

## The Tragic Revelation of the Transgender in “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” (Anonymous)

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to analyze the tragic revelation of the transgender in an anonymous short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman.” The analysis is supported by the concepts of transgender and cross-dressing since the male main character who has a wife and two daughters gradually becomes a transgender preceded by becoming a secret cross-dresser. The library research method is used to collect the relevant data while the qualitative research method is used in the general analysis. The literary analysis is supported by textual research method focusing on character, conflict, and setting, and contextual research method focusing on the concepts of transgender and cross-dressing. The result shows that becoming transgender is a difficult process and needs much bravery. Since the main male character feels unable to face the consequence as a transgender, he starts by becoming a cross-dresser in secret at night for a couple of hours at the house basement. When he finally wants to declare in public about his coming out in a full female clothes, he prefers to present it as his last performance in his well-arranged death.

**Keywords:** contextual, cross-dresser, textual, transgender

### INTRODUCTION

The issue of transgender and cross-dressing is a latent issue although it is becoming popular nowadays. Due to growing open mindedness, people nowadays tend to be brave to declare his/her incongruent gender and to tolerate the different gender shown by other. However, the issue of transgender and cross-dressing is a very difficult situation to face around the

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end of the nineteenth century as shown in the anonymous short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” in a compilation entitled *“The Man Who Thought Himself A Woman” and Other Queer Nineteenth-Century Short Stories*, edited by Christopher Looby and published by University of Pennsylvania Press (2017).

The short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” is relevant to be analysed since it portrays an inner battle experienced by the male protagonist called Japhet Colbones. He was a unique man from a unique family who has a family of his own with two daughters but secretly had a hidden desire to become a woman. The disappearance of several pieces of female clothes at first made his wife, sisters, and mother feel confused. The confusion turned into fear due to the strange noises at several nights that they did not dare to confront and finally ended in horror when they found out the husband/brother already died in a strange female dress comprising of the disappearing items of female clothes.

Based on the hints above, the purpose of this article is to analyse the tragic revelation of the transgender in “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” (Anonymous). However, to prove that this topic is not yet done previously, a serious previous study is done with the results as follows. Zachary Neil Lamm in 2009 wrote a dissertation entitled “The Queer Work of Fantasy: The Romance in Antebellum America.” He considers that the short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” as a “tragicomedy” since the freak is laughable (Lamm, 2009). Carina D. Pasquesi in 2012 wrote a dissertation entitled “Cruel Sorority; or Feminizing Enjoyment in American Romance.” It talks about Japhet Colbones in the short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” who fails to construct his life as he desires (Pasquesi, 2012). Elizabeth Reis wrote “Transgender Identity at a Crossroads: A Close Reading of a “Queer” Story from 1857.” She talks about the secrecy taken by the person who is against gender normativity (2014). Valerie Hoke wrote an annotation on “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman.” She focusses on the early form of transgender literature when such literature is not yet present (2015). Carrie D. Shanafelt wrote “Review of The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman, ed Christopher Looby.” She discusses the queer desire of the nineteenth century literature reflected in the short story (2022). Matthew Rozsa wrote “Transgender identity has a history as long as human beings have existed.” He talks about the oddities of Japhet Colbones in the short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” which decades later is known as transgender (2023).

The previous study mentioned above clearly shows that the proposed topic of the tragic revelation of the transgender in an anonymous short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” has not been analyzed yet, thus there will be no duplication or plagiarism. This study contains several necessary points. It implies that incongruent gender identity has existed since centuries ago and it can befall to someone grown up in a strong patriarchal

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surrounding. It also indicates the inner struggles of the person to soothe the growing stronger urges of becoming transgender. Finally, it portrays the hopeless final solution when that person cannot suppress the hidden desire anymore.

To support the academic analysis, several concepts are borrowed, especially the concepts concerning gender, transgender, and cross-dressing. The term gender itself is very common and has been mentioned in many articles. Sugianti in her journal article entitled “Gender Discrimination in Orhan Pamuk’s *Snow* and Khaled Hosseini’s *A Thousand Splendid Suns*” reminded that gender is a construction done and forced by the society (2018: 45). Afandi in his journal article entitled “The Shift in Gender Roles in Amy Tan’s *The Joy Luck Club* and Khaled Hosseini’s *The Kite Runner*” said that “gender practices” is inevitable from the start of someone’s life (2018). Susanti in her journal article entitled “Literary Works Empowering Social Movements: *A Doll’s House* & *Bumi Manusia* Analysis in Norwegian-Indonesian Feminism” mentioned gender role in a patriarchal society (2023).

