**Interview with Jessica Leigh Foster**

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Interviewer: Hi.

Jessica Leigh Foster: Hello.

Interviewer: How are you?

Jessica Leigh Foster: I’m doing well, how about you?

Interviewer: Good. Okay, hold on. Let me pull up these questions. Alright, so here we go.

Jessica Leigh Foster: Okey-doke.

Interviewer: So, when did you first hear about drag and what was your initial reaction to it?

Jessica Leigh Foster: I was maybe like 13 and honestly, I didn't really know what to think about it because, I mean, I don’t know. Growing up like my father was Baptist so I didn't really, I don’t know, I guess I just kind of thought it was bad.

Interviewer: When did you start performing as a drag artist and why did you start performing?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Probably when I became 21 because I like to drink. And, I mean, a lot of times they get to buy you like, free drinks and shit, so it’s like win-win, you know? Plus, I get to, like, do my make-up and stuff like that. And it's kind of invigorating, what are you laughing at baby girl?

Interviewer: Alright, question three how did your family, friends and other loved ones receive you becoming a drag artist?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Baby, they don’t know. Honey, like I said, we come from a religious background, so everything’s low key. I mean my grandma still asks if I have like a girlfriend, so yeah. It’s just kind of on the DL right now. I mean, they don’t really want me to drink either, because, you know, but I mean…

Interviewer: I understand, where does your drag name come from?

Jessica Leigh Foster: To be honest, it's kind of hard to remember, because I'm pretty sure I just dressed up, like not like in drag, but I just kind of like wore, a little bit more feminine clothes, and I just got really drunk with my friends one night, under the table. Okay. And um, okay. I think there was this one dude and I like asked him, I was like, if I was a girl, what would you call me? And he was like, Jessica. And I was thinking, I was like, that is the most basic ass white girl name. But I mean I like, I was fine with it cause even he was… it was fine, but, and I don't know, I think the other part, like I really liked the movie Silence of the Lambs and I really liked Jodie Foster and like I kind of thought Leigh was like cool. You know, so like Jessica Leigh Foster.

Interviewer: I like it.

Jessica Leigh Foster: Thanks.

Interviewer: Okay. So, there are a lot of terms for types and styles with drags, from drag queens and drag king to glamour queen and others. Are there any particular labels you would use to characterize your drag or what kind of drag do you do or style of drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Honestly, I think it would be more like traditional then anything. I don’t know. Labels I think are good and bad. I don’t know, like, it, kind of defines who we are as people. But at the same time I don't want to be put in a box. So, I don’t know. I guess like, like I said, I would be more like traditional, but I would be open to like doing anything.

Interviewer: Right. Okay. Who has or what has influenced your drag? Hmm.

Jessica Leigh Foster:  Honestly, like, watching RuPaul's Drag Race, like in my bedroom growing up, as like a secret. I get to watch all these fine, fine queens and like honestly, like, RuPaul, just in general, like she was a fucking queen and she slayed. So, I guess I would say like her, but at the same time I think our styles are a little bit different. But I think from each drag queen that I watch on that show. Some of them are crusty ass bitches. Let me just say that one, two, some of them have like real stuff to say. So, I guess everyone influences me. Plus, I think like some of the old bit- like, bitties in my church, well, like, what they would wear and like how they did their makeup, I would just multiply it by 10. I'm like, that's how we do.

Interviewer: Okay. Do you consider your drag political? Why or why not?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Hmm. I don't think so. I think I'm more just like kind of like in entertainment, cause, I like to make people laugh even though I don't like them. So, I mean I don't think it's political. I think you can make political statement with it. And I know that a lot of people do and I'm honestly like down for that. Like that's so cool. Like, the fact that we can like come together as like a community and we can show that we're not transgender, but we can support transgender people. Like I just think that's amazing. And then, I mean it's kinda like we're living like a double life. Like you'd come home, and you take off all the makeup, even the lights drag. And I just think that it opens so many doors for people and so many people in our community. And like with my, a couple of my straight friends, like they were not okay with me being gay. Sorry if you couldn't tell. But when I took him to a drag show, not one that I was performing at, it kind of opened their eyes a little bit. So in a sense I think it was political, and in a sense I think it's kind of eye opening. So take it how you want.

Interviewer: I like that.

Jessica Leigh Foster: Oh, I look crusty. My robes, they show money. People ask for this blushy cheek. But Hun, no.

