

## *Thirty-Five*

### **“YOUR LIVER IS NOT FUNCTIONING”**



“It seems appearing in *Caligula* is not conducive to a long lifespan.”

— Valerie Rae Clark<sup>1</sup>



IT WAS IN 1987 OR MAYBE EARLIER that Franco Rossellini invited an unnamed Penthouse Pet to stay with him at “House Number 49” on the Duke estate. When this Penthouse Pet wandered about the enclosed grounds shirtless, a scandalized Doris Duke decided to end her support of Rossellini.<sup>2</sup> By the end of 1988 Franco was back at his apartment and no longer living on the Duke estate.

We can feel confident that this unnamed Penthouse Pet was in fact Marjorie Lee Thoreson, better known as Annela de Lorenzo (or De Lorenzo, or di Lorenzo, or diLorenzo, or Di Lorenzo, or d’Lorenzo — she was credited various ways). It was in May 1981 that Thoreson launched her suit against Guccione, and Rossellini realized she needed protection. To explain this suit, we need to go to Thoreson’s beginnings in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Thoreson’s paternal ancestors had arrived in Minnesota from Norway in the mid-1800’s, though Thoreson would tell her friends that her father, Leroy Paul Thoreson, an accountant, was in fact of Swedish descent. Her mother, Patricia Jane Hull, was, Thoreson said, of English and German ancestry. Marjorie Thoreson was born on 6 September 1952 in St. Paul, the second of four children,

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1. Valerie Rae Clark: email message to J.E. Chaffin, 29 October 2011.

2. Tom Valentine and Patrick Mahn, *Daddy’s Duchess: The Unauthorized Biography of Doris Duke* (Secaucus, NJ: Lyle Stuart, 1987), pp. 169, 170. Valentine and Mahn place Duke’s dismissal of Rossellini in the 1984/1985 season, but that is far too early, for Duke was still actively assisting at that time. If Duke evicted Rossellini prior to 1987, she surely relented, for she continued to house him as late as the autumn of 1988, after Valentine and Mahn had left Duke’s employ. The two authors wrote from memory and they frequently exaggerated for effect, so their book requires critical reading.

all daughters, raised in the Lutheran faith.<sup>3</sup> Little is known about her childhood, but we do have an anecdote: In second grade when a boy in school tried to kiss her, she whipped him with her jump rope. We also know that as a young child she would gather the neighborhood children during summer break and put on little shows and offer amusements for which she charged a nickel. At age 12 the family was in Miami for the summer, and again she put on a show with the local children, with mothers supplying lemonade and cookies. She and the others advertised their attraction by posting flyers on cars and street signs. "Anyway, a Walt Disney talent scout saw the flyers and came to the show. He wanted my parents to take some snapshots of me, and maybe take a screen test. I didn't find out about this until a year later, because my mother thought show business was, you know, very bad. So many temptations, and I was so young."

Thoreson did not think of herself as "unusually attractive," though she did notice that once she began maturing "the guys used to follow me home from school." Growing up she enjoyed breaking in horses, tennis, jogging, and dancing. She was active in church and school and was quite popular. She devoted much of her time to viewing movies on television, with her favorites being the Astaire-Rogers musicals. "They were gods, you know. They were so pretty, and danced all the time, and everything worked out in the end."<sup>4</sup>

She got a job in sales at a clothing shop, and she found another job flipping hamburgers at a White Castle,<sup>5</sup> but by then her parents' marriage had fallen apart. The nonstop rumblings were so traumatic that she found herself unable to concentrate on her homework. After a bitter battle, her parents divorced in 1965.<sup>6</sup> By the time she was fifteen, she said, she could no longer tolerate her home life.

A friend, Joseph Anthony Davis, six years older, had just moved to Los Angeles, and she attempted to run away and follow him, but her mother caught her and had her arrested, threatening her with reform school should she pull such a stunt again. She tried again, and this time she succeeded, catching a flight to Los Angeles in hopes of fame and fortune.<sup>7</sup> I suspect, though, that she

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3. Ron Powers, "What's a Nice Girl Like You Doing Posing Nude for a Men's Magazine?" (Chicago Sun-Times wire story), [The Kingsport \[Tennessee\] Times-News](#) "Weekender," Saturday, 20 December 1975, p. 4.

4. *Ibid.*

5. John Keasler, "Getting the Bare Facts," [The Miami News](#), Tuesday, 18 November 1975, p. 5-B.

6. Laurie Whitwell, "Police Baffled by Mystery Death of Caligula Actress Found Naked and Washed up on Beach with Broken Neck," *The Daily Mail: Mail OnLine*, 25 October 2011, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2052886/Anneka-Vasta-mystery-Navy-police-appeal-help-death-Penthouse-model-washed-beach.html>.

7. "Ex-Penthouse Model Found Dead at Camp Pendelton [sic] Beach," *NBC San Diego*, <http://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/Anneka-Di-Lorenzo-body-found-ex-model-camp-pendelton.html>.

may have run away a year or two earlier. The question we need to ask is precisely how she managed to catch a flight at age fifteen (or maybe thirteen or fourteen). The likely answer was that it was Joey Davis who had paid for her ticket, and that he had promised her a better life far away from home.

Considering the context, it is surprising that Thoreson did not fall into the usual trap. Valerie Rae Clark, who later worked with Thoreson at Penthouse, explained the usual trap: "Talent scouts" — actually pimps — would prowl around Minnesota in the late 1960's and 1970's looking for teenage girls to prey upon. (Boys, too, I discover.) As the population was predominantly Scandinavian, the teen girls had striking Nordic looks, looks that were much in demand. "In the early 1970's Hollywood was flooded with young teenage hookers from Minnesota."<sup>8</sup> Those who knew Thoreson presumed that she was a part of this crowd. Yet she was not, not at all.



Joey Davis (<http://www.tributes.com/show/Joseph-Davis-96603476#>)

There are conflicting stories about Joseph Anthony Davis, who was also known as Joseph Davis Suthern. One version was that he was a grifter, and not such a good one. This version paints Davis, who was half-white/half-African-American, as a homely, lisping, overweight, blubbery confidence man, who referred to himself as "High Yella Nigga" and "Chubby Checker."<sup>9</sup> Though some found him repulsively overweight, many women found him attractive, with his big Afro and his overbite. Davis had been adopted as a baby (hence the variant of his name) and was raised by "very nice" old-fashioned people who showered him with love. He was always hurt, though, to know that his real parents had

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This story, together with many other details throughout this chapter, derives from various conversations and, above all, transcripts of Thoreson's court proceedings.

8. Clark: email message to Chaffin, 29 October 2011.

9. "High Yella Nigga" is a term some blacks used to refer to light-complected blacks. Chubby Checker was a singer in the 1960's.

abandoned him. This version of the story speculates that his intermittently dangerous behavior may have been a result of his disappointment.

Thoreson was swept away by Davis, and she even dated him at first. The man, during those years, identified himself as a successful rock-concert manager. The alternative story was that he was no such thing, that he merely dealt drugs to rock bands, and that after a few years no rock band would have anything further to do with him. Some wealthy people allowed him to live in their mansions and drive their limousines. This version of the story claims that he had no place of his own, but lived with a series of women, each of whom was under the impression that when he was away much of the year, he was traveling with his bands; whereas, in fact, when he was away, he was simply living with a different woman, giving her the same story. Once the women found out, he was homeless again. Unable to make ends meet, he started a business by which he would be hired out to go on the school lecture circuit to tell youngsters how he overcame the evils of drugs. Authorities investigated him and, discovering that he was still a dealer, shut his business down shortly after it began. He spent the rest of his days opening more and more such businesses, failing more often than not.

A longtime friend of his took exception to this characterization, and denied it in every detail:

I am an old friend of Joseph Davis. I knew him for 47 years. He and Anneka both came from Minnesota. When he traveled back to California she followed him. Because she was so young he found her an apartment and her sisters came to California and lived together. She had aspirations and Joey paid for singing lessons, drama lessons and had a designer to make her gowns for beauty contests. She made some of her own decisions and made some of her own mistakes.... Regarding his career in the music industry... there are three biographies about Jimi Hendrix with quotes from Joey. I have photos of Joey with the Kennedys at the "Strand" with Buddy Miles. With Dionne Warwick and Bette Midler. I was a guest at two recording sessions at the Record Plant and another in the Valley. He managed many artists and could engineer the music. He had an anti-drug program. He was an event planner and published a fitness magazine in the 80's. I could go on and on about his interests and achievements. He had two names because he was adopted and changed his surname as an adult... does that cover the aliases.... Joey helped many people in his life and Anneka was a well-liked, beautiful woman. I think that both of them had haters that were jealous.

Maybe that’s where you got your sources. I hope that this information will help you with your research.<sup>10</sup>

As an underage runaway, Thoreson decided to prevent her parents from locating her by assuming an alias, Connie Strodtman<sup>11</sup> (sometimes misspelled Strattman), courtesy of a faked ID that a friend in Minnesota had given her. Under that name, she took a run-of-the-mill job as a receptionist. Since she did not wish to turn to her parents for help, she had to make do on her own, and she did something quite risky.

An interesting letter appeared in an advice column in two Pasadena newspapers. Thoreson is almost certainly not its author, but even so, this letter shines a light into the dark underground of which Thoreson was now a part.

Dear Miss Virginia Kay: A few weeks ago I read a letter in your column from a waitress in a topless bar. I am one too, but I have a problem that has me scared. I lied about my age to my employer because I needed the job. Now I’m afraid the officers or authorities or someone like that will find out and I could maybe be in trouble. What should I do? I don’t have parents to ask... I’m sort of desperate.

SCARED TOPLESS, Pasadena

Miss Virginia Kay responded:

Dear Scared: Quit that job. That’s the first thing for you to do — and for more reasons than one. You know — and your own good, common sense has already warned you — that you will be in more trouble than you have even dreamed of, if you don’t get out of that bar and that job.

I am confused about one point — how did you get the job if you are under legal age? Didn’t you have to show a Social Security card? Was your employer so lax, and so willing to risk his business, that he would employ a minor and in such a place?

Believe me, “Scared,” it would be better for you to take a job washing dishes than taking the risks you now are. If you are really “desperate and scared” send me your telephone number and at what hour you can be reached by telephone.<sup>12</sup>

How Thoreson managed to get jobs at nude bars is impossible now to determine, though, at the time, underagers did get such jobs. We learn from her

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10. Email message received on 29 September 2019.

11. [Decision of 2 April 1992](#), *Marjorie L. Thoreson, a/k/a Anneka diLorenzo, respondent, v Penthouse International, Ltd., and Bob Guccione, appellants*, Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, First Department, 179 A.D.2d 29 (1992).

12. See Virginia Kay, “Bachelors Dance,” [The Independent](#) [Pasadena, California], Tuesday, 18 October 1966, p. 15. Also printed in *The* [Pasadena, California] [Star-News](#) of the same day, p. 13.

court testimony that she graduated from underage cocktail waitress to underage nude dancer,<sup>13</sup> enhancing her alias: Connie “T” Strodtman. We also know that she appeared nude as Connie Strodtman in *Pix* magazine when she was 17 years old.<sup>14</sup>

At about the time she began her life in the topless bars, she somehow came to be called Priscilla Louise Shutters, an alias she did not use herself. Over the next several years Thoreson was arrested and charged with various offenses.<sup>15</sup> At the urging of Davis, she rented a car for a weekend from the Avis Rent-a-Car System, and she let Davis’s friends, members of a rock band, drive it. Half a year later, to her astonishment, she was arrested for grand theft auto. She had not realized that Davis and his musicians had never returned the vehicle.

On another occasion, Thoreson accepted a ride from a man who started taking her somewhere else. They got into a fistfight and she fled from his car. Fearing that such an event may reoccur, she purchased a small tear-gas gun that resembled a ball-point pen, unaware that this was an illegal weapon. That counted as another felony arrest. On yet another occasion she wrote some checks to a music shop for a few hundred dollars despite inadequate funds. That seems to have been at Davis’s urging. Finally, she was once arrested for driving while intoxicated, a behavior for her that was so unusual it may have been unique, since she had no taste for alcohol.

We know that there were at least four bars on her circuit. One was the Phone Booth Night Club at 8505 Santa Mónica Boulevard in West Hollywood. Valerie Rae Clark told me about this (though at the time she could not remember the name of the establishment). Clark also told me about Thoreson’s work at The Ball in Santa Mónica. I discover from Internet searches that Thoreson also worked at The Ball’s sister club, The Other Ball in San Gabriel. The Charles H. McCaghy Collection of Exotic Dance from Burlesque to Clubs, housed at the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute at the Ohio State University in Columbus, includes an advertising card from The Other Ball announcing “Anneka,” which features a photograph of Thoreson posing at a beach.<sup>16</sup>

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13. Whitwell, “Police Baffled,” *The Daily Mail: Mail OnLine*, 25 October 2011.

14. “Free-Wheeler: Busy Men, Look Out! This Beauty Means Business and She Has It in for You,” *Pix: Magazine for Men Who Like Action!* 3 no. 8, April 1970, pp. 50+.

15. *Ibid.*

16. The Charles H. McCaghy Collection of Exotic Dance from Burlesque to Clubs, XTF eXtensible Text Framework, Folder 1.1.40, <http://findingaids.danceheritage.org/xtf/view?docId=findingaids/Ohio%20State%20University/McCaghy.xml;chunk.id=a23;brand=default;query=mccaghy>.

The Ball had opened on 1 August 1964 at 2719 Wilshire Boulevard in Santa Mónica. Its companion, The Other Ball, had opened in December 1966 at 825 East Valley Boulevard in San Gabriel. Both were founded by William C. Coleman, a former Monterey Park police chief who had significant political influence and protection, together with his nephews, Robert Coleman Locker and [Elmer Oren/Orville "Whitey" Locker, Jr.](#), along with Whitey's wife, Joyce T. Miller. The Locker brothers were themselves the sons of a Santa Mónica police officer. The Other Ball was a favorite police hang-out and an inspiration for Joseph Wambaugh's novels. It was also used as a location for Russ Meyer's *Beneath the Valley of the Ultra-Vixens*, starring professional stripper Kitten Natividad. As Clark explained:

The Other Ball was a cop hangout, but there were crime characters there also. (Lots of corruption.) Bill had a racehorse and spent lots of time at Santa Anita racetrack. Joseph Wambaugh was his best friend. They'd been young patrol officers together. Their wives were good friends. His other best friend was a bail bondsman, whose name I don't remember. Whitey was having an affair with a dancer/Penthouse model named Helen [Lang] at the time. She's the model who went to Rome, but who fled in the night when she discovered the film [*Caligula*] was XXX. Bill and Whitey (and most of the dancers) had issues with alcohol abuse. The bars generated so much cash, that they'd lament that they couldn't fit all the \$100's in their safe deposit boxes. They were upset they didn't have thousand-dollar bills, so it'd be easier to stash cash.<sup>17</sup>



Bill Coleman in Sacramento with his girlfriend at the time, Valerie Rae Clark. They were in the capital city to lobby for nude dancing. This snapshot was taken in 1976 or 1977.

The fourth known club on Thoreson's circuit was the Hi-Life Theatre bar in Pasadena, at 1758 East Colorado Boulevard, founded in 1966 by Leo Barbarick's Vinot Enterprises, Inc. For whatever this trivia may be worth, among the regular customers here were physicist Richard Feynman and assassin Sirhan Sirhan.<sup>18</sup>

17. Clark: email message, 23 July 2015.

18. See Edward Humes, *Murderer with a Badge: The Secret Life of a Rogue Cop* (NY: Dutton, 1992), p. 1. See also Jason Torchinsky, "The Things to Know about the Man Who Beat the Veyron to 250+ MPH," *Jalopnik*, 22 August 2013, <http://jalopnik.com/ten-things-to-know-about-the-man-who-beat->

The Hi-Life led to at least one more arrest, in April 1970, when she was 17. The record is confusing, and the news report of a police raid and arrest sometime around the first of October 1970, just after she turned 18, may be referring to the same April incident. Thoreson found herself arrested along with her fellow dancers Carol Maureen Bonner, Francesca Isabel "Kitten" Natividad, Rose Isabel Rudman, Adrienne Agatha Tripp, Linda Parks, Annette Zweig, and Morganna Roberts ("The Kissing Bandit"), together with Roberts's manager Blaine "Sparky" Banks and Barbarick himself. The charge of public indecency was presented to Pasadena Judge Daniel Fletcher at a jury trial. Mrs. Lillian Stegman was counsel for the prosecution, and [Dean Pic'l](#) was counsel for the defense. All except Banks were found guilty on 19 October. Thoreson was ordered to pay a \$250 fine or spend ten days in jail. Barbarick dismissed Pic'l and hired Virgil Becker of San Marino to continue with the appeals. The cases were remanded and dismissed for lack of evidence. Barbarick's shows continued, with ever more raids, arrests, and court trials.<sup>19</sup>

A local newspaper not long afterwards described what was in all likelihood Thoreson's act, which kept her on stage doing calisthenics for 45 minutes out of every hour, dripping with sweat. That would explain how she came to have the body of a gymnast, with Viking warrior-princess legs. The dancer told the journalist that she had been arrested several times under section 314 of the penal code, namely, for "lewdly" exposing her "private parts."<sup>20</sup>

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[the-veyron-to-1038607018](#); J. Robert Smith, "Shows Not Offensive — Nobel Winner," [The \[Pasadena, California\] Star-News](#), Saturday, 8 November 1969, p. 3. Concerning Sirhan, see Mel Ayton, [The Forgotten Terrorist: Sirhan Sirhan and the Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy](#) (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2007), p. ???.

