



As he walked along the sidewalks on his way home, Baxter got a lot of looks and even some snickering comments. He'd practically been born in a suit, and as a suit, he'd always largely blended into mainstream society, so he'd never been subjected to this kind of ridicule from the normals. It made him feel shaken, off-balance, and yet, at the same time, he would sometimes pass someone with purple hair or piercings, someone dressed in off-beat clothes or with many visible tats, and there was a kind of look of recognition, a glance, a small nod.

He was part of the underground now, he realized with a strange sense of pride. He'd have to tell Lew. Just as that thought crossed his mind, he saw a sign painted on a storefront window: eyebrows threaded. Without a thought he wandered into the salon and was soon down to get his eyebrows done. Of course, part of him couldn't understand what he was doing, why he was doing, but sitting with his legs crossed at the knee, his hands folded in his lap, he couldn't deny that it all just felt right.

The staff, everyone, just treated him like any customer. This was, after all, New Amsterdam and, besides, he figured with his piercings it wouldn't be at all odd that he would want to have his brows done. When the girl finished, he cringed. He now had slender, arched eyebrows like a fashionable woman.

I guess I can expect more snickering, he thought, running his finger along his sleek brow. Well, fine. He was a free spirit and would do what he wanted.

When he got home, he collapsed onto the couch, exhausted. He tossed. He tossed again. He turned. "I'm too tired to sleep," he realized. "Hey, Giri, play..." his wife made a change in his musical tastes... "Rriot Grrrrls."

"Now playing Riot Girl punk rock," Giri responded.

Wait, what? Baxter thought, wondering what he'd been thinking. He never liked punk—too messy, too imperfect, and girl punk? Yet, as soon as it started playing, he found himself nodding along, smiling. "I'm so quirky," he thought as he began to dance, throwing a bunch of Breakfast Club dance moves, bopping around his apartment, his arms in the air, then racing to his smart pad, ordering candles and incense, and then dancing some more, biting his lip, feeling rebellious and free.

Later, he did manage to fall asleep, and as he slept his ex-wife, Annie, decided to give him a signature traumatic memory, since all Manic Pixies had some sort of trauma in their background. She spent a little time thinking about it, giggling at how ridiculous it was, how funny it would be when he revealed his "trauma" for the first time. Then, for good measure, she added a quirky allergy.

Good... good... she thought, yawning, thinking she would go to bed, get up early to watch him deal with all the changes, but then on a whim she decided he should have freckles. He'd always had a weird thing for freckles, and then she changed his eye color to green as well, just because she could. That was enough, she thought but then, well, why not give him a little bit longer hair, too? She smirked as Baxter's pink hair grew out, forming a messy bob, now purple and pink. "Don't you just look adorable," she said to her husband's sleeping image.

Baxter tossed and turned all night, his dreams haunted by his new traumatic memory. “Fin...” he whispered... “Fin, don’t leave me...”

He woke curled up into a ball, drowning in emotional agony more terrible than anything he’d ever felt before. “Damn... damn... damn...” he whispered. “Fin. Oh, Fin.”

He was exhausted from his troubled sleep and didn’t even notice he had to brush bangs out of his eyes as he got up. He stumbled into the shower, but when he reached for his usual Irish Lava bodywash he found something called She Coconut and Hibiscus illuminating body wash. He squirted a little in his palm and sniffed. It most definitely smelled like girl shit. He started to put it aside, but then he noticed the bottle also promised him radiant skin. “Girl smell be damned,” he whispered as he lathered up. “I’m so damn quirky these days,” he thought as the perfumy smell of female seeped into his skin.



After he showered, Baxter went to the sink as he’d been doing every day since he’d become a teenager and prepared to shave. As soon as he saw his face, his mouth fell open. Everything was wrong. Purple and pink bangs cascaded down over one eye. His hair now came down to his jaw line, and he had freckles?

