

HERE'S LAUGHING WITH YOU - 1983

As last year's pictorial report ended, our hero (yours truly) had adopted a strange pair of Siamese-twin prostitute friends, a 38-year-old black transvestite and a 19-year-old blond star of male burlesque. Indeed, that photo of Willie's buns making dollars got rave reviews everywhere. Pirated copies of my Xmas letter were even swiped from the printers and circulated among strangers.

Now, it's December 21st, 1983, a whole year later--the Solstice. Tomorrow the sun slowly starts its comeback. The days grow longer, heralding the eventual coming of spring and the rebirth of life. The very thought of it fills my atheist heart with joy.

John Klar, my first real apprentice, my on-again off-again manager for many years, came back to work...and then stormed out again. Not once but two times. This time though, he's probably gone for good.

David Combs, my ex-wife transformed into a clone-style butch husband, took command (that's his worst trait) and became manager after John Klar left. The shop next door became available and I signed a new 5-year lease which doubled my shop space and increased my monthly rent from \$600 to \$1800. One month later, in mid-april, after ten thousand dollars worth of renovations, the new half of the shop opened. To all who saw, it was obvious that David Combs's decorative genius had transformed my shiteating little shop into an elegant, classy emporium!

Now, eight months later, the final tally is in. Those passers-by with their gold American Express Cards have given me a 15-thousand-dollar a year raise. And they did it just in time to keep me in the Republican Party. Haven't you always wanted to be a "fat cat" Republican?

Meanwhile, back at "Hotel Wicker," Hoboken's finest "house," domestic life maintained its usual exciting pace. Marsha was flown out to Los Angeles by a 21-year-old friend/hustler who'd latched onto a good sugar daddy and wanted his dear old friend, the great Earth Mother herself, with him.

Willie, the deserted child, the now-severed Siamese twin, soon followed with the help of a naive kindly gentleman who wasn't even a john and who, therefore, made the mistake of taking a weekend fling with Willie too seriously. One week and a thousand dollars later, he must have realized his mistake.

When that poor fool patted me on the shoulder and assured me he'd "take good care of" Willie, I laughed and predicted Willie would be leaving him sooner than he thought. Two or three days after reaching San Francisco, Willie was on his way to Los Angeles to reclaim that wonderful, gentle, lovable person he called "my nigger."

But Marsha was living the good life in Beverly Hills--money, drugs, good company--and the State of California was giving her \$460 a month which she used to call all her friends in N.Y. every day. She wasn't about to give all that up and come back home with that little baby blonde sadist from Baltimore.

Willie hates buses. We always argued when he took Amtrack to Washington or Baltimore. Double the price to get there one hour sooner. So, when he called and wanted to come home, I did what I told him I was going to do when he left-- I sent him a cross-country Greyhound bus ticket. And a few weeks later, when Marsha decided to come home, I did the same--proving once & for all that I am an equal opportunity cheapie.

Meanwhile, David Combs still refused to have anything to do with Hoboken. Why, with all those hustlers lolling about and an occasional old man popping through the front door to make a \$50 donation, he couldn't handle it.

As the new shop blossomed, his income jumped enough for him to get his own \$500 mo. studio apartment a couple blocks from my place which he shares with his new (one-time fem fatale) lover who sells very expensive handbags (\$200 to \$1000) to social matrons at Macy's.

Oh, these divorces are expensive. It costs more to keep those bitches out of your house than it does to support them while they're there. But it's worth it. Eight hours of customer aggravation and fighting with each other at work is quite enough for each of us.

Meanwhile, small and big changes have happened at home. Marsha still gets arrested every now and then for hooking in drag on the West Side Highway but the NYC jails are so full they let her go after a couple days. We're truly thankful for the crime wave.

Willie's no longer just a quickly-getting-fat-stripper at the theater. Now he's cashier, runs the front office and is manager of the whole damn operation whenever the owner is out. I knew that boy had a future if he'd just get up off his knees and get to doing some real work.

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Now, when those trolls hit on him, he's known to give grand attitude-- Sticking his nose in the air, he pushes them away and snidely informs them, "I'm sorry. You've made a mistake. I'm not one of the dancers here." Now, is there anything more hypocritical & sanctimonious than a reformed whore?