19. Lucie Lowery, "Court to Ponder If 'Tis Rude to Dance in Nude," [The Pasadena Star-News](#), Thursday, 6 October 1970, p. 15; reprinted in [The Pasadena Independent](#), Thursday, 7 October 1970, p. 1; Jane Hardy, "9 Guilty of Lewd Offenses," [The Pasadena Star-News](#), Tuesday, 20 October 1970, p. 15; "Judge Sentences Nine in Nude Bar Dancing," [The Pasadena Star-News](#), Wednesday, 28 October 1970, p. B-7; Lucie Lowery, "Bottomless Hassle: Club Seeks Arrests Ban," [The Pasadena Star-News](#), Saturday, 6 March 1971, p. 3; Lucie Lowery, "City Nudie Bar Case Nets Jail or \$2,875 Fine," [The Pasadena Star-News](#), Wednesday, 26 May 1971, p. 1; Decision, 2 April 1992, [Thoreson v. Penthouse International](#), 179 A.D.2d 29 (1992).

20. Lucie Lowery and Carter Barber, "Sin City? — Fifth in a Series: 'Bottomless' Generally Accepted," [The Pasadena Star-News](#), Thursday, 26 November 1970, pp. 1, 3.



## AT THE LANDMARK

**B**Y 1971 THORESON WAS LIVING at the Landmark Motor Hotel,<sup>21</sup> 7047 Franklin Avenue at the bottom of the Hollywood Hills. Her abode was an extra-large upper-level unfurnished two- or three-bedroom apartment with cathedral ceilings. She was certain that Davis, the supposedly rich concert promoter, would pay her rent, and she behaved as an entitled, privileged upper-class snob, friendly to few. By this time, she had legally changed her name. Long a fan of the *Pippi Longstocking* stories, she chose for herself a variation on the name of one of the characters, Annika, and as a surname she chose de Lorenzo. Joey Davis, oddly, attempted to take credit for the new moniker.

She was free in the day and spent much of her time reading every book she could find about Marilyn Monroe. When not reading, Thoreson rhapsodized about eventually becoming a mother. Those were her two great goals in life: movie stardom and motherhood.

Unbeknownst to Thoreson's neighbors and friends, Davis had paid her enrolment in acting lessons conducted by [Charles E. Conrad](#).<sup>22</sup> Thoreson got some experience with the Children's Theatre Company, and she was also cast in three small plays, *The Wall*, *Marquis De Sade*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In 1971 she joined AFTRA (American Federation of Television & Radio Artists), and in late 1972 she joined SAG (Screen Actors Guild). She also found a commercial agent (identity unknown) and a talent agent, [Sue Goldin](#), and got some gigs in television commercials and industrial films.<sup>23</sup>

She revealed none of this to her friends, and she certainly never offered so much as a clue about her secret night life, though there must have been suspicions, for when chatting with neighbors, she would occasionally dash off to mumble into a telephone, careful not to be overheard.

Joey Davis, who had no lodgings of his own, frequently spent time at Thoreson's apartment, and let others believe the apartment was his. Thoreson broke up with him when she discovered the truth about him, and when she witnessed his horrifying behavior. For instance, he would have social gatherings at her apartment, where he would pull such stunts as tip-toeing up to the guests, one by one, and loudly passing wind directly at them. He also had an

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21. As of this writing the Landmark has been renamed the Highland Gardens Hotel. Coincidentally, this is walking distance down the street from Gore Vidal's later residence on Outpost Drive.

22. Judge Wilk, Ruling, 23 October 1990, [Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione](#), 149 Misc.2d 150, 563 N.Y.S.2d 968.

23. Decision, 2 April 1992, [Thoreson v Penthouse International](#), 179 A.D.2d 29 (1992).

uncontrollable temper that caused him to lash out verbally and abusively at anyone, with no provocation. (Eventually, someone shot him in the chest in retaliation for his escapades, grazing his aorta, but not killing him.)

Despite all this, Thoreson still relied upon Davis. Whenever she needed protection, he would show up. This sort of protection could go wrong. Since Thoreson was engaged in her secret night life only several nights a week, rather than full time, she did not earn enough to pay her rent. When her Landmark landlord lost patience with her, Davis assaulted him, kicking him violently in the bladder, causing him to lose control, as other tenants watched. The landlord was too afraid to call the police. By this time Thoreson was dating someone her own age, someone who I am assured was “sickening.”

Davis caused further upset when a cat, without invitation, wandered into Thoreson’s apartment and settled down there. This cat soon had a litter of kittens, but within a week they all disappeared. Davis had stuffed them into a sack, which he tossed into the dumpster.

During the day, Thoreson was her upper-class self, disdaining most, but making friends with people in the arts and in show business. She spent time with them admiring the exhibits at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art as well as attending various functions. She made friends with a few celebrities, and she was certainly in the company of celebrities during social events. The one we know about with certainty was Byron Gilliam, a dancer on the *Laugh-In* TV show. On at least one occasion, when driving to a social event, Thoreson wore a see-through blouse with nothing underneath. Her car was a luxury rental, which she had obtained free of charge in return for giving the rental man a bear hug.

Despite her rudeness towards those she regarded as of lesser stature, Thoreson was sincerely kind towards her friends. She was now again in regular touch with her sisters, who would visit, and with whom she never fought. She also reconciled with her mother, certainly by 1973, possibly earlier.

In her romantic life, she preferred dark men. She was a fan of the black singer Wilson Pickett. She was not a fan of his music, but of his physique, and she found him mesmerizing. Further, her preference was for cold, aloof, domineering, criminal-boss types, and that was her failing.

#### BEAUTY WINNER

**T**HORESON, USING VARIOUS PSEUDONYMS, entered four pageants. Those who knew her assure me that she merited all the praise she received. Her large cat-like eyes were bright-apple-green, and to intensify the color, she “smoked” her eyeliner. To make a contrast with her eyes, she dyed her light sandy-brown

hair a fiery red. Her make-up skills were shared with two of her sisters as well. All four were, I am assured, beyond cover-girl in looks.

Her agent was an Egyptian-American named Mark Marzouk, who later became rather prominent in the world of show business. In early 1972 Thoreson entered the Los Angeles Press Club beauty pageant. Which assumed name she used is not known, though it was probably Anneka Steinberg. Present was a previous winner, Susan Anton, who had also once won the Miss California contest.<sup>24</sup> Thoreson wowed the audience with her act, giving lie to the presumption that Barbie Doll legs were a prerequisite. She strutted onto the stage, mysteriously covered in a black cape. She threw it open to reveal pink lining and a black bikini that threw into sharp relief her flowery-white skin. Though she was the hit of the show, she lost to a foot model. The reason was merely that the foot model had entered four years in a row, and the judges wanted to make her dream come true. The judges urged Thoreson to enter again the following year, when, they promised, she would be sure to win first prize. Thoreson was incensed at the injustice.

The second event occurred in July 1972 when Thoreson, under the name Anneka Steinberg, was named Miss Studio City held at the Sportsmen's Lodge "and supervised by Miss Kent, one of the beauteous interval announcers on the former Jackie Gleason television show."<sup>25</sup> As she walked the runway, she held a lion cub, which she lowered for a friend in the audience to pet.

That same year she won first prize at the annual Miss Zodiac Beauty Pageant and Ball. This event was produced by Maureen Dragone, a journalist with the Hollywood Foreign Press Association who doubled as an astrologer.<sup>26</sup> The contest was held on Saturday, 16 September 1972, at the Beverly Hills home of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Marks. Johnnie Grant was the master of ceremonies, and the judges included Pat O'Brien, Henry Wilcoxon, Sue Anne Langdon, Gloria DeHaven, Donna Jean Young, Angel Tompkins, and Lyle Waggoner.<sup>27</sup> The news article suggested that there would 12 winners, one for each astrological sign, yet there was one grand-prize winner, and that was Thoreson. For this contest, Thoreson used a different assumed name, Susan Steinberg.

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24. Anton had won the Miss California title in 1969. See "Susan Anton," *Wikipedia*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susan\\_Anton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susan_Anton).

25. "Studio City CC Projects Help Brighten Community," *The News* [Van Nuys, California], Tuesday, 6 February 1973, p. 27.

26. "Zodiac Party Is Scheduled," *The [Van Nuys, California] Valley News and Green Sheet* (North Valley Edition) 62 no. 119, Thursday, 8 February 1973, p. 107.

27. "Variety Club Ladies Announce Ball Date," *The [Van Nuys, California] Valley News and Green Sheet* (Northeast Edition) 62 no. 33, Sunday, 10 September 1972, p. 25.

To her annoyance, Thoreson won only trophies for her contests. What she really wanted was work. One time the prize was a free trip to Palm Springs, a mere two-hour drive away, an award that she found insulting.

Finally, under her new legal name, Anneka de Lorenzo, she represented Studio City once again when she won the California Citrus Queen pageant at the 58th National Orange Show, from March through April 1973.<sup>28</sup> That was her final pageant, since she was by now a part of the Penthouse empire.

### HOLLYWOOD BECKONS

SUE GOLDIN FOUND Thoreson small parts in three minor films. They were exploitation movies, *The Centerfold Girls*, *Act of Vengeance*, and *Mama's Dirty Girls*, which opened in 1974, primarily at drive-ins, and which were instantly forgotten.<sup>29</sup> Thoreson was pleased that the directors made no moves on her but treated her professionally. She singled out one in particular, John Hayes, for complimenting her on her naturalness while performing in the nude.<sup>30</sup>



Thoreson as Pam in *The Centerfold Girls*: no acting ability required.



Thoreson as Charity, stabbed to death in *Mama's Dirty Girls*: undeliverable dialogue.

28. "Seeks Citrus Crown," [The Van Nuys \[California\] News](#), Thursday, 29 March 1973, p. 36-A.

29. *The Centerfold Girls* (a/k/a *Girl Hunter*), shot in 16mm, produced and distributed by Arthur Marks's General Film Corporation, opened at drive-ins in the South as the first feature on a double bill on Friday, 19 April 1974. *Act of Vengeance*, released by American International Pictures, opened at drive-ins in the South as the first feature on a double bill on Friday, 17 July 1974; and by November it had been retitled *Rape Squad*. *Mama's Dirty Girls*, distributed by Premiere Releasing Corporation, opened at drive-ins in Los Angeles as the first feature on a double bill on Friday, 6 December 1974. All three films slowly meandered across the US over the next several years, usually at drive-ins. Strangely enough, these cheap throwaway films have developed a small but loyal cult following.

30. Powers, "What's a Nice Girl Like You?" [The Kingsport \[Tennessee\] Times-News](#) "Weekender," Saturday, 20 December 1975, p. 4.

## WEALTH AND POWER

LIFE WAS LOOKING UP. All her risky adventures, from running away from home to taking illegal jobs and getting in trouble with the law and running a bank account on empty, were proving to have been worth the trouble. She was beginning to gain a reputation, she had three upcoming films, and then, by chance, on television, she saw what seemed to be the answer to her prayers.

It was on Thursday, 8 March 1973, that Thoreson caught an episode of *The Merv Griffin Show*, which featured, among other guests, Bob Guccione. She had never seen or heard of *Penthouse* magazine, but once she laid eyes on the man on the screen, she was smitten, "hypnotized" by his sparkling personality.<sup>31</sup> "I was so impressed with how much he loved women," she said.<sup>32</sup> She sensed that Guccione, who was working with Paramount Pictures on several major features, could be the gateway to better acting jobs. After, he stated on air that he was in search of talent for his films.<sup>33</sup> She wrote to him and visited the Penthouse office on Sunset Boulevard where she had some test shots taken, which were sent to Guccione, who initially rejected her. She persisted and soon got her way.<sup>34</sup>

Thoreson was impressed by Guccione's praises of women, by his insistence on hiring women to run his companies. Whether she realized it or not, there was another reason: He was the embodiment of the cold, cruel, manipulative, wealthy, powerful brunette men for whom she had such a weakness.

It was in Los Angeles that Thoreson and Guccione first met, not long after the *Merv Griffin* episode. Guccione predictably asked her to disrobe. "I was a little uptight about it, but he was very professional."<sup>35</sup> Said she, "He said he thought that I was different, that I was special."<sup>36</sup> Thoreson soon enough was completely comfortable with Guccione. She told Guccione that "I want to become

31. Susan Jimison, "Ex-Penthouse Pet of the Year Says in Court: I Was a Rich Man's Love Slave," [Weekly World News](#), 30 May 1989, p. 5.

32. "People: She — Sniff — Believed Him," [The Syracuse Herald-Journal](#), Tuesday, 21 March 1989, p. C2.

33. Larry Sutton, "[Petulant Pet's Cry: Promises Premise](#)," *New York Daily News*, Friday, 17 March 1989, p. 7.

34. Powers, "What's a Nice Girl Like You?," [The Kingsport \[Tennessee\] Times-News "Weekender"](#), 20 December 1975, p. 4; Samuel Maull, "Judge Orders Guccione, Penthouse to Pay former Model \$4 Million," [AP News Archive](#), 23 October 1990, [http://www.apnewsarchive.com/1990/Judge-Orders-Guccione-Penthouse-to-Pay-Former-Model-\\$4-Million/id-ed226d77b3e35af4729470cc6bb48e84](http://www.apnewsarchive.com/1990/Judge-Orders-Guccione-Penthouse-to-Pay-Former-Model-$4-Million/id-ed226d77b3e35af4729470cc6bb48e84); Barbara Goldberg, "Penthouse Pet: Guccione Made Me Sleep Around" (UPI wire story), [The Daily Republican-Register](#) [Mt. Carmel, Illinois], Monday, 20 March 1989, p. 7.

35. Amy Linn, "Newsmakers: The Millie Saga: 4 Puppies Are Born," [The Philadelphia Inquirer](#), Saturday, 18 March 1989, p. 2-C; reprinted as "People: She — Sniff — Believed Him," [The Syracuse Herald-Journal](#), 21 March 1989, p. C2.

36. [Ibid.](#)

the sexiest woman in the world”<sup>37</sup> and she confessed her dream to be an actress. Guccione offered her counsel. “At the first interview, he said that I had all the requisites to become a star, but that the Hollywood way entailed a lot of sacrifices and compromises, like, for example, what Marilyn Monroe and Jayne Mansfield agreed to. He told me to trust him....”<sup>38</sup> Trust him she did. She freely told him of her life. Guccione later summarized in court, and his testimony was untrue:

She told me that she was a prostitute and that she had been working in Las Vegas, that she had a criminal record and that she was on parole, and one of the things I attempted to do for her was to have her criminal record expunged and to help her look at her own life and decide to do something with it with our help. She never came to me with the idea of becoming an actress. It was my idea.... She was 20 years old. She knew the score. She knew what Penthouse was all about. She knew what being a centerfold would mean.<sup>39</sup>

Guccione’s testimony was outrageous. Thoreson had never been a prostitute, and acting had most definitely been her idea from the time she was a small child. He had no right to take credit for her life’s goal. By talking about her criminal record absent its context, he gave his listeners only the worst impression. That all happened years later, though. At first, the experience was quite pleasant — or so it seemed to a young and gullible woman. As for the reason he wanted her criminal record expunged: He wanted to hire her, but could not afford to hire a known criminal.

Penthouse soon drafted a contract, and her old friend warned her against it:

Joey tried to reason with her but she signed the contract anyway. She was gullible and thought he [Guccione] would make her a star.<sup>40</sup>

Discounting the sage advice, she signed that contract in New York City. By this contract, Penthouse International, Inc. (“Manager”), became not only the employer of Thoreson (“Artist”), but also her exclusive manager! We should note here that the “Inc.” was a misnomer; it should have been “Ltd.”

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37. Gene Mustain and Jerry Capeci, *Murder Machine: A True Story of Murder, Madness, and the Mafia* (NY: Onyx, 1993), p. 187. The “sexiest woman” was one of her standard lines. See Robert Hullihan, “Finally, Our Man Asks Tough Question,” [The Des Moines Register](#), Sunday, 15 August 1976, sec. A, pp. 1, 3.

38. Gino Gullace Rauegi, “[Mi ha costretta a fare la schiava a luci rosse](#),” *Oggi* 46 no. 46, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

39. Robert Charles Joseph Edward Sabatini Guccione, cross-examination, 14 March 1989, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

40. Email message received on 29 September 2019.

The Artist is seeking a professional career in the public entertainment field. She is unfamiliar with the selection and preparation of appropriate material, and is generally inexperienced in this area of endeavor, and recognizes the necessity for supervised guidance and specialized training to develop her talents. Therefore, she desires to engage the Manager as one who is qualified to act for her in that capacity....

1. The Artist hereby engaged the manager to act as her sole and exclusive personal manager, personal representative and general advisor, to supervise, guide and direct the Artist's professional career and to attend to all business arrangements in connection with the Artist's career in all fields of entertainment, but not limited to recording, personal appearances, modeling, stage, motion pictures, radio and television, for a period of five (5) years commencing upon the date of this agreement. The Artist shall be guided by the Manager's advice, and shall render her services exclusively under the Manager's direction....<sup>41</sup>

The contract was signed by Anthony Joseph Guccione (Bob's father) and Thoreson. Bob witnessed his father's signature. Kathy Keeton witnessed Thoreson's signature. These four people signed the contract not in an office, but in a taxi. They were on their way to the airport where Thoreson would catch a flight back to Los Angeles.<sup>42</sup> No lawyers signed this document, which was notarized by Irwin Edward Billman, Penthouse's executive vice president, though he was not identified as such.

The contract had Thoreson grant Penthouse power of attorney in all her financial matters, which surely explains why the moneys supposedly set aside by Penthouse on her behalf were nowhere to be found.<sup>43</sup> The conflicts of interest inherent in this document need not be examined any further. The above excerpts suffice to show that this was nothing more than a swindle by which Penthouse locked Thoreson into its employ and by which Thoreson surrendered independence, and by which Penthouse would earn a percentage of all her other earnings.

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41. Agreement between Penthouse International, Inc., and Marjorie Lee Thoreson, signed 15 June 1973. [FRC](#).

