TransFocus

The World from a Transgender Perspective

August 2026



London Trans Pride

The Importance of being Seen

Transnormativity

Welcome to August

Welcome to the August edition of *Trans Focus*.

Summer is in full swing, and so are the many Pride celebrations taking place around the world. At a time when so much feels uncertain, these events remain a powerful reminder of visibility, resilience and hope.

At the time of writing, I see reports of wildfires in many parts of Spain. Families are having to move away from their homes and the fear of harm and destruction of their homes is very real. The lack of rain and oppressive heat make this a threat every year. Like everyone else, I hope people come through this in one piece.

On a more positive note, congratulations to Spain on winning their second World Cup. Well deserved, from the best team in the tournament. We have people from many different nationalities where I live. Most neutrals supported Spain when their own team went out, which is as it should be here. As I have lived in Spain for many years, I can safely say that football did come home this year.



There's often one lunatic attempting to facebomb a significant event…

This month has once again highlighted the stark contrast between countries moving forwards and those moving backwards on transgender rights. While parts of the UK and the USA continue to restrict the rights of transgender people, the Netherlands has taken a very different approach. A landmark official review has recommended expanding access to evidence-based gender-affirming care for transgender young people, concluding that specialist services should be improved and made more accessible rather than restricted. It is refreshing to see evidence placed ahead of ideology.

Meanwhile, in the UK, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is due to publish its guidance on single-sex services on 5 August. The proposed approach relies on an outdated definition of "biological sex" that many transgender people fear will be used to exclude us from everyday public life. To me, it echoes the spirit of Section 28: another attempt to make a minority less visible and less welcome.

Whenever I see legislation or guidance targeting transgender people, I often ask readers to replace the word "transgender" with "Black", "disabled", "Jewish" or "Muslim". Read it again with those substitutions and ask yourself whether it would still be considered acceptable. Too often, prejudice against transgender people is presented as something reasonable rather than recognised for what it is.

There is more worrying news this month. A judicial review has been launched over the proposed clinical trial of puberty blockers recommended following the Cass Review. The challenge is being supported by well-funded gender-critical campaigners, underlining the scale of the opposition facing the transgender community. Whatever your view on treatment pathways, forcing transgender young people through an unwanted puberty can have profound and lifelong consequences. I continue to believe that denying appropriate care to trans children amounts to conversion therapy by another name.

If you spend any time on social media, particularly X, you'll know that outrage often spreads faster than understanding. The same familiar claims are repeated again and again: "men are men", "women are women", and that no amount of long hair, make-up or clothing can change that. Facts rarely seem to matter when slogans are easier to share.

One incident this month was especially revealing. J.K. Rowling shared and defended an upskirt photograph of a transgender woman, arguing

that it was acceptable because the subject was transgender. This is from someone who frequently says her activism is about protecting women. It raises an obvious question: how does violating a woman's privacy protect women? The logic is troubling, because it risks sending the message that women who are judged not to look "feminine enough" somehow deserve less dignity or respect. Language matters too. Repeatedly removing the word "woman" from "trans woman" may seem like a small grammatical choice, but words shape perceptions, and perceptions influence how society treats people.

Against all of this, Pride reminds us why visibility matters. It reminds us that progress has never been inevitable, that rights must be defended, and that hope remains one of the most powerful forms of resistance.

As usual, we have attempted to fill our magazine with interesting and entertaining content. Take a look at when Carla went to Mexico for a World Cup match as well as the alternative World Cup feature and our cartoon story, '*The Four Seamstresses'.*

Once again, thank you for reading. If you have any ideas for future content, please let us know. If you wish to contribute, please do. Articles, photo shoots, opinion, life stories. We welcome you all so long as it's LGBTQ related. Keep on enjoying your summer and remember, despite the negativity many of us are facing, you aren't alone!

Until next month,

Lots of Love

Carla & Penny xx

Why I Have Decided to Be Seen

By Penny

I am in my sixties, and after spending far too many years worrying about what other people might think, I have recently made the decision to let my customers know that I am a transgender woman.

For some people, that may not seem particularly remarkable. For me, it is one of the biggest decisions I have ever made.

It would certainly have been easier to remain invisible. To let people make their own assumptions. To carry on as I always have, keeping one part of myself quietly tucked away because it felt safer. There is a certain comfort in anonymity, especially when you have lived through decades in which being transgender was misunderstood, ridiculed or treated as something shameful.



But these are not ordinary times.

Across both the United Kingdom and the United States, transgender people have become the subject of endless debate. Hardly a week seems to pass without another newspaper headline, television discussion or political speech questioning our existence, our motives or our place in society. We are spoken about as though we are an issue to be solved rather than people trying to live ordinary lives.

I have watched this happen with growing sadness.

What troubles me most is that so much of the conversation happens without people actually knowing us. Many of those with the strongest opinions have probably never knowingly met a transgender person. Their understanding comes from headlines, social media or commentators whose livelihoods depend on keeping the argument going.

That is why I have come to believe that simply being visible matters.

Not because I imagine I will change the world. Not because I think everyone will suddenly agree with me. But because every ordinary transgender person who lives openly makes it just a little harder to believe the caricatures.

I am not an activist by nature. I am simply someone who has built a life, worked hard, paid my taxes, worried about bills, laughed with friends, grieved for people I have lost and tried to treat others with kindness. Like countless other women, I have good days and bad days. My being transgender is part of who I am, but it is by no means the whole story.

