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Transvestia

FICTION

The Cure
Case 481

ARTICLES

Alcohol and the TV

TRUE STORY

The Bitter and the Sweet
Unforgettable Incident

POEM

Ballad of Mary Jane

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

VIRGIN VIEWS

Magellan Was Right

TRANSVESTIA



Volume XV No. 87

Purpose of Transvestia

TRANSVESTIA is dedicated to the needs of those heterosexual persons who have become aware of their "other side" and seek to express it. The magazine provides —

EDUCATION — ENTERTAINMENT — EXPRESSION

to help its readers achieve —

UNDERSTANDING — SELF ACCEPTANCE — PEACE OF MIND

in place of the loneliness, fear and self condemnation they have known for too long.

TRANSVESTIA does not condemn nor judge the fields of homosexuality, bondage, domination or fetishism. These are left to others to develop. They are not part of the areas of interest of this magazine.

TRANSVESTIA seeks to gather information and to disseminate it to interested persons in the medical, legal counseling and scientific professions to further their knowledge about this little understood field.

THE COVER SYMBOL

The symbol on the cover expresses the philosophy of this publication. The head, divided diagonally, represents our two sides — mind (Wisdom) and face (Beauty).

The lateral curving line portrays the ancient Chinese duality of the "Yang" (masculinity) and the "Yin" (femininity) — the two aspects of human nature.

The total symbolism indicates the wholeness of a human being — not all masculine — mind and reason, abstract and unseen — and not all feminine — beauty, desirability, and appearance, but rather an integration of both.

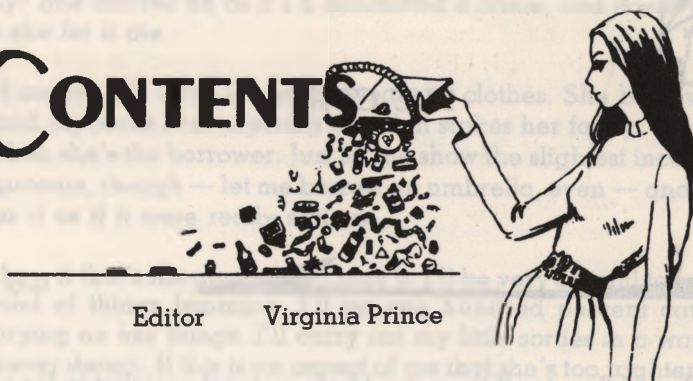
A "SAYING" OF JESUS

"When you make the two one . . . and when you make the
MALE AND THE FEMALE INTO A SINGLE ONE . . .
then shall you enter the kingdom."

From the Gospel According to St. Thomas.

Transvestia

CONTENTS



Editor Virginia Prince

- 2 The Cure — Fiction
- 37 The Bitter and the Sweet — True Story
- 40 Alcohol and the TV — Article
- 46 Ballad of Mary Jane — Poem
- 50 Unforgettable Incident — True Story
- 54 Gilbert is Gone — Obituary
- 55 Case 481 — Fiction
- 60 Editorial Emanations
- 64 Letters to the Editor
- 70 Virgin Views — Magellan Was Right

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VOL. XV

NO. 87

Generously donated by:
Virginia Prince, PhD.



FICTION

THE CURE

C.S. — PA

One of the nice things about being a teacher is that in June, when the days are fresh, and when moments of joy come bubbling to the surface, you start a long vacation. And one of the nice things about having a wife who works is that she gives you a kiss and leaves you with the apartment to yourself. You can do what you please.

What it pleased me to do was to wear her clothes. If you've never tried it, you don't know what you're missing. It is a step into another world. It is a chance to feel as she feels, to see it as she sees it. It is a way of uniting with her that no physical union can match.

You put on her panties, and you feel how silky and sheer they are, and the elastic around your legs. You put on her slip, and you feel the way it slides across your bare legs and slick rump. You put on her bra, and you feel the fullness of a woman's bosom. In a way, you are two people at once, the seeker and the sought, the girl and the man. Because you've actually gotten a little way inside, you feel closer to her than you can in any other way.

You have to be careful, though — at least with Sally — it's not something that she is particularly tolerant about. Once — just once — did I try letting her in on it, and that was a disaster. I was just joking, but she was furious. She didn't think it was funny at all. What I did was to wear one of my sweaters — *my* sweater, mind you — that she had worn that day. Underneath the sweater, I put on one of her bras, stuffed with tissues.

"Look what you have done to my sweater!" I wailed, walking into the kitchen.

She really blew up. What right did I have to go into her drawers? What if I had ruined a six-dollar bra? What sort of pervert was I anyway? She carried on as if I'd committed a crime, and it was weeks before she let it die.

Of course, it's okay for her to wear my clothes. She borrows my shirts and my jeans and anything else that strikes her fancy. That's all right when she's the borrower. Just let me show the slightest inclination to reciprocate, though — let me borrow an umbrella, even — and she'll go after it as if it were really serious.

Okay, if that's the game, we'll play it. I'll be very careful to appear disdainful of things feminine. I'll be one hundred percent cautious about trying on her things. I'll carry out my little sorties in a way that she'll never detect. If this is an aspect of me that she's too frightened to know about, I'll hide it from her, and she'll just have to go through life knowing a little less about me than she could.

So, on that first, sweet, vacation morning, after I had given her plenty of time to catch her bus, I chained the door, and went to the bedroom to pick out the clothes I wanted to wear.

Most men would look ridiculous in a dress. Believe it or not, I don't. I look young for my age, and in a dress, I look quite natural. A pretty dress seems to set me off, to complement a graceful, well-shaped body and a friendly, boyish face. As long as there isn't anyone around to apply their narrow, stereotyped attitudes to the situation, I enjoy the way I look.

So I dressed in her clothes and felt good — gloriously, elatedly good. I felt a mite guilty that I was having such fun while she was at work. Of course, whether I was enjoying myself or not, it didn't make any difference to her, but I did feel a little remorse.

I pattered. I fixed the noisy toilet that the union plumber couldn't fix. I did the dishes, and straightened the apartment. I began the first of a series of books that I had assembled for summer reading. I did exactly what the mood of the moment told me to do, and I enjoyed it with the warm sense of well-being that wearing Sally's clothes always brings.

At about three in the afternoon, she called.

"I expected to hear from you by now," she said.

"Why?"

"Can't you guess?"

"I'm not a mind reader."

"Well, I am. Does it fit?"

"Does what fit?"

"The dress."

"What dress?"

"The dress you're wearing. Does it fit?"

"Oh, for Christ's sake, what are you talking about?"

"You mean you're not wearing a dress?"

"Of course not. I'm wearing exactly what you would expect."

"I'm sure you are, so maybe you had better go look in the mirror," she said facetiously and hung up.

She couldn't know. No one could. Our apartment was on the ninth floor and had well-curtained windows. No one had been at the door or anything. No way; there was absolutely no way for her or anyone else to know. She was pulling some sort of joke.

Nevertheless, I took off her clothes and put them away, exactly as I found them. Regretting the hour or so I had yet to go, I started to put on my own clothes.

Started, that is. My own clothes had disappeared. From the chair where I sometimes left them, from all of my drawers, from my closet, from the clothes hamper even, all my clothes had vanished, *all* of them. I searched again and found not so much as a sock.

Obviously she had hidden them. But why? What was she up to? And why, for the first time in my life hadn't I taken the precaution of laying out some clothes ready to jump into?

I started to call her back and give her hell. That was foolish! I'd just have to find where she had hidden them. But I couldn't. All that I was able to find was a box under the bed that I suspected had something to do with all this. It had a dress and some lingerie in it. I recalled seeing an envelope lying on top of the panties in her drawer. Since I don't go around reading people's mail, I had left it carefully in place, but it occurred to me that she may have meant for me to find it. She had, because it wasn't sealed and it had a note in it for me.

Larry,

These are mine. Your's are under the bed.

I got the box again and examined its contents more thoroughly, and, of course, from a very different point of view. It contained a puffy dress that nearly filled the box, and on top of it, some pink underwear, fresh and gleaming — a bra with satiny straps, panties and a slip, lusciously soft and pink, and beneath it all, another note:

You know how I feel about your wearing my clothes, but that doesn't seem to stop you. Let's try another tack.

These are for you to wear to your heart's content. Maybe, when you've had your fill, you can start paying attention to me instead of to my clothes.

You have no idea how exciting it was to think that she had bought me those clothes. No child at Christmas ever found a more delightful present beneath the tree. But in no way could I go along with it. She didn't really want me to have and enjoy such things. She was making fun of me. For one lousy joke she was still making me pay. Of course I wanted them, to try them on at once, and to wear them in front of her, but no way. Neither of us was up to it. I reread her note, being excited anew by what it said. But however exciting it might be, I couldn't. For my sake or hers, I couldn't. I knew what her real reaction would be. There was no doubt about it.

But what kind of a hole was I in? How had I gotten into it? Why hadn't I taken the precaution I always took of laying out some clothes to change into? If only I had!

But I hadn't. There I sat trapped as effectively as if she had walked in on me. I searched for an excuse. I had just never gotten dressed. That was it. I had been in my bathrobe all day. Except my bathrobe

had disappeared. Then why hadn't I called? I just hadn't gotten dressed at all. But I had. The marks of her too-tight brassiere and girdle were plainly embossed on my skin. I searched for something safe of her's that I might wear. Nothing. To get rid of the marks, I showered. If it had any effect, it made them redder. I tried a towel around my waist. It hid the girdle marks quite well. I showered again, practically rubbing my skin off. I doused myself with powder. With only a half-hour left, the marks were as strong as ever. I tried a sheet. Even I could see how ridiculous it was.

Damn her anyway. I ought to wear that dress just to show her. I went back to the box and reread the note. I ran my fingers over the bra, pink and gleaming, the panties with the soft, slick feel of sheer nylon, the slip with its scalloped edges and satiny embroidery. I held up the dress with its lush, full skirt and short, puffy sleeves.

What a world it would be! Why should the clothes that I enjoyed so much be forbidden? What right did she have to tantalize me so? Damn her, damn her, damn her!

With twenty minutes left, I tried them on. Not only were they pink and luscious, they really fit. They fit me. "Yours," the note had said. My bra that was snug without cutting into me. My panties that came up well over my hips. My dress that I could zip all the way. If I could! I took them off and laid them back in the box. I tried the words again for sound — "my panties," "my slip," "Sally's bra," "Larry's bra." They were delicious words.

She was at the door. She juzzed the buzzer and rattled the chain. It was her fault that I was in this predicament; I'd show her. I put on the dress and let her in.

"I see you found it," she observed.

"Will you tell me what in the hell you are up to?" I retorted.

"I told you, or didn't you make it to the note?"

"I made it, but you are badly mistaken."

"Fix us a drink, and then you can tell me all about it," she said as if she were talking to a child.

I fixed them and curtsied sarcastically as she took hers.

"Please," she said, "let's not go overboard."

We drank our drinks in embarrassed silence. She twirled the ice in her glass and held it out for a refill. I made another round.

"You really need a slip under that dress," she laughed. "You can see right through it."

"You should have thought of that when you hid my clothes."

"I did."

"I mean you should have thought about the consequences."

"Do me a favor, and put on a slip."

"So give me back my clothes, and I won't offend you."

She left the room and returned shortly with two water-filled balloons.

"Look," she said, juggling the balloons under my nose, "you can be as coy as you want, but don't expect me to share my life with these. You can get rid of these, or you can get the hell out."

"You are overestimating things," I protested. "You wear my clothes all the time, but you make a big deal out of it if I so much as touch your things."

"Oh, no, we're not going to go through that argument again. I'm simply telling you that I am no longer going to be a party to the deception that has underlain our marriage."

"No more deception than you've asked for," I retorted.

"Look, I dislike your wearing my clothes, but I detest your sneaking behind my back to do it. The deception has to go."

"Only the deception?"

"What do you think?"

"We scarcely need to go through all this. You could have said what was bothering you. Give me back my clothes, and I'll promise to leave yours alone."

"That's not a promise you could keep. You made that promise once before, remember?"

"That was different. I promised not to, well, pull any more jokes — to wear your clothes as a joke. What I might do in private simply wasn't considered. I didn't know that you were bothered by the time or two I tried on your things in private. But since I do, I won't do it again."

"I'm not satisfied with promises. I want something more. I want you to get rid of whatever it is that intrigues you about my clothes — this craving."

"Craving is putting it a little strong."

"And what were you doing all day?"

"Experimenting, satisfying my curiosity. It is hardly as serious as you make it."

"You don't believe that any more than I do."

"Try me."

"I did. You're worse now than ever."

"If you'd feel better about it, I'd go talk to somebody."

"I already did. He didn't hold out much hope."

"What kind of nut was he? Was this his idea?"

"No."

"And so you're going to rush in where angels fear to tread?"

"I'm going to try something."

"Curing a cold with a case of pneumonia?"

"Forcing you to find out that clothes aren't as magic as you seem to think they are."

"I already know that."



Karla CA-67-H



"And yet you spent the day in them. But I'm tired of this. Did you fix anything for dinner?"

"What do you expect? I was looking for my clothes."

"Well go fix something. I'm tired."

I put some vegetables on to heat and some chops to fry, and wondered what to do. It was a strange situation with which I had to cope — dismay that she knew so much, embarrassment that she could be telling me to cook dinner or put on a slip, and a marvelous joy that for a day or two I could wear a dress. I wanted nothing so much as to go to the bedroom and put on the lingerie that was waiting there.

To hell with it! Why, when she was to blame, was I afraid to do what I wanted? If she hadn't wanted to face the situation, she shouldn't have forced me into it. It was her fault that I had to wear the dress. It was her fault that I had to wear the other things as well. I fixed another drink — a big one — and took it in. She was watching television and scarcely noticed me.

A gush of enthusiasm washed over me as I put on the lingerie she had bought. I toyed even with putting on some lipstick, but chickened out. Maybe she'd make me do it. I hoped.

"I hope you're satisfied," I said, serving dinner.

"Oh, I am," she retorted. "I've got the prettiest husband in Manhattan. What more could I want?"

It was too bad, really, that neither of us could accept my pleasure in women's clothing without making a big issue of it. With the apartment to myself, I could unselfconsciously enjoy the moments that made their appearance like meteors in the sky when I'd catch the curve of my dress as it stretched across my bosom, or feel the slickness of my panties beneath my skirt. It was a subtle, momentary pleasure, a spark of realization that now Sally and I had sensations that we could legitimately share, not in our usual complementary roles, but in true sharing. I felt good, in a way a fire feels good in autumn — snug, safe, and at ease with the world. I hoped Sally knew that. I hoped that she knew how pleasant it was to be able to wear what I pleased, and to — for the first time ever — be free of the fear of her return, to look forward to it, even. I felt good, so good that I did all the household chores she

would ordinarily have to do. I cooked, ironed, and dusted. I even began the mending that she had accumulated.

For several days, it went like that. Sally would come home and except for a crack or two about how good a girl I'd make, she'd act as if my being in skirts were the most natural thing in life.

When she got home on Friday, however, she blew up. She came out of the bedroom just furious.

"You've been into my clothes again."

"But I haven't."

"You seem to think I'm a damn fool."

"I tell you I haven't."

"Larry, if it takes everything I've got, we're going to get this thing out into the open. You want a girdle? Then for God's sake admit it, and I'll buy you one. Lipstick? Stockings? I'll buy you sanitary napkins if you want, but don't go sneaking into my things. You leave my things alone. Strictly alone, do you understand?"

"But I have."

The fact was that I had been into her things, and I realized that my denials were in vain. Sheepishly, I reversed my stand and admitted having — as a matter of curiosity — seen what wearing makeup was like. And stockings.

"It's beyond me," she said, more to herself than to me, "how you can get any pleasure out of cramming yourself into a girdle all day, or spending time to make up your face. If I didn't have to I'd never wear a girdle or a bra. Yet you do it out of choice. I find it absolutely incomprehensible."

"It's a matter of curiosity. I want to find out what it's like."

"How long does it take?" she asked sarcastically.

Next morning she left the apartment without saying anything, and was gone until late in the afternoon. She returned with so many bags and boxes that she could scarcely carry them.

"Here," she said, "if there's anything you might be curious about that isn't here, I can't imagine what it'd be. I've spent nearly three hundred dollars."

She carried them into the guest room — where she had insisted that I sleep until all this was over — and dumped them on the bed.

I was overwhelmed. It was like being a child at Christmas — bags, boxes large and small dumped on the bed and falling on the floor. Almost in a state of shock, I began to pick them up and arrange them on the bed. I turned to speak to her, but she had gone. I followed her to her bedroom.

"Jesus, you shouldn't have done that," I told her.

"Oh?"

"I mean . . ."

"Go try them on. I'm going to have a bath."

Rather sheepishly, I returned to the guest room.

She had gone mad. There were shoes, skirts, dresses, bras, girdles, stockings, panties, slips, petticoats, blouses, and makeup. Hungrily, I closed the door and started trying them on. It was on, then off, then on with something else. In a few minutes I had been through them all. I sorted them out, making stacks of panties, slips, blouses. I went through them again, removing the tags and cramming the wrappings into a single bag. I hung the dresses in the closet — an orange one with a pleated skirt, a white one of a glossy material that flowed as if it were wet, a sheer one with colored flowers embroidered all over it, a black one with a satin top and a chiffon skirt, a yellow one of real silk. I marveled at them — mine — hanging soft and ready in a row. I added the skirts to the row, a blue pleated one, a soft woolen plaid, a green cotton, and then the blouses, a beige one, one of white satin, a sheer one with tucks, a sheer black one with a taffeta lining. They filled the closet with softness and excitement.