Interviewer: Can you talk about what your life is like as a drag artist?

Jessica Leigh Foster: I mean this is not going to be submitted to any like, like you know, this is just for your school, right? Okay. Honestly, it's a ball. Like, I mean clearly there's like the bars where you get to drink at, and, you know, Ms. Foster likes to get a little litty litty, you know what I'm saying? So we like to do that. That's what we like to do. Um, we really have a good time and I just think as a drag queen in general, I'm just tired, like all the time. Like I party pretty much. Not every time, but like my liver is probably like shot, you know what I'm saying? Like, it's like dying. Sorry, my cat keeps playing with me and I'm like “Pussy, back off.” I guess dad was right, I was always a pussy magnet. But I think like in the scene, and in like, my performance it’s kind of like, I'm a whole new person. Like I'm still me but it's, I don't know how to explain it. I guess it's like a part of me that is deep inside, and only gets to come out during that time. So, I think as I live through that, I think it's a whole new experience through a whole new story. What was your question again? I got to be honest I was like, halfway paying attention.

Interviewer: Can you talk about your life as a drag artist?

Jessica Leigh Foster: As a drag artist. Yes. Lots of partying, lots of fun stuff. Not too many boys. There's kind of like this thing going on within our community where it's like mask only. So, and I think there are some dudes who like femme guys, but I mean when you're in drag, it's kind of like a turnoff for a lot of guys. So I that's kind of not fun. I mean it's, I do get that on the DL though. Like, I don't know, it's hard to explain. Like just living my life as a drag artist I think is kind of unique in its own way, just because so many people you like you can walk down the street and there could be like a drag artist, like a drag queen, a drag king, and you would never ever know. I mean there's so many movies and like there's so much culture around it and so many people don't know about it. And I think that's kind of sad. But at the same time, kind of cool, I guess you could say because it's kind of like her own thing and living that is also a cool thing. So I hope that answers your question.

Interviewer: How often do you perform and where do you perform?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Mm, maybe like twice a month and then Bar:PM in Saint Louis. So yeah, I really liked the Saint Louis area. I really liked The Grove, it’s a lot of fun, clearly that’s our area. But at the same time, like, Saint Louis, this just so much fun. Ow sorry. My cat is like killing my arm.

Interviewer: It’s okay, so what goes into getting ready for a performance?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Oh honey. Okay. First off, I have to have like two shots of either like straight up vodka, or like a whole bottle of vino because if I'm going to be like sitting down and doing my makeup for like, I don't know, 40 minutes. I don't like, glam up myself like too, too much, at least I don't think. But like, I don't know, I definitely want to be drunk for the beginning of it, that way, like time kind of goes like a little bit by faster and then you just start your makeup. I mean you just see all these beauty gurus and stuff like that, and I think everyone does their own thing. Like, with the contouring and like, do they like glue or tape their eyebrows and like, personally I glue it because I think that looks nicer. It blends in easier, and that way you can like contour to your eyeliner, eye shadows. So it just pops. You know what I’m saying? And after that I kind of just like, hmm, I just kind of go into this zone where, yeah, I guess it’s kind of hard to explain, because I just go into the zone. Like I'm kind of halfway buzzed, but we're just like becoming a fucking goddess, you know? So honey, you laughing at me again. I don't understand what is so damn funny. I'm just living my life. Okay. I'm living my life, straight up.

Interviewer: Well, okay, we're about halfway through the interview.

Jessica Leigh Foster: Oh, halfway, girl, that is fast.

Interviewer: So how do you identify insurance terms of your sex, gender identity, and gender expression out of drag.

Jessica Leigh Foster: Out of drag? I Identify as male. And I'm clearly gay, although I think there's many people on this spectrum, and I can understand that, and like I think people need to be more open to that, like gender fluidness, and how amazing like gender neutral people can be, like, kind of doing this stuff. Because only as like a male dragging it up. Like you kind of get into this like facade of being female and like she, she, she, “Ooh, yes honey. Yes, sister.” And then, I mean, you still say these things like “Yes, sis. Ooh kill ’em sis,” like outside of it. But like I definitely have a penis and I'm down for it. And I mean, I like being called a boy, but I also like being called sis. So…

Interviewer: What pronouns do you use in and out of drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Sis, Sister, Huntie, Ms. Foster, Hey yo bitch, um, she, yeah, I mean like, I mean there's always those couple dudes who are outside the bar, and if they're not kind of like, with the thing, they’re kind of like, ooh, look at that fucking tranny. So then I get called a dude every now and then, but honestly, it doesn't bother me.

