

Police as Pimps

Karen

In 1975, I had run away from home. I met a man who was nice to me and later on turned out to be a pimp. At the time, I was fifteen years old. I was from North Carolina, and very naive to the ways of the world. He told me he was going to take me to California to be a model. What I found out when I arrived was that instead of being a model, I was to be a prostitute. He put me on the streets of San Francisco.

One week later, I met Vince. He was a vice officer. He started coming around where I worked and buying me cigarettes. And when it was cold, he would bring me doughnuts and cocoa. He said he wanted to be my friend. I didn't know anyone in California, and I was very lonely and scared, so I believed him. He finally got me to tell him everything that had happened. My pimp, my age, my parents, how much money I was making. This went on for about a month. Then he told me he wanted me to make love to him. He said if I did, he would make sure I never got busted by vice. So I did. He saw some bruises on my body that had been inflicted by my pimp. He told me that I did not have to be abused anymore by my pimp, and that he would take care of me. He even said I would not have to give him all of my prostitution earnings, just half. I told him I would have to think about it because I was scared of what my pimp would do to me. Vince told me not to worry about it, he would take care of it.

I left my pimp and contacted Vince. I told him I still wanted to work the streets. He said I could as long as I continued to have sex with him and gave him some of my money. He would be my pimp. He would bring all of the vice officers by, where I was working, one at a time, so I could see them, and so they wouldn't arrest me. This went on for a few months until I had saved enough money so I could go home to my parents.

The Continuing Saga of Scarlot Harlot III

Carol Leigh

No wonder I'm all stressed out. This work is weird. This stigma is weird. I'm weird. Everyone I know is a weirdo. It usually takes about an hour to wind down after an encounter. What should I do now, while I'm waiting, waiting for the next phone call?

I can always read *The Mamie Papers*, a collection of letters written by a brave and guilty whore at the turn of the century. The book depresses me. I cringe as she calls herself unclean and immoral. There is no repose.

I'd rather be contemporary, anyway. I think I'll watch television. I check out the Guide. Oh, no! I can't believe it. Margo St. James on a talk show, and just in time, I tune her in.

Ah, there she is, chronically courageous, impenetrably brave, grinning out from the commercial in her stylish pink sweater dress and thick, neat farm-girl hair. I admire her ease, yet I worry through the patter of the talk show host, posed carefully seductive in his loveless sports suit. I relax as I observe his good-natured interrogation.

"So, you're retired now?" He seems disappointed.

"Not tired. Just retired," Margo replies in her alto drawl as she stretches comfortably on her couch. The audience chuckles. The host mugs a pout.

"Would you be inclined to kiss and tell?" he asks, squirming in his seat.

"Oh, we don't kiss. Too many germs," she replies and sits, erect. "By the way, why are you rubbing your thigh?"

A whore speaks! Not quite the revolution I had hoped for, but she certainly is afforded respect. The audience gasps, titters and applauds this heroine. They seem to care.