Hitler's Mustache

by tsipi keller

"If you want to sell the house, you've got to mow the lawn."
Marilyn Jaeger

First, I read the literature (extensive, and quite seductive) and bulleted the essence:

- Make sure to pick a salon where the techniques used are up-to-date with the latest fashions and trends in vogue around the globe for waxing the nether regions(!)

- What you want is a beauty therapist (a.k.a. waxer) who is quick with her hands and mouth.

- The treated areas may be red-dotted and swollen, but this should be a minor and temporary concern.

- In some cases, the exposed labia may seem to be drooping, your own vagina may seem alien to you, but remember who you're doing this for.

- Last but not least: Cunnilingus not recommended if your partner is bearded.

I don't like facial hair on men and, at the moment, I don't have a partner, so it wasn't difficult to disregard this last warning. But another warning came from the medical community which did scare me a bit: "There's a recent increase in folliculitis, or infection around the hair follicle in women.…these infections can develop into more serious abscesses that require incision with a scalpel, drainage of the abscess, and antibiotics."

Still, after some debate, I decided, why not, let me strip down to basics, it will be painful, I'll be red and swollen, not to mention the monthly maintenance costs, but, I reasoned, if millions of girls around the globe do it, there must be benefits. I found a waxing salon in my neighborhood and went in to make an appointment. While waiting for the receptionist to get off the phone, I heard an occasional scream coming from behind the white curtain behind the receptionist. Every scream startled me anew, but I remained in

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place, determined to get a wax and become part of the community.

When Amelia (the receptionist) got off the phone and gave me her full attention, she assured me I was a good candidate, and that I needn't worry (I'd mentioned the research I'd done), the beauty therapists in the salon were talented and gentle and had hands of gold. Talking with Amelia, I learned new terms as she asked what my preference was, and I had to study a brochure which described the different looks. I could choose a clean sweep, or, if I preferred, a landing strip. A landing strip could be dyed, could be made into a heart, a teardrop, or a triangle. The beauty therapist, Amelia said, would be glad to create the look I wanted.

Encouraged, I smiled. Amelia couldn't have been nicer, or more accommodating. She was so warm and welcoming, I very quickly felt at home, like I've come to the right place. She was also very pretty and clean-looking, her eyebrows trimmed to perfection, and I easily imagined her Brazilian-waxed parts, though I wondered if she had opted for a landing strip or a clean sweep. At any rate, everything about her was perfect, which was very reassuring, and soon I felt as though we'd been friends for years, and that I could be open with her, discussing such delicate issues. We were both women, we wanted to please our partners — actual or potential — and, in the end, what else mattered?

When Amelia was done explaining the various treatments and styles, I timidly asked, “A friend mentioned something called, Hitler's Mustache?” I giggled nervously. No friend had mentioned such a thing to me, but I came across the alluring name in one of the many blogs I visited while doing the research.

A small anxiety line appeared between Amelia's waxed brows. Soon, though, she remembered to smile.

“Let me check with our beauty therapists, all right?”

“Sure.”

Amelia picked up the phone and punched a button. She exchanged whispers with someone on the other line, then hung up, looking at me with bright happy eyes.

“No problem, Hitler's Mustache is an option. In fact, Melanie, one of our most experienced and talented beauty therapists, is not only familiar with the design, but recommends it as her favorite! And, as luck would have it, she can see you right away. Her 2-o'clock just cancelled because she got…you know…the curse. Melanie will come and get you in a minute, she knows all about Hitler's Mustache.”

“Oh.” I took a moment to think. I had no particular desire for Hitler's Mustache, but since Amelia went through the trouble of inquiring about it on my behalf, and since it was Melanie's preferred design, I decided I'd just let myself be handled by these two ladies and come what may. I do have this impulsive, adventurous side, and often, unable to decide, I let others decide for me. A gleeful shout echoed in my skull: Hey, a Hitler's Mustache to adorn my labia — go girl!

I laughed with relief. “Sure. Let's do it.”

This made Amelia very enthusiastic. Again, she picked up the phone, and two seconds later a girl in a starched white smock appeared from behind the white curtain.

“I'm Melanie,” she said, “I'm so happy to meet you.”

“Me too,” I offered. Melanie was even prettier than Amelia, even if both of them seemed to have emerged from the same cocoon.

Melanie led me to a long and narrow cubicle and drew the privacy curtain shut. Soon, I found myself on the table, stark naked and a bit shy.

“Where do you want your mustache?” Melanie asked. “You can have it on the side, you know, or, if you prefer, across your labia, in which case it will also look like a cross?”

“A cross!” I gave it some thought, but couldn't make up my mind. “Which do you recommend?” I asked.

“I think across the labia makes more sense? I think it's the better choice?” Melanie said, and I nodded my assent. Without further ado, she began to apply the hot wax and, frankly, for a minute my skin burnt like hell, but soon a kind of calm spread through me, and I went kind of numb. I felt myself melt and become pliant and yielding, very much like hot honey or wax. I closed my eyes, giving

myself over to Melanie and her touch. I felt her hands on my crotch as she pressed a piece of cloth on top of the wax, and when she pulled it off some time later I screamed as I felt each hair detach itself from my skin.

I won't try to describe the pain, except to say it was shocking. I forget who (some philosopher?) had said that pain precedes every pleasure, which gave me hope, and then I also recalled our homegrown “No pain, no gain,” and I began to feel much better and almost back to normal. It's absurd, I know, but for a moment I felt like a foot soldier in the army of female progress.

