



"IT'S LIKE ANY OTHER SATURDAY NIGHT. JUST WITH MORE SEX"

Tessa Mayes goes 'safe swinging'...

Fondling each other in the living room of an imperial-sized Victorian house in London are two girls sitting on an ornate silk-cushioned sofa, dressed in fashionable mini skirts and off-the-shoulder, beaded chiffon tops.

In another part of the room, a man dressed in a smart suit has two lippglossed blondes frolicking on each knee. As the DJ turns up the music, a cute guy in an unbuttoned white and blue shirt, wine glass in hand, smiles sweetly and asks, "Do you ever get jealous?"

Then he starts stroking my arm. I look up and almost spit drink all over him in nervous laughter. This wasn't an ordinary, philosophical question. I was at a private orgy. His question was swinging code for, "Are you willing to share your man with my girlfriend and 80 other party-goers having sex with each other upstairs?"

"Of course I get jealous!" I say, a bit too loudly, to see if he would admit to having a touch of the green-eyed monster, too.

"I've been doing this since I was 14," he replies, ignoring me. "I love my girlfriend - we can explore each other's fantasies safely here."

We're interrupted by a curvy, naked woman in her late 20s, bursting into the living room, screaming and laughing. "You should get some action!" she says to the room, wide-eyed and beaming, before romping with a fully-dressed couple in the middle of the dance floor.

I'm at a Fever party - the place to be if you fancy a bit of sexual experimentation. It's an attractive crowd. Single women are welcome, but the majority of guests are in couples. And everyone is happy to pay between £100-£150 per couple (depending on the venue) for the night. Everywhere I look, there are good-looking young couples. Have I missed something? Who'd want to throw their boyfriend's car keys into a bowl if they're having wild sex with him already?

I start chatting to a pretty Scottish woman called Julie*, 29, who's wearing a low-cut 70s-

style black dress and works as a PA. It's her first party and she's here with her 35-year-old Swedish boyfriend, Eric*. "It was his idea to come," Julie says. "We're both inquisitive, but we've agreed we don't have to swap. Everybody's much friendlier than at a normal party, where people can be quite stand-offish."

Eric joins us and they explain how people differentiate what they do, by calling it a 'hard' swap, when sex is involved and a 'soft' swap, when it's not. "It's the woman who decides how far she wants them both to go," says Julie. "The nice thing is there's no pressure to have sex."

I ask Julie if she minds sharing her boyfriend with other women. She pauses for a minute and then says, "We've had threesomes with people we know, but I'm not sure I'd be happy watching him have sex with a stranger."

Later, I saw them kissing each other in a corner, their clothes still on.

By 3am I've had enough and am looking for the girl friend I brought with me for moral support. I overhear a group of girls, semi-naked, pulling their skimpy tops back into shape near the toilets. In some ways, it's like any Saturday night party. Just with more sex.

"It's my birthday today and this party's nuts!" says one of the girls. "I'm not sure I can get used to this. But then if somebody reaches over to you, it's either 'yes' or 'no', I guess."

"See you in the bedroom, girls," says another.

After the party, I spoke to Mark Roberts, Fever's spokesperson, who's in his early 40s. "Having a majority of women at the parties makes them feel more comfortable," he explains. "Some come to have a bisexual experience, others because they're too busy to have a boyfriend. The ones who bring their boyfriends are not at the stage where commitment to sexual monogamy is on the radar - they just want sexual adventure."

And this bizarre mix of common sense, safety and exploration is really catching on. **G**