
"God, if I had my name in the phone book, I'd probably have to get a switchboard."

A Conversation With Eric Stanton



Illustrations From "Blunder Broad" unless otherwise noted.

He is 51 years old, 52 come September 30, 1978. At about 5-8 and 155, he has the physical composition of a middleweight. But in his field of bondage art, Eric Stanton is a full-blown heavyweight. He is in fact The Champ, The Nonpareil, Numero Uno. He is someone several million people would give their eye-teeth to meet. He has drawn more good bondage art than anyone on earth. He sits with Klaw, Willie and Page at the highest level of bondage eminence.

What materializes at the moment of first meeting is a polite, soft-spoken and somewhat distant personality. He is responsive, but proceeds with visible care and caution. There is nothing gratuitous about him —if there is something you want to know, you will have to ask. He is not given to idle chatter, nor does he seek to ingratiate. Although he makes no pretense at being scholarly or intellectual, he is probably a little of both.

The hair is mostly still there, brown tinted with grey, along with a short almost completely grey beard. He moves athletically and dresses for comfort instead of show. His style and presence are more rugged than bookish. The voice is distinctly Manhattan.

There is not much humor around the mouth or in the voice, but the promise of plenty in the eyes, which are blue.

You were born on September 30, 1926, in New York City.

In Brooklyn...Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Street.

So, you grew up with the Dodgers and all of that.

No, that didn't interest me at all.

Then maybe you left Brooklyn when you were young.

When I was four, we moved to California.

What did your father do?

My step-father... he was the only one I really saw. He was a chef. Traveled all over.

And your mother was a housewife?

Yes.

Brothers? Sisters?

Two sisters.

Surviving?

Yes.

Do you still have contact with them?

Oh, sure.

Do they both live on the East Coast?

They're in Florida.

Are they older or younger?

Both are younger, one by a year, the other by six years.

You were in the Navy. When?

I was seventeen. Let's see _that would make it 1944.

Did you see action?

Yes, along the way to Japan. I served on a destroyer. We were picket ship for a task force —first one out there. It was frightening.

I would think so. Did you know then what you were going to do with your life provided you survived the war?

Yeah...I was making a dollar a handkerchief on board.

Handkerchief?

I was drawing pictures on them...of girls.

On board ship.

Yes, and I was handling the ship's newspaper also.

How many guys were on that ship?

I think two hundred and thirty.

Did you sell two hundred and thirty handkerchiefs?

You better believe I did. I know you're kidding, but can you imagine the repeat business I did?

Sure, probably a lot like now. How long did it take you to do one of those drawings?

Oh, about 10 minutes. They weren't very good. If you washed them out, the picture was gone.

How did you...well, when did you dis-cover that you had this talent for drawing... for art? You must have been pretty young.

It was at a very, very early age. I was eleven. It turned me on. I think that is why I became an artist—I had control of the people.

I'm sorry, I don't understand what you mean.

Well, with a human being, I can't make them do what I want. But I could have the people I drew do anything I wanted. They did whatever I said. I was king of my world.

Then, did you have some formal education or studies?

No, I never did. I think what started it was that my sister had scarlet fever and so for two months we were quarantined and I had nothing to do. So, I just drew for two months. I was confined, so I had no choice but to work at something and learn.

There is that thing about fate. Had it not been for your sister's scarlet fever, there probably wouldn't have been a "Bound in Leather" and you might be a housepainter or tile setter or something.

I agree with the part about fate, but not with what I might have been.

Anyway, how old were you during this period?

12.

Do you follow art formally?

Well, there is only one kind of art that I like and that's illustrative art. I don't care for modern art, although my wife is a very fine modern artist, and, also, she does very good contemporary things.

Who then are your idols as illustrative artists?

I've had quite a few of course, all of them good cartoonists. My favorite cartoonists were Alex Raymond... Ogden Whitney. Ogden because I thought his girls were full and round and voluptuous ... very attractive. He had a good hand for girls. God, there were so many of them. I liked Dan Barry. I didn't care for a lot of artists who over-did muscles and things like that. Like Hogarth, even though I was taught under him when I finally did go to school for a while when I was 28. My greatest hero in the comic book field is Robinson. He does a half-page strip in all of the



Sunday papers. Fabulous teacher. Everything I've learned... just the basics, which are so important to art. You can draw all your life, but if you don't get the basics rubbed into you, you don't have any room for improvement. You have to learn good planning, how to develop a page, and Jerry Robinson is it. He used to do "Batman" and characters like that.