42. Judge Wilk, Ruling, 23 October 1990, [Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione](#), 149 Misc.2d 150, 563 N.Y.S.2d 968.

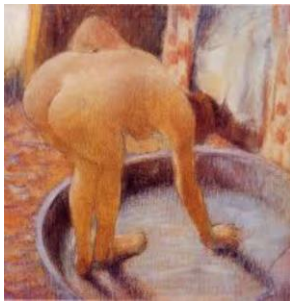
43. Opinion of Justice Elliott Wilk, 2 December 1988, *Marjorie Lee Thoreson, a/k/a Annika di Lorenzo v Penthouse International, Ltd., and Robert Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), Supreme Court New York County, index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).



Within two weeks of the contract, Thoreson was whisked off to London where Guccione shot her Pet of the Month spread. He was respectful to her, and she loved having sex with him.<sup>44</sup> She was a bit worried at first.

I was so nervous. I'd never done it before. I thought: "My God, how am I going to pose?" Be sexy? What does that mean? And I had jet lag from flying to London. So I just spend the night worrying about everything that ladies worry about when they want to look good. But Mr. Guccione is really blessed with some gift where he can really draw from models whatever he thinks that girl wants to express. You know? Their feelings and emotions. He makes them feel completely at ease.<sup>45</sup>

Thoreson quickly changed her attitude about broadcasting her anatomy to the world. "I used to think, 'Do I want everybody in the world to see what my body looks like?' But I've gotten through that. It's pretty, and if people want to look at it, why not? If it brings happiness, why not?"<sup>46</sup> We can see that the photos of Thoreson were copies of Degas paintings.



Not long after her first photo shoot, when they were back in New York, Guccione required her to have cocktails with two men. They slipped her a mickey and raped her. She shortly afterwards related this episode, unaccountably smirking about it, confident that her acquiescence would impress Guccione.

Back at her Franklin Avenue apartment in Hollywood, there were more troubles afoot. The Pet of the Month issue had just reached bookshop shelves when Thoreson went about her chores, taking the trash to the bin out back. She heard footsteps following her, but when she turned around to look, the sound

44. The photos shot in London appeared in the UK edition of *Penthouse* 8 no. 6 and the US *Penthouse* 5 no. 1 (September 1973).

45. Powers, "What's a Nice Girl Like You?," [The Kingsport \[Tennessee\] Times-News](#) "Weekender," Saturday, 20 December 1975, p. 4.

46. [Ibid.](#)



stopped, as her stalker vanished into the landscape. In the future, she asked to be accompanied whenever she took out the trash. Then the phone calls started, with the caller listening but saying nothing. Thoreson was terrified. We do not know who her stalker was, but we do know that one of the residents at the Landmark was Angelo Buono, one of the two men who would later become known as the Hillside Strangler. Is there a connection? It is impossible to know.

Unable to meet her rent at the Landmark, Thoreson moved to the Oakwood Garden Apartments at 3674 Barham Boulevard in the Toluca Lake area of Los Angeles. It was a glamorous place where she was surrounded by people in the music and movie businesses. Soon she found a new boyfriend, a dark-complected Israeli with black eyes and black curls. She moved in with him at his abode on Sunset Boulevard. He kept her prisoner, and when she could finally make a telephone call for help, Joey Davis and several big muscular black men arrived and taught the Israeli a lesson. She then found a new boyfriend, a refined middle-aged businessman who treated her as royalty. He invited her to move into his two-story townhouse on Kings Road in West Hollywood. When business required him to fly to India, he took her along. She refused him sex, complaining of an ailment that precluded her from intercourse.



Left to right: Ted Zeigler, 1973 Penthouse Pet of the Year Patricia Cherokee Barrett, Sonny Bono (sitting), Larry King (standing), Thoreson with a red bow in her hair, Billie Jean King, and Guccione. Out of shot to the left is Andy Griffith. *The Sonny & Cher Comedy Hour*, 7 November 1973.

Guccione called her to New York City constantly, and he granted her living space in a room of a row house he was renting on 8 East 63rd Street, which she was free to use whenever she happened to be back in town. In the autumn of 1973, Thoreson was on a promotional tour for *Penthouse* and *Viva* (her photo was on the cover of the December 1973 issue). Among her appearances were Nicky

Blair's Restaurant in Hollywood in September 1973;<sup>47</sup> the House of Sound on 2 October 1973;<sup>48</sup> and the Third Annual Tampa International Championship Speed, Cycle and Custom Auto Show, Friday through Sunday, 26 through 28 October 1973.<sup>49</sup> She now took it upon herself to enroll in singing lessons, but she gave up shortly due to the prohibitive cost.<sup>50</sup> She still had high hopes for an acting career, though, and continued taking lessons from Charles Conrad. Remarkably, Thoreson and Guccione were cast on the 7 November 1973 episode of *The Sonny & Cher Comedy Hour*, though they had little to do other than look good for the cameras.



Thoreson, Cher Bono, and Barrett.

Then she was back in Los Angeles for most of 1974, and, she was working again with Joey Davis, who was putting together a new production company for rock bands. There was only one known announcement, in the 5 August 1974 *Daily Variety*:<sup>51</sup>

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47. Dorothy Manners, "Hollywood" (King Features Syndicate), *The Evening Herald of Shenandoah* [Pottsville, Pennsylvania], Thursday, 27 September 1973, p. 24.

48. Advertisement, *Springfield [Missouri] Leader and Press*, Tuesday, 2 October 1973, p. 7.

49. Advertisement, *The Tampa Times*, Wednesday, 24 October 1973, p. 5-C; Perry Fulkerson, "Customized Wrecker in Auto Show," *The St. Petersburg Independent*, Friday, 26 October 1973, p. 3-B; "Auto Show Slated at Hixon Hall," *The Tampa Tribune*, Friday, 26 October 1973, p. 6-C.

50. Powers, "What's a Nice Girl Like You?" *The Kingsport [Tennessee] Times-News* "Weekender," Saturday, 20 December 1975, p. 4.

51. "[California Incorporations](#)," *Daily Variety* 164 no. 43, Monday, 5 August 1974, p. 4.

Naturally Unlimited Inc., L.A. (1000 shares-no par). Entertainment events. Robert L. Fitzpatrick, 9000 Sunset Blvd., L.A. Drts: Anneka d'Lorenzo, 3674 Barham Blvd., Toluca Hills; Joseph A. Davis, 111 N. Layton Dr., L.A.; Robert L. Fitzpatrick, 9000 Sunset Blvd.

Naturally Unlimited was incorporated on 17 June 1974, company number C0707816.<sup>52</sup> It seems never to have produced anything. An anonymous person sent me an email message that arrived only after having been forwarded to a third party to obscure its origin:

He used her former address where she couldn't be located. Anneka would have been disgusted if she knew that he was using her name. He used an address on Layton that was not his house.<sup>53</sup>

Anneka was not disgusted. She was hopeful that there would be profits in this venture. The house on Layton Drive was the address of Davis's girlfriend at the time.<sup>54</sup> Again, as usual, Thoreson kept her friends and neighbors in the dark concerning this plan.

#### ANOTHER MOVIE

**S**UE GOLDIN CAME THROUGH AGAIN with yet another part for Thoreson. This was in late 1973, for a small speaking part in a movie called *The Star of India*,<sup>55</sup> which was released in some areas as *Live a Little, Steal a Lot*, and in other areas as *Murph the Surf*. We can only assume that, instead of dealing directly with Thoreson, Goldin needed to deal with Penthouse, which was now her manager. Thoreson's part in the movie was deleted prior to release.

Soon Thoreson began to realize that nobody at Penthouse was qualified to guide her acting career.<sup>56</sup> She had gotten this part on her own, with no help

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52. "Naturally Unlimited, Inc.," *Open Corporates: The Open Database of the Corporate World*, 29 April 2013, <http://www.bizapedia.com/addresses/9000-SUNSET-BLVD-LOS-ANGELES-CA-90069.html>.

53. Anonymous message, 25 February 2015.

54. Email message received on 29 September 2019.

55. Thoreson's involvement in this movie is mentioned in Guccione, cross-examination, 14 March 1989, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81 ([FRC](#)), as well as in Thoreson's own testimony. The film was shot quickly in January 1974 as *The Star of India*. It was trade screened as *Murph the Surf* on 6 September 1974, then released by American International as *Live a Little, Steal a Lot* on 7 May 1975 in Los Angeles and as *Murph the Surf* in New York on 11 June 1975.

whatever from Penthouse. Penthouse was in breach of the contract, failing to offer Thoreson any professional advice and providing her only with minimal legal and accounting services, nothing more than what Penthouse routinely offered to its models.<sup>57</sup> She insisted, more and more, that Guccione live up to his end of the contract.

### COCKTAILS

UNTIL THE SPRING OF 1975, when she took up residence in a room in Guccione's rented row house at 8 East 63rd Street in Manhattan, Thoreson had never smoked or taken drugs, and had rarely imbibed alcohol. This is a bit surprising, considering her youthful vocations, but it is true. She was too concerned about her looks and her health to risk compromising them with addictions. (Guccione later claimed otherwise in court, insisting that when she first approached him, Thoreson had many "personality problems, not the least of which was heavy drinking and drug abuse."<sup>58</sup>)

Guccione soon told her that he was a voyeur and that he wanted to hide in a closet and watch her have sex that was odd, peculiar, different. He would not direct her, except to insist that all her acts be from her own imagination. He asked her to play a game: Thoreson would enter a bar and choose the least-attractive old man she could find and proposition him. Guccione would follow unobtrusively to witness the seduction. He would then hide in her hotel closet, unbeknownst to the other man, and Thoreson's job was to perform sex acts that had never been done before. Since Thoreson could never think of any unprecedented act, they probably they never performed this game. Guccione further insisted that Thoreson have sex with women as well as men, but that was a step too far. Thoreson had no sexual appetite whatever for women, and, on the contrary, was repelled at the very thought. She fought off this demand for a full four years before she finally caved in. Guccione assured her that if she did anything he asked, her future as a professional actress would be assured. One of his demands was that she have cocktails with whomever he chose. That is how the drinking began.

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56. Judge Wilk, Opinion, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

57. Opinion of Justice Wilk, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

58. Guccione, cross-examination, 14 March 1989, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

Thoreson again "urged" Guccione to "hasten her acting career."<sup>59</sup> That is an understatement. Actually, she nagged him relentlessly, trying his patience. Thoreson's conduct is understandable, though, for Guccione was doing nothing in this matter, despite the contractual obligation.

Thoreson suffered an agony that was mitigated by her infatuation, for, like many of the Pets, she hoped to seduce Guccione away from Keeton. Thoreson, though, made the mistake of going one step further. She continually snubbed Keeton and insisted on being deeply involved in Guccione's business affairs. Keeton began to fear that, unlike the other Pets, Thoreson might actually get her way. She had a talk with Thoreson, but it did no good at all. Keeton laid down the law and instructed Guccione never to have sex with Thoreson unless she joined in as part of a threesome, and only if Thoreson would be used as a mere sex toy.

In truth, though, Keeton need not have worried. Thoreson's hateful treatment of her served only to antagonize Guccione, who now became ever more demanding, pushing her to submit to ever-greater humiliations.



"Mis Porsches a escala," <http://misporschesaescala.blogspot.com/2017/01/al-holbert-2-parte.html>  
1975 Sebring car race. Thoreson is on the right.

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59. Judge Wilk, Ruling, 23 October 1990, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione*, 149 Misc.2d 150, 563 N.Y.S.2d 968.

## PROMOTIONS

PENTHOUSE KEPT Thoreson in the public eye. When Penthouse entered a Porsche in the 21 March 1975 Sebring 12-Hour IMSA car race in Sebring, Florida, it sent Thoreson along to promote the event and the magazine.<sup>60</sup> Penthouse also shopped her around to promote various events and retail merchants. Online newspaper archives reveal a few of these events: Jon's Cycle Shop, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Saturday, 26 April 1975;<sup>61</sup> and the gala opening of the Spinnaker Discothèque in Panama City, Florida, Thursday, 29 May 1975.<sup>62</sup> In October 1975 she made a coast-to-coast tour of Veterans Administration hospitals, as she said, "to show our fighting men what they were fighting for."<sup>63</sup> These visits to VA hospitals continued intermittently through 1980.<sup>64</sup> One of the more unusual publicity stunts was a show of solidarity with the Greater New York Blood Program's annual blood drive in July 1979. Guccione had 100 of his employees, including Thoreson and three other Pets, Victoria Lynn Johnson, Corinne Alphen, and Cheryl Rixon, volunteer to submit to the needle.<sup>65</sup>

Penthouse awarded Thoreson "Pet of the Year" in the autumn of 1975.<sup>66</sup> This title entailed a bouquet of prizes valued at \$50,000.<sup>67</sup> The prizes included "a hand-built Jensen-Interceptor automobile, a fox coat, 26 pairs of shoes, a motorcycle, a Persian kitten (though she had no interest in pets), a trip for two to México, stereo equipment, and clothes." Another prize included in this bundle

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60. Anonymous comment, "The Sudden Death of Anneka Vasta: Murder or Suicide?" *Jim Fisher True Crime*, 14 May 2014, <http://jimfishertruecrime.blogspot.com/2011/11/sudden-death-of-anneka-vasta-murder-or.html>.

61. Advertisement, *Wilkes-Barre Times-Leader*, Friday, 25 April 1975, p. 32.

62. "Spinnaker Has Gala Opening," *Panama City News-Herald*, Saturday, 31 May 1975, p. 2D.

63. Marilyn and Hy Gardner, "Glad You Asked That," *The [Jefferson City, Missouri] Daily Capital News*, Thursday, 6 November 1975, p. 4C. See also "The Clippings: Santa Comes Specially Wrapped!" *The Boston Herald American*, Monday, 24 December 1979, p. A14, which mentioned that Thoreson and fellow Pet Joanne Latham visited patients at New York's Veterans Hospital in "abbreviated Santa Claus costumes."

64. "People: Personality Glimpses," *The Salina [Kansas] Journal*, Tuesday, 18 December 1979, p. 2; "Sunny Valentine," *The [Huntingdon, Pennsylvania] Daily News*, Friday, 15 February 1980, p. 2.

65. "People Potpourri: 'Reward' Left Him Speechless," *The [Bend, Oregon] Bulletin*, Friday, 27 July 1979, p. 23.

66. UK *Penthouse* 10 no. 8, and US *Penthouse* 7 no. 1 (dated October 1975, but on newsstands in early September).

67. Judge Wilk, Opinion, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).



was a scholarship to the Lee Strasberg Theatre & Film Institute, the only school that taught Strasberg's version of "The Method."<sup>68</sup>

By now it was inevitable that Thoreson's parents would have found out what their little girl was up to. Thoreson told of that story:

The first time my mother saw that layout, she looked but didn't say anything. I didn't think she was very pleased with it. So we didn't discuss it. Then I went back about six months later and I found out that she was really proud of the fact that I was making good money, that I was happy. And of course she thought that, like, I was a little star. She told all of her friends, all the neighbors. I was so surprised, really shocked.<sup>69</sup>

Upon publication of the Pet of the Year, Thoreson's former Hollywood boyfriend suddenly made his presence known. Joey Davis bluffed his way into a personal call to Guccione, wrongly accusing him of the mickey and the rape. Guccione went wild with rage and ordered an investigation into this "big businessman" only to learn that he was anything but. He was further infuriated to discover that someone else claimed to be Thoreson's handler. Thoreson was "in a lot of trouble" with Guccione, and she was infuriated with Davis. She now attempted to cut Davis out of her life. She went so far as to refuse to talk with anyone who was on speaking terms with him.

To give her illusion of making good on his end of the contract, Guccione invited Thoreson to move into a room in his townhouse. He opined that this would put her in the midst of the show-business people who often visited, which could only help her acting career.<sup>70</sup> She took him up on his offer, and found herself a member of the boss's harem.

Despite all the setbacks, Thoreson loved her job with Penthouse, she loved traveling the world as a Pet, she loved living at Guccione's luxury flat and having fun with the other models. Once she had a taste of that life, she had no desire to return to office work or stripping, occupations she now thought beneath her. Guccione promised to make her a new Marilyn Monroe, encouraging her dreams and talking her up to the press, claiming that the "flaming redhead"

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68. Powers, "What's a Nice Girl Like You?" *The Kingsport [Tennessee] Times-News* "Weekender," Saturday, 20 December 1975, p. 4. See also Judge Wilk, Opinion, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

69. Powers, "What's a Nice Girl Like You?" *The Kingsport [Tennessee] Times-News* "Weekender," Saturday, 20 December 1975, p. 4.

70. "[Ex-Penthouse Pet Says She Was Virtual Sex Slave](#)" (AP), *The Morning Call* (Allentown, Pennsylvania), p. A2.

would be the next sex-star of the cinema.<sup>71</sup> Now that she was Pet of the Year, Thoreson was assigned to go on a promotional tour, followed in November 1975 by a Penthouse-sponsored tour for the United States Department of Defense, which later sent her a Certificate of Esteem. Penthouse continued to send her on tour to do sales promotions for various merchants. We know of two: Barker's Photo Fair, Friday through Sunday, 26 through 28 March 1976, New Brunswick, New Jersey;<sup>72</sup> and the grand opening of Stereo-Town in West Des Moines, Iowa.<sup>73</sup>

#### AN INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION WITH A BIG STUDIO BEHIND IT

**I**T WAS NOT HER ACTING LESSONS that led to her silent rôle as an extra in *Caligula*, of course. As a resident of Guccione's townhouse, she heard of the movie in 1975, and in early 1976 Guccione promised her the part of Cæsonia. "For two days, I was crying with happiness. It seemed like a great moment in my life had finally arrived...."<sup>74</sup> Of course, there was a catch: Guccione insisted that she undergo breast-augmentation surgery, "a good career move," since, "in the movies, you're larger than life." He hated the large space between Thoreson's small breasts and wished to correct this infirmity. He promised to pay, but, in fact, Penthouse paid for the \$3,500 procedure by "deducting" it from her prize money.<sup>75</sup> Thoreson suffered a let-down during her recovery from her surgery, when she discovered that she was not to play the female lead at all, but would be a mere extra.