I opened a drawer and made it my lingerie drawer. I piled the panties in it one by one, pink, blue, beige, black with pink ribbons threaded around the legs and tied in bows at the hips, plain white. I folded the bras and arranged them in a row, five of them, one to match each color. And the girdles, two of them, both white, but with lots of

glossy satin and tiny ruffles along the edges. And a pile of slips, four slips and two petticoats, beige, pink, blue, white, and a black one with ribbons, that matched the panties. Three pairs of panty hose and three pairs of stockings. Two pairs of shoes, beige flats and black patent pumps with incredibly high heels. I put the shoes in a line on the closet floor. I arranged the makeup neatly on the dressing table.

It took me a while to decide which outfit to wear first. I'd have worn them all at once if I could. Finally I decided on the sheer dress with the embroidered flowers. Under it I wore the blue slip, and of course, the blue bra and panties. I toyed, too, with wearing panty hose and lipstick, but I didn't have the courage.

Excited, I went to let her see and to thank her for it all. She had gone. I found a note on the table:

Larry,

I'm going to dinner and a movie with George and the Williamsons. We may come back here afterwards. I'll buzz.

Enjoy yourself.

You might think that her stepping out on me wouldn't matter. In fact, it made me furious. If I had had anything to change in to, I'd have gone after her and done I don't know what. As it was, I was trapped, and it added to my anger. Impulsively, I decided to give her a little of her own medicine. I changed into the black chiffon, including stockings, heels, and makeup. I did everything I could to make myself sexy and feminine. Recklessly I plucked my eyebrows and lacquered my nails. You may think I am boasting, but if you hadn't seen me before, you'd think I was an attractive young woman dressed for a party.

At about eleven, she buzzed from downstairs. I moved to the sofa and sat down in the most feminine pose I could. With my heart pounding, I awaited their arrival. I heard the key in the lock. My heart was pounding furiously. The door opened, and in stepped Sally, alone.

She was aghast.

"Are you out of your mind? What if they had come back with me?"

"What right do you have to step out on me?" I asked. "Are you or aren't you my wife?"

"Simmer down," she said pleasantly. "I just went to a show."

"I don't care what you did; you have no right . . ."

"I was well chaperoned."

"As long as we are man and wife, I expect you to leave other men strictly alone. Those are the rules I play by and I expect you to do likewise."

She looked at me with such amusement that she didn't have to answer.

"You are the one who got me into this. You hid my clothes; not I. You went out and spent three hundred dollars."

"Well?" she laughed.

"Then don't act as if it's so goddamn funny."

"Surely you don't think it isn't?"

"I think it is sadistic."

"Look," she said, "I think there is something to salvage or I wouldn't try. I don't really enjoy seeing you sitting there in a dress."

"I suspect you do."

"Are you crazy? Do you think I enjoyed lying to them tonight, claiming that you were sick, when I knew that you were dressing up like a little child, prancing around in frilly underthings, pretending to be a woman? You really have lost touch."

"Things you bought. How do you explain that?"

"Oh, come on now. This is silly. You sit there like a carnival doll and expect me to take you seriously? You just think about it. I'm going to bed."

Two weeks went by, two weeks during which I alternated between delightful fantasy and foolish depressing boredom. One time I'd marvel at how pretty and girlish I was. Another time I'd feel like an idiot, a simpleton dressed in its mother's clothing — tottering in heels, smeared with lipstick, pretending to have breasts. I'd get all made-up, girdled, bra'd, pantied, stockinged, eyebrows penciled, lips painted, nails lacquered. I'd walk across the room feeling like a girl ready for a date, when my fantasy would collapse, leaving me no place to hide, no way to escape from my shame. Especially if Sally were there, I'd see the look on her face and know how contemptuous she was of me to have fallen into her nets.

And yet she wasn't. I realize that it was my own sense of shame that made me attribute most of her contempt to her. Actually she was very gentle about it. Even when I went all out, she took it pretty much as a matter of course.

From time to time I asked her to return my clothes. She'd look at me and tell me that I didn't really want her to. In a way she was right; I wasn't really ready to give up all the pretty things I had.

Still there was something I wanted that I didn't get. I wanted her to sympathize with how I felt, with my delight, with my wanting to share her secrets. She accepted my dressing up, but she didn't really share it. I wanted to talk to her about our common problems, like snagged stockings and tight girdles. I wanted her to ask to borrow my things, to treat them not as playthings, but for real. She didn't.

It was two o'clock in the morning. I couldn't sleep. I had tried to crawl in with her, but she hadn't let me. I had tried to dress up in something special, but everything had grown commonplace, even the black chiffon. I lay in bed, tormented with wakefulness, but unable to turn to anything that would satisfy my wakeful craving.

I got up and went to the kitchen. I wasn't really hungry. I picked up a book, but put it down after a dozen lines. I opened the door, and looked out into the empty hall. I got dressed again.

"What on earth are you doing?" Sally called.

"I'm going for a walk."

"You're what?"

"Going for a walk."

"I believe they arrest people for that."

"I don't care; I'm going out of my mind."

"Well, it's your neck. I guess you can risk it if you want to."

"That's right."

I opened the door and checked the hall again. It was completely silent. I fixed the lock so that I could open it, and slipped across the hall to the stairway.

Quietly, I made my way down the nine flights of stairs. At the bottom, I pushed open the outside door and looked out into the alley. It, too, was deserted. I stepped outside and let the door swing closed against a wad of paper so it wouldn't lock.

As the door closed behind me, an entirely new sensation swept over me. It was like being born again, like having a whole new world open up before me, like no experience I had ever had before. My heart was pounding. I was trembling from head to foot. For quite a while, I just stood there like a newly metamorphosed butterfly, soaking up the sensations of my transfiguration.

Terrified, but unable to stop myself, I started down the alley toward the street. I felt as some honored sacrificial victim must have felt, elated at the glory, insensitive to the impending doom. I knew — oh, how I knew — the humiliation that faced me, the impossibility of it. And yet the alley toward the street I walked, moved along by an irresistible excitement.

Every move was sending its messages with a feverish intensity. I could feel my breasts — for at that moment they were my breasts — gently bouncing. I could feel the night air twirling around my legs. I could feel the elastic in my panties roll and unroll as I walked. The breeze played with my skirt. The rough concrete reminded me of the thinness of my shoes. I felt like a dancer on the stage, almost naked, yet gloriously veiled. I reached the street, and irresistably started down it.

It was deserted. The trees, their leaves still young, quivered in the purple-green light of the street lamps. They, too, were experiencing a second, unnatural birth, and I felt akin to them.

Down the street, a man emerged with his dog, and I suddenly felt the true terror of my situation. In a panic, I needed to run, but that other force, even stronger, kept me walking on, like a nightmare. I passed him while he stood at the curb with his dog, disappointed that he had not noticed me.

I reached Second Avenue, but stopped by the traffic which flowed even at that late hour, dared not cross. Instead, I turned to look in a florist's window while I waited for the man and his dog to go back in.

A couple crossed Second Avenue and came toward me. Like an animal, I froze at the window. They passed so close behind me that I could smell the girl's perfume. They paused to look in the florist's window, too, and my heart pounded. They started on, and I followed, seeking the protection of their wake. As they reached the man with his dog, the girl stopped to give the dog a pat. And then, as if some master hand had guided us, they parted and the man led his dog between us into his building. I followed on behind the departing couple.

They leaned their heads together and slipped their arms around each other's waist. The girl's skirt was short and flippy and I watched it as they walked. I envied him. For the moment, I envied his having a girl with a soft and sexy air to put his arms around, and I felt ashamed that I had given up my right to do so, too.

That envy, however, was more than compensated for by something I had that he did not. I had an entre into her life that he did not — a degree of intimacy that he could never have. We both had panties on, that girl and I. We both had breasts and bras. We both felt the brush of our skirts against our legs, the lightness of our sheer clothing.

The breeze caught her skirt from time to time and showed enough of her panties that I knew they were plain and white. Mine were prettier than her's. The breeze caught my skirt, too, and made me wish that someone was following me to see a flash of blue. She gave him a little kiss, and I felt a wave of shame to be in a dress. The breeze really caught our skirts, both her's and mine, and raised them high. Like players in an orchestra, we moved our arms in unison and held them down. She turned around and looked, and maybe even smiled.

Half a block later, they turned into a building, and I headed back.



Dixie - NJ



Dorothy



Jo Anne

Vancouver, B.C.

I didn't sleep. I spent the night trying to sort things out. One thing was clear; one thing came through regardless of how I thought about it. I had a touch of woman in me.

It was a frightening thought, but it fed upon all the doubts of my youth and grew. Hidden in among the masculine components of my personality was a woman, a woman who was trying to come out and assert herself along with all the rest. That was the only explanation.

Perhaps it was silly — and in view of the wardrobe I already had, it was — but there was something else, something I craved. And the night's expedition only intensified my craving. I already had a girdle. I had two of them, but not like this. The one I craved was pink, with a matching bra. I closed my eyes and saw it on the mannekin. Ruffled garters hanging loose, ruffles like mist cascading over the hips. But best of all, a sleek satin panel starting at the dipped down waist and running in a smooth, glossy, unbroken line down between her legs. Oh, I had to have that girdle, to be able to put it on, and to have it give me, too, the gentle roundness of a woman's crotch. Nothing, no other garment I could imagine did I want so much.

For weeks I had been going out of my way just to look in the window of the lingerie shop where it was displayed. Never in my wildest dreams had I thought it possible to have such a girdle. But as I lay there remembering it, and reviewing the night's events, the shop seemed to beckon me. Come in, says the proprietress, come in. You're one of us now. Come in and let us try it on. You really appreciate nice things. So many of our customers are sloppy and fat, and you are so lithe and trim. Come in, come in.

It wasn't something I reasoned out, or even consciously came to. It just happened. I found myself planning a trip to that shop, planning what I'd wear, imagining myself in the fitting room being measured, being welcomed for the woman in me.

For the remainder of the night, I lay awake, counting the hours and making the trip to the shop again and again. It seemed forever before morning came.

As soon as Sally was gone, I began to dress. Never had I taken such care, never with such anticipation. It took two hours.

I started out, but just as I did, the elevator arrived at our floor. I ducked back in and waited. When the hall was clear, I crossed over to

the stairway and made my way to the bottom. I wedged the door open and stepped out into the alley.

It was bright and noisy. Shocked by these unexpected conditions, I paused before starting down the alley. Much of last night's confidence had vanished. Nevertheless, I walked down the alley and out onto the street. Fortunately, I had taken great care in dressing and making up. I was badly frightened, but I knew that everything was in order. What I hadn't counted on was the brightness of the light. How far could it penetrate? I began to wish that my dress weren't so sheer and that I'd worn an extra petticoat. As much as I could, I stuck to the shadows.

Third Avenue was worse. There it was the crowd, hurrying and bumping along, and the shadowless glare of the sun. Fearing I was about to be knocked over, I finally made it to the lingerie shop. The window was changed. I reached the door, but I couldn't go in. I don't know if their having changed the window was the cause, but I just couldn't do it. I stopped at the window and counted, vowing to go in on the count of ten, and then twenty. Still, I couldn't do it. Terribly disappointed, I started back.

I had left Third Avenue before I realized that I was being followed. I increased my pace, but the vague sounds of some one following me kept up. I turned and looked. Not far behind were four boys. My looking at them seemed to make them strike, and they began to overtake me. I broke into a run, and so did they. I ran as fast as I could, and so did they. I turned into the alley, and they followed. I reached the door, and tried to get it open. Since it had no outside handle, I had to open it with the tips of my fingers, and it slipped away.

By then the boys were all around me, like a pack of dogs. One of them reached for my skirt and tried to lift it. I shoved him away and grabbed the edge of the door again. With only a quarter of an inch to hold on to, it got away. I pushed the boys away and tried again. It took both hands, and two of the boys grabbed my skirt and raised it high. They had a thorough look before I slipped inside.

Up the stairs, I bolted, taking them two and three at a time. The boys followed at my heels. Up flight after flight I ran, fueled by some miraculous source of energy that let me climb the nine flights without stopping. I reached my floor well ahead of the pack, and ran down the hall and into the apartment just as the boys emerged, shouting, from the stairwell.

The commotion brought the neighbors to their doors, and I listened in horror as the gleeful boys told their story.

"This man," one of them was saying, "he was wearing a dress."

"We were following him," another chimed in, "and he started to run."

"He was made up just like a girl."

"And dressed like a girl, too. You could see a brassiere through his dress."

"It was pink, and he had on pink underpants, and long stockings. Ronnie lifted up his dress."

"Where did he go?"

"Up here."

"Did he try to do anything? Did he hurt you?"

"Naw, he was just standing there, looking at corsets, and then he started down Third Avenue, and we followed him."

"He didn't try to do anything?"

"He was real scared."

"You are sure he came up here?"

"We almost caught him."

"How did he get in?"

"Through the side door. That's where we lifted up his dress."

Just then the super arrived, and sent the boys on their way. He promised the neighbors that he would check all the service rooms and halls, and after banging a couple of doors, went away. I flopped down on the bed.

I woke up when Sally came.

"Well, the doorman tells me you have been going out," she said.

"Oh, my God."

"He didn't exactly say it was you. He just said that a man dressed like a woman had disappeared on our floor. Who saw you?"

"Just a gang of kids."

"Did you know them?"

"No."

"You could lose your job."

"I know."

I can't understand why you would try anything so foolhardy."

I told her the whole story — or most of it.

"How would you like to make another public appearance?" she asked.

"Never," I assured her.

"Even if you could do it right here, at a party?"

"Not even here," I repeated.

"Look," she said, opening up the large box she had with her. "It's a Tyrolean peasant's costume."

She extracted a very voluminous skirt with an embroidered border, an embroidered blouse with a low puckered neck and puff sleeves, and a black, laced bodice. From a second box, she produced a petticoat even more voluminous than the skirt. And then, with obvious delight, she produced the very girdle and bra that I had been coveting.

"Where did you get that?"

"The same place you would have, if you had had the courage."

"Oh, come on now."

"Go try them on."

I was embarrassed, but I simply couldn't resist. I took the clothes to the bedroom and tried them on.

It was a mistake. Once I tried them, I was hooked. I was hooked by the puffy way the skirt spread out over my hips and down in a froth of soft folds, and the sharp contrast between the fullness of the skirt and the sleek, tight bodice. But what hooked me even more was the way I had looked in the girdle and bra. The girdle, as I had thought it would, gave me the gentle plumpness of a woman, but it was the bra that really set me off. It had substantial pads but only in the bottoms of the cups. With a little coaxing, I was able to draw the natural plumpness of my breasts into two round orbs only partly covered by the lacy cups. It really looked as if I had a woman's breasts. Even without a dress, I had the figure of a woman. I put on the blouse, and found that by adjusting the drawstring right, I could bring the neckline low enough to suggest real breasts, like some well endowed country girl. I suppose I should have been ashamed to appear so feminine, but I wasn't. I was proud.

"My," she said, coming into the room, "that's a little more than I expected."

It made me blush.

"Here's what you're going to do," she said. "On Saturday, everybody from the front office is coming over here for a shower. It's for Ilse, who's Austrian. I thought it would be fun to have a Tyrolean motif. We'll decorate the apartment with travel posters and things. You can pretend to be a Tyrolean serving girl. None of these people know you, so they will think you have been hired for the occasion."

I gulped. I did sound like a lot of fun, but even more, it would give me a chance to show people how I looked — people I wouldn't have to face again.

"What if I got caught again?" I asked.

"Nothing ventured, nothing gained," she chided.

"Do you think I could?"

She shrugged. I went back to the mirror and took another look. In spite of my experience with the boys, I found myself thinking that I could get away with it. My face was as feminine as her's was. My arms and legs were a little more muscular than her's, but not nearly as

muscular as some girls I had known. And in that dress with its low-cut blouse and full hips, I really had the figure of a girl. It was probably my movements that gave me away.

A lot of things about it intrigued me — the idea of being a serving maid, the pleasure of letting people see me, a kind of pride in the way I looked, and wanting to reciprocate for all she had done for me. Also, the fact that the party was still several days away made the decision less frightening. I decided to do it.

From that moment on, my anticipation began to grow. By the day of the party, I was so excited that I was almost no help to her. In disgust, she sent me off to dress.

It was a kind of vindication, when I was ready, to look at myself in the mirror and to realize that the lack of toughness that had been such a misery to me as I was growing up was now having such delicious rewards. How many of my boyhood friends, who were so good at baseball, wrestling, and all the rest, were now finding their masculinity limited to grunting at a televised ball game? Or taking out their frustrations by abusing their wives? Or having to boast continually about their sexual prowess to the other men on their jobs? I saw what had become of them the summer I worked for the railroad. Not one of them could claim one half the masculinity I could — masculinity complemented by a profound appreciation and knowledge of femininity. How many of them — with all their self-proclaimed bravery — could have dared to step far enough into the feminine world to have tried on a bra and girdle, let alone to have dressed as I was dressed? No sir, it was I who won. It was I who not only enjoyed my masculinity enough that I didn't have to go around proving that I had it, but who could know it all the more for daring to step beyond its borders.

I looked at myself in the mirror — partly out of pride, partly out of the need to counteract the fear that the gang of boys had engendered. I saw myself having all the zesty, wholesome charm of a country girl. I saw the gentle roundness of my breasts disappearing beneath the gathers of my blouse. I saw my slender waist and full hips. I lifted my skirts, and was warmed by the glossy, smooth, pink femininity of my girdle nestled in the lush layers of my petticoat.

"Hurry up," Sally called.

I gave a last touch-up to my lips and lashes and went to the kitchen to get things ready for drinks.

The bell rang, and Sally went to answer it. It was three young women who immediately began gushing about my costume. Sally came in, and I ducked into the kitchen.

"That's Gretchen," I heard her say.