That is precisely the point.

When people know a real transgender woman, the conversation changes. We stop being an abstract political talking point and become someone's customer, colleague, neighbour or friend. It becomes much harder to believe frightening narratives when they are contradicted by everyday experience.

I also think about younger transgender people.

When I was growing up, there were almost no examples of people like me living ordinary, successful lives. There was silence, shame and isolation. You learned very quickly that certain feelings were better left unspoken.

Things are different now, but only partly. Young transgender people today may have more information than my generation ever did, yet they are also growing up amid extraordinary hostility. Many are being told that their identities are controversial before they have even had the chance to understand themselves.

If someone like me, a woman in her sixties who has lived a full life, can be visible, perhaps it offers

a different picture. Not one of conflict, but of possibility. A reminder that being transgender does not prevent someone from building a career, making friends, finding happiness or contributing to their community.

I know visibility is not without risks.

Some people will think less of me. A few may decide they no longer wish to do business with me. Others may judge me before they have even spoken to me. I would be naïve to pretend otherwise.

Yet I have reached an age where I find myself asking a different question.

If not now, when?

I have spent enough of my life worrying about whether other people would approve of me. Age has brought with it an unexpected freedom. I no longer feel the need to apologise for existing. I have earned the right to live honestly.

That honesty also extends to my customers.

I have always believed that trust is built through openness. I hope people will continue to see me as they always have: someone who works hard, delivers what she promises and genuinely values the people she serves. The only difference is that now they know one more truth about me.

I am not asking anyone to change their beliefs overnight. I am certainly not demanding admiration for simply being myself.

What I hope for is something much simpler.

I hope that when people hear the words "transgender woman", they will think not only of newspaper headlines or political arguments but also of someone they actually know. Someone who treated them fairly. Someone who listened. Someone who cared about doing a good job.

If enough of us become visible, perhaps that quiet familiarity will begin to outweigh the noise.

I also want other transgender women of my generation to know that it is never too late. Many of us grew up believing that authenticity was something reserved for other people. We became experts at surviving, often at the expense of truly living.

I understand why many choose to remain private, and I would never question that decision. Safety, family, employment and peace of mind all matter. No one owes the world their story.

But for those of us who can step into the light, I believe there is value in doing so.

Not because we are extraordinary, but because we are ordinary.

The more ordinary we become in the public imagination, the less room there is for fear. The more neighbours, customers, friends and colleagues people know who happen to be transgender, the more difficult it becomes to reduce us to slogans or headlines.

I cannot control what politicians say or what newspapers print. I cannot stop people from arguing about people like me.

What I can do is live openly, treat others with respect and allow my own life to stand as quiet evidence that transgender people are exactly that, people.



At this stage of my life, that feels like the most honest thing I can do.

And perhaps, in its own small way, it is also the bravest.

If you'd like this to read more like a newspaper opinion piece, a personal memoir, or something intended for your business website or customer newsletter, I can adapt the style accordingly.

How I Went to the World Cup in Mexico... Without Leaving Spain

A Monday in early July. I went to the World Cup in Mexico.

Well… sort of.

My bank account stayed firmly in Spain. My passport never left the drawer. And I didn't spend eleven hours folded into an aeroplane seat wondering whether my knees would ever straighten again.



View from my hotel room

Instead, I packed something much lighter. Artificial Intelligence.

Over the course of an afternoon, I "travelled" to Mexico City, caught a crowded bus full of passionate Mexican fans, stood outside the Azteca Stadium, queued for food, posed with England supporters, made new Mexican friends, enjoyed a tequila in a lively bar and even found time to admire the view from my hotel balcony.



The bus journey to the ground

The photos looked pretty convincing. So much so that some people on Facebook

where I posted them, thought I had gone there.



Pre match drinks

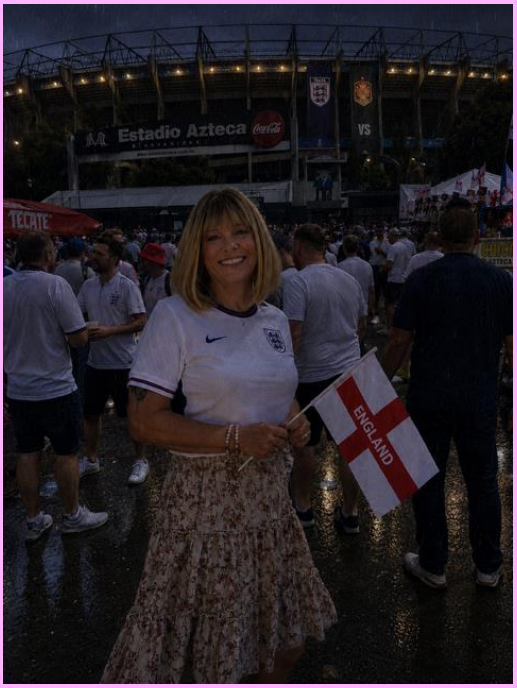
By the end of it I had an entire holiday album, despite never having to remember where I'd put my passport.

My favourite pictures were probably the ones with England and Mexican women happily posing together before the game. Football rivalry at its best and competitive for ninety minutes, friendly before and afterwards.



I even managed to experience the traditional British football weather. Later versions of the photos had the heavens opening, rain pouring down and everyone getting soaked. AI clearly understands football culture better than some pundits do.

