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TRANSGENDER

The Uncertainty of My Certainty



PHOTO: DOK WRIGHT

BY TOBIAS NOVAK

I've been dreaming of T for over a year now. In my dream-life, I have the body and the chemistry I, well, dream of. In my dreams I am the guy I am so certain I am. Awake, I remember how good my dreams felt, and am calmed.

Movement, fluid in its certainty, self-assured in its presentation.

I wake up in the morning, and there are my breasts. There is my female body; behold its incongruency. I immediately have this disconnect, not only between the waking and dream states, but also between my desired body and actual body.

Heaviness, freed by bondage.

I used to sleep naked when I was disconnected from my body - when I walked the world as a woman. The woman-actor was convincing, but never so self-assured as the man I am becoming. Now that I am connected to my body, I can no longer sleep naked comfortably.

Underdeveloped maleness floating through an overdeveloped female body, breasts heavy, ready to fall at any moment with the weight of their inconvenience.

I don't hate my body; I have a beautiful female body, but I'm not a woman.

Trapped in this body, familiar, yet so unfamiliar.

I stare at my breasts before my morning shower, defiantly holding my hands over them, imagining a male chest there instead.

We are given a body to walk the world with, and sometimes it is not our own.

As I prepare for my shower each morning, this anomaly of magical incongruency, right before my eyes. I can't be blind to the fact that it's there.

I look in the mirror and I see you, unwelcome but unable to leave.

My body is undeniably female - to outsiders. What a sacred thing, I think to myself, that I can see something in such a magical way.

Things are not always what they seem. I see you as you really are; can you see me?

I have no plans for bottom surgery - the creation of a penis that may never work, may not look convincing, and costs money I don't have. Top surgery, on the other hand, is not something I can live without. My vagina doesn't hang between my legs as the breasts hang from off my chest.

How I wish that you could dangle there, in concrete certainty. Alas, your invisibility must suffice.

I know there is a male chest under there, spiritually, and I can't wait to see it after top surgery. I've been looking at lots of pictures lately, researching surgeons, wondering who would do the best job; will I ever have nipple sensation again?

You are there, but you are not really there. I will acknowledge you only for brief moments of incongruency.

To allow another to cut into to your body is a huge decision; as much as I want to see the male chest I have underneath, I know that I must

decide carefully, as surrendering your body to another is never an easy decision. Surrendering your breasts to a surgeon's knife is an act that changes the rest of your life. I must trust this surgeon, and they must honor me, in much the way that lovers honor each other's bodies when they surrender to intimacy.

I lay before you, naked in my honesty, the stillness of my surrender on display.

I imagine myself unbound, breasts gone forever, the male chest I have underneath finally free.

I see you, body of my dreams, and I long for you stronger than you comprehend. Or do you comprehend?

After I showered this morning, I had a sudden realization - oh my god, I'm going to do this. I'm a boy-man, wanting to make his way into manhood - ready for the challenge, the unexpected, the unfamiliar. I felt a surge of energy in my body.

Sudden chills, ravenous hunger for maleness.

This comforted me at first, and then I was terrified. I started to think about life. Employment. Discrimination. Lovers. My life will be so different. There will be no going back once I do this.

The uncertainty of my certainty overwhelms me.

I've put off getting a tattoo for twenty-five years now, despite wanting one for spiritual reasons. Why? Because it's permanent. Once you get the tattoo, there's no going back. You've got it for life. Well that's what I'm going through with my gender transition. Once I start the T, that's it. My voice will be changed forever.

We have a voice for so long; we know it so well. Then, we realize it was never our voice to begin with.

I almost changed my name recently. I stood there in the courthouse, got the forms, talked with the receptionist about changing my name and gender. But the cost was \$50. I didn't have it. I couldn't change my name then, but I had the desire, so strong, to finally part with my birth name for good.

You can change your name back again, or forward, but once you change your body, there is no return.

I don't do anything permanent. Yet I want desperately to change this fundamental essence of my body from female to male - to go through with transition completely.

Complete me in your cycles of rebirth.

So how is it that I won't get a tattoo, yet I want nothing more than to change my body and brain chemistry permanently?

I am waiting in line for the roller coaster. I am so ready for the ride. But my stomach turns at the thought of actually getting on and being strapped down, unable to get off the ride if I change my mind. Yet, I am still waiting in line, ready to begin all that I simultaneously dream of and fear.

I'm a free spirit. A traveler, a transient, a hippie if you will. I don't do forever. This is the one thing in my life I can do for real - permanently.

I want this forever with everything. How can a

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