The bell rang again, and another group came in, four men. And more girls. And more. Within about five minutes the apartment was full, and Sally came to the kitchen.

"Make a tray full of drinks and take them around," she ordered.

I did. They were gone at once, and I returned for more. And more. Sally kept barking orders and I kept filling them. Perhaps it was a good thing, because it got me over my stage fright.

Eventually the rush died down and I was able to wander among the guests with my tray. I felt warm and excited, delighted from time to time to look down over my plump bosom at the tray being offered and to be looked at and thanked. It was especially pleasant to realize that of all the women there, I was wearing the most feminine clothes. They were in ordinary afternoon dresses and pants suits, but I was in a bouffant skirt and a sexy, low-cut blouse. I felt so good, I began to swing my hips as I walked, and to really think of myself as one of the girls.

I have often noticed that women in less sophisticated cultures have a much greater talent for bringing out their real femininity and enhancing it. Of all the women there, I in my peasant's dress was clearly the most feminine and, to judge from the glances, attractive. I liked it when they looked into my bosom and at my frothy skirt swishing around my knees. I really liked it.

It was a friendly group, and I had to keep reminding myself that I was supposed to be a serving girl. I kept finding myself lingering at a group, listening to their talk, responding with a smile if they questioned me or paid me a compliment.

I even gave thought to the possibility of getting a job from time to time as a waitress, maybe on weekends in some bar where I'd have to wear a fancy costume. Having tasted the pleasure of really being taken for a girl, I found myself searching for ways in which this pleasure could become a component of my work, particularly ways in which the pleasure was as keen as this.

"I just love your outfit. I'm afraid it would kill me to have my waist cinched so tight," said one.

"I think we ought to make her raise her neckline," said another. "It's unfair competition."

"But then we couldn't see her pretty bra," said a third, taking the liberty of loosening the tie of my blouse and lowering the neck still further.

I went to the kitchen to refill my tray.

"You are making quite an impression. One of the girls has asked me how much you charge. Should I tell her?" Sally asked.

"Lay off."

"She wants you to dress like a Playboy bunnye."

"Tell her to go to hell."

"Tell her yourself. She's the one in the green dress."

It was unreal. Sally was making fun of me, and I knew it. Still it was an idea that built on all the thoughts that had been fleeting through my mind since the party began. I began to see myself in long net stockings with a red satin corset riding high over my hips, with bare shoulders and even more of my bosom showing than now, a black ribbon around my neck, and an up-swept hair-do. Could I really do it?

I carried in the tray.

"Tell me," said one of the girls, who had had a little too much to drink, "where did you learn to do it, you know, I mean how did you learn to use makeup and things?"

"What she means," added her companion, "is how did you come by the, uh—"

She indicated her meaning by putting her finger between my breasts and feeling around. I whipped around, and headed for another group.

And then I became aware of it. Like rain it had begun to patter on my ears, remarks made with less and less restraint, with less and less care if I heard them. How long they had been going on, I don't know, but there was no longer any doubt about it. They knew I wasn't a girl,



Mitzi - NY



Rosemarie - WA

and they were becoming increasingly aggressive about having their fun with me, paying me false compliments, running their hands over me, trying to find out how I had come to be dressed like this. Some of them were getting quite ugly, as if I were something to be poked at and destroyed.

For a while, I tried to stem the tide by pretending not to notice. It got worse.

One of the girls, less savage than the rest, warned me, "I think some of the men are planning something. You had better watch out."

She was right. Across the room, several of the men were making their way toward me. I handed her my tray, and ducked into my room. Right after me came the men, dragging me back to the living room. Music began to play, and one of the men grabbed me around the waist and began to swing me as if we were dancing. It was no real dance, of course, more like a wrestling match with me trying to escape, and my captor doing his best to make me rock and bend with the music.

He swung me to another, and another. They twirled me from one to the other until my head was swimming, and I lost my footing and fell.

"That's enough," a couple of the girls insisted in the midst of the laughter. "Help him up."

I sprang to my feet, and made my way dizzily to my room, closing and locking the door behind me.

I couldn't help it; I broke into tears. I sat on the bed and sobbed. Never, never had I felt such humiliation. What a fool, what a goddamn fool. Sally knew. Why had she done it. Why had she bought me the things, encouraged me? How could I face her, or anyone else again? What if I ever ran into any of them on the street? Or at Sally's office? I sat there and bawled.

The party was soon over, and Sally came to the door.

"You set me up for this. Why?" I asked.

"I had to find out."

"How big a fool you could make of me?"

"How deep it goes."

"What?"

"Your wanting to be a girl."

"That isn't what I want."

"It seemed so to me."

"I thought you were serious. I mean, I thought you really wanted me to help."

"Really?"

"Yes, really."

"Well, I'm sorry they treated you so roughly. I hadn't planned on that."

"But you had planned on embarrassing me?"

"I guess a little. At least I didn't want you to get away with it. To think you really could fool people."

"But, why . . ." I tried to push on, trying to really understand her motives. She cut me off.

"We'll take about it another time," she said, leaving the room.

A month passed — a month of life in four rooms. I couldn't go out in dresses and she refused to give me back my own. I tried, unsuccessfully, to order clothes over the phone, but she had arranged with the doorman to intercept all deliveries, and she simply sent them back. It was a month of reading, watching television, and doing housework. Friends came, but I waited out their visits in my room.

She went out — even on dates. She claimed to be sorry that I couldn't go, but not sorry enough to give me back my clothes.

It was, in fact, one of her evenings out when I decided on another trip to the street. I wasn't being entirely foolhardy. For one thing, in two months, I had grown very accustomed to skirts, and felt quite at ease in them, at least around Sally. For another, it would be dark. And for a third, I planned to dress as inconspicuously as possible.

Besides, if I went far enough, there was a little clothing store that stayed open late, where I could buy myself some clothes and escape from this prison in which she kept me.

I dressed in my wool skirt and beige blouse. Underneath it I wore my pink panty girdle both to keep my stockings up and to give me that feeling of femininity I needed.

Quite warily I made my way downstairs and out to the street. It was about ten o'clock. I joined the moderate number of people who were on the street at that hour, and headed for the clothing store. Nothing happened, and as I got closer and closer to my goal I grew more and more confident. My confidence faded, though, when I actually reached the store. It was brightly lighted, and there were several people inside. I walked on by.

I began to regret my cowardice, and started back. As I did so, however, a gang of boys appeared. In a panic, I ducked into a bar I was passing.

It was dimly lighted. A couple of men in some sort of uniform were sitting near the door talking to the bartender. Farther down were a man and woman talking to each other. At the back was a cigaret machine. I made for it, hoping to use up enough time to elude the boys. I put the money in, but nothing came out. I pulled a knob or two, not because I wanted the cigarets, but because I had the feeling that someone was watching me, and I didn't want to arouse their suspicions. The woman who had been sitting at the bar came over and made the machine work. I took the cigarets and stuck them in my purse — actually Sally's purse — and headed for the door.

As I passed the two men, one of them grabbed me by the arm, almost lifting me from the floor.

"What's this?" he asked rhetorically.

Still gripping me, he marched me back toward the rear of the bar and into a well lighted room off to the side. His partner and the couple from the bar came with him.

"What do you guess this is?" he asked, directing the question to his partner. He had the expression of a boy who had come upon a beetle on its back.

"Looks like a fairy."

"Let's take a look," said my captor, trying to lift my skirt.

I knocked his hand away.

"Gimme the purse," he commanded, grabbing it.

He opened it, and found a couple of cards with Sally's name on them.

"Where did you get this purse?"

"It's my wife's," I told him.

"I suppose that skirt's your wife's, too," he said sarcastically.

I didn't answer.

"I don't think this here Sally wants to talk. Let's see what she keeps under her skirt."

He tried again to raise my skirt. Instinctively I shoved him away, but since he outweighed me by about a hundred pounds, I didn't have much effect. He reached again, and I hit him as hard as I could, in the stomach. Like a flash, something hit me, and I was on the floor.

"Take it easy, Al."

"I'm going to teach this here queer a lesson," he snarled.

"You could kill him, Al," the woman cautioned.

"That wouldn't be no loss."

"Let him alone, Al, he didn't do you no harm. He just bought a pack of cigarets."

"That's what you think. This here ain't no fairy bar, and we're going to keep it that way."

He reached again for my skirt.

When you've grown up small and light for your age — as I did — you get in the habit of using your tongue instead of your fists. It's a good habit, if you use a little discretion. I was angry, and anger is not conducive to discretion. When he made that last grab for my skirt and succeeded in raising it high enough to give everyone a good laugh, my tongue took over. It made me do what only a complete fool would do. I hit him where it hurt.

"Here," I said, raising my skirt like a can-can dancer, "have a good look. If it was a fairy I came in here for, I sure as hell found one."

The sound of their laughter and the first blows arrived almost simultaneously. I have never had such a beating. He hit me everywhere — my face, my belly, my jaw. He knocked me down and picked me up and knocked me down again. He might have killed me if the bartender hadn't intervened. He stopped the beating, helped me straighten my clothes and sent me home in a cab. Bleeding and sore, I made my way down the alley and up the stairs. When I let myself in, Sally was there.

"My God," she said. "What happened?"

I told her. She helped me undress and into a warm bath. She bandaged the cuts and made me climb into bed. Never had I known her to be so genuinely sympathetic."

I stayed in bed for two whole days, sleeping a lot and thinking a lot. By the time I felt good enough to get up, I knew what I was going to do. I called a friend and asked him to bring me some clothes, claiming that Sally and I had had a fight. Then I took all the women's clothing down to the incinerator where I could watch them burn, vowing as each garment shriveled and blackened, that if the inclination to wear such a thing ever came over me again, I'd recall this past few days.

That evening, when Sally came home, I told her what I'd done.

"Everything?"

"Everything," I said.

She went out, and in a few minutes was back with my clothes.

I should never have tried playing God," she said.

"I suppose I was playing God myself," I added.

We laughed, kissed, and cried.

"Let's go out for dinner, and to a play," she suggested.

We went, each of us chastened, but also aware of a new life ahead, a new level of understanding, and a new appreciation for each other's worth. From that moment on, I vowed never again to profane the sanctuary of womanhood. However much I might want to be a part of it, to learn its secrets from within, I'd recall the troubles that doing so had brought, and recognize that life must have its mysteries and forbidden places. From that moment on, I'd stand in awe of that line that life draws between the sexes, and cross it not.

.....

So that's his story, is it? In case you are inclined to gullibility, I'm going to add a few words of my own and clear up a thing or two.

First of all, he leads you to believe that all this had its origin in one harmless trick. What he neglects to tell you is that by the time I hid his clothes, I was having to go by myself to about ninety percent of the social activities to which we were invited, while he stayed at home stretching my bras and girdles out of shape, pulling the seams on my dresses, and snagging my stockings. How the big lummoX thought he could squeeze a size 18 into a 12 without my noticing it is beyond me. No, it wasn't just a simple trick — which by itself would have been rather funny — that was bothering me. It was his increasing remoteness and the continually reconfirmed suspicion that my clothes were coming between us.

He would also have you think that he was utterly helpless in all this, that I had succeeded in imprisoning him in dresses, and that there was no escape. True, I did hide his clothes and I did buy dresses and lingerie for him to wear instead, but he was a very willing prisoner. If he had called me that first morning and demanded his clothes, he could have had them. I never intended for it to go beyond a gentle sign to him that we had to start being honest with one another.

And for that reason, I deny categorically having said anything about playing God. You can see for yourself that I didn't force him or lead him to do anything he hadn't already done. I just confronted him with it. I grant you that I was amazed at the speed with which things snowballed, but I certainly didn't contribute any more to the build-up

than a few clothes that would fit — clothes that he'd have stolen if I didn't.

But the biggest correction I have to make is about his burning the clothes and vowing never to wear them again. I don't know when he wrote all this, but it must have been during the week or so of remorse that followed the beating. Within about two weeks, the supposedly incinerated clothes began to make their appearance again, first surreptitiously, and then quite openly. By the end of three weeks, he was back in them on a full-time basis.

No, the real outcome of all of this is that I have traded a husband for a sister. She's out there not, fixing dinner for company. And when dinner comes, she'll be sporting a low-cut gown that will barely cover a set of boobs almost as large as mine — real breasts, not just a little puffiness above a padded bra — thanks to almost two years of hormone shots.

I won't give you all the details; they constitute a story in themselves. He started the shots, without telling me, of course, during the opening week of school. By spring, he was impotent; by summer, he needed a bra. The following fall, he resigned his teaching job and began to work — you guessed it — in a lingerie shop. At this point, he is passing quite easily, having eliminated most of the pseudo-feminine mannerisms that he first effected.

Are we still married, you ask? Legally, he's a man and legally he's my husband. But you'd never suspect. He goes by the name of Beverly, a name his mother thoughtfully gave him, and his appearance is entirely feminine. When we appear together now, we are taken as sisters.

And why don't I divorce him? If the right man comes along, I probably will. For the time being, however, I am content. I don't have somebody always pawing at me, wanting a quick lay. And I do have somebody to take on all the womanly chores I never really liked. He likes to cook and iron and mend and get ready for parties. We go to shows and have friends — mostly new ones — and do all of the things we used to do except make babies. I never expect to find another husband with all those qualities.

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*THE BITTER & THE SWEET OF TV*

Vikki-ILL

I just received my first issue of *Transvestia* and was thoroughly pleased with its entire contents. I have a true story about myself to relate which may be of some interest.

To the best of my recollection, my TVism began 25 years ago at the age of 11 when I was attracted to women's clothes, particularly high heels. At the time and for the next several years, I had no idea what a TV was, had never heard of the term, and really had no second thoughts about my desire to don feminine attire. All through high school I never dated a girl but was content to go around the house (we lived on a farm) wearing high heels, day or night. My mother knew of my desire for these things and I could wear them in front of her but dared not let my father catch me.

After high school I enlisted in the armed forces but never mentioned on my enlistment that I wore women's clothes. I never gave it any thought as there was no question asked that was directly worded this way. Well, anyway, I completed one hitch and re-enlisted for another. It was during the second year of my re-enlistment that it happened. I had been married for about three years and had told my wife after marriage about my desires and she didn't seem to mind. Anyway, the service job required reporting for work around 4 a.m. Being married I could live off-base within the local city.

For several mornings I put on complete female clothing, less make-up, in order to make a few public stops on my way to work. I would go into one of the 24-hour laundromats to make change or stop and get the morning paper from the machines on the street corner. Well, everything went all right for about a week. Then I got real brave and went into the downtown area. There I was right in the middle of the business district, all alone at 4:30 a.m., strutting along the street in sweater, scarf, skirt, and four-inch spike heels. I had stopped to observe a window display when a local police car stopped for a traffic

light. Immediately I froze. I couldn't think of what to do. Of all things, I put one hand to the side of my face and began walking on. This must certainly have been a no-no because the police began tailing me. After about a block they stopped and one got out and began approaching me. I thought, "Oh, hell. I've had it now." He was very polite when he said, "Ma'am, is there anything wrong, do you feel sick?" I said, in a very shaky voice, "No, sir, I'm not a ma'am." The next couple of minutes seemed like ages but this soon came to a screeching halt when he said, "If you're not a woman, would you please come with me to the station?" Naturally, I obliged.

Once inside the station house all pertinent information was exchanged and my first sergeant at the base was notified. While waiting for him I talked to the officer about what would happen to me. They didn't know what the service would do but they said all that the police could do was charge me with disturbing the peace. It didn't take long to ascertain the military point of view toward transvestites within their number. In less than two weeks I was on my way back to the midwest with full pay and an honorable discharge.

For the next 12 years I tried to suppress my TV desires and succeeded to a degree so much so that my wife thought I had "gotten over" the feeling. I went to a trade school and have been with a small business almost 10 years. I might not be writing this account now save the fact that I ran across a magazine dealing with female impersonation. After purchasing said magazine I began realizing that there is evidently quite a bit of this going on. Rapidly I acquired more articles, including several of your books, Virginia. Again I confronted my wife with my TVism. She was hesitant and somewhat frightened at first but now has gained considerable insight into the phenomenon. Her success and acceptance must largely be credited to your book, *The Transvestite and His Wife*.

I would rate her somewhere between the A and B wife. She enjoys seeing me dressed and made-up as a woman and says that her sex life has been greatly enriched due to my dressing. I finally got bold enough to tell my son that I was a TV and even showed him pictures of myself (femme self, that is). He said, "You sure don't look like yourself." That was about all the comment he had to make. He could care less if I want to dress like a girl. Needless to say I was greatly relieved that when the cat was out of the bag nobody cared which way he ran. Also, I have confided in a few close friends and either they are disinterested or genuinely enthused. One girl in particular, my

next-door neighbor, who is also a beautician, has really surprised me with her acceptance. Since she has known that I am a TV, she has given me makeup, jewelry, clothes and a new blow-cut wig from her shop. I can use her shop facilities to dress whenever I wish.

Recently, she, my wife and I went on a TV outing to a local city within an hour's drive from where we live. We took in shopping at different stores and later spent two hours in a cocktail lounge where I was even asked to dance. What a beautiful evening! My success is due largely to your informative publication, Virginia, and should you decide to print the foregoing account, I can only hope that will be of some benefit to other TV's and wives.

WHAT CAN I SAY?

July WI-10-B

What can I say that's not been said
of dressing "femme" from toe to head;
of feeling good; of feeling free;
of loving life; of being me?

What can I say that's fresh, that's new?
What words to use in telling you
of joy, of peace, of calm I feel,
of happiness, of being real?

What can I say? I just don't know.
I wish new words would come to show
my heart, my mind, my inner light,
my smile, my knowing that I'm right.

So here I sit with pen in hand,
perhaps it's best that I should stand
and show, and speak and shout if need
of heart at peace, of spirit freed.