Could you have taken your art abilities into a more conventional milieu and have been successful at it?

I'm sure I could have.

Do you regret that you did not?

Oh, God, no. You wouldn't believe the letters I get from people who say, "Thank God for you, Eric Stanton." Because I've given them the realization of their fantasies. The fact that some people have told me that they wouldn't have known what to do had not been for me has kept me going... even through adversity and there has been a lot of that.

You respect the people who buy material from you.

Every one of them. Because I've found mental, physical, personal pleasure drawing things for myself. I know I've had fantasies I've wanted to see and so has every man I know. All of us want to see... something happening between two people, or just one person, and I give it to them. I think I'm the only one in the world who does.

You feel then that you're doing something good.

There is no question in my mind about that. As far as you're concerned, you have a pleasure that you would like to see and, if I drew it for you, I would have done something very important for you.

Yes, that's true. And you wouldn't think any less of me for this fantasy that brings me pleasure, no matter what it was?

No, no matter what your pleasure. I've had people ask for the most unbelievable fantasies you can imagine.

Is there a fantasy you won't draw?

I did turn one down once. I said that I could never do this. And one man came to me — personal introduction for someone else—and he asked me to draw that one thing I had always known I would never do. I looked at him and I just know this man was getting ready to get down on his hands and knees. He was desperate, willing to pay me anything although I had told him he could have the originals—I never wanted to see it again, that's it.

Well, to repeat the question then, is there anything you wouldn't do now, that earlier barrier of yours now having been crossed?

The same thing. I wouldn't do it again. I don't like things involving very young girls and I don't care especially for violence.

I see. Did you ever meet John Willie?

No, but I adored him. One of the people I worked for at the time didn't believe in two of his contributors meeting—bad business.

"Once I get it out, I think I'll finally start making some money in my lifetime because "Blunder Broad" really is super-duper."

Did you at least ever correspond with Willie or talk to him on the phone?

No, I've talked to many of his friends... people who admired him. And I admired him a lot of course. Because we did the same thing, I understood his work better than anybody else.

What did you especially like about him?

Oh... his sense of humor for one thing, I suppose. There is a kind of humor that can be blended into violent situations which I might even like despite what I said earlier and he was able to convey that. We see violence every day, so, if you can at least create violent situations which have some wit or humor in them somewhere, you have your realism, which is necessary, even essential to some people, and you've watered it down into a more acceptable situation. That's how I like to deal with violence when it is wanted.

Was John Willie a nice man from what you've learned from these acquaintances?

A fine man, I would say. I've had my thoughts about him —the kind of work he did. You know, this whole area of fantasy in our field is considered by people who don't understand it to be sadism or masochism. It isn't that at all. You don't have to be a sadist to love to see something; you don't have to commit a crime. You don't have to beat up anybody. There are very few real sadists, I think. All kinds of people like a kind of excitement that other people sometimes think is sadistic or masochistic, yet both groups go to the movies oftentimes for just this thing, this excitement, and it turns them on. But they don't lose control of themselves over it. I really don't like to relate these things to sadism or masochism. I think, more accurately, they are just in the fantasy field.

Was Willie a really good artist?

Fabulous artist. Except at his stage of the game and my stage of the game, I'm probably better because I have much more movement in my figures than he has. I would have liked his work more had his figures been moving more. Everything else about him was good though. He worked a lot with photographs, you know. His drawings were so photographic in fact that I didn't think they had enough fantasy in them. Maybe too true to life for my taste.

Too bad the two of you couldn't have met and sat and...

We would have had a ball.

What questions would you have had for him?

Oh... I've never really thought about any specific ones. I think it would have been very natural and we would have had a very good time just talking.

What did he think of your work?

I don't really know what he saw of mine, some of it, I suppose. He must have known I was a beginner.

What do you know about his beginnings?

Well, of course I know he did some work for London Life which was a wonderful magazine.

From what I know of London Life, it had to have been an underground publication.

