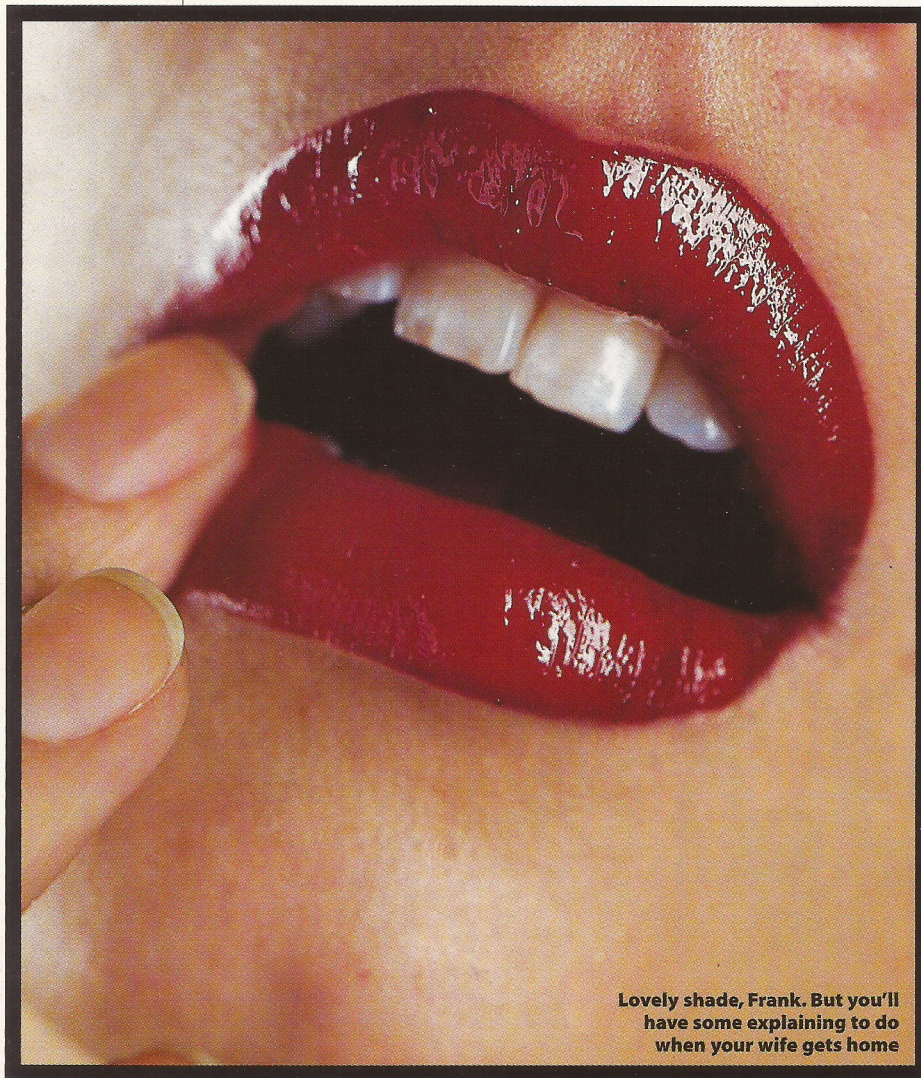


When Good Girls Go Bad

At a certain time in her life, every earth girl gets easy. Learn how to spot the woman who wants you just for your body—and just for tonight. By Jennifer Baumgardner



Lovely shade, Frank. But you'll have some explaining to do when your wife gets home

Back in high school, there were a number of labels all girls wanted to avoid: Chief among them were “prude” and “slut.” I wanted to be sexy, yet good—which, as you may recall, translates into “cockteaser.” That mode worked well through a string of relationships until, at age 24, I moved to New York from the Midwest and found myself behaving, well, differently.

My foxy best friend, Marianne, and I were both single, and at least three times a week we embarked on outings that had

but one purpose: to seek out and seduce strange men. We marched into bars, dressed in teeny dresses and platform shoes. We danced lesbianically, pretending to be unaware of the men watching and completely unaware that these places weren't dance clubs. One night I was pushing a male friend (who had a girlfriend) into the bathroom for the adult version of Two Minutes in the Closet; the next Marianne and I were having men at a Lower East Side dive bar queue up for a chance to kiss us.

Night after night we experienced bartenders, Wall Street financiers, tourists from now-defunct countries, and a guy who said he was the bass player (or was it the drummer?) of Superchunk.

What the hell was going on with me? I was gathering groupies like a rock star—all without a guitar. The answer is, I was going through a time in my life that most men know nothing about but that many women experience. I was going through my “slut phase.”

You've met this girl before: You run into her at a bar when you're hanging out with your buddies, and you know she's going home with one of you—you just have to wait for her to choose which one. She marches up to you, bums a cigarette, says, “Hey, what's your name?” and the next thing you know you're in a lip lock in a corner booth. You know the minute you meet her that she's up for a good time, and whether she's the type you'd want to marry is beside the point—because the last thing in the world she'd want to do is marry you.

