

q life: with GABRIEL TABASCO

The Greek Ambassador's Son: Chapter 3: Drinks and the Dance Floor

I was standing in line waiting to get into the Dungeon, the biggest and best gay club in Athens.

'Who's that?' I asked Bountiful Sublime, a well-known drag queen, who was lurking around the people waiting to get in and turning away anyone not trendy enough for the club. 'Oh honey no. No way. He's out of your league. He's the most powerful man in town. He only goes for the big, butch sisters. Or on second thought, he might go for you. You'd be his midnight snack. That is after he has your boyfriend for breakfast and friends for dinner.' She cackled and after finishing her monologue Bountiful Sublime lit her cigarette, blew the smoke in my face and walked away in her gold sequined high-heels patrolling the queue for any 'undesirables' as she referred to people she did not find attractive.

Who exactly was the most powerful person in Athens? Not the Prime Minister. Not the Mayor. It was the Man-Eater.

'Let me tell you a little something about the Man-Eater,' said Bountiful Sublime, coming back and talking to me after plucking a few people out of the queue and sending them home.

*He wears the kind of shoes
That walk all over you
He'll never speak to you
Unless you beg him to*

*If needed he will wield
A knife, to stab you in the back
He's always in a good mood
Thanks to the crack he does*

*He thinks he's super cool
He barely made it through school
He's seeking sex and fame
He's fun, but I advise you to stay away*

Bountiful Sublime pointed him out to me and continued singing the Man-Eater's praises.

'The Man-Eater has made love to everyone in town. People love to hate him. Everyone in Athens wants to have the power he has. He is the gatekeeper to Athens' most popular club. One gesture would not only determine your night out but your position on the social food chain. A simple nod of the head would mean you are in, he'd let you into clubbers' heaven and your status for that night at least would be elevated. Flamboyantly dressed girls and male fashionistas entered the club in a heartbeat; not his heartbeat, he doesn't have a heart. A shake of the head, a quick glance on the clipboard and a 'sorry, no table, no room' means your night is ruined. Imagine being publicly rejected and having to saunter silently through the crowd. Better go home, curl up and die.'

I heard stories of this man but thought it was nothing but nightclub urban legend and here was Athens' primadonna drag queen confirming the rumours. I had heard stories that the Man-Eater could be cruel when selecting who would enter the club. To a group of three friends he would say: 'you can go in but you have to choose only one of your friends to accompany you. The others should go away. Who do you choose?' Some people actually chose a friend leaving the others outside hurt and embarrassed in front of people who had seen and enjoyed the whole spectacle.

When the Man-Eater was not acting as a gatekeeper he behaved as a stylist and loudly dispensed his comments to people in the line.

'We are not a dumpster,' he told one girl.

'I know,' she said quietly, hoping she would be granted access.

'If you know that we are not a dumpster, why are you dressed like trash?'

People say she needed therapy after that.

Other times, usually to groups of boys, the Man-Eater refused to grant admittance into the club because the person was not 'appropriately' dressed.

'You look poor. Go home. Get changed and then come back.'

Desperate to get into the club, the boys went home and returned wearing another shirt or shoes.

The Man-Eater, in his endless cruelty still refused them entry and so the boys ended up swearing at him having wasted their whole night getting ready twice only to be refused entry into a club.

Eventually the Man-Eater's behaviour got him in trouble. People who recognized him in the street attacked him. Some vandalised his car when it was parked outside a restaurant he was eating at. He was sworn at and spat at in the street. People went as far as creating a petition to have him removed from the club he worked at. Forums were dedicated to him with people writing how much they hated him.

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crowd, I always got in. That was before Bountiful Sublime snagged one of his boyfriends and she was no longer granted access. But before half of Athens was blacklisted and were banned from the club, my friends and I made it beyond those gates and into the fortress that was the Dungeon, which until 6am was our world. And where anything felt possible with drinks on the dance floor.

The club was filled with rich kids in their own private Pepsi ad. They were the stars of their own real life reality TV show. There were twinks who were giggly and silly. They enjoyed wearing bright colours, tight clothes and anything that sparkled.



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Certain characters stood out in the club. There was one man in his late 40s who thought himself to be Britney Spears and as the night wore on he stripped down to his PVC pants and danced to bubble-gum pop. He was a bored civil servant so dancing in a small piece of clothing, as his body swayed to the music was his only outlet. Initially I thought he was on drugs but every Saturday he performed the same routine. I wondered why the Man-Eater, who was so strict on face control, would let him in. Watching the faces of the people in the club, I realised that it was so people could laugh at him. Though no one did. People cheered him on.