ARTICLE

ALCOHOL & TV

By "Ex-Brenda"

A funny thing happened in my fourth month of total abstinence from alcohol: I lost my interest in transvestitism, after about 50 years of devotion of it. I'm 57 years old now.

The loss occurred about a year ago. The interest has not returned.

I am still dry, or sober rather. Alcoholics make a difference between "dry" and "sober": being dry means simply abstaining from consumption of alcohol; being sober, changing or undergoing a change of perspective and attitude, essentially in one's way of thinking.

One TV acquaintance reacted to my statement of loss of interest by saying I had surrendered to a guilt feeling.

An alcoholism counselor (a woman who has recovered from alcoholism) told me I had matured.

I can speak only for myself in accepting this explanation.

My TV acquaintance, as many other TVs, has accepted her feelings toward TVism as normal expressions of her feminine self whose existence is normal for a balanced personality.

My acquaintance, as others, has found peace of mind in this acceptance of her TVism.

My view of my TVism, however, based on extensive reading and self-examination, is that it has been a symptom of an emotional disturbance.

I am compelled, incidentally, to reject my TV acquaintance's judgment for these reasons. Several months before, I, too, had accepted my situation as normal, came "out of the closet" and felt completely free and at peace with myself for the first time in my life.

This decision was made several months before and several months after I stopped drinking. Then in March 1974 came a return to drinking after four months of abstinence. But after a bad weekend which brought my first arrest for driving under the influence, then a night in which I went strolling in public in TV style, followed by an arrest for public drunkenness (my first) but fortunately not in femme style, I realized I had to stop.

My attitude toward TVism didn't change, however, till about the fourth month after this latest effort to achieve permanent sobriety was initiated. Then I started noticing that I was either too tired or didn't have time to dress.

At the same time I decided to switch jobs. Then I decided to get a haircut, for the sake of the "business image." In news work (which I was in before switching but later returned to), the length of hair doesn't matter. Mine had been growing for about nine months, supplementing my femme posture. The "image," I now suspect, was merely an excuse to do what I had been wanting to do, in withdrawing from TVism.

In the ensuing months, I had occasional revivals of interest in TVism but they weren't strong enough for me to take the trouble to dress up.

About six weeks after changing jobs, I changed again: the restaurant business was not my "bag," as the saying goes — not the business of washing dishes about eight hours a day six days a week. This wasn't what I had signed up for, so I returned to the news business.

By last fall, I had developed an antipathy toward TVism — for myself. I got rid of the femme clothing and the wig. Now on this date when I think of TV, I feel that I'd just as soon seat myself on a red hot stove as dress up again. And I am one who is so intolerant of pain I insist on being given a general anaesthetic before I'll have my hair cut.

I had tried to quit TVism several times before, but each time had been motivated by a sense of guilt. This time last year, however,

wasn't a conscious effort to quit: it was an involuntary loss of interest. The loss of interest was a result of a change of attitude, which, in turn, was a result of the lengthening period of sobriety. I had learned through reading and examination of my personal experience that my TVism had been a symptom of a common disorder: development of antipathy toward males and maleness and over-adulation of females and femininity. This had stemmed from childhood experiences in which I had been rejected by the father, who was undesirable and unadmirable to me but well-loved and cared for by the mother, who was extremely admirable and lovable. Other males I had met in early — and later — youth failed to meet my standards for male conduct.

Reinforcing my attitude toward females was my education in a Catholic boarding school. Sexual morality was stringently defined — even a thought of "taking liberties" with a female is punishable by eternal damnation unless forgiven in the confessional. Girls at the school were strictly off limits to the boys at the school. Ironically, the penalty for being caught in the company of a girl outside of class or a school program was forced transvestitism. Thus was developed the foundation attitude springing from the emotional disturbance described.

The fact of my presence in a boarding school in the first place was evidence of rejection. All this, however, I did not become aware of till later years, starting in the late teens. Still, one puzzle remains: during my teens to early 50's, before my drinking became a problem to the point where it clearly was alcoholism, I drank only occasionally, and was not particularly interested in drinking. Yet during those years my interest in practicing TVism was thriving, and my efforts to quit by exerting sheer will power failed.

A definition of an alcoholic is one whose personality is changed by drinking so that he conducts himself in ways absolutely foreign to those in which he acts when he is sober; he allows alcohol to interfere with some important area of his life — his health, family, or work, or all three; and his drinking is beyond his control, once he starts drinking.

This change in attitude toward TVism is reasonable when one considers the effect of alcohol on the personality: since drinking produces a change in thinking, then abstinence from drinking does the same for the alcoholic. At the same time, however, it must be remembered that drinking does destroy the inhibitions — which explains why I

came "out of the closet" while I was drinking. It doesn't explain why I chose to stay out of the closet (but discreetly) when I sobered. Still, sobriety is not achieved the instant the effects of the last spell of drinking dissipate — for example, 24 hours after the last drink is consumed.

Sobriety, my acquaintances in Alcoholics Anonymous agree, and I have found true from experience, comes gradually. The "return to sanity," as the AA members put it, takes about two years, more or less, though the period may be longer or shorter with each individual. For me, this "return to sanity" meant, among other things, losing a lifetime of interest in TVism, because the emotional disturbance that stimulated it vanished during the lengthening of the period of sobriety. On the other hand, for the TV whose TVism is accepted as a normal aspect of his personality, a "return to sanity" would not change the attitude, since he does not regard his TVism as insanity.

On the other hand again, since I do believe every individual has masculine and feminine characteristics, or elements, some more of one than the other, I believe that for some, TVism is a natural expression of the feminine aspect in the male, and the masculine aspect in the female. For myself, as I said before, in other words, my TVism was an expression of a personality disorder, not of a feminine aspect of my personality. Just as the causes of happiness — and unhappiness — are many, so are the causes of TVism. I know this essay does not provide a complete answer to even one particular case. I do not know that my loss of interest did follow the lengthening of the period of sobriety; and the cause was a change of attitude.

Alcoholism is recognized by the medical profession and victims alike as a treacherous disease with many faces. Consequently the effects of indulgence or sobriety are difficult to interpret. For me, however, drinking and practicing transvestitism were foreign to my true being, I found after searching for a long time. I can live in freedom only if I stay sober. In staying sober, I have discarded TVism. This doesn't mean discarding both frees me from all worries and solves all problems automatically. It does mean I am capable of working effectively and sensibly toward solutions to problems as they arise, instead of collapsing in panic, lying paralyzed in hopelessness, passively awaiting consequences.

I know that I must stay sober to possess this capability. Whether I could possess it while practicing TVism I don't know, since the loss of

interest accompanied the lengthening of the period of sobriety. On the other hand, my TV acquaintance has told me "she" has confidence in herself (has freedom from fear) when she is dressed. What she means is she feels "natural" expressing her feminine self — that her TVism to her is her true being. Consequently, she can cope with her personal problems effectively when she is practicing TVism. She has, she said, found serenity.

Still, she refused to believe that my "resignation" from TVism was anything but surrendering to guilt feelings. I can understand her feeling this way while accepting as valid her own acceptance of TVism as a natural expression of part of her being.

As for my view compared with the others, the situation amounts to the ancient saying: "One man's meat is another man's poison." Or, "To each his own," as the French phrase is translated. To evaluate my TV experience now would take a book. I can say, though, I now have a tolerance and understanding of TV's and, as a by-product, of humans in general that I would not have acquired had I not gone through alcoholism and TVism.

TEE-VEE TIPS

June Daye MA-4-B

When buying women's clothes in second-hand stores, as many of us must do, to avoid the embarrassment of trying them on under the gaze of women shoppers, take a tape measure along, but before you go, measure the inside (NOT the outside) of a jacket or coat or even a dress that fits you, make a note of the size in inches that it measures from the one shoulder seam where the top of the sleeve is sewed on, across the inside of the garment just below the collar, to the other shoulder seam. Also check the sleeve length on the outside from the shoulder seam to the cuff, and the desired waist length from the collar to the bottom of the garment at the center of the back. Armed with these measurements you can buy almost anything in the coat or dress line without trying it on. Just murmur something about your wife being sick, unless you are an old hand at this sort of thing and don't even blush.



Miki-Japan



Ruth - NY



POEM

THE BALLAD OF MARY JANE

By A.J.W.

His mother had been lenient. Of that there was no doubt.
So lenient that young Ronald became a surly lout.
His school grades were atrocious. His manners even worse.
He bullied smaller children. And you should hear him curse.

Then, when he was thirteen, he broke the smoking rule.
A teacher caught him at it. They threw him out of school.
At last his mother understood that lenience seldom pays.
And she became determined to change his roughneck ways.

She said: "I'm filled with heartache by everything you do.
I've found the only answer is to make a Girl of you."
"Oh, no. Not that," he stammered. "You can't do that to me."
"Think not?" his mother answered. "You just wait and see."

He argued and he pleaded but his words were all in vain.
And he was told that from that hour his name was Mary Jane.
His horror was redoubled as she described his fate:
A rigorous course of training to kill each boyish trait.

Next day, she took him shopping for dainty, girlish clothes.
Shoes and frocks and panties . . . wigs and bras and hose.
She made him don these garments before the startled clerks.
Then off to the beautician . . . who gave the lad the works.

By evening, "he" was gone for good and "she" was in his place
With high heels on "her" pretty feet and makeup on "her" face.
The furnace claimed "his" clothing. "Her" room was changed to pink.
What was next, he wondered. He scarcely dared to think.

In fact, had he but known it, this was just the start.
A rigid sense of purpose filled his mother's heart.
Not lightly, she had made the vow that she would never rest
Till Mary Jane was molded into her pretty best.

His mother's plan had many things which left the lad in tears.
She sterilized a needle and then she pierced his ears.
"From now on, you'll wear earrings. Dangling ones of pearl.
Another small reminder that you are now a girl."

She put him into corsets and they were tightly laced.
"Mary Jane, they'll help you achieve a trimmer waist."
And the daily pills she gave him weren't really for his nerves.
They were female hormones to give him shapely curves.

At the same time, they prevented the things his mother feared.
His voice would stay an alto. He'd never grow a beard.
"And when your hair grows longer we'll set it in feminine style.
Then we can throw your wig away but that will take a while."

By fourteen, there was progress. He walked with swaying hips.
And he had learned to apply the makeup to his lovely, rosebud lips.
But still the lad resisted the dreadful change in him.
He longed for rough and manly sports. To box and hunt and swim.

"Please mother, let me be a boy. I've learned my lesson well.
I promise you that I'll behave. Release me from this hell."
"Mary Jane, what nonsense. You look so cute and frilly.
Let you be a boy again? The whole idea is silly."

Knowing she would never yield, he sprawled upon his bed.
Sobbing till his makeup ran and wished that he was dead.
"Don't cry, my little Mary Jane. It's best for you like this.
And some day you will thank me for making you a Miss."

Sometimes, he grew submissive . . . regretted that he'd fought her.
Other times, he felt a rage that he was now a daughter.
His fifteenth birthday present was incredible indeed.
A visit to the clinic of the eminent Dr. Reed.

The grey-haired doctor shoved them in. His offices were plush.
 The hateful words he had to say made the young lad flush.
 "I think we can be helpful. After we make tests,
 I'll do an operation to give him girlish breasts."

The frightened youth was thunderstruck. And later, on his knees,
 Implored his tight-lipped mother to reconsider . . . please.
 "Oh, mother, have some mercy. Spare your only son.
 Do not let them do this thing which cannot be undone."

"You'll always be my Mary Jane. Accept it without sorrow.
 The doctor has it all arranged. It's scheduled for tomorrow.
 "Now, let's remove the padding from your bras of lacy mesh.
 In no time, you'll be filling them with lovely, living flesh."

Next day, the lad got pretty mounds where none had been before.
 A bosom that was his for life. He'd wear it ever more.
 The sutures out, the doctor said: "Now, that's a gorgeous bust.
 It makes him ultra-feminine. You're pleased with it I trust."

"And for your information. There's much more that we can do.
 We can complete the transformation. The choice is up to you."
 The lad's mind reeled in horror. What a price to pay.
 What was his mother thinking? What would his mother say?

He let out a huge sigh of relief when she said from where she sat:
 "Thank you very much, doctor, but we have no plans for that."
 At sixteen, he went back to school but this time he wore curls
 Which really was consistent . . . it was a school for girls.

When the semester started, it was rather weird.
 In Mary Jane's self-image male pronouns disappeared.
 In no time, "she" just loved "her" school. For somehow it seemed right.
 "She" trotted off each morning and came home every night.

What's more, to please "her" mother, "she" played it very prudent.
 This time she worked very hard to be a model student.
 Her efforts were rewarded. For out of sixty maids,
 the former roughneck failure achieved the highest grades.

Best of all, her schoolmates liked this smiling lass
 And voted friendly Mary Jane the "most popular girl" in class.
 She revelled in her happiness. She was confident and calm
 Until some of her classmates dropped the atom bomb.

"Oh, mother, tell me what to do. I hope I'm in a trance.
The girls got me a blind date for the Christmas dance."
Her mother's answer floored her: "It's time you met some men.
We'll get a swishy, frou-frou gown from seamstress Agnes Glenn."

"Mother, are you crazy. I can't go out with Earl.
He will quickly fathom that I am not a girl."
"Look in that mirror, Mary Jane, and tell me what you see.
There's not a trace of your true sex. You're womanly as can be.

"Of course, you must be cautious but you needn't be a prude.
If you're begged for a 'goodnight' kiss, I hope you won't be rude."
This counsel from her mother left Mary Jane just furious
Until she mulled it over and then she got quite curious.

Mightn't it be thrilling to feel a strong embrace?
And what about a moonlight kiss? Would her pulses race?
Soon she had her "coming out" in a gown of blue chiffon.
And this sassy Miss with long blond hair turned the young man "on."

The bachelors started calling. Her phone rang all the day.
In a kindly manner, she turned most of them away.
The few who caught her fancy felt all at once like kings.
Dates with little Mary Jane were rare and precious things.

"Mary Jane, my darling, I've loved you from the start.
Unless you say you'll be mine, you'll surely break my heart."
"Why, Randolph, I'm so flattered. You're the handsomest boy in town.
But I can't take your college ring. I'm too young to settle down."

.....

Now Mary Jane is eighteen. Her life's a social whirl.
She seldom remembers her early years. She thinks now like a girl.
What is in her future? Time will make that plain.
And maybe there'll be a second part to the "Ballad of Mary Jane."



TRUE STORY

UNFORGETTABLE INCIDENT

Beverly-CA

Neither my "brother" nor I ever pick up a hitch-hiker, but . . .

My brother travels all of northwest California as an outside salesman. With a brother in such a situation, that is away from home a good bit, many opportunities are available to do that thing we like best and to "be" that which we all dream of.

It was on one of these trips that this incident, strange but true, occurred. Brother has traveled this territory for so many years that he became tired of motels and restaurants and, of course, the parting of the curtains, wondering where the room service maid was, and wondering if anyone would associate that fellow who had registered, with the girl who came and went from the room. So, possessing a very nice and most complete travel trailer, he started using it as a motel, restaurant and mobile dressing room. The restfulness and enjoyment of tooling down the road in those long stretches between populated areas in a chic pants outfit or in a sports dress, became a tranquilizer supreme. While on one of these interludes, it happened and became indelible in my memory.

Upon returning over the long miles from way up north to home base, I had stopped in a small town off the freeway for brunch. Resuming my journey after a "Thank you, come again, ma'am," I started to enter the freeway and noticed two things. First and most evident, was the long climb to the top of a hill that would require second and possibly low gear from my slow start. Second, I saw a young man with a small satchel at the side of the road with his right thumb in the air. He was dressed in levi's, dark turtle neck sweater, warm jacket and desert boots. The long, high hill meant that very few would interrupt

their high speed journey to pick up a foot traveler in this low spot. Feeling a twinge of concern, I rapidly evaluated the roadsider. Clean cut, very neat, no beard, short cropped hair, dressed nicely, no hippy pack or sleeping bag or dog, so, why not?

He entered the pickup cab with a "Thank you, ma'am, I began to think no one would ever stop," the words being spoken in a soft, throaty voice.

After the trial of getting up the steep hill from a standing start, I asked, "What is your destination?" The reply, "Back home in the L.A. area. I came up here for a few days to visit some of my college friends."

Following a few moments of chit chat on college and his friends, I advanced, "Since you are still in school, what is your major?" The answer, "Psychology," rather stopped me for a moment. I thought to myself, this could be most interesting so I introduced myself, "Since we seem to have found a mutual interest, I am Beverly Cousins. Call me Bev if you like." After a little chuckle, he replied in that low, throaty voice, "My friends all call me Tony." So "Tony" and "Bev" it was for many a mile.

The chatter evolved from one type of psychology to another until I learned that his special interest was child psychology. This developed a further line of discussion and I asked if he had gotten into the psychology of behavior yet, and particularly if he had been confronted by a person who insisted, or dreamed, that they were not what they really were, but were playing a role as someone else, even to the sex opposite to that which they were born. I was going to be an opportunist and see what came next. Tony's reply was that he wasn't sufficiently advanced into the full course and hadn't had any direct experience with such a person, but, just the thought of meeting someone like that might prove most interesting. I tried to work the conversation into what might be the background or environment of such a person and what might be the motive or the feeling of gain behind such a projection. This didn't produce much comment from Tony except that he felt that the feelings and actions of a person of that type would be most interesting to observe, evaluate and try to determine the cause.

By this time many miles had gone by in such a seemingly short span of time that I suggested there was a quite nice roadside cafe up

ahead where I normally stop for a salad and coffee, shall we? As we stopped and parked, Tony jumped out, ran around the truck and opened my door. My, I thought, such a courteous young man! This repeated as we entered the cafe. He went first, help open the door and waited for me to enter. I was elated to be treated as such a lady.