Nonetheless, despite the irritation of being relegated to the wings for the bulk of the shoot, she clearly had a good time on the set, and, judging from the only known photograph of them together, she seemed quite fond of Tinto Brass. Things went awry, though, when Guccione told her that he was going to shoot some additional scenes, scenes that would be beautiful, and for which he needed her. He asked her to trust him. When it became clear that he was asking her to

71. Marilyn and Hy Gardner, "Glad You Asked That," [The Times](#) [San Mateo, California], Wednesday, 12 November 1975, p. 31.

72. "Barker's Sets Photo Fair," [The Bridgewater \[New Jersey\] Courier-News](#), Monday, 22 March 1976, p. D-6; "'Photo Fair' Set at Mall," [The Home News](#) [New Brunswick, New Jersey], Wednesday, 24 March 1976, p. 13; also an advertisement on the same day, [p. 7](#).

73. "Grand Opening," full-page ad, [The Des Moines Register](#), Thursday, 22 July 1976, p. 18A; Robert Hullihan, "Finally, Our Man Asks Tough Question," [The Des Moines Register](#), Sunday, 15 August 1976, sec. A, p. 1.

74. Raugei, "[Mi ha costretta](#)," *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

75. Larry Sutton, "[Hustler: Ex-Penthouse Pet Says Publisher Guccione a Bleeping Tom](#)" ([New York Daily News wire story](#)), *Philadelphia Daily News*, Saturday, 18 March 1989, p. 10. According to a different quote, the surgery cost only \$2,000: "[A Courtin' We Will Go: Sex Slave Annika di Lorenzo](#)," *Celebrity Sleuth* 9 no. 9, November 1996, p. 40.



have graphic sex on camera, she was horrified. Nonetheless, Guccione quelled her fears, assuring her that this was in the interest of historical accuracy, and that the scenes would be flattering to her image.



Thoreson is happy to receive a kiss from director Tinto Brass on the set of *Caligula*. Lori Wagner also expresses her appreciation.  
Photo by Mario Tursi.

Valerie Rae Clark, who was in Rome for Guccione/Lui's "additional scenes" in mid-January 1977, told the story of that particular shoot.

When we filmed *Caligula*, Anneka took over as sort of the den mother; for instance, she was responsible for carrying our return tickets and keeping us in line. She explained to us that we were at risk of kidnapping, that Bob would have people watching us. She said it was because the film had a big budget that kidnappers would try to ransom us. She also said that Bob and the pope were in kind of a pissing war. Bob was retaliating for statements the pope made against *Penthouse* by filming *Caligula* in Rome right under his nose. Anyway, here's the story: Susanne [Saxon] and I were roommates. Shooting had started on the film and was taking place at night. Susanne and I were out sightseeing and shopping one day, but came back to our room to get ready to go to the studio. We were energetic, eager, and excited. We came into our room and both just dropped on our beds exhausted. We couldn't wake up or get up, but we were both aware that someone came in the room and looked at us both before leaving. After some time had passed, we awoke to yelling and pounding on the door. Susanne couldn't budge, but I somehow managed to stagger to the door. It was locked from the other side, which is weird for a hotel room. I was unable to open it. We were locked in. It was Anneka and the other girls yelling on the other side. They yelled at me to open a window. Eventually Anneka got someone from the hotel to open the door, but it took a while. Our room

was filled with natural gas, and the other girls had smelled it when it started to overtake the hall. Once we got some fresh air, we recovered but I was really upset because someone had come in the room, looked at us, and locked us in the room. I thought someone had tried to kill us. I went to Bob's hotel, which was different than ours, and told him and his assistant what had happened. Bob laughed! It struck me as so odd because we were being so careful not to be kidnapped, and we were constantly reminded we were in some danger, from the film and from anti-American sentiments. His assistant said most likely a hotel worker came in, realized the room was occupied, and accidentally locked the door. I didn't buy that. The maid had already straightened the room. It was late afternoon, a small hotel, and the desk clerk had seen us come in and go to the room. There was no knock at the door before coming in. The person who came in came over to us and looked at us. The room was full of gas. If it had been a hotel worker they would have saved us. Anneka saved us. I've always wondered what the real story was and now Susanne and Anneka are both dead.<sup>76</sup>

Thoreson was of two minds about the film. On the one hand, she was chagrined to discover the promising film had been transformed into crass pornography. A few years later she let her true feelings be known, saying that she was distressed that she had been misled: "there was no international production with a big studio behind it, and, what's worse, the screenplay had nothing to do with the historical subject. Guccione used the emperor Caligula's life as an excuse to put together a series of orgies among people with exaggerated physiques. It was a horrid porno film where I was forced, because of the contract I had signed, to shoot some lesbian scenes."<sup>77</sup>

On the one hand, she decided to do her job, and so she did everything in her power to convince herself that Guccione's decision was the right one. Despite her hesitations, Thoreson put on her best face and determined to perform lesbian sex and to participate in the Imperial Bordello orgy with all the gusto she could muster. At the time, she even put on her best face to the press:

When you're on stage, or on camera, you do whatever is necessary to make your character real — I would do anything to bring my character to life. But those sexual scenes are the hardest to do. One scene we shot for two days: one scene, two days. It was exhausting.<sup>78</sup>

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76. Valerie Rae Clark: email message to Chaffin, Wednesday, 4 January 2012. Susanne Saxon's real name was Susan Swanson. She passed away in 2006 at age 49. No details are known.

77. Raugei, "[Mi ha costretta](#)" *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

78. "About People: Marriage Isn't Sexy" (UPI), [The Logansport \[Indiana\] Pharos-Tribune](#), Sunday, 18 May 1980, p. 28.

To gossip columnist Earl Wilson, she complained (Wilson's phrase) that Malcolm McDowell was "a five-letter word" and that Peter O'Toole "imbibed excessively" (though he did not), but complimented John Gielgud for being "a gentleman" (that was a bit strange, as the evidence suggests she never met Gielgud). She was certain that her sex scenes would go down in cinema history. "I loved doing the love scenes. I'm an actress."<sup>79</sup>

Years later she would admit that "I had drinks and cocaine on the set of *Caligula* to do those two scenes. I was very stoned during the oral sex and I could hardly stand up in the lesbian scene."<sup>80</sup>

The \$500 she had received as an independent contractor on *Caligula*<sup>81</sup> would be supplemented, promised Guccione, by an unspecified percentage of the film's profits, which was never forthcoming.<sup>82</sup>

Valerie Rae Clark offered her own opinion of Thoreson's life at the time of the *Caligula* shoot:

At the time of [the] *Caligula* filming, I saw no sexual relationship between her [Thoreson] and Bob Guccione. He was involved with Bonnie Dee [Wilson] at that time. I know Bob was screwing lots of women, but in Rome I only saw him with Bonnie. I didn't even see him flirt with anyone. It wasn't a love affair in any way. He was using her to masturbate himself, and she was using him to advance her career. It was cold and boring. There was no affection.

I was told she [Thoreson] was seeing Mussolini's son. I'm not sure which son it was. Lori and Anneka told several of us she'd been seeing one. When I met her she was happy and enjoying Rome. Lori was uncomfortable about filming, but Anneka was enthusiastic about the film. She was a sweet, sunny person. When we went to clubs at night the movie community in Rome was excited about the film because of all the drama surrounding it. Paparazzi hung around the clubs. Movie people were friendly to us. I felt at home because it was so similar to Hollywood. There was lots of drinking in Rome, and Bob insisted on it on set. Anneka didn't stand out as drinking any more than anyone else. We were all young, and she was a few years older by that time, so I remember her as being more mature than the rest of us. She had won a

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79. Earl Wilson, "People Talk Stresses Women," *The Milwaukee Sentinel*, Saturday, 23 February 1980, pt. 3, p. 3.

80. "A Courtin' We Will Go: Sex Slave Anneka di Lorenzo," *Celebrity Sleuth* 9 no. 9, November 1996, p. 41.

81. Penthouse Films International, Ltd.: IRS Form 1099 for Anneka de Lorenzo, Statement of Receipts of 1976. [FRC](#).

82. Judge Wilk, Opinion, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

beautiful fur coat as Pet of the Year. It was cold, so she usually had it on, and looked very striking.<sup>83</sup>

Feeling sorry that Thoreson had been misled by Guccione, and also sensing that she had a sparkle that the cameras would adore, Franco Rossellini cast her as the lead in *Messalina, Messalina*, a B-grade follow-up to *Caligula*. The shoot was a quick five weeks, and then Thoreson did a four-week promotional tour in Italy.

### BACK IN THE US

AFTER COMPLETING THE PROMOTIONAL TOUR, Thoreson performed on a cruise ship, singing and dancing with a group called The Penthouse Pets, and then returned to Southern California, where she met with old friends in Bel Air in mid-1977. Her appearance was alarming. Her hair was broken from harsh bleach. She was skin-and-bones with black circles under her eyes. From being an adamant nonsmoker, she had by now evolved into a chain-smoking addict. She was grimacing and gesturing to signal that something was horribly wrong, something she dared not speak.

### AN INTERLUDE WITH MR. NEW YORK

CHANGES WERE AFOOT in the Penthouse empire. Despite his earlier collaboration with the criminal syndicates in London, and despite his continuing dealings with mobsters in New York City,<sup>84</sup> Guccione saw nothing wrong with having *Penthouse* (March 1975) publish a muckraking exposé about mob connections at the Rancho La Costa resort. After all, it was run by a rival family, not friends of his New York associates. The resort sued and the case was eventually settled out of court.<sup>85</sup> During this time, Guccione continued paying criminals to handle various business problems.<sup>86</sup> Guccione for a while was being helped by Serbian criminal Boško Radonjić, who offered his services as a paid assassin (as far as I know, nobody was murdered, though Radonjić did make a threat on *Viva* model Margaret Ashley Porter's life). Radonjić at the time was

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83. Clark: email messages, 23 November 2014.

84. Film director John Parsons recalled a business conversation that consisted largely of Guccione's plans for "cement booties": telephone conversation, 11 August 2017.

85. By a strange coincidence, Rancho La Costa was Gore Vidal's preferred exercise spa, and he was presumably unaware of the behind-the-scenes connections.

86. Deyan Ranko Brashich, "Opinion: The Good Pornographers, a Tale of the Mob, Lutèce, Bob Guccione, the Kennedys and High Standards," *The Litchfield [Connecticut] County Times*, Friday, 12 April 2013, <http://www.countytimes.com/articles/2013/04/12/opinion/doc51687a99a3cc9420917048.txt?viewmode=fullstory>.

filling in for the imprisoned Jimmy Coonan, boss of the so-called "Westies" Irish mob. Coonan and the "Westies" had by then formed an alliance with the Gambino family. There is no indication that Guccione was a member of a crime family himself — quite the contrary! — but he did reach an understanding, one that appears to have been mutually beneficial.

We already encountered Charles "Chuck" Anderson, Jr., in Chapter 6. He was known to gossip columnists as "Mr. New York," as mentioned earlier, and he had been the *maitre d'* at the exclusive 21 restaurant for 27 years. One evening, in or just before October 1977, he was fired for attempting to bring in three Pets at the request of his good friend Bob Guccione.<sup>87</sup> The Pets were dressed in "slinky" outfits that violated the 21's policy. Barred from the 21, Anderson instead took the three ladies, along with their much-older male guests, to his penthouse apartment at 40 Central Park South.

Dominick Montiglio, on his weekly round of picking up loansharking payments due Uncle Anthony Frank "Nino" Gaggi (a *caporegime* in the Gambino crime family), stopped by Anderson's penthouse that evening and was introduced to the Pets. Thoreson chatted with him and expressed her plan to parlay her "Pet of the Year" title into a star on Hollywood Boulevard's "Walk of Fame." Montiglio collected Anderson's payment and was nearly out the door when seductively clad Thoreson approached him with an offer: "Do you like to do cocaine?" Montiglio, an addict, nonchalantly replied, "Sure, once in a while."

Thoreson invited him back in, saying, "Come with me. I like to do lines the size of my finger." Montiglio remained at Anderson's penthouse the entire night and following morning.<sup>88</sup>

The meaning of this nighttime encounter becomes clear when we remember that Guccione, as we learned earlier, hoped to generate sufficient income from *Caligula* to fund a casino in Atlantic City. That idea failed, as we learned. In February 1980, the same time that *Caligula* was first shown to the general public, Guccione met plasma physicist Robert Bussard, and got a new idea. He would use the casino profits to generate sufficient income to fund Coppi/Bussard's thermonuclear-fusion laboratory, which would render all other power sources obsolete and make Guccione the richest and most powerful person on earth.

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87. MuckRock FOIA Files, [https://muckrock.s3.amazonaws.com/foia\\_files/1264472-0 - File 3 - Section 1 Serial 1 no descriptionMedi.PDF](https://muckrock.s3.amazonaws.com/foia_files/1264472-0 - File 3 - Section 1 Serial 1 no descriptionMedi.PDF), p. 50. For more details, see Jack O'Brian, "Crosby Footnote," *Daily News* [New York, New York], Monday, 24 October 1977, p. XQ6; Don Flynn and Phil Roura, "He Got the '21'-Skidoo..." *Daily News* [New York, New York], Thursday, 1 December 1977, p. 7.

88. Mustain and Capece, *Murder Machine* (1993), p. 187.

Here is where the story gets complicated and impossible to piece together. Upon Anderson's dismissal from the 21, Guccione hired him as his "executive aide,"<sup>89</sup> his "right-hand man."<sup>90</sup> To construct the casino in Atlantic City, Penthouse had put up *Caligula* as collateral. Anderson was an integral part of the casino plans,<sup>91</sup> helping Guccione try to secure a mortgage.<sup>92</sup> It was not until about five years later that Anderson was credited on the mastheads of Guccione's magazines, where his title was given as "National Field Sales Manager," then as "Director, Eastern Regional Sales," and finally (posthumously) as "Sales Director, West Region." An unnamed informant detailed Anderson's duties, and the FBI summarized: "ANDERSON sets up broads, associated with Penthouse magazine, with rich businessmen.... It appears that ANDERSON is running a high-class call-girl operation."<sup>93</sup> For what it may be worth, Anderson, like Guccione and Billman, generally wore shirts unbuttoned to the navel revealing numerous gold necklaces on his chest.<sup>94</sup>

These random facts begin to come into focus when we realize that Anderson was Nino Gaggi's first cousin, and that Gaggi was "interested in obtaining the limousine contract for the Penthouse Casino." As for Anderson, his primary connections seemed mostly to be with New Jersey crime families,<sup>95</sup> certainly the DeCavalcantes. Byron Trott noted above (Chapter 23) that Guccione would occasionally vanish and become incommunicado. Unbeknownst to Penthouse headquarters, Guccione occasionally resided at Anderson's Central Park penthouse, which may partly explain his mysterious disappearances.

Carl Rizzo, of Buffalo's Maggadino crime family, also had a financial interest in the Penthouse Casino, and the supposition was that he was steering money from Cleveland, Ohio, towards this venture.<sup>96</sup> Rizzo, an associate of Sam "The Plumber" DeCavalcante and Tommy "Corkey" Vastola, was a consultant of a Buffalo dental clinic established by New York Yankees tax lawyer Daniel McCarthy of Cleveland and convicted heroin dealer John Montana. On 7 March 1980 Rizzo vanished. His decaying corpse was discovered a month later in the

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89. Jack O'Brian, "Crosby Footnote," [Daily News](#) [New York, New York], Monday, 24 October 1977, p. XQ6.

90. [MuckRock FOIA Files](#), *op. cit.*, p. 45.

91. Jack O'Brian, "Voice of Broadway," [The \[Passaic, New Jersey\] Herald-News](#), Monday, 6 November 1978, p. B-8.

92. [MuckRock FOIA Files](#), *op. cit.*, p. 45.

93. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

94. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

95. *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 70.

96. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

trunk of a car owned by Dr. Jesse Hyman, chief dentist of the clinic.<sup>97</sup> Rizzo had been garroted.<sup>98</sup> Was this part of the reason Penthouse was never able to complete its casino? Is this what cut off one of the money pipes?

We know that another of Guccione's problems concerned one particular investor in whom he placed nearly all his hopes, a Middle Eastern sheikh by the name of Kabir Abdul Rahman, who worked together with Emir Yassir Habib. Guccione had hired Las Vegas casino operator Tony Torcasio to manage the proposed Penthouse Casino, but Torcasio was in it only to skim off the top, and he was eager to double deal with the sheikh and the emir in order to dump Guccione and help them run the casino instead. Nothing could move ahead without approval from the Democratic officials in New Jersey, who were heavily involved in organized crime and union busting. They were also on the take. Attempts were occasionally made to indict them for corruption, but they were under the protection of President Jimmy Carter. (When Carter's term was over, nothing changed, since his successor, Ronald Reagan, was also in the Mafia's pocket.) The Democrats, together with the various Mafia families, were all accountable to infamous mobster Meyer Lansky, who controlled the territory from afar. No casino would be operated without Lansky taking his cut. After a long stall, Abdul turned Guccione's proposal down, but not before scam artist Melvin Weinberg, pressured to work for the FBI in return for a reduced sentence, repeatedly tried and failed to induce Guccione to pay bribes.<sup>99</sup> Sheikh Abdul was later discovered to be FBI agent Mike Denehy, and Emir Yassir was FBI agent Richard Farhardt. The FBI had wisely kept this "Operation ABSCAM" secret from both the Carter and the Reagan administrations.