Yarhouse explained that transgender is “An umbrella term for the many ways in which people might experience and/or present and express (or live out) their gender identities differently from people whose sense of gender identity is congruent with their biological sex” (2015). In short, transgender means someone who secretly feels that his biological sex does not match his gender identity. Stryker stated that transgender “implies movement away from an initially assigned gender position” (2008). This moving away is possible, according to Bevan because: “The independence of sex and gender is important for transgender people, because it means that it is possible to have a male sex and a feminine gender or a female sex and a masculine gender (Bevan, 2017). Since gender and sex are different and are not inherently connected, the unusual mixture of gender and sex is likely to happen such as in the case of transgender. That gender, manifested in conventional gender identity, is not just binary as commonly believed but more and more complex as represented in the emergence of transgender: “In recent years, trans has been used to indicate the full complexity of gender and to acknowledge that gender identity does not fall into a neat binary” (Haeefe-Thomas, 2019).

The latent issue of being transgender is still controversial because “Transgender raises questions about the formation of all gender identities; particularly concerning the extent to which we can shape and re-shape individual and collective identities” (Hines, 2007). In other words, transgender disturbs the taken for granted gender division which has already existed in the society so far. However, being a transgender is not a comfortable experience that can be easily explained, as stated by Stryker: “transgender people who experience it [gender incongruence] often have a hard time explaining to others what this feels like” (Stryker, 2008). So, being a transgender is a complex and confusing undergoing, not only for other people around the transgender but for the transgender himself/herself. The

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process of becoming transgender is not instant or in uniform as quoted by Hines:

Ekins and King map out four modes of transgenering: ‘migrating’, permanent crossing from one side of the gender boundary to the other; ‘oscillating’, temporary movement from one side of the gender boundary to the other (and back again); ‘negating’ – ‘ungendering’ – whereby the story tellers refute the existence of a binary gender divide; and ‘transcending’, wherein story tellers speak of being ‘beyond’ gender” (in Hines, 2007).

According to Hines, based on the conception of Ekins and King (2006), there are four ways in the process of becoming transgender; namely, migrating, oscillating, negating, and transcending. Meanwhile, Devor and Haeefe-Thomas added that transgender may include “cross-dressers” (2019). Vencato supported the statement of Devor and Haeefe-Thomas as follows: “Transgender therefore refers collectively to the different ways and manifestations of cross-dressing” (Vencato, 2013). Thus, there is a close link between transgender and cross-dressing.

The second concept to support the analysis is about cross-dressing. Girshick stated clearly that:

cross-dressing is about the expression of gender identity and has nothing at all to do with sexual orientation, sexual identity, or sexual deviation. It is the outward expression of inner feminine feelings; cross-dressers seek to emulate femininity. Males who cross-dress do not want to stop being males and being masculine, but they do want to be able to express their feminine side occasionally or often (2008).

According to Girshick, cross-dressing is just about how someone wants to express his gender identity based on what he personally feels. Cross-dressing, even though closely related to transgender, does not mean that the person want to change his sex or sexual preference. Being a male cross-dresser may just an expression of feminine tendency that he wants to show from time to time. So, according to Girshick, being a cross-dresser woman might be just a performance in the sense that it does not mean changing the biological sex permanently. Girschick emphasized that “Cross-dressing is not connected to sexual orientation; most male crossdressers are heterosexual and are expressing their femininity” (2008). Thus, a man who dresses as a woman can still be a heterosexual who wants to show his feminine aspect. He may still looks masculine in his female dress.