Not at all — it was quite open, above board. It was all about fetishism. Fabulous. I have a few issues.

Do you have any ideas on the genesis of his passion for bondage?

Well, what do you think he liked about it?

Me? Well...I suppose, control, the word you used a little while ago, had a lot to do with it. He seemed interested in clothing; I think he may have identified with some of his own ladies.

Exactly. I always felt he was the one who was being dominated, not the one dominating.

In other words, he was in those pictures somewhere himself.

Yes, and everybody agrees with that, except most people feel the male character—Sir D'Arcy—is fashioned in his image. Look, I never met the man, probably don't really know anything about him, but I think he was Gwendoline.

Whew... that's quite a theory.

Well, if you really think about it some, you'll see it has merit. It's interesting. Anyway, how about you? How did you get touched by this? You went to work for Irving Klaw. How did you get involved in this?

With Irving?

No, with bondage.

Well, I'd already been doing little comic stories on my own bondage, fighting and that sort of thing. What happened was that Irving Klaw had a little ad in some magazine—Whisper or one of those—and I wrote and told him I thought I was a better artist than the one whose work was in the ad and I would like to do something for him.

By the way, since you're familiar with other bondage illustrators, were Mory and M.R. the same?

The artwork looks the same. I would think so. Mory is a fine artist.

Really?

I like his work, but some people criticize it as straight and stiff.

(At this point, the interview was interrupted by the arrival of Eric Stanton's wife, who popped her head through a door behind the interviewer to tell her husband she was home. The interviewer made no attempt to rise or look back at her.)

The reason I didn't behave like a gentleman and stand was to respect your privacy. Because of the nature of our interview, my interest and your work, I thought it would be more discreet and comfortable if I just stayed put. Now, speaking of your privacy, you must have to protect it more than most people. You probably have to be awfully discreet. Are not people trying to get to you all the time?

God, if I had my name in the phone book, I'd probably have to get a switchboard. Yes, people do want to know who I am, where I live, all sorts of things.

Uh huh. Have you been found when you didn't want to be?

Yes.

"I seem to like them wrestling, because every ounce of their bodies are moving and doing something."

And how do you shake off these un-wanted visitors who are so obsessed?

They don't seem to be pushy. So that isn't what really bothers me about it. It's just that I really don't have the time.

You do seem busy—even now when I'm talking to you, your mind seems to be jumping about.

It seems I'm always busy. I've always got my mind doing something. It's tiresome — I wish I could relax.

Eneg—was he a good artist?

Excellent. One of the finest inkers.

Well, let me ask you something. Can I expect that you're going to say only good things about all the artists I name?

Not at all, I can tell you what I think is bad about Gene's work.

No, I'll settle for what you've said. So-Eneg was good, or Gene as you call him.

Certainly, he did many fine things. Princess Elaine... I think that is really excellent. Listen, he was a better artist at the time than I was. Much better. Better craftsman.

Be interesting to put that to a vote, wouldn't it?

No, I think at the time, he really was better. But I think I improved more than he did.

Well, what is your masterpiece then...in your opinion?

I think the only masterpiece I have is what I'm working on now.

Is it anything you'd care to discuss?

Sure, there are two things I'm working on actually. "Blunder Broad" is one and I think that's a masterpiece. My Blunder Broad is a loser, but she's bigger busted, bigger hiped—just as attractive, but she's hardly ever won a fight.

What is it—a book?

Right now, it's a strip. I've got six chapters. I'm working now on seven and eight and at its conclusion it will probably be about 100 pages of artwork.



How will you advertise it?

I'll only offer it and sell it to my own mail order customers. Once I get it out, I think I'll finally start to making some money in my lifetime because "Blunder Broad" really is super-duper. "Sweeter Gwen", made of lot of money, but not for me. I got about \$35 a page and some of those pages took me a week to figure out. It came out in booklet form several times, even the originals were sold for more than I was paid. The lesson is that I won't deal with publishers again; I'll just get it clone myself and make it available to customers who contact me directly.

You said you have two masterpieces and you mentioned "Blunder Broad." What about the other one?

I'm working on a psychological story about a husband and wife wanting to get into something, but not knowing how to go about it.

