm sorry, but GIVE is a hard-edged, dark little book. It wouldn't even use phrases like 'submission is okay'.
"I'm going to smack you".

“Besides, you can’t take power from the powerless. Dishwater isn’t soup, weakness isn’t submission”.

“You have to explain that, not just be cute about it”.

“I spend a lot of time talking about how submission requires strength, courage, intelligence, focus—“

“It’s not the same. Do you know how long it took me to come to terms with my identity as a submissive woman?”

“If I guess right, will you loan me another *Cure* CD?

“Not after you lost my other one! I still want that replaced, you know”.

“As I was saying—what should I tell them about reconciliation?”

“Tell them that submission is just something they do. It’s a part of who they are. Just because they submit sometimes—“

“Or all the time”.

“..to specific people, doesn’t mean they’re submissive to everyone. And there’s nothing wrong with submission. It’s normal, and it’s not weird or strange or anything”.

“I object strenuously to that statement”.

“Look, just tell them it’s okay to be submissive”.

“It’s okay to be who you are?’ What is this, a children’s book?”

“You’re a jerk, you know that?”

INTERLUDE: “The Basics”

Jeff’s Five Basics of Power Exchange:

1. Submission is specific. It is a set of personal choices worked out between yourself and your partner(s). You do not necessarily **have** to submit to anyone, no matter what others may think. You do not necessarily **have to** submit in any particular way, no matter what others may think. You are not necessarily a “bad” submissive if you don’t act the way other people expect you to. And, likewise, dominants are not necessarily jerks, twits, or abusers if their conceptions of D/s are different from your own.

Finally, finding and understanding a submissive nature is not necessarily easy; it often requires a great deal of soul-searching, thought, trial and error, and, probably, a lot of fucking up, just like most major life paths. To paraphrase Hillel, “That is the whole of `GIVE’; all the rest is commentary”.

2. Urgol's Law: “No matter what you're into, there is SOMEONE out there SOMEWHERE who is into the *EXACT* same thing, NO MATTER **how weird (or unusual)** it *IS*”. For personal use, this means that your desires are not necessarily manifestations of serious psychological problems. Neither, per se, are the desires of others.

For interpersonal use: The “mainstream”, by definition, can’t be open-minded. It is often hoped that, since we are excluded from that mainstream by our needs and desires, we will be open-minded and respect the differences of others. Some of us do. Some of us do not. I, personally, believe that those who do not are generally twits, usually blinded by their own egos, self-esteem problems and guilt, or sheer stupidity. But this is not a universal rule.

3. You can’t take power from the powerless. Dishwater is not soup. Weakness is not

submission.

4. Danger. What I do is *dangerous* if it's done properly. I deal with physical, mental, emotional, and psychological extremes. I'm not saying it's necessary that everyone be that way; but it's what I do, and what I need. If this is true for you as well, then *be aware*. I've never been in a knife fight, but I've been told: "If someone pulls a knife, think to yourself, *'I'm going to get cut.'* Because you probably will, and if you aren't ready, you'll probably freak out and get cut a lot more". Be conscious of the fact that, if those involved aren't aware of safe use of all tools and toys, physical or otherwise, someone will probably get hurt in a bad way. Then be *more* conscious of the fact that, quite possibly, this will happen anyway. Accept it, live with it, understand that it is part of the strength of what we do:

It is *great* to play with a few toys and some dirty words. If that's all you want, wonderful! Enjoy!

But if you want to tap into a sheer kinetic vein of power, remember that *it can be done*. And **it can't always be controlled.**

5. Your goddamned mileage may vary!

STORM

I love the power of becoming.
I love walking out of one self and entering another.
I love being whatever I may want to be, god, demon, and more.
Sculptor. Vivisectionist. Thief.
Drug.

Larger than life



Today, you are one of the unexpected people.
Submission is intense, an extreme. And most people can't handle that; by definition, the "average" person still chooses comfort, security, and lesser pleasures over that which is risky, difficult, and brings, not enjoyment, but actual bliss.
You become things which don't exist for them, except in fantasy.
You become things about which they are afraid to fantasize.
They are life-size.
You are not.
You are much, much bigger.

For me, this is an active, conscious part of most of my life.
Perhaps it is the same for you; perhaps it is alien to your thoughts.

Today, it's to play a role in what you are.
Spend a little while focusing on that feeling, thinking about it.
Then, as you interact with the world, remember it. Whatever they do, whatever happens, remember that you have this core, this flame in your belly. Think of it as setting you

apart, as much as you would like; let it make you totally divorced from them, or let it be simply an aspect of your individuality.

Take a few pauses today, as best you can, to think about this. Whether you are isolated or surrounded by people, think about how you know a certain secret, that you have gained that secret the hardest way: by putting your emotions, your needs, on the line. You chase after fears others avoid, you play with things whose risks are enormous, you challenge yourself in ways that others, perhaps, can't even contemplate.

And when you pause, ask:

How does this feel?

“The freedom to...”

And sometimes, as we are known to say, being securely bound is the freedom to struggle as much as you want.

More—

Being a fucktoy is the freedom to stop being anything else, for a time.

Being broken, here, can be the freedom to cry tears the outside world need never see.

Being afraid, in this place, can be the freedom to confront fear and perhaps overcome it.