Due to an urge that results from many miles, I excused myself with the usual, "I have to go and powder my nose. Would you please find us a table?" Tony's reply was a short, "I had better make a little trip, too." As I entered the powder room, I noticed that he was right on my heels and even held the door for me again. Since I try so hard to really "be" completely Beverly, I could not help sincerely blushing and stammering, "But, this is the ladies room!" "I know," said Tony, and followed me right on in. Silently we each performed our toilet and adjourned quickly to the lunch room.

Seated at a table and still blushing a bit, I ventured, "Tony, what is this? You have the appearance of a young, clean-cut and well-mannered man and yet you followed me right into the powder room as if it were second nature." The chuckling, low reply was, "When I travel as a hitch hiker, I find that I have better luck dressed as I am now dressed. My real name is Barbara, but all my friends call me Tony."

I must admit to being terrifically surprised and a little chagrined in my "being" Beverly so sincerely all this time, and still be so wholly taken in and, pure and simple, fooled completely. After the initial shock wore off, I was overjoyed that it had happened to me. Our lunch and the discussion of his/her confession was strictly out of this world. As we resumed our journey, Tony/Barbara was still glancing at me and smiling.

For many long years it has been my firm resolve never to reveal my born self to anyone unless that person is one of us or is acceptable to me and knows what this thing really is. This incident and its surprises was just too much for me, though, so as we were entering the freeway again, I turned to Tony/Barbara and said, "In the cafe you really shocked me with your disclosure so I feel a confession is in order. Very frankly, I am not what I appear to be, either!" My statement was followed by a short silence and a searching look from my companion. "My God," he/she stated, "I would never have thought otherwise if you hadn't told me." My stupidity of a few moments before was now neatly salved by this nice compliment.

Needless to say, the conversation became quite lively and was then turned around as I was quizzed from A to Z as to what this was, how did it come about, what happens and what lift did I get out of doing my thing. The chatter was most open and delightful to say the least.

The conclusion of this story came a number of miles later when I was about 40 miles from home base and really didn't dare to enter home territory in the state that I had been in for most of the day. As we left the freeway to go to a large shopping center parking lot, I asked my companion if she would care to give me about 30 minutes to make a hocus-pocus change and then go on with me to the end of my journey. "Sure thing," she said. "I should call me mother and let her know where I am." Since the trailer was well-equipped, we had a highball toast to those who weren't really what they appeared to be, then she left to make her phone call. Later as I came out of the bathroom, her comment was, "If I hadn't really been part of it and hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I wouldn't have believed it," after being confronted with my born self in a business suit and tie.

I swear, on a whole stack of girdles, panty hose and all those other unmentionables, that this was a true incident, and also hope beyond hope that I can experience and survive many more equally as exciting.

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GILBERT IS GONE — OBITUARY

T.V.'s are mortals like anyone else. However, the passing away of Gilbert also known as "Nancy," and in later years, "Jane," is a great loss to the TV community and needs recognition.

This well-known and well-read TV author died last spring at age 75, after having gradually lost his eyesight during the last 12 months and finally succumbed to a severe coronary.

Gilbert of course is widely known for his "Pink Mirror" distributed by *TVia* and the complete "Leslie" series published by others. I guess there are few TV's who have not read at least one of his titillating petticoat stories.

His pen name originated and was actually the name of the late artist who illustrated Nancy's stories in the earlier years. Nancy claimed to have corresponded with more than 400 TV's here and abroad. He was mentioned in Raynor's book, *Year Amongst the Girls*. He continued active as an author and correspondent until his eyesight forced him to give up his private apartment.

I did not meet Nancy until five years ago when our mutual hobby of writing and collecting TV fiction stories brought us in contact. In those five years we became close friends and I admired Nancy as a kind, gentle, and well-educated, all-around-person. A "giver" rather than a "taker," he made many friends. His ability as a seamstress enabled him to be generous with handmade clothes. I was fortunate to inherit his entire collection of stories, including many still unpublished. His last 300-page, illustrated tale, *The Kidnapping and Feminisation of Robert*, is a classic. Every one of his stories is clean and delicate and of course deals mainly with petticoat punishment or forced dressing. Nancy will be sorely missed. His stories will live on forever.



CASE NUMBER 481

Linda

My name is Thunder, Jerry Thunder. I'm a private eye. Most of my cases are the usual types; robberies, kidnapings, muggings, assaults, etc.

But my latest case, my four hundred eighty-first, was anything but commonplace.

It started June first, when this beautiful handful of chic comes walking into my office. She was all business.

It turned out that her fiance had been missing for about two weeks. She wanted me to try to find him. Miss Matson, as her name turned out to be, told me they were to be married in two weeks.

I hesitated a moment, but then she pulled out five hundred bucks from her purse. I quickly said I'd take the job.

I started by checking her fiance Jennings' apartment, where he lived alone.

The first thing I noticed was that half the closet, and the shelf above it, was full of dresses, blouses, skirts, high-heels, wigs, purses, etc. At the time I didn't give them much thought. I assumed they were Miss Matson's.

Then I found a paper near the phone. On it was a number I recognized as that of a small hotel downtown. I decided it was worth checking on.

When I got to the hotel there wasn't anyone at the desk. I rang the little bell and waited. A tall brunette came out of the office.

"Have you seen this man?" I asked, showing her a picture of Jennings and my badge.

"No. And we don't like dicks around here. Why don't you just leave?" she answered coldly, as two big thugs came out.

Well, I didn't want any trouble, so I just turned and left.

Later I decided that I had hardly left, and the two thugs had gone back into the office, when the brunette turned and walked down the corridor. She stopped several doors down and, opening the door, went in.

Inside, a fairly good-looking blond chic was sitting at the desk.

"There was a private dick outside just now. He had a picture of you and was asking questions. I got rid of him."

"I didn't think my fiance would go to the trouble of hiring a private eye to find me. I figured she'd just assume I changed my mind about our getting married," said the new chic.

"Well she did hire one. Name's Jerry Thunder," said the brunette, who was also the manager. "Anyway, it's time for your hormone shot and more lessons."

She then proceeded to give the blond a shot of female hormones. Then the brunette started the lessons in makeup, dress and mannerisms, etc.

The next day, my third on the case, I drove back to my office. I called Miss Matson. I told her about the events of the previous day. Then I asked her if the clothes in Jennings' apartment were her's. When she said no, I was more than a little puzzled.

I went back to Jennings' apartment to look around again. This time I found a box of papers. I rummaged through them. I found a slip of paper with the hotel's name, address, phone number and a room number.

Then I found a couple of pictures of a familiar lookin' blonde.

I then checked the sizes on the various clothes. I checked the sizes of the female clothing and the male clothing and found they corresponded almost exactly.

When I got back to the office, I began to realize why the blonde had looked familiar. On a hunch I compared the blonde's picture, which I had taken, with Jennings' photo. There definitely was a resemblance. The likeness of the two photos, the slip of paper and the similarity in sizes between the male and female clothes began to prey on my mind. Could what I was thinking really be true?

I decided to go back to the hotel and check on my hunch. First, though, I checked my .38 magnum to be sure it was fully loaded. I hoped I wouldn't need it, but if I did I didn't want to run out of ammo after a couple of shots.

I went back to the hotel, and, the desk being unmanned, I went to the room number on the slip of paper. I knocked on the door.

A pleasant feminine voice called out, "Come in."

I opened the door and saw the blonde in the photos sitting there.

"Mr. Thunder, I presume?" she queried?

"Yes. And I presume that you're Neil Jennings?" Yes, that was my hunch, crazy as it seems. Jennings and the blonde were the same person!

"Yes, Mr. Thunder, I'm Neil Jennings. Although I'm known as Cathy Jennings now. But how did you figure all this out?" she replied.

"Between your "before" and "after" photos, that slip of paper and the clothes, it wasn't too difficult," I replied.

"If you'll sit down and join me for a drink, Mr. Thunder, I'll explain everything," she said.

I agreed.

"I've always admired females," she began. "So much so that I decided that that was the type of life I'd like to live. So I went out and purchased a whole wardrobe of wigs, dresses, shoes, etc. At first I just dressed on weekends. Before I go on though, let me say that I'm straight, I just like to dress and act like a woman. I met Jan, Miss Matson, shortly after my decision. We dated and then I asked her to marry me. As you know, she accepted.

"But two weeks ago, I suddenly woke up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat. As I sat in bed and pondered why I had awakened, the answer came to me. My male life and its stresses was getting to be too much. So I decided to start living full-time as a female. I knew I'd need help for this. I also knew Jan would never go along with, or understand, it.

"So, I packed most of my female clothes and moved into this hotel room. I talked my plan over with Pat, the manager . . ."

"The tall brunette?" I interrogated.

"Yes. As I was saying, I talked my plan over with Pat and she asked me to let her help me. I agreed.

"So my training as a female began. Pat got hold of a doctor friend of hers to give her female hormones for me, in pre-prepared doses which she then gives me.

"The hormones will help give me a full bust, rounder hips, smooth skin and help soften my voice. As you can see, the hormone treatments are taking effect. My breasts are getting bigger, my hips are rounding out, and my voice is softer, more feminine.

"Pat also instructs me in walking, talking, makeup, dress, hair care, mannerisms, etc. And as you can see, my dress, makeup and mannerisms are completely feminine.

"You can understand why I couldn't explain to Jan. She would have died from shock, let alone being broken-hearted."

"Of course I can understand. But Miss Matson will have to be told. I have to report my findings to her. There's no way around it," I answered.

I then left her room through the window. In the morning I got down to the office and then called Jan Matson. I asked her to come in that afternoon so I could give her all the information I had gathered with regard to the case.

When she got to the office, I told her to have a seat. I then proceeded to tell her about her fiance's new life. I could tell as I went on that she was getting more and more shocked.

I asked if she wanted me to set up a meeting between Jennings and her, but she was still rather shocked and declined. I drove her home and then went back to the office.

I called Cathy and told her of my meeting with her ex-bride-to-be. She had figured it right. We decided that it was best that they call the marriage off, at least for the time being. I agreed to bring Miss Matson to the hotel room the next afternoon.

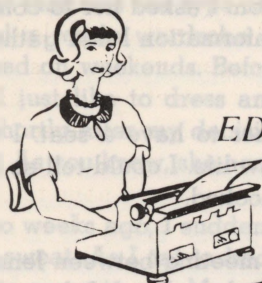
I managed to get Jan Matson to the hotel room about one o'clock the next afternoon.

Cathy greeted Jan warmly. Jan seemed to be rather amazed that this good-looking blonde was really her fiance.

I started to leave, but Cathy asked me to stay awhile. Jan soon began to realize that this was how her would-be husband wanted to live. After a while, she also realized that she still loved Cathy as a person and that they could remain friends.

I then excused myself, as my job was over. Later I learned that they hadn't been married, but were living together as "sisters" in Cathy's apartment. I could hardly believe all this had really happened. It was certainly a bizarre ending to what had started out as a routine missing person case. It was truly my most unusual case.

P.S. If you're ever in Chicago and need a private eye, look me up. I'm listed in the phone books.



EDITORIAL EMANATIONS

Virginia

I decided to put this editorial comment section in the middle of the magazine instead of at the end. In this way I hope you will all read it which I don't think has been the case in the past. This is the only place I can communicate with you collectively about things important to the magazine.

I. BELATED THANKS: This is the first issue that has been put together since my return from the long trip last year so it is the first time I've had the opportunity to express my collective thanks to those of you who sent me Xmas cards. I don't have the time to answer all cards and I gave up trying to send them out myself some years ago, but I do appreciate the thought on the part of those of you who sent them and I do want to acknowledge them even in this general and somewhat impersonal way. Again thanks.

II. INCREASING COSTS: *TVia* is no more immune to the ravages of inflation than anything else. Typography, printing, binding, postage have all increased. I am very reluctant to increase the cost of *TVia* since I know you are having a harder time than previously finding the \$5 for it. However, since Chevalier is one of my few sources of income there has to be an adequate spread between cost and price or it isn't worth the effort. The only way to counteract the reduction of that spread and still retain the price is to sacrifice some quality or some pages. As this is the first issue put together completely with the new printer, bindery and postage costs I have to wait and see how it works out. But there are a couple of things that can be done; 1) The magazine is presently "square" bound which is much more expensive than "saddle stitched" which is the way the separate stories are bound, but it is also much better looking. I would

like to continue it but I may have to resort to the other type of binding to save more. 2) The magazine looks much more professional when the text is even on the right side as well as the left, but computer typesetting is also much more expensive than just typing, so I may have to resort to just typing and eliminating the justified right margins. 3) I could also eliminate one-half a folio of pages.

I don't want to do any of these things, but I may have to in order to stay in business. However, there are things you can do to help if you enjoy this magazine and want to see it continue. 1) You could buy back issues when you are waiting for the next new one. I have a continuous inventory of about \$8,000 in stock, which, if I could realize some of it, would give me some capital to put into new stories which we very badly need. The back issues are just as interesting as the current ones and you could have something come more often that way. We still have almost all issues since #61 with just a few blanks, tho there are others that don't have too many left. We also have a number of issues prior to #61 which we bought back from subscribers and which are available for \$6 each so that you could complete your collection if you are missing any issues. If you don't have some particular issue we do maintain a rental stock of all issues for which you send us \$6 and we credit or refund you \$3 upon its return.

2) You could refrain from loaning or sharing your copies with others who are too cheap to buy them themselves and tell them to subscribe directly. I can understand their motivation particularly in hard times and I can understand the generosity of those who loan, but it is coming down to an issue of the survival of *Transvestia* and if it doesn't survive, there won't be anything to loan out.

I've tried to make this magazine from the beginning a forum for your contributions, comments and participation. Moreover, I've tried to keep it dignified so that if it were inadvertently left on the coffee table and seen by an unaware individual there wouldn't be anything in it that you'd be ashamed of having to explain. Thus you don't see, semi-nude and lingerie pictures here, you don't find personal ads for various types of sexual activity; you don't find ads for other books or magazines with "sexy" titles or themes; you don't find ads for goods or services that are "far out" in one way or another. You can find all those things and more in every other publication on the market so those that want them need not be disappointed. But there

needs to be one publication for the heterosexual cross dresser that is dignified, clean, and educational as well as entertaining. Don't get me wrong, I'm not prudish and I'm not against sex in any form that two consenting people want it, but I have always been dedicated to the idea that the public doesn't know or understand us and that efforts must be made to acquaint them with the subject. When this is done or attempted to be done in publications that cater to and provide for a lot of other points of view or which present the subject in a "sexy" way it only serves to perpetuate the ignorance and antagonism that we have all had to deal with for so long.

So if you agree with these points of view and want to see *TVia* continue please support it and urge any new sisters that you happen to meet to subscribe to it.

III. BACK IN THE GROOVE: I believe that I sent out a note to all of you with Issue #85 apologizing for the extremely long hiatus between #84 and #85. I had prepared #85 and #86 completely and left them with my former printer with instructions to get them ready for an Aug. 1 and Oct. 1 mailing. In spite of numerous letters from abroad he had done absolutely nothing by the time I got back in Sept. So I had to dig him continuously to get #85 out in late November. I changed printers and we finally got #86 out in February. Due to the first printer's failure I was out of almost all of the separate stories so that they all had to be reprinted too which further slowed things down. So now finally here is #87 put together in February. I'm very sorry for the foul-up.

IV. POSTAL HELP: Please don't overlook adding the 10% to your order for shipping costs. This does not, in most cases, pay all the cost but it cuts it back to a bearable percentage about where it used to be in the good old days.

V. MATERIAL: I am very aware that you would like and I would like to produce some new long separate stories. There have been two problems; lack of money to do so and lack of good material to print. I can't ask you for the former except in the way of subscriptions, but good material we always need. I don't have any more than just enough to make up #88 so if you want to see *TVia* continue you've got to come up with something to fill it. Let's have some interesting true experiences like Beverly's "Unforgettable Experience" in this issue and some commentary articles, and some good histories, and

some good poems, and some good fiction and some good....how about it?

VI. YOU CAN'T PLEASE THEM ALL DEPT.: In this issue you have the first half of my trip report, next time the rest. Some of you don't think I should waste space on things not directly involved with *TVia* such as travel reports. But others of you tell me that these are among the most interesting material in *TVia*. So this report is for the latter group and the former can close the mag. when they get to page 70.

VII. DREAM 1976: I hope you will all read twice the ad for Dream 76 on page 35. It is far enough in advance for you to plan on being there. It will be an experience unlike anything you've ever had before even if you are used to going out. I was there in '74, missed it last year on account of the trip and if all goes well, will be there this year. If you plan on it now you can save the money and arrange the time.

VIII. PRICE CHANGES: I am sorry to have to raise the prices of some of the merchandise that we list in the price list. But there is little else I can do. The inserts have nearly doubled in price since 1973 and the oil crisis. That makes the bras go way up, too. However, in a store yesterday, I priced some just plain bras and found a lot of them at \$7.50 and \$8 so we are not out of line. Foam plastic has risen about 25 percent recently so that too had to be adjusted.

IX. YOUR SUGGESTIONS PLEASE: I am thinking of putting together a volume of the most useful and helpful material which has appeared in *TVia* over the years. Since it is never possible to evaluate the effects of something you have written on someone else, I am asking your help. I would appreciate your thinking back over the Virgin Views editorials (or any other articles) that have appeared in these pages over the years and that you found particularly instructive or helpful to you. If you've been helped by my efforts please spend a few minutes running back over old issues and let me know what you think should be included. In this way you can pass on some of the help you've received to others who may need it.

