

I was awakened at three o'clock in the morning.  
 "Come quick. We are at Family Hospital. Jim is dying."  
 "Dying," I said, still too sleepy to understand. "Dying. What are you talking about?"  
 "On the fifth floor. You know where the room is. Come quick."  
 I hurried over.  
 "Where is he?" I asked.  
 "He is in the room. Over there," Mark said. Mark and Eric were there. Mark is sixty and Eric is sixty-five. Eric likes to smoke cigarettes. He was nervously pacing back and forth in front of the small waiting alcove at the end of the hall. He went past the room where the nurses were preparing Jim, I guessed, because they barred the way. Mark was very upset. I took his face in my hands and kissed it often. He still cried. Finally one of the nurses came over to us. He gave us a very official look.  
 "Are you the next of kin?"

# Kinship



Yes," I said.  
 "You may see him then."  
 We went into Jim's room. It was half lit and smelled of all kinds of serious medicines. They had already plugged him into some sort of instrument to measure how fast his heart was beating and judge when it would stop. It looked kind of like a speedometer. On one dial it measured how fast his heart was beating and on the other it measured mileage.  
 "It was really nice of you to come," he said. He was smiling much more gaily than any of us could mark up to.  
 "How could we stay away?" Mark asked.  
 "I miss all of you," he said. "When we get older, we must have each other. I feel like I've been here for so long." He paused for a moment, "We're all we have, you know." He took my hand. It seemed so young and warm in his hand which was old and cooler, but moist. "It has been so good of you," he said, "to love me, now."  
 "But I needed you..." I protested.  
 "You are so much younger than I am."  
 "I was forty thirty years ago."  
 For a moment we looked at each other. It was as if time was a bridge that we were looking back and forth over at each other. He still held my hand and I did not resist it the way I did the first time he held my hand last year when I first became a part of the three of them. Mark was trying very hard not to cry. Mark who had been so very good at making cocktails and talking about the revolution that had taken place so many years ago when I was still a teenager. He used to talk. Chatter all of the time and now, now he was choked with tears. He couldn't speak a word.  
 I left them for a moment. They were both holding his hands. They were looking like people on the landing of boats, getting ready to say goodbye. The doctor came over to me. He wore his hair very long in the old style, like pictures from old magazines.  
 "Are you his next of kin?"  
 "Yes," I said.  
 "Where is his wife?"  
 We are all his 'wife'  
 "I only see three men."  
 "I told you we are his next of kin."  
 "We need his next of kin for the certificate of release. I don't believe any of you are his next of kin. We'll have to keep his body then right here until we find the next of kin."  
 "I told you we are his next of kin."  
 "He has no children? He is an old man."  
 "We are all his children."  
 Suddenly his lips curled into a slight smile. "No daughters?"  
 The doctor persisted in sticking his hands in and out of the pockets of his smock. It was made of a strange kind of paper. I was sure it would break. He also rocked his head up and down as if he were making a list. I didn't understand why Jimmy's doctor was not there. Hospital doctors were notorious for giving us a hard time. They were the only ones that had not signed the accord that gave women and Gay people autonomy. He still had a modicum of power in the State and made sure everybody knew it.  
 "We are all his daughters," I finally said. Suddenly I became very angry. "If you don't stop this, I'm going to report this to the Committee on the Extended Family."  
 He nodded his head once more: "then you are all homosexuals."  
 "If you insist on categorizing us as such."  
 I hated him. Such a pig. The pigs were always there. Even as Jim who had lived through incredible pigshit, who grew up in fear, who grew up when men were afraid to be known as homosexuals or Gay or anything other than the Established code of Ethics which had been superseded by the Revolution: even as Jim was dying, I had to deal with this reactionary.  
 "Your friend has been here for a week," he finally said.  
 I didn't understand what he was getting at. "What are you talking about?"  
 "It's just that we don't like to keep people here any longer than we have to. That's why I've got to have the name of his next of kin."  
 "I told you that we are his next of kin."  
 "I can never understand what you people have for each other."  
 "Maybe you were never meant to."