Of course, none of it happened.



England really did beat Mexico 3–2, but I watched it from Spain, not from Row 37 of the Azteca Stadium. That, however, is the fascinating part.

A few years ago, creating images like these would have required expensive software and professional editing skills. Today, with a little imagination and the right prompts, you can create a believable visual story in minutes.

It raises interesting and often concerning questions.

Photos have always been treated as evidence. "The camera never lies," people used to say. These days, perhaps we

should retire that saying. The camera might still be honest, but AI has developed quite an imagination.

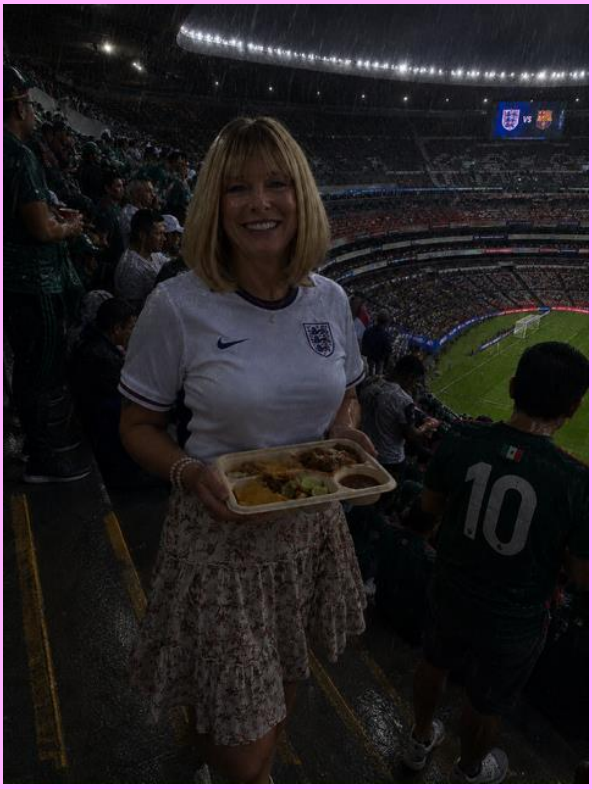


For me, this wasn't about fooling anyone. In fact, quite the opposite. It was simply a bit of fun. A playful experiment in storytelling. Every picture came from a real photograph of me combined with AI's creativity. Think of it as digital theatre rather than digital deception.



The delayed kick off meant food…

So yes, I visited Mexico. I chatted with fans. I sampled the local atmosphere.I survived the rain. I even got back home in time for bed.



Time to eat

Not bad for someone who never actually left the Costa Blanca.

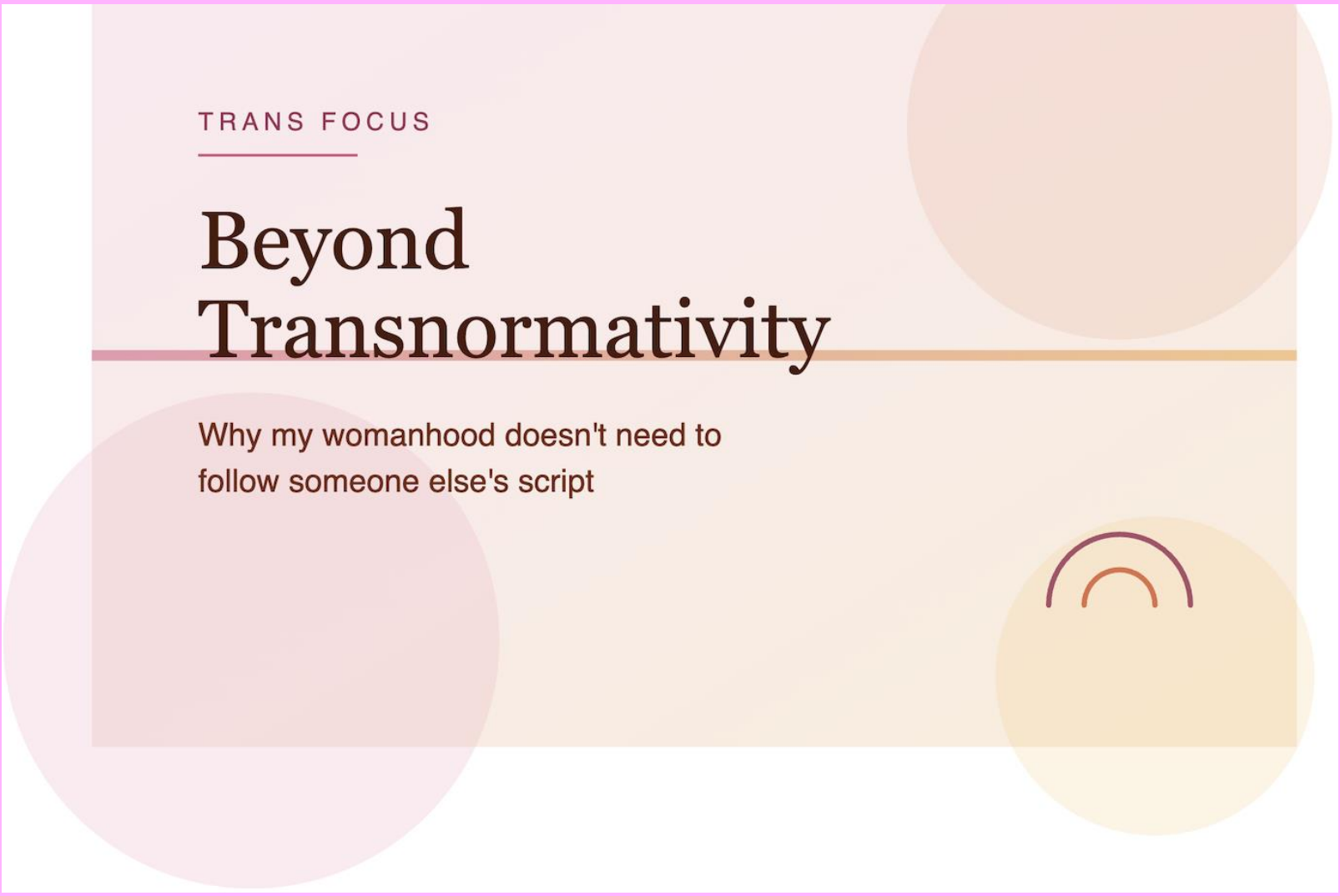
The reality was, that I recorded the match and watched it from the comfort of my living room at 7.30 am.