Playing out the depraved, the perverted, the obscene, can be the freedom to know, when you are not here, that you go farther than almost anyone else, that you are larger than life.

Becoming your fantasy is the freedom of becoming your fantasy.

No-one is allowed to hurt you, or take from you, in some of the ways that I do.

But sometimes, they do so, without your consent.

When I take you, with your consent, it is because I have proved myself worthy of your trust.

So when you give me the right to take you, you are gaining power over that which, ordinarily, we fear and shun. You have chosen, you are controlling, that which tries to harm you.

This is a bit idealistic; we know too well that trust gained is not, and does not always remain, trust earned.

But the idea is powerful to me, all the same; you are exploring, you have turned tables on, you are hunting
that which tries to make prey of you.

PART IV

“The art and deadly challenge”

*creating you,
the art and deadly challenge:
tear away, with my teeth
everything you are not.*

WHIPPING POST

A few moments spent in consideration of the drawing of your blood.



Pain is easy.

You will find no extraordinary tortures here, no attempts to impress you with the esoteric or the devilish. That is the makework of fantasy.

Fantasy is an excellent tool. But it is not an end in and of itself. My purpose here is to remind you, graphically, that we are not fantasy. Any animal trainer will tell you the efficacy of pain. Call it “negative reinforcement”. Call it whatever you’d like. It is easy to do.

Of course, teaching an animal through pain is cruel, and perhaps morally wrong.

Teaching you, bitch, through pain...is merely my right.

More than that.

Why might I cause you to go through an experience which, if it succeeds, will make you wish to forget it...and never be able to do so?

Punishment.

Proof to yourself of what you will do for me.

A tangible demonstration of the power that flows between us.

Catharsis through brutality.

And more.

Think about these things.

Write me a paragraph on each of the points mentioned in the paragraph above. If you do not feel you understand something, guess a meaning and write about it. There are no wrong answers here.

Freeze!

Lie on your side. Pull your knees in tight, tuck your head. Cross your hands and lock them around your ankles. Shut your eyes hard.

Freeze!

Don't move don't gasp don't *breathe* loud enough for me to hear you.

Those hands, all your life a part of you, doing what you wanted, or trying to—whose are they now? Those eyes, separating you from darkness for as long as you've had conscious thought—they see darkness now.

Easy for the outside world to imagine a slave, unmoving in chains or rope. Easy for the outside world to think of you, held still, out of fear of whip or palm.

The outside world knows shit.

You and I—in our world, our shared home in space and time—we know that you are locked. Better than chains, which have weak links. Better than rope, which can slip or mis-knot. Better than a gun at your head.

You don't move *because you are mine*.

I have locked you.

You will not move without my permission.

My permission is your only key.

* * *

(If you choose, continue here):

Let me make my authority a little clearer.

Make sure you are dressed.

Take in a good deal of liquid.

Wait until you need to piss.

Then wait until you *really* need it.

Disrobe, as I have already shown you.

Set a timer for several minutes, preferably a timer which ticks, or counts the seconds visibly or audibly.

Until the timer goes off,

Freeze!

bitten

When something clenches, but does not break, your skin, it generally has three stages: an initial shock of sensation, a continuing pressure as the clench continues, and a rush of feeling when the grip is released and blood flows back to the affected area.

Toys and situations which do this make good tools for sensation work. Reactions to pain vary, but the regime of mixed physical reactions...well, why discuss it in words?

Take two clothespins, and find a reliable clock, or a timer.

Put a clothespin on your right nipple. Put a clothespin on your sex..

Arrange them within the limits of your pain tolerance; you will have to maintain this for some time. If the clothespins bite too harshly, as they probably will, put rubber bands on the grip ends. We are working with a triangle here: two nipples, and sex.

Every few minutes, on a schedule that pushes you enough, rotate the clothespins clockwise; clothespin on sex goes to left nipple, clothespin on left nipple goes to sex. Next, left nipple to right, right nipple to sex.

Continue this for an hour.

Or else:

Continue until you feel you cannot take any more.

Then, a few more minutes.

“Be Still”

Go.

Kneel.

In the corner.

Stare at a spot on the wall.

Be still.

Do you remember when you froze for me?

Then, not moving was training, a lesson in place.

Now, it's time for a very different lesson in that same subject.

You are to stay there, like a child, and the order is not “Don't move!”—a suspension in place, awaiting release.

No. The order is “be still”. You move too much. You lack control. Your movements offend, they dishonor the intelligence and capabilities which I know—perfectly well—you possess.

Stay!

Look at the wall!

Think about why you are there.

And be

very

still.

a simple denial

For the next two days, during your free time, whenever you *have* free time, masturbate. Keep a record of what you do during those days, when your opportunities are, and when you took them.

You are not, per se, required to spend all of your free time thus.
But I had best, for your sake, see frequency and regularity of obedience. If you do not have time, find it.
You are not to come.
You are to think about it, imagine it, fantasize about it if your preferences so run..
You may anything you wish involving the matter of your orgasm.
Except have one.

INTERLUDE: “To Take”

At one point, I didn't know the difference between “telling someone what to do during sex” and “dominance”.