"What do you mean by that? My son is one of you. He left home at the age of thirteen and joined you. He hates me. I don't understand why. I am his father. His real father. We had him in the old way. Just my wife and I. No machines. No artificial insemination. No artificial conception. And yet he left us to go live with a bunch of males. He said he couldn't be free around me. He said that I oppressed him. I don't understand. I loved him. He is my son, and I love him."  
 "Did you ever show him?"  
 "We went together. We shot skeet together. We went to the games. I told him about women. I loved him the way my father loved me. How else can I love him?"  
 "Did you love him the way men love each other?"  
 "I loved him the way I loved a son."  
 "That's the way Jim loves us," I said, "and that's the way we love him. We've got to be each other's children and each other's parents. Why should you limit your feelings of closeness and caring ... only to children. We've got to keep these feelings all of our lives."  
 Eric and Mark came out of Jim's room.  
 "He's unconscious again," Mark said.

"did you notice how much his cardiometer gave him?" the doctor asked.  
 "About fifty-three over forty-three."  
 "That's very bad. I can cut him off now or leave him on 'natural'. Then he can go on until tomorrow."  
 "Leave it on natural," I said.  
 "Can you arrange for the body or shall I have the Hospital Termination Team do it for you. If you leave it for us though, we are allowed to give away as much of the donor as it is necessary at the time of termination."  
 I couldn't believe how he could talk this way in front of Mark and Eric who were absolutely torn to shreds. I took him aside. "Doctor, can't you just leave us alone until Jim's doctor comes. We'll handle everything. Please, sir."  
 "You know," he whispered, "I could have terminated him an hour ago."  
 "I know," I said. "What do you want from us?"  
 "I don't know. A little love. A little respect. People today treat doctors like we were technicians."  
 "Then why do you try to scare us with all those power plays?"  
 "I guess we're just human. I'm really afraid of you. We're like everybody else."  
 I took both of his hands in mine and raised them to my lips.  
 "Don't be afraid," I assured him. "Just don't be afraid."

We spent the night listening to music and playing cards. Jim woke several times and we talked to him, but I don't think he understood what we were saying. Martin, Jim's doctor finally came in from the shore where he had gone with Michael and the kids Steven and Erica. Steven might be coming to live with us soon. We were looking forward to his coming. There were so many things that we could learn from a boy of seventeen. By daybreak Martin told us that Jim's cardiometer had dropped to forty over thirty. He could try to jolt it electrically but that might shock Jim's whole system. die. He's seen too many changes. We're not at that point that we could rejuvenate him, you know, wash away all that shit that came from living so long under old Sexism. He's only been able to come out in the last fifteen years or so. He's seventy-two now. Sometimes it's just better to let people go. Do his friends know that he is dying?"  
 "Yes," Eric said, "they'll be here soon."  
 Suddenly Jim called out to us. We hurried into his room where Mark was already. Jim was very happy to see Martin there. We talked for a while, the five of us all together. It was starting to be a beautiful day. The cardiometer was at 35/30. Jim said that it was indeed wonderful of all of us to be there. We talked about music for a while. On the tape machine that Eric had brought in a week before, we played Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante and some old Bob Dylan songs that Jim liked because they reminded him of his youth.  
 30/25  
 He was speaking very softly. "The warmth of you all being here will really last me forever."  
 I was really struck by this. It was the last thing Jim said to us. He lapsed into a coma. 20/15.  
 Mark was overwhelmed with grief. The three of them had lived together for about twenty years, even before Jim had come out publicly. I kissed Mark and we held each other. Eric seemed lost in thought. I remembered what I had said about being each other's children. We went over and talked to him. Eric had been very strong and now I don't think he was able to really understand that Jim was dead. He had not released any of his feelings and they were there waiting to be felt. The nurses were starting to make their daily rounds. They left Jim's room alone.  
 The whole community came out for the funeral. There was very slow dancing and chanting. Eric had become very joyous. We planted three cherry trees in Jim's honour and had a communal meal of rice and apples.

# INTRO 475 HEARING

A HUSTLE

by,  
"Field Mouse"

I missed round one but I was there for the second and third *Public Hearings On INTRO 475*. The third was the final hearing.

I appeared at both hearings in straight drag, collar properly pressed, necktie, suit & vest! I wanted to be "respectable" for my testimony. I was prepared to give personal testimony to that gang of white heterosexual con-artists which calls itself the City Council and presumes to decide our fate!

I was never given a chance to testify. This despite a promise by Sharison, the "Chairman" that "Everyone who wishes to will be given a chance to testify." All those who wanted to testify at the second hearing but did not get a chance were supposed to be the very first to speak at the third hearing. It was a lie and a pretence at democracy.

At the second hearing there was much personal testimony by Gay people including a Lesbian who came out publicly for the first time in her life! We scored heavily. The manipulators had to change the rules.