The article, in line with the title “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” focusses on the issue of transgender. The discussion on this issue is important to share so that people in general will have enough knowledge about transgender, not to be the followers but more to understand the complexities of gender incongruence and its impacts not only to the person himself, but also to the people around him including the society. To make the discussion comprehensive, the discussion is divided into several parts. The first is about the uniqueness of the Colbones family because each predecessor of Japhet, the male main character, has specific famous eccentricity that gives a foreshadowing that young Japhet has a hidden eccentricity. The second part

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discusses Japhet Colbones, the male protagonist. The discussion is to trace in details Japhet's life as a preparation to see the emergence of Japhet's eccentricity. The third focusses on the signs of becoming a transgender. It talks about several indications leading to the open declaration of his being a transgender. The last part exposes the dramatic coming out of the transgender. It show how and why Japhet prefers a dramatic coming out of his being a transgender.

## METHOD

A good academic analysis must be supported by a sound method. In this literary analysis, a combination of methods is used. The first one is qualitative research method applied for the general analysis. According to Creswell, "Qualitative research is a method of investigating and comprehending the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human issue" (Creswell, 2014). The second one is library research method which, according to George: "library research is a method that involves identifying and locating sources that provide factual information as well as personal/expert opinions on research issues" (George, 2008). The last research method is specific to literary analysis, that is, a combination of textual and contextual literary method analysis. The textual literary research method deals with the intrinsic elements of the literary text focusing on character, conflict, and setting. The contextual literary research method deals with the context of the literary text. According to Beard "Texts are produced by authors who live in the political and social world of their time, and we gain a better understanding of their works by taking these contexts into account" (Beard, 2004). Thus, in the case of the short story entitled "The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman", the contexts taken into account are mainly about the concepts of cross-dressing and transgender since the topic being analyzed is about "The Tragic Revelation of Transgender in "The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman" (Anonymous)".

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the anonymous, nineteenth century short story entitled "The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman", it is found out that transgender is an individual issue. It is not influenced by the surrounding since the male protagonist lives in a strict, traditional, and patriarchal family and society. It also does not clearly reflected in the appearance and work of the male protagonist who turns into transgender. He is still a big muscular man working in a field. His being transgender is just manifested in his secretively wearing modified female clothes at nights when he thinks he has private moments. It also obviously reflects the unbearable inner conflicts endured by the male protagonist realizing the unbearable reactions of the society to his gender preference. In short, this anonymous short story, due to its nineteenth century rural settings, portrays transgender issue as a unique individual case.

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The detailed discussion will focus on the male character, Japhet Colbones, who is the fourth generation of the Colbones family. To understand Japhet's unpredictable actions, it is necessary to trace back his ancestors and his hidden tendency. The setting of time at Japhet's life is around the end of the nineteenth century due to the types of clothes worn by the common people and the simple carriage used as a means of transportation. The setting of place is in a small peaceful but unnamed village far from big cities and the social setting is middle-low class in which most people earn money by doing manual work (Anonymous, 2017).

#### a. The Uniqueness of the Colbones Family

The Colbones family is well-known as a unique family because the male head of the family in each generation has certain eccentricity that make the neighbors always feel astonished. The first oddity in the Colbones family is described as follows: "His great-grand-father, at the age of seventy-one, built a hut in a patch of thick woods, leaving a handsome and comfortable home, a wife, children, and grand-children, to live alone by himself" (Anonymous, 2017: 118). Abandoning a settled, peaceful life in a big family to live a solitary, secluded life is unusual, moreover at the time when village people usually live together with their big family in a small warm community.

The next idiosyncrasy still can be seen in the next generation of the Colbones family: "The son, grand-father to Japhet, was not a whit behind his father in his oddities. He caused a coat to be made wherein were introduced seven different colors, and would not kill or allow to be killed on his premises, anything that had life" (Anonymous, 2017). A colorful coat is not common at that time since people, especially in the small village, commonly wear conventional clothes with soft colors to show their modesty. Moreover, animals are usually raised to be consumed or traded, so it is so strange that Japhet's grand-father forbids any animal killing in his land. His weird regulation leads to uncontrolled breeding of the animals.

The whim of the Colbones family continues to the next generation, as can be seen in the quotation below:

Number three, father of Japhet, was in his way an original and an eccentric. His tastes travelled bookward. Not an auction took place in the neighboring city that he did not attend, and purchase every leather-covered and worm-eaten volume that could be found ... In his house books abounded. Not a closet, chest, trunk, drawer, or shelf but was filled with flapping leaves (Anonymous, 2017).