Freckles? Pink

hair, green eyes, freckles, all of that shook him, but the smooth, hairless skin on his face rattled him to his core. Shaving had made him a man. It had been a part of that identity since he first scraped off a few wispy hairs from his upper lip. Now, he put a hand to his

soft, smooth cheek, feeling not even the hint of stubble. His face was smooth as any woman's.

"As smooth as any woman's" He murmured. Did he have a hormonal imbalance? Was that why he was acting so weird? He put his hands over his chest terrified it would feel soft, like he was budding young breasts, but it was hard as always, thanks to hours doing pushups, lifting weights. The rest of him looked okay, but from the neck up? I need to see a shrink, he decided. Something is most seriously wrong with my brain.

He couldn't go to work like this, he decided. No way. His reputation would be ruined. His boss, Powers was all about old-school alphas, hard drinker assholes who would fuck anything or anyone. He was into guys with pink hair and freckles. Baxter went to his phone thinking to call in, but he saw a text from Powers, the founder of the firm. "We need to talk. Today." Shit. Powers would not like him calling in after he'd just gone MIA for a day after showing up to court looking like some post-apocalyptic weirdo. He glanced in the mirror. No. Being seen like this was worse than being—

Annie, the ex, had no intention of allowing her hubby to hide in his apartment. She wanted the whole world to see what he was becoming. She gave him a nudge, and Baxter realized he really had no reason to avoid his boss. He looked in the mirror once more. "I'm rocking this look," he said, smiling. "I might even start a trend."

Baxter kept getting strange looks from some people as he walked along, the little chains on his ears jangling. The day was looking gorgeous—bright, crisp and clear, with a pleasant breeze that blew the sometimes offensive odors of the city away. He would have to call Lew, see what she was up to. He felt like partying, maybe take a Zumba class.

The weird look effect ramped up as soon as he walked into his building. Here, people knew him, and right away Frank, the security guard, did a double take. He was an old school city guy and a wisecracker. "What happened?" He said as Baxter swiped his pass and pushed through the turnstile. "They run out of blue?"

"Hey, sometimes you have to take risks," Baxter said, mussing his hair.

As he waited for the elevator, he saw Kennedy, another lawyer from his office. She tilted her head to the side and raised her palms to the sky. "I didn't peg you for the nose ring type."

"I'm full of surprises," Baxter responded, and then his mind filled with panic. No. No. But, he couldn't help himself. He raised his arms above his head and did a twirl. The people around gawked. A couple even applauded, though ironically. Horrified, Baxter now found himself executing a perfect ballet bow.

"I didn't know you took ballet," Kennedy said.

“I haven’t.”

She squinted. “You couldn’t have such perfect form without hours of practice.”

“Hey, Swan Lake,” Eric, another guy from the office who’d just walked up said. “Get in or get out of the way.”

The elevator had arrived. Baxter pushed in with the rest. When the elevator opened on their floor, Powers Law had its own floor in the building, he could feel eyes turning toward him, people whispering, some covering their mouths so he couldn’t see their expressions, but he knew they were laughing at him. He felt that same sense of disorientation as the day before, like the whole world had changed.

As a partner, he had his own office and a secretary to keep people out, so he dove in and told Melissa, his secretary, he didn’t want to see anyone. Mellisa stared, trying to decide if she should say something, not sure how to read what she was seeing, especially her boss’s sculpted, feminine eyebrows. Finally, she said, “I like your lip ring.”

“Let’s just pretend none of this is happening,” Baxter said, gesturing toward his face and heading into his office, closing the door and feeling a rush of relief.

He sat down and got to work, waiting for the summons that came at precisely 10:31 am. “Mr. Powers would like to see you.”

