

# Readers' Notes



<http://readers.pewter-rose-press.com>

What does the title '*Perfect 10*' mean to you? Is it the best title for the book?

In *The Importance Of Sisters*, how does the author convey Sally and Mildred? How are the misconceptions laid out by the author? Why did she do this? To what extent have sisters affected the characters?

Does Bennie have any redeeming features? How could her life be turned around?

In *Denise*, she comments that she "... is fat, not plump (Mummy's words), not cuddly (Daddy's words), plain fat". How do people describe larger individuals and how should we? Is it alright to call someone 'fat' or is that restricted to the individual to refer to themselves that way? Was Denise's low esteem due to her weight?

*Melting Away* discusses the effect of losing a lot of weight. What else is lost and how does the character respond?

Does *Net Babe* illustrate that deception is an integral part of human interaction?

"Fat is a feminist issue." Does the author agree or disagree with this sentiment?

Do we relate more to the characters who flaunt their weight or who suffer from it? What does this say about our attitudes to weight?

In what ways do Jimmy and the chip shop add to the collection of stories?

What does the collection of stories have to say about women and weight? Is it biased towards any particular view?

## About the Author

Vivien Jones is a writer of prose, drama and poetry, which she also performs in readings and collaborative events with musicians. She has a particular interest in renaissance themes which have formed the basis of several performance events including site-specific dramas in historic locations.

Her prose work is in the form of short stories which explore the small rebellions in everyday life that sustain a sense of individuality, particularly in the lives of women. The themes of her poetry are domestic; rituals of family life, the association of food and nurture, the experience of making and hearing music, and latterly, work on environmental themes.

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## Critical Praise

*"This delightful and most unusual collection provides a welcome new insight into certain areas that are usually conveniently overlooked, obsessed as we are today by slim and perfect model looks. The heroines of these stories are large, and have to learn to adapt and survive in a society which does not prize their particular qualities. The author tells their stories with sympathy and insight.*

*There is great humour in some of the situations described: we learn about Jeannie, a respectable but large middle-aged lady, stranded in the late-night city dressed as a mini-skirted school-girl after a hen-party. And we learn about Jimmy the chippie – his shop is patronised by most of the heroines – who calls his daughters after varieties of potato.*

*There is beauty and pathos in some of the stories, notably that of Carol, who dances alone in her garden at night; but sometimes the stories go deeper, uncovering the origins of the overweight state, the misery and the guilt. And there is potential tragedy too, in the impossible despair of Sandy, ashamed of her fat mother, and of her own feelings about her.*

*The author reveals a wide knowledge of life and human nature in all its aspects, and in a wide variety of settings."*