

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

The beautiful people aren't interested in old porn, so that day I let them in even though I was about to close. Their magnetism relied on the fact that they made you think that they were unwillingly or accidentally beautiful and clever, that they weren't asking for special treatment, that they weren't trying to take advantage. Among themselves, they acted like they tacitly understood that they naturally had a certain amount of control over people. It's something everyone knows but no one mentions. Even now, five years after I met them on that rainy afternoon, I still don't know whether I truly exist or whether I'm merely here to tell this story and to be part of their memories.

Narco-State works freelance, flextime. I have this small store selling vintage porn—collectors' items. I don't make much money with it, but I keep it open as a moral duty to this slowly dying industry. Today we closed early to get to the party a little earlier than we usually do. We know we're always the last ones to show up. I take Narco-State's hand. Without taking his eyes off the highway, he purses his lips and clicks his tongue. I remain silent the whole way there, playing with my curly ponytails as I watch people coming out of stores with packages and paper bags full of purchases. We were never good at talking about our feelings, so we developed this language to tell each other things we can't express in words. I know he's really sad, I know he knows the world is about to change today.

I'm asking myself what will happen to us after they're gone. I ring the doorbell, feeling the anxiety of our last winter together. I hope the sun never rises, and if it does, I hope that by then we've drunk all the wine, danced to all the music and smoked all the weed there is in the whole world.

—Hey sexy, did you run into traffic?—says Colonial Matrix of Power as she hugs me and kisses me on the cheek. The skin on her face is freshly made up, making her olive eyes stand out, as well as the long, curly blond beard around her red lips and pink cheeks.

—Like every Friday!—I say as I hug her affectionately and recognize the smell of her skin.

Narco-State takes one step forward, slightly lifting the balaclava off his face to give her a kiss. He says:

—How are you guys? Have you finished packing? —He takes her arm and, with his other hand, gives her a bottle of wine we'd brought along as a present.

—Oh! Almost. We're trying to sell all we can, so don't expect much furniture—she says as she takes the bottle.

—Ugh! If there's no furniture, I'm leaving—he says, with that sense of humor

hardly anyone understands, though she finds it entertaining. They both laugh loudly and she responds:

—No way, you're here, so you're coming in.

As he walks ahead I catch him staring at her ass. Though few women might find such an ill-mannered man attractive, it's why I'm with him. Because he's always horny and inappropriate.

—Hey brother! —he says as he hugs Wall Street Bull. Everyone knows they've been best friends for years, long before I met them. They keep hugging for a few seconds and I know many people are asking themselves the same question I am: how this brutal man has been able to seduce and get along with the Wall Street Bull. I guess they're two types of men that complement each other.

—You must be happy, getting rid of us, aren't you? —I joke as I also hug Wall Street Bull and kiss him on the cheek.

—You couldn't be more wrong—says Wall Street Bull—I'm not getting rid of you, and you're not getting rid of me, because I'm going to pack you into one of my suitcases and take you with us—he grabs me by the waist with the force of a big animal and tilts me backwards, making me lift one foot to keep my balance. He leans in, his black eyes close to mine, and I smell his breath, like a wild bull's, a stock exchange stud.

I know he's only joking, but for a second I imagine the whole story: they stick me in a medium-sized suitcase and I eat cracker nuts during the whole trip. On the other side of the world, they keep me locked inside their apartment and make me their sex slave.

—No! What'll my hubby do without me?—I ask.

—I don't know and I don't care—he says picking me up again—come in. Everyone's already here and we're a couple of drinks ahead of you.

We all sit down on two big sofas in the living room and small stools that Wall Street Bull and Colonial Matrix of Power have rustled up for the occasion. On two tables they've laid out bottles of tequila, whisky, rum, vodka and ice cubes on a tray. But everyone is drinking red wine and eating cheese and anchovy-stuffed olives. When we get there people are discussing amateur porn, and this has unleashed a flood of opinions about whether or not German pornography is limited by its own language to representing amateur porn as well as Russian porn does, and if Latin American porn is even interested in the idea, since it's the very definition of amateur porn. I'm sure it was Terrorism who brought this up, since she likes B-movies. On some afternoons, Terrorism picks me up when I'm closing the store. We have coffee with cake at the diner on the corner and then we go see a

double feature at the Cosmos Theater. We pick up a couple of guys and we fool around for a while. If we're in the mood, we end up at Terrorism's pad.

—Why are we still talking about Western concepts?—asks Delinking.

—What do you mean?—asks Terrorism.

—Well, why do we keep using concepts that have nothing to do with us? Amateur porn? German, Russian porn? On this side of the world, there never was a porn boom or even a similar industry. God! We've never even made gonzo porn!—responds Delinking.

