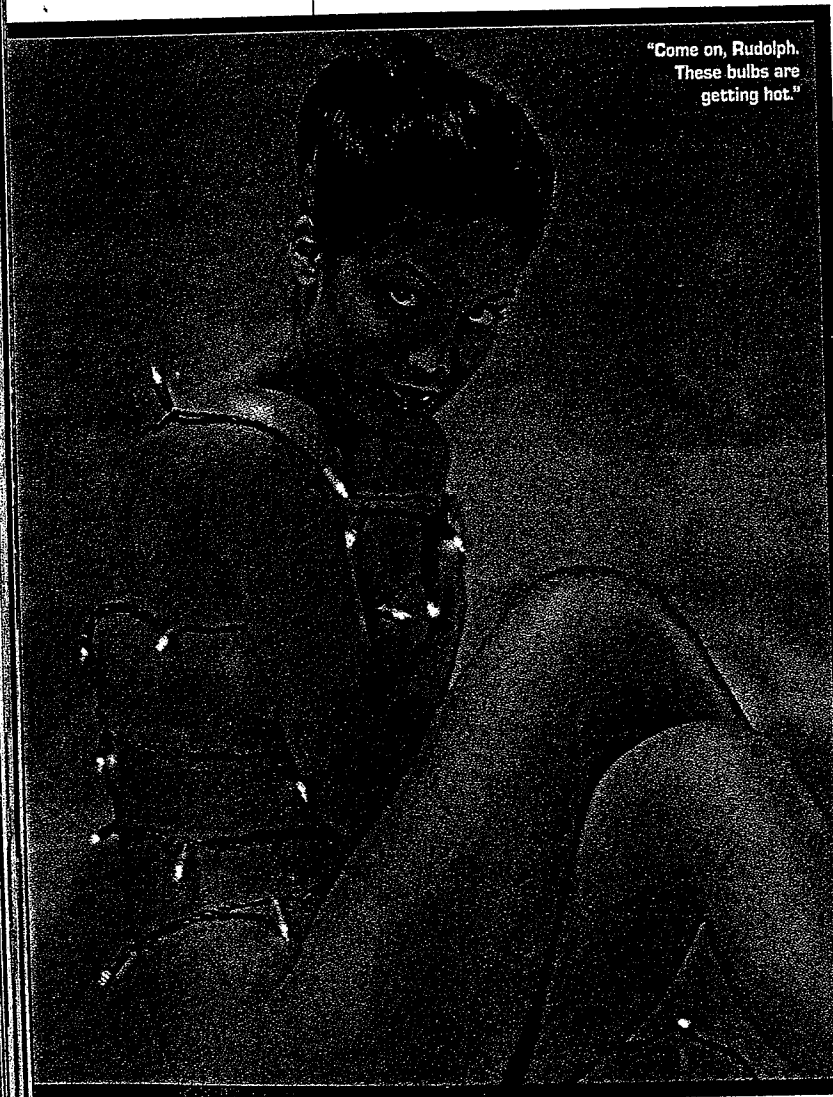


# The F\*#@ing Holidays

'Tis the season to get lucky: Women everywhere are looking to get their jingle-bell rocks off before ringing in the New Year. Ho-ho-ho!

By Nancy Miller



"Come on, Rudolph. These bulbs are getting hot."

I t had been a rough year. I couldn't afford to go home and see my family, and all my close friends were off being miserable with theirs. My already icy relationship with a boyfriend had become so glacial that two weeks before Christmas, I wanted to bludgeon him with a stocking full of rocks. We hastily exchanged Christmas/see-ya-later gifts: He gave me a handheld blender, I got him a two-day-old pineapple. Merry fuggin' Christmas. Worse,

**During the holiday season, we consciously toss logic onto the yule log.**

what awaited me outside was a tidal wave of winter-wonderland nausea: rosy-cheeked couples playfully tossing snowballs at each other as little kids made angels in the snow. Feeling like the Grinch's pathetic dog, I went to a party for holiday orphans at a friend's place across town.

