



## Elf Girl

*Reverend Jen*

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## Elf Girl Reverend Jen

**Meet Rev Jen.** Patron saint of the uncool. Cheerleader for nonconformists, geeks, and oddballs the world over. From her tiny rent-controlled apartment on Manhattan's hip Lower East Side, she holds court over a wacky cast of friends and lovers with an unchecked candor that makes her impossible not to love. Zany and wry, Rev Jen will charm readers with these fun and irreverent true stories of her meteoric rise from art school misfit to neighborhood celebrity and all-around good-time gal. Whether she is dressing up as Doo-Doo, the hard-drinking Teletubby who's been expelled from Teletubbyland, or starring in her one-woman musical *Rats*, the shortest running show on Broadway, Jen's quirky humor and genuine heart make *Elf Girl* an anthem for misfits everywhere.

## Elf Girl Details

Date : Published October 25th 2011 by Gallery Books

ISBN : 9781451631661

Author : Reverend Jen

Format : Paperback 288 pages

Genre : Autobiography, Memoir, Nonfiction, Biography, Humor, Did Not Finish

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## From Reader Review Elf Girl for online ebook

### Trav S.D. says

<http://travsd.wordpress.com/2011/10/2...>

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### Oriana says

Do you know who Reverend Jen is? Let me show you:

See the elf ears? See the tiny dog, Rev. Jen Jr.? See so much awesomeness in this short little lady?

In case you're not convinced, check out what her apartment looks like:

Yeah. It's also called—you may have guessed—the Troll Museum. Visits by appointment.

So Reverend Jen is completely amazing. She's kind of a fixture / cult figure in the Lower East Side art scene. She coined the term "Art Star" (ironic before ironic was cool) for herself and her friends, all of whom were wacky quirky outsider "artists" rejecting the '90s New York art scene much faster than it could reject them. They held open mic nights, staged bizarre protests, made up holidays, dressed in costumes and ran amok, befuddling everyone around them. She has a long-running event called Reverend Jen's Anti-Slam, a bizarre and brilliant variety show / open mic with three ceremonial judges who always give everyone a 10. The acts at the Anti-Slam range from poetry to songs to reciting baseball statistics to freeform monologues about childhood trauma to stripteases to orgies (really).

I'm just a bit too young to have been to the Anti-Slam in its heyday (I didn't make it to NYC until 2001), but I did go a few times in its later incarnations, and if that was a tamed-down version, I am so so sad to have missed the real thing. (Here's Rev Jen's story of the Anti-Slam's origins, if you're curious. It's great.)

So Rev Jen is amazing, her work is amazing, and this memoir is amazing too. I mean, if you're into "New York when it was grittier" stories, or "here's some bonkers things me and my bonkers friends did" stories, or just stories about unconventional people leading unconventional lives as loudly and absurdly as possible. If you're not into stories like that, I'm not sure why you're reading my reviews.

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### Jim says

Here's Rev Jen's first book under a major publisher, and here we get to relive with her her entire trajectory from the odd girl in suburban Maryland through art school in New York through her founding of many things: a religion, an open mike that still operates to this day, a group of people who call themselves Art

Stars, and many other wondrous creations. I first discovered Reverend Jen in the mid-90s at Faceboy's Sunday night open mike at Surf Reality, a scene that I knew I could call home as soon as I got there. Rev is the patron saint of the uncool, and here she establishes how she became the coolest person on the planet. There is wackiness. There's sex. There's drugs. There's lots and lots of wackiness. I am proud to have been part of the Art Star and Rev Jen's Anti-Slam scene for many years, and all I can do here is express my undying love. If you have no idea what I mean but you are curious, please do check this book out. If you have a clue, by all means, read it and love it. This whole deal is still yet gonna be much bigger than you can imagine, I guarantee it.

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### **Marta says**

If you always wanted to read a book about a 40-year-old "artist" who wears elf ears and reflects on her life as a hipster in New York City before they were known as hipsters then look no further.

Stories were interesting but a bit rushed and could've used a bit more development.

As a jaded New Yorker, I probably would find Rev Jen obnoxious and annoying if I chose to judge her by appearances without talking to her.

For instance, I find nothing "artistic" about dressing up as Doo Doo the reject Teletubby begging for money on the subway.

I did actually learn something from this book, apparently there's no dancing allowed in NYC bars unless the establishment has a license thanks to the cabaret laws.