I thought I could explain “that whole master/slave thing” quite well. I'd say: there are many reasons why my partner enjoys having me tell her what to do. For one thing, my pleasure is *my* responsibility now. She usually worries about not pleasing me—well, if I tell her what to do, and she does it, she doesn't have to worry that she'll do the wrong thing. She can feel less guilt, too, because in her mind she pretends she's being “forced”—sex isn't her “fault”, she's not intentionally doing “naughty” things. And she enjoys the teasing feeling of not knowing when/if she'll be pleased herself...

I wasted years of my life that way. Not that those weren't good answers. They just never got me to the knowledge I needed.

For me, the real answer was this:

To dominate is to take. It's not about giving commands you choose to follow. It's about giving commands you feel a *need* to follow. The dominance becomes important, and the method—commands, in this case—becomes less important.

For a long time, I simply couldn't bridge the mental gap between sexual submission and outside submission, couldn't figure out the connection between enjoying being “commanding” in bed, and...wanting something outside.

I realize now that I simply wasn't thinking of *submission itself* as a desire or a need. I thought people submitted because of the reasons I gave above—I couldn't see that, for many, “submission” is an end in and of itself.

To me, “submissive headspace” is simply a place where D/s is important, and the method far less important. You may submit by sucking a cock, washing a window, saying “sir”. You may submit simply by closing your eyes for a moment, or walking a little faster, or turning your head a certain way.

The symptoms are pleasant. I enjoy them.

But the things which cause those symptoms are transcendent. I need them.

CREATION

I believe that what we do is too intense, too primal to have a name as we know the term; that we cannot really pin down the origins and foci that give the lifestyle its power. I see what we do as opening a channel to parts of our mind which predate consciousness, which survive still in the form of our most raw and devouring passions.

This may, in fact, be the case. If not, I find it a useful metaphor. I doubt it's possible to really pin down what drives us to this lifestyle, and many would say that, if we could do so, D/s would lose some of its power. That isn't a worry of ours; we won't have a time, in this brief piece, to delve that deep.

But as humans, it is one of our gifts, one of our curses, that we name things. We are inquisitive and possessive; we wish to gain understanding of the world around us, give pieces of it names in our own tongues. It helps us; we can call a tree a "tree", then try to capture a bit of its quintessence through science or poetry or woodlore. And it hurts us; we have a tendency to forget that, though we have named the "tree", we do not necessarily understand its place in the environment, the universe, or our own perspective. We fail to see vital things, sometimes, simply because we have already catalogued and categorized their visible aspects, and think no more on the subject.

I would like for us to look around just enough that we can name some pieces of what we do; I want to give them definitions with which we can work, for a time.

A core

When I studied directing under Joseph Hart, he told us of a concept he called the "Clerman", after theater critic Harry Clerman. A "clerman", or "spine" as it's sometimes called, is a bonestripped expression of driving force. Joe felt that, no matter how complex a character was, it could still be reduced to a single concept, a single, short, animalistic sentence.

That idea feels right to me somehow. I love to divide the world up; even in my speech I will extemporaneously begin listing the basis for my reasoning, categorizing (a), (b), (c), and the like. Perversely, I really identify with the idea that we can reduce multifaceted concepts to basic expressions of desire.

With that in mind,

what does "submission" mean to you? Why do you submit?

I don't want any attempt at a broad, all-encompassing definition, or a textbook one. I mean a vital, short, simple expression of your own, personal submission. "Because I enjoy it" or even "Because I need it" are inadequate. Why do you submit?

"To give myself to another".

"To subjugate myself to power".

"To lose control".

Try to do it in less than a dozen words, half that if you can.

Find the word that closest approximates how you feel.

Take your time.

Try to get it right.

Inversion

This is a simple question, approached in a roundabout way. The reasoning behind it is that, if you already have an answer, I would like you to approach the question in a different manner. It is one of those questions which tend to improve with repetition, anyway.

If you do not have an answer, this is intended to provide a method for finding one.

Take the spine we created.

Find an opposite to it, a sentence with a more or less flipped meaning.

Now tell me why you *don't* want *that*.

Even if your answer is obvious or perhaps a little silly, say it anyway. Tie it into your life, your wants. Try to imagine you were explaining to someone who *did* want those things precisely why they do not work for you. Is it something to do with your family, your work, your past, your fears?

Now go back. Use that data to answer the question,

“What makes you submit?”

“Who the hell are you?”

Who the hell are you, then?

Who comes to me, who exactly knocks at my door?

The same person the outside world knows?

The “real” you, who is hidden at all other times? The opposite, perhaps, a role you play only in this place?

If either of the above is true, how do your two selves see each other?

Is it the same “you” all the time? How do you manage that? How do you reconcile our world with the outside?

Write down answers for the following:

Describe your outside self in adjectives. Use as many single words as you want, “strong”, “happy”, “analytical”, or what-have-you. Then narrow them down to the eight that you think are most important. I know you may not feel totally accurate in so doing. Just do your best.

If you feel the answers would be different for the self that you and I share, then do the same for that self. Compare your answers. Tell me, in writing, why they're different.

If they are the same, or change very little—tell me, in writing, why you feel that is; as always, even if the answer is obvious or seems silly, put it into words for me anyway.

“When?”

When do you feel the need to be here?

Is it triggered by something that goes on around you? Is it something that takes you by surprise? Is it constant? Does it have a pattern?

When do you feel the desire, but not necessarily the need, to be here?