See, it's not that she's a slut—it's just that for a little while at least, she'd like to enjoy sex the way men do: on top. Sometimes it's a reaction to getting dumped, or it's an escape from an oppressive or dullsville relationship. But the fact is, even women who've had the best, most devoted boyfriends imaginable—ones with Bill Clinton's charm and Al Gore's mating pattern—can go through a stage like this. And benefit from it. Humiliation aside, I believe that my slut ▶

"Who could have written that?" the Senator wondered.



My 'slut phase' was just as important to me as my Valley Girl phase.

phase was as important as my Valley Girl phase and my office job phase, because those 10 months of sex and stupidity were actually when I jumped into the cockpit of my own sex life.

"Before I hit that stage, the worst thing I could imagine was getting rejected," Marianne recalls. "But during it I was fearless—just a rake, out there hitting on men. It took away that junior high feeling of waiting to be picked for the slow dance: Suddenly I held the reins."

There is no condition more vulnerable than waiting to be picked: for the baseball team or

at the party. In traditional mating rituals, the guy scans the goods and ascertains who is the sexiest girl to approach. That's the power women want a piece of.

"When I reversed that mating ritual," Marianne says, "I felt free. Like a guy, I was being judged not for my bod but for my wit."

At this point you may be wondering two things: *How will I be able to identify a girl like this?* and *How can I get her to*

choose me over all the other horndogs in the joint?

Well, she probably doesn't have long, overstyled, Monica Lewinsky Does Dallas hair. As my sister Jessica points out, "Men are drawn to women with long hair like moths to a flame." So a woman who is no longer trying to impress guys may shed her locks as a first step toward sexual independence. Oh, she may still be dressed provocatively, but she won't be waiting for you to ask her to dance; she'll already be out there swinging with her girlfriends or dragging some guy onto the floor. Maybe, if you're lucky, it'll be you.

If so, remember this: She doesn't care how much money you make. She doesn't care where you went to school. She doesn't care whether you know wine or appreciate art or whether

you're the kind of guy who can stay faithful over the long term. What she does care about is that you're into her physically and that you would be more than happy to prove it.

Go ahead and ask if she's got a boyfriend. While a *Rules* girl will probably say, "I'm sort of seeing someone," a woman in her slut phase will say, "Boyfriend? Why would I want a boyfriend?" What she's telling you is that no, she's not taken, but—guess what buddy—you aren't taking her anywhere, either. With the exception, perhaps, of tonight.

What you must remember is that the slut phase is similar to what men go through—a time for sowing our wild oats and figuring out who we are. As my friend Veronika, a leggy L.A. bombshell, puts it: "Having that time in my life allowed me to get married. I experienced everything I wanted to—kinky sex, diverse partners," she reminisces. "I knew I would never feel like I missed out."

As for me, there eventually came a time when plucking those wide-eyed gents from the lineup at the bar no longer served the purpose it once had. I'd proven everything I needed to sexually, and at last I was ready for a committed relationship. At least that's what I told the writer I started dating. And the writer I dated after that. And the musician I dated after that... **M**

THE LASS IS ALWAYS GREENER...

One woman was so sick of having boyfriends, she took a few swings for the other team.

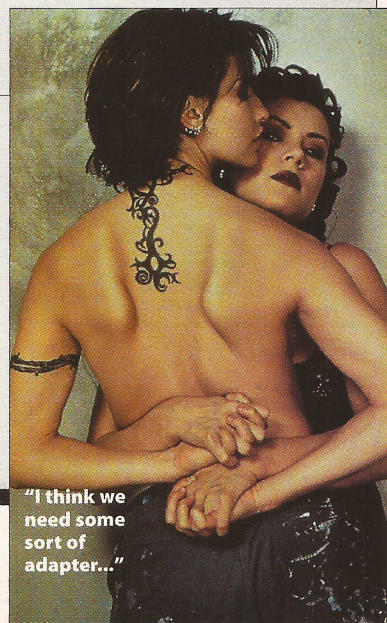
When my loser of a boyfriend dumped me, it was the last straw: He was 28 and unemployed and lived with his mom—and I *still* wasn't good enough for him. I was so fed up, I knew I had to try something completely different.

At a bar a week later, I told Jolene, a bisexual friend of a friend who always came on to me, that I wanted to get a taste of *la vida diva*—but that it would take a little encouragement. I downed a few shots of Jose Cuervo and walked outside and kissed her. Her lips were really soft, her kiss was really gentle, and she was caressing my face in just the right way. All we did was make out that night, but I knew right

then that I could get used to this.

The next night the clothes came off, and three weeks later we were having pretty amazing lesbian sex. But then Jolene wanted me to spend mornings in bed with her, cuddling, and she wanted me to tell her how I *felt* about her. Whoa. Now I knew how guys had always viewed me. Here I was, running from a relationship—right into the hands of a high-maintenance girlfriend! I broke it to her that my heart still belonged to hairy chests and spent the rest of the year carving male notches in the bedpost—without spending the morning cuddling with them in bed. —Zoe Furth

She digs me



"I think we need some sort of adapter..."