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### **Shelleyrae at Book'd Out says**

I had never heard of Rev Jean but the blurb of Elf Girl promised humour and wry observation and I was hoping for something lighthearted from this memoir as I needed a break from some recent somber reads. I did smile in a few places, but shook my head in a lot more and a little psych 101 may be the saboteur in this case, because mostly I felt a sort of pity for Rev Jen. This is an autobiography of a persona that has devoured its host, and while she seems to believe it is all wildly exciting and special it seems to me that she is mostly lost and directionless. Jen's love life is a series of shambling disasters, she drinks and drugs more often than she eats and subsists in poverty.

Constantly striving to outdo herself Rev Jen takes maniacal glee in creating shock and awe amongst her friends and strangers. Art may well be subjective but just as I find Jason Pollock's supposed genius inexplicable I fail to see the the artistic merit in pancake batter, painting a penis purple on stage or pretending to be a fifth teletubby. There is no sense of irony here either, the Anti-Slam participants take them selves incredibly seriously despite the sheer lunacy. I imagine some of it is fun when you are in the midst of the craziness and have a bit of a buzz going but as an outsider I view it as mostly just bizarre and desperate. The epilogue is probably the most revealing and honestly introspective section of the book. Despite being of similar age to Jen my life has taken a completely different direction and while she talks of the freedom of being an unconventional artiste I actually think she may have less, tangled up in "panic, anxiety, low self esteem, hypomania and Budweiser" as she is.

Unfortunately I couldn't lose myself in the antics of Rev Jen and friends to enjoy this book. Perhaps the

current crop of restless twenty somethings will admire her irreverence, I can only wish her a happy life, whatever that means to her.

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### **Russ Marshalek says**

being this quirky all the time must be fucking exhausting.

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### **Marsha says**

Ms. Jen has certainly led a wild and bohemian existence. Determined to settle, not for success but for whatever suited her fancy, her acquaintances are loony, her job path has been unpredictable and her zaniness undeniable. What comes through is Reverend Jen's *carpe diem* mentality. I won't say she's filled with bubbly *joie de vivre*—there are moments in her memoir when she was decidedly mopey and borderline depressed. Yet she always bounces back, on the lookout for those who would spoil the party for other people.

Never cruel, eager to fall in love or lust and ride that hormonal crazy train wherever it took her, Reverend Jen's tale is filled with abundant drinking, drug use, wild sex and frequent brushes with the law. Whether staging protests over former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's silly attempts to clean up New York (We can't dance here? Inconceivable!) or cheering nude performers, Reverend Jen is highly irreverent. She's the wacky girl some of us secretly longed to be, a Dionysian holdover during a time when everybody else was desperately trying to sober up.

If her brand of off-the-wall existence is one that appeals to the secret rebel in you, pick up her book and don your own elf ears. Don't worry; we won't tell.

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### **Sarah says**

i was surprised to see she wrote another book! i thought maybe i'd bought 'live nude elf' twice or something; but no. she's not yet 40 and this is her second memoir type book. she has a lot of funny anecdotes as one might imagine. i read this book in like 24 hrs. i like her; wish i'd remembered to try to see the anti-slam one of the last few times in nyc....

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### **Fiona Helmsley says**

My whole life I've made a practice of hitting interpersonal relationship benchmarks out of order. Many a time intimate activity has preceded introduction formalities. In keeping with this behavior, I was photographed *au naturel* with Rev. Jen Miller before I had ever laid eyes on her work. Now that I have, I can say without a doubt there is a world of brains, wit, and brawny vision behind her rockin' bod. Since then she has become one of my favorite writers and artists.

The stories in Elf Girl are funny and inspiring. I love New York City like an old friend who has fallen under the spell of an abusive boyfriend- an abusive boyfriend who has forced her to jack up the rents in a bid to keep her isolated and towing the line. Rev. Jen is a true NYC original in the tradition of Moondog and Ed Sanders, and she's made it her mission to keep my abused, cowering friend as vibrant and debauched as she can. Rev. Jen is the good kind of bad influence that New York City needs so desperately right now. It is fitting that she has starred in a television series where she played a super hero in the title role. One of the most powerful weapons in the fight to protect New York City's creative skyline may just be the rent control on her apartment.