Interviewer: So, so how do you identify out of drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Just honey. I feel like you've already asked this question, but it's okay. I identify as a male, so…

Interviewer: I mean the pronoun.

Jessica Leigh Foster: Oh, as a pronoun he, you can just call me he. Or sir, I really like sir. Kind of feels like I'm s- oh what’s the word? Forget. I don’t care.

Interviewer: Has drag influenced your sex and gender identities?

Jessica Leigh Foster: I want to say no, but I feel like it definitely does like in little ways, because like sometimes like when you're with a dude and you're in drag, which it doesn't make it happen very often for me, but it does happen. But like when you're in drag and he's giving you that blow out, it's kind of like, I don't know, kind of like a double sided. Because like I would like to be called like, you're fucking queen when I'm on top of you. Okay. Like if I'm in that, like I got like all the makeup, I've got my hair, I'm like, Ooh, yes, Daddy, pull. Like, you know, but not too hard, because that shit took way too fucking long. Just a little. But I mean, and then when I'm kind of like out of drag, like, I don’t know. I call myself vers like versatile, like, you know what the top, vers, bottom thing. Okay. Um, I think more when I'm in drag I'm more bottom like, and it's, I guess it's like, with being with a religious background, like we kind of, I've kind of like, have ingrained in my mind that females submit. And like you, kind of, I think as a bottom you don't submit to your partner, but like you kind of give yourself over, and like you kind of allow someone to control the situation while you're in it. And it's kind of sexy. But when I'm in, when I'm out of drag, and I'm like kind of like, I guess, more male. I mean I definitely bottom again, because that shit feels good. But like I definitely, like I can, I can hang. I'm not hung, but that's okay. I don't know. I just, I really like those Latino boys because they always be hanging, and sometimes they uncut and that’s nice. So I would, I would definitely say more feminine. I think that I would identify more like sex wise, I, I’m still a male, but like gender in that moment, like in my head I'm kind of like, “Ooh, Ooh, I want your babies.”

Interviewer: Okay. So, how has drag impacted or changed you?

Jessica Leigh Foster: I think it's definitely changed my life because one, like I said, my liver is like dying, two, I think it's opened up a lot of doors for me. Like, I've definitely made some lifelong lasting friends, and, I think, with me being in the community like this. I don’t know, it's just like, it's kind of hard to explain to be honest. Yeah. I mean like how, how do you view me? Like from a non-drag perspective, you know? Yeah. So yeah.

Interviewer: Has drag impacted your confidence as a person when you are out of drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Honey, you cut out, what'd you say?

Interviewer: Has drag impacted your confidence as a person when you are an out of drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Oh, hell yeah. Oh hell yeah. When I was in like middle school and high school I was quiet as shit. Because like, I don’t know, I guess I was just kind of, like, scared to become whoever I really was. And then when I was in drag, like I, like I said earlier, I was like this whole new person and I can be whatever I wanted and I could say whatever I want and I could be a total raging, see you next Tuesday. Sorry Lord. But like I just kind of felt like I can be me, and I've noticed like as I progressed in this period of my life, like I've noticed that I've been more outspoken, I've been more fine with who I am. I've been more fine with how people are around me. Like if they don't like the LGBTQA community, like that's on them, I think that's wrong. But, at the same time I see myself and how I was when I was younger, so I can kind of halfway understand it as well. But for me, like confidence wise, knowing that I can walk into a place as an openly gay man and strut my stuff, and be fine with it, and not give a shit what people think about me or how I live my life. It's honestly been so freeing and the fact that like, I'm not saying that there are, but maybe they're like, maybe there's a little boy or a little girl out there and they're seeing me and they're seeing how I'm dressed in drag or out of drag. Say they can tell are their parents like, honey, you don't be like that man. He's so nasty. Oh, don't be like that. Well that's wrong. And yeah, they hear that it's wrong from their parents, but they can also see me living my life and how happy I look and how happy they can become, you know? So I think it's definitely like boosted my confidence and it's affected my life positively because I can affect others positively while being a bitch.