Without the expected money from Abdul, and with the Ohio funds cut off, Guccione had to halt his new casino in mid-construction. Hoping to find other sources of financing, Guccione needed to deflect suspicion of criminal involvement, which is why he claimed to have dismissed Anderson from his

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97. *Ibid.*, p. 45; Michael F. Rizzo, *Gangsters and Organized Crime in Buffalo: History, Hits and Headquarters* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012), p. 193; Jonathan Marshall, *Parapolitics/USA* no. 6, 31 March 1982, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/63837543/Parapolitics-USA-no-6#scribd>.

98. Gerhard Falk, *Murder: An Analysis of Its Forms, Conditions, and Causes* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 1990), p. 7. For those unfamiliar with the term garrote: "This method of murder is accomplished by binding the victim's hands behind his back, tying his legs at the ankles and knotting the same rope around the throat. Consequently, the victim throttles himself to death as his legs become tired and he is forced to lower them, thus tightening the rope around his throat."

99. Robert W. Green, *The Sting Man: Inside ABSCAM* (NY: E.P. Dutton, 1981). See also Dan E. Moldea, *Dark Victory: Ronald Reagan, MCA, and the Mob* (NY: Viking, 1986).

*Penthouse* job in the summer of 1982,<sup>100</sup> though he continued to list him on his magazines' mastheads. The dismissal did no good, for the unfinished, rusting skeleton of the building continued to hover over Atlantic City for years, until a group of investors eventually purchased the property, demolished the steel skeleton, and built the Trump Plaza Hotel and Casino in its place.

Upon dismissal from *Penthouse*, Anderson purchased Truffles Restaurant,<sup>101</sup> where he had been taking various *Penthouse* Pets for some years.<sup>102</sup> Gaggi was unhappy with him for having spoken to the FBI, CIA, and other entities in Washington, DC. On 6 September 1983 there was a supposed "robbery" at Truffles (nothing was stolen), during which Anderson was shot. He died three months later, on 18 December.<sup>103</sup>

We have gotten ahead of ourselves. It is time now to return to earlier years.

#### ESCAPE THWARTED

NOT LONG AFTER the evening with Anderson and Montiglio, Thoreson took a vacation to Florida to visit with someone named Carlos Marquez, who soon became a love interest. She notified *Penthouse* that she would not be returning. Then she was no longer with Marquez, but with someone named Stanley London, also in Florida. What happened, we do not know, but a year later, in the autumn of 1978, Thoreson was back at *Penthouse*. She had nowhere else to go. It is tempting to tie this attempt at escape to an episode concerning Gerald Kreditor (see below), but we do not have enough information to understand what really happened. Once she was back at *Penthouse*, life got worse.

Thoreson now learned that her job at *Penthouse* was to be the new hostess at Guccione's townhouse. "I trusted him, but he kept me a slave in his house. I didn't know who he was going to ask me to sleep with next."<sup>104</sup> "I lost count of the number of times I had to humiliate myself to help with Guccione's business deals. He was always morbidly curious about the sexual preferences of the men he was making business deals with, and each time he wanted me to give him a detailed account of what happened in bed. He claimed he was giving me advice on the best way to unleash men's sexual appetites, and he enjoyed it when he saw how embarrassed I was. I think it was his way of proving his perverted

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100. [MuckRock FOIA Files](#), p. 23.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

102. *Ibid.*, p. 23.

103. *Ibid.*, pp. 39, 41, 43.

104. Jimison, "Ex-Penthouse Pet," [Weekly World News](#), 30 May 1989, p. 5.



masculinity."<sup>105</sup> Thoreson later testified in court that Guccione made the rules clear: Her continued employment hinged upon her sexual submission to his male associates. He would not merely fire her, but ruin her career if she failed to coöperate.<sup>106</sup>

#### PREPARING FOR RELEASE

**G**UCCIONE ARRANGED SOME PRE-RELEASE PUBLICITY for *Caligula*, and Thoreson was inducted to put herself on display. On Saturday, 26 January 1980, with a predicted high of 35°F (1.67°C), with northwesterly winds of 10 to 15 MPH and increasing cloudiness from a low-pressure system moving eastward,<sup>107</sup> Thoreson, on behalf of a cross-promotion with the Greater New York Automobile Show, polished a \$200,000 Lamborghini Countach sports car — outdoors, wearing nothing but a flimsy toga and chattering teeth.<sup>108</sup>

HERE'S A PHOTO (right) of Annela diLorenzo, braving some chilly weather in the Sour Apple to wipe off the windshield of this \$200,000 Lamborghini Countach.

Annela's wearing the toga she sports in what's being called "the most expensive porno movie ever," "Caligula."

Why are we running the photo? Just to brighten your day.



[The Boston Herald American](#), Monday, 3 March 1980, p. A13.

105. Raugei, "[Mi ha costretta](#)," *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

106. Judge Wilk, Opinion, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

107. "[Weather Forecasts and Records](#)," *The New York Times*, Saturday, 26 January 1980, p. 10.

108. "People in the News," [The Pittsburgh Press](#), Sunday, 27 January 1980, p. A-6.

At the same time, working on a lead, Thoreson contacted a Mr. Polenco of the William Morris Agency, who got her an audition for the Robert De Niro film *The Raging Bull* (1980). She did not get the part and never heard from the William Morris Agency again,<sup>109</sup> but Brian De Palma cast her for a momentary appearance as a nurse who gets murdered in *Dressed to Kill* (1980). Again, it was Thoreson who landed the rôle. Penthouse simply signed the papers for her.

Since the celebrities who had made *Caligula* refused to perform any publicity chores, Guccione left it to Thoreson to make up for the deficit. At first the promotional duties were rather innocuous, for instance a kiss to postal clerk Arthur Tornquist, the purchaser of the first ticket on opening night.<sup>110</sup> She also told gossip columnist Earl Wilson, "*Caligula's* the first movie with a centerfold."<sup>111</sup> As another stunt, she helped famous Italian actor Giancarlo Giannini gain entrance to the film without the bother of standing in an endless queue. He asked her for a "date" and they entered together, bypassing the boxoffice.<sup>112</sup> We should note that, in early 1980, she was still quite proud of her work in *Caligula*, and had not hesitation about watching her sex scenes on the big screen with an audience.

Another bit of promotion tied in with Uri Geller, a minor Israeli stage magician who had finally made a name for himself once he claimed that his simple magic tricks were in fact miracles unexplainable by science, and, further, that he had acquired his superhuman gifts from extraterrestrials. Geller offered to give advice to lovelorn women on 28 February 1980 in preparation for Leap Year, the one time every four years when women are traditionally permitted to propose marriage to men. The event, held at the Nirvana restaurant in New York City, had Geller teach women how "to utilize their extrasensory perceptions to propose to men." Hired to "evaluate" Geller's advice were Miss USA Mary Friel, Miss Universe Maritza Sayalero, September Thorp of the current Broadway revival of *Oh! Calcutta!*, 27-year-old New York Giants footballer Dave Jennings, as well as Thoreson.<sup>113</sup> To demonstrate his "psychic powers," Geller bent a fork. Thoreson quipped, "You're great to dine with because I'm dieting and it's

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109. Judge Wilk, Ruling, 23 October 1990, [Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione](#), 149 Misc.2d 150, 563 N.Y.S.2d 968.

110. "Sum of the People," [The Elyria \[Ohio\] Chronicle-Telegram](#), Monday, 4 February 1980, p. B9.

111. Earl Wilson, "Villain Just 'David WHO?'" (Hall Syndicate), [Durham Morning Herald](#), Friday, 16 May 1980, p. 4C.

112. "People," [The Ottawa Citizen](#), Wednesday, 13 February 1980, p. 55. See also Thomas Schnurmacher, "Regine Flies in Amid a Flock of Paper Parrots," [The Montréal Gazette](#), Friday, 7 March 1980, p. 27.

113. "[People](#)," [The Albuquerque Tribune](#), Friday, 22 February 1980, p. ??.

impossible to eat with these bent utensils."<sup>114</sup> It is doubtful that Thoreson was taken in by Geller's stunts. She had no interest in magic tricks, whether advertised as entertainment or as paranormal flummery.

Thoreson accompanied Guccione and one of his bodyguards, a retired policeman called "Del" or "Dell" (a nickname for Carmine Delgado),<sup>115</sup> to Washington, DC, for the film's 28 March 1980 premiere there.<sup>116</sup> When she returned to New York she had a photo opportunity with H.R. Giger at the opening of his Penthouse-cosponsored exhibit at the Hansen Galleries on 8 April 1980.<sup>117</sup>



#### Safe bicycling

With smiles reflecting the day's weather, Dave Jennings, All-Pro punter for the New York Giants, and Annela DiLorenzo, former Penthouse Pet of the year, ride yesterday a bicycle-built-for-two around the state Capitol and Hartford's Bushnell Park to help kick off bicycle safety week.

Associated Press

[The Stamford \[Connecticut\] Advocate](#), Tuesday, 22 May 1980, p. 2.

114. "People," *The Albuquerque Tribune*, Tuesday, 4 March 1980, p. ??.

115. Tom Zito, "Bob Guccione — The Power & the Pressure; The Embattled Emperor Fighting to Protect his Penthouse Empire," *The Washington Post*, 4 April 1982, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1982/04/04/bob-guccione-the-power-38/0ed2f1d2-3f8d-4a9c-99e4-acf579a2143c/>.

116. Leslie Jay Gould, "Mr. Penthouse & Me," *Salon*, 27 October 2010, [http://open.salon.com/blog/leslie55/2010/10/27/mr\\_penthouse\\_me](http://open.salon.com/blog/leslie55/2010/10/27/mr_penthouse_me).

117. Photo of Thoreson with Giger, published in Jeanette Steele, "Ex-Centerfold Model's Death Stumps Naval Cops," *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 22 October 2011, <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2011/oct/22/ex-centerfold-models-death-stumps-naval/>. See also "People in the News" (UPI), *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, Monday, 10 March 1980, p. A-6.

The press attempted to develop a story about a blossoming romance between Thoreson and Jennings, who would escort the model to the April première of “her movie” *Caligula* in New Haven, Connecticut.<sup>118</sup> The romance was nothing more than a publicity stunt.

The *Caligula* promotional duties soon proved demoralizing. Thoreson was beset with leering, ridicule, and even hostility from interviewers who lashed out against her claim of being an actress, explaining that she was nothing of the kind, but that she was merely a sex performer. Once *Caligula* was released, offers stopped coming in. It was at about this time that Thoreson’s position at Penthouse deteriorated. She was “tired of sleeping with Guccione and his girlfriend [Kathy Keeton].”<sup>119</sup> In the summer of 1980 Guccione demanded that Thoreson seduce a Milanese furniture manufacturer who, he thought, could invest in his proposed Penthouse Casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Thoreson refused. “He asked me to date and sleep with a furniture manufacturer from Italy. I started crying [but] Guccione said I had to do this for him, that I owed him.”<sup>120</sup> She capitulated, but only once.<sup>121</sup>

Thoreson was not alone in her disappointment. Various Penthouse Pets at one time or another had become disillusioned with life at “the House,” notably one Gloria Cheryl Rixon, the 1979 Pet of the Year. Rixon explained that living in Guccione’s Manhattan townhouse was “uncomfortable,” what with the curfew and the logging, timing, and, she suspected, even taping of the phone calls. “All the girls threw themselves at Bob. They imagined that they would take Kathy’s place.” Rixon was dating someone else at the time and had no interest in pursuing Guccione. “Only later did I understand that she [Kathy Keeton] was offended that I didn’t try to steal Bob.” Over a year after being named Pet of the Year, Rixon approached Keeton about the \$195,000 worth of prizes she had been promised but had never been awarded. Keeton was furious and put Guccione on the phone. Rixon recalled that conversation. “He said, ‘After all I’ve done for you!’ I was numb. I thought, ‘Wow, for everything I’ve done, would it kill you just to give me my prizes?’ I had nothing. I’d devoted all my time to Penthouse.” Guccione ordered her out of the townhouse. Rixon sued and won a cash

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118. “People in the News,” [The Reading Eagle](#), Tuesday, 15 April 1980, p. 10. The story puts the première as the 21st, but my records have it opening on the 16th at the York Square Cinema.

119. “[A Courtin’ We Will Go: Sex Slave Anneka di Lorenzo](#),” *Celebrity Sleuth*, November 1996, p. 41.

120. *Ibid.*

121. Judge Wilk, Ruling, 23 October 1990, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione*, 149 Misc.2d 150, 563 N.Y.S.2d 968; Decision, 2 April 1992, *Thoreson v Penthouse International*, 179 A.D.2d 29 (1992).

settlement. Guccione issued an edict that her name never be spoken in his presence again.<sup>122</sup>

#### DISMISSAL

**G**UCCIONE HAD BEEN IN FINANCIAL QUICKSAND for several years now. The casino project was ruining him, and so he tried to persuade Penthouse's British accountant, Gerald Kreditor, to move to the US to help, but to no avail. Guccione offered Kreditor money and a new home for him and his wife. Kreditor did not wish to leave London, regardless of inducements. Guccione decided he needed a stronger tactic. He knew that Thoreson was quite fond of Kreditor, whom she found sweet and gentle, though there was no romantic attraction at all. Nonetheless, in 1977 or 1978 he ordered Thoreson to solve his problem, instructing her to seduce the man.

He was upset that his financial adviser was not spending enough time in America. He started telling me about this mission he wanted me to go into. He came up with this idea for me to seduce Gerald Kreditor and get him in this relationship so he would move to America. I would report back to him [Guccione] what was happening.

I was shocked. I told him I didn't want to do this. He told me I had to do this, that it was important to his empire. He said I was part of the Penthouse family and I should agree to do this. I wasn't sure how to do this, but Guccione began giving me directions.<sup>123</sup>

Over the course of a year and a half, Thoreson carried on an affair with Kreditor during his periodic stays in New York City. Elsewhere Thoreson elaborated:

He hoped that the man would fall in love with me and that he'd leave his wife and four children in London to follow me to New York. And that's exactly what happened. The Englishman phoned me one day and told me he had filed his divorce papers and that he was ready to marry me as soon as possible. I was so ashamed that I couldn't take it anymore. And so that's when I told him the truth, and that derailed the whole plot hatched against him. Guccione went ballistic.<sup>124</sup>

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122. John Colapinto, "The Twilight of Bob Guccione," *Rolling Stone* no. 945 (April 2004), p. 64.

123. Goldberg, "Penthouse Pet," *The Daily Republican-Register* [Mt. Carmel, Illinois], 20 March 1989, p. 7.

124. Raugai, "*Mi ha costretta*," *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30; Maull, "Judge Orders," *AP News Archive*, 23 October 1990; Goldberg, "Penthouse Pet," *The Daily Republican-Register* [Mt. Carmel, Illinois], 20 March 1989, p. 7.



Guccione then ignored her for a week before telling her, on 9 September 1980, to pack her bags immediately and accompany him the next day to Japan for a promotion leading up to the eventual Tokyo opening on 21 November 1980. Thoreson had been given no time to prepare at all,<sup>125</sup> and she “was sure, based upon past experience, that she would be forced to have sex with Guccione and Lori Wagner at the same time.” Further, “I knew he was going to offer me to a group of Japanese businessmen, as usual, and so I worked up the courage to shout ‘no’ for the first time after seven years of nonstop exploitation.... A few hours later at home I got a telegram saying I was fired.”<sup>126</sup> She was at first denied unemployment benefits, since Penthouse claimed that she had resigned.

Confirmation of the basics comes from Bob Guccione’s assistant, Leslie Jay Gould, who wrote her reminiscences three decades later:

As part of the PR campaign, they wanted Anneka and Lori, the other Pet in the movie, to do topless lesbian photo shoots. When Bob finally told Anneka what was expected of her, she refused to go on the trip. He never told Lori. At our first meeting with the Japanese, sitting in the lobby of the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, I feebly explained, “Anneka is sick and she couldn’t come with us. But, we did bring Lori.” They responded by telling us they wanted topless photos of her.” Bob agreed on behalf of Lori, but she said “No.” Dell, acting as Bob’s intermediary, told me, “Bob wants you to talk to Lori and convince her to pose for the pictures.”

Jay initially refused, but reasoned with herself:

It was one thing to work for a pornographer, it was another to be one. Yet, I thought if I failed, the Japanese would send us back to NY. I would be blamed, Bob would lose face. I might even lose my job. And, I would lose the opportunity to see Japan. Several sightseeing trips had been planned including a ride on the bullet train for a two-day stay in Kyoto.<sup>127</sup>

It took considerable coaxing for Jay to convince Wagner to take her shirt off for the photographers, but she eventually succeeded in persuading Wagner to give in.

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125. Guccione, cross-examination, 14 March 1989, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

126. Raugei, “[Mi ha costretta](#),” *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30. See also Philip Finn, “[Penthouse Bob Kept Me as a Sex Slave](#),” *Daily Express*, Friday, 20 November 1987, p. 7; Judge Wilk, Opinion, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#). “Home” was obviously the flat Guccione provided her on East 63rd Street.