*Annie couldn’t help herself. She had a bunch of ideas, and they just came. First, she remembered how her stupid ex had always pestered her to wear thongs. Well...*

Baxter had known it was coming. Even though he’d mollified the client, word that one of their partners was walking around with pink hair would be a cause for concern. He grabbed his phone to check his teeth and face, run his fingers through his hair, and as he was sitting there, he felt his ass swell and spread under him. At the same time, his underwear slipped up between his ass cheeks. “Ow!” He said, wiggling and then standing. Even before he looked back, he could feel his ass was bigger, sticking out like a caboose, his pants stretched tight across his butt. Baxter had a closet built into the shelves along the wall, and he opened the door and looked in the mirror, standing sideways so he could see his profile. “Holy guacamole,” he said as he looked at what to him looked like a woman’s ass in the mirror. He wiggled, uncomfortable with the way his underwear rode up his ass crack, but shrieked again when he unzipped his pants and saw he was wearing a pair of lacey black panties. It took about half a second for him to connect the dots and realize he not only wore panties, but thong panties.

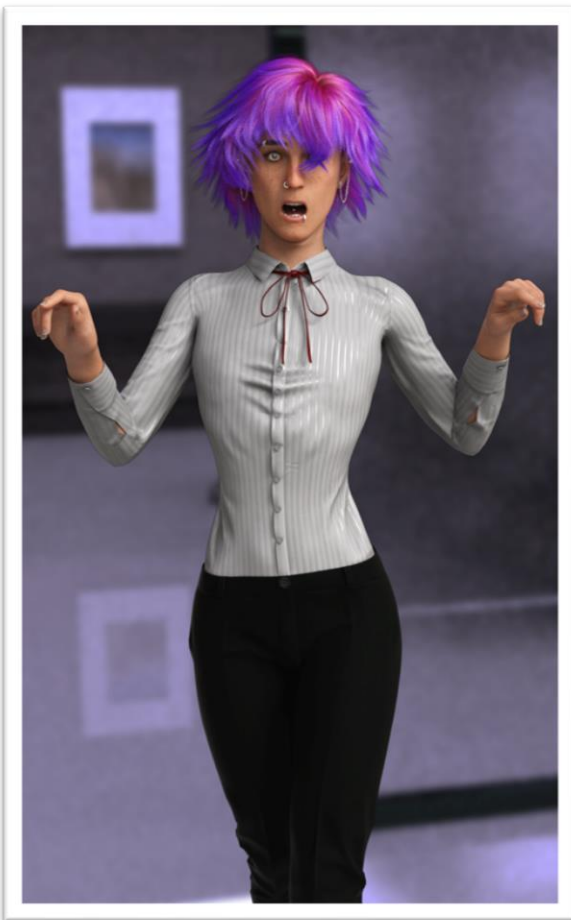
“What the fudge...?” He felt himself overcome with terror and shame. Panties were sexy and he loved them—on women. Realizing he wore a pair now made him feel completely

emasculated. He could feel his balls shrinking, and he searched his memory. Had he put on panties this morning? He didn't think so...

*As Baxter freaked out, his whole body shaking as he unzipped his pants, thinking to wiggle out of these humiliating panties, Annie decided she wanted to see how his ass looked when he wore high heels. She started with a pair of cork wedge sandals, then decided to go higher and higher...*



Baxter wobbled as he felt his heels suddenly lift, pushing him forward onto his toes. Then, his heels kept rising and rising higher and higher and higher until he was perched forward, arms outstretched trying to keep from falling forward. Lifting one foot and looking down, he saw he now wore strappy wedges with an alarmingly high heel. Even as he recoiled in shock to find himself wearing women's shoes, he felt like some strange force had wrapped itself around his waist and squeezed. Baxter felt his waist pull inward, and all the extra flesh seemed to flow down to his widening hips. At the same time, his muscle melted away as he became slender, his shoulders narrowed, his arms melted down to feminine twigs.



Now distracted from his shoes, he looked back at the mirror and gasped, putting one hand to his smooth cheek. He looked like a woman, or rather his body looked more like a woman's body with a slender waist and round hips. He'd lost muscle, looked skinny, and his shirt, like

his pants, had shrunk and hugged his new figure. His pants were clearly a woman's trousers, with no pockets, and he now wore a woman's blouse with a cute little collar and a string tie. He didn't like his body. "I have a woman's body," Baxter whispered. "I look like a woman."