You mean how to approach each other? Yes, and it's a very sensual thing. What's its name?

I'm working on that. It's only 20 pages of pencil so far, but it's probably going to wind up being 60 pages.

You know, you're 52 years old, but you have a lot of youth about you, particularly your enthusiasm.

I hope I never lose it.

Well, to be honest, when I spoke to you on the phone, I really took you to be pretty blasé — an old, who-needs-this sort.

I've been at it a lot lately and I'm a little worn out. But, when I'm on my game, when I'm doing yoga, look out.

Do you play tennis? Do you play golf?

No, just yoga. I was a pretty good handball player.

Why "was?"

I don't play anymore.

Too busy?

No, my hands, I have to use them to work. Handball is too hard on them. I want to start playing racket ball.

Good luck on that. Okay, Eric Stanton, the first I saw of you was "Bound in Leather." Did you write that?

No, I wish I had. I attacked that story with a relish. I thought that was the most beautifully written thing I'd ever done.

Well, I think it tends to be a master-work. What do you think?

Without a doubt. I don't think there is anything better. Hmmm. That's what I expected you to say first time around, but... okay.

You've done things just as good...

No, I wasn't really as proud of any of my other work. I don't think much of it approached what I did with "Bound in Leather."

"My work has more and more reflected the tastes of my customers since that is what my work is really all about — giving people what they want, not what I want."

Where do you now and where did you then get these ideas? From your own head, or did you have direction from someone else?

My own head. I have a marvelous imagination.

One would think you should be a clothing designer.

You know, I have, without a doubt in my mind, created so many fashions. And people, you know, have just copied them. I think I may have caused a few trends. I must have created ten different shoe styles, you know, pointed and stilt heels. Now, I seem to have drifted away from doing high heels because I'm more interested now in developing a story than in stressing detail. If I were to take every item on every page and fantasize it in each picture—high heels, gloves, hands, fingers, cigarettes, eyes, ear, nose, different hair styles, different clothes—I would be completely detailed and there would be no real story development.

You mean you were locked into those items which prevented you from having freedom of story.

Yes, and now I am more interested in telling a story with characters and reasons. I am also very interested now in expression, even of the body. To me, a face isn't the only thing that's saying something; every inch of your body is talking.

Which brings us to a personal point, a question readers will be asking as they read this, so here goes. You say you were doing bondage even before your association with Irving Klaw. That suggests you must have been personally interested in it, yet I am told that it is not your personal interest... that there is something far more to your liking than bondage.

I know. Well, the answer is my interest in female to female. I don't care what they are doing to each other. I love to see two females. I don't like to see men, males are not attractive to me. So, I want to see two females. I want to see two females wrestling... I don't like to see them boxing. I like to see them wrestling, because every ounce of their bodies are moving and doing something. I like female domination of the female because I can play either role. But when it's a male, I have to look at only one person which deprives me of one of the roles.



Back now to your work. I think we have already established that the texts of the cartoon serials you drew for Irving Klaw were written before the illustrations. Do you know who did write "Bound in Leather?"

I wanted desperately to meet whoever it was, but I never got to. Most of us were kept separated so that there would be no exchange of information on how much we were making and that sort of thing.

So, you never did know who the author was?

Right.

So, you were just handed a narrative one day called "Bound in Leather" or "Bound to Please" or whatever and told to illustrate it. The words always came before the pictures.

Yes.

You don't use photos and models, do you?

No, I think that limits me right away. I usually make several sketches of anything I'm going to do on tracing paper. Then, I overlay the tracing papers until I have the action, I think is right, what I want. I think it's through that system that I've gained the feeling I have for movement.

Your art, and your women, have moved through at least four phases: (1) the early, rough renderings such as "Diana's Ordeal" and "Poor Pamela," in which the women are very slender, sometimes almost undernourished; (2) your "classic" period —"Priscilla, Queen of Escapes" and "Duchess of the Bastille," in which your women seem idealized, perfected, (3) the later phase which included "Bettina in Jeopardy." Your women in this period are stockier, shorter legged. Finally, there is this current, fourth phase, in which your women are full blown, totally exaggerated. Are you reflecting the tastes of your customers, or has your own concept of female beauty changed all that much over the years?

