

Smoking weed, sleeping over and stalking Jay Leno: At home and on the prowl with Jimmy Kimmel – the man who would be king of late night

Here's Jimmy

BY JONAH WEINER

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK SELIGER

IN 24 HOURS, JIMMY KIMMEL WILL STAND UP IN HIS OFFICE AT THE EL CAPITAN THEATRE in Hollywood, looking less like a talk-show host and more, to use his words, like “a hobo.” He’ll be wearing baggy mesh Dodgers shorts, a rumpled old Coca-Cola T-shirt and no shoes; his hair will stick out in three directions. As he leaves his desk, where he’s been refining jokes since the morning, his transformation into late-night star will begin. After a quick haircut, he’ll carry his MacBook to the makeup room, where he’ll put the finishing touches on his monologue while a woman named Stephanie puts the finishing touches on his face: powdering his skin, shaping his eyebrows, blackening his hair where it’s a bit too gray or a bit too thin for HD. In his private bathroom, he’ll change into a crisp white shirt, a colorful Prada tie and slim blue Gucci pants. His wardrobe guy will bring the matching jacket, steamed and lint-rolled and bearing a sticker on its lining that says ABC ASSET above a bar code marking it as network property. “I’ve got the same bar code tattooed on me,” Kimmel will joke. “It used to say ABC LIABILITY, but they changed it when the ratings got good.” As he makes his way downstairs – where a 200-strong crowd is waiting for that night’s episode of *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* to start – a group of writers, producers and crew will fist-bump Kimmel and chant, as they do before every episode, “Best show ever! Best show ever!” His band will launch into an ecstatic fanfare and Kimmel will stroll out, hit his electrical-taped mark, and fix his eyes on the teleprompter as the audience roars its welcome: showtime.