—If what we're doing isn't amateur, then what do you want to call it? Erotic B-movies? We didn't invent porn, there's no escaping it, you know, the language of porn is inherently Western—says The Other.

—If I understand this right, what you're suggesting is that not only does the history of porn not take into account our vision of it, but that we should accept this history as legitimate? Is that it? —says Terrorism.

—Not exactly. I think that expecting them to include us in their version of history is beside the point. We shouldn't give a fuck about the history of porn, at least mainstream porn. By ignoring it, we discredit it.—continues Delinking—I'm not denying that we inherited the language of porn from colonialism, but I at least don't really know what a MILF is, or what fisting is, because I've never done it and the male and female actors don't represent me. We should focus instead on our own vision of eroticism and pornography. I don't have the time or the means to play around with bondage, and experimenting with interracial partners would be redundant, since I'm interracial myself—he says.

—Don't make me laugh. If you don't want to sound Western, you shouldn't even be talking about pornography, at least not about mainstream porn, which is just a nickname for Western oppression—continues Terrorism, addressing Delinking. Delinking and Terrorism fooled around a couple of times. It didn't go very far. Terrorism says he liked coming on her ass without penetrating her, something she found frustrating, not so much because she wanted to be penetrated but because she likes people to come in her mouth. Terrorism is a huge fan of fresh semen and Delinking's self-confidence goes flaccid when someone looks him straight in the eye, so the relationship didn't prosper.

—Mainstream porn is still an extremely well defined structure that, in every case, is constructed around the archetype of the Western male, for his own pleasure, to establish this as the norm. A white man and woman are the main characters. The narrative is simple and starts with fellatio, where the woman has to convince us that her only pleasure is to please the leading man. Then comes penetration: missionary-style, cowgirl, acrobatic penetration, doggy-style and finally, he

comes in her mouth. His coming in her mouth is the fundamental conclusion that, following Aristotle's dramatic structure, serves to clarify the story, its conflict and philosophy. The white man is the king of the species who subdues white women and, in the case of mainstream Central European porn, especially enjoys fucking white Eastern European women, to make it clear that there are classes even among Europeans and that he rules over them all. He also screws women of every race and creed as an alternative indicating his ubiquitous authority over the rest of the world. There are variations on this theme where youth, physical appearance, race or even religion defines subgenres. In every case, the message is the same; even in stories where the leading man is black or non-white and fucks a white woman, the goal is to fulfill the white man's fantasy: there's always a stalker and the woman is always in danger, as is the rest of his property. The gardener, the chauffeur, the immigrant houseboy are the enemy that will momentarily undermine the system, adding a bit of spice to the story. These accidents are never more than that: momentary glitches in the system that the white man learns to overcome by playing with them and incorporating them into his own imaginary so as to neutralize them. Mainstream European porn isn't Western propaganda, it's class and gender propaganda, it's the authority of the "white man with property" as a statement in every realm of life—says Colonial Matrix of Power. Terrorism lowers her head, a bit ashamed of being such a fan of fresh semen in her mouth.

What we were and will be, the power and money we've managed to get or haven't got: none of this means anything on the nights when our group gets together. What plays an important role in the world of our relationship is porn. Over the nights and early mornings we've spent together, it's the subject that always comes up. It's because of porn and not love that we're together. Sex would've separated us; porn has allowed us to forgive each other.

I haven't said anything while listening to the whole conversation. And although I have my opinions about the need to distinguish mainstream from alternative, I've kept them to myself so as not to ruin the goodbye party for Wall Street Bull and Colonial Matrix of Power. I know my opinions can sometimes seem radical.

Colonial Matrix of Power knows me well enough to read them on my face, so she rescues me by taking my hand and leading me to her room. She looks in her chest of drawers for the bras and panties she bought yesterday and puts them on the bed. Four black sets and two red. After trying them all on and exchanging opinions about which is sexier and more enticing, we quickly look through Wall Street Bull's things and we find four pills that look like E. We each take one. Colonial Matrix of Power puts the third one in her mouth, bites it and gives me half, mouth to mouth. The feeling of her tongue on mine travels through my entire body and reaches my vagina, which gets a little wet.

When we've finished trying on the underwear we go back to the living room. By then the group has scattered around the apartment. G8 and Delinking are still in the living room. Terrorism and Noble Savage are in the kitchen. Peaceable Revolution and Decolonization are talking in the hallway.

—Hey, Philosophy of Liberation, where were you guys?—asks G8.

—Us girls always pee together, didn't you know?—I respond as I take a long sip of wine.

—Where are the others?—asks Colonial Matrix of Power.

—Smoking a joint—says Peaceable Revolution.