The future may be slightly surreal, but I have to admit, it's proving to be quite entertaining.

Love Carla X

Beyond Transnormativity

Why My Womanhood Doesn't Need to Follow Someone Else's Script



One of the most frustrating things about being transgender isn't dealing with society's expectations of men and women. It's often dealing with the expectations imposed by transgender people on each other.

There's an unwritten rule that to be a “real” trans woman, I must follow a prescribed path: pursue hormones, seek surgery, present in an unmistakably feminine way at all times, and work constantly at “passing.” If I don't do all of this, some conclude I'm not serious, not authentic, maybe not even transgender.

I reject that.

I've always felt female, even if I can't fully explain why. Few people can explain with precision why they experience themselves as the gender they do. Cisgender women are never asked to provide a philosophical account of their womanhood, they simply know who they are. Trans people are held to a standard of proof nobody else has to meet. That demand is itself revealing: it suggests my experience is viewed as suspect from the outset.

The Problem with Transnormativity

Transnormativity is the belief that there's a “correct” way to be transgender, one narrative in particular: knowing from early childhood, experiencing severe dysphoria, medically transitioning, and ultimately passing completely.

That path is valid for those who choose it. But it isn't the only valid path.

The problem is when this narrative becomes a gatekeeping tool, creating a hierarchy where some trans people are seen as more “legitimate” than others. A trans woman who skips surgery is viewed with suspicion. One who skips hormones is dismissed. One who doesn't always present conventionally feminine is accused of not trying hard enough.

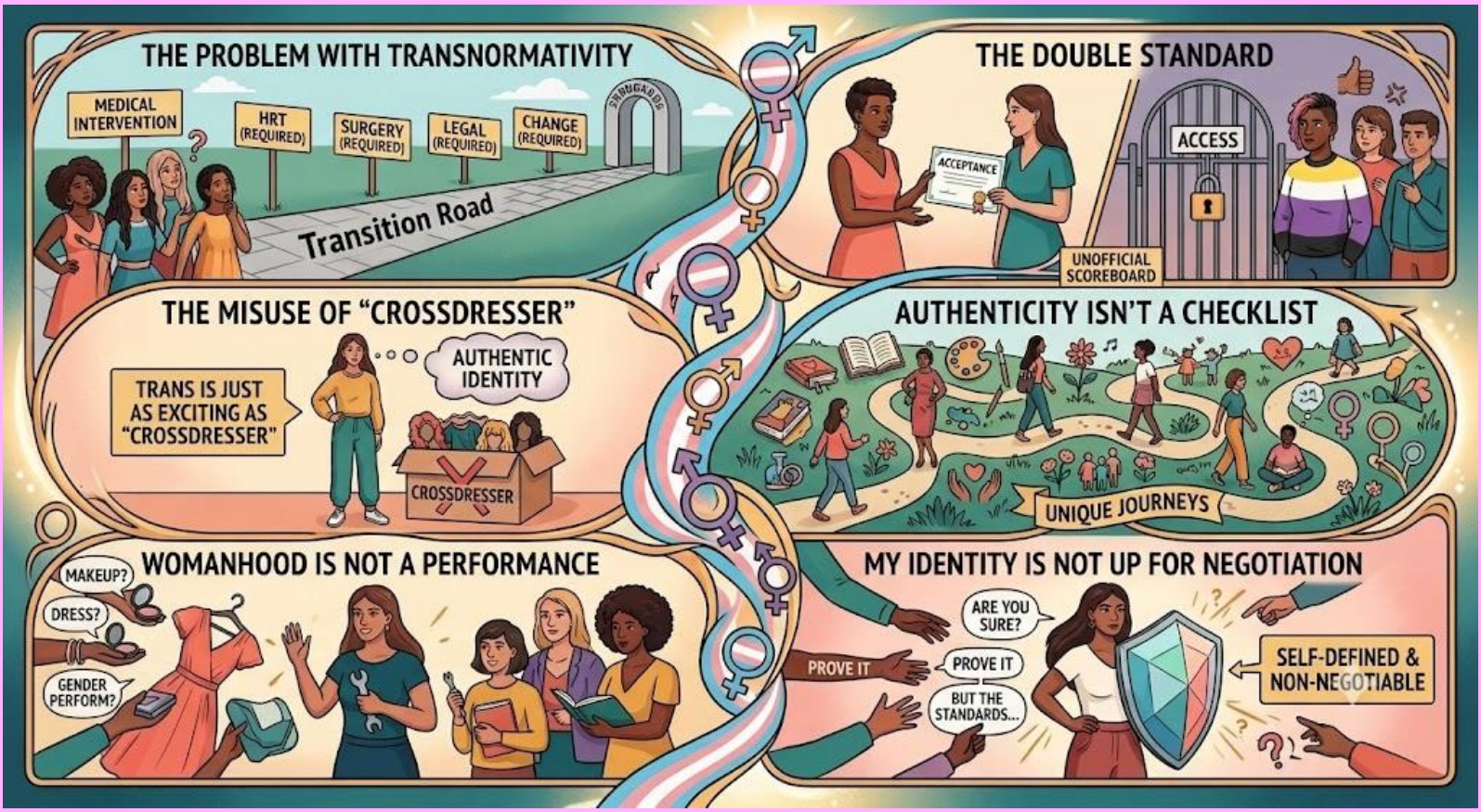
Why should authenticity be measured by conformity?