127. Gould, “Mr. Penthouse & Me,” [Salon](#), 27 October 2010.

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH CALIGULA LAWSUIT

JUSTICE

AFTER BEING BOOTED OUT OF PENTHOUSE, Thoreson was long out of work before finding a job as a cocktail waitress.<sup>128</sup> In the autumn of 1982 she phoned gossip columnist Earl Wilson to tell him about her program on cable television, *Sensations*, in which she would model lingerie. These were not great professions and would never lead to a career. She told Wilson, "No girl ever helped herself posing nude. It's hard to get legit jobs afterwards." Nonetheless, she was determined to succeed, "because I'm fiery and passionate as a tiger."<sup>129</sup> She wanted to move on, never again to think of her life at Penthouse. She wanted "to erase this incredible odyssey from my mind."<sup>130</sup> The erasure failed, and her experiences at Penthouse so continued to torment her that she sought help from a psychotherapist.<sup>131</sup> Finally, she decided that it would be too easy to let Guccione get away with all he had done. She hired the law firm of Schwartz & Latzman, and, in May 1981, filed suit in the Supreme Court of the State of New York – County of New York, charging Guccione with sexual slavery and breach of contract. She demanded \$40,000,000 in compensation. In her complaint, she called Guccione "a sadistic, evil person" and a "pimp."<sup>132</sup>

Despite her suit, Thoreson was still in awe of her master, in a shell-shocked trance at his earthly presence. The reverse held true as well. Former *Penthouse* model Sheila Kennedy, who lived at Guccione's mansion and who was friendly with Thoreson, assured me that Guccione deeply loved Thoreson, and was wounded to the quick by her suit. He could not understand how or why she would press charges. He was utterly bewildered and caught off-guard.<sup>133</sup> He fought back with fury.

Giancarlo Lui, Guccione's long-time friend, had been fond of Thoreson, finding her warm and intelligent. He visited her privately to talk her out of the suit, urging her to reconsider, since he felt that her charges would be pointless

128. Goldberg, "Penthouse Pet," [The Daily Republican-Register](#) [Mt. Carmel, Illinois], 20 March 1989, p. 7.

129. Earl Wilson, "Mel Claims That Divorce Has Improved His Voice" (Hall Syndicate), [The Durham Morning Herald](#), Monday, 20 September 1982, p. 8A.

130. Raugei, "[Mi ha costretta](#)," *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

131. Decision, 2 April 1992, [Thoreson v Penthouse International](#), 179 A.D.2d 29 (1992).

132. Finn, "[Penthouse Bob Kept Me as a Sex Slave](#)," *Daily Express*, 20 November 1987, p. 7.

133. Sheila Kennedy: personal conversation, 2 May 2017.

and self-destructive. Guccione was furious with Lui when he learned of the visit.<sup>134</sup>

For reasons unknown, nothing happened with this pending lawsuit until six and a half years later.<sup>135</sup> Penthouse moved for a dismissal of the charges, which Justice Elliott Wilk denied on 6 January 1988. Wilk agreed that Thoreson's charges that Penthouse had breached its contract to train her professionally, to advise her on suitable projects to establish her as a serious actress, to provide her with legal and accounting services, to provide her with an agent, to pay her a share of *Caligula's* proceeds, and to pay her moneys and gifts owing could not be dismissed out of hand. Wilk pointed out the conflict of interest "between what was in Penthouse's best interest and what was best for plaintiff's career."<sup>136</sup> He also pointed out that, per the management contract, "Penthouse undertook to manage plaintiff's finances. Penthouse admits that it set up a stock account and handled plaintiff's taxes. Therefore, defendants have an obligation to account to plaintiff. That obligation is not satisfied by the conclusory claim that plaintiff spent all the money to which she was entitled." Wilk did not initially believe Penthouse's counterclaim that Thoreson, by not demanding payment, "forewent" the prizes due her as Pet of the Year. Wilk spoke of "Liability for the tort of intentional infliction of emotional harm is predicated upon 'extreme and outrageous conduct, which so transcends the bounds of decency as to be regarded as atrocious and intolerable in a civilized society.'"<sup>137</sup> Thoreson eminently qualified for a hearing regarding reparations under the Human Rights Law. The case would be heard.

Penthouse attorney Norman Roy Grutman noted that "some of his [Guccione's] most hard-fought legal battles, in fact, have been against former Penthouse Pets. Guccione regards all Pets as his creations. He discovered them. He even made up most of their names. And when one takes him to court, he considers it an act of treason." Grutman had "a lot of fun" filing injunctions on behalf of his client, and he found the various ex-Pets' claims risible. Grutman conducted Thoreson's deposition, and he was particularly amused by her responses to his line of questioning.

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134. Giancarlo Lui: conversation with Chaffin, 1 January 2011.

135. Finn, "[Penthouse Bob Kept Me as a Sex Slave](#)," *Daily Express*, 20 November 1987, p. 7.

136. Judge Wilk, Opinion, 2 December 1988, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

137. Here Wilk was quoting [Freihofer v Hearst Corp.](#) 65 NY2d 135 (1985). "Tort" = civil wrong resulting in another's loss or harm.



Another ex-Pet, Anneka di Lorenzo, charged Guccione with everything from breach of promise to forcing her to have sex with one of his 200-pound Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs.

"Did you do it doggie style?" I asked her.

"No," she replied, as if I were suggesting something uncivilized. "I was on the end of the bed and the dog on top."<sup>138</sup>

The trial was held without jury, and by this time Thoreson was pregnant with her first and only child, Jessica Marie. On Friday, 10 March 1989, the judge, defendant, plaintiff, and attorneys examined one of the plaintiff's exhibits, a videotape of *Caligula*. When the lesbian tryst came on screen, Thoreson could no longer hold back her tears and fled to the women's restroom for more than 30 minutes.<sup>139</sup> During the screening Wilk moaned, "Does this movie ever end? It kind of makes you appreciate Pee-wee Herman, doesn't it?"<sup>140</sup>

Guccione's counsel was one Jeffrey H. Daichman, of the firm Greenspoon Gaynin Daichman & Marino. His partner, Greenspoon, was also on a Guccione retainer, and Greenspoon would also partner with Norman Roy Grutman. We have seen their names before, as Greenspoon was happy to represent Franco Rossellini in his conflict with Penthouse, without bothering first to reveal to Rossellini that he was also representing Penthouse.

The next day, guided by Daichman, Guccione countered that Thoreson herself was responsible for ruining her career, that instead of accepting three movie offers in 1978 she disappeared on a "drunken spree" in Florida with a boyfriend.<sup>141</sup> Guccione opined that Thoreson's starring appearance in an Italian film, *Messalina, Messalina*, was "a leg up on prostituting in Las Vegas, stealing cars, writing bum checks, and generally building up a prison record." Guccione responded to Daichman's questioning:

Q. Now, those scenes that you yourself reshot, did Anneka de Lorenzo participate in those scenes?

A. Yes.

Q. Did she participate and perform in those scenes voluntarily?

A. Yes, indeed.

Q. Did she do so willingly?

A. Yes.

Q. Did anyone force her to do that?

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138. [Norman] Roy Grutman, with Bill Thomas, *Lawyers and Thieves* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), p. 138.

139. Maull, "Judge Orders," *AP News Archive*, 23 October 1990.

140. "People: Penthouse Chief Fights Suit," *The Syracuse Herald-Journal*, Tuesday, 14 March 1989, p. D2. Pee-wee Herman (real name: Paul Reubens) was a popular American juvenile comic.

141. Jimison, "Ex-Penthouse Pet," *Weekly World News*, 30 May 1989, p. 5.

- A. No.
- Q. Did she ever protest or express any reservations about performing in those scenes?
- A. Never.
- Q. Did she resist performing in those scenes in any manner?
- A. No.
- Q. Did she ever express her opinion about performing in those scenes?
- A. She thought it was wonderful.
- Q. Did she cry during or after those scenes in your presence?
- A. No.
- Q. Did she express any adverse emotions following the filming of those scenes?
- A. I'm sorry. I do not understand.
- Q. Did she express in any[one's] presence any adverse emotions towards the filming of those scenes?
- A. Oh, oh. No, no.
- Q. After she performed those scenes, did she ever tell you she was sorry she did it?
- A. Never....
- Q. Did she ever ask you to cut out or eliminate or edit any part or all of those scenes from the final version of the film?
- A. Never.

Thoreson's lawyer, Murray Schwartz, concluded the morning session by announcing, "I would like to assure the court, if I never saw Mr. Guccione again, I wouldn't be troubled by it."<sup>142</sup> Resuming after lunch, Schwartz felt compelled to tell the court of Guccione that "He's probably one of the leading pornographers in the United States. This man has as much right to enter into a management contract as I do." Judge Wilk saw no merit in Schwartz's characterization of his adversary. "What's the difference what his character is? She didn't think her manager was the pope."<sup>143</sup>

A witness for the defense was a former roommate who claimed to have stolen Thoreson's address book and personal papers many years before. She testified that Thoreson, despite her current denials, had indeed been a prostitute prior to meeting Guccione. It was not until 2 May 2017 that I was able to learn the identity of this mystery witness, and I learned only by sheerest accident when I met former *Penthouse* model Sheila Kennedy. In the course of our conversation, she happened to mention, without prompting, that her aunt, Antoinette Villero

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142. Guccione, cross-examination, 14 March 1989, *Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione* (149 Misc.2d 150 (1990)), index no. 13039/81. [FRC](#).

143. "People: Judge Concludes Guccione Is Not Pope" (UPI), [Pacific Stars and Stripes](#), Thursday, 16 March 1989, p. 16.

(then named Antoinette Barone), had been the mystery witness, and told me that everything she said on the witness stand was perjured, that she had never stolen Thoreson's diary at all. Villero and Thoreson had met, but only briefly, and barely knew one another. Barone's testimony was riddled with inconsistencies, as she gave different replies to the same questions when repeated. She was so uncomfortable about telling her lies that she often spoke too softly to be heard. Another witness for the defense, surprisingly, was Thoreson's longtime friend Lori Wagner, another Penthouse Pet.

By Friday, 17 March 1989, Thoreson herself was on the stand,<sup>144</sup> telling of how she met Guccione, fell in love with him, and believed he would make her a movie star. Instead, he confined her to his home at his "beck and call."<sup>145</sup> She reluctantly accepted his assignments to perform sex on camera and to seduce business associates. She was in tears, dabbing her eyes with tissue during her testimony.<sup>146</sup> Daichman responded, "Her claims are far out and ludicrous. No one can guarantee that anyone will become a star."<sup>147</sup>

In early April 1989, Daichman began his cross-examination of Thoreson, asking, "You were free to come and go as you pleased, weren't you?" That was a trick question, for both "Yes" and "No" would have been correct answers. Thoreson did what she could: "Not exactly. Guccione kept me like a slave in his house. He could use me any time he wanted to have sex with me."<sup>148</sup> On 7 April 1989 Daichman continued cross-examining Thoreson, making the argument that Thoreson had surely known that performing sex on screen would brand her a sex performer rather than a legitimate actress. "I was so brainwashed, I didn't know," she responded. It was a lame response, and it got worse. "You went in with your eyes wide open. It wasn't clear to you that appearing in those scenes would not advance the career of a serious-minded actress?" Thoreson's answer was even worse: "No, that's not what Guccione said." Daichman tried again, "Are you complaining about appearing nude in *Caligula*?" Thoreson's answer was slightly better: "No, I'm complaining that he didn't keep his promises." She said that Guccione still owed her \$19,000 for her work in the film. "That's why

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144. "World News at a Glance," [The Daily News](#) [Huntingdon, Saxton, Mount Union, Pennsylvania], Saturday, 18 March 1989, p. 1.

145. Jimison, "Ex-Penthouse Pet," [Weekly World News](#), 30 May 1989, p. 5.

146. Goldberg, "Penthouse Pet," [The Daily Republican-Register](#) [Mt. Carmel, Illinois], 20 March 1989, p. 7.

147. Jimison, "Ex-Penthouse Pet," [Weekly World News](#), 30 May 1989, p. 5.

148. "[Ex-Penthouse Pet Says She Was Virtual Sex Slave](#)" (AP), *The Morning Call* (Allentown, Pennsylvania), p. A2.

I'm in court," she said.<sup>149</sup> It is interesting that Daichman's line that the sex scenes in *Caligula* could only have hindered the career of a serious actress was, in effect, a confirmation of Thoreson's charge that Penthouse had breached its contract to guide her acting career. Wilk was deaf to this inadvertent admission.

A few days later it was Franco Rossellini's turn to take the stand. On Monday, 10 April 1989, he introduced himself by explaining that his cousin, Pia Lindström, currently a critic on New York City station WNBC-TV, had told him about the case, and that he decided to help. Rossellini explained that Lindström was the child of his aunt Ingrid Bergman, who "worked in the movies too."<sup>150</sup>

From the witness stand Rossellini gave the performance of a lifetime. He claimed to be embarrassed by what Guccione had done to his film. He claimed, falsely, that he had been entirely unaware of the hardcore inserts until after the film had premièred at the Cinema Nuovo in Meldola in August 1979, and that he was furious about their inclusion.

Rossellini spoke glowingly of the plaintiff. "She has nice human values, a sparkling girl, a girl who has talent." He thought that Thoreson was a promising performer but that the sex scenes were "a funeral" as far as her acting career was concerned. He gave her the title rôle in *Messalina*, *Messalina*, he said, by way of compensation, since he liked her and felt sorry that Guccione had deceived her with *Caligula*.<sup>151</sup> He also countered Guccione's earlier testimony in which he claimed to have invented *Caligula* from scratch. "I'm very flattered that he liked my idea," Rossellini responded, but insisted that he was the producer, that the film was his idea, and that Guccione was merely an investor. He started to tell the court about the time that Guccione attempted to hire two assassins to murder Tinto Brass, but Daichman cut him short, objecting to such testimony as irrelevant.<sup>152</sup> Wilk sustained the objection but admitted that he enjoyed the way Rossellini told the tale. Rossellini responded, "I got lost," to which Wilk replied, "But it was an interesting trip." Rossellini had a topper: "I'm still traveling."

Daichman cross-examined Rossellini, who at one juncture grew nervous. "Please, I'm sweating. Ask only one more question about oral sex. I can't take

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149. "[Pet' Says She was 'Brainwashed'](#)" (New York Daily News wire story), *Philadelphia Daily News*, Saturday, 8 April 1989, p. 2. This wire story contains text that was not included in the original publication in the *New York Daily News* of Wednesday, 15 March 1989, p. 21.

150. Larry Sutton, "[Action! at Penthouse Trial](#)," *New York Daily News*, Wednesday, 12 April 1989, p. 2. [FRC](#).

151. T.J. Collins, "Lawyer Is Assailed at Penthouse Trial," *Newsday*, Wednesday, 12 April 1989, p. 8. [FRC](#).

152. Irrelevant to this particular proceeding, yes, but Daichman did not claim the story was false. Should we wonder if one of those two hoped-for assassins was Boško Radonjić?

it."<sup>153</sup> He finally erupted at Daichman. "I refuse to listen to your stupidity. You are embarrassing. Your liver is not functioning. You look like a maniac, not a lawyer." He turned to Judge Wilk, "He's a maniac, Your Honor. Take me away from him. He looks like Bernhard Goetz. Look at him with those glasses! Bernhard Goetz!"<sup>154</sup> Wilk responded simply, "Well, maybe you can cast him in your next movie."

Daichman, for his part, suggested that Rossellini had an ulterior motive, that he was testifying not to help Thoreson, but to further his current \$90,000,000 federal suit against Penthouse. Rossellini could not contain himself: "All this talk about profits! I don't believe it." That was a rather insufficient statement. It is true, though, as we have seen, that Rossellini was correct to disbelieve Penthouse's accountings showing that the film had never made a profit anywhere.

Wilk asked Rossellini, "How long have you been in this country?" Rossellini responded by answering a question that he had not been asked, "I'm booked on the next flight out."

When Rossellini finished, Thoreson took the stand again, and cried as she read a joke from the script of a routine written for her Penthouse-sponsored USO tour: "I've had 600 proposals for marriage on this tour, and 2,000 proposals."<sup>155</sup> At the end of April another witness for the prosecution was summoned to the stand. David Gideon, who had once served as Thoreson's acting coach, explained to the court that, "It's OK to be famous and then nude. Not the other way around."<sup>156</sup>

Thoreson was by now working at a computer firm,<sup>157</sup> and her daughter, Jessica Marie Thoreson, was born on 2 October 1989 in Los Angeles. A year later, on 23 October 1990, Wilk passed his judgment, ruling that Thoreson had "failed

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153. Larry Sutton, "'Caligula' Lawsuit Is a Steamy Affair," *The Buffalo News*, Sunday, 16 April 1989, p. ????. Though this is a wire story emanating from the *New York Daily News*, it contains material entirely different from what *Daily News* had published. Apparently both published versions were abridged from a considerably longer source.

154. Bernhard Hugo Goetz had shot four black men on a New York City subway on 22 December 1984, seriously wounding them, leaving one of them a brain-damaged cripple. He alleged that the men had threatened to rob him. After shooting all four, Goetz checked the first two to ensure that they had been "taken care of," and then approached a third, saying, "You don't look so bad. Here's another," and shot him again. The other passengers were terrified, ran to the other end of the subway car, and fled at the next stop. All charges against Goetz were dropped except for possession of an unlicensed firearm, for which he served eight months in prison. Jeffrey H. Daichman did indeed bear a striking resemblance to Goetz.

155. Sutton, "Action! at Penthouse Trial," *The New York Daily News*, 12 April 1989, p. 2. [FRC](#).

156. "Penthouse Witness Testifies" (UPI), *The Schenectady Gazette*, Tuesday, 2 May 1989, p. 7.

157. Rauegi, "[Mi ha costretta](#)," *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

to establish fraud, misrepresentation, unjust enrichment, right to recover on the basis of quantum meruit [reasonable value of services], breach of contract, prima facie tort, and intentional infliction of emotional distress." She had also "failed to prove that she was wrongfully denied any prizes to which she was entitled by virtue of her selection as 'Pet of the Year.'" He found that Guccione and Penthouse had met all their contractual obligations and had attempted to build a viable acting career for Thoreson. Wilk was not persuaded by any of Thoreson's charges — except for the charge of sexual harassment.