When do you not feel some, or any, of the above?

Or are those inapplicable to you, in one way or another? Do you find this world to be something you want, but can turn away from without too much difficulty? Do you seem to think you must always be here, or be unfulfilled?

How have these things changed over the course of your learning? How do you expect, or want, these things to evolve?

They say “no submissive always feels submissive”. Are they right? What makes this need come and go? Frustration? Satiation?

Answer this for me:

When does the hunger to be here enter your daily space?

When does it go?

What does this say about that hunger?

What does this say about you?

Have you a Lecter?

I have a certain fascination with the character Hannibal Lecter, from the writings of Thomas Harris. Granted, the man was a murderous psychotic, which is not one of my personal ambitions; it's with Lecter in mind that I discussed way our art is created by consent. But I will admit to a love for the idea of being a perfectly controlled, seemingly all-knowing being, holding all the cards, capable of what is, in essence, mind-reading. He knows his pleasures and dominates the world around him to get them. And I acknowledge a conceptual being, an insidious creation of my mind which I find myself attempting to emulate from time to time. I find myself wanting to create certain images, wanting to be certain things, as a dominant:

I want to be ever-creative, ever surprising; I want to be able to take control with a turn of my head, I want to have a flawless charm and grace which can become an animal brutality at the right moments. I want Lecter's ability to enter a mind after the exchange of only a few words...

In most of this, I recognize aspects of myself, idealized and made into fantasy. For example, I tend to be soft-spoken, and sometimes my desire to be courteous also makes me quite deferential. In scene gatherings, when I was just starting out and trying not to get in anyone's way, I was often thought to be a submissive, because I “acted like one”. (Remember “Act like what you are”?) I enjoyed the surprise of people around me when they had a chance to see my nature, watch me make a transition from quiet reserve to bestial cruelty.

It is from this that I began to build, and enjoy, the knowledge that I often shift from charm to brutality in scene, without any stutter of transition, and from there I began to develop fantasies of which I was, and am, still only half-conscious. Sometimes I recognize these fantasies and learn from them; I read people well, for example, but I can't read mines. Likewise, my desire for perfection is ludicrous; I am not perfect, nor will I ever be. So, instead, I have become more conscious of the fact that I err, and I have tried to learn how to work with it in scene. Were I to stride confidently across a room, for example, then trip, to hear my partner laugh, I might reply,

“You're right, pet. That is funny, isn't it?

“Yes, sir!”

“Enjoy the laughter. Laughter is good for you”.

“Thank you, sir”.

“We both know it doesn't mean you respect me less”.

“No, sir, of course not”.

“Or that you aren't just as afraid when I do *this*...”

Or I might simply take it as a cue to change the flavor of the scene, and walk over and give a hug. Or—anything, depending on the time and place. The basic truth is the same: I have to thank my fantasy for making my conscious mind aware of my ideals. Now, I don't have to get frustrated by "failure" to live up to desires I don't even know I have—a sure route to anger and loss of control, or at least a loss of headspace.

So then.

Have you a Lecter of your own? It could be a character from a book or a movie, it could be someone you know. What I'd like you to find are fantasies about what you are and what you want to be. What do you consciously want to emulate? What aspects of yourself frustrate you when you don't do them the way you "should"? Why do you think you "should" do things that way? Is that aspect really something you want to make a part of you, or just something you "believe" you should have, perhaps without any real justification in your experience or your heart?

...like what you are



I'll say it again, in a slightly different way. If you ask me, "As a submissive, should I be gentle, obedient, bratty, quick, deliberate, needful, calm, afraid?"

I only have one honest answer:

"Use whatever you know and feel to improvise your submission in any given situation".

Yes, this is a repetition of my constant words, that submission is individual and personal, not necessarily formalized. But I've tried to put it into practical terms. What does it mean, to improvise? It makes you an artist, not a robot. You will not always know what to do; in that case, you must *find* your answer. What do you feel is right? How does that gibe with your understanding of your role and your situation?

If you are afraid of something, or confused, when should you speak up? Ordinarily, for example, those with whom I play are always allowed to question things. But there are times when speech may not be appropriate—during certain punishments, for example—and sometimes, contrarily, the need for clarification or communication should override an expected silence.

If you are given an open-ended task, how will you perform it? Some dominants don't give open-ended tasks, some will clarify with specific instructions. I, for one, might well say, "Go dress like a slut", and if you say, "How do you think a slut looks, sir?", only reply, "I want to see you try to look like a slut. You must have some idea of it, since that's what you are. Go, do it". This can be paralyzing for many, since they fear doing wrong or displeasing. Which is natural, and right; but in my book, I wish to be trusted with the idea that, if I intentionally tell you something which can be interpreted many ways, I shan't punish you for using your own interpretation.

How do you express, with your body, your emotions and feelings? There is a certain amount of physical self-control expected here; it may or may not be appropriate to jump up and

down and clap one's hands when overjoyed, or throw things when frustrated, or to kiss my mouth in gratitude, and so on. Talk to me. Express your feelings, ask questions. Don't just "assume", because you've read about something or seen it online, that it will (or won't) please me.