Along these lines, is there some particular area of the cross-dressing phenomenon that you would like to see discussed at length? If so, let me know. If it seems interesting enough for a lot of people I'll try to get it together.

"Dear
Editor"



LETTERS

Dear Virginia and Jeannie,

I got *Pink Mirror* in the mail today and it made me realize that I hadn't written to you to give my permission for third class mailing. So here it is: O.K. You have my permission to mail *TVia* to me third class, parcel post, Greyhound package express, anyway you want just so you ship it.

I do have an excuse for not letting you know sooner. I got the issues you sent (thanks for the ones I'd missed) and saw the articles on *Dream* and the ad in 84 and wrote to Marilyn — that was the first week of August. I got the information and began trying to arrange time off and financing so I could attend. I literally had to fight to get to go and wasn't sure I could till Sept. 4 — that's cutting it close. I was one busy girl before going.

And one dazed girl after coming back. What an experience!!! The pace was hectic! Never enough sleep, never enough time to do anything — I loved every bloodshot-eyed minute of it! *And the people!!!* I had never met a TV before *Dream* (I had never done anything except dress in my bedroom) and to meet 60 of them at once — and all so *nice* too — was mind-blowing!! Add to them the "straights" I met, and was so glad to have met, and it was just overwhelming! It's taken me this long to pull my head together enough to start handling day-to-day things properly. (I'm glad my job is so routine; I hate to think what would have happened if I had had to think about what I was doing.) Only one thing marred the experience and that was that a woman whom I was looking forward to meeting couldn't make it — she was in Samarkand or someplace, too far to commute.

Her name was Virginia (ah, you guessed). Oh well, maybe next year — or have you booked a tour of the Mountains of the Moon, and I mean the ones *on* the moon, not the ones of earthly fame.

That's all folks,

Renee

* * * * *

Dear Virginia:

Please feel free to print this in *TVia* if you see fit.

As I recall, the first time I femme-dressed was about at the age of 10 years or so, when I tried on one of my mother's slips and really liked the feel, later on I began wearing articles of my mother's and older sister's clothing. I've always preferred skirts or dresses, never slacks. I continued dressing occasionally throughout my childhood at irregular intervals. I do remember as a child wondering why I wasn't born a girl and hated participating in boys' games until I was older. At 14 years I was initiated into high school. On initiation day my older sister as an upper classman dressed me in her cheerleader's dress and shoes with makeup, a scarf on my head, and sent me to school. I received much teasing that day, but secretly enjoyed every minute of the school day.

I was discovered wearing a slip and bra while home alone one day at the age of 16, by an older GG cousin. However, she never told anyone and only seemed amused at the time. My femme dressing continued throughout my school years with me envying the girls at school when they wore something I liked. My dressing was somewhat curtailed during my service years with the exception of the time in Japan when I was able to dress in the company of an understanding GG girl friend. I located in California in 1963 and lived with a good friend and his wife for a time. I couldn't resist wearing her clothes while alone and finally told her of my secret. She was very understanding and even selected clothes of hers that fit me and helped me to learn to use makeup properly and how to don a wig, etc. One evening while alone she consented to take me for a drive in her car while femme-dressed (the first time out as Barbara). It was thrilling to say the least. In 1964, I met and married the GG

who is now my wife. Unfortunately I failed to tell her about Barbara Ann as I thought I could do without my other half being married. I soon found after a few months I was wrong and started dressing as often as possible in secret using her clothing. I soon collected a wardrobe of my own and not long after, my wife found my femme clothing. We had a bad scene, she didn't understand and we separated for a time. As I loved her very much I promised to try and quit, which I did for only a short time. I was found out again about a year later and my wife threatened divorce, insisted I see a psychiatrist, which I did, and not to my surprise he informed me he didn't see any hope of curing me, and spent a few sessions trying to help me accept Barbara as a permanent part of my life without the guilt I was feeling, he also suggested counseling for both of us, but my wife refused and so the matter was dropped and I have never had the courage to bring it up again.

As to the present, my wife and I have had a good marriage with the exception of my being able to share Barbara Ann with her. I have recently been accepted into the Sorority and now I feel with the help of God and the friendship of other FPs I will be able to express my femmeself as I've wanted to all these years. I do so appreciate your efforts with *TVia* magazine and the maintaining of the Sorority all these years. I would be glad to help any other FP I could in any way possible.

Sincerely,

Barbara Ann

* * * * *

Dear Virginia,

Let me start this letter by saying that I've read your book called *The Transvestite and His Wife*. I found this book to be very enlightening, as I myself have been a transvestite ever since I was nine years old. I think the reason for my being such may be attributed to the fact that my step-mother made me dress up with my step-sister and play "house." I remember at first I objected strenuously to this, but after a while I came to look forward to "my weekend" where I could be myself and function as I really and truly wanted to. Soon I began "dressing" myself all of the time.

I found that when I wore "my" own "clothes," I could be my complete self. I didn't get so nervous anymore and I began to understand the true meaning of self-understanding.

Finally, after about three years I became worried. When I would slip into something comfortable at bedtime I would always find myself looking back over my shoulder. This went on until I was about 14 when my father caught me wearing my step-mother's negligee. He became so furious that I was scared to death. He didn't understand me or my reasons for doing such an "unholy" thing. For about a month after, he made me wear a skirt and lipstick when I was home. Deep inside I was very happy, but on the outside where my emotions lay, I was slowly turning into a nervous wreck.

Well, after a few turns of events, my father put me in a home for children from underprivileged homes. I spent two and one-half years in one. During that time, I went almost mad because I didn't have a way to release. At first I thought I might be able to forget about it altogether, but that was an impossibility even for one as hard-headed as myself. I could never get it off of my mind.

When I turned 17 I enlisted in the U.S. Army so I could get away from my family and old memories. This was in 1966. In 1968 I went to Korea where I met the most wonderful woman ever to enter my life. Soon after we were married. About six months after we were married I ran out of clean shorts. My wife said not to worry, but to wear a pair of her panties that day. Suddenly all of my old memories rushed upon me all at once. Being half embarrassed and half happy I went ahead and wore her panties. After that I began dressing quite often. My wife, not quite understanding, thought that I was "funny." I went ahead and explained to her that I had been doing this thing for years.

She accepted me as I was, no questions asked.

Soon after she persuaded me to wear some of her dresses in front of her sister, cousins, and daughters, who by the way, are all girls. Well, surprisingly enough, they too thought I was cute and even went so far as to buy me my own small wardrobe. You can't imagine my joy. I stayed in Korea 19 months and I am presently stationed state-side. I am also very lonely, because I would like to meet some friends like myself.

I am really relatively new at this because I hadn't done this sort of thing for so long. I would be overjoyed if I could meet someone like myself.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Yvonne

* * * * *

Dear Virginia and Jeanne,

My wife and I have just finished *The Transvestite and His Wife*, and may I say that if I accomplish anything half so meaningful in my lifetime, as I believe you have with this book, I feel it would have been a meaningful existence, to say the least.

Finding you marks a new metamorphosis for me and so, though a long time in coming, I have taken a name.

For what I've been though and for what I have yet to go through in order to realize my whole self — thank God I now know you are there. I don't wish to take up more of your understandably precious time, but this much I had to say.

Most affectionately,

Shelly

P.S. In a *Penthouse* Forum letter a reader suggested your book and gave the address of Chevalier Publications. We had no idea what it would lead to when we hurried to order it.

* * * * *

My Dearest Virginia,

Please excuse these opening words, but I almost feel as if I am writing to the big sister I always longed for but never had. Your book, *The Transvestite and His Wife*, has caused Franny to finally be re-born after 21 years of secret cross-dressing. My wife Jan's family are

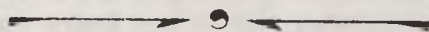
Roman Catholics of the old school. I love my wife very much and just never could bring myself to fully reveal my secret femininity to her.

About eight months ago, though, I finally got the courage to reveal myself to her. As could be expected, the roof fell in on me and I thought our happy marriage would come to an end. Then in early August I happened to pick up a copy of *Sexology* at the local drug store. In it was a letter from the wife of a fellow TV telling about your wonderful book and urging other wives to read it.

Needless to say, I sent for it and gave it to my wife. She has only read about half of it so far, but it has been the dawn of a new day for me. Jan isn't an "A" wife yet but she shows all the signs of eventually becoming one.

Yours truly,

Franny



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Hello everybody! It's nice to be writing to and for you again. You see #85 and #86 were put together before I left on my long trip last June as I had left instructions with the printer to have #85 ready for shipment Aug. 1 and #86 on Oct. 1. Result — he didn't do a damn thing until I got home in September and then delayed and made excuses for still another six weeks. So, as most of you know, you didn't get #85 till late in November and #86 in January. But we have a new printer now — started with 86 and I hope we can keep things under control from here on. So you want to know what I did with myself last summer? You don't? You don't give a — ? Well YOU go and read the funny paper while I tell the others all about it and I'll see YOU in #88.

Way back in June I took off on the big adventure. Sat night with the Chi chapter people in Chicago for an interesting evening with 12 or 15 of the girls and a few wives. Next day to Detroit for a get-together with a few of the girls trying to put the Beta chapter back together again after one of the former members had blown it apart. Monday into New York for a week while I tried to find an agent to handle a book I have written (not about TV) and visits in person and by phone with friends in the area. On Friday, Nancy, who had kindly put me up all week drove me out to JFK to board the big bird and we were off — for Ireland. Since I was on an around-the-world fare it didn't cost any more to stop in various places before and after the tour proper, so I went to Ireland first.

Took a three-day tour around southern Ireland to all those places I've heard about and never seen — Cork, Kilarney, Shannon, Limerick, etc. Had a marvelous evening at an Irish singing bar in Kilarney. We sang every song I've ever heard and a few new ones. Then a flight



Atop Blarney Castle - Ireland



Peter the Great's Palace - Petrovets -
Leningrad, USSR



Aboard
Cruiser
Aurora
Leningrad
USSR

to Dublin and a meeting with Alga, one of the founders and president of the British Beaumont Society. She had a half dozen Irish colleens and several wives over for the evening and once again I found that FPs are pretty much alike wherever you find them.

Next to London, my favorite city, for a week. It started with a party in my honor by two of the local groups of Beaumont members; lectures to two London hospital groups; a couple of interviews; my usual subway tours and general visiting. Nice visit with Cover Girl who does a very good business with Chevalier merchandise all over the world. She has a fantastic mail order business and all kinds of things for cross-dressers. Any of you going to London should make a point of a visit to her shop. If you aren't planning a trip you could write for her catalog to 95 Upper St., Islington, London. I think the catalog is \$2 to cover printing and mailing but it is applied to your first order. I even managed to collect payment for a radio appearance I did two years ago, persistent little witch, aren't I? Had an evening and dinner with Sylvia, the other founder and former secretary of Beaumont. She cooks a mean taragon chicken. I also managed finally to take the trip up the Thames to Hampton Court which I've missed every other time I was there, certainly a beautiful trip.

Flew to Stockholm on a Saturday morning for the pleasure of attending a marvelous party put on by Maryann, one of the Swedish girls that I had met on previous trips. An usual with Swedish parties, lots of toasts with about five different kinds of drinks and all different kinds of people. The Swedes and Danes seem to take everybody and everything at face value.

Fortunately the date of the party coincided with my schedule so I could take it in — it wasn't in any way a party for me, though a nice tribute to my past efforts was given. But early the next morning it was off to Helsinki to start the trip. There I teamed up with the woman who was my roommate for the rest of the trip. I only had time on Sunday afternoon to take a trolley ride downtown and walk around a bit since I didn't arrive til the middle of the afternoon. So next morning the real trip began as we took off for Leningrad. Arriving there we were met by an Intourist guide, put in a taxi and sent off to the Europa Hotel in the city.

The hotel was an old building but well kept up. I couldn't believe the room(s) assigned to us. They were in the corner and the suite consisted of a living room complete with radio and television which led

into a sort of a large boudoir-dressing room, leading in turn to a large bedroom which led in turn to a bathroom with a door back into the living room. It was all furnished with the eriod-type furniture that you usually see in palaces — gold-striped furniture and blue and white walls. Hardly consistent with the concept of stark and severe Communist living. But that was only the first of many inconsistencies, incongruities and misconceptions that I ran into in Russia. For example, there were a lot of small boats with outboard motors tied up along one of the canals. With typical American preconceptions based on ignorance and anti-Russian propaganda. I commented to the guide that I supposed these belonged to Communist party big-wigs. "Certainly not," the girl guide said, "they belong to ordinary workers." I thought that was probably propaganda too and resolved to satisfy myself. Later in the week I went for a survey tour of the biggest department store in the city and finally found — you guessed it — a fibreglass boat for 900 rubles and an outboard motor for 500 rubles — 1400 rubles altogether or about \$2100 by current exchange rates! That is not beyond the ability of a worker to save up or to borrow from parents or credit union. So began my Russian "debriefing."

Our second big surprise was the women's dresses. And the young women wore mini skirts and chunky heels. I thought things like that would be manifestations of "western decadence" and be suppressed by the Kremlin, right? But there it was all over town. And a lot of people driving private cars. But we all know that workers can't afford cars and the Russians don't make very many of them and they are used either by Communist bigshots or for export, right? Evidently wrong. By the second day I decided that I'd better clear my brain of all my pre-conceived ideas and simply walk around with my eyes and ears open, record my observations and set up some conclusions later. I did and I'll give you my conclusions at the end of this report. In the meantime back to the travelogue.

Since my companion and I were traveling first class it entitled us to three hours of guide and three hours of car and driver per day. We were in Leningrad for three days so we took the usual trips to the Aurora, the cruiser that signalled the start of the revolution in 1917 by firing her guns; the Peter and Paul fortress, the Hermitage museum — what a place; the St. Isaacs Cathedral, one of the most fantastic construction jobs in the world; the Neva River that winds through the city; and a day trip out to Petrovoretz. This place is something to see. It was Peter the Great's summer palace and he did himself proud allright. It is built on a sort of palisade with fountains and pools run-

ning down between groves of trees to the Baltic shore about half a mile away. The place is beautiful like all palaces but Peter was something of a sadist. He had a zoo in the park and used to amuse himself and frighten his guests to death when they would be walking in the park and he'd turn a lion or a wolf loose. He also had some cute arrangements still pulled on tourists — a sort of rock garden. When people come up to examine it, a man seated nearby, and looking like a spectator, turns his foot a little and streams of water come up to wet down the curious. The kids love it but Peter must have been — a little odd, to say the least. He built the city and established the industrial base of modern Russia but he was also present at the torture and death of his own son as a traitor. Nice guy. We spent one evening at the circus which was fascinating — not only the performers, animal and human, but to be among the ordinary Russian people on an outing. They knew we were foreigners and we couldn't speak to each other except to say "spasebo" (thank you) or "das vedanya" (I can say it and that probably isn't the best spelling but it means goodbye). They were very friendly and smiling. Aren't they supposed to be kind of overworked, oppressed and sullen and suspicious of foreigners and afraid to talk to them?? Maybe I was misinformed. We took the subway out to the circus and thus had our first introduction to Russian subways but more of that later.

After three days in Leningrad and our introduction to the Soviet Union, we went back to the airport to board an Aeroflot jet to Moscow. At this point I might say that Aeroflot is the biggest airline in the world and that it is exceedingly well patronized. Every Aeroflot office I saw in any city was jammed to the doors with people trying to get tickets and every airport was mobbed in the domestic part. We were always in and out of the Intourist section which spared us the mobs, the bags and boxes and the kids. The planes of Aeroflot run from 10 or 20 passenger jobs for short domestic hops like we have on our commuter airlines through a lot of turbojets to the equivalents of our 727's, 737's, DC-10's and 707's. Although the Russians have a supersonic like the Concorde we didn't see it. They don't have the equivalent of our 747's because they don't need them. But their newer planes are just as nicely equipped and furnished as the 707's and DC-8's we have. The only trouble is that at a lot of their airports they are not equipped with ground air so after you get seated, belted, and the doors close, you just sit while the pilot goes through the check list and has a last cigarette. If it's hot outside it just gets hotter inside with 50 to 150 people cooped up in the cabin. Until the plane is not

only airborne but gets up where the outside air is cool you just don't get cool again. It was pretty gruesome in the hotter regions like Tashkent and Samarkand.

The flight to Moscow was uneventful as such but as we approached the city I noticed something different. The city just begins, bang! I mean here are fields and right outside them are apartment houses, etc. There is no gradual thinning out of the city through suburbs into country. That was strange till I had a better understanding of things. While there are a lot of private cars they are nothing like the traffic we have here, so that most people are dependent on buses and commuter trains to get to work. This being the case they can't live very far from the end of the line. Also, since the state owns all the land, there are not many private homes like we have, most of the population live in apartment houses of which there are thousands. Of course, already built houses are occupied but they aren't plentiful. One can save up money, make a rental arrangement on a piece of land and then contract with a building organization and build one's own house, but this is not common in the larger cities of European Russia.

We arrived about 1 p.m. and by the time we had made connections with Intourist, been put into a taxi and sent off to our hotel and checked in, it was the middle of the afternoon. Not to waste any precious time, we arranged for a guide to take us on a walking tour of the Kremlin which wasn't too far away. We got in and went through the "Treasury," so-called, where all the riches of the czars are kept, including all the myriad of expensive and unusual gifts that were given to them by other royalty. It is a pretty indescribable place with all kinds of things in it and most of them worth a small (or large) fortune. Royalty doesn't mess around with trifles. Especially is this so in Russia. The country is geographically big and this seems to be part of the Russian mentality, too. They just don't do anything small or moderate. Everything is big, elaborate, terrific, super tremendous — pick your own adjectives but have them all imply bigness. We walked around the Kremlin walks and squares a bit but although we were able to see the several cathedrals from the outside it was past closing time so we couldn't enter. In line with what I said above, they have a bell there that for sheer size makes the Liberty Bell look like something they'd ring to get school started. Also a big bertha cannon that was built more to impress than to be dangerous but the cannon balls approached three feet in diameter. Quite a pop gun and it doubtless had its psychological effect on the enemy.