Under the Human Rights Law, an employer is prohibited exploiting a dominant position of power in the workplace by imposing sexual demands upon an employee as an implicit condition of continued employment. Any attempt by an employer to use the terms, conditions or privileges of employment to coerce an employee, targeted on the basis of gender, to agree to participate in sexual activity is a form of sex discrimination outlawed by state law.

Wilk pointed out:

Plaintiff's testimony concerning these matters was controverted only by defendant Guccione's blanket denial that the events took place. I do not believe him.... The statute authorizes the awarding of compensatory damages for plaintiff's subjective mental suffering, on her testimony alone.... As compensatory damages, plaintiff is awarded \$60,000.

Wilk admitted that punitive damages were not available under the Human Rights Law, but he did note that the awarding of such damages was permitted in a judicial proceeding.

An award of punitive damages under Exec. Law § 297(9) is a particularly appropriate response to flagrant acts of discrimination.... The cold and calculating use of his authority as plaintiff's employer, in precisely the manner deemed by the legislature to be harmful to society, affects a public trust. Because that abuse of power within a protected relationship entailed sexual coercion, it is precisely the sort of extreme misconduct that would justify the imposition of punitive damages even under traditional common-law principles....

Defendant's subjugation of plaintiff through the use of sexual coercion forced her to safeguard her employment by sacrificing her body. In so doing, she surrendered one of the most private and intimate aspects of her personal liberty....

Unless eliminated, such conduct permits the employment structure to be permeated by attitudes and relationships which we have determined to be abhorrent. When female employees such as plaintiff

are allowed to be confronted by sexual coercion on the job, women as a group are relegated to a subordinate status.

For these reasons, Guccione's request for sexual compliance, by itself, constitutes an act of sexual harassment, without regard to plaintiff's response. Defendant's attempt at sexual extortion entailed precisely the type of insult and indignity that the statute is designed to eradicate. Forcing plaintiff, because she is female, to choose between her right to liberty (bodily and personal integrity) and property (the right to earn a living) is per se discriminatory. As employers who abused their dominant status by forcing a female employee to choose between compromising either her job or her personal dignity, defendants are guilty of attempting to reduce plaintiff, because of her sex, into a position of servitude....

The offensiveness of defendants' conduct is not mitigated by the fact that plaintiff's job as a model and actress for Penthouse involved, in part, the commercial exploitation of her physical appearance. Sexual slavery was not a part of her job description. The fact that plaintiff accepted employment which exploited her sexuality does not constitute a waiver of her right to be free from sexual harassment in the workplace.

Wilk's challenge was to select a fine that would act as a deterrent.

The parties have stipulated, for purposes of this action, that defendant Penthouse International possesses assets with a market value of \$200 million, and that defendant Guccione's net worth is \$150 million. These figures supply the subjective framework within which an appropriate award must be measured.

After considering the nature of the offense and the enormous wealth of defendants, it would be inappropriate to assess punitive damages that are not significant. Only a substantial award will have the effect of punishing the defendants and vindicating the rights of the community.

Wilk awarded Thoreson \$4,000,000.<sup>158</sup> This was the largest award ever made in New York for a sexual-harassment case.<sup>159</sup> Schwartz felt vindicated. He told the press that the ruling was "for all the women like her who may have suffered at the hands of Guccione. He has finally been held accountable."<sup>160</sup>

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158. Judge Wilk, Ruling, 23 October 1990, [Thoreson v Penthouse and Guccione](#), 149 Misc.2d 150, 563 N.Y.S.2d 968.

159. Ronald Sullivan, "'Penthouse Pet' Wins \$4 Million in Magazine Sex-Harassment Case," *The New York Times*, Wednesday, 24 October 1990, p. B3.

160. Maull, "Judge Orders," [AP News Archive](#), 23 October 1990; Goldberg, "Penthouse Pet," [The Daily Republican-Register](#) [Mt. Carmel, Illinois], 20 March 1989, p. 7.



Guccione was furious that a “three-time felon who had violated her probation”<sup>161</sup> would have prevailed in the suit. He called the trial a “farce” and claimed that the judgment was the work of right-wing Republicans who had long been smoldering with resentment over *Penthouse’s* success:

Judge Wilk conducted the trial with a hatred worthy of a jury of angry feminists. He chose a unique way of interpreting the facts, fabricating nonexistent evidence, believing every fantasy told by that woman. Don’t forget: She was the one who sought me out; I didn’t seek her out. She was a juvenile delinquent, a drug addict, and a prostitute, and all I tried to do was bring some sense into her life. I offered her possibilities, but she bungled them, and in the last analysis that’s why she went back to earning a living the same way she did before we met. She came to court dressed like a school girl with her hair made up, and the judge turned her into a holy martyr. The reason they talk about me as though I’m a sex-mad tyrant is because they want to destroy my integrity as a businessman. But I’m going to file an appeal and I’m going to unmask this horrible hoax. And with that, I have nothing more to say.<sup>162</sup>

Guccione further told the press that Thoreson had begun her affair with Kreditor “at a time when she was not even employed by *Penthouse*.”<sup>163</sup> That was a fractional truth. Thoreson was an independent contractor rather than a staff member.

Daichman was similarly outraged. He called Thoreson a liar and told the press that Wilks’s ruling “read more like a political manifesto about the women’s movement than an objective analysis of the evidence.”

This was a landmark case that has become case law, for it “set a significant precedent by supporting the position that a victim of sexual harassment can establish the claim based on the victim’s testimony alone.”<sup>164</sup> Thoreson realized that “people will soon forget my name and my face,” but that she wanted to reveal her life as a warning for others. She looked forward to receiving the \$4,060,000, for with that money she planned to open a Hollywood office to freely counsel “the young, naïve, and gullible” who chased after success only to fall under the sway of confidence hucksters. Other than that, she would, for the first time, live serenely, enjoying life’s simple pleasures as an ordinary person.<sup>165</sup>

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161. *Ibid.*

162. Raugei, “[Mi ha costretta](#),” *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

163. Maull, “Judge Orders,” [AP News Archive](#), 23 October 1990; Goldberg, “Penthouse Pet,” [The Daily Republican-Register](#) [Mt. Carmel, Illinois], 20 March 1989, p. 7.

164. “Murray Schwartz: Bio,” *Schwartz & Perry, LLP*, <http://www.lawline.com/faculty/bio.php?id=498>.

165. Raugei, “[Mi ha costretta](#),” *Oggi*, 14 November 1990, p. 30.

Thoreson now announced that she would forever retire her professional name. "Anneka di Lorenzo, the soulless doll that Guccione created, is dead for good."<sup>166</sup>

On 3 January 1991 Penthouse entered its appeal, and this time cleverly chose a female attorney as its counsel, Bettina B. Plevan of Proskauer Rose Goetz & Mendelsohn, which collaborated with Greenspoon Srager Gaynin Daichman & Marino on this appeal. Myron D. Rumeld and Daichman helped write her brief. On Thoreson's side, in addition to Schwartz, there was also an amicus brief by Nadine Taub for Women's Rights Litigation Clinic as well as an amicus brief supplied by Catherine A. MacKinnon.

The case was decided a year later, on 3 April 1992.<sup>167</sup> The mid-level State Appellate Division had four jurists — Bentley Kassal, Israel Rubin, Ernst H. Rosenberger, and Richard W. Wallach. These four affirmed, with Wallach dissenting, the compensatory damages of \$60,000.<sup>168</sup> As for the \$4,000,000 punitive damages, though, Penthouse was successful, as the Appellate Division was unanimous that punitive damages arising under the Human Rights Law were not permissible pursuant to Executive Law § 297(9). Had the issue been brought before the State Division of Human Rights, no punitive damages could have been considered. "Judicial expansion of the relief available to an aggrieved party who elects to proceed in court to encompass potentially large awards for punitive damages would discourage claimants from seeking resolution of their claims in an administrative forum. This is an irrational result which conflicts with the legislative intent to establish procedures which are primarily administrative...."<sup>169</sup>

Wallach's dissent concerned the \$60,000 in compensatory damages, which he found unjustified, since Thoreson had willingly agreed to employment as a sex object. He wrote a lengthy opinion attacking every facet of Thoreson's existence, finding not only that her claims had no merit, but that she herself had no merit as a human being.

Thoreson and Schwarz pledged to appeal,<sup>170</sup> but to no avail. On 21 December 1992,<sup>171</sup> Judge Hancock of the Appellate Court affirmed the decision of the

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166. *Ibid.*

167. Ronald Sullivan, "Ex-Penthouse Model to Appeal Denial of Damages," *The New York Times*, Sunday, 5 April 1992.

168. John Caher, "Short-Handed Top Court to Hear Penthouse Case," *The Albany [NY] Times Union*, Thursday, 12 November 1992, p. B2.

169. Decision, 2 April 1992, *Thoreson v Penthouse International*, 179 A.D.2d 29 (1992).

170. Ronald Sullivan, "Ex-Penthouse Model to Appeal Denial of Damages," *The New York Times*, Sunday, 5 April 1992.

Appellate Division, arguing that had the case not gone to court, but had instead been taken to arbitrators at the State Division of Human Rights, no punitive damages could have been forthcoming. "The precise question before us, then, is: did the Legislature, in creating the cause of action in Executive Law § 297(9), intend that an aggrieved person could recover punitive damages in a court action when, if that person had chosen the administrative alternative, such damages could not be recovered?" Through a tortured logic that, I confess, I cannot follow, Hancock concluded that the answer was a resounding No, for "the purpose of the permissible remedies is solely to right the wrong done to the aggrieved person, not to punish the wrongdoer."

Despite the overall victory for Penthouse, attorney Bettina Plevan was unhappy that the court had upheld the sexual-harassment finding. This was "disappointing but not surprising," she said, since the Appeals Court was not in the business of overruling findings of fact.<sup>172</sup>

I do not and cannot know, but I would assume that more than half of the \$60,000 was collected in taxes, and that a third of it went to the law firm, leaving Thoreson with less than \$20,000 for herself.

## RETHINKING

THORESON WOULD NEVER be able to realize her dream of helping gullible youngsters. Now she decided to rethink everything. I do not know what became of her job at the computer firm, but now she needed a new job. Her criminal record was no longer much of an impediment, since Guccione had indeed arranged to have it expunged.<sup>173</sup> Hoping for work as an entertainer, she retained her membership in the Screen Actors Guild,<sup>174</sup> though I know of no bookings. She continued as a cocktail waitress at casinos for some years in the San Fernando Valley and in Gardena, California. An anonymous friend posted a message about her:

I had the wonderful privilege of not only being able to call Anneka Thoreson Di Lorenzo (as I knew her) my friend, but my boss as well. I

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171. Decision, 21 December 1992, *Marjorie Lee Thoreson a/k/a Anneka diLorenzo, appellant-respondent, v Penthouse, Ltd., and Robert C. Guccione, respondents-appellants*, 80 N.Y.2d 490, 606 N.E.2d 1369, 591 N.Y.S.2d 978 (1992).

172. "People Potpourri: Woody Allen Blasts 'Ludicrous and Wicked Cassette,'" (AP), *The Bulletin* [Bend, Oregon], Tuesday, 22 December 1992, p. D6.

173. Expungement removes many index entries for criminal files, which will then seldom appear in a background check.

174. "Performer — Screen Actors Guild," <http://www.docser.com/file/performer-screen-actors-guild-2810500f>.

met Anneka in 1987 when I was working at a Casino in Los Angeles. Anneka came in as lead Cocktail Waitress to about 8–10 of us young ladies. She was an understanding, kind-hearted, beautiful woman. Whenever any of us had personal problems, we knew we could go to Anneka. Not only was she our lead waitress, she was our friend, our mother, our big sister and our counselor. I don't care what anyone says, she was a good-hearted person who had issues like every single one of us. The difference was the fact that she carried herself with such style and elegance. She was one of the strongest people I have had the pleasure to have in my life....<sup>175</sup>

In 1995, Thoreson enrolled in yoga training from the White Lotus in Santa Bárbara, California, and that is about the time she forever ceased using the De Lorenzo surname. In the *Yoga Journal* from the summer of 1996 we find this ad:<sup>176</sup>

**Anneka Ananda Thoreson**  
4949 Tyrone Ave.  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423  
(818) 501-0233  
White Lotus certified. Sivananda style.  
Gentle, spiritual class. Beginners welcome.

By now Thoreson was no longer the proud youth who would not deign to speak to those beneath her. She no longer masked her true personality, and, as her sister Susan remarked, she "would talk the paint off the walls...." "She's like a little girl out in the street. A stranger could walk by, and she'll pick up a conversation with them."<sup>177</sup>

In November 2000, she and her fiancé Philip Felice Vasta (23 years her senior) opened a branch of a tanning-spa franchise called the Forever Young Experience, Inc., in Ocala, Florida, and the following year, on 21 June, the couple married. Forever Young quickly failed and was formally dissolved in October 2002. In 2005 Thoreson sold her Van Nuys, California, house at a handsome

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175. Anonymous comment, "'Gal' Friday! Anneka Vasta," *The Catacombs*, 4 January 2013, <http://comicbookcatacombs.blogspot.com/2011/10/gal-friday-anneka-vasta.html>. Minor spelling errors corrected.

176. "Yoga Teachers Directory 1996–97," *Yoga Journal* no. 129, August 1996, p. 118; "Yoga Teachers Directory 1996–97," *Yoga Journal Guide to Yoga 1996–97*, August 1996, p. 118; "Yoga Teachers Directory 1997–98," *Yoga Journal* no. 135, July/August 1997, p. 133.

177. Steele, "Ex-Centerfold Model's Death Stumps Naval Cops," *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 22 October 2011, <http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2011/oct/22/ex-centerfold-models-death-stumps-naval/>.

Thoreson was unable to renew her certificate, probably because of ongoing divorce proceedings in Florida, and that is likely why she lost her position at the clinic. She began a search for new employment.

**S**HORTLY BEFORE FOUR O'CLOCK in the morning on Sunday, 2 January 2011, Thoreson set out in her maroon 2001 Mazda 626 sedan and headed for Carlsbad, California. She arrived just before six o'clock in the morning and checked into Room 160 at the Motel 6, 750 Raintree Drive. It has never been reported how many days she paid for. No all-night diner in Carlsbad would have been able to cater to her dietary needs, and that is most likely the reason she drove back north, probably to San Juan Capistrano or vicinity, places known for

183. Clark: email message, 19 December 2014.

greater variety that could easily have accommodated the needs of a yoga instructor. During this journey, she kept in touch with her family and friends by mobile telephone. Her family noticed nothing out of the ordinary in her telephone conversations. She drove back south on the Interstate 5 towards Carlsbad and stopped at Las Flores View Point at Camp Pendleton. Phone records show that she made a call from Las Flores, or at least its general area, at about 8:30 in the morning. The friend or relative who took her call found no need to be alarmed.

Las Flores View Point, I have confirmed, is remarkably popular with the locals, who enjoy stopping off for a few minutes to take in the breathtaking view of the Pacific Ocean, even before sunrise on a chilly midwinter morning. By 8:30 on a Sunday morning in midwinter there will be several dozen people admiring the view.

After her 8:30 phone call, Thoreson would not answer her mobile phone. Her family, worried at her uncharacteristic silence, filed a missing-person report the next day.

Two days after her last phone call, on Tuesday, 4 January 2011, two joggers at Gold Beach noticed that the body of a naked woman had washed ashore. Though Gold Beach is a popular destination for high-school miscreants, partiers, surfers, joggers, and naturists, it is on military grounds, and, prior to about 2008, it had been used as a site for military training and war games! Despite the dangers of ground collapse and so forth, the area is not patrolled.

Since Gold Beach is on the grounds of the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base, it was only proper that the autopsy and investigation were assigned to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS). The investigators discovered that Thoreson had cuts on her wrists and on her chest, the deepest of which was half an inch. There were no traces of drugs or any mood-altering substances in her system. Her neck and back had been broken while she was still alive. The investigators also discovered that her Mazda was still parked at the vista point, but it mysteriously contained a bloody steak knife on the passenger-seat floorboard along with a plastic bag containing her bloodied leopard-print blouse and sports bra. There was speculation that the plastic bag was the ice-bucket liner from her room at the Motel 6. The blood matched Thoreson's. No one thought to ask why a vegan would travel with a steak knife.

The family had Thoreson cremated that very week.<sup>184</sup>

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184. Find a Grave, # 63937121, 8 January 2011, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=63937121>.

The NCIS placed information-wanted posters along the I-5 from January through April, to no avail. There was no obituary. Thoreson's death was kept out of the news for the better part of the year. When the story did finally break, in late October, the NCIS investigators claimed to be baffled, for the only way from her car to the beach, they said, was by climbing down the cliffs and then traveling a mile by water. NCIS Special Agent Rachel McGranaghan told the *San Diego Union-Tribune* that, "The main unanswered question that we have is how she got from her vehicle to the water." The mystery disappears with a simple examination of the satellite view available on Google Maps: A dirt road operated by the USMC Camp Pendleton connects the rest area with the spot where her body was found. Further, as mentioned above, this is a popular retreat for partiers.



There was speculation that Thoreson had jumped, or perhaps fallen, from her car to the beach 35 feet below, but as we can see from the satellite image, the cliff is 1,000 feet away from the parking area, making such a fall impossible. The NCIS considered the possibility that, after she had talked happily with family and friends on her mobile telephone, she half-heartedly attempted suicide by



slitting her wrists and stabbing herself, disrobed and wrapped her blouse and bra in plastic, dropped the knife, walked nude around the bend and down to the cliff face to leap to the ground below, breaking her neck and her back in the process, and then dragged herself several hundred feet to get to the ocean where she drowned. That makes no sense either, since several dozen tourists would surely have noticed a naked woman, bleeding profusely, walking to the end of the parking lot, down the military road, and then another thousand feet to the cliff face to hurl herself off. Further, of course, no one with a broken neck and broken back could possibly crawl several hundred feet. Most importantly, that is not how suicides happen. Where was the note? Where were the warning signs? There were none.

