



Some thoughts on sex and relationship



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Count von Count as a metaphor for passion

All of life can be placed on a continuum, with Count von Count on one end and the Cookie Monster¹ on the other.

The Cookie Monster loves cookies, and Count von Count loves peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. But the nature of their love is much, much different. Cookie Monster is all animal passion in his love; he stuffs all the cookies in his mouth all at once, and doesn't even care that the crumbs all go flying out. There is no reason, no sanity, in his love. It's an explosive, fiery love, a love that consumes everything it touches.

The Count, on the other hand, lines up his PB&Js, and counts them. Then he eats one, and *counts them again*. He *knows* how many are left, but that doesn't matter. For him, the love of his PB&Js is a cerebral thing. He savors the *process*. He draws out his passion, delighting in the intellectual joy.

I am very Count von Count about sex. I love savoring it, I love drawing it out, intellectualizing it, drawing in and tasting my lover's responses.

"Oh God oh God oh God I'm going to--"
"No, you're not. Not yet. Perhaps I will just...move...slower. Or maybe..."
"Noooooooo!"
"...stop...touching...you...altogether."
"Pleaseohpleaseohplease I need to I need to!"
"What do you need to do?"
"Oh pleaseJesusGod!msoclosepleasepleaseplease!"
"You are, are you? So if I just do THIS..."
"OhfuckohfuckNOOOO!"
"...or maybe press just a little bit harder, like THIS..."
"OhgodohgodAAAAAIGH!"
"...or perhaps move a little bit more, like THIS..."
"NonononononoYESYESYES!!!"

And amazingly enough, I have partners who keep coming back. Even when I start off a session by saying things like "I'm going to hurt you now. You can scream if you want to."

I had the opportunity to accompany  to a play party recently, and she, too, keeps coming back. I'm not yet quite sure what sort of relationship she and I are building, but so far it's different in kind from most of the relationships I've built in the past...or at least it feels that way to me.

In the past, I was in a long-term poly/mono relationship with a partner who, I think, never fully trusted me (or at least, never fully trusted polyamory), and seemed to me to believe that if she didn't keep me on a pretty short leash I'd end up running all over the place.

At that time, I generally seemed to stabilize at about three relationships. For a very long time, I was involved with her,  [REDACTED], and a partner M, and things remained that way for quite some time. Longer, in fact, than the median lifespan for conventional marriages in the US which end in divorce.

After my marriage ended, I still seemed to stabilize at three relationships;  [REDACTED],  [REDACTED], and  [REDACTED]. At least for a while.

Since I've moved to Atlanta, though, things have changed rather a lot, and become rather a lot less well-defined.

On epiphanies and habits

*My past displays a reason
The past displays a cause
And I know that we will never be the same
'Cause it's the elements that make us who we are*

*My path betrays my reason
My hope betrays my cause
And if I ever find a way
You know I'd follow through, I'd carry on
But the elements have made us who we are*

Shortly after I moved to Atlanta, I met  Lauren . She was quite a surprise to me; but then, the people in my life often are. One could argue that it's because I have never once gone out seeking a partner, and rather keep myself open to whatever connections form on their own; looked at another way, it could be argued that I'm reactive rather than proactive in relationship.

Shortly after we connected, she moved to New Jersey. Our relationship seemed to falter after that, in part because I'm not really good at long-distance relationships.

Cue the irony here; all of my relationships are currently long distance, some more long distance than others. Yeah, I know. Polyamorous and multi-partnered and all of my partners are a ways away. I'm doing it wrong.

Part of the problem is that I'm very unstructured in my life--so unstructured that accidentally clicking on a

link to Google Calendars has been known to cause me fourteen points of aggravated damage. I Just Don't Do Structure. She and I communicate differently, and for whatever reason, the things she needed to feel valued felt to me like obligations, which made it difficult for me to provide them. In the end, I think she did not feel valued by me, and we sort of called the whole thing off.

So there I was, on my way back from playing with

 [REDACTED] at two o'clock in the morning, with the moon grinning down like a Cheshire cat at me, and I was (what else?) processing. Count von Count, and all that. And it occurred to me, I don't really assert my needs in relationship.