Originally, when I was drawing things like "Pamela," I think I was just drawing what I thought looked best. But, since then, my work has more and more reflected the tastes of my customers since that is what my work is really all about—giving people what they want, not what I want.

Many Stanton serials from the Klaw days, such as "Duchess of the Bastille," "Marie's Unique Adventure," "Phyllis in Peril" and others have not been is-sued for years. Are they totally, gone? Haven't you kept copies?

You have to remember this material belonged to Irving Klaw. He gave me something to draw and I turned it into him. Maybe I did keep a copy or two sure I did—but someone borrowed them or they just slipped away. There probably are copies around in private hands, but I don't have any. I think whatever Klaw hadn't sold prob-ably was part of the material he destroyed during the trial back in the 1960's.

Some of your serials, such as "Duchess of the Bastille" and "Jasmin's Predicament," are set in the past. Where do you pick up ideas on how to make your settings look authentic?

Well, Irving had all those files, photo-graphs from costume and period pictures, which gave me some idea. But I really didn't use them that much though since, if you start setting a scene which you really haven't created yourself, you lose too much. So, you've got one picture and what are you going to do next?

When you began drawing, bondage literature was almost totally underground and limited to a handful of artists and writers, yet you very quickly began working some incredibly complicated equipment and devices into your _ ..._ stories. Where were the ideas coming from?

I generated my own ideas concerning devices.

Your ideal woman—what does she look like? Have you drawn her?

Oh, I draw her all the time. Except when she has muscles.

Is she in "Bound in Leather?"

Definitely.

Is she the mother or the daughter?

She's the mother.

What do you consider sexy in clothing?

I like cotton in a way. Leather at times, depending. But, you see, there is a reason I don't like leather a lot—it has to be absolutely perfectly made. So many times, the leather doesn't fit the body. That's the absolute worst. But when leather does fit right, then I appreciate it a lot.

Situations. You like women on women situations. You are quite clearly heterosexual, you adore women. They can be driving each other through a park on a jitney and that's fine with you, right?

Absolutely. Women are exciting...sexy. I've seen things that just two women do...there is nothing like it because the communication is so good sometimes.

Do you get letters from women?

Oh, sure.

What do they say? Titillate us a little.

I've received letters from many women who like particular fantasies and want me to illustrate them. They order my material. I've met a lot of women who have fetishes.

"For some women, it's a complete lift-off for them to come on and attack you."



Is bondage a woman's fetish ever?

Yes, certainly. A lot of women love to be bound, spanked, taken. Some women are attracted to me because they feel I have a Satanish look. I hear from a lot of masochistic females. But I come on pretty strong too. When it comes to women, I feel I'm very dominant. Still, I like. to be dominated too. For some women, it's a complete lift-off for them to come on and attack you.

Tie you up? That sort of thing—do you allow that to happen to you?

Oh, sure. Why not? It's an ego trip.

For whom?

For me. If a woman is aggressive to me and wants to take me, my God, it makes me feel handsome. It makes me feel beautiful. If a woman just lies down and waits for me to do everything, I feel she doesn't care for me. But, if she goes to all the trouble of tying me up, she must want me a lot.

Do you prefer women nude or dressed?

To be honest with you, I dislike women nude. I don't think a nude body is attractive. Of course, there are some, but not many. I think just a bra and panties or even a bathing suit is more attractive than a nude body.

How many people do you suppose care about what you do? Are there thousands? Millions.

Okay, you say millions, but you certainly haven't been contacted by that many people, so how do you come up with that figure? I would say I have millions of readers. In the amount of years I have been drawing, I know I have heard from many thousands and I know there are even more who wouldn't dare write. I sat in a bar one day... my wife and someone else and the guy sitting next to us started talking and asked if I was an artist. I said, yeah, and he said, you know, the best artist in the world is Eric Stanton. I said I think I've seen some of his work. Why do you feel he's the best? The guy just shrugged that Stanton is a genius, that's all. That may have been my greatest moment, the biggest lift. Here was someone really praising me without even knowing that I was the one he was talking about. I had a heck of a time proving that I was Stanton and then I had a heck of a time getting rid of him.

