

The Happy Hooker: My Own Story

Xaviera Hollander

From Publishers Weekly

Xaviera Hollander has been writing a *Penthouse* column for 30 years. She chronicled her life as a "high-class New York madam" in 1972's *The Happy Hooker: My Own Story*, which now returns to print. Frankly discussing lesbianism, bondage, voyeurism and run-ins with lawyers and the FBI, Hollander's book was an international bestseller. In her new epilogue, Hollander rather questionably attests that although her stories may not be as shocking or taboo now as they were in 1972, "the business of sex [has] a new relevance" since September 11. Regan Books will also publish Hollander's new memoir, *Child No More*, in June (a review will run in an upcoming issue).

From Library Journal

Dutch madam Hollander scored big with this 1972 autobiography, which became a best seller 15 million copies worldwide. Although the book ended up in the hands of respectable readers, it's little more than smut, as Hollander recounts how she left Holland for a job as a secretary in New York, got bored, and became a prostitute and brothel manager (doesn't everybody?). Three decades later, when you can find raunchier stuff on prime-time TV, this is kind of kitschy. This 30th-anniversary edition contains a new epilog.

An astute historian of New York prostitution might have heard a small bell ringing in their head upon reading the name of the woman accused of arranging prostitutes for Eliot's Emperors Club VIP: Tanya Hollander. You see, New York's most notorious prostitute (and madam) ever, the *Happy Hooker*, was named Xaveria Hollander. Was it now a family business? We called the old girl in Amsterdam to check.

"No, she's not my daughter," Hollander tells us from what she refers to as her "bed and brothel" on Amsterdam's Gold Coast. "But it's a wickedly chosen nom de plume." (We prefer to think of it as a "nom de poon.") Was the *Happy Hooker* herself shocked by the news of Spitzer's dalliances? Not really, save for the prices being bandied about. "Is that what they get paid these days?" she asks, referring to the \$5,000 allegedly earned by Ashley Alexandra Dupré. "I was in the \$100 bracket."

Let's talk quality of clientele. Is Spitzer really that big of a deal? Who did Hollander meet in the boudoir? "I had my dealings with the White House," she says. "But it was more discreet. Newsweek offered to pay me a lot of money if I'd admitted that Sinatra was my client. But I never talked. My affairs we're never sleazy. I might have mentioned something about a crooner from New Jersey, though..."

Hollander has written eighteen books since her seminal tome in the seventies, in addition to writing the "Call Me Madam" column in *Penthouse* from 1973 to 2005. Coming soon to a bookstore near you: *The Happy Hooker's Guide to Sex-69 Orgasmic Ways to Pleasure a Woman*, from New York's very own Skyhorse Publishing. We're the hooker capital of the world! -Duff McDonald

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The Happy Hooker: My Own Story

30th Anniversary Edition

The Happy Hooker



My Own Story

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WITH
A NEW
EPILOGUE

with Robin Moore and Yvonne Dunleavy

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*DEDICATED TO
LARRY
AND
TAKIS*

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The events in this book actually happened. The people actually exist. Only the names have been changed, and we genuinely regret any inadvertent similarity between these fictitious names and the names of real persons.

1. RUBBER SOULS

Almost from the moment we were herded into the crowded cattlepen of a prison cell in New York's infamous Tombs, the jail-toughened black hookers gave us nothing but misery.

"Hey, bigshit madambitch, bet you ain't got no black cunt turnin' tricks in your high-class fuckin' house!"

"Yeah, bet your midget-dick rich white johns can't buy no licorice from your candy store!"

"This queen bee of the hookers here, she afraid the black stuff gonna rub off all over her beeyootiful white sheets, ain't ya, honey?"

The hassling began bawdy, became ugly, then menacing.

"You there in the red-white-and-blue Saks fuckin' Fifth Avenue dress – don't bend forward so far, otherwise ah'm gonna tear it off and eat you up!" Five minutes more and there could be a bloodbath, with us sure as hell the losers. There were seven of us, twenty of them, and common contempt of these street hookers for us, the expensive call girls, united them. In the hooker hierarchy, we were the aristocrats, they were the serfs, and jail, by God, was the great leveler.

I stood with my girls huddled tightly together against the cell bars, putting as much distance as possible between us and the black streetwalkers. Even if we wanted to sit down among the others, we had no chance. Those that had places on the few uncomfortable benches hung jealously onto them. If anyone got up for a drink of water or a pee, a fast ass would cancel the space. Some girls, exhausted from a night's sidewalk cruising, lay on the concrete floor, their heads in someone else's lap. They slept despite the anguished sounds of junkies in neighboring cells coughing, retching, and howling for relief. The stench of vomit, urine, and stale human body odor was suffocating.

The ranks oozed and abated like an oil slick as one group of girls, summoned by the big bull-dyke matron, was led to the courtroom and replaced with another. "Git heeyah, judge gonna see ya now."

Each new paddywagon full of hookers fell in with the catcalling. "Hey, muthahfuckin' madam, can you tell us now why you don't have a little

color in your high-class establishment?” a vicious-looking hooker in a neon-orange wig said menacingly.

Caution on my part gave way to exasperation, then anger. “Listen,” I said, “I want you to know I do have black girls working for me. Several of them... I even have a black roommate. There she is over there.”

I pointed to Aurora, a willowy light-skinned girl who was sitting apart from us. A prostitute since her teens, and the veteran of many arrests, the same experience that taught her how to grab a seat for herself also taught her to assume a low profile in this kind of a scene. Aurora sat in a corner, wearing a blond wig and dark glasses, her collar pulled high under her chin, trying to blend in with the walls. She squirmed as twenty pairs of raisin eyes riveted on her.