Even if you **are** given rituals and rules for your specific actions, it is still best that you know how to improvise, not just because the unexpected can—and does—happen...but also because the ability to improvise adds value to your submission. I feel that, ideally, my submissives should act in certain ways, not simply because they are told to do so, but because they understand the implications and potentialities of a situation, and have learned to react to those things in a manner pleasing to me.

And, in terms of the fear of mistakes—yes. You are likely to have it, and to continue to have it.

But there is a difference between having that fear—and being paralyzed by it.

BALM

Welcome home.

I've made some green tea.

Drink up. It's good for you. It'll turn you green.

Now kneel, please.

Close your eyes.

And get yourself *here*.

When I attended Sensei David Jones' dojo, it was up a flight of stairs. And leading to the school door were a pair of signs. The first was a standard martial-arts school "Please remove shoes". This simple act gave a physical reminder that I was leaving one place—"the street"—and stepping into a different world, with different rules.

The second was at the top of the stairs. "You are entering a traditional karate dojo. Please act accordingly".

How did one "act accordingly"? I knew many common rules and practices—I also knew that every school I had seen had its own style, rules, approach. What was proper in one school might be utterly wrong in another.

Yet the practical value of that sign was enormous. It always gave me pause, called to my mind all of my associations with training grounds, what I learned there, and who and what those things made me. "Act accordingly": know what you have come to do, know what you are doing, at least in your own mind. Or, at the barest minimum, recognize in your gut that you've come to a place where things are *different*. Don't just take that difference passively, when it enters your space; make it a part of your consciousness.

And thus. And so.

You've entered our home, not a physical home, but the place inside of us which fosters our need to exchange power. To me, this place smells of the sea, placid, calming, deep, hungry for human bone. The air is muted, hushed. There is an undercurrent beneath every moment, like a scream cut off just before it leaves the throat. And sweat and blood have flown for long enough that they fill the floor, pull against my steps, lap at my ankles. I am standing here, a sharp thing, waiting to open you.

What are the looks, the sound and smell and images of this place for you?

Leave the outside world for outsiders.
I am waiting to join you, in this other place.
Focus.
Get yourself here.

“Sir”

Why do I expect to hear “sir” whenever you address me? Why do I expect a reply whenever I address you?

Because it helps me know that you are here.

“Sir” is not natural to our speech—nor are any of its equivalents, “My Lord”, “boss”, and the like. Even after we have used them long enough to make the words near-instinct, they still require a slight flicker of mental channels, entrance to a certain state of mind.

Ours is a dark art. It is never really “safe”. It has too much power, strikes at places too deep inside us.

When we enter that darker place, I need to know that you are with me.

I want to hear, as well as see, a confirmation that you are paying attention; that you are focused, directed, aware of what and where we are. I need to know that you are conscious of my communications, verbal or otherwise.

“Sir” is not natural...but it becomes natural when you are here. I know it in your voice, as clearly as I can smell it on your skin.

Awareness is quintessential.

If I need to stop you, change what you are doing, alter a moment—I want to know that I can do so, NOW. I need to know that, no matter how deeply you trance, you are still following me.

I need to know that you are *mine*.

Ritual

I believe firmly in the power of rituals. I believe humans are hardwired for programming through ritual, through its combination of actions, communication, and symbolism. Those are tools I’ve tried to use throughout “GIVE”.

At the same time, I’ve included very little that I would call “ritual”.

That’s because I believe our rituals should be specific, personal. I do not believe in a single, “True” path of dominance and submission. I have put together specific exercises to accomplish certain goals, but no system for “becoming a slave”. It was and is my desire to create exercises which would not, I hope, even imply that other methods are bad or wrong.

That doesn’t get you off the hook, though.

Find or create something which reminds you of what you are.
Put it away.

When you take it out, do not simply reach for it, or pick it up.

Respect what it represents.
Treat it accordingly.

Create a short ritual, one which makes you feel like what you are.
You may take inspiration from this work.
You may take inspiration from outside sources, such as books and stories.

Think to yourself: “What is my place?”
Think to yourself: “What actions help me go there...and stay there?”

Incorporate them here. Bind yourself well.

“Act like what you are”.

You notice I have never used the phrase, “Act like what you are”.

Feel like it, yes. **Act** like it, no.

That’s because **acting like what you are** is holistic—and individual.

In my eyes, there is no “perfect submissive”, towards which all other submissives strive, no single way of feeling or knowing or expressing the drive to give yourself to another. This means that your submissions lie, not in following universal rules, but in making individual choices. Your submission is spoken, directly, through everything you do when you are here.

This is a hard idea for many people to face, because it means that they can’t expect to rely on “Always do so-and-so or be punished”. They’re faced with judgment calls—a much more difficult and involved submission.

For example, it’s a misconception that “good submissives always obey”. I could see relationships wherein this is true, but it is hardly something that I, personally, desire. A submissive with a mind of her own = a submissive who can and sometimes will defy me. A submissive with no mind of her own, to me, is useless to anyone.

Or, from another angle, our exercises in body language are hardly a code of etiquette between you and I. You are not necessarily acting like a “good submissive” if you use them in my presence, and there are no automatic rules about what is appropriate, when. They are tools, to be used as needed. Nothing more.

Perhaps we’ll decide to create or incorporate some specific system. We will certainly have our rituals, our rules, our familiar games. But the specific actions don’t matter half as much as the meaning, the feeling, the spirit behind them.