The NCIS interviewed Thoreson's sister Susan, who made some strange statements. We need to consider that Susan was, at this time, not merely distraught, but also confused and likely being pressured by leading questions, before she had any time to process the trauma. She also clearly had never been to Las Flores. She admitted that her sister Anneka had, beginning in about 2003, suffered bouts of paranoia and anxiety. "When Anneka got paranoid, she would run away. It was that fear-or-flight stuff."<sup>185</sup> Susan also postulated that, "I think Anneka did make suicidal gestures to herself." The investigators noticed that in Thoreson's car, which was packed with miscellaneous belongings, there was an empty bottle of Xanax (an anti-anxiety medication) as well as some lithium, which more often than not is prescribed as a mood stabilizer. The nonlethal steak-knife cuts, the statements from Susan, and the two medications were, altogether, enough to seal the case as a probable suicide.

It was Fox News, in a brief television report, and Jeanette Steele in the *San Diego Union-Tribune* who broke the story. Steele's story was syndicated far and wide and was summarized on various television news shows. There were no other reports. Since no witnesses came forward with testimony, the investigation was closed.

There was no report on whose fingerprints were on Thoreson's car, in her motel room, on the knife, or on the plastic bag that contained her blouse and bra. If Thoreson had indeed suffered anxiety attacks and panic attacks, those were clearly unrelated to the events of Sunday, 2 January 2011. Furthermore, anxiety attacks and panic attacks are not necessarily signs of "shaky mental health," a term that Steele used in her report. They are much more likely the beginning stages of recovery from an emotional trauma, and we need to keep in mind that

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185. Steele, "Ex-Centerfold Model's Death Stumps Naval Cops," [\*The San Diego Union-Tribune\*](#), 22 October 2011.

Thoreson had recently gone through a divorce, and, perhaps worse, had worked intensively with returning soldiers who were suffering extreme PTSD. We must keep in mind also that Thoreson was no longer taking medications, which would indicate that she had recovered. Thoreson's family and friends do not for a moment believe that she was in any way suicidal.<sup>186</sup>

Several people have repeatedly warned me that I am refusing to see the elephant in the room. Thoreson had performed twice as Messalina, a character about whom Aleister Crowley, "The Wickedest Man in the World," had written a poem. Indeed, a YouTube recitation of Crowley's poem includes an image of Thoreson as Messalina.<sup>187</sup> Crowley, I am told, is a hero to devil worshippers, and thus Thoreson would be an object of interest to devil worshippers. The paranoia, the fear-or-flight early morning drive, and the leopard-print blouse raise speculation that Thoreson was a Monarch mind-control slave, stalked by a network of criminals who perform ritual Satanic murders. These are all claims that, until recently, I would have thought sheerest lunacy, hardly fit even for the worst tabloid. After learning everything else I've learned over these past few years, though, I wonder if there may be a small amount of truth behind such fears. Then, at a meeting, I heard a brief talk by an investigator with the County of Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), who presented her new software application designed to keep real-time records of rescued children and available safe lodgings for them. Afterwards, I spoke with her, asking about her line of work. Her specialty is capturing trafficked children and putting them into protective custody. As she was telling me about her adventures, she volunteered that the children who can never be completely rehabilitated are the ones who are abused in Satanic rituals, as they are so emotionally damaged as to be beyond hope of recovery. I was dumbstruck. I had been under the impression there were no such Satanic rituals, that claims of such goings-on were nothing other than the vilest urban legend, the fantasies that spew forth from disordered minds. I said nothing, and let her continue. As part of a law-enforcement team, she raids such rituals in progress whenever she gets tips about them, and rescues the children herself. I have not traveled with her in her job duties, I have not seen such events with my own two eyes, and until such a time, I continue to be more than highly doubtful.

Adding to my DCFS acquaintance's claim is a contribution by Becky Blanton, who, in responding to a question on a blog called *Quora*, insisted that claims such

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186. I posted a detailed illustrated investigation at <http://caligula.org/anneka.html>.

187. As of 13 April 2019, this video is posted under the title, "'Messaline' by Aleister Crowley (read by Tom O'Bedlam)," at [https://youtu.be/wxxu\\_Ymg\\_so](https://youtu.be/wxxu_Ymg_so).

as these are often true.<sup>188</sup> Blanton referred readers to a bone-chilling article of devil-worshipping child-traffickers published in *The Washington Post*, a paper that has a solid reputation for reliable reporting.<sup>189</sup> The story matches what my DCFS acquaintance told me, and it partly matches the stories that others told me of devil worshipping and mind control. Adding even more credence to this seemingly unbelievable claim is a deeply disturbing 1994 television documentary called *Conspiracy of Silence*, made for the Discovery Channel but never aired. Pressure from the US Congress resulted in all copies being destroyed immediately prior to the air date. The producers were reimbursed their costs. Only a single VHS copy of a rough cut survived the purge. This rough cut has been digitized and is now available on YouTube.<sup>190</sup>

Collectively, these stories forced me to rethink my earlier conclusions, and so, in regard to Thoreson, I have decided to be cautious enough not to discount this Monarch theory entirely, but it seems too preposterous, and it does not fit the rest of the published facts.

In my view, the most likely explanation of what happened is that, while at Las Flores View Point, Thoreson struck up a conversation with another sightseer who convinced her to accompany him on a stroll down the military road to Gold Beach. Even in midwinter, though nights are most chilly, the weather is suddenly warm once the sun comes up, and the ocean is remarkably warm as well, which would normally make the hike a most pleasant one. Upon approaching the beach, he attacked her and tossed her into the water to drown. The assailant would then easily have been able to souvenir her clothes and would have had access to her car and her hotel room. He could have tampered with the evidence to throw investigators off the scent.

Early on the chilly morning of Sunday, 28 December 2014, several friends and I replicated part of Thoreson’s journey. We parked our car at the vista point, monitoring the heavy traffic on the I-5 and the numerous sightseers who were constantly pouring in to admire the view, even before sunrise. We took a walk down the military road, turned off to look at the 35-foot cliffs, and continued

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188. Becky Blanton, response to “What’s Something a Police Officer Knows That Would Scare Normal People?” <https://www.quora.com/What-s-something-a-police-officer-knows-that-would-scare-normal-people/answer/Becky-Blanton>, 26 December 2018.

189. Sandra Saperstein and Victoria Churchville, “Officials Describe ‘Cult Rituals’ in Child Abuse Case,” *The Washington Post*, 7 February 1987, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1987/02/07/officials-describe-cult-rituals-in-child-abuse-case/11f05df1-48e0-41f7-b46d-249c0bd2bc39>.

190. As of 21 February 2019, this video is posted under the title, “CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE [Banned Discovery Channel Documentary],” at <https://youtu.be/AY-F5JoHoho>.

down the road to the spot at Gold Beach where Thoreson was discovered. There were plentiful graffiti and there were numerous tire tracks of hobbyists' miniature ATVs in the arroyos, mixed in with the gigantic tire tracks of enormous military vehicles. There were countless niches in the cliffs where anybody could hide indefinitely. There was no police patrol, though human activity is remotely monitored and the military will scramble helicopters to check on unauthorized activity — indeed, two helicopters followed us at various times.

The County of San Diego, where Camp Pendleton is located, is notorious for dismissing female murder victims as sex workers, drug addicts, or transients who committed suicide, though many of the victims were provably not sex workers, drug addicts, or transients at all. There had even been a gallery exhibit devoted to these victims of “NHI — No Humans Involved.”<sup>191</sup> Half a year after Thoreson's death, in the same general area, another woman, Rebecca Zahau, was found gagged, hanging nude, with her wrists and ankles bound. Authorities ruled this a suicide.<sup>192</sup> Several people have told me that they are strongly inclined to think that the two murders are connected. I am in no position to pass judgment one way or the other.

Curiously, Thoreson's death, as reported, was a re-enactment of the various murder scenes from her movies: stabbing (*Mama's Dirty Girls*), broken back, snapped neck (*Dressed to Kill*), body dumped into the Pacific Ocean (*The Centerfold Girls*), and drowning (*Mama's Dirty Girls*). Had a crazed fan somehow managed to trace all her obscure movies with a goal towards re-enacting them? Had this crazed fan been following her back and forth along the highway for over four hours that morning? The thought seems too far-fetched to be acceptable, and yet there is no question that the murder was a re-enactment of the murders in her movies. I do not know what to make of this.

Guccione died a little over a year before Thoreson, on 20 October 2010. Philip Vasta died in Florida less than two years after Thoreson, on 14 October 2012.<sup>193</sup> Dave Jennings died on 19 June 2013 at age 61 of Parkinson's disease. Just

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191. Deborah Small, Elizabeth Sisco, Carla Kirkwood, Scott Kessler, and Louis Hock, “NHI” (San Diego, privately printed, 1992). See also “NHI: No Humans Involved,” Deborah Small's Ethnobotany Blog, <https://deborahsmall.wordpress.com/projects/public-art/4958-2/>.

192. “The Death of Rebecca Zahau,” *Wikipedia*, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death\\_of\\_Rebecca\\_Zahau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Rebecca_Zahau). This Wikipedia entry makes clear that, after the initial ruling of suicide, the verdict was changed in a civil suit to wrongful death.

193. “In Memory of Philip Vasta, August 31, 1929 – October 14, 2012,” Dignity Memorial: Riverside Memorial Park, <http://obits.dignitymemorial.com/dignity-memorial/obituary.aspx?n=Philip-Vasta&lc=6209&pid=160541743&mid=5278567>.

afterwards, in October 2013, Joey Davis died of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, and went unmentioned in the obituaries.

Again he was in Providence Hospital having surgery on January 2nd when Anneka was killed. Even in death he is easy to find. He is at Forest Lawn. He passed away on Oct. 20th and the funeral was held on Nov. 02 2013.<sup>194</sup>

Thoreson's three sisters are all still alive, to the best of my knowledge, and so is her daughter. The names of many of the other people in her life are unknown to me.

It is strange that the only four people who have published on the Internet, claiming to have known or met Thoreson, all refuse to reveal their identities. It is more than evident that Thoreson's friends are living in genuine fear and are hesitant about saying anything at all. There are two comments on the *Venus Observations Blog Spot* by a "Joanne"<sup>195</sup> and another by a "Carol,"<sup>196</sup> and there is the aforementioned anonymous post on a web site called *The Catacombs* as well as the anonymous post in reply to Jim Fisher True Crime, cited above. Other than those four, Valerie Rae Clark, and Susan Thoreson, nobody who knew Thoreson has gone public, even though there should be every reason to do so.



#### POSTSCRIPT

Penthouse was sold in early 2016, and the new owner, Kelly Holland, was unaware that the vast *Caligula* holdings were at Iron Mountain in Hollywood, unpaid for and just days away from being destroyed. Had it not been for information I had provided to a movie-maker friend, who informed Kelly of this, the materials would have been forever lost. In the summer of 2016, Kelly quite unexpectedly invited me to the Penthouse archives and handed me a key, by which I was given unsupervised, unfettered access. She even set plans in motion for a TV movie about Guccione and a book series we could work on together,

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194. Email message received on 29 September 2019.

195. "Venus by Request: Anneka de Lorenzo in a Hip Bath," *Venus Observations*, [http://venusobservations.blogspot.com/2011/06/venus-by-request-anneka-de-lorenzo-in.html?zx=b426a63e5ed8\\_839f](http://venusobservations.blogspot.com/2011/06/venus-by-request-anneka-de-lorenzo-in.html?zx=b426a63e5ed8_839f); "Venus Passing: Anneka Di Lorenzo," *Venus Observations*, <http://venusobservations.blogspot.com/2011/11/venus-passing-anneka-di-lorenzo.html?zx=23bbe8039f321ecc>.

196. "Venus Passing," *Venus Observations*.

dealing with Penthouse's early years. I warned her that she should reconsider, for the story was not pretty, and would probably not be in Penthouse's best interests. She had no objection to revealing a shady past. She wanted to publish the truth, no matter how unpleasant it might prove to be. I admired her integrity. After months of the most gracious cordiality, I was suddenly met with a raging volley of hostility from a different executive, and I realized my days there were over. I was pressured to sign three contradictory contracts that would have gotten me sued instantly and that would have prevented me from ever talking about *Caligula* or Penthouse or anyone ever involved with Penthouse. I had no choice but to leave, with no permission to use any items I had discovered in the archive files. I related my story to Valerie Rae Clark, who sent me an insightful email message:

*In all your research, have you ever come across a person who said, "What a great experience! It was so positive! I was impressed by the honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior of Penthouse"? Or was Penthouse quicksand that people fell into? Some got out quickly. (I was willing to speak to them for about 2½ years. My 2nd photo feature ran years after I severed our working relationship.) Some stuck around too long, determined to succeed where others hadn't, but that was just ego. No one won, not even Bob and Kathy. I'm not surprised [Penthouse] wasn't a good fit for you, because you are a beautiful, fully formed human being. Penthouse is a place for broken people. Never forget when you talk to the "victims" like [-----], that Penthouse was mirroring her own behavior back to her. Did Bob and Kathy really turn her on? Did she really love them? Or was she trying to exploit their attraction to her into a desired outcome? They just beat her at her own game. Anneka was cool with the "slavery" when she thought she was coming out on top; it was when the stardom wasn't forthcoming, when she was forced to admit she wasn't in control, that she balked.*

*The draconian contract reminds me of the personal-management contract models were offered. Penthouse would own your soul, and make all the profit on your work forever with anybody, but you might become a STAR!!!, although they'd do next to nothing to help you get there. I declined to sign, and I was young and in the throes of advanced alcoholism. That's how bad it was. Even I could see it. Penthouse traps people by dangling the possibility of fame or fortune. That never happens, and trying to make it work will crush your soul. It just isn't possible there. What it can be is a grand adventure. It didn't turn out to be what you thought it would be, there were betrayals, but it was still a valuable experience. You got into the archives, met Kelly and the current team, heard Sheila's story from her own lips, saw the inner workings. That's most definitely something! I wouldn't be bitter, or have regrets. Take a long shower (spiritually, metaphorically) to wash off all the bullshit, throw away your old ideas of*

*what it would have been, and figure out to use this latest experience in the grand scheme of things. You have been given a gift, because you experienced what everyone attached to Caligula went through. I'm glad I was involved, although the money was paltry, and I had to deal with the PENTHOUSE EXPERIENCE, because it was an amazing adventure. All these years later, here we are talking about it. It's a puzzle, a drama, a mystery, with tragedy and broken dreams, murder, fortunes, pretty girls, a saga stretching over decades, and sex. It reminds me of the film Sunset Blvd. The story of the making of Caligula is a million times more engaging than the film Caligula. The best part is that now you've become a part of the story. Welcome to the family.*

Valerie then read my revised draft of this chapter, and responded with the perfect coda:

*I was just able to read chapter 35, and it's fantastic! I wish I could remember what I was talking about when I said Anneka also worked at a club on Sunset whose name I didn't remember. Was it The Body Shop?<sup>197</sup> Lots of us on the "use your naked body to achieve stardom" circuit worked there. Sorry, I'm currently not remembering more than The Ball/Other Ball. I do know that one of the nude-work agents I signed with claimed to have represented her starting when she was 15, and spoke of her fondly. I remember talking to her about her boob job in Rome, because I'd just gotten one (since removed). She seemed very pleased with it, and said it was Bob's idea, and that it was for her movie roles. At that time, she believed Bob was mapping out a plan to her eventual Stardom. Reading her story, I'm struck by what a zest for life she had. By the time I met her, her experiences would have crushed the spirits of most, but she was a sweet, happy, kind, smiling, fun person. Her beauty came from within. She seemed to really enjoy life. Other than Bob, it's hard to imagine her having enemies.*

*I think younger readers today need to understand her choices in many ways reflected the times. The late 60's and 70's were an age of losing inhibitions, free love, challenging gender roles and rules, experimentation, trying to find a better lifestyle than what our parents had shown us. There were no worries about AIDS yet. Lots of teenagers ran away to Hollywood. Anneka was partially a product of the times. The big difference in her case is that she was so pretty, and that her early life was documented.*

*Anyway, great job on this chapter. I think you captured the essence of Anneka.*

*I feel compelled to point out one more thing. Penthouse was very, very competitive. Hundreds if not thousands of young women were clamoring to get in. Bob wasn't forcing women to do things, as much as he picked women who were already willing to do anything to advance themselves. I never saw anyone physically forced to do anything. In*

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197. Thoreson's court testimony reveals that the establishment was the Phone Booth.



*Rome, there was coercion, but it was verbal. Bob wasn't holding the tickets. Anyone could leave. Where Bob was evil was that when he met young women eager to destroy themselves, he was more than happy to be their guy, but he didn't seek them out, they came to him. Even then, they had to compete for the opportunity to be used/abused more than the others. While it's deplorable that he was so much older, and used them rather than counseled them to make better choices, look at it from his perspective too: Thousands of women are telling him he's so sexy, they love him, and he knows deep down it's all fake, that they're hoping to use him. Without the magazine, mansion, personal fortune, movies, he'd be lucky to pick up the occasional cocktail waitress. Everybody deserved what they got. Lori claims she fell in love with him, but in her taped interview there was a hunky, pretty boy toy in the background. Where was the oily, hairy, old Italian type she supposedly loved? Most of us have a type. Life in the Penthouse harem must have been like an episode of *The Bachelor*. Everyone just met superficially, and they're all competing because "they're in love." Why would a woman fall in love with someone dating 20 other women at the same time? In Bob's case, he wasn't even hiding a committed relationship. Why would he respect them when they're all trying to destroy that relationship and use him? The NY pets were fair game. I met beautiful, self-respecting women who were invited to test for Penthouse, and who decided "I deserve better" after having a PENTHOUSE EXPERIENCE.*