Willie's mother and sister came up from Baltimore for a visit this year. I drove them all around town & we smoked some pot together. (Now, why couldn't I have a momma like that?) She knows all the dirt, but has recently begun taking Roman Catholicism very seriously. Nevertheless, she is a wonderful, loving person and it was a real pleasure to have her visit us. But, why is it I always end up meeting these boys' mothers--counseling them on the phone, assuring them that their boys are fine. (I'm not talking so much about Willie's mother here, but others.) If only I was as popular with some of these boys (I use the term 'boys' for everyone under 30) as I am with their mothers, I'd have it made.

Yes, it's been an exciting and wonderful year. "Not-dead-yet" Peter (pictured in last year's newsletter) has apparently made a nearly complete recovery from what everyone erroneously thought was Aids --the disease, not the diet plan--and is back working again.

TV producers have been hounding my doorstep getting old photos, radio tapes, home movies, etc., to be used in the "Before Stonewall" documentary and another one being made for HBO. Both are due out this spring. And my early exploits have gotten a few pages of attention in the history books about the gay movement released this year.

The best was SEXUAL POLITICS, SEXUAL COMMUNITIES, The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970 by John D'Emilio and published by The University of Chicago Press. pp158-162

I had a lot of fun doing the flea markets this past spring & summer and had great help from two friends/houseguests/part-time assistants - George Flimlin and David Benton, both of whom should have gotten proper thanks and credit in last year's letter as well.

The past couple months have been wildly insane. I still have to redo the old part of the store this year. After much searching, I've hired Mark Mullin as my new assistant manager & he's turning out to be a real whiz. Last year, I only managed to spend a few days with my old friend Jack Nichols in Coca Beach, Florida. But this year, I'm going to find time to really play.

Especially since I've found someone who's a lot of fun to play with these past couple months. He's a Virginian named Michael Sizemore. He's earning his way as an apprentice lampmaker at the shop and is learning quickly. Vases full of flowers, Garfield toys, stuffed Teddy bears and a growing assortment of woven baskets and countless little boxes are popping up everywhere in our bedroom.

There's nothing like having a 19-year-old, 5 ft 10", 118-pound fiancée to make those unwanted pounds of middle-aged fat melt away-- especially one that never wants to eat and whose vivacious, stimulating presence makes going to sleep irrelevant. I've lost ten pounds already & hope to waste away to almost nothing his coming year.

So, my improvised alternate "family" is complete now. I still have "the maid and the little(?) boy," as John Klar described it last year. But now I may have found "the bitch" too. (ha) And all four of us are going to Puerto Rico for ten days around the end of January. Puerto Rico will never be the same and neither will we.

On February 3rd, I'll be 46--really old, really tired, near death really. On February 8th, Michael turns 20. They can't arrest me, can they? I mean, Justice Douglas did it. Strom Thurmond did it. Now I want to do it! If it ended tomorrow, I'd have no regrets--only fond memories.

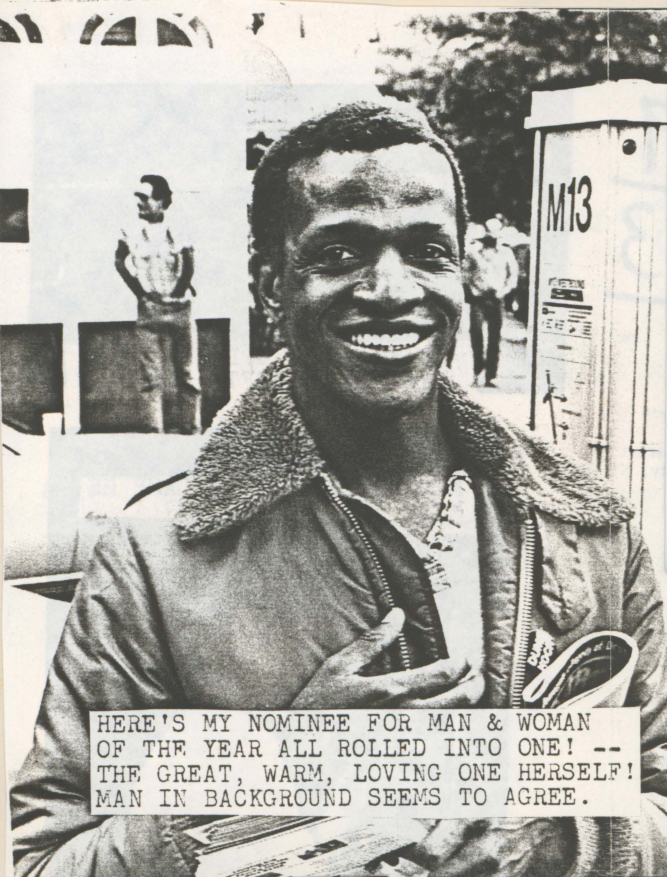
So friends, we spin on into 1984. What wonders the new year must hold. I've not written much this past year. This, dear readers, is 1983's only glimpse of my staggering talent. Next year I must commence writing the chronological story of my boring life. Do you think "Hustler, John, & Madam" would be a good working title?