D/s, like all arts, comes not from the body, but from inner places. The outside world mistakes traditional trappings of our work—leather, manacles, kneeling, commands—for the work itself.

But you, and I, we know better.
Chains can be powerful, but in the end, they’re only decorations.
Putting them on won’t make you a slave.
Taking them off won’t release you from what you are.

PART V

“That beast again”

Awareness, goals, and memories.

PRISONER

Strictly speaking, I don't need to do D/s.
Strictly speaking, I don't need to eat, either.

Through Slave Eyes

Just how much control do I have?
How much control do you *want* me to have?

What is it like, in that space, the place in your head where you are mine?

As you go about your day, think about doing so under control.
Not rigid control, like a movie, or like pop culture's idea of a 'slave'.

Rather, do this as a most independent person, a strong individual...who is "given, taken... and stolen". Think about having given control to me, told me that I may make claims on your time. Think, too, that I've made use of that power, that I don't hesitate to take pieces of your life for my own. And that I knew, however you felt about it, happy or reluctant or blissful or terrified—ultimately, I knew you'd do as I asked.

I spoke earlier of being "stolen". If you look up just once from your day, and realize that, without knowing it, you had stopped belonging to yourself for a little while...that unconsciously, you belonged to me...

Then you'll know what I mean.

If you're already under that control, take a half-step back, be more conscious of what is going on around you. Use this exercise to think about where you are, what you are doing, and where you might be.

As your day goes on, think about controls I might take, and their ramifications.

There are many traditional examples—like asking my permission to go to the bathroom., forcing my control over the basic functioning of your body.

There is controlling what you wear, which is especially popular in our fiction-- particularly wearing slutty clothes for me, having men stare all day...or dressing conservatively on the outside, and underneath, like a whore, my secret fucktoy.

There is controlling what you eat. Giving or denying you things you enjoy. Helping you adhere to a special diet, perhaps. Even fasting, depending on your health and my mood.

There is controlling how you eat it, in public or in private. I've played some very interesting games at table. I don't have to be there to remind you of my presence in your life. You may have run across many rules, either in fiction or in lifestyle households. Slaves may not use the furniture without permission, but must use the floor. Slaves may not sit at the table, but beg underneath, like dogs. Slaves may not eat using their hands, but must dip faces into bowls, like pets...

Controlling if and when you masturbate or come...obvious enough. And for whom you come, and to whom you give `your' erotic favors...

And I expect your mind and imagination to come up with ample other thoughts. Whether or not you do, be awake, be aware, understand what you are doing.

Look through slave eyes for a while.

Tongue/Whip

I kiss soft, I bite hard, I love the intimacy of invasion. I remember when I first tied a woman to her bed and cut the clothes from her body. Her clothes were nonessential; it was her comfort zone that I was slicing apart, a space which, she realized, was no longer personal. I love that realization, I love to confront you. When I take sex from you, I am giving you tangible proof that your exchange of power is real. We are hardwired to perceive reality as stimulus; I am challenging you to ignore the pleasure I might give you, and every time you beg to come, I have won. Every time you want my touch to be brutal, I have won. Every time you beg me to make the pleasure stop, I have won.

For the next few days, be very conscious of your sexuality. Touch a part of your body, sometimes, when you otherwise might not. Deny yourself a caress, a kiss, an act you might otherwise enjoy. Seek out something erotic, avoid something sensual. Play with your ability to be aroused.

Go further.

A question: why does our art breed physical masochists? Because pain, like pleasure, has a closeness to our consciousness; it pushes us to acknowledge its reality. And because pain is a deep invasion. Our laws create barriers between our bodies and a thousand types of pain. Our bodies know pain and will twist away from it, move unnaturally; we will go up on our toes or down to our knees to avoid pressure in the proper areas. Assaults of violence or sex have this in common: both destroy the barriers that our minds use to be confident in our flesh.

Find pain for me.

Whether or not you translate pain into pleasure, play with the basics of that stimulus. Twist your nipples, carefully, but firmly, until you feel the hurting. Pull on your pubic hair, apply pressure to sensitive parts of your body. Be careful. Don't go to extremes, don't damage yourself. You are not permitted to push your barriers for this assignment, only to test them.

For the next few days, every time you consciously choose pain or pleasure, stop a moment.

And thank me for the invasion.

A different journal

Keep a different journal for me, today. Keep me a journal of stolen moments.

Don't write it in words. Keep it, silently, in your head. Carry with you something that reminds you of what you are. At intervals, find a little space of time, seconds, minutes, to reflect on it. Touch it if you want, look at it, use it—or simply remember that you carry it, and remember why.

Find a private place, play one of our games. Take a risk, push yourself. Jot it all down behind your eyes, record it in the flashes of current between your synapses.

Draw me a day with your actions, make what you are, and what we do, the fringe of your consciousness.

Tonight, before you sleep, read this journal, play it over in your head, try to feel its aftertaste.

Now you know how I feel, thinking of you.

You are my journal.

SEEKER

“Whose are you?”

“Yours, sir”.

“What would you do for me?”

“Anything, sir”.

“Would you die for me?”

“Fuck no, sir”.

Automata

“I want to submit to you completely, I want to be yours, mind, body and soul. I want to have no will, no desires but yours. I want to do nothing but follow your will”.

