

My husband is a woman

Liz and Tim tied the knot in 1991.

Liz married a man and is still happily wed – even though he's now a she! *By Rachel Dobson*

When sci-fi writer Tim Hignutt told his wife Liz that he wanted to become a woman, her world fell apart.

But Liz stood by her man and they're still together, living happily as wife and wife.

Liz's story

"When I fell for Tim he was the lead guitarist in a local rock band, Mystic Spider. I was 22 when I went for an audition and became their lead singer.

"In December 1991, after a whirlwind romance, we were married in a romantic ceremony on a Jamaican beach.

"But my world collapsed 11 months later when Tim, then 28, explained to me he wanted to dress as a woman.

"Usually mild-mannered, sensitive and caring, Tim had been in a permanent bad mood since our Hallowe'en party. A friend of ours had come dressed in drag and looked great.

"I asked Tim what was wrong and thought he was going to tell me he was sleeping with someone else or he wanted a divorce.

"Instead he confessed he had overwhelming fantasies about dressing as a woman. Ever since he'd seen our friend in drag he

found it more and more difficult to resist these urges.

"I was shocked and felt sick, but I was relieved we would still be together. I even joked about him not wanting a sex change or anything crazy like that.

"Because Tim had never dressed as a woman, he asked me to help him.

"A few weeks after our discussion, Tim dressed as Diana for the first time using my wardrobe. Feeling uneasy, I helped him with his bra

fastening and tried to stop him from laddering my best tights. I tried to

curl his long hair a little and taught him how to apply make-up.

"But the result was awful. Tim didn't look like he had imagined he would and was really upset with the outcome.

"However, dressed as a woman, he just wanted to sit, chat, pose in the mirror and explore what it was like

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Still happy together, as Liz and Diana.

... and this is us today!

to look like a woman.

"Over the next few years, every month or so, we would go through this ritual.

"I felt it was a small price to pay for my wonderful husband. He was my soulmate, someone that I was willing to do anything for. In return, he treated me like a princess.

"Because his hair didn't look very good, I went out and bought him a brunette wig and I also picked up a pair of high-heeled shoes, as he was a different size.

"At our Hallowe'en party in 1995, Tim went dressed in drag and loved being told he made a great woman.

"I was happy Tim had been so honest with me and I pushed our dressing up sessions to the back of my mind. But then, in January 1997, he was struck down with the intestinal complaint diverticulitis.

"Surgeons removed part of his intestine and told him it was unusual for someone so young to suffer from the disease. Usually the condition only affected older or very stressed people.

"Three months later Tim was back in hospital with diverticulitis again. On a drip, being unable to eat for three-and-a-half weeks, his weight plummeted and he came home looking very sick.

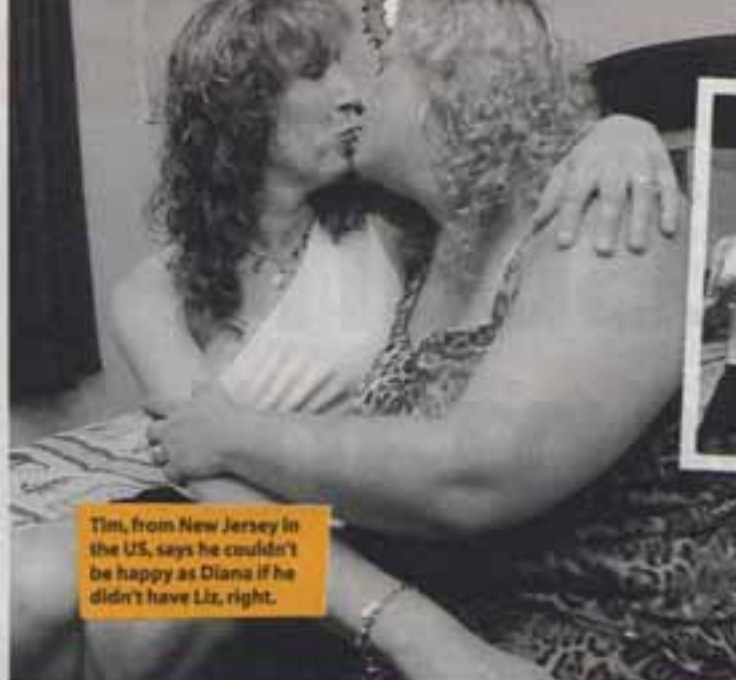
"As he convalesced he told me he needed to talk. My heart plummeted. I feared he was going to tell me he was gay. Instead, he tearfully said he wanted to be a woman. He wanted a sex change.

"I was furious. I stormed out of the house and didn't return for two weeks. It felt like the man I had fallen in love with, married and had the most wonderful relationship with, had been snatched from me. I felt cheated.

"I went home. We both took two days off work and talked and talked and talked.

"I asked him every question I could think of. I cried, Tim cried, and we talked some more until I finally understood why he needed to do this.

"I told him I would stay with



Tim, from New Jersey in the US, says he couldn't be happy as Diana if he didn't have Liz, right.



Tim/Diana's story

"When I was three I remember telling my mum I wanted to be a girl. I have an older sister, Donna, and I loved dressing up in her clothes.

"As soon as Liz walked in for her audition I knew I had fallen in love for the first time.

"She was my one and only love. For the first time in my life those feelings of wanting to be a woman disappeared. But after 18 months they rose up again and I couldn't hide them.

"I prayed Liz would understand and thankfully, if begrudgingly, she did.

"Although dressing as a woman helped, it intensified the feelings of wanting to be a woman. When I became ill I knew it was because I'd bottled up my feelings for so long.

"I had to tell Liz I wanted a sex change. I was astounded and relieved when she said she'd stand by me.

"Now my mind is finally clear. I feel released and much happier. As well as working in the hardware store, I've fulfilled my dream of being a fantasy fiction author.

"Moonsword (available from www.dianahignutt.com), is about a prince who is transformed into a woman and is based on our relationship.

"Without Liz I would never have been able to be so happy as Diana, the person I was meant to be.

"I owe her everything."



"I'm not attracted to anyone but Liz," says Diana. "I call myself a Liz-bian."

"I feel blessed with this amazing marriage"

him through the surgery and then we would decide what to do. We went to counselling and Tim began a gender reassignment programme in July 1997.

"After six months of psychological tests he began having electrolysis to remove hair, cosmetic surgery to fix his broken nose and to make his lips fuller, and he began buying clothes.

"On July 1, 1998, Tim began living as Diana full-time and 18 months later he had the surgery.

"At first I worried about how

I'd react to Tim's body changes. I've always been a happy heterosexual but now I was suddenly married to a woman.

"We slowly began to explore each other and soon discovered our already good sex life was even better. We live full lives with both of us working at Diana's family hardware store and don't have time to bring up a family. Instead, we have two cats, Nox and Jasper, who we dote on.

"I fully love and accept Diana and feel blessed with this amazing marriage. Lots of friends admit to feeling jealous of our relationship because we are so honest, loving and close to each other.

"When I took my wedding vows I meant them — for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health... and, in our case, for male or female.

"My biggest dream now is to take those vows again in a big wedding with all our family and friends as witnesses to our new relationship and to celebrate a new beginning for Diana."

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