Hope I haven't grossed all you good, stupid, ignorant Christians and Jews out with all this saucy living. If I have, I don't know what to say--except to quote a note Sandy & David scrawled inside my Xmas Card this year...and to pass the wish along to all of you.

"Here's hoping," they wrote, "you have an ageist, sexist, politically incorrect Christmas full of good drugs, sex, young boys and lots of money! Now, doesn't that just say it all!

See you next year!

Paula Weber



HERE'S MY NOMINEE FOR MAN & WOMAN OF THE YEAR ALL ROLLED INTO ONE! -- THE GREAT, WARM, LOVING ONE HERSELF! MAN IN BACKGROUND SEEMS TO AGREE.



YOU CAN BUY THIS SERIOGRAPH OF MARSHA BY ANDY WARHOL FOR ONLY \$2,000. FOR \$10 MORE, YOU CAN BUY MARSHA.



A TEDDY BEAR FOR EVERY BOY. A BOY FOR EVERY TEDDY BEAR. I WANT TO BE A TEDDY BEAR.



WILLIE TRIED TO REPLACE ROLLERINA ONE SUMMER DAY. SKATED AROUND THE VILLAGE ALL DAY WITH THIS MOP ON HIS HEAD BUT HE WASN'T DISCOVERED!

OH, SWEET MEMORIES - AN OLD PHOTO BROUGHT BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND.



WHEN STRIPPERS LOSE THEIR LOOKS, THEY MUST RESORT TO COMEDY. WILLIE SHOWS US HOW.

KEN FITZGIBBON - A MAN WITH MONEY & IMPECCABLE TASTE. HE KNOWS WHAT THOSE BOYS WANT. WE USED TO GO HUNTING TOGETHER.



MONEY! MONEY! MONEY EVERYWHERE. WILLIE CLOWNS ON HIS WAY OUT TO WORK.






WILLIE & MARSHA WRESTLING TOGETHER ON RUG IN FEB. '82

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DOUBLE-SIZE UPLIFT. OLD PART IS ON LEFT, NEW PART IS ON RIGHT

 Randy Wicker's Uplift Inc. 506 Hudson Street New York City, NY 10014



SUPER-STAFFERS, JOHN HELIKER IN MIDDLE, MARK MULLIN ON RIGHT. JIM, JOHN'S LOVER, LEANS IN ON LEFT.



MICHAEL HOLDING A LAMP HE MADE FOR HIS MOTHER.



GEORGE HOLDS MY LITTLE TINKER.



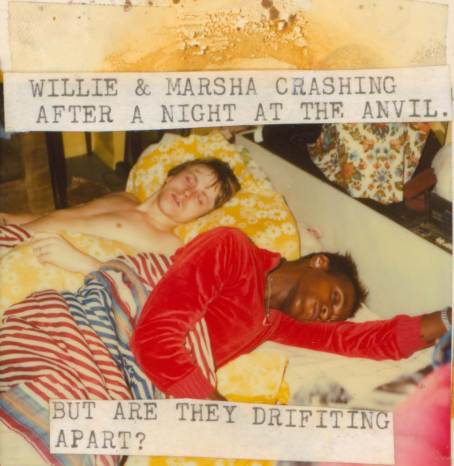
JOHN KLAR STORMED OUT AGAIN. HE IS MISSED.



COULD AN OLD FLAME & NEW ONE GET ALONG ANY BETTER?



ME IN FRONT OF NEW STORE



WILLIE & MARSHA CRASHING AFTER A NIGHT AT THE ANVIL.

BUT ARE THEY DRIFTING APART?

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