Is that an ultimate submission?

No.

Dominance is active, alive. It is a neverending series of delicious games, it is a serious and constant dedication to the exchange of power, it is, at its core, *taking...not accepting*.

If your will bends, automatically and without thought, to my every desire—then there is nothing left for me to take. You can't submit because you no longer exist; telling you to do something is no more challenging or rewarding than doing it myself.

You may do something that you don't want to do, and feel fulfilled because you're doing it for me. But if your desires automatically match my own, how can I enjoy my control over your desires? If you have no limits, how can you ever improve?

You can't be dominated if there is no “you” to dominate.

“Object”

Not a human, but a piece of furniture.

No name, just a number.
No rights. No protection.
No thought. Just use.

Is this an ultimate submission?

I don't feel so.

The power of submission lies in your consciousness, in the strength of your identity. Anyone can take someone weak and give a gift of oblivion. *Submission does not remove the will; submission focuses the will.*

Sometimes, yes, submission means that thought goes away, that the mind is quiet. Sometimes we allow that escape. But there should still be a striving. Perhaps, if you became a table, you might let your thoughts subside, might lock into position and remember your role only at the edges of your consciousness. But you had best be prepared to leave that space in an instant, had best be ready to meet my challenges whenever I decide to reward you with them. Your training may condition you to be comfortable in many forms of service; I had best find, if I challenge you with something new, that you are prepared to be uncomfortable for me, as well.

In my eyes, then, the popular fantasy of dehumanization is simply another test. As with any test between us, I am impressed, not simply by obedience, but by *awareness*. The loop is simple:

It's not edgeplay if you're not afraid. If you're afraid, then you have another barrier to cross. If you cross that barrier, it's no longer edgeplay.

So edgeplay is always self-limiting. Every edge ends. And every defeated edge creates the path to the next game.

"Be a footstool"



Go be a piece of furniture.
Be a table. Be a chair. Be a footstool.

What does being furniture mean?

It means you must lock in place. Human muscles are not made for the immobility of wood or plastic. It may mean muscle strain, exhaustion, discomfort. It will require the discipline of immobility. And it requires the knowledge that you, a thinking being, a person...are now reduced

solely to a body shape, and not even a shape to which human bodies are well-suited.

Wood or plastic or other materials make far better furniture. You are an imitation of an object, given that shape, not because you'll serve well in that form, but because your service itself is on display.

I like making you into my footstool. It puts you in the proper place—beneath my feet. It puts you in a proper position, on all fours. And it adds directly to my comfort.

On your hands and knees. Tuck your head. Bend your elbows. Don't strain your back too straight. Prop yourself up. Be prepared to hold that position. Recognize that, when you are a footstool, I am not obligated to use you. If I rest my feet on you for a moment, feel honored. After all, an empty box would serve me just as well, and is more practical for prolonged use. If I have decided to use you, you had best please me.

Let these things go through your mind, as you wait in that position.

Footstool. Furniture. Object.

You.

“If you meet the Buddha on the road...”

“If you meet the Buddha on the road, kill him”. In other words, if you have found a physical representation of some ideal, then you are forgetting the idea and getting lost in a need for a tangible imitation of your desire, instead of the desire itself.

If I found the ultimate submission, I would have to destroy it.

No submission can ever be conclusive enough to end the learning process; if you could go beyond learning, beyond exploring, what would be the point?

In fact, I suggest you create your ultimate submission, find something you might want to do but would never dare. Then destroy it—find within yourself the strength to reach that point.

For me, dominance involves a constant shattering of my limits. I'm actually sad that I can no longer say, “I can't imagine why anyone would ever do so-and-so, and I know that I never will”. It was so much fun, the first dozen times, finding myself doing those things, and not believing it. Now I realize that, for me, today's limit is tomorrow's tool.

In the end, it looks like I'll be stopped only by possibility. Certain very dangerous activities will always remain a limit for me, I think. But I eventually reached a point where I could think of doing them. And then I reached a point where that fact no longer shocked me.

Do you still want to find a single, end-all, ultimate submission? Go ahead! I wish you luck in your search.

But not too much luck. Because then I'd have to kill you.

ADEPT

Student: Big fish, small pond.

Adept: Small fish, big pond.

Sar's Cup

“Soda”.

“Yes, sir”.

She comes back from the kitchen. She is holding the cup out to me, balanced on her palm, with her arm extended, elbow slightly bent. It is the style I saw and admired the night before, at the house of my friend Sar.

I smile.

How do I want you to serve me a drink? In a manner which is prompt, obedient to any of my stated preferences (I generally prefer my drinks without ice, for example)—and doesn't involve spilling the drink all over me, you, or my guests. Other than that, it's generally up to you.

Why? Because serving my drink is something that you'll do frequently. It makes a good ritual because it's a simple, often-repeated task. But our nature and our muscle memory will make such tasks into rituals regardless. You'll stylize the motion, and that style will reflect the individuality behind your submission. Will it be brisk, but attentive, waitress style? Slow and measured, emphasizing the servility? Will you adapt something you see elsewhere? I wait to find out, I am anxious, excited at your development.

Does the use of a specific style or system destroy individuality? Of course not, unless you forget the purpose of that style and start to sacrifice function for the sake of form. It has many advantages over my philosophy; using a style makes it easier to create specific goals, helps clarify expectations. And the realization of those goals is very individual, very personal.

