

BARBAROUS RITUALS: 84 Ways To Feminize Humans

By Anonymous

Woman is:

- kicking strongly in your mother's womb, upon which she is told, "It must be a boy, if it's so active!"
- being tagged with a pink beaded bracelet thirty seconds after you are born, and wrapped in pink blankets five minutes thereafter.
- being confined to the Doll Corner in nursery school when you are really fascinated by Tinker Toys.
- wanting to wear overalls instead of "frocks."
- learning to detest the words "dainty" and "cute."
- being labeled a tomboy when all you wanted to do was climb that tree to look out and see a distance.
- learning to sit with your legs crossed, even when your feet can't touch the floor yet.
- hating boys--because they're allowed to do things you want to do but are forbidden to--and being told hating boys is a phase.
- learning that something you do is "naughty," but when your brother does the same thing, it's "spunky."
- wondering why your father gets mad now and then, but your mother mostly sighs a lot.
- seeing grownups chuckle when you say you want to be an engineer or doctor when you grow up--and learning to say you want to be a mommy or a nurse, instead.
- wanting to shave your legs at twelve and being agonized because your mother won't let you.
- being agonized at fourteen because you finally have shaved your legs, and your flesh is on fire.
- being told nothing whatsoever about menstruation, so that you think you are bleeding to death with your first period, or:
- being told all about it in advance by kids at school who titter and make it clear the whole thing is dirty, or:
- being prepared for it by your mother, who carefully reiterates that it isn't dirty, all the while talking just above a whisper, and referring to it as "the curse," "being sick," or "falling off the roof."
- feeling proud of and disgusted by your own body, for the first, but not last, time.
- dying of shame because your mother makes you wear a "training bra," but there's nothing to train, or:
- dying of shame because your mother won't let you wear a bra and your breasts are bigger than other girls' your age and they flop when you run and you sit all the time with your arms folded over your chest.
- feeling basically comfortable in your own body, but gradually learning to hate it because you are: too short or tall, too fat or thin, thick-thighed or big-wristed, large-eared or stringy-haired, short-necked or long-armed, bowlegged, knock-kneed, or pigeon-toed--something that might make boys not like you.

- wanting to kill yourself because of pimples, dandruff, or a natural tendency to sweat--and discovering that commercials about miracle products just lie.
- dreading summertime because more of your body with its imperfections will be seen--and judged.
- tweezing your eyebrows/bleaching your hair/scraping your armpits/dieting/investigating vaginal sprays/biting your nails and hating that and filing what's left of them but hitting the quick instead.
- liking math or history a lot and getting hints that boys are turned off by smart girls. .
- getting hints that other girls are turned off by smart girls.
- finally getting turned off by smart girls, unconsciously dropping back, lousing up your marks, and being liked by the other kids at last.
- having an intense crush on another girl or on a woman teacher and learning that that's unspeakable.
- going to your first dance and dreaming about it beforehand, and hating it, just hating it afterwards: you didn't dance right, you spilled the punch, you were a wallflower in anguish (or: you were popular but in anguish because your best friend was a wallflower); you said all the wrong things.
- being absolutely convinced that you are a clod, a goon, a dog, a schlep, a flop, and an utter klutz.
- discovering that what seems like everything worthwhile doing in life "isn't feminine," and learning to just delight in being feminine and "nice"--and feeling somehow guilty.
- masturbating like crazy and being terrified that you'll go insane, be sterile, turn into a whore, or destroy your own virginity.
- getting more information any way you can, and then being worried because you've been masturbating clitorally, and that isn't even the "right way."
- swinging down the street feeling good and smiling at people and being hassled like a piece of meat in return.
- having your first real human talk with your mother and being told about all her old hopes and lost ambitions, and how you can't fight it, and that's just the way it is: life, sex, me, the works--and loving her and hating her for having been so beaten down.
- having your first real human talk with your father and being told about all his old hopes and lost ambitions, and how women really have it easier, and "what a man really wants in a woman,"--and loving him and hating him for having been beaten down--and for beating down your mother in turn.
- brooding about "how far" you should go with the guy you really like. Will he no longer respect you? Will you get--oh God--a "reputation?" Or, if not, are you a square? Being pissed off because you can't just do what you feel like doing.
- being secretly afraid that you'll lose your virginity to a tampon, but being too ashamed to ask anyone about it.
- lying awake wondering if a girl really can get pregnant by the sperm swimming through her panties.
- having a horrible fight with your boyfriend who keeps shouting how he's frustrated by not "doing it"--it never occurring to him that you might be climbing walls, too, which you maybe don't even dare to admit.