You seem more attracted to the dark, exotic, almost sinister style of beauty—both as villainess and as victim—than to the blonde virginal style of heroine exemplified by Gwendolyn. Do you think this is true and why so?

I love drawing that poor little blonde victim. But the problem is, as I said, that I have to make money and so I have to draw what I am asked to draw and the brunette seems more popular.

What are the most erotic bondage positions you can imagine, either in reality or as you might draw them?

I like to see the front view and I like to see the back view, so I am a little disturbed there since I like to see the whole figure if possible. So, my most pleasurable thing is to see a girl in bondage in a mirror. Coming and going. Coming and going. That to me is the most erotic. You get the continuation, front and back, and you thus get the feeling of being there, of knowing everything that's happening.

Do you not shoot photographs?

I don't. I can't get what I want from a photo, but I can certainly draw it. But I did pose a lot of pictures for Irving Klaw, his bondage and fighting girls.

I take it then that you met Betty Page.

Ah, yes. Let's talk about Betty Page. She was my first love.

Really? Did you try to date her?

No, I think I must have placed her too high on a pedestal in my mind at the time. I was married too, so...

What are your impressions of Betty Page from those days?

Just a fine girl. She was the easiest person in the world to work with. Didn't Paula tell you that? She was just a natural ... beautiful legs. Fire in her eyes, a full woman, but still someone you could take advantage of and you could also be dominated by her. She had both qualities. She was so sweet.

Were you a little in awe of her?

Oh, yeah. Maybe she would have even gone out with me, but I was the kind of person ... you know, being married ... wouldn't have brought it up.

But I sense you weren't happily married.

I don't think I was and I was a pretty sick guy in those days.

Sick?

I had a bad hack for 10 years ... I practically crawled.

Sounds like an injury. From the Navy?

Probably, because I was hit by a five-inch shell casing and that laid me up for a long time. But the problem eventually went away apparently. Yoga. Thank God for yoga. Once I started, I went from 189 down to 148, from a 36-inch waistline to a 28. Took two years. Every day, as much yoga as I could take. Great pain, but, without it, I probably would have killed myself.



We thank God that you didn't. Lois Meriden, Shirley Maitland, did you know them?

Sure, Shirley was pretty, but I don't really remember much about her. Lois was terrific, an adorable person. I haven't seen any of them since those days.

A profile of the people who like your work. What are they like? What kind of composite emerges?

Well, I associate sensitivity and intelligence with bondage, because, if you are subject to fantasizing, then you are sensitive and intelligent. But that's just an impression I've formed from the people I've met and what pops out of the letters I get. I've had a Shakespearian actor ... he could recite the most eloquent lines and he was personally that way, but when he explained his fantasy to me, he turned into a 10-year-old boy. Literally.

You mean he actually regressed?

Yes. It was just a beautiful way for him to get back to a part of life that he wanted to hang onto, a particular scene or fantasy that meant so much to him.

What causes a man, or, for that matter, a female to find something pleasurable and appealing about a woman tied up?

Who really knows? I think it goes back beyond even what is considered the probable imprint period of adolescence. Maybe it can even be genetic —something recurring along the genetic bloodline. I used to think my fantasy began at 11, then I said no, it was 5. Then; I thought I might have enjoyed that at 2 or 3. I believe that.

So, it was more a matter of whatever that pre-adolescent psychology is that imprinted you than some movie or scene in a magazine that aroused these peculiar feelings in you.

Well, I used to think that the very first thing that ever turned me on happened when I was 5 years old, an act between a girl and me. But I realized later that I hadn't been forced into that scene, I had created it, which means I had some appetite for it already. It was not an accident and it was not her idea, so it had to have been my idea. My conclusion now is that I planned it when I was five. So that fantasy which turned me on had already been in my head.

Did this have something to do with bondage?

It was cops and robbers. I tied her up and then she came back and tied me.

And it was all pleasurable.

Yes, I had planned it beforehand. It was what I wanted.

Movies. Did you see a movie when you were young that may have reinforced this?

I saw a lot.

Do you remember some of them?

I will say that "Perils of Nyoka" had the most in it. There were lots of other pictures that had at least one short scene.