I do talk about needs in relationship, and I do ask my partners about their needs in relationship. In fact,  [REDACTED] and I have had a conversation about what she's available for.

But, y'know, saying "What are you available for in relationship?" is not the same thing as saying "I would like a relationship with you." It seems the same to me, because (at least from my perspective) I wouldn't ask a person I wasn't interested in a relationship with, and the *subtext* of "What are you available for in relationship?" sounds to me like "I would like a relationship with you," but the two still aren't the same.

And interestingly, that very night  Lauren [REDACTED] called me, and let me know that the door was still open to a relationship with me.

In my past, there were certain things that were most definitely Not Okay in the context of my old relationship. Proactively seeking out new partners and making myself available for big-R Relationships with them definitely Was On That List Of Not Okay.

Problem was, I *was* available for relationship, so when they formed (and they did), those relationships tended to be Not Okay, too.

Now, I learned some bad lessons from this. One of the lessons I learned was that being reactive rather than proactive in relationship was a Good Thing. I've never developed, and still don't have, a good set of tools for laying out the boundaries of my romantic relationships; instead, I tend to follow my partners' lead, and allow my partners to shape and form the path the relationship will take. That passivity is a bug, not a feature, in the environment I live in now.

As I'm fond of saying, [REDACTED], habits can become ruts, paths that we take simply because at some point we stop seeing any other way.

On choices and consequences

you are so far from home...

*They turn me alone, not today
In you, this void just goes away
In this distant foreign land
I won't be forgotten*

*Complicated, I know; life's this way
And you're half the world away
And my hold's slipping from your hand
As I walk you to the gate*

It's also a feature, too, this lack of proactivity in relationship. It give me flexibility.

When I met AMBER, I saw in her things I had never seen in anyone before. I recognized so many things I valued on such a deep level that it felt like being struck by lightning. Even her recognition of the Void resonated with me.

I did not know, of course, how profoundly my connection with her would change everything. Nor did I know that AMBER was a dragonslayer [REDACTED]; to be honest, I don't believe she did, either. That recognition has been extraordinarily expensive, and at the same time a gift beyond all price. There is in her a passion, as methodical as the Count and as fiery as the Cookie Monster's, and every time I am reminded of it I am awed and humbled by it.

There is not any part of life that AMBER does not live with passion, and there is not part of life that Shelly does not face with an unflinching, razor-sharp intellectual honesty. She probed and prodded the weak spots in my relationships, the thousand little compromises I'd made and the choices I'd made without consciously being aware I'd made them. There are, I think, few people who can stand up to that relentless probing and pushing; it is no accident that she has often been surrounded by people who are not like her and do not understand the value she brings.

Eventually, there came a time when the pushing and probing of the fault lines in the life i had built led to a tiny earthquake, far beneath the water, an almost imperceptible slip of those faults.

Even the smallest of seismic shifts can create a wave, deep underwater, that presents itself as no more than a ripple on the surface, a few inches high...yet when it reaches the shoreline, is revealed for the gargantuan tidal wave it is. Wen that wave surfaced, it altered the landscape forever. There are certain compromises I will never make again, and I believe I am a better person for it.

That is the gift beyond price AMBER gave me--the tools to remake my life in a way that allows me to be who I am.

Our relationship today looks nothing like it did when it began four years ago. She has set herself down a path that has re-forged her in the fires of her own passion. The life of a dragonslayer is not an easy one. We

no longer live together, and I rarely see her these days. In almost every important way, she is no longer the person she was when I met her.

I am flexible in relationship. A relationship that came attached with expectations would have, I think, become brittle and fractured by now. But our relationship, because it is allowed to be whatever is, today is as strong as it has ever been. Time and distance don't matter. I have, over the past four years, been able to watch her unfold and blossom, and I feel uniquely privileged and honored to be able to be part of that.

In the past, I have generally tended to stabilize at about three relationships. Today, I have somewhere between four and six, depending on how one defines the word "relationship." Over the past year, I've been forced to examine many of the most basic assumptions I make about sex and relationship, and to learn skills that I have never needed before.