Interviewer: I love that. So how do you define drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: How do I define drag? I mean we all do drag, hashtag Birdcage. But like, I mean we all kind of do, because I think nearly every person on this planet, like they kind of have like this own mask that they hide behind. And not that I hide behind my drag, but I'm definitely like not my complete self, but I'm not-not myself. I don’t know, I don’t know if I'm making sense. But I think drag, to me, is just like a daily performance. Because life, you go through, I mean honestly, everyone's kind of fake. So when you're doing this, you're in drag and it's a fake and it's entertainment and it's a show and “ha-ha bitch, ooh, yes boy.” But I think at least to me, like I said, I think everyone does drag in their own way. Like with men, they wear shirts that are a little too tight, so they show their muscles or they wear pants that are a little too tight or they don't wear underwear with basketball shorts glass up. And then like with girls, like yeah, they may not be doing like the whole drag makeup, like where it's like over the top or even clown, like clown drag, like, hmm (inaudible). But there's definitely girls who like kind of use their makeup as a mask and they use it as a tool to help give, like build their confidence. So I think drag is a confidence booster and I think that it's a way of entertaining our daily lives and not even realizing it.

Interviewer: I really liked the definition. Okay. What do you think is the purpose of drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: To be honest, I don't know. Like I think, like I said, like people kind of like take it as they will. I think for me, like I said, I like it. The entertainment portion, I definitely liked the partying portion, but I got to be honest, I forgot your question halfway through. Sorry, I've been sipping on this. vino for a fat sec. So…

Interviewer: So, what do you think is the purpose of drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: The purpose of drag? The purpose of drag? Hmmm. I think it's, I think back to like the political statement. I think it's, I think some people use it as a political statement. Some people use it as entertainment. So, I don't know if it's like the purpose of it, being entertainment, or political or if it's like for me where it's kind of like freeing. So, I think it just depends on the person, or like in how the viewer like takes it honestly. Because I know when I first saw drag, I thought it was dirty, and I thought the meaning of it or like the purpose of it was like devil's work, and but now I mean clearly, it's not. So, I think it just depends on who you ask and the situation on their background and how drag and the history behind it has affected them and how they've seen it. So, I don't think you can put a purpose on something that is so fluid and open minding.

Interviewer: Do you think drag his sexual, why or why not? And if so, how or in what way?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Again, I think it just depends. Like for me, and I think for many drag queens, like there's definitely like sexual innuendos within each, like performance. And I think that's like kind of part of it most of the time. Like, if you know a guy who's a big dick, like you're definitely going to like talk about it. So, I won't say that it's about sex, but I will say that sex is incorporated with it, which I'm completely fine with, this honey. Like I said, I loves the pain so, and honestly like I went to a performance for another queen and I mean she had like these fake titties and they were huge and I was like, yes bitch, fucking slay, I don’t even like titties but girl! And like clearly that’s fucking sexual, because like men, like they see a pair of tatas and they're like, so yeah, I think a lot of drag queens, just incorporate sex into it. I don't think it gives off the vibe sex, because there's definitely drag queens who will, I mean they just do like lip sync performances and they're more for like the aesthetic and you don't have to talk about sex with them. And like I think, with some drag queens, that's pretty much like all they talk about. Like they want to be the slut, or they want to be the “ohh she’s a fucking crackhead ohh” like, you know what I'm saying? Cause you know crackheads like dick. So, I mean maybe not all of them but like every one that I've known. So like, some drag queens are crackheads and they definitely incorporate their sex with her performance. Because I mean after you take a hit and you get a little horny, so you just want to talk about your experiences, you know?