"Yes, you do," Annie said, smirking at the shocked expression on Baxter's face.

The sight of his slender waist, the curve of his hips filled him with fear and rage. "No... no... NO!" Baxter shouted, grabbing a paper weight from his desk and hurling it across the room, where it shattered against the wall. "This is NOT ACCEPTABLE!"

She'd never seen him so rattled. He loved to pride himself on his cool, but she supposed most guys would probably lose it if they suddenly had curves.

Baxter's heels, which left his feet bare other than a strap across his toes, forced him to stand with his ass sticking back, his tits thrust forward. Try as he might, he couldn't seem to stand in any way that would resemble a man. He teetered over to his chair, arms out to his sides, feeling his new hips sway, and sat, thinking to get these humiliating shoes off his feet at least then shimmy out of the panties, which that dental floss up his ass was driving him insane, serving as a constant reminder he was wearing a woman's delicates.

Baxter has never worn strappy shoes or strappy anything, but it looked pretty simple. There was a strap that hugged the back of his ankle, and he was pretty sure if he pulled it down, he would be able to slide right out of the shoe. The only problem was he couldn't seem to pull it down. He tugged, Yanked. Cursed. He couldn't get the platform heels off his feet.

The intercom buzzed. "Mr. Powers would like to remind you he doesn't like to be kept waiting."

Baxter groaned. At some risk, he was about to tell the founder of the firm he couldn't meet right now, and he was cycling through excuses but then, suddenly, it was as if a dark cloud lifted from his mind. So what if he was wearing high heels and women's clothes? So what if he had pink hair and piercings and a banging ass? "Everything that happens," Lew always said. "Is just something that happens."

Once again, Annie had given her ex a nudge.

He got to his feet and tottered to the door, struggling to keep his balance perched up there on his toes. Making matters worse, his hair fell across his left eye, making it hard to see, and no matter how many times he brushed it away, it seemed to bounce right back. So, partially blinded and unable to really walk, he moved slowly and awkwardly—or, as some of the women thought watching him as he made his way across the office, he looked like a tween girl learning to walk in heels. It was, to some of them, kind of adorable.





Another of Lew's sayings came to mind. "Life is better when it's weird." Well, his life had just gotten very weird. Ass back, he opened the door and minced across the main office floor, wishing to God there was some way to get his underwear out of his ass.

While the partners all had their private offices, the junior lawyers and the rest of the staff worked in an open-office style bullpen. Word of Baxter's new look had created all kinds of buzz, so as he passed texts flew and heads poked up like meercats as everyone wanted to catch a glimpse. None of them was ready for what they saw. Baxter didn't look at all like Baxter. Yeah, the hair and the piercings were shocking, but even more shocking was his slender, feminine body, perched up on a pair of insanely high wedges. None of the women



at the office wore heels that high, and it was clear Baxter wasn't used to them as he looked almost like he was drunk, wobbling and teetering, his arms stretched out to the sides as he struggled to make his way to Powers' office.

He heard murmurs. "He's so skinny. What's his secret? He has a better ass than I do... tell me about it. Is he gay?" Baxter cringed at the comments, which seemed so wrong. He'd been a man among

men, and now women wished they had his figure. It was death, but what choice did he have but to face it?

Eric, the obnoxious guy from the elevator, stood in the door to the break room, coffee mug in hand, one eyebrow raised as he looked over his former rival and, he figured, now very much defeated enemy mincing along. Powers would never go for this kind of thing in his office, Eric thought. Baxter was finished, partner or not.

"Nice shoes," Eric said. "My wife has the same ones."

“Shut up,” Baxter said, but he didn’t feel confident at all. How could he? Jerk, Baxter thought as he walked by and felt Eric’s eyes drop to his ass. Well, he thought, glass half full. At least he doesn’t know I’m wearing panties.

Then, he felt Eric pinch his ass. He jumped. Yelped and rushed into his boss’s office.

### **Sneak Peek**

