

**L**EGENDARY comedian Luenell has never been shy about her opinion or her body. Long before her breakout role as the “hooker with the heart of gold” in the 2006 comedy *Borat*, Luenell had established herself as a badass who doesn’t pull punches or take shit from anyone. And when she agreed to pose nude for *Penthouse*, we knew this funnywoman wasn’t kidding around.

Regardless of age or body type, it takes a uniquely strong person to bare it all in front of a dozen strangers, and Luenell strutted around the photo shoot like a peacock in full bloom. Michelle Obama once said, “History has shown us that courage can be contagious.” We hope that this pictorial serves as an inspiration to all woman to raise their middle finger to any and all who would try to hold them back.

**How is it that I have the distinct honor of talking to you in bed, naked, during this historic photo shoot?**

You are the luckiest man in Los Angeles, that’s how. You must be living right. I’ve been going through some things in my professional life that are sad to me, the way they cast aside women after a certain age or over a certain weight in Hollywood. If you’re not between 17 and 28 and don’t weigh between 116 and 125 pounds you’re shit. Even though you know better, that can wear on your psyche if you live here. You begin to feel as if you’re not as good, or you’re worthless.... I haven’t felt that way often, but I can tell you if I lived in Georgia I wouldn’t be thinking about having a tummy tuck. I’d just be a fat bitch in Georgia.

**Why do you think that particular body type is what Hollywood continues to push when it’s not relatable to most people?**

Designers want to design for certain types of people and the masses that watch TV and movies want to see a certain type of woman. The standard of what a Hollywood type is was set long ago and that is still what it is. You have to look a certain type of way. Although Hollywood stars used to be glamorous, now we have some raggedy-ass stars so that’s changing. Maybe the body issue shit can change, too. Like it or not we live in an obese society, they super-size everything, we eat way too much and we do way too little, but that doesn’t mean you’re worthless, that doesn’t mean that you aren’t sexy, that doesn’t mean that you don’t have hopes and dreams and want to be desired and have dirty, nasty sex and all that stuff. It just means that people have to open their minds more and see the beauty in people and not get sucked into the whirlwind of the bullshit.

**You have always been a woman who owns her sexuality and you once said you’re not into “restrictive garments.” You look amazing in every shot. How did you feel getting**

**all dolled up in lingerie for the camera?**

I wore all that stuff when I was younger. I wore the corsets, I dressed up for my man, I did all that. But what I found was the real men don’t care anything about that. It’s cool, if you have a video vixen she should look like one, but if you’re in the real world and you’re a real woman, then it’s more than those outfits that is turning a man on about you. Every woman, in somebody’s eyes, is a supermodel. But the most important person’s eyes they need to be a supermodel in is their own. I’m saying wear whatever you’re wearing with confidence, swag. Lift your head up, step high, and be proud of who you are and have fun. You only get one life.

**I love that you say, “I don’t have to suck my stomach in, I just let the shit hang.” What message were you trying to send with this shoot?**

My goal, first off, was to have more women look at *Penthouse* than have ever looked at it before by putting something special in that has never been done before. They have never shot an over-50, heavysset black woman. I want to make history in every area of my life. The way I walked around this shoot I never would have thought I’d be so comfortable walking around naked, but I

want to tell women to be free. This is me. I’m great and it’s okay that I don’t look like you and we are all amazing and can all hold our heads up and be desired.

**Any cold feet as the date of the shoot drew near?**

About two days before I got cold feet because I’d never done a shoot like this and I didn’t know what to expect. I didn’t know if someone was going to giggle behind my back because I didn’t know what kind of people I was going to be naked in front of...or the judgment and the backlash that may

come to the magazine or myself about how I look (or don’t look), or what I should or should not have done. I had cold feet, but they warmed up very quickly when I looked at the greater good of what is hopefully going to come of this shoot. I just said, “Eff it!” People can go fuck themselves if they feel any type of way about what I’m doing, because I’m a badass.

**Social media is a wonderful and awful thing. On one hand, it allows information to be shared quickly while bringing people closer, but it also gives voice to some very ugly, closed-minded people. What has your experience been like?**

I’ve had two social media beefs. It was very unnerving. I spent a whole day blocking people because I want to keep my pages upbeat. I think that my mouth, personality, sexuality, and humor distract people from body-shaming me, but every now and then something gets out that is unflattering, so I’m ready for the backlash. “Why would *Penthouse* put that old, fat, black woman in this magazine?” Because *Penthouse* is forward-thinking, *Penthouse* takes risks, *Penthouse* is smart, and *Penthouse*

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