The maximum time allowed for testimony was changed from 10 to 5 minutes. Gay people would now have to cut their testimony short. But still Pig Sharison was willing to extend the time limit for a straight history professor, but a Gay brother had to fight for his right to give a complete testimony.

The majority of testimony at the third hearing was by straight people debating what they should do with us! This included an hour and a half of bantering back and forth between a Mayor's aide and the Pigs on the council. It came off as thinly disguised Presidential politics.

By the time they got around to Gay people it was late afternoon. We were famished by their bourgeois rule forbidding food in City Hall except for those privileged to quietly recess into their private chambers for refreshments. At the day's end Pig Demarco was still fresh as a dandy daisy. For us there was no lunch hour. Any Gay person who left the hearing room was not allowed back in.

## FLAMING FAGGOTS CONTINUED

**ON TERMINOLOGY:** Since presenting our demands, through the process of consciousness-raising, we have discovered that most of us have always been bothered by the word "gay". We felt it trivialized us: we're not gay, we're angry. We also noticed how women in Daughters of Bilitis and those splitting from GLF (because of its anti-womanism) were both reaffirming their right to the single proud word, Lesbian, to describe themselves, even though this had once been used abusively against them. We disliked the two-word phrase "gay men." It made clown of us. Male homosexual.. was hard to keep saying over and over.

Then we learned that the word "faggot" originated from our persecution in the middle ages: when a woman was to be burned as a witch, men accused of homosexuality were bound together in bundles, mixed in with bundles of kindling wood (faggots) at the feet of the witch, and set on fire "to kindle a flame foul enough for a witch to burn in." So the enemy has known all along the danger in strong women and gently men, has known that both present the same threat to masculine domination. That is why we have decided to embrace "faggot" as our one-word description, complete with a piece of our buried history unearthed, and accept it positively as a tool to cut through our last ties to "passing" - those of us who were in the privileged position of having such an option.

What is most infuriating is that even if INTRO 475 is passed, it will give Gay people scant protection against the harrassment and abuse we suffer daily. The bill gives no protection to the "obvious Homosexual". So we will still be expected to act straight on the job. And Transvestites are left out altogether! Such an outrage - even if we win we still lose! In either case the Gay People end up as stepping stones for Mr. Politician. He toys with our feelings as if they were a ploy for his ambitions.

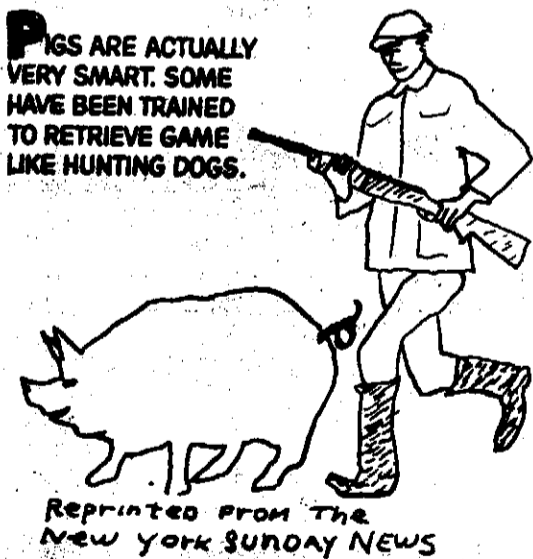
At the second hearing DeMarco and Sharison went into a heavy Transvestite baiting number in order to turn the "respectable" Homosexuals against the flamboyant. But we remained strong and united as was demonstrated when the pigs tried to rip off a group of transvestites. They were surrounded by angry Gays and forced to release our half-sisters who proudly walked to the front and took seats in the first row.

At the third hearing the pigs tried to bust a half-sister for using the "ladies" room. This was after the Transvestites were warned by the pigs not to use the "lady's" room or the "men's" room. Again the arrest was prevented by Gay Unity and Gay Power.

When Pig Sharison announced that the hearing was adjourned and there would be no further public hearings, we realized that we had been taken, A cordon of helmeted TPF appeared to protect that pack of corrupt bloodsuckers from the righteous wrath of angry Faggots and Lesbians.

What lessons can we learn from the INTRO 475 hearings?

The first lesson is that we can never win at a game where the rules change at the whim of the Dealer, and the cards are stacked to boot. Why should we be puzzled and wonder, "What did I do wrong?" In a crooked card game the mark cannot win no matter what tactics are employed. The only thing to do with a cheat is to knock the cards out of his hand.