The reference in "Bound in Leather") to "Jamaica Inn" was not your idea then since it was written by someone other than yourself. He refers to the bondage scene in that movie and you're illustrating his text for Irving Klaw. Did you then just dip into Irving's file for the still from that movie since you hadn't seen it yourself?

I don't remember what I did, but I did see "Jamaica Inn." I was very much into it.

"The victim just sort of melts into your arms. What can be better than that?"

Were you excited by the bondage and gagging scenes in it?

Yes.

Is that one of the first movie scenes you can remember having seen?

No. There were lots of movies and serials before that.

What is the greatest bondage scene you've ever come across in a movie?

Probably one which I never expected to see was the most exciting, maybe because it was such a pleasant surprise, suddenly showing up like that when it was so unexpected. I think it was "The Fuller Brush Man." There were two girls—one a very voluptuous blonde and the one who tied her up on a couch. She sort of sat on her and tied her up. It was one of the most exciting things I had ever seen. I think it was "The Fuller Brush Man." In magazines, Wonder Woman probably had the most satisfying bondage scenes.

What is the most requested bondage situation you receive?

Oh, God, there is so much. I have to think about that.

If I asked you to draw something for me, how much would it cost?

First of all, I no longer do custom work. Besides, it's too difficult to quote a price until I know exactly what you want and not everybody can tell me what they actually do want. When I was doing custom work, I used to make the mistake of quoting prices before I knew exactly what was wanted. The customer would agree to the price and then ask for something so incredibly complicated and time-consuming that I couldn't afford to do it.



Eric Stanton, circa 1963

But just to get a handle on it, say you were doing custom work and I ordered a very simple situation —one girl only, in some conventional bondage pose. How much would that cost?

About \$50.00. If I were doing that kind of thing, which I'm not. I'm really too involved with creating new serials. People who buy those are less apt to be disappointed than with something they've specifically requested. It's something I did, not something they asked for, so immediately, it has to be more acceptable.

What is the greatest picture of a bondage scene that you or anyone else has ever drawn?

Well, to me the greatest one I ever did, and I think this is something John Willie did too, was very striking. The girl was bound, leaning against a wall, crying ... pathetic. Beautiful face. Then the dark-haired girl, very sexily puts her hands on both sides of the victim and very teasingly. I've done that a few times and so did John. I think I like the mood and look of it better than anything else. See, I like it when the girl being tied up is not just going to be left like that, but is going to have something else done to her by the woman who tied her. The one who has done the tying is obviously going to have some pleasure and maybe so is the victim. In that case, it is a mutual situation. The victim just sort of melts into your arms. What can be better than that?

The interview was over, and Eric Stanton invited me to see the sketches he had been working up on the psychological husband and wife story. During this portion of our meeting he became more animated, more enthused. He moved through the story boards, flipping them over one by one, carefully explaining how the husband builds up to telling his beautiful wife that he wants to spank her, while she tries to figure out how to get him to take her forcibly, to bind her and then have her.

As the psyches of Stanton's characters approached their inexorable confrontation, I realized the worth to some people of even these preliminary sketches, which, despite the awesome prices they could command, would be thrown away once their storyline purposes had been served. Such economics have no meaning to Eric Stanton.

It was early June and Manhattan's afternoon rain began falling, and, after all the things we had talked about on this day, it was only here, watching the man move through his art, that I really began to understand him. Clearly, he is a man who does exactly what he wants, who works at his joy. And, just as clearly, he will continue doing —pursuing? —this thing only for the rest of his life. He breathes fresh logic into Sir James Barrie's quote that "Nothing is really work unless you would rather be doing something else."

We said goodbye then and I left him with his work. I stepped out the front door and into the rain and began looking for a cab. I called one over and then turned around and looked back at the building, in private appreciation of the intriguing secrets it held. Up there, behind one of those windows, were some of the sweetest fantasies ever to invade human sense. Someday, people would walk over this space where this building had stood and not know what had been inside it, an unfair irony of timing.

Now the cabby was shouting at me to move it and I shook off the reverie, at the same time discovering that I was soaked from the rain. It didn't matter. I got in and the cab pulled away from the curb and turned left into traffic, out of fantasy and back into reality, back to where Stanton doesn't dwell.

Originally published in *Bondage Life*, No. 3, August 1978

Scanned and Transcribed by guardian46w