The Double Standard

Women today routinely wear trousers, boots, and suits, clothes once considered masculine, without anyone questioning their womanhood. Yet trans women face a far stricter standard: if a

cis woman wears trousers, she's still a woman; if a trans woman does, some suddenly question whether she's “really committed” to being female.

The issue was never clothing. It's that trans women are often expected to perform an exaggerated version of femininity just to be accepted, even as the same critics claim gender stereotypes are outdated.



The Misuse of “Crossdresser”

Crossdressing describes behaviour — wearing clothes associated with another gender. Being transgender describes identity. These aren't interchangeable, yet “crossdresser” is often used to dismiss trans women who haven't medically transitioned, as if their identity is merely a costume unless backed by every possible intervention.

Authenticity Isn't a Checklist

Transnormativity assumes that more transition equals more validity, as if hormones make you more valid, and surgery more valid still. Taken to its logical end, identity becomes a checklist of procedures.

But medical treatment can change the body, it can't create an identity that wasn't already there. A person doesn't become transgender by taking hormones; they take hormones because they're transgender. The treatment responds to identity, it isn't the source of it.

Womanhood Is Not a Performance

Women are diverse: feminine, masculine, into makeup or not, pursuing medical intervention or not. We don't judge cis women's womanhood by these criteria. Why should trans women be different? If society believes women are more than stereotypes, that principle has to apply to all women.

My Identity Is Not Up for Negotiation

I don't necessarily need hormones to justify my existence. I don't necessarily need surgery to prove who I am. I don't need to perform femininity on someone else's terms.

True acceptance means recognising there's no single way to be transgender, just as there's no single way to be a woman. Validity shouldn't depend on conformity to stereotypes or medical scripts. It should depend on a simpler principle: people are the authorities on their own lives.

Transnormativity



Summer's London Day Out

A.K.A. London Trans Pride 2026

If I'm honest, London Trans Pride had always been one of those events that somehow passed me by. Last year, when anti-trans rhetoric seemed to be reaching new heights, I decided it was finally time to go. Typical luck though, we'd already booked a holiday to sunny Spain!

This year there was no way I was going to miss it. The moment train tickets went on sale, mine was booked.

Then life decided to throw me another curveball.





For the past couple of months I've been quite poorly. At one point I was even blue-lighted to hospital, missing the Marti Pellow and Billy Ocean concert at Lincoln Castle that I'd been looking forward to for ages. After two stressful weeks of convincing myself I had every worst-case scenario imaginable, I finally received a diagnosis of Post Viral Syndrome, essentially Long Covid, although it doesn't have to be caused by Covid itself. Thankfully I'm improving.

These days I'm "only" sleeping around ten hours a night instead of the fifteen I was managing at first, and I'm tired rather than completely exhausted.

Even so, Saturday morning arrived with a mixture of excitement and nerves. It was the first time Summer had been out in over eight weeks, and I wasn't entirely sure how I'd cope.

I'm so glad I went.

The weather couldn't have been better, but what really made the day special was the people. Everywhere I looked there were smiles, conversations and an overwhelming sense of kindness. Complete strangers chatted as though we'd known each other for years. It reminded me just how welcoming and supportive our community can be.





What struck me most was how different London Trans Pride felt compared with many other Pride events I've attended over the years. There was less glitter, fewer corporate banners and less of a festival atmosphere. Instead, there was something much more powerful, a sense of purpose.

This was Pride in its original spirit.

It was a peaceful demonstration of visibility, resilience and solidarity. A reminder that Pride began as a protest, and for transgender people in 2026, that protest still matters. At a time when our rights continue to be debated, challenged and, in some places, rolled back, simply gathering together in such huge numbers sends a powerful message: we are here, we belong, and we are not going away.





One of the most heartening sights was the number of younger trans people taking part. The crowd felt noticeably younger than at many other Pride events I've attended, and seeing so many young trans women and men standing proudly together gave me enormous hope for the future. Alongside them were thousands of allies, both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+, who had come simply to stand beside us. Their support meant every bit as much as the march itself.





The turnout was astonishing. Tens of thousands filled the streets of London. I made the classic rookie mistake of joining towards the back of the march, and by the time we reached

Trafalgar Square the crowds were so immense that getting anywhere near the stage for the speeches was impossible. But somehow that didn't matter. Just being there, surrounded by so many people united by compassion, acceptance and determination, was enough.

