

Autobiography Notes, 2015-2016

By Jennifer Gann

Chapter One - Baby Boy?

"Mother is the Name of God
which comes from the mouths of babes."
— Hindu Scripture.

I was born on October 6, 1969 at Parkview Community Hospital, a reflection of divine life. My mother and father both came from typical white American working-class families of Scots-Irish, German, and Native American ethnic background.



Growing up in suburban Riverside, California, my father left my mom and I when I was only a year old. So I never knew much about him, other than that his side of the family were from Tennessee. He was a blacksheep of the family, a slacker and a loner who drank a lot. He died in West Palm Beach, Florida.

So, I was raised by my mother, Peggy, who later remarried my step-father, Jim. My early childhood was not so bad, spending the holidays,

Christmas and Thanksgiving, at my Nana's house, with aunts and Uncles and cousins. We had big turkey dinners, baked ham, and pumpkin pies! 🍁

My great-grandmother, Dolores, and her family were Okies who migrated out west during the Great Depression. Her father, George Davis, was a Cherokee Indian half-breed from Missouri.

My mother was a Christian woman who took me to church and Sunday school at Calvary Chapel of Riverside. However, my step-father, Jim, was an abusive heroin addict who made my life hell. I hated him.

I found solace in visiting my step-sister, Adrienne, who lived with her Jewish and Italian grandparents. She was a year older than me and a pretty girl, I worshipped her. I always enjoyed playing in her room, wearing her make-up and clothes, and wished I could be like her. I just knew my sister:  a feminine  girl with wavy blond hair and bright-

colored eyes, was certainly better than me — a shy and awkward young "boy." This is likely the first time I experienced a desire to be a girl, at least subconsciously this fleeting desire began to manifest as I began to gravitate toward a female gender identity, I was 5 or 6 years old.

I developed a similar relationship attachment to my girl cousin Dayna, who was a decade older than me. We spent lots of time together at her parents home playing around, and on summer vacations in Newport Beach, where my parents and grandma would rent a beach house or rooms each year.

Then my baby sister Vanessa, was born in 1978. A year later, we moved from Riverside to Huntington Beach, California, in Orange County where my step-dad had a job as a machinist. We moved into a three bedroom/one bathroom house in a housing track across the street from the Westminster Mall.

i had earlier on in my childhood already developed some feminine proclivities, such as an obsessive fascination with women's shoes. This first started in first grade elementary school, where my teacher Mrs. Eggley (phonetic), wore high-heels and disciplined me for playing with other girls shoes in the class.

In second grade, when i became drawn like a magnet to my friend Michelle's black and white bowling-type shoes and began to play with them, my teacher Mrs. Bonner grabbed me and dragged me roughly out of the classroom. She escorted me a few rooms down to the janitor's mop room, took one of her own shoes off and spanked me hard for a couple of minutes until i screamed and cried hysterically.

"You are not to play with girl's shoes!" she scolded me. "You're a boy!" When i apologized profusely and begged her to stop, she hugged and comforted me. "I'm sorry".

she said. Then she took me back to class, and made me sit next to her chair like a little puppy dog. I was confused, I had no concept in my young mind of what I did, or why it was wrong...

My mother took me to see a child psychologist, but in the mid-1970's there was little known about transsexualism, or clinical diagnosis and treatment of Gender Dysphoria. My feminine desires only grew stronger, as I grew up surrounded by female relatives, for whom I had a strong preference over the male family members.

I was the middle-child between two sisters, older and younger. I was just a "baby boy" (?) who my aunts used to coddle. "Oh! He has such pretty eyes!" the ladies would exclaim.

All I knew when I was young was that I loved my Mother, and she loved me unconditionally. This defined my childhood, I was her baby boy and tried to conform with this upbringing.