The Marsha P. Johnson March

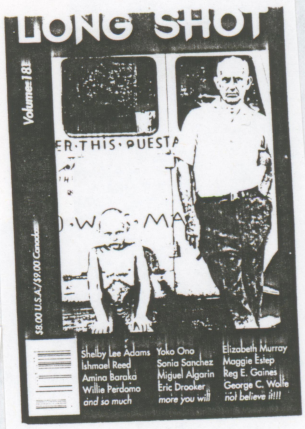
BOBBY MILLER

Miss Marsha P. Johnson could march.
a true 1-2-3-4 step in place step march.
She marched that march out of Hoboken
and into the Big Apple
when it was still called the Big Mary.
She marched that march up Christopher Street
to Sheridan Square
where she carved out her place in history,
where she sat morning to night and panhandled.
asking in that familiar rasp of a voice,
"got any spare change for a dying queen?"

Miss Marsha P. Johnson marched
across Eighth Street
down St. Marks Place,
headed towards Club 82,now the Bijoux,
but then when the feathers and sequins still ruled there.
Marsha P. dressed casual on Easters eve,
wearing pink and white easter bunny ears,
Easter basket in hand,
marching that march,
smiling a big Easter bunny smile,
the sidewalk parted in awe.
behold, Miss Marsha P. Johnson.

She marched that march
up Eleventh Avenue,
into the parked cars
of lonely married men from New Jersey
looking for a taste of something special,
she was it.

Miss Marsha P.
as in pay it no mind
free as the wind at her back
on the coldest of winter eves.
She marched that march
onto the stage of life
and sang a simple song and spoke a simple tale
to the people.
A tale of hope in darkness.
A tale of love and acceptance.
A tale about the importance of charity.
Miss Marsha P. Johnson
spent the day and early evening
working the crowds at Sheridan Square
only to walk a block to a sister
in greater need than she
and inquire "how ya' doin' kid?"



"Not too good Miss Marsha,
I only got a dollar fifty so far.."
and Marsha's daily take became hers.
She'd save enough for dinner
head back to her spot on the sidewalk
and start over working the late shift.

Miss Marsha P. Johnson
marched that march
into the lives of those
who knew and loved her.

Marsha P. Johnson
found floating face down
in the Hudson River
one hot July morning.

No one knows for certain what happened.

But you can place your bets
that she went out
the same way that she came in,
with a fight
with a faith
that carried her over to the other side
where she marches still.
and those streets
so paved with gold,
will hear the glorified click of her heels
forever

while she watches over the children of the streets,
while she marches her way into history.

Photographer Unknown
Marsha P. Johnson

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