Aunt Evelyn’s Letters

New Yorker Barton Benes saved thousands of letters that his Aunt Evelyn, a Florida widow, wrote during their daily correspondence in the ’70s. Now, 20 years and an epidemic later, he makes art by combining her text with his own images. This month’s piece depicts the once-and-future flowering of a new kind of man.

February 1, 1999 By Barton Lidice Benes

METAMORPHOSIS

BRUCE SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO GET
BUSY WRITING THE “FUCKING BOOK.”
HE COULD SWEAR AS GOOD AS MY HUSBAND
DID. ALL STRAIGHT PEOPLE ALWAYS
FELT THAT GAY MEN WERE JUST THE
OPPOSITE. WE HAD TO BE VERY CAREFUL
AND NEVER SAY ONE SWEAR WORD IN
FRONT OF THEM, BECAUSE THEY WERE
DAINTY INSTEAD. THIS IS LIKELY ONE
REASON THEY HAVE A TOUGH TIME WITH
STRAIGHT PEOPLE. NO ONE KNOWS THEM
AND PEOPLE ARE AFRAID OF WHAT THEY
DON’T KNOW.

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