At home, I stood in front of the mirror for a very long time, trying to connect with the new look of my vagina. As I contemplated the now alien battle zone, I suddenly recognized that indeed Melanie had been right, the mustache across my labia did endow the area with the look of a cross! This realization gave me quite a jolt until I saw it as a sign from above, which confirmed my choice not only of a Brazilian wax, but also the specific design of Hitler's Mustache.

For a few days, I walked around with my head in the clouds. Colleagues and friends noticed this change in me and wanted to know (some of them aggressively) what was new in my life, was I in love, I looked radiant, happy, and so on. I was too embarrassed to reveal the real reason, so I just nodded, smiling, admitting nothing. At work, I found myself going to the ladies room more often than usual, sometimes just to admire myself; sometimes to look and make sure no hairs were growing; and sometimes for the real reason one goes to the bathroom.

While I was in my own private heaven, busy transforming myself from a simple, ordinary girl into a kind of celebrity, vis à vis myself at least, the country was going nuts. It was the political season, and even though I usually keep up with the news, this time I was too distracted to pay attention until the day when I heard them talk about a lipstick-wearing pitbull. As I was trying to visualize such a creature, I suddenly realized it wasn't an actual pitbull they were talking about, but a woman, newly arrived on the scene, and that her name was Palin, and that she was from Alaska. They said she

knew how to shoot a moose, and that she ate caribou. The night I discovered her, I watched her on TV and instantly took to her, there was something irresistible about her, I felt a kinship, like we were sisters, like I was suddenly SURE that Sarah, too, had had a Brazilian wax, maybe like mine, and as I sat there on my couch admiring her, my Brazilian wax began to itch, I tried to ignore it, but it wouldn't go away, so I went to the bathroom and got the ointment tube Amelia had sold me ($22!) and applied it where it hurt, then returned to the couch, and as the pain grew, I began to play with Palin's name and came up (easily enough) with Pain, and then Plain, and then the more difficult Napalm (don't ask me why, maybe because by this time I was BURNING down there), I couldn't take it anymore, I turned off the TV and took a sleeping pill and blissfully fell asleep, and in my dream, as if to comfort me, Sarah came to me and indeed, just like I had guessed, her Brazilian wax was exactly like mine, she had a small Hitler Mustache right where I had mine, and I was filled with joy, and then, as often happens in dreams, a new picture superimposed the first and this time Hitler's Mustache was on her upper lip, which made me laugh, in the dream, it was funny, she looked a bit like Chaplin (huh! Palin sat in Chaplin!), but even the mustache didn't take away from her beauty, her purity remained intact, and her mouth, for a change, was shut, and I could admire her fully, without all the sound and fury.

On the subway the next morning, instead of reading my book, I Brazilian-waxed my fellow riders and, like Nino Manfredi in *Vedo nudo*,I looked at people and imagined them with a Brazilian wax. Nino undressed only women, but I undressed everyone, seeing landing strips, and hearts, and teardrops, but no Hitler Mustache; the mustache was reserved for me and Sarah alone. In the office, I got on line and looked for and found her. I did some work too, especially when I heard my boss's voice in the corridor, but whenever I had a moment, I looked at her. I couldn't wait to get home and watch her on TV, and when the hour finally arrived, I said no to colleagues who wanted me to join them for a drink, and rushed home. The pundits, as always, were reliable. My Sarah appeared

instantly, this time with her running mate at her side. One of the commentators explained that they were soul mates, and this, I have to say, filled me with apprehension, like, why would a pretty thing like her stick to an old guy like McCain. I tried (in vain) to do my Brazilian trick on him, but no way, no how, my brain wouldn't go there, so I fixated on his fingertips, he was kind of fidgeting and twiddling his thumbs, standing there quietly at my Sarah's side, humble and unassuming, and I thought that maybe someone should hand him a *misbaha* — what we call in this country worry beads — to play with, but worry beads originated in Islam, so I knew that no one in that crowd would hand him worry beads, and it was getting all so crazy and mixed up in my head, I was filled with apprehension all over again and truly and deeply felt kind of lost.

A few hours later, in the middle of the night, I called 911, and was soon taken to the hospital. One doctor checked me down there, the burning center of my complaints. He then called another doctor to come in, and the second doctor examined me, and then the two of them discussed me in a hushed tone and grave faces, and I thought, Oh, my God, what have I done, Hitler's Mustache was acting up. How stupid and misguided can a young girl be, and I wasn't even all that young anymore, I was nearing thirty, and by thirty you'd better have a husband or a brain, and I had neither, obviously, and then I saw it, writ large, I saw that rapists sat in therapists, what calamity, then the two doctors came to my bed and stood over me and said, “How did this happen?” and I told them, I explained it was a newly acquired obsession which I deeply regretted. They nodded, and before leaving the room told me I should try and get some sleep, the nurse would come in shortly and spread some soothing ointment over my wound, which should take care of the burning, but, they advised, I mustn't wear any underwear for a while until the area healed, and that I should never get myself a mustache down there, I was too sensitive, and so on, and I said, Yes, I know, I'd already resolved never ever to do this again, and the good doctors left, and I lay back with a sigh when the nurse came in and gently applied the ointment, truly, it was soothing, and I marveled at modern medicine

that had an answer for everything, even for silly girls who do silly things, and, drowsy, I drifted off and must have fallen asleep, for my Sarah appeared in her full naked glory, and told me to ignore the doctors, for what is a girl if she doesn't have beauty? “You're my sleeping beauty,” Sarah whispered hypnotically, stroking my forehead, “you're my sleeping beauty, rest in peace.”