Japhet's father's love to collect books is exceptional. Buying, collecting, and storing the ever growing number of books seems to be his life, even to the point of ignoring his family's comfort due to the crowded house. Japhet's father has another oddity as can be seen in the following quotation: "He had recently had every door taken from its hinges, and the house was uncomfortably cold, until he had a mind to put them on again" (Anonymous, 2017). It is very queer that without any logical reason the doors of the house

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where the whole family live are taken off, leaving the house without doors in cold weather that makes the family members suffer from cold.

The types of queerness of Japhet's ancestors can be said to be unrelated from one generation to another. In other words, besides indicating unconventional attitudes, the queerness has no connecting line. Because of that, the males of the Colbones family has been labelled as queer people, however the females Colbones are not like the males: "The women were generally good, harmless creatures, with few idiosyncrasies, and feeble mental constitutions, willing to put up with the queer freaks of the masculines, and always ready with a defence or an excuse when they were particularly disagreeable" (Anonymous, 2017). The community can accept the females of the Colbones family as their members because they are not eccentric like the males. However, strongly realizing the queerness of the males, the females of the Colbones family tend to tolerate the atypical behavior of the males and try to make excuses on behalf of the males.

### **b. Japhet Colbones**

Japhet Colbones, the male of the fourth generation of the Colbones family, is directly stated at the very beginning of the story as follows: "Japhet Colbones was a very odd individual" (Anonymous, 2017). This direct statement is given due to the oddities of all the males of the Colbones family of the previous generations. However, he is much expected by the females of the Colbones family to be different from his male predecessors (Anonymous, 2017). Japhet's appearance is describes as follows: "Japhet was rather a fine-looking boy. The only draw-back to his good appearance was a head of somewhat unwieldy size, and whitish blue eyes, exactly like his father's (Anonymous, 2017). There is one unusual feature of Japhet Colbones, the size of his head is too big to be considered normal.

Little Japhet turns out to be genius and learns so fast that makes his family so proud of him and expects so much of him to become normal person. The hope of the family is in vain: "Suddenly, when he was fourteen, Master Japhet refused to go to school any longer. His mother coaxed him, his father beat him, but all to no purpose" (Anonymous, 2017). The first sign of the eccentricity of the male Colbones begins to appear in Japhet. Another eccentricity of Japhet can be seen when he has decided to get married. Without telling his family about his plan, even without previous talk to the woman he is going to marry, Japhet directly comes to Tiddy, the woman he is not acquainted with, to ask her to get married with him. His oddity can be seen below:

"A fine day to be married in," suggested the young man.

Tiddy looked up in astonishment and then looked down in confusion.

"If you'll have me Tiddy, say 'Yes,' and put your bonnet on; we'll go right to the minister's" (Anonymous, 2017).

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Nobody considered normal will do as what has been done by Japhet. However, it must be remembered that Japhet is the fourth generation of the eccentric males of the Colbones family.

His family does not only feel surprised with his marriage, but also underestimates his recent wife, Tiddy, who comes from a poor family and earns a living by washing and ironing people's clothes:

“What did Japhet want to be such a confounded fool for? Wasn't the house already full from cellar floor to clapboard with trash?—and now he must go to bringing more” (Anonymous, 2017).

Japhet's big family members equate Tiddy with trash as they do to the so many books of Japhet's father. In short, Tiddy is considered as useless and as an additional burden to the family.

For Tiddy whose life is so full of misery, becoming Japhet's wife is not too bad: “She had really found in Japhet a tolerable companion and a very industrious husband” (Anonymous, 2017). Japhet is responsible as a husband and he does not have many demands. Japhet fully realizes that his wife is much disliked by his sisters and mother, so when he sees that Tiddy begins to feel uncomfortable in the big house, he says briefly that Tiddy must be patient because he is building a house for them to be able to live separately from the big family. Japhet builds the house by himself on a land given to him by his father. When the house is ready, Tiddy asks the first and second sisters to live with them. Japhet gives the freedom to decide to his wife. The two sisters in law, who at first underestimate Tiddy, accept the offer gladly because the big house is not comfortable. Tiddy's action indicates that she is a good person who is not selfish and eager to share. The marriage of Japhet and Tiddy goes on comfortably and they have two daughters (Anonymous, 2017).