Something that had impressed me in Leningrad but which I thought might just be characteristic of that city turned up again in Moscow. There was ABSOLUTELY NO LITTER lying about in gutters, under trees, in alleys and sidewalks such as you see in almost any American — and for all that most other — large cities. One day I was walking over to another hotel and not being sure of my way asked directions from a Russian woman going the same direction. She spoke pretty good English and in the conversation I asked her, "What would happen if I were unwrapping a candy bar or just finished a pack of cigarettes and disposed of the wrapper by just tossing it away on the street?" She said, "Why someone who saw you do it would probably come up to you and tell you to go back and pick it up." I said that was about what I thought. She went on to explain that Muscovites are proud of their city and believe in keeping it clean. She said that each year every resident of the city donates one full day without pay to doing whatever is necessary to repair, maintain or improve the city. Why not? The city, its streets, buildings, etc., belong to the people, not to some corporation or organization that is impersonal and doesn't care. They do and they act on it. One very large point for their society.

Another one is that everyone tells you, Russian and European alike, that a woman could walk about Red Square or most any other part of Moscow or other Russian city in the middle of the night by herself without fear of mugging, purse snatching or rape. Doesn't that, too, say something about a society that is in many ways more important than their politics and international diplomacy?

During the next three days we visited Red Square, the GUM Department Store, the Polytechnical Museum, Lenin's Museum, and many other places. In the Polytechnical Museum we found a young man who was studying electronics and who talked English and sort of filled in as guide in the museum. He showed us all over and was able to explain the things that we couldn't figure out because all the captions were in Russian. Toward the end we were going into a room of musical instruments. He asked me if I played the piano. I said no but that I had an organ at home that I occasionally took a flyer at playing. He said fine, then you can play on our organ. We went to it and it was a little bitty thing like Sears would sell for three to four hundred dollars. It wasn't large and multi-keyboarded like a Hammond or a Lowry. But that wasn't important. I sat down at the single small keyboard and began picking out tunes and pretty soon started to play America. The young man said, "What is that tune?" I said that if you were in England it would be "God Save the Queen," but in the U.S. it was



Karl Marx Prospect - Moscow, USSR



Lenin's Tomb Red Square - Moscow, USSR



Shores of Lake Sevan, Soviet Armenia
Hydrofoils in background

"America." He asked me if I would write down the words for him which I did later. But as I was playing, a group, which grew to about 20 people, gathered around me with great interest in what the American woman was doing. When my small repertoire was exhausted, a young Red Army soldier, one of many walking around the city, took my place and began to play one of his country's anthems. This was a bit of people-to-people activity and once again gave the lie to ideas that the Russian people are aloof or afraid of foreigners.

I can't take the space to go into all the things we did and experiences we had but I will mention a couple. I observed all over Russia that there are dozens and hundreds of museums. They are all crowded with people. There are lots of bookstores and they are crowded, too. The people are much more interested in learning than we are; partly, I supposed, because although they have several television channels I don't think they broadcast all the time and that probably everybody doesn't have a set so they are not chained to the "boob tube" as our people are. We went to visit the Museum of Economic Achievements. This is not a building as most museums are, but an enormous park probably bigger than Disneyland, crowded with buildings each dedicated to one aspect of Russian activities like, petroleum, mining, electronics, agriculture, fisheries, metallurgy, music, art, and of course, space, and many more. The place is so big that you take a little tram around it just to get to what you want to see. Not surprisingly I wanted to see the space building and what a place. In front is the whole original launching mechanism for Yuri Gagarin's first Sputnik flight together with an identical full-sized rocket to the one that launched him. Pretty impressive. Inside the large building, every kind of space vehicle the Russians ever launched, and they have sent up hundreds, was hanging from the ceiling. Even one of the Soyuz ships which several weeks later was to link up with the U.S. Apollo for their historic flight. There were great arrays of charts, diagrams and explanations of every aspect of space flight. I suppose that the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C. has much the same for our space efforts but I venture the observation that the number of Americans who go through the Smithsonian space room is considerably fewer than the number of Russians who see this exhibit, partly because the Soviet exhibit is not only in the capital city but in their largest city. Washington is our capitol but not one of our larger cities. This building was crowded with classes of students going through it and I expect that this is true about every day the place is open. Interest in what *their* society is doing is obviously high. Not about what General Motors or Westing-

house or DuPont or Standard Oil is doing but what *their country* is doing, one more indication of the relationship of the people to the country. There were more on my trip but I'll get to them in due course.

This whole place can be characterized as the world's largest county fair since there are buildings for every aspect of Soviet life spread around the park. The principle difference is that instead of being used just one week a year it is open all the year though with Moscow's winter snows it must slow down a bit. We didn't get to see the Bolshoi or go to the symphony because in the summer these groups are traveling abroad giving concerts. Maybe we should have stayed home. Anyway we did the city tour and walked through the famed Park of Culture and Rest. There was plenty of park and doing a trip through that park would certainly be no rest. Like everything else in Russia it was immense. The same goes for the main building of the University of Moscow. This is built in late Stalin-esque style. It is massive, it is tall, it is big, it is impressive, and it is duplicated about five other times on the Moscow skyline. You get kind of mixed up looking out the window in one direction and seeing this skyscraper on the horizon then a minute later you are looking in some other direction and there it is again — makes you a little confused.

I essayed a solo ride on the subway, too. I had figured out the Russian cyrillic alphabet from figuring out the names of cities on the radio dial in Leningrad and had learned that P=R, B=V; C=S and H=N, etc. Thus one sees PECTOPAH all over the place and translating it it turns out to spell restaurant — without the "t." Surprisingly, there are a lot of public eating places and night spots in Russia. Anyway, back to subways. Having mastered this little bit of the Russian alphabet I could at least read the station names. I didn't say I could pronounce them nor know what they meant except for such names as Komsomolskaya or Karl Marx Allee but I dived down the subway and got off and back on again at about half a dozen stations, even transferred to another line for a couple of stations and back again. Believe me Moscow's subways live up to their billing. The trains are fast, quiet and more than anything, they are clean — both of trash and of graffiti. What a change from the disgraceful transportation in New York. And the stations, they are like museums — all marble, stained glass or sculptures or bronze reliefs, etc., yet the ride only costs four kopecs (equal to six cents). Each one is different and all are interesting. And there are mobs of people, too. This little trip was something of a contradiction to the idea that somebody follows you around all the time. I was free to go where I pleased in Moscow and I did and I think any-

body but reporters, diplomatic attaches or persons suspected of anti-Soviet activities could do likewise.

Well our stay in Moscow came to an end and so back to the airport and a flight to Kiev. I had a big disappointment there, namely that the Kiev National Museum was closed the day we were there. It is the repository of the fantastic Scythian gold sculptures found in southern Russia over the last several centuries. Many of the pieces were on tour in the U.S. and knowing that I'd miss them in L.A., I made a point of seeing them at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. They were mostly produced 300 or 400 years B.C. and are really fantastic in the detail work. Kiev is on the Dnieper River, mostly on the palisades overlooking the river, but like all the cities in Russia, it is expanding outward with dozens of new high-rise apartment buildings. The skyline everywhere is dotted with the big cranes used to lift construction material to the top of the growing building. I walked among the crowds on the main street of Kiev, found the Metro (subway) and repeated my Moscow investigations. The cars and stations were again immaculately clean and efficient although the stations were not quite the show places they are in Moscow.

The next day we were delayed at the airport because Aeroflot planes go when they are ready — not necessarily when the schedule says. I was sitting in the waiting room on a chair along the wall. There were a number of small and inexpensive plywood coffee tables in front of the chairs on which various publications about the Soviet state and international affairs were left for reading or taking. I picked one up and was reading it with interest. Without any thought I had put the ball of my foot on the edge of the table. At least five people walking past me on the way to the departure lounge pointed to my foot on the table and said "nyet" (no) and other Russian words which, because of the tone of voice and the gestures toward my foot and the floor, meant that I should put it down. What they were in effect saying was that feet don't belong on tables to which, with some embarrassment, I had to agree. The important thing was that ordinary citizens were saying this. Can you imagine any Americans doing this in any American airport? I can't, because in our airports we would consider that such furniture belonged to TWA or United or Eastern Airlines. In Russia, however, all such equipment and everything else belongs to *the people* and therefore the passers-by were in effect the owners and they were telling me to get my cotton pickin' feet off of their tables. I did so promptly and with embarrassment at my poor American manners. But it made a big impression on me.

Finally the plane was ready and we took off for Yerevan, the capitol of Soviet Armenia. We flew over the high snow-covered tops of the Caucasus Mountains and they were a sight to behold. It is no wonder that in ancient times they provided a barrier pretty much like the Alps to movement from one side to the other. It was pretty stormy most of the way and the cloud effects were fantastic. As we came in for a landing at Yerevan, I could feel us hitting "bumps" — areas of down-drafts or turbulence — when we were only a couple of hundred feet up. Being a sailplane pilot, I said to myself, "This is going to be a rough one," and in preparation I cinched up my seat belt another notch and braced my arm against the window molding because on Russian planes the seats fold forward and therefore don't give any support. I was right — it was rough. We hit on one wheel which slowed down that side a bit and the plane veered toward that side as the pilot corrected it which put the other wheel down and made us veer the other way. He hit the brakes hard as soon as he could get the plane straightened out and from the galley which was in the rear of the plane all the remains of the dinner trays came sluicing down the aisles along with hundreds of cellophane bags of knives, forks and spoons. The side veering had slid them off into the aisle and the sudden slowing slid them all the way up the aisle. It was something of a mess which we all had to pitch in and clean up before we could get out into the aisles for debarkation. As I got to the door I could realize what the pilot was up against because there was a real dinger of a gusty headwind that blew peoples' hats off. So I couldn't blame him for the messy landing.

We came to Yerevan because we were to join the tour group here. We finally got through a very delayed customs and got to the hotel about 11 p.m. which was too late to make contact with our tour leader but that we did the next morning and met the other 24 members of the tour, all but six of whom were females. They had had 12 days together in Turkey already so they pretty well knew each other but we had to start learning names and since there were two Dorothys and three Barbaras, it was slightly confusing.

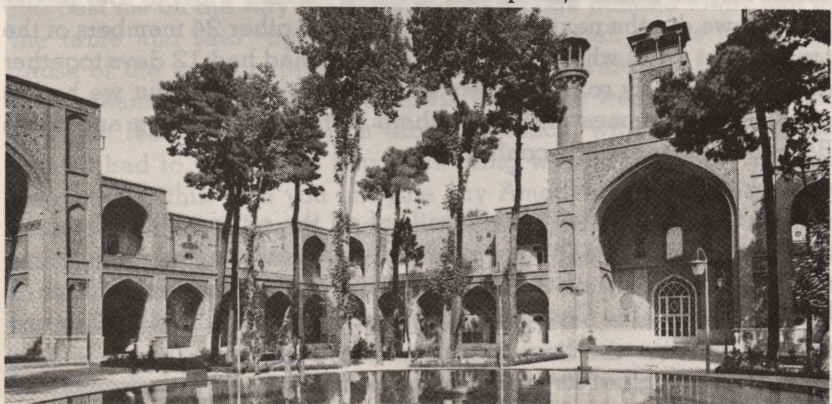
I won't bother you with the details of all the cities we saw but will stick to the highlights. We spent two days in Yerevan and then by bus to Tiflis, the capitol of Georgia — where Stalin came from. Then a flight to Baku on the Caspian. This place *really* has oil wells. They are not only all over the land but all over the sea, too. There are long causeways going out five miles or more into the sea with dozens and dozens of drill heads along them. After a day's sight-seeing there we



Overlooking Harbor - Baku, Azerbaijan, USSR



Grand Staircase - Persepolis, Iran



Sepahsalar Mosque - Teheran, Iran

boarded a Soviet ship and headed out into the Caspian on the way to Iran. We left about 3 p.m. and until it was too dark to see, we sailed past oil rigs active and abandoned literally all over that end of the sea. I went up on the bridge and found the First Mate who could speak a little English and he took me into the bridge and demonstrated the radar equipment, auto pilot, etc. These abandoned rigs didn't have either lights or buoys on them and I wondered how we managed to miss them but they had left a sea lane open and as long as we sailed at 175 to 185 degrees (south) we would miss them.

Next day we arrived at the port of Pahlevi in Iran and there being insufficient docking space we tied up alongside a Soviet freighter and walked across it. But there were all kinds of formalities before we could do so, so we got a good look at the activities aboard the freighter. It was interesting to see crates and machinery originating in France, Germany, Sweden, etc. that apparently had been shipped into and through the U.S.S.R. down to Baku and by freighter to Pahlevi for delivery in Iran. With the Suez canal out of operation it apparently was cheaper to make this overland haul than to go by ship around Africa and then up to an Iranian port on the Persian Gulf (otherwise known as the Arabian Gulf if you are in Kuwait or elsewhere on the west side of it). It was also interesting evidence of international cooperation in that the U.S.S.R. was in effect acting as middle man for commerce between two NATO nations. Again, not what you'd expect from reading the American papers and magazines.

The south end of the Caspian is very tropical in climate, and only the end of the Sea borders on Iran. All the rest of it extends up into the U.S.S.R. We were put up in a nice resort motel and I got a chance to take two swims in the Caspian. "Swim" isn't quite the word — "dip" would be better because the sea is quite shallow and you have to walk out quite a way before it gets deep enough to really swim in. There are only tiny waves but I expect that in a storm sweeping down the length of the sea from Russia that it could work up some pretty wild water. Next day we took off on a long bus ride over the mountains to Teheran. We used the road built by American troops during the war when they occupied Iran along with the British and used this road to ferry supplies for Russia over the mountains and down to the Caspian for shipment to the war zone. It is something of a fantastic road winding its way up the side of several very steep canyons with one hairpin turn after another. But the terrain, the temperature, the vegetation and everything else changed at the summit. You go through a very

long tunnel just at the top and emerge on the south side of the mountains running down to the central plain of Iran. Where it was hot and moist tropical heat along the Caspian — about like Hawaii — it was very hot and dry all over the rest of Iran.

In Teheran we stayed at the Hilton which like most Hiltons was very plush with several restaurants and all facilities. We stayed here three different times as we used it as a base of operations from which we departed on other trips. It is located quite a ways north of the city proper up nearer the base of the mountains and as Teheran is located on a big alluvial fan coming down from the mountains it is quite a bus trip straight down hill into the city proper. We were now in Islamic country and so of course we had to start seeing mosques and other important buildings all in that style. I'm not turned on to Islamic art, culture or philosophy so I got pretty tired of it all before we were through not only in Iran, but in Kuwait and in southern Russia. But the one outstanding building is the Gullistan Palace. You know, Buckingham, Versailles, Shonberg (in Vienna) and the palaces in Sweden, Italy and elsewhere all seem to have been built by the same school of architects. But they had a new boy in Persia all right. It bore no physical resemblance to other palaces except that it had a throne room. The entrance way staircase and hallways were all done in mirror mosaics — small pieces of mirror stuck into the walls. It was like walking around inside a gigantic diamond with light reflections sparkling in all directions. Quite overwhelmingly beautiful. Other rooms of the palace including the throne room looked as though they had been done by Wedgewood of china fame because the walls were painted a light blue and the plaster scrolls, swirls and moldings were all brilliant white. Truly a different place. Or course all sorts of fantastically beautiful (and expensive) gifts that the present and past Shahs had received from other princes, presidents and potentates were lined up along the walls.

The Shah's jewels are not kept in the palace but in an underground vault downtown which is guarded like the National Bank. Displays and cabinets by the dozens all showing off the accumulated wealth of the royalty of Persia (Iran). But here it was just like it was looking at the Sultan's palace and his jewels in Istanbul. Enough is enough is too much. Large diamonds, emeralds and rubies, especially when they are polished in the rounded form — called cabochon cuts — tend to look like big hunks of white and colored glass — super rhinestones. You know they aren't, but that's what they come out like. And when they are encrusted on robes, crowns, awards, cups and bowls, etc., they look

even cheaper. I suppose in olden days they didn't but we are used to the brilliancy of the diamond cut with its sparkle and fire and you just don't get it with the old-fashioned cabachon cutting.

Iran Airlines is a very independent type operation. They won't make reservations and hold them so you never quite know whether you are going to go or not. Our tour leader could not be sure of any transportation from Abadan to Kuwait in advance but we took off anyway for Abadan. A long, weary ride over hundreds of miles of barren mountains and plains with an occasional hamlet someplace. Finally the Euphrates appeared, meandering its way on the horizon and we started down for Abadan. Nothing much to talk about here except that it is the base of one of Iran's principle refineries. From the air you could see it, the shipping on the river and the orderly rows of date palms on the plantations. The Garden of Eden was reputed to be around here someplace but it wasn't visible from my side of the plane. The reason for there being nothing much else to report about Abadan was that it was 120 degrees F. and that tends to discourage exploration.

Somehow our leader managed to promote some seats on Kuwaiti Air and we took off for Kuwait at about 10 at night. They fly at night because hot air is thin air and sometimes the big planes can't make it off the ground safely. At Kuwait International Airport we were all piled into Lincoln and Cadillac taxis — nothing cheap about these Kuwaitis — and took off for the Hilton. The airport is quite a way from town and the intervening desert is criss-crossed by north-south and east-west highways. The various drivers of the cars had a big race to see who would get to the Hilton first but they didn't all choose the same roads to travel on so we would be following and then turn away from one of the others and at the next signal a mile or so along we'd meet one of the others coming on one of the other streets. It was kind of exciting and slightly hair-raising in the middle of the night.