As I write this, I'm heading back home to sunny Hull, feeling pleasantly exhausted, incredibly proud and deeply grateful.

London Trans Pride isn't just another date in the calendar. It's a reminder that, despite the negativity we sometimes see online or hear in the media, there are far more people who believe in equality, dignity and kindness than there are those who seek to divide us.

For me, this wasn't simply a day out in London.

It was a celebration of our community, a reminder of why visibility matters, and the beginning of what I know will become an annual pilgrimage.

Summer x



The Four Seamstresses



On a quiet corner of Marigold Lane stood a small dress shop called *The Four Seamstresses*. While the big department stores sold cheap festival costumes and rushed alterations, this little shop offered something different. Inside, fabric, colour and kindness came together to help people feel truly seen.

The shop was run by four women whose talents perfectly complemented one another.



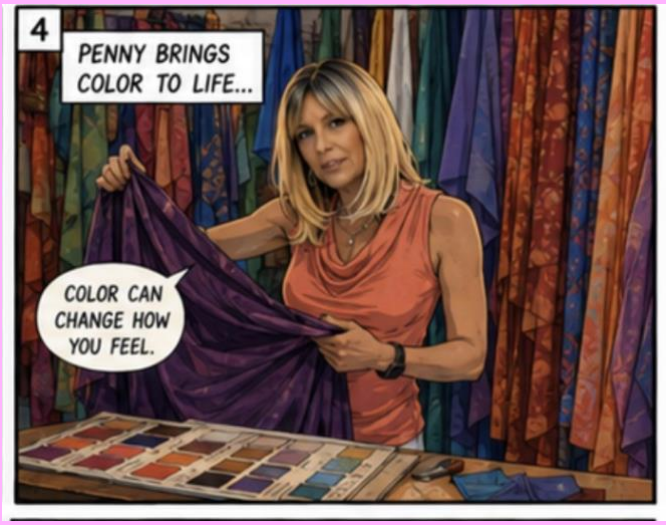
Carla understood silhouettes. She could look at someone for a moment and instantly know which cut, shape or style would help them stand taller and feel confident. “Clothes should never hide a person,” she often said. “They should reveal who they are.”



Emma specialised in hidden structure. Her stitching was so careful and precise that nobody ever noticed it, yet every dress she made moved beautifully and comfortably.



She believed the best support was often invisible.



Penny brought colour to life. Her corner of the shop overflowed with silks, ribbons and vibrant fabrics in every shade imaginable. Penny knew exactly which colours could brighten someone’s mood or transform how they saw themselves.



And Summer offered emotional reassurance. Customers often arrived nervous or uncertain, but after a cup of tea and a few gentle words from Summer, they usually left smiling. She had a gift for helping people believe in themselves.

Business had been slow for months. Many people in the city dismissed the four women and treated their little shop like an oddity rather than a place of real talent. Still, the seamstresses carried on, supporting one another and creating beautiful work.

Then one rainy evening, just before closing time, the bell above the door rang.

Standing in the doorway was Helena Vale, the country's most famous stage actress.



The women immediately recognised her, but Helena looked very different from the glamorous star seen on posters around the city. A scar ran along one side of her face after a recent accident, and she carried herself with sadness and uncertainty.

"I open the Grand Lantern Festival tomorrow night," Helena explained quietly. "But every designer I've visited has tried to hide me. None of their dresses feel like me anymore."



The four seamstresses exchanged a glance.

"We don't hide people here," Carla said warmly.

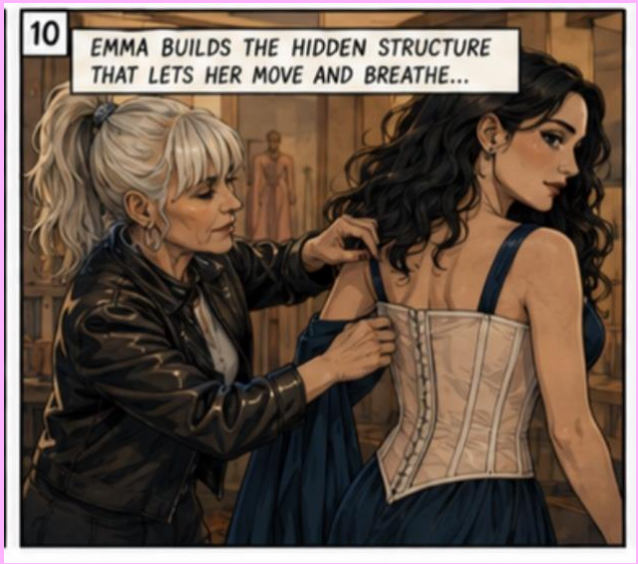
They worked through the night together.



Carla redesigned the gown's silhouette so Helena would look strong and elegant rather than fragile. Emma rebuilt the hidden structure of the dress so Helena could move and breathe comfortably instead of feeling trapped. Penny chose a rich sapphire-blue fabric that shimmered beautifully beneath the lights.



“This colour belongs to someone meant to be noticed,” she said with a smile.



Finally, while the others sewed, Summer sat beside Helena and quietly reassured her.

“You don’t need to become someone new,” Summer told her gently. “You only need to remember who you already are.”

By dawn, the dress was finished.

When Helena looked in the mirror, tears filled her eyes.