### c. The Signs of Becoming a Transgender

Coming from a line of eccentric males, it is not surprising that Japhet has many eccentricities. Besides the oddities described in the previous section, Japhet still has many other oddities. This section will focus on the oddities that become the signs of Japhet's becoming a transgender. After Japhet's abrupt decision at fourteen years old to stop going to school, his next action is surprising:

... bought himself yarn and knitting-needles, and pestered his mother till she taught him how to knit. From knitting he went to embroidery, and during the long winter evenings made fancy seats for chairs, table-covers, and everything else he could think of, saying that he was preparing himself for future housekeeping (Anonymous, 2017).

Japhet is so persistent in his new passion which is conventionally considered belong to the female circle. Knitting and embroidery are regarded as feminine activities, while Japhet is a muscular male because he works in field to earn a living. What is so surprising is that Japhet is so good and creative at his new unconventional track (Anonymous, 2017). Japhet is also so proud of his

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feminine type of works and he is not embarrassed to acknowledge his handicraft: “he was not ashamed to have his handiwork shown at the county fair, with his name attached” (Anonymous, 2017). His wife, Tiddy, does not mind his passion in knitting and embroidery, saying that it is better than drinking and getting drunk in cafes (Anonymous, 2017). Bearing in mind the concept of transgender, Japhet’s interest and pride in an activity considered belong to the female domain indicate the early sign of becoming transgender.

After getting married, a strange thing begins to happen. The females in the house start losing items of female clothing as can be seen below:

“And don’t you think,” said Sarah, the next eldest, “two pair of my very finest stockings are gone.”

“And my nicest, newest flannel petticoat,” chimed in another.

“And my blue and green striped calico!”

“Did mother tell you she missed two of her best caps?” (Anonymous, 2017).

The sequence of missing items of female clothing after Tiddy joins the family and their disliking her due to her poverty, inevitable leads to their accusing her of stealing those items. However, they cannot prove it even though they have secretly search Tiddy’s belongings and even her poor mother’s house. Fortunately, Tiddy does know about this accusation.

The mysterious missing of items of female clothing continuous even after Japhet, Tiddy, and two of Japhet’s sisters, move to the couple’s new house. Drusy, the eldest sister, annoyingly says that she and her sister Fanny lose their things: ““I can’t find my best black silk!” ... And my nice tucked skirt is gone, too; and Fanny’s pink pelerine and best bonnet” (Anonymous, 2017). Even Tiddy starts missing her things too: “she could not find her best shawl, high nor low; and two very fine night-dresses were gone” (Anonymous, 2017). This unsolved mystery is followed by another scary thing, the sisters start hearing footsteps at night that make them so afraid. On the other side, Tiddy does not hear anything, but there is a reason for that, she is a heavy sleeper who will not hear anything when she is sleeping (Anonymous, 2017).

A succession of strange happenings makes Tiddy and the sisters feel curious. The first strange thing is that Japhet’s habit changes. Japhet, who was used to wake up earlier to work, now he always oversleeps and Tiddy has to work hard to wake him up (Anonymous, 2017). The next strange thing is the neighbor’s question about the “big tin box” that Japhet always brings in his cart nowadays that his wife and sisters do not know at all (Anonymous, 2017). The fact that he keeps the box in a locked “carriage house” like a secret increases their curiosity (Anonymous, 2017). Because the mysterious walking sound at night continuous, the sisters cannot keep their curiosity any longer, so they ask Tiddy to check the sound together.

Desperately holding back the fear, the three women plan to peep at the room where the sound is coming from, especially when Tiddy says that Japhet is not in the bedroom that night. What they see is beyond any weirdest imagination:

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Japhet was standing before the looking-glass, his box open beside him. He was arrayed in woman's clothes almost from head to foot, and was just then pulling and straightening out the ruffles on a cap which Drusy recognized as the one her mother had lost some years before. The gown, with its bright blue and white pattern, was familiar to her; and now he was throwing over the pelerine that they had missed so lately. Everything he had on seemed to have undergone a change—to have been widened, enlarged, and otherwise altered. After he had sufficiently admired himself, he spread out his gown, took his handkerchief in his hand, and began to walk back and forth with as much of the air and gait of a woman as he could assume. Then he would take out his knitting, smile amicably, sit down with finikin niceness, and knit, holding his head affectedly now this way, now that, with many an accomplished smirk (Anonymous, 2017).

