

**A BRIEF
HISTORY OF
MY WOMANHOOD**

BY

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1992 I am born. They write 'male' on my birth certificate. They wrap me in a blue blanket. They are wrong.

1996 First memory of feeling like I should have been a girl.

2000 Called a girl for the first time by a boy on my council estate. I go home and cry to my mum.

2003 I'm sent to an all-boys school. On my first day a boy in my class tells me I look like a girl. I'm bullied for being effeminate every single day until I leave seven years later.

2004 I watch Nadia on *Big Brother*. It's the first time I truly see myself, and have a word to understand who and what I am.

2005 Puberty starts. My body starts to change in ways I don't like. I start to hate myself. I hide my razor from my parents in my room because I'm ashamed that I have to shave my face.

2009 The bullying at school is worse than ever. I'm suicidal. I stumble across *RuPaul's Drag Race* on TV at 3 a.m. on a school night. It saves my life. I start doing drag. I feel the happiest I've ever felt when I'm dressed as a girl.

2010 I get into Central Saint Martins. I'm celebrated for my femininity for the first time in my life. Despite this I'm still very depressed. I hate my body. Drag isn't enough.

2011 Carmen Carrera comes out as trans on *RuPaul's Drag Race*. I think I might be ready to transition.

2012 The darkest period of my life. Apparently I tell my friend I think I might be trans. I don't remember this.

2013 I have a breakdown. I accept I am trans. I tell my family and friends. I go to my GP for help. He tells me I will never be a woman and refuses to help. I have to see two more GPs before I find one who helps me.

2014 I legally change my name. I take my mum and nana's names as my middle names because they are the strongest women I know. I need their strength as I start presenting as female; I am attacked verbally/physically/sexually on a daily basis. I say a Hail Mary before leaving home every day.

2015 After waiting two years, I finally get an appointment at the Gender Identity Clinic to discuss transitioning. I begin hormones later that year. My body's chemistry feels right for the first time in my life. The transphobia I face in the

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streets starts turning into sexism as I begin to pass more. I'm catcalled, told to cheer up and followed home like all my other girl friends.

2016 First time having sex with a straight man. Also the first of many times I don't come during sex with straight men. I have finally saved enough money for facial feminization surgery and book my surgery date. I cry on my bedroom floor.

2017 I am raped. Two weeks before my surgery. I have to go on PEP*. I'm not allowed to have surgery. I cry on my bedroom floor. I end up having my surgery the day after my birthday. It's the best birthday present ever. I am truly happy for the first time since I was a child.

2018 The day after my birthday, I have my first consultation for lower surgery. I feel like I finally have a date for the end of my prison sentence.

2019 I WILL BE REBORN.

I WILL BE FREE.

I WILL BE THE GIRL

I WAS ALWAYS

MEANT TO BE.