- finally screwing and your groin and buttocks and thighs ache like hell and you're all wet and maybe bloody and it wasn't like a Hollywood movie at all but Jesus at least you're not a virgin any more but is this what it's all about?--and meanwhile he's asking, "Did you come?"
- discovering you need an abortion, and really learning for the first time what your man, your parents and your society think of you. Frequently paying for that knowledge with your death.
- finding that the career you've chosen exacts more than just study or hard work--an emotional price of being made to feel "less a woman."
- finding that almost all jobs open to you pay less for harder work than to men.
- being bugged by men in the office who assume that you're a virginal prude if you don't flirt, and that you're an easy mark if you are halfway relaxed and pleasant.
- learning to be very tactful if you have men working "under you." More likely, learning to always be working under men.
- becoming a woman executive, for God's sake, and then being asked to order the delicatessen food for an office party.
- finding out how difficult it is to get hold of "easily accessible" birth-control information.
- chasing the slippery diaphragm around the bathroom as if in a game of frisbee the first time you try to insert it yourself, or:
- gaining weight, or hemorrhaging, or feeling generally miserable with the Pill, or just freaking out at the scare stories about it, or:
- going on a cross-country car trip in a Volkswagen, during which the Loop or the Coil becomes dislodged and begins to tear at your flesh.
- wondering why we can have live color telecasts of the moon's surface, but still no truly simple, humane, safe method of birth control.
- going the rounds of showers, shopping, money worries, invitation lists, licenses--when all you really wanted to do was live with the guy.
- quarreling with your fiance over whether "and obey" should be in the marriage ceremony.
- secretly being bitched because the ceremony says "man and wife"--not "husband and wife" or "man and woman." Resenting having to change your (actually, your father's) name.
- having been up since 6 a.m. on your wedding day seeing family and friends you really don't even like and being exhausted from standing just so and not creasing your gown and from the ceremony and reception and traveling and now being alone with this strange man who wants to "make love" when you don't know that you even like him and even if you did you desperately want to just sleep for fourteen hours, or:
- not getting married, just living together in "free love," and finding out it's just the same as marriage anyway, and you're the one who pays for the "free."
- playing the role to the hilt, cooking special dishes, cleaning, etc.--and knowing you'll never make it as Good Housekeeping's "ideal," or:
- "dropping out" together to a "hip, groovy" commune--and cooking brown rice instead of Betty Crocker.
- having menstrual cramps each month quite normally, cramps and/or headaches and/or nausea that would put a "normal" man out of commission for two weeks--and going on with your job or chores, etc., so no one will be inconvenienced.
- finding out that you're bored by your husband in bed.

- faking an orgasm for the first time: disgust, frustration--and relief (because he never even knew the difference).
- feeling guilty for not having an orgasm: what is wrong with you?
- finding out that you bore your husband in bed. Getting desperate--where have you failed?
- wanting desperately to know what special things he wants you to do to him in bed--and being afraid to tell him what you'd want him to do; or telling him hints that he promptly forgets for ever after.
- wanting to be the power behind the throne and finding out either that he's not a great man after all, or that he doesn't need your support.
- being jealous and hating yourself for showing it.
- hating certain books that you might have loved--all because he read them first and told you all about them. Feeling robbed. This goes for movies, too.
- wanting to go back to school, to read, to join something, do something. Why isn't home enough for you? What's wrong with you?
- coming home from work--and starting in to work: unpack the groceries, fix supper, wash up the dishes, rinse out some laundry, etc., etc.
- feeling a need to say "thank you" when your guy actually fixes himself a meal now that you're dying with the 'flu.
- getting pregnant, hearing all the earth-mother shit from everyone, going around with a fixed smile on your terrified face.
- having men on the street, in cabs and busses, no longer (at least) regard you as an ogle-object; now they regard you as Carrier of the Species.
- knowing there must be some deep-down way to enjoy this that maybe women in some 'primitive' tribe feel, but being elephantine, achy, nauseated--and kvetched at having to be cheerful.
- wanting your husband with you, or wanting natural childbirth, and either he won't, or the doctor or hospital won't--and you're on your own, or:
- maybe you're lucky and he's not afraid or disgusted and the doctor approves and you go through it together and it's even beautiful--and you hear another woman screaming in solitary labor next door.
- feeling responsible for more lives--your kids' as well as your man's--but never, never your own life.
- learning to hate other women who are: younger, freer, unmarried, without children, in jobs, in school, in careers--whatever. Hating yourself for hating them.
- trying desperately not to repeat the pattern, and catching yourself telling your daughter one day that she "isn't acting like a lady," or warning your son "not to be a sissy."
- knowing that your husband is "playing around" and wanting to care, but not even being able to.
- being widowed, or divorced, and trying to get a "good" job--at your age.
- claiming not to understand the "revolt" of your kids, but understanding it in your gut and not being able to help being bitter because you think it's too late for you.
- still wanting to have sex but feeling faintly ridiculous before your husband, let alone other men.
- being patronized and smirked over by your own children during the agonizing ritual of widow-hood dating.
- getting older, getting lonelier, getting ready to die--and knowing it wouldn't have had to be this way, after all.