The mystery is solved in a very strange way: the lost items of female clothes, the heavy big tin box, the scary sound, and Japhet's oversleeping. Japhet takes the items of female clothes and modify them to suit his big muscular body. Japhet keeps them in the big tin box, Japhet is the one who makes the mysterious sound, and because of his night secret activities, he cannot wake up early in the morning as usual. What makes the unexpected sight is gross is that not only Japhet wears the complete set of female clothes but he also behaves like a woman. Not only that, his manner when he is doing the knitting is just like a woman enjoying the female solitary activity. This is the secret coming out of Japhet's transgender state in the form of cross-dressing.

The reactions of the adult females in the house when they secretly see Japhet's action is different. Tiddy, the wife, cannot stand her laugh although she tries to suppress it so that Japhet does not know her presence. She thinks it is just a funny thing, a moment of her husband's antics. As a modest woman without any deep thinking, Tiddy never suspects any serious problem with her husband's secret activity. Drusy, the eldest sister, tends to be angry seeing her lost precious things are on Japhet's hands. Japhet's eccentricity does not surprise her so much being familiar with the various eccentricities of the male Colbones. However, this is the proof that Japhet has a hidden side that grows stronger. Japhet's new eccentric habit continuous for two hours every night, watched by Tiddy and the two sisters (Anonymous, 2017). Although nobody suspects Japhet's tendency as a transgender, this situation is an indication that Japhet is getting accustomed to enjoy his becoming a secret cross-dreser.

This fact indicates that Japhet's lasting eccentricity is not just a whim, a sudden desire, since it is well-prepared step by step for years in secret and executed routinely in secret also. Secrecy is important in Japhet's case and secrecy indicates that something unlawful or unacceptable is being done. Thus, Japhet fully realizes that his action culminating in his wearing female clothes is a deviant action in normative perspective that makes him perform it in secret. His persistence in doing it every night in secrecy indicates that he enjoys his doings and cannot resist the temptation to do it again and again. At this point, Japhet does not realize that his wife and two sisters have known his secret. For the females in the house, they does not know how to stop

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Japhet's action because they are afraid to talk about it to Japhet and their efforts to take the big tin box are never successful (Anonymous, 2017).

#### d. The Dramatic Coming Out of the Transgender

In the previous section it has been discussed Japhet's secrecy of being a cross-dresser using the modified items of female clothing that he has stolen in several occasions for years. This section focuses on the deliberate revelation of Japhet's secrecy as a cross-dresser. After several nights of his secret action that has been watched by his wife, suddenly on a beautiful summer morning he asks his wife and two sisters to bring the children to go to the house of their father. What makes the adult female curious is that Japhet orders them to stay overnight if he does not pick them up. However, Tiddy who actually does not want to go because she has things that have to be processed soon insists that she will return home by 5 pm even if he does not pick them up (Anonymous, 2017). Tiddy feels restless all day, even Drusy the eldest sister feels uncomfortable without any reason. These are all a kind of premonition that something unpleasant or beyond prediction will happen.

Seeing that Japhet does not pick them up even though it has been evening, the restless Tiddy decides to walk home since Japhet's house is not so far from his father's house. When the walking party is reaching the house, Tiddy is surprised by the female helper who tells them that Japhet asks her to leave the house, leaving the work that she has to do. This information makes Tiddy becomes more worried. Her worry escalates when she finds out that the living room has been arranged differently:

She went into the parlor, and started back with a scream. All the chairs in the house had been brought in and ranged in double rows around the room, as if for a funeral, while the large hall-table was set in the centre, spread with a white cloth, and occupied only by the great Bible and hymn-book (Anonymous, 2017).