When I got there, I immediately chugged a couple glasses of nog to summon some Christmas cheer. In the corner, a short guy wearing horn-rimmed Buddy Holly glasses fiddled with the stereo. That Christmas song by the Waitresses came on. He poured two glasses of something red and sauntered over to the couch I had just dropped into. We drank and talked and drank and by 11 o'clock were slow-dancing senior-prom style (basically,

hugging while shuffling back and forth) to Louis Armstrong's "What a Wonderful World." The guy was too short, too shallow, a total poseur, had a dumb laugh, and we were totally mismatched. But that didn't stop me from dragging him into the bedroom and pinning him down on a stack of coats for three blissful hours. I wasn't looking for a relationship or even a date for New Year's Eve. I guess I just wanted...to make the season more immediately bright.

## Holiday Rush

The day after Thanksgiving is not important to women because it's the biggest shopping day of the year. Not even close. In reality, that Friday kicks off a month-long spree of maniacal mirth that can make a girl feel like hell if she's single and hasn't had her stocking stuffed since the summer solstice. And somewhere in that month, she's going to try to rectify the situation. So while the December pages are blowing off the calendar, a man's chances of getting merrily mauled are about 1,000 times better than if it were the big countdown to, say, Arbor Day.

Can my theories on holiday horniness be proven by hard science? No. But that big guy with the white beard and the red suit can't be scientifically verified either. Yet we stick him in the centers of shopping malls and let kids sit on his lap anyway.

Which is exactly the point. During the holiday season, we consciously toss logic onto the fire with the yule log. If a woman is swinging solo, she looks back on this year's greatest hits and comes to the startling realization that she simply has not seen enough action to launch a new year. Add to that being all alone during the holidays and her self-pity morphs—granted, irrationally—into belligerent defiance as she vows to the bottom of her beer bottle, "I am *not* going out like a loser!" And what better setup to guarantee that promise's fulfillment than a series of parties—beginning with the company blowout and ending with the New Year's Eve bacchanal—to supply her with endless possibilities for lascivious looting.

No doubt the hooch is a huge ▶

## NAUGHTY AND NICE

**These real women had a lot more than sugarplums dancing in their heads.**

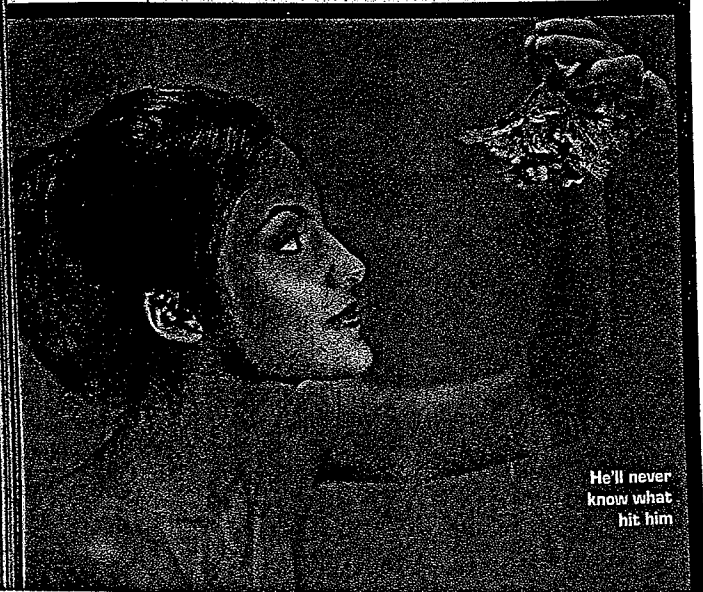


"I hadn't seen a lick of action since Halloween. So New Year's Eve, my friend and I went to an enormous club, and I started dancing with this guy. He was a tourist in town for two days, so I didn't have to worry about him calling to bug me a week into my new year. We danced all night long and, of course, went back to my place. I won't give you the sleazy details, but let's just say the year went out with a bang."—*Erica, 24, New York City*

"Last year I was at a New Year's Eve party full of guys, but there wasn't anyone I was that interested in. At 11:30, my ex-boyfriend Nick walked in. We'd had a friendly breakup; he just wasn't Mr. Right. Then the clock struck midnight. Desperate, I walked up and shamelessly started making out with him, and we spent the night together. The next morning we kissed each other good-bye, and I started off that year with a smile."—*Christina, 29, San Francisco*