And in all of that, there is a sense that distance *does* matter. Distance makes it seductively easy to continue to add partners, almost indefinitely; because I live alone, and because any long-distance partnership necessarily imposes limits on the time and attention which I can make available to someone, there seems to be a vast amount of unused potential for relationship that is not touched by my current partnership arrangements.

Back to sex

*I'm drawing your lines with my hands
I'm weaving the dream that never ends
I don't play hide and seek with you, dear
when i touch you*

*You know that you love it
You need it
For sure*

*Aiming fingers searching secret pleasures
Roaming where your river seems so deep
you know I'm going on
i like the song you'll sing for me
when i touch you...*

I am very Count von Count when it comes to sex. So much, in fact, that I quoted Francis Bacon during a conversation about sex with _recently.

Okay, so that's a little over the top, perhaps. Particularly when the conversation came as it did on the heels of a different conversation with a very charming woman who may identify herself if she so chooses which

included lines like "I am going to take you now. You may come if you want to, but there are rules. You are only allowed to come if it hurts. Now, be a good girl and ask me to rape you." (Yes, the people in my life have some very interesting and exotic tastes. Yes, I share those tastes.)

We live in a society that promotes a virulent and particularly destructive, I think, double standard about sex. Men who have a number of partners are studs; women who have a number of partners are tramps and whores. The conversation touched on that double standard a bit; women who embrace their sexuality openly, enthusiastically, often run the risk of losing the respect of the people around them, because, y'know, good girls just don't do that sort of thing.

There's another irony there, at least with me, because, you see, I am more likely, not less likely, to respect any person who embraces all of himself or herself, and who makes conscious, deliberate choices about what to be, even when (or especially when) those choices run counter to the generally accepted ways to live.

Next week, I leave to spend thanksgiving with  [REDACTED]. I have not seen her in a long time; in fact, our relationship is nearly a year old at this point (almost exactly a year old, depending the point at which one might choose to call it a "relationship"), and these past couple of months have been the longest time we have gone since the relationship began that we have not seen each other.

I could not, two years ago, have predicted the path that would led to her life intersecting with mine. And at this point, I can not imagine my life without her in it.

There's a saying: "People come into your life for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. When you figure out which it is, you will know exactly what to do." The part that saying gets wrong is in failing to understand that sometimes, it may be some or all of the above. I have been blessed, in my life, to be able to share some part of it with all of the people who've touched it; and I've been particularly blessed with being able to share it with people who have been there for a reason, a season, *and* a lifetime.

 [REDACTED], I believe, quite possibly all of these.

However, that doesn't mean that I'm not going to do some very dirty, very evil things to her poor hapless naked body when I get my hands on it.

¹Yes, I know ~~he's now the Vegetable Monster, and that~~ "cookies are a sometimes thing." Blasphemy, it is.

Edit: So apparently, rumors of the Cookie Monster's demise have been greatly exaggerated (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cookie_Monster). Whew!

TAGS: [philosophy](#), [polyamory](#), [sex](#)



24 comments



November 19 2007, 03:10:18 UTC

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

this is a very good read, well written.

I am only 21 and I have never even been in a mono relationship ever in my entire life, let alone a poly one. I think my behaviors are definitely more poly than mono, but I really don't know myself until I've experienced the "specialness" of a relationship. I am in a state where I am really confused and uncertain. Your writing clarifies some of those feelings.

Thanks!



[November 19 2007, 03:15:43 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

wow. what an amazing illustration of a growth process. so familiar, and yet so different. thank you for taking the time to put it out here.



[November 19 2007, 03:42:45 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

As always I love reading what you've written. Be it a journal entry, an erotic story, or anything else.

This was a great read, and I, as always, am fascinated by you.

And yes, it is blasphemy...the "vegetable monster" *sigh*

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[tacit](#)

[November 19 2007, 16:21:43 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

That, at least, makes me feel somewhat better. The Vegetable Monster...yikes!



[November 19 2007, 04:38:02 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

I'd be honored to be outted by you.. (and inned.. and sidewaysed and.. ohh!) Hee!

I had a little epiphany of my own similar to this topic.