The chairs and table are arranged unusually, hinting at a funeral ceremony. Everything has been prepared for such an occasion. This finding makes Tiddy feels panicked, since she cannot find Japhet. Tiddy asks Japhet's two sisters to spread looking for Japhet's existence. The blinds that are closed adds to the alarming condition. Every part of the house also looks tidy even though the females have not tidied them due to the sudden order from Japhet to leave the house soon. However, the two sisters still think that it is just another eccentricity of Japhet as he grows older and nothing is serious about it (Anonymous, 2017).

It is Drusy who first gets a sight of Japhet when she is looking at the attic. Still she is thinking it is just Japhet's eccentricity to surprise them all.

By this time Tiddy had flown up with Fanny, and now approached the figure that sat in the shadow. Bonnet, cap, pelerine, gloves, black-silk gown, a bag in its hand, fantastic bows pinned all over it: it was a most fearfully grotesque object. Tiddy, calling him by name, went nearer and nearer, and still nearer; then, with a shriek: "O Drusy!" she cried, "he's stone dead!" and fell down fainting (Anonymous, 2017).

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On closer inspection, Tiddy not only sees a startling appearance of Japhet, but she also finds out that Japhet has already dead. Japhet's dies in a complete female clothes. It is also found out that Japhet commits suicide by skillfully hanging himself in a sitting position so that it is not too scary, and he looks peaceful as if he has expected the death: "He had managed to hang himself in a sitting posture, and his face was calm and placid" (Anonymous, 2017).

The gross surprise does not stop there. The shocked party also finds a letter written by the dead Japhet.

"In the bag in his hand was a paper on which were written the words:

"I think I am a woman. I have been seven years making me a perfect suit of garments appropriate for my sex. As I have passed so long, falsely, for a man, I am ashamed to show myself in my true colors; therefore, I hang myself. The property all to go to the woman I have called my wife. It is now twelve o'clock. I have prepared everything for the funeral, and desire that I may be laid out in the clothes I have on.

Japhet Colbones."  
(Anonymous, 2017).

The letter is an open confession of Japhet that inside the masculine appearance as a male Colbones, he feels that he is not a male. He feels that he is a female. He feels that he is trapped in a male body, however he also fully realizes that he cannot openly show his true self as a female. That is why, when the desire to express himself as a female is getting stronger, he secretly dresses as a female, acts like a female, and does feminine work such as knitting and embroidering in the solitary hours at nights. It seems that the urge to be a female is growing stronger that Japhet feels squeezed in a dead end. As can be seen in his letter, in a cornered situation, Japhet decides to come out as a female represented in his fully dressed as a female. However, unable to face the reactions of his wife, daughters, sisters and other relatives as well as the community, his coming out is in a tragic fashion, that is in his dead body.

Japhet's case is an example of a transgender in the late nineteenth century in a small village. His being a misfit between the real sex that he feels and the gender expectation that he has to bear is trying to be negotiated by Japhet by becoming a secret cross-dresser. The tragic coming out as a transgender indicates the unbearable hardship that must be faced that even an eccentric Japhet Colbones cannot endure. In Ekins and King's modes of transgenering as quoted by Hines in the literary review section is a combination of "discreet oscillating and migrating." The oscillating mode is when Japhet becomes a secret cross-dresser at certain hours at nights and performing a masculine gender during the days. The migrating mode is represented in his final decision to declare as a permanent transgender to the public but this tragic coming out happens in his well-prepared death.

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## CONCLUSION

Although it is already known, that sex and gender are not the same and are not dependent on each other on their relation, the phenomena of transgender often manifested in cross-dressing is still not easily accepted. The anonymous short story entitled “The Man Who Thought Himself a Woman” skillfully presents this delicate issue with the setting of time around the late nineteenth century and the setting of place in a small village. The feeling of being incongruent between gender and sex makes the masculine in appearance, Japhet Colbones, leads a double life. During the day in public, he is Japhet Colbones, the husband of Tiddy and the father of two daughters. At night, for around two hours, in secret he becomes a female, wearing female clothes, behaving like a female, and enjoying feminine work. Unable to appease the urge to appear as a full female in public while thoroughly realizing the commotion and the sneering comments from the family, relatives, and community if he does so, the only outlet for him is to declare his feminine side in his carefully planned death. The eccentric Japhet organizes carefully a tragic coming out as his last performance.

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