

HUMOR

Men in uniform

High heels, low morals

So here it is, 2002, and I must say I'm just a little disappointed. Having grown up watching 1950s and '60s sci-fi movies, I was certain we'd all be wearing those unisex jumpsuits by now. But the only people wearing them are prisoners on road crews and Robert Downey Jr. when he appears in court.

What's more, unisex dressing is still a one-way street: Sure, a woman can wear pants, but a man can't wear a dress unless he's a judge, a priest or an Islamic fundamentalist.

Me...I've been working up to the idea gradually.

After a period of teen rebellion (picture Boy George in *Flashdance*), any clothes of mine that seemed too queer went, well, back in the closet. Only after I turned 30 did I feel comfortable enough to make gayer fashion choices like rolling up my shirtsleeves until they fit tight on my biceps. Yeah, I know it's cheating, but since I'm gay and Italian, I figure it's my birthright.

Following the gay principle of Jeans as Marketing, I began to choose pants that barely had enough room in them for me, let alone my wallet. When the bulge in my front pocket from my keys made me look like I was wearing a colostomy bag, I chose not to buy bigger jeans but to invest instead in a purse.

That's right, a purse—not a man bag, not a satchel, but a purse. It's not like some beaded clutch you'd expect Joan Crawford to pull a compact out of and powder her nose, but it's a purse nonetheless.

So when the invitation to my friends' annual Red Dress Party arrived, I figured I was ready.

Every year I make a pilgrimage to Patsy's in Palm Springs, a consignment store for the clothing of the Beverly Hills elite, and I always walk away with incredible bargains—great stuff, like a pink sports jacket that used to belong to Wayne Newton. If ever there were a place to find a red dress, Patsy's is it.

The store is run by Patsy Fowler and her mad son Frank. Frank needed a wheelchair after a recent medical procedure and was enjoying freaking customers out either by sitting on his foot so it looked like his leg was amputated or just parking himself in the corner and drooling.

I immediately found a silky, jitterbuggy number (size 10, if you're interested) and a pair of gold sandals (size 11) because heels do so much for the line of the dress. My partner, Floyd, had more trouble but eventually settled on a wine-colored strapless with a black caribou bodice.

"Do you think this color counts as red?" he asked.

"The lining's red," Frank answered. "It'll count

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC
by Marc Acito



as soon as you pull your skirt up over your head."

Guess he's been to this kind of party before.

I was pretty impressed I could find a dress that fit so well, but once I arrived at the party I realized the world must be full of gowns made for husky women that fit slender gay men perfectly.

The outfits were divided in two basic categories: Sluts and Housewives. Since muscles never go out of fashion, the guys who hit the gym regularly squeezed themselves into dresses that left so little to the imagination they could only be called Wienie Wraps. A no-tuck policy prevailed, and a good many solved the visible panty line dilemma by simply going without

panties. A few more who started out with panties lost them before the night was over.

The more full-figured boys opted for a Republican National Convention Chic—y'know, Nancy Reagan red but in Barbara Bush's size. One fella even saved money by borrowing his mother's dress. Of course, the savings will be offset by the extra therapy sessions he'll need.

Footwear choices were divided pretty evenly between heels and combat boots. The combat boots are a good look, but they're so last season.

It didn't take long for many of the guys to realize it's much easier to get up someone's skirt than it is to get into his

pants, and things turned pretty randy. I took to the dance floor, strutting in my size

11 sandals, flipping my skirt like Tina Turner and boogying with a delightfully insane woman who would only answer to the name Poontang O'Plenty.

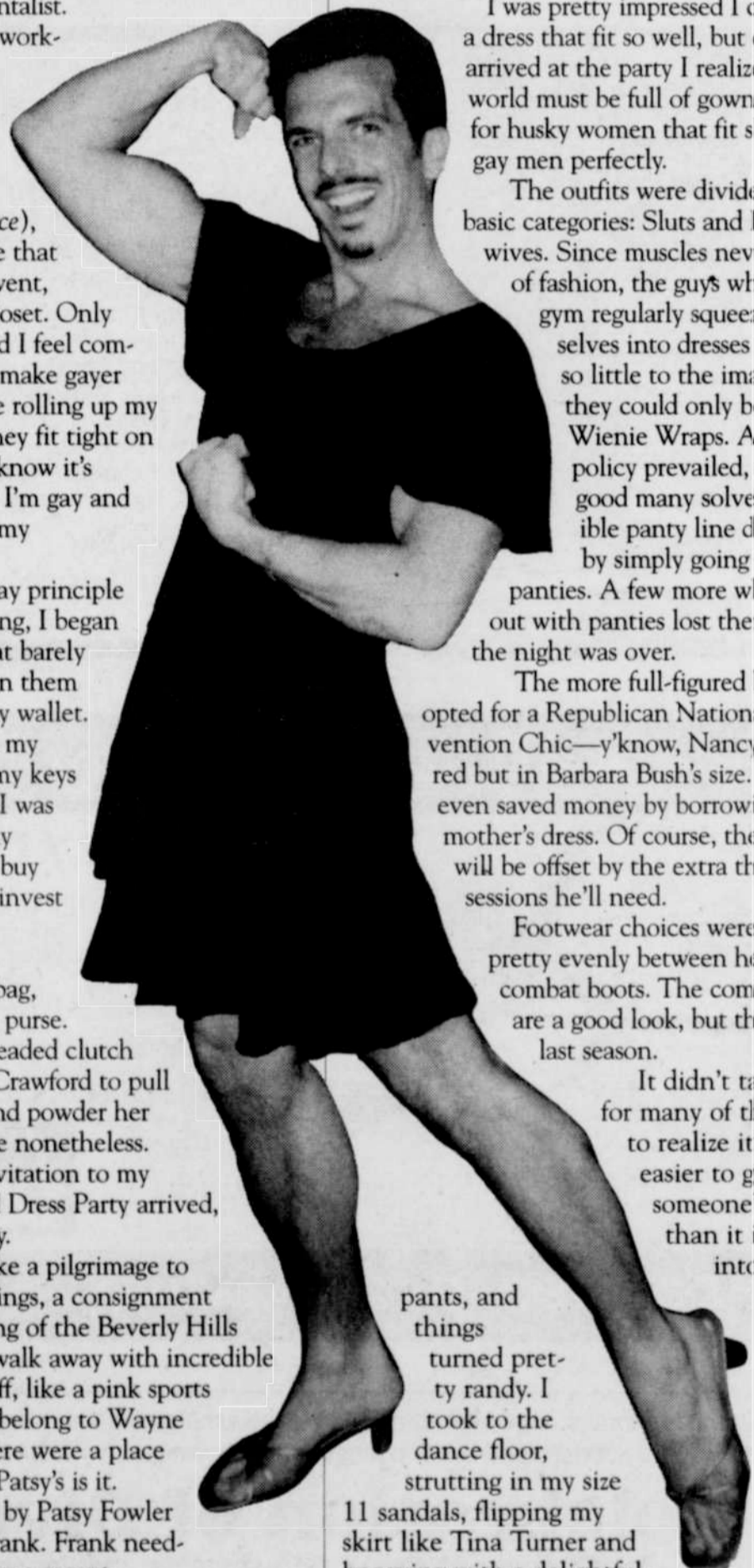
"Well if you're Poontang O'Plenty, who am I then?" I asked.

She smiled and said: "That's easy. You're Scarlett O'Harlot."

I must say, freed of my pants and of my identity, I have never felt more pretty and witty and gay.

And that, my friends, is The Gospel According to Marc. ■

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