The Kuwait Hilton is very posh as you would expect and it was here that I had my "big moment" of the trip. There were a couple of Arabs in their white robes and little black rope crowns on their heads who struck up acquaintance with some of the women in our group. I was one of them. It seemed that one of them wanted to marry an American woman and he didn't take more than seven minutes getting around to the proposal. The other was his uncle and he was playing John Alden all the while. They wanted me to come out and be shown the town, to see his villa (same old story anywhere in the world), etc. He wanted to

take me to dinner, give me a "little present," etc. — all the usual. It was kind of hard finding excuses not to accept. I told him I had a husband at home and that I didn't really think he would look too favorably on my bringing home an Arab in a white robe to join the family. But that only slowed him down a little and brought on a change of tactics. Next afternoon when we got back from sightseeing there they were again and Hameed Hassan, which was his name, "wanted to talk to me." So we went through it again. This same process was carried out with one of the other women so she and I had fun all the rest of the trip talking about taking away each other's "boyfriend."

My other memorable experience in Kuwait was something of a surprise. We had taken a boat ride quite a way out into the gulf to visit an historical island that had been fortified by Alexander the Great on his way back from India. There were some ruins there to be seen. Since the trip took about an hour and a half each way I had quite a long discussion with the special Kuwait anthropologist guide about the Israeli-Palestinian question. It was low key, no acrimony, just a discussion. We parted friends so far as I knew but next morning at the airport our tour leader looked kind of sourly at me and I asked him if he had a belly ache. He said yes and I had given it to him. I was surprised and asked what he meant. He said that he and the local tourist agency had spent a rough night with the Kuwaiti police chief trying to keep me out of jail. It seems that you don't even mention the name of Israel in Kuwait — even the newspapers don't print it — so when I freely talked about it the guide, who was a Palestinian himself, hied himself promptly to the police and reported me. I slept through it like a baby and didn't even know what I'd caused until the next morning.

Kuwait is a strange place. Vast numbers of new villas for the better-off Kuwaitis. Even the poorer native-born Kuwaitis have it made with education, free medical care. But the ordinary work of the society seems to be done by Palestinians, Saudi Arabians and miscellaneous laborers from other nations. And from some of the letters to the editor in the paper they aren't too happy by the cost of living versus the wages they make. Seems that even in Paradise they have labor problems. It was 120 degrees F. there so one didn't lounge around in the sun very long, but it is a very busy and growing city and seaport.

From there to Shiraz in Iran again and a long, 40-mile taxi ride to Persepolis. This was the capitol of Darius the Great of Persia and was sacked and burned by Alexander something over 300 years B.C. The

ruins are really fantastic both from the point of view of size and from the carvings. I've seen a lot of ruins but these are by far the most impressive. They had a "sound and light" show just for our group in the evening in which lights play over the various pillars and temples near and far and a tape recording speaks in the names of Darius, Xerxes and Artaxerxes, all of whom were kings in this palace. It really brought things back to life for us. Those were fantastic times but then, aren't all times, including our own, "fantastic" in their own individual ways?

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Well, back to Teheran and the Hilton, with a stop in Isfahan, which is probably the most beautiful city in Iran, and then off for three days to Mashad, the third holiest city for Moslems, where they were having a celebration of the birthday of one of Mohammad's relatives. There were 1,500,000 pilgrims in a town of 500,000. Was it ever crowded! Amongst other sights we drove out of town about 50 miles to the tomb of Omar Khayam which was quite a beautiful place. It is interesting that eastern and Russian cultures show a lot more respect to their great poets than the west does. They have statues and memorials and tombs to all the great ones, most of whom we in the west have never heard of.

Back still again to the Teheran Hilton — I felt like a commuter — for overnight and then off to Kabul in Afghanistan. This was a long, dull trip over hundreds of miles of dry terrain dotted at long intervals with spots of greenery and human habitation. One interesting thing was to trace the lines of qanat holes. These were underground conduits to carry water over great distances. Naturally they couldn't be dug too far without having to get rid of the diggings, so about every 20 feet or so they had to sink a vertical shaft to take out the "dirt." And these holes with the piled-up dirt around them mark out the line of the irrigation system. They were apparently well-engineered to maintain the grade in the tunnel itself as the holes go up little rises and down the sides of shallow gulleys. One more example of the tremendous amounts of human labor consumed in primitive times to build temples, palaces, pyramids, tombs, irrigation systems, etc. We don't know when we are well off because in less developed parts of the world this sort of thing still goes on. The Chinese build and excavate with strings of humans carrying things to and from on their heads and backs.

Well the trip to Kabul was dull but the arrival wasn't. Kabul is on a flat plain surrounded by modest mountains. The pilot came in for a landing, wheels down and all, and then when about 100 feet from the ground he suddenly gunned it and pulled up again. He circled around and tried it from the other end but gave that up even sooner and climbed up above the mountains and headed south. About this time he announced that the cross winds were too strong and that a landing wasn't possible at Kabul (pronounced "cobble" incidently) and that we were proceeding to Kandahar, about 200 miles away as the nearest alternative landing site.

We arrived there in late afternoon to find a neat little airport sitting all by itself with no planes, cars, equipment or anything around it. Disembarking — with only our flight bags as they didn't unload the baggage — we wandered through the airport building which was a very nice place with the usual booths, waiting rooms, gates, restrooms, etc. but *absolutely empty* of both people and equipment. It turned out that the place had been built in the late 50's and paid for by guess who — you and me as American taxpayers — when they were still flying prop planes which needed a refueling stop between Europe and India. But jets don't need to stop so the nice little airport just sits there waiting for emergency situations like ours. They managed to find beds for most of the passengers in what had been planned as the airport hotel but which was now part of an army barracks and they called into town for someone to come out and put something together to feed us — not just our group of 26 but the whole plane-load. Finally around 10 p.m. we got some bread, tomatoes, cucumbers, a little doubtful meat and warm cokes — a really delightful repast but welcome nevertheless since we hadn't eaten since noon. It was plenty hot and the walls of the one-story "hotel" were still radiating a lot of heat by midnight, so I pioneered a movement of my bed out onto the ground in front and was soon followed by everyone else. There wasn't a cloud or a wisp of smog in a thousand miles and no city light glow so the stars were as brilliant as any I'd ever seen so that part of the experience was worth it.

At 5 a.m. we were roused out to dress and get back on the plane to return to Kabul. Since it is hot and high, the planes can only come in and out in the early morning or evening so we had to be there early to get off and get the plane serviced and reloaded for its take-off to the next destination. The line is Ariana Afghanistanian Airlines but it operates under contract by Pan Am so at least we knew that they knew what they were doing. Walking from the plane to the airport

building was sort of strange. Spread across the front of the building was a long board with a slogan something like "Long Live the Peoples Republic of Afghanistan." That alone wasn't too surprising since we'd seen such before in Socialist countries, but then we got closer and began to notice a lot of soldiers around, each with a rifle over his back and others on the roof of the building. They were all wearing grey uniforms with a familiar peaked cap and black jack boots. I thought, "Gee, this looks more like Nazi Germany than a Peoples Republic." Commenting about it to our tour leader, he informed me that they were indeed German uniforms. Quantities of them had been captured at the end of World War II and they had been sold to Afghanistan. About 1972, the then-prime minister who was a cousin of the king, threw the king out and took over. His complaint was that the king was just leading a feudal king's life and wasn't doing anything for the people so the prime minister became president and has apparently been doing a good deal for the people ever since with the limited facilities he has. He is, however, handily situated on the borders of China, India, Pakistan, Russia and Iran, and with ties to England, France and the U.S. Since the international game is "don't let anything worthwhile fall under the control of your enemy," everybody is in there pitching to gain advantage. The country has a great deal of undeveloped natural resources so the new president walks an interesting tightrope trying to get as much as he can from the various interested foreign governments without giving up any more than he has to.

The city has a couple of big hotels — we stayed at the Intercontinental which is as modern as you'd want — a university, and other accessories of a modern city but it also has miles of run-down, dusty streets lined with all kinds of beaten-up shacks and stores. A real native quarter which in this case is more like a three-quarters. Next morning we had to get up about 4 a.m. to get to the airport for a 6:30 flight in a little DeHaviland Otter which carries about 20 people. We flew to Bamyan and the reason for the early departure was again the heat of the day and the altitude. We got up to 14,000 feet going over the Hindu-Kush Mountains. This is 2,500 feet higher than the FAA says you have to have oxygen if you are going to stay up very long. Well we didn't have to stay up very long and we didn't have oxygen but we did have a number of people with headaches and other symptoms of oxygen deprivations. Since we had a lot of people in their 70's and three in their 80's it was fortunate that we didn't have anything more than discomfort.



View of Kuwait City
Kuwait

Carved Buddha-
Bamiyan, Afghanistan
(compare size of
Virginia in lower
right corner)



Natural Dam on Lake Bandi-I-Amir
Afghanistan

But we had acquired the beginnings of what in Mexico would be called Montezuma's Revenge, but which in that part of the world I dubbed Genghis Khan's legacy. When we landed at Bamyan which was nothing but a dirt strip with no buildings I was suddenly forcefully taken with the idea that I'd feel a lot better quicker if I could patronize a powder room. There was no habitation in sight so I decided that a bush in the field was worth two in the park and I went over to it to "pay my respects." I was too much in a hurry to notice in the beginning that there was a male native sitting under a nearby tree smoking his pipe but when I rose up to pull up my pants (I was wearing a pants suit as did most of the other women on the tour), I found that I was not alone. However, as I was performing in a most native fashion, the only novelty in the situation was the fact that I was a foreign woman instead of the local variety.

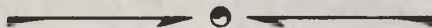
But I was only the first. That night the "legacy" hit several other people and two days later on the bus out of there it hit my roommate in another way. She must have gotten ptomaine poisoning because she was so ill that she couldn't sit up in the bus seats and actually fainted. The dirt road was a mass of chuckholes and the little mini-bus jounced terribly. I had to lay her on two seats with her legs crossing the aisle and then sit on the arms of the seats myself with my legs over hers to keep her from bouncing off on the floor. It was pretty uncomfortable for both of us although she was "out" for a good part of the time.

In that part of the country we saw not only the enormous Buddha statues carved into the side of the hill — they are about five or six stories high — which Bamyan is famous for but we jounced most of the afternoon up a canyon over a ridge and down into another canyon to see one of the most fantastic and unbelievable sights in the whole world. This is a "lake in the sky" as it were. It is a lake between the two sides of a canyon allright but at the end of the canyon where it widens out to a plain there is a natural dam that the lake itself has apparently built by some of the same processes as you may have seen at Yellowstone or other volcanic areas — the deposition of limestone around the edges of a pool. But in this case it was a curving dam across the whole canyon which was at least 100 feet high. The water flowed over it in a number of places and I climbed up the side to be greeted after quite a little effort with a lake at eye level as I reached the brim. The lake was like tea in a teacup filled to overflowing, which is what it was doing. The guide said that they had not been able to

plumb the depth of it in one place so it was obviously a volcanic hot spring with a lot of dissolved limestone which deposited gradually around the edge and made the dam. But it is some dam, believe me, as it backs up a lake several miles long and at least 100 feet deep at the dam face. Furthermore, if man had made a curving dam it would have been convex *upstream* not curving concave downstream. The fact that it did meant that it had to be that much stronger to hold the lake. It was a really fantastic sight.

We "did" several other places in Afghanistan, ruins of cities destroyed by Genghis Khan, more mosques and Moslem schools and shrines, goats, camels, sheep, bumpy and dusty roads, native bazaars, etc. One interesting fact is that riding along in the bus you practically never see a woman and only very small girls. Those that are seen are wrapped up in their black robes with their faces covered. This is really a machismo society as of course Moslem societies always were and, except for the more modern countries and cities with more western connections, still are. Woman's place is *really* in the home. But enough of Afghanistan. I never thought I'd ever get there and it's not the most comfortable place in the world but it was interesting to see, as life there is so different from what I've seen before. But the tour had other places to see so we went to Tashkent in the Uzbek Republic of the U.S.S.R.

Continued in TVia #88



Recently, I served as a judge in the "Best-Dressed-Girl Contest" at one of our universities. Prior to the contest, each girl had been asked to write a paragraph about what constituted for her a feeling of being "best dressed."

If there had been a prize for the most intriguing answer, I would have given it to the girl who simply wrote: "I feel best, *dressed*."

PRICE LIST

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A few issues other than those listed here have been repurchased from subscribers. These may be bought when available for \$6 each. If we don't have the issue you need, put a hold on it — first come first served — and we will ship when it is available.

We have retained a lending library of 3 copies of all issues of TRANSVESTIA. They may be rented for \$6 per copy, \$3 of which is a deposit and will be refunded or applied to something else upon returning the rented copy. This way you can ready every issue from No. 1.

MERCHANDISE

Item 1. **SPECIAL BRA WITH INSERTS.** Nice cotton bras with elastic straps having a special pocket in each cup which holds a poly-vinyl insert. Although intended to be inflated with air, the inserts can be filled with a special jelly to provide softness and weight. Available in white only in sizes 36B and 38B only. For larger sizes, bras can be lengthened with special extenders available in most notions departments and 5 & 10 stores. Inserts can be removed and used in other bras.

BRA and INSERTS \$6.50

Item 2. **JELLY KIT, FOR SPECIAL BRA:** Consists of two chemicals — one liquid, the other a powder. When the powder has been soaked in water overnight and injected into the inserts, followed by the liquid and enough water to fill them properly, a soft, non-flowing jelly results. This may be colored to skin tones with liquid makeup. The jelly-filled inserts give the breasts a natural softness and weight. Worn in an elastic strap bra they bounce and flow as one walks just like a natural breast. Full instructions provided suggestions for producing "cleavage."

JELLY KIT \$5

Item 3. **REGULAR INSERTS ALONE:** For those requiring special bra sizes or who wish to wear inserts in bras of their own the inserts can be obtained separately.

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INSERTS PER PAIR \$5.50

NOTE: Items 6, 7, 8 and 9 are cut out of urethane foam plastic. They are supplied to you as "blanks." That is, they are cut to size and shape but are left in a rough finished state to be trimmed to final smoothness

and shape by the user. This may be done with any sharp scissors. To supply the items in finished smooth condition would require much more time and consequently a much higher price and they might still not exactly fit the needs of the purchasers.

Item 6. "PHANTOM PHANNY": Two separate shield-shaped plastic foam pads, beveled and made concave to fit and cover the buttocks cheeks. Worn under a girdle they will enhance one's derrier to more feminine proportions. They are washable, comfortable and undetectable. One size only.

PER PAIR \$5

Item 7. HIP PADS: Two rather oval shaped pads of foam plastic cut into approximately the right shape and with edges beveled. Since the exact shape and size desired will vary they are intentionally left in a rough finished condition to be further shaped, trimmed and smoothed to the desired contour by the wearer. Easily cut with scissors. When worn under a girdle, they add about an inch of "hip" on each side. These are "wrap-around" pads, not just a narrow piece of foam worn over the hip. Under a girdle with the front pad (which they are designed to match with) they give an entirely feminine and smooth pelvic outline.

PER PAIR \$5.50

Item 8. FRONT PAD WITH GROOVE: A "T"-shaped foam pad pre-shaped and beveled and with a groove and pocket in front to hold the male organs. Rough finished to allow for further trimming to individually desired shape and smoothness. Use of this pad will give the "flat-front" look so much desired without binding and discomfort. There is a "tail piece" that fits back between the legs and fills this area when worn under a pantie and girdle or a pantie girdle. If it is not wanted it can be cut off.

PAD, EACH \$4.25

Item 9. A small front pad designed to cover the male organs when they are worn tucked between the legs. Intended to be worn under bathing suits, shorts, tight slacks. Gives smooth, rounded feminine control.

PAD, EACH \$3

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Publication Policy

TRANSESTIA is composed primarily of material submitted by its readers. Fiction, articles, histories, true experiences, letters, poems, pictures — all are welcome. The greater the variety of material the more interesting the magazine will be. Material is solicited for publication on the following basis:

1. All printed material of one page or more will be paid for at the rate of \$1 per page with the exception of pictures. The Editor must reserve the right to cut or edit submitted material for suitability and payment will therefore be made on the basis of the final printed page. No payment will be made for material less than 2/3 of a page which will count as one page. Payment will be made after material appears in print. Manuscripts will not be bought in advance.
2. Submitted material will not be returned unless requested and stamped envelope provided.
3. Off-color material will not be printed and should therefore not be submitted. The Editor reserves the right to be the sole judge of suitability and to edit, alter, delete or refuse material when it is deemed to be in the best interest of the magazine.

PHI PI EPSILON (FPE) is our social organization. After having been on Chevalier's subscription lists for 5 or more issues, having read them, and deciding that we are your kind of people, ask for an application to join. Acceptance into FPE is dependant upon approval of the application, payment of dues and submission of an information form for use in the FPE Directory of Members. Admission into local chapters of the sorority requires an interview with the appointed interviewer for that group. Five or more members may form a group and can request designation as a chapter.

PERSON TO PERSON ADS AND REPLIES

To protect the magazine and its subscribers from the careless, thoughtless or foolish acts of a few it is necessary to limit correspondence service to members of Phi Pi Epsilon. A \$2 fee is charged for each ad and \$1 fee for forwarding all inter-member correspondence. Letters to other members should be sent to Phi Pi Epsilon, Box 1038, Cherry Valley, Calif. 99223. Place the letter to be forwarded in a stamped, sealed envelope with the addressees femmename and code number in pencil. Do NOT put *your* return address on it. Enclose the \$1 fee.

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