When I was kid growing up in small town CT, I loved watching Geraldo in the morning when I could somehow finagle staying home from school. As much as I enjoyed the episodes that showcased brawling skinheads and bald headed Satanists, my favorites were always the panel discussions with Club Kids like Micheal Alig and James St. James. What I enjoyed so much about the Club Kids was that they spoke to me of a world outside my window where people really were free to be you and me and individuality was celebrated as a fabulous, blessed trait. It made me want to move New York and be a part of what I was seeing on the television screen. More importantly, it made feel that I could be a part of it. I believe Rev. Jen and the stories in her book will inspire in others the same feelings those Club Kids on Geraldo did for me.

As the stories in this incredible book attest, there is still a vibrant, crazy underground world to be found in NYC.

Elf Girl will offer anyone who's interested a road map to finding it.

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### **Morgan says**

DNF

I am not sure exactly what I had expected in starting this or even in originally picking it up at a library book sale for \$0.25, but I don't think it was what I ended up getting.

I was looking for sort of fun, quirky, off-beat stories, but apart from the first about when she was an elf at Bloomingdale's.... Even that one didn't quite fit the bill. It came off very disjointed overall for the 1/3 I read, and I just wasn't finding anything "fun" or "humorous" in it.

Sad, because I'm all for marching to the beat of your own drum, but I guess that's one less book I'll be packing in the move!

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### **Heather says**

Some parts of this were entertaining. Mostly though I think I just enjoyed hearing about New York. I would like to see the troll museum. My friend thinks this was funny and recommended it, I dont really agree. No plans to read any of her other books.

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### **Jeff Nichols says**

I love Rev Jen. I drink the cool aid. She is a truly mesmerizing/enchanting being. She ran the 3 hour long Anti –slam on the lower east side with seemingly effortless ease. Always staying til the last performers, resolutely positive and kind. And always had sharp off-the-cuff remarks/observations to make “I have got to go drain My Lizard”...she also has great legs! And a wonderful disarming delivery some of which is captured in this book. What bothered me about the Anti Slam, which I regularly attended and loved, was that I wanted to only see reverend Jen (and a couple of others like Big Mike “Sibling rivalries” and Steve Bird, brody stevens ) but I never really saw her do a long set, or monologue. Soooo, I was sick for this memoir Elf Girl. Book starts out with here Elf story at Bloomingdales...always funny and good. Then I felt it lost some steam in the early child hood years, (this is not good as I was already fascinated with her.) seemed to be drunk stories that we all had. To much: “we caused such a rukus that an alarmed crowd formed” Here early years in NY as an avant-garde blossoming art star were interesting enough ( Giuliani (sp) bashing/ her dance movement/ etc...but a lot of it was sad...I wanted (the reader wants/needs) Rev Jen to get the job at MTV!!...Those bastards! all memoirs drag some, but hang in there, because Jen ends strong, wonderful acid stories/ and fish out of water situation at Ozz Fest and A charlie Daniels concert. (here Jen lays down pros like the best of them). Truly Bizar relationships; a great intelligent piece on 911 and her love for NYC, and about acquiring Her dog ten years ago; this is what I was looking for: rev Jen vomiting her wonderful humanity out onto the page.

Jeff Nichols ( Author:Train Wreck My LIfe as AN Idoit / American looser movie

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### **Sara says**

This book got better as I continued reading it. It wasn't anything like what I expected it to be- I thought it would just be a collection of funny stories (which it was), but the character was very artsy and wild.

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### **Amy says**

Five Stars for making me laugh out loud on nearly every page. Rev Jen is my new anti-hero, and the best travel guide I ever had--even though she's rarely left the LES (Lower East Side) in over twenty years. Just when you think that she's trying to be outrageous on purpose, she becomes completely vulnerable and tells every detail of her regrets and fears, which just makes her all the more "Reverent" in my book. You might have known someone like her in high school and completely ignored her. After reading this book, you'll be kicking yourself for that.

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### **Alvin says**

There aren't all that many Free Spirits around these days, but Rev Jen is surely one - and a shining example at that. She has managed to turn the sort of youthful larks and performance art-style hi-jinks most people give up with their first job/mortgage/baby into a full-fledged Lifestyle. Not all of said hi-jinks are unique and

fascinating, but they bring her into conflict with a culture that's descending into dull conformity and base materialism in such a way that one can't help but root for her. Oh, and the gal can deliver a good one-liner. This is a good read for those who like breezy memoirs of off-beat people. If Rev Jen runs for president, I will vote for her.

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