

# A Visit With A Transvestite



Jamie and Divil

by Jan Kelly

(Provincetown) Divil gets company just as I do. Twice a year, Divil the Parrot gets a visit from Jamie, a Transvestite who has visited Provincetown with the Tiffany group in May, and the Fantasia Fair in October for the past seven years. Each visit, Jamie is closer to his ideal of passing as a woman, but the acid test is Divil. Divil likes women, does not mind homosexual men, but detests and fights back when a straight man is in his territory. Parrots are one-person animals and don't want those affections shared. Straight men are a threat. Jamie through dress, speech, and posturing has been trying to fool Divil these seven years.

Jamie reminded me that I met her seven years ago at the Pilgrim Club where she was performing a Shirley Temple routine. I had to help her with a fussy garter but urged her to "go simple," casual dress as most women do. The crowd of us went on to the Pied Piper to dance. The transvestites loved being in an all-women bar, not realizing that they were making it a mixed bar and that they were drawing customers who would not ordinarily be in a gay women's bar. Transvestites always insist that you lead. So I led Jamie around the floor and sang *You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby* to her. She loved it. Big Betty from Rochester (300 lbs) and Naomi from Chicago (another 300 lbs) were something to dodge during this routine.

Jamie also visits with Lil Holway at the Crown & Anchor, Mildred Riley at the Gifford House, Lynn

and Lacey Carter, Joey from Obsessions, and Ruth at Ruth's Rummage. Ruth helps outfit Jamie. Size 16 ½ dress is not easy. Size ten shoes aren't either. Jamie said she bought a "housedress" this trip. When I wondered what she would want with a housedress, thinking cotton floral print, patch pockets, center zipper good for cleaning and dusting, Jamie realized it was a "housecoat"—something to sit around in. Jamie doesn't do windows.

While this chatter was going on, Jamie was painting her nails. "Uptown Tangerine" was the shade. She prefers "Sunny Sienna" but can't always find it. She prefers short stockings to panty hose. She eschews panty hose. They are not her fantasy.

Jamie began cross dressing publicly in 1980. She is 53 years old, has never married, and lives with her mother and sister. Jamie feels we are all dealt half a life. Men are valued by their accomplishments and women are liked for what they are. She says there is a tremendous preponderance of electrical engineers among the TVs. Jamie likes other TVs. They are the kind of people she would pick out of a crowd dressed or not. We couldn't seem to settle on what was a typical TV. When Jamie started, she used to "play with lingerie." She didn't know there were other TVs. She thought they were all drag queens and gay. When Jamie was visiting New York City, she picked up a brochure at Times Square. In it was advertised a shop



ORDER DATE		CARD NUMBER		TERMS	
5/20/86				chk no. 289	
QTY.	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	AMOUNT	EXP. DATE	
1	Solo Aroma No. 4	13.25	13.25		
1	La Hoja Rothchild	21.50	21.50		
SHIPPING AND HANDLING					
ADDITIONAL SHIPPING					
FL. RESIDENTS ADD FIVE PERCENT					
TOTAL					
NOTE		SUBTOTAL		34.75	
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ORDER!!				2.00	
QUEEN VICTORIA ENJOYED				36.75	
SMOKING GREAT CIGARS					
I HOPE YOU ENJOY OUR					
PRODUCTS					
				order slip for cigars	

for transvestites, and drag queens, Lee's Mardi Gras.

Jamie went right over, beard and all and requested to buy some white cotton panties. The sales people rolled their eyes. Jamie bought a skirt and put it in his attache case in case "he needed it." He wanted the "girl next door" look, to "look like a nice woman." From Lee's Mardi Gras, Jamie went to a bar catering to what she calls "underground types." Here she met Rhonda, a former Marine pilot, now a chemical engineer and Trudy, a former Golden Gloves boxer, now a professional pianist and librarian. Trudy also has her Master's in Clinical Psychology. The three are still friends.

After these New York City experiences, Jamie decided to shave. No "spit drag" for her. She prefers the "little girl" look. The Village became a part of Jamie's leisure time routine. Jan Wallman's cabaret is a favorite. Margaret Whiting, Joan Rivers, and Dick Cavett all started there. Dressing several times a week these past seven years has given Jamie much practice. No more wigs, she arranges her own hair and knows more about cosmetics than any woman I know. Dresses and cosmetics give Jamie a psychological benefit. She thinks there is no particular advantage to being a man and that all she wants out of life she could have as a woman, but that strong little girl identification predominates. She wants to wear what women wear. If they were to wear sack cloth, TVs would, Jamie insists. She prefers straight bars and restaurants,

with a straight woman. If she keeps her voice low, she has the thrill of "passing." This makes Jamie more adventurous by degrees. In 1981, she went to the opera and the ballet as a woman. She has transvested in eleven states, thinks the sex feelings clothes give are fun, loves being referred to as "she," and loves showing her legs. It takes Jamie about an hour and a half to dress. Nails are last, otherwise you rush and mess them up. She only dresses when she has somewhere to go.

Jamie feels she will cross dress the rest of her life and thinks there is a very individual dividing line between the transvestite and transexual, "all of us think about it." You are asked to live the role for two years before surgery. Hormone shots and electrolysis are steps towards surgery. "But I'm still interested in women and maybe even sex, but I am more interested in the friendship." The clothing and thrill of passing seem to lower the sex drive, give it a back seat.

While Jamie was visiting, UPS arrived with a shipment of cigars for me. Yes, I've smoked them since I was eight, but that's another story. When I opened the box, this note was on the order. I laughed so very hard. Generally, they are sent to Mr. Jan Kelly. Jamie said, "Nobody realizes I'm a girl either."

Well her six foot frame exited and Divil whistled his victory call loud and clear, man *out* of the house. He kept it up for half-an-hour. Divil resents people trying to fool him and he lets them know. Maybe next year, Jamie.