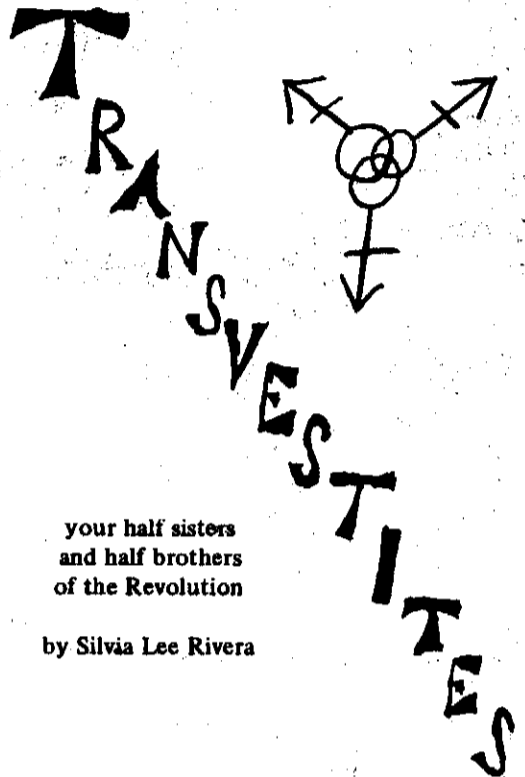
We call ourselves faggots in the name of Jacques DeMolay, in the name of Bernard de Vado, tortured by fire applied to the soles of the feet to such an extent that few days afterwards the bones of his heels dropped out, in the nineteen brothers from Perigord tortured and starved for six months running, in the name of ten thousand Knights Templar burned at the stake for the crime of homosexuality, in the name of all nameless brothers still tortured in mental hospitals and in psychiatrists' offices by aversion therapy, shock treatment, apomorphine, and succinylcholine.

We are flaming with the fire of final revolution. We are not ashamed of being faggots. We are proud.

FAGGOTS UNITE TO SMASH HETERO-SEXISM

Transvestites are homosexual men and women who dress in clothes of the opposite sex. Male transvestites dress and live as women. Half sisters like myself are women with the minds of women trapped in male bodies. Female transvestites dress and live as men. My half brothers are men with male minds trapped in female bodies. Transvestites are the most oppressed people in the homosexual community. My half sisters and brothers are being raped and murdered by pigs, straights, and even sometimes by other uptight homosexuals who consider us the scum of the gay community. They do this because they are not liberated.

Transvestites are the most liberated homosexuals in the world. We have had the guts to stand up and fight on the front lines for many years before the gay movement was born.



your half sisters  
and half brothers  
of the Revolution

by Silvia Lee Rivera

As far back as I can remember, my half sisters and brothers liberated themselves from this fucked up system that has been oppressing our gay sisters and brothers - by walking on the man's land, defining the man's law, and meeting with the man face to face in his court of law. We have liberated his bathrooms and streets in our female or male attire. For exposing the man's law we are thrown into jail on charges of criminal impersonation; that dates back as far as the Boston Tea Party when the English dressed up as Indians because the motherland had raised the taxes. We have lost our jobs, our homes, friends, family because of lack of understanding of our inner-most feelings and lack of knowledge of our valid life style. They have been brainwashed by this fucked up system that has condemned us and by doctors that call us a disease and a bunch of freaks. Our family and friends have also condemned us because of their lack of true knowledge.

By being liberated my half sisters and brothers and myself are able to educate the ignorant gays and straights that transvestism is a valid life style.

Remember the Stonewall Riots? That first stone was cast by a transvestite half sister June 27, 1969 and the gay liberation movement was born. Remember that transvestites and gay street people are always on the front lines and are ready to lay their lives down for the movement. Remember the transvestite half sister that was out gathering signatures for the Homosexual Civil Rights Bill petition and was arrested on 42nd Street. Remember the N.Y.U. sit-in? Transvestites and gay street people held the fort down and didn't want to give in that Friday night after we had been removed from the sub-cellar.

So sisters and brothers remember that transvestites are not the scum of the community; just think back on the events of the past two years. You should be proud that we are part of the community and you should try to gain some knowledge of your transvestite half brothers and sisters and our valid life style. Remember we started the whole movement that 27th day of June of the year 1969!

Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries meet Friday at 6:00 p.m. at Marsha Johnson's, 211 Eldridge Street, New York, N.Y., apt. 3. For information write: S.T.A.R., c/o Marsha Johnson, at the same address.

Power to all the people!