I have always shied away from being identified as a perv, or a whore, etc. I was.. *cough* an innocent little girl who might have found herself in some odd situations and just did what came naturally with them. ('Naturally' not necessarily being anything remotely innocent, but it wasn't my fault.. I certainly hadn't SOUGHT out this situation.)

Recently, I was playfully (nay, respectfully?) called a 'Perv' and tried to innocently say.. 'no no, not me!' when the preceding conversation was held up to deny my protestations.. And a little toggle was hit inside my thoughts and a warm, soothing, golden light lit up my interior sense of self! 'You know.. I AM a Perv. Isn't THAT wonderful?!?!?' ;)

This shy, shrinking, reserved, self certainly wasn't the whole of my relationship or sexual expression - I behave in a much more even-tempered and balanced fashion (I was so thrilled when someone recently

called me 'Scary and mean!') - but the story I liked to **tell** myself was one that allowed me to believe I was a passive player in the world. Behaving boldly was reasoned away by my internal logic, forgotten, and even denigrated by the parts of me that seek attention through conformance.

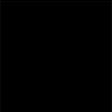
I was considering this sparkling realization that I am a prevert in the face of some sad historical facts of my life where I didn't receive the attention from those I would like to have (and perhaps should have - it's been a lonely life for much of it). I may, arguably, have even been conditioned by a series of life events to think that I was only allowed only the attention someone offered. That I should not (could not!) ask for more from anyone.

I'm a bit done with all that. I will ask, damnit, for what I want and need. And should I be denied it, by poor timing and planning or if I should exceed the emotional quotient of my partner, then it cannot hurt anywhere near as badly as realizing there is something I want and being unable to ask for it.

I think, in the few relationships I have claimed important to me the last few years.. I was already doing this (at least in part). It is part of the pull I felt inside me to only pursue relationships with individuals who seemed to bring out a better version of myself. I was being gregarious and playful and outgoing against the better judgment of the old biddies sitting on my internal committee. They have been excused from the panel of my thoughts. Their judgmental services are no longer required.

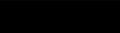
It's a little toggle that doesn't actually serve to change many of my behaviors, but I feel a whole lot better about it. ..and warm.. and squooshy.. and playful.. and happy.

Now I get to spend time just enjoying and being aware of my wants as they come up.

  
[November 19 2007, 13:22:18 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)
Bravo!

  
[November 19 2007, 21:13:24 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)
Aw. Shucks. ;)

It's been delightful. Not only do I still think all the same dastardly things - I get to ENJOY them too!

   11 years ago [EXPAND](#) CHECK

  [tacit](#)
[November 19 2007, 16:27:38 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

It does seem that being an openly, joyfully, pervertedly sexual being is something that people do wrestle with. It's been my experience that women tend to wrestle with that more than men do, possibly because of the double standard that says men who have multiple partners are more acceptable than women who have multiple sexual partners (and by extension men who embrace sexuality are more accepted than women who do), or it may just be that I know more women than men.

 **[More points to add on the social morass some women experience on the open, joyful, perverted path:](#)**
 
[November 19 2007, 21:44:43 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

I get what you mean about their being a double standard on expressing a healthy, strong libido, but I think the whole 'reclaiming the word slut' discussions generally overlook a few trends on how women with expressed high sexual interest are treated. (I've encountered each of the following personally.)

1. Women are supposed to stop being simpering and passive. Stop letting things happen to them and ask for what they want. And if they want to be used, or seduced then they are immature sexually and not worth the time of the 'experienced' sexual elite. I think the comment was, 'Come look me up again when your tastes have matured.'

One thing that has frustrated me is that many view the 'young, innocent, hapless female' archetype is seen (among so many circles) as juvenile. "You must be really psychically damaged to want someone to treat you that way!" "Don't you believe in yourself?"

I've been told, repeatedly, that the fantasy of looking over a bridge at the swimming fowl at the pond on a sunny day in a public park and imagining the scene where someone strong with a resonate voice clasps the rail on each side of you and carefully explains that his hands have already lifted up your skirt and if you make a fuss or noise the other park goers will be attracted by the spectacle and that you would never, then, get to know what it felt like to now be raped now by this stranger in the warm sunshine ..and everyone would stare and point at you if you made a fuss as he left you there alone, suddenly chilled, and disheveled - so do you dare take the risk?? ..while a common fantasy, isn't supposedly the fantasy of someone who is fully claiming their own sexual power.