Take lessons from both schools.

Find a half-dozen small activities—serve a drink, acknowledge a compliment, carry a small object, pick up an item, write a thank-you note, give a kiss, or what-have-you. Imagine that you are performing each of these as an act of submission. Use each as an opportunity to remind yourself of your place, be it through a ritual, a bowed head, a certain phrasing, or simply an image in your mind. If you have trouble expressing these things, go look up an existing style and steal from it—Victorian etiquette, geisha techniques, Gor.

Go now. Fetch me a drink.

Impress me

Almost every time, just after I say, “Goodnight” or “Take care”, or any other little goodbye, I also said to her,
“Make me proud”.

Make me proud. Please me by your way of life, and your actions. We have discussed some of your ideals, desires, objectives. We both agree that we want you to accomplish certain things, act in particular ways. Anyone can kneel beside me and follow simple orders. Few people have the strength and discipline to carry out long-term goals.

More than that. It's not simply a question of doing what I've told you. It's a matter of taking our agreement to heart. You're faced with a setback. How do you react? You have an opportunity. What do you make of it?

When I ask you, “What did you do today?”, how will I feel when I hear your answer?

Find something about yourself that you would like to change in your life. A small thing, a habit, a skill.

Can you show me the discipline required to make that change? Do it slowly, over an extended period of time. Aim for the endurance of a long-term task, not the challenge of doing something quickly.

Add to that concept. Are there certain practices you'd like to adapt? Ways you'd like to live your life? Don't set long-term goals here. Instead, see how well you can do those things on a day to day basis. Be happy about little victories. Don't be too hard on yourself when you have setbacks, but try not to repeat them, as well.

Can you make me proud of you?

Can you impress me with your seriousness and capability?

Show me.

A bit about fantasies

A classic exercise, my way.

Chose a fantasy of submission, preferably one which challenges you, frightens you a little, but also one that holds you and keeps you fascinated.

Go over it in your mind. Try to feel details. Taste them, try to define their flavor. Is this one embarrassing? Is that one erotic? Does some part of it touch on a memory or a dream? How does all this affect you? Why?

Write a short piece, a few paragraphs, exploring this fantasy. How did you find it? Why does it strike you?

Is this purely a fantasy? Or would you enjoy some of it in real life?

It's our power, our gift, to make these fantasies real. Go to any public leather club, see people on the sidelines. Some of them are a part of us; they're just shy or unsure, or quiet that evening. Others aren't, they don't understand us. All they see are our extremes, our costumes, our nudity, our eroticism. To them, fantasy is frightening, intimidating, taboo. They need us to do the things they're afraid to even imagine.

Let's not disappoint them.

Child

After my tenth year doing the Rocky Horror Picture Show, I began to go to the theaters where I wouldn't be known, and pretend I'd never seen the RHPS before.

It was exhilarating. I was always treated well. Old familiar lines suddenly sounded fresh to me. I was once again appreciative of the bold dress and undress of my cohorts. I had a hell of a time.

Every so often, in the course of your submission, *forget*.

Forget how much you've seen and done.

Lose track of some of the things you've learned.

Grow a little amnesia about the sensations, the potentialities, your desires.

What were you like, when you first started?

I was rapacious, analytical. I wanted to see and try everything. I would stare at a scene as though my eyes were drill-bits, trying to bore through what I was watching and into the knowledge it entailed. I wanted to figure out what everything was like, and try to explain why.

Having seen a bit of me in this work, perhaps that doesn't surprise you.

Try to avoid or tone down negatives in this memory; if you were afraid, remember it, but try to feel that fear as anticipation. If you were self-conscious, blush.

Go back to the beginning. As you do the familiar things, pretend you don't know what they're like. Wonder how they'll feel. You're a kid again.

And you're in such a lovely a candy shop..

INSPIRATION

Two lessons.

Raven's power

Raven walked into the room, looked at me, looked at my playpartner, looked at my lovely vanilla friend.

Seven minutes later, my "vanilla" friend was tied to my playpartner; they wrapped their bodies around each other as Raven beat and touched and teased. I'll never forget the look on Tia's face, will never forget her half-muffled exclamations, "Sweet Jesus..."

That, I thought, is power.

Renee's spanking

It wasn't quite a scene. It was an opened door. And it happened in two swats to Renee's ass.

The first was hesitant, but produced a murmur of approval. Slap. "Mmmm". "You really liked that?" I asked timidly. "Of course!"

I'll never know what moved my hand, how I made the jump from cautious experimentation to giving the bitch what she needed. I struck.

"SLAP!"

Her back arched, a cry tore its way up her throat and pulled past her bared teeth. Her head snapped up, her legs tightened; I could smell and feel her new wetness. In that instant, she was a superconductor; some feral energy welled up deep within her, and bellowed its way out of her body. The shockwave passed through her, and slammed, like a thunderbolt, straight into me.

It's still there...

Epilogue



“Who do you belong to?”

“You, sir”.

“Who do you belong to?”

“To you, sir”.

“*Who the fuck do you belong to?*”

“To y—” and her reply shuts off because my hand is over her mouth, splayed out against her face, and I shove her head to one side, exposing her neck to my teeth.