“I finally look like myself again,” she whispered.

The following evening, Helena stepped onto the festival stage in the sapphire gown. The crowd fell silent in amazement. She stood proudly beneath the lanterns, no longer hiding her scar or her fear.

During her speech, Helena thanked the four seamstresses publicly.



“They reminded me,” she said, “that beauty is not about perfection. It is about having the courage to be seen.”

From that day on, *The Four Seamstresses* was never empty again. People came from across the city not just for beautiful clothes, but because inside that little shop on Marigold Lane, everyone was welcomed exactly as they were.

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ASK CARLA

Someone told me, "You can't possibly know what it feels like to be a woman because you were assigned male at birth." How would you respond?

I would start by saying that I don't pretend to know what every woman feels. There isn't one universal female experience. Every woman, cisgender or transgender, has her own life, personality and story.

What I can talk about is my own experience. I've always had a deep sense that I am female. Long before I had the language to describe it, being treated as a boy felt wrong in a way I struggled to explain. It wasn't about wanting to wear different clothes or copy stereotypes. It was about feeling that the person everyone else thought I was didn't match the person I knew myself to be.

The person challenging you is looking at the question from a completely different starting point. They believe that being a woman is defined solely by the sex someone was assigned at birth. If that's your definition, then of course my explanation won't be convincing, because we're using different meanings for the same word.

Nobody can directly experience another person's consciousness. A cisgender woman doesn't know she's a woman because she's experienced being a man for comparison. She knows because her own identity feels self-evident. A transgender person is making the same kind of claim about their own internal experience, even if others disagree about what that experience means.

My identity isn't something I can prove in a laboratory. It's an internal reality that has shaped my life for as long as I can remember. You don't have to share my experience to accept that it's genuine. We may never agree on definitions, but I hope we can at least recognise that none of us is better placed to describe my inner life than I am.

Love Carla X



Bikini Freedom — A Woman Becoming Herself

She steps onto the sand like it's a threshold she's crossed a thousand times in dreams. The morning light wraps her shoulders, soft as a blessing, and the sea lifts its voice as if it's been waiting for her.

Her bikini is not just fabric, it is declaration, it is rebellion, it is the quiet, radiant truth of a woman who has finally stopped apologising for wanting to be seen.

At sixty, her body tells stories of endurance, of tenderness, of years spent living half-hidden from a world that never understood how much courage it takes to become yourself.

But today, the breeze knows her name. Today, the sun kisses her skin without hesitation. Today, she walks across the beach with hips that sway not because she is performing femininity, but because she is *feeling* it for the first time without fear.

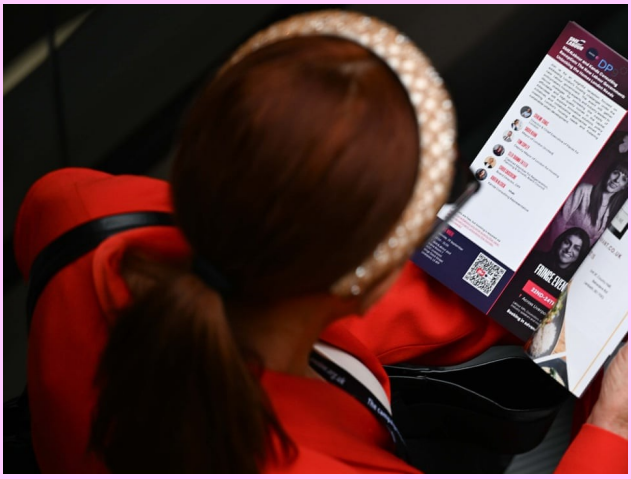
She laughs, a sound carried easily by the wind, because freedom tastes like salt, like sunscreen, like the first warm wave touching her toes and whispering, *You made it. You're here. You're whole.*

And as she stands there, bikini bright against the blue, she realises something simple, something enormous:

The world didn't give her this moment. She carved it out herself. And no one can take it away.

Unions clash with Labour over Trans Exclusion

By Penny



Several of Labour's most influential unions have announced they will boycott the party's forthcoming Women's Conference in protest at the exclusion of trans women.

The National Annual Women's Conference is scheduled to take place in Liverpool on 26 September. Its stated purpose is to help women engage more fully in policymaking and to give delegates an opportunity to exchange ideas.

In December 2025, however, the party's National Executive Committee voted to bar trans women from formal proceedings at this year's conference, including main-hall speeches and policy debates.

Unions such as Unison, Aslef, Usdaw and the Musicians' Union have said they will not attend in protest at the decision, Metro reported on 29 July. These unions, among Labour's largest financial backers, argued that the exclusion is at odds with their policies on trans inclusion.

A Unison spokesperson said: "The union has decided against sending a delegation to Labour's women's conference this year. This is because the party's restrictions on access run counter to UNISON's policy on trans equality." Unison, which represents more than 1.3 million members, has donated over £43 million to Labour over the past 25 years.

Usdaw, which represents retail and shop workers, similarly said it would not send a delegate because "the party has excluded trans women, which runs counter to Usdaw's policy on trans equality".

Labour cancelled its 2025 Women's Conference last year after receiving legal advice following the UK Supreme Court's judgment on the definition of "women" in the Equality Act 2010.