The hookers stopped teasing their wigs and painting their nails with varnish that had mysteriously appeared despite all handbags having been confiscated outside. “Sheeyit, man,” a mean-looking coal-black girl finally rasped, “that mixed rat ain’t black, she half-white.”

“The scumbag dunno what the fuck she is,” a girl with the face of a sepia madonna and the voice of a carnival tout said. Both she and her friend left their seats to walk toward Aurora for a better look and maybe take a swing at her. All of us were watching them. This had to be the moment of detonation.

Just then the cell gate cranked open, and the big black matron escorted in a fat white girl who was hobbling on crutches. The girl was all marked up with ulcers on her arms and legs and seemed to be dope-crazed. As the matron, in a kindly way, tried to ease her into one of the vacant seats, the lame hooker yelled, “Take ya hands off me, ya big black dyke!” and hauled off, her crutch savagely ripping across the matron’s head.

That was all we needed in this charged atmosphere, a racial explosion touched off by the handicapped whore. Girls started screaming and yelling; fists, arms, legs, and the crutches flew all over the place. My girls and I quickly moved for cover behind the urinal wall and waited to see what would happen next.

Three hefty matrons marched into the cell and efficiently subdued the hysterical white girl. What would happen next? Thank God we didn’t have to hang around to find out. “Git heeyah, you girls behind the wall over there. Judge gonna see ya now.” The cattle were led to the courtroom.

Inside the courtroom, full of journalists, quick-sketch artists, and curious onlookers were my house guests of the night before. The nice John from the Midwest I called Calvin was probably going to lose his job and marriage because his name and position had been blasted all over the New York papers. There was my sweet Greek lover, Takis, and beside him the couple whose only concession to convention was their last name. Otherwise they lived a life of free love and had been swinging with Takis and me in my house, for love, not money, only minutes before the cops arrived.

The judge listened with what seemed to me obvious hostility as the charges against us were read. One by one I paid the bail for my girls from the envelope of money I had stuffed into my panties before accompanying the cops to the station house. But the one person I wanted in the courtroom wasn't there. My boyfriend, Larry. I hadn't been able to contact him and he had the key to the safe-deposit box where my main cash supply is kept. Now I was left without enough cash to pay the sky-high bail of \$3,500 they put on "New York's most notorious madam" – as I heard myself described. So it was off to Riker's Island for me.

Riker's Island is the new women's prison, cleaner and more modern than the Tombs, but still the nesting place of the dregs of humanity. I was thrown into a big room full of junkies, pushers, five-dollar harlots, the general hustlers of life, and victims of other people's crimes.

A scrawny white hooker who had been the victim of a "freak trick" – a customer who gets his kicks from brutally beating girls – was nursing her wounds. Three other hookers had been beaten by him on Eighth Avenue over the past two weeks, and this poor girl had bruises and cuts all over her, plus a broken arm and a lip which was cut to her nostril. Her eyes were swollen slits.

A sixteen-year-old Puerto Rican girl was crying for her three-week-old baby left unattended at home. "Mi marido try to kill me," she wailed in fractured English.

I tried to help the Spanish-speaking girls fill in their forms, but when I did, they would move away from me as though I had leprosy. So did the other prisoners. My expensive clothes and appearance made them suspicious and resentful.

They all stared, but nobody spoke to me except a cute little brown girl with freckles on a face like an acorn. "I have already been picked up eight

times in a fortnight,” she said. “So now the judge decided to send me away for a month’s rest.”

She was agitated because her pimp did not know where she was. She wanted me to phone him when I got out.

When I got out? When would that be? It was four P.M. Friday, sixteen hours since my house was busted by three phony johns.

It is now daytime, so where is Larry with my bail money? Where is my lawyer? Why am I, a woman of class, happy in her profession and basically doing a necessary service, in this horrible place? I thought back on the bust, trying to understand where I had made my mistake.

Aurora could smell a cop a city block away. She didn’t trust those three “clients” who had persistently phoned and insisted on coming over even though I tried to discourage them. We had been having a stag party earlier and now just a friendly social gathering. On their third call, around midnight, I finally allowed them to come up.

As soon as they came through the door, Aurora reacted like a gazelle downwind of a jackal. My instincts also signaled caution. The little swarthy man with the moustache sure looked like a john, and he was shaking in his shoes. The second one looked like a crook, and these days cops and crooks often look alike, so I couldn’t be sure. But it was the third one, a tall man, who looked most like a cop.

“As a matter of routine,” I said to them politely, “would you mind showing me some identification.” The one with the moustache shook some more, and he and thugface looked toward the tall one, and he pulled a wallet from his pocket with only four of the dozen plastic compartments occupied. None of them contained credit cards. Cops can’t afford credit cards. I didn’t like it. I looked toward Aurora, who was staring down at the tall man’s feet.

I followed her gaze. Rubber soles! The sure mark of a policeman. The cop followed our eyes, too, and knew that we knew. The bluff was up. “Okay, everybody, this is a raid,” he said, and flashed a badge. “You’re all under arrest for being on premises used for prostitution.”

As if on cue, the front door opened, and in walked the big plainclothes policeman I recognized as the one they call Scarface. “Good evening, Miss Hollander,” he said, leering at me; “I told you we would get you again.”

Eight uniformed cops stormed through the front door and started turning the place over like a pancake. But the scene that followed was more like a