Necropolitics has brought a bit of crack as a goodbye present for Wall Street Bull, who shares it with Narco-State. They put it in a green glass pipe with a seated mandrill decorating the tip and smoke it in a corner of the courtyard. Out of habit Narco-State always hides when he's smoking, even when it's not necessary. Necropolitics is with them. Although she doesn't drink or do any drugs, she likes to please other people.

—Want some? —asks Wall Street Bull, holding the smoke in his lungs, waiting for an answer he already knows will be no.

—No, but get as fucked up as you want, it's a gift—she says.

The first time I saw Necropolitics I thought she was a rabbit. She's a tall black woman with long horns and burning coals in her mouth and eyes. She was born male but decided to transition when she was an adult.

—Maybe I'll go visit you next year. I have some business to do on the other side of the world—she says, wagging her long black horns.

—Amazing, it'd be great to see you over there—says Wall Street Bull—we'll have some fuckers lined up waiting for you.

—Like a whore—says Narco-State.

—Well, a whore fucks guys for money, and I'm a whore but a respectable one—says Necropolitics—I screw them for kicks.

Narco-State purses his lips and clicks his tongue wistfully.

—Oh well, shit happens—he says drily.

Colonial Matrix of Power is entertaining those of us who stayed behind in the living room. She pours wine into glasses and restocks trays with cheese, cold cuts and olives. I'm sitting next to the stereo on the step between the hallway and kitchen, trying to pick which music to play. Colonial Matrix of Power is sitting next to me and we both start singing along to the jazz song that's playing on the loudspeakers. The song talks about such violent love that it asks to be set free, because it's like the wind, because it needs more than a soft touch, because it's

wild and she has to let it go. She has to let it go in spite of the fact that it's with him that she heard the sound of the mandolins and that her life started with his kiss.

When everybody gets back, Decolonization grabs me by the waist. I sway my hips to the rhythm as I reach over to turn off the light. Noble Savage and Terrorism come out of the kitchen with a huge cake decorated with colored candles and big lettering that reads, "Bon Voyage." Noble Savage is proud to be showing the cake off with Terrorism. He fantasizes about them being together, about them being the hosts and the main characters in this story, though when it comes down to it he realizes, as I do, that we're only playing bit parts. Terrorism told me a few days ago about her cake idea. Colonial Matrix of Power is serving sparkling wine in flutes and we all take a piece of cake, raise our glasses and toast.

—Cheers!—says Delinking.

—Cheers, happy trails!—says Necropolitics.

—Long live the happy couple!—yells G8, already a little drunk.

Colonial Matrix of Power gets up and taps her glass with a spoon.

—Thank you my dear friends—says Colonial Matrix of Power—I'll make this quick.

—Take your clothes off! —yells G8.

Everybody laughs and Colonial Matrix of Power adds:

—Seriously, thanks for being our friends, you're our family and the years we've spent with you have been the best of our lives. We'll miss you.

—Cheers—says Wall Street Bull.

We all cheer and toast. I start thinking about the group's future, and I watch Colonial Matrix of Power as she sticks small pieces of cake into her mouth as fast as a young girl would on her birthday. She looks happy. From time to time she looks at Wall Street Bull and wipes crumbs from her lips with a napkin. Colonial Matrix of Power is curvy but her flesh is firm. She's one of those all-out blondes with silky skin and thin, almost translucent hair. Her hair falls to the middle of her back and her long beard is classically cut, Plato-style. When she first walked into my bookstore that afternoon with Wall Street Bull, the first thing I noticed were her eyes, which are round and sparkly and crowned with long lashes; since they're also blonde, she coats them with mascara to make them visible. In the summer, her nose gets freckly and it's the size of a pinky. She has full lips that change color with the weather: in winter they're as red as a

strawberry, in summer, pale pink. I hadn't met them yet when they got married. But Necropolitics wrote in the guestbook:

"As soon as you meet Colonial Matrix of Power, you realize that the gentleness with which she strokes her beard is precisely what keeps Wall Street Bull tame and balanced."

—The fact that this sexy woman also has a childlike sweetness to her is what's confusing. You don't know whether you want to fuck her or give her candy—Necropolitics once told me.

At the same time, Colonial Matrix of Power is very knowledgeable about pornography, which makes her a great conversationalist, though she's also thoughtful enough to listen to your opinions. It's true she can sometimes be conservative, even reactionary, but like I already said, who we are and want to be doesn't play any role in the realm of our friendship. I know Colonial Matrix of Power and Wall Street Bull met in an airport, that they talked non-stop through the whole transatlantic flight and that by the time they landed, they couldn't face leaving each other's company ever again.