"In college I worked as a ski coach in Colorado for a week during winter break. All the employees stayed in close quarters, where the girls and guys slept in bunk beds. The sexual tension was insane. On Christmas Eve, after four glasses of spiked eggnog, I pounced on this gorgeous ski instructor who slept a few bunks away. While everyone else was out singing carols, we were having sex in the basement."—*Diana, 26, Seattle*

"I had just started working at an ad agency when the holidays hit. At the office party I recognized a guy I saw around work a lot. In all honesty, I wasn't really attracted to him before that night, but the liquor and the mistletoe made me feel a little carefree. At one point in the evening, I grabbed him by the shirt and said drunkenly, 'I want to kiss you *right now*.' We made out in a corner until we finally took off in a cab. The next day at work, everyone was staring at us. I could barely look at him, I was so mortified. He got a new job a few months later, and though it had nothing to do with me, I was seriously relieved."—*Fiona, 29, Newport Beach, CA*



He'll never know what hit him

part of Noel nookie. Like most pagan rituals, these festivities are kept well lubricated with barrels of booze. I'm willing to wager that 60 percent of a woman's holiday hormones can be tied to her wearing a set of champagne goggles for three weeks. As her cup overfloweth, her standards get-teth more, shall we say, liberal (I know my goodwill toward men improves remarkably when I'm stoned on mulled wine and stuffed mushrooms). "It's like the energy behind slutting at weddings," says my friend Jodi, who unabashedly admits to checking the list twice in an effort to guarantee a little extra holiday bell ringing. "You look nice, he looks nice, by sunset you're tanked, and it's like, 'These melon balls are mighty tasty. Let's make out.'"

### Final Countdown

If nothing pans out before the end of December, all roads inevitably lead to New Year's, the big daddy that rules in holiday bootyland. "If you haven't managed to score some lovin' in the Thanksgiving-Christmas period, you are going to make damned sure that you see some action on New Year's Eve," claims my coal-receiving friend Katerina. "At least I am. At least I did last year." Katerina, a literary agent with legendary—though apparently seasonal—reserve, recalls last year: "It had been a while since I'd hooked up with someone, and I really wanted something before the end of the year. There was a guy friend at this party, and as the night wore on, I became wildly attracted to him. I was a little drunk, which made me brave enough to make sure he kissed me at midnight to get things rolling. Things did, and we wound up spending the night together. I remember thinking to myself as we rolled around, *Ahhh, mission accomplished.*"

So if the last guy a girl made out with was the one who bought her the Saint Paddy's pint o' Guinness, she is, without question,

looking for someone with whom to hop in the one-horse open sleigh before the year is officially over.

### Popping the Cork

Which leads me to the greatest part. What really ends up fueling many holiday hookups is that in most women's minds, these liaisons simply don't count. 'Tis the season to be jolly, or Dolly, or Vixen, or whoever you want to be, because anything goes, anyone is an option, and all is forgiven—and forgotten—come January 1. And thus the next batch of 365 days begins with a clean slate and an equally clear conscience. Yes, I will admit that I did go home with the company-party caterer who smelled like sugar cookies, but were I ever forced to confront my actions and take responsibility for my holiday hussiness, I, like most women, would put my hand on my hip and defiantly cop to temporary insanity.

So if you want to get in on the holiday ho-hos, it's simple: Be there. It's cold outside, the punch bowl is filled to the brim, and Nat King Cole is piping out of the stereo. Pour a couple of glasses of the good stuff and park your elf ass next to the wanton woman who wouldn't give you an ounce of sweat in the heat of summer. She is likely measuring your potential as a last hurrah to keep her warm till 1999.

And sure, these year-end trysts rarely make it to Martin Luther King Day, but isn't that what the holidays are all about? Giving, receiving, checking out what you got, and if it's not what you wanted, exchanging it for something else within 30 days. Happy f\*#@ing holidays, fellas. ■

Maxim's "Says Her" columnist, Nancy Miller, wants to take on your most pressing sex questions—great and small—to be answered in the March issue. So send your hopefully not-too-painfully-burning questions to Maxim "Says Her," P.O. Box 13S, Edison, NJ 08818-9701. Nancy promises to think about each one of you in your underpants as she composes her answers.