Interviewer: How do you feel about RuPaul's Drag Race?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Ooh Bitch. Depends on which season. Cause sometimes I'm just like, “Yes! I fucking live for it!” And then some seasons I'm like, “Hmm I can pass.” But I will say RuPaul, I think, has influenced me the most because growing up and like kind of hiding, and sneaking around watching it, because it's been, it's been awhile around for a while. Like I think it's just, kind of like an eye-opening experience for future drag queens are kids who were in the closet and they're like, “That looks like so much fun. Like, I would love to do that one day.” So I love the RuPaul's Drag Race, and like the idea behind it. I also love the fucking ’tudes, mm, honey. I love a good clap back. I love when the sisters have their claws out. Love it. Maybe because I'm a bitch. I don't know. I just, I don’t know. I think it's just been amazing TV show. It's good quality. It's family entertainment, because, I mean, think about it, like with little kids, they have like some of these like PBS shows and they're fucking boring, and the teach them their ABC’s when they could be watching RuPaul's Drag Race. I mean you learn about gender identity, you learn about gender fluidity, which are serious topics. But I mean, kids are smarter than what they seem. I mean they’re little fucking assholes, but like they’re smart. So, I think with RuPaul's Drag Race, and not only that, like you teach them social dynamics and like who's the fucking boss, and who's the queen, and like the pecking order and like, not that societies like a pecking order. Like I think it can teach little kids, and I think people in general, like how the world works. Like if you act like a bitch, you're, someone's going to act like a bitch back to you and like, yeah, I fucking live for it. But at the same time, like, you know, don't. At least to me because I will be a bitch to back to you and I don’t give a damn. Sorry, I just had to pet my pussy real quick.

Interviewer: She's so cute. What’s her name?

Jessica Leigh Foster: I know. Her name is Rosé because we do have some good vino. Yes. She just has the first name just like Madonna and Beyoncé. I mean, Beyoncé Knowles, but everyone knows her by Beyoncé.

Interviewer: Okay. Um, what do you think are the misconceptions people have about drag?

Jessica Leigh Foster: Like, I think everyone, not everyone, but I think a lot of people who are close minded and not open to the idea of it, I think they automatically, they're like, “Ooh, that person wants to be a female.” And that's disgusting. That's not necessarily the case. I think there are some drag queens who would be fine with becoming transgender or sometimes they do transition, like they find that they're more comfortable in that like state of mind and that's who they, who they feel they should be. And honestly, I'm, I'm for that. And I think a lot of people kind of get wrong because you brought up sex earlier and not every drag queen talks about sex, and not every drag queen cusses. I mean I do because again, I don't give a shit. But, like there's so many layers to it, and I think so many people just kind of like see it as a black and white situation where it's only this way or this thing. Like it can't be both. And there's, I just think that's kind of shitty. Because I mean, there are some queens who really do some good. I mean, they like raised money for like, I mean, Willam Belli, he is a straight fucking see you next Tuesday but, I love him. Oh my God, he's hilarious. And like, sorry, she, I live for her! Like she's honestly like, like with the Willam’s Beatdown. Yes, honey slay. Like, she just don't give a fuck. But she also like wrote a song for HIV awareness and for the AIDS run and AIDS walk. Like, I think that's amazing. And I, I could be wrong, but I'm pretty sure like RuPaul has donated like so much money to like just all these LGBTQ programs and like, there's so many queens who help with like The Trevor Project and I think people just don't see that. They just see drugs, alcohol, dicks, tits, and like it's all a good time. Which, I mean, for most queens it is, but at this- like we all care about each other in this community. I mean even the bitch that I fucking hate, like I wish her the best in our community because, I mean, who knows, there's some crazy people out there. I mean I've been in drag and people have shouted at me while driving, and I've definitely been confronted it and like I've been scared for my life sometimes and just because people don't understand like how, sorry. I think people just kind of confuse like the idea of drag and the history behind it with other things, and they either see it as sinful or nasty and it's just honestly kind of sad and I wish it would get better. So, hopefully.

Interviewer: Okay, so last-

Jessica Leigh Foster: Ohh last question. Yes, we lives for it.

Interviewer: If you choose, if you chose one thing you want people to know about or learn about drag, what would it be?

Jessica Leigh Foster: That's a good question. Hold on. Let a bitch think. That contour is not for everybody just kidding, just kidding, just kidding. I think I would just want them to know that there's so many things that go into, I don't think things is the right word that I'm looking for, but like I said, I’ve been hitting that vino. So, I think there's just so many options and so many viewpoints in the drag community, and I want people to know that. Because there's something for everybody, like, some people like a bitch and like I fucks with it. And some people are more like, Ooh, I just want to watch this bitch perform because she's fucking gorgeous. Look at her. Her dress is beautiful. That makeup, that hair, she spent all that time on it. So I think if I were, if I was to tell someone or want something to know something about drag, I would just want them to know how open it is and how they can be part of it because it's that open… I’m done.

Interviewer: Well thank you!

Jessica Leigh Foster: No problem! Bye bitch!

Interviewer: Bye!