Labour for Trans Rights told Metro: "For decades, trans women members have had a home in Labour's structures, and it's not acceptable that they're being so blatantly excluded. The trade union movement — including Labour-affiliated unions — has been an incredible ally to the trans community. We hope they will continue to use their influence in the Party to shift the new government towards a far more inclusive position."



How the Labour Party has caved to media pressure

The decision to restrict trans women's participation appears to reflect a retreat by Labour under sustained media scrutiny. In recent months parts of the press have amplified debates over gender and single-sex spaces, often framing the issue as a culture-war controversy. Faced with persistent headlines, editorial campaigns and coverage that highlights internal dissent, Labour has moved to adopt a compromise position that seeks to reduce negative publicity and placate sections of the electorate worried by the debate.

This concession has had immediate political costs: it has alienated prominent union allies and pro-inclusion activists, who see the move as abandoning long-standing commitments to transgender members. Critics argue the party prioritised short-term media management over principled inclusion, allowing external pressure to shape internal policy rather than leading a clear, rights-based approach. Supporters of the change maintain Labour is responding to legal and electoral considerations, but the withdrawals by major unions show the decision has strained relationships within Labour's traditional coalition.

THE CISGENDER PROTECTION ACT 2027

Keeping Our Communities Safe

The Government is pleased to announce a series of common-sense measures designed to address growing public concern regarding cisgender individuals.

We wish to reassure citizens that these proposals are not anti-cis. We simply believe that legitimate questions must be asked.

Proposed Measures

Mandatory Registration

All cisgender individuals will be required to register their cis status with local authorities. Registration cards must be carried at all times and presented upon request when entering gender-sensitive spaces.

Public Facilities

Access to toilets and changing rooms will be restricted to individuals whose biological sex aligns with their certified gender history. If you identify as the gender you were assigned at birth, you need to take the necaesary safety steps.

Cis people wishing to use public facilities may be required to provide:

- A birth certificate
- Government-issued identification
- Evidence of lifelong gender consistency

These checks are necessary to protect public confidence.

Failure to apply or receive these, will require gender checks by gender safety officers.

Schools and Young People

New guidance will prohibit the promotion or normalisation of cis identities in educational settings.

Teachers must remain politically neutral and avoid encouraging children to identify as cis.

Parents will be informed if a child expresses persistent cis tendencies.

Sport

To preserve fairness and safety, cis people may be excluded from certain sporting activities where their participation causes concern.

An expert panel will determine which sports remain appropriate.

Media Responsibility

Newspapers and broadcasters are encouraged to investigate the growing influence of the Cis Agenda.

Areas of concern include:

• Cis representation in entertainment

• Cis advocacy groups

• Online cis communities

• The increasing visibility of cis identities in public life

Child Protection

Independent experts will continue examining whether exposure to openly cis adults may influence children's understanding of gender.

Until further research is completed, caution is advised.

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with local authorities.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do you hate cis people?

Absolutely not.

Many of us have cis friends, neighbours and even family members.

Do cis people deserve rights?

Of course.

We simply believe those rights must be balanced against public safety and the concerns of others.

Should cis people hide who they are?

Nobody is asking cis people to hide.

We merely ask that they behave discreetly and avoid making their identity their entire personality.

Remember

This legislation is not about discrimination.

It is about asking reasonable questions.

It is about protecting children.

It is about preserving public confidence.

It is about safeguarding traditional values.

And most importantly, it is about ensuring that ordinary citizens feel comfortable in a world where cis visibility is increasing.

Because common sense must come first.

Issued by the Ministry for Public Reassurance and Cis Affairs.

Where’s Straight Pride? I think I just watched it.



Remember June and July this year?

Every year there's someone who asks the same question.

"Where's Straight Pride?"

Even in recent weeks, social media posts about Pride event have atracted the same old tropes.

Well... I've just spent the last few weeks watching it.

It's called the FIFA World Cup.



Think about it. Hundreds of thousands of people dressed in matching colours. Flags draped over shoulders. Faces painted. Singing in the streets. Giant public gatherings. Emotional embraces with complete strangers. Drinking, dancing, chanting and celebrating until the early hours.

People travel thousands of miles simply to stand beside others who share something important to them.

There are parades. There are costumes. There are songs. There are even the occasional tears. Swap an England shirt for a rainbow flag and you've basically got Pride.

Curiously though, nobody complains that football fans are "making it their whole personality."

Nobody says, "I'm fine with football supporters, I just wish they wouldn't keep rubbing it in our faces." Nobody writes, "Why can't they just support football quietly at home?"

Funny, that.

Apparently, public celebration is perfectly acceptable... provided it's the *right* kind.

Now don't misunderstand me. I actually love the atmosphere of a World Cup. The colour. The passion. The community. Watching complete strangers hug because somebody they've never met kicked a ball into a net is one of humanity's more charming oddities.

Which is precisely why Pride exists.

People like celebrating who they are and finding others who understand them. Yet there's another irony lurking behind the confetti.

Football's governing bodies regularly speak about inclusion, while FIFA's president has been widely criticised by LGBTQ+ organisations and women's rights campaigners for comments and positions they regard as dismissive of LGBTQ+ people and equality issues. And I havent even started on Trump!

Then there's the tournament itself.

Several participating nations continue to criminalise LGBTQ+ people or impose severe restrictions on their lives. Countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and Qatar have laws that punish same-sex relationships. Women's rights are also heavily restricted in some participating nations, including Saudi Arabia and Iran, where women continue to face significant legal and social inequalities.

Even among countries