Now that's a foolish statement on several levels, but I bought it for a while. So I had been giving myself time to sort through the types of experiences which are important to me.. allowing myself to taste the information I needed from the last adventure to savor the next. While I'd like to be more than be just hapless.. there may, indeed, be a time and place for it.

2. Women are secretly all subservient and really want to be. (I'm sure you've encountered this one out of the leather community as well?) Similarly, there was a time in my life I could not conceive of playing along with anything that looked like domination - I wanted sex to be animalistic, sure, but from the place of two happy hairless apes each taking something from each other and it somehow becoming More.. not to be dominated by someone unless they happened, that day, to get the upper hand.. when a family friend took me aside one day and said that she hoped I would someday know what it was like to be truly subservient to a partner.. to find myself a Master for then I might know real Joy.. as every woman secretly needs and yearns for. Ugh. (Please keep your kink OFF my body and mind unless previously negotiated for. kthxbye!)

3. Heterosexual relationships are inherently power-skewed and any heterosexual sex amounts to nothing more than rape and violence. (Subset: all sex is a transaction or exchange of social capital.) This one comes out of the academic world (at least that is where I encountered it when I began at college at 16) and while I thought they were loony.. I then thought I had to rethink all my desires and re-evaluate them. Yeah. um. okaaaay.

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 **tacit**

November 19 2007, 16:29:30 UTC

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

"Your true self can be known only by systematic experimentation, and controlled only by being known."
Tat probably doesn't tell you too much about the context, though...

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 [tacit](#) 11 years ago [EXPAND](#) CHECK

 [November 19 2007, 08:59:35 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

most excellent and insightful writing. You have made me reflect upon my own path and choices made and not made. Thanks for sharing this.

 [November 19 2007, 09:05:57 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

I was terribly amused by your Count von Count analogy. Thank you for a much-needed giggle.

 [November 19 2007, 10:37:29 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

"I'm going to hurt you now. You can scream if you want to."

That is so unfair, I read this just before going to bed, to sleep perchance to dream.....
shiver

 [tacit](#)
[November 19 2007, 16:28:15 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

See, now you're *supposed* to run screaming in terror at that. :)

 [November 19 2007, 13:34:42 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

Mr. Count, you're a Very Bad Man, lol! Although I must admit, I enjoy distracting you into Cookie Monster - although the crumbs may be a problem.

 [tacit](#)
[November 19 2007, 16:29:54 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

I am, it's true! But that's okay...it's all in the name of Science!

[The truth is, I'm as aroused as leppard](#)
 [November 19 2007, 14:02:29 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

Insightful, eye-opening and wickedness-inducing as always, Franklin. Thank you for being a genius, and seeing fit to spread the love.

 [November 19 2007, 17:04:14 UTC](#) CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

G apparently you've been recycling some of your favorite lines:)

"I am going to take you now. You may come if you want to, but there are rules. You are only allowed to come if it hurts. Now, be a good girl and ask me to rape you."



[tacit](#)

[November 19 2007, 17:06:26 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

I do have some specific tastes, don't I? :)



[November 19 2007, 17:50:49 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

That was...woah. One of the best posts I've read on LJ ever. Thank you for so much truth (and reawakening and evolving my lifelong thing for the Count... AHHH-ha-ha-ha-haaaaa!!!).



[November 19 2007, 18:07:11 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

I love this analogy.

I am a Count von Count top and a Cookie Monster bottom. Maybe that's appropriate. **grin**



[November 20 2007, 07:59:29 UTC](#)

CHECK [COLLAPSE](#)

But, I *am* a good girl!

The irony is, of course, that not only am I not a "good" girl, but when not in that character, I proudly proclaim it to any and all, owning my own sexuality and my perverse kinks and unusual tastes without shame, which then actually makes me a very "good" girl.

I just had an interesting evening of processing after a reunion of sorts with the guy who first introduced resistance play to me, totally unbenownst to him what that outcome would be. I think I'll go write about it.