We talk, drink, dance and sweat. G8 doesn't look too good. His sweater is soaking wet and for the first time, he's dropped the watermelon and the Italian cantaloupe he's always carrying. He looks a bit vulnerable and occasionally stammers something to Peaceable Revolution. He's always believed that Peaceable Revolution and Necropolitics are involved. He couldn't be more wrong. Peaceable Revolution occasionally sleeps with Decolonization. Decolonisation likes blacks that taste like chocolate.

—I think you've had too much to drink. Do you want to go to bed? —says Peaceable Revolution to G8—I want to get home in one piece and you're in no state to drive.

—He's fine, he just needs to rest a bit and drink plenty of water—says Wall Street Bull.

—Let's go rest for a bit, honey—says Peaceable Revolution to G8.

—Did I say I wanted to go to bed? —growls G8 at Wall Street Bull.

—Take him anyway—says Wall Street Bull.

—I'll make up a bed for him—says Colonial Matrix of Power.

G8 was a guest teacher in postgraduate studies at the University when he was at the height of his fame. Though it was grueling to take a six-hour flight to go and teach for only two hours, he considered it a luxury that his life as a jet setter provided him with, and he enjoyed it as such. Peaceable Revolution was one of

his most brilliant students and, in his mind, she's still the most fascinating woman he's ever met. One could say that Peaceable Revolution has been managing his declining stardom better than he has. He still doesn't understand and keeps yearning for his former acclaim, wishing he could go back to his country. For her, life is a natural process and it follows that what's alive has to die. I'd say they love each other very much.

Peaceable Revolution takes G8 to bed and makes the most of the situation by staying in the room with him. The rest of us go to the rooftop to watch the sun rise. The chirping birds tell us it's about to come up. We sit on the roof in a line facing East. Wall Street Bull remembers we forgot the wine and glasses; he gets up and I offer to help. Colonial Matrix of Power looks at him and says:

—Don't take too long, the sun's about to come up.

Downstairs, Wall Street Bull grabs me by the waist and kisses me. We go down into the basement on the small staircase at the end of the hallway.

—I was dying to eat you out—says Wall Street Bull—I thought the time would never come.

—I'm wearing the clothes you like—I say as I stroke my neoprene suit—because I know the time would come.

In the basement I quickly take off my suit and he goes down on me. He then raises his head to my breasts and sucks them hungrily, alternating between one and the other as if they had different flavors. He sits on the ground and I squat on him; I know we have to hurry up so no will come looking for us, so I sit on him without delay; I pound him continuously as fast and deep as I can while we're kissing, rather desperately. He keeps nibbling my tits, one after the other; he knows I can't stop myself from coming when he sucks my tits. But we still have a bit of time and I don't want to come yet, so I pull myself off him and intentionally thrust his penis into my ass; his penis is covered in my juices, and though I feel a sudden intense pain, it's bearable. The swaying of my round butt brings Wall Street Bull close to orgasm, but I pull myself off just before it happens, because I want to go first. I've always liked to go first, even when I was a little girl, I always asked to go first, whether we were skipping rope, playing hopscotch or doing school presentations. I proffer the traditional point of entry and proceed to sit as far up his bastion as I can while I let him slide in as deep as he can. I apply the same technique three times but faster and faster. The third time I come and my body spasms.

—I'm tired. Can we stop?—Colonial Matrix of Power interrupts the story as she takes off the mask of Philosophy of Liberation. She wipes her vagina with a handkerchief and puts her underwear and bra back on.

When Colonial Matrix of Power and Wall Street Bull emigrated, reenacting their

last night back home down to the most trifling details became a way for them to stop themselves from forgetting, to keep everyone alive. After a while, the ritual became something that lessened the loneliness and boredom they felt in this perfect city, where nothing happens and where people entertain themselves by ratting each other out. They've been doing their best to play all of us for nearly three years now, reenacting every detail they can remember, but over the months and the years, memories fade and different versions of the events contradict each other. All that's left of that night are shadows, and we've become caricatures.

—Yes, let's stop—says Wall Street Bull—I'm also tired. If you want we can make love in the bedroom.

—Haven't we just fucked?—asks Colonial Matrix of Power.

—We were the others—he says—let's fuck as ourselves. Also I haven't come yet.

—Oh, Wall Street Bull, it was always you, my great occupier, you, you, you son of a bitch, you—she says as she smiles and touches the tip of one of his horns with her index finger.—Since we got to this country, every Friday we play this game, and it's not fun anymore, it's just sad. Let's go to sleep. I'm tired. You'll get a chance to come next time—she adds.

They go to bed as the sun is rising.

Oscar Cueto, October 6, 2017

Traslation: Richard Moszka