On one occasion the DJ played Hot Chocolate's "You Can Keep Your Hat On" and three boys in their early 20s, one tall and chubby, the other two short and toned, stripped completely naked. Unfortunately, none of them got an erection. Most men looked on in amazement, as they stood there starkers. Some straight men grimaced not knowing what to do and where to look. Such events were more entertaining than actual real life porn-stars and strippers that the club brought in to entertain us. Strip-shows entertained people for a while, but they were too orchestrated. However when normal people danced naked, such as a friend of a friend then the event was much more appealing.

There was Mai Tai, a nasty queen who worked in retail. It was commonly said that he enjoyed two men inside him at once. He claimed to have lost his virginity at 18 and since then, during the four years of sex, up to the age of 22, has bedded over 3000 men. Which worked out to 2.05 men per day. The analysis is as follows:

3 years x 365 days = 1460 days
3000 men / 1460 days = 2.05 men per day
Yeah. Right!

The 'star' or the club was a drag queen known as Gina (real name Stelios). Gina was a good-looking man who looked even better as a woman. She styled herself, both the apparel she wore and attitude

she had on Madonna. It was rumoured that not only did Gina come from a rich and well-established family but she also had a huge penis. It was further believed that married straight men paid her to fuck them. Once when I was drunk I told her that I liked her style, and I meant it. She looked at me nastily, flicked back her hair and walked away. Then I ran into the bathroom and threw up. I had too much to drink.

The bathrooms were not just for throwing up. Mostly they were used as temporary love-shacks. I had a threesome with two Hungarians in the toilet cubicle. We were so drunk, only one of them could come. I met a hot Middle Eastern man and proceeded to have sex with him in the toilets after the club had closed for the night at 6am. Bountiful Sublime, who was patrolling the shut down shift, walked in and saw my shoes poking from under the door and screeched in laughter. I liked the man but I never saw him again because my phone was stolen by a drug dealer that Bountiful Sublime knew. She also knew someone else who was able to get it back for me and by Monday morning I had my phone again.

There were further embarrassing situations. One weekend I got so drunk I stumbled into the Dark Room thinking it was the toilets. As a result I accidentally switched on the lights. All of a sudden the light showed a dozen half-naked men who were standing around the room with their penises erect as other men were going down on them. Men looked around, nervous and shocked at having his identities revealed.

'Oops. Sorry,' I said. 'Please continue,' and switched off the light.

During the big New Year's bash there was a pickpocket who stole nine mobiles, as well as the phone of Matthew, my clubbing buddy.

'What shall I do now?' he asked, upset.

'Get new friends,' I replied.

'That's not funny,' he bit back.

However the person who bit back the hardest was a short, mannish lesbian who caught the thief while he was stealing a phone. After following a crowd to the car park we discovered that the lesbian and her friends found a rope, tied it around his neck and proceeded to push him around the car park, yelling insults and swearing.

'What have I done?' he protested. 'All I did was steal a few phones. Why are you treating me this way?'

'A few phones?' shouted the leader of the lesbian pack 'a few phones? Get over here so I can teach you a lesson' she yelled and proceeded to hit him.

Other than lesbians abusing the poor man by tying a rope round the neck of a pickpocket, the club was usually a great place to hang out although its demise eventually and inevitably followed. Instead of being a gay bar it somehow evolved into an all-inclusive bar, which meant its gay patrons went elsewhere. The Man-Eater eventually left to be the one token man among three women at a talk show on TV. The clubs' new gatekeeper allowed in people who not only were not gay but were troublemakers.

If you chose to be a faithful partygoer at the club then you could have a good time, which meant drinking copious amounts of alcohol. One night I was drinking so much that the bar-woman at the bar told me she wouldn't serve me.

'What? You won't give me another Vodka and Coke? I've only had four.'

'Sorry. My boss told me not to serve you.'

'What?'

'I'm sorry but... my boss told me you can't drink anymore,' she said feeling a little bad. I could see an older man in his 70s sitting in the corner of the bar. He was one of the owners. He must have sensed I was drunk and did not want any trouble. I stared at him a few moments longer than I should have then turned to the bar-woman.

'Oh. Alright then,' I said smiling sweetly and walked away. Instead of getting angry and asking to speak with the manager I walked over to the second bar at the opposite side of the club.

I smiled and asked for a Vodka and Coke. The barman nodded. 'Actually, may I have a double?'

He handed me my drink with a smile and then said, 'it's on the house.'

I was delighted that somehow the staff had outwitted their manager. I guzzled them down gratefully. Justice was served! It's true what they say that the best things in life are free. If it's Vodka and Coke then even better.

*Those nightclub bitches can't hold a flame to you
You drink like a fish on the dance floor
Then in the toilets you screw
Any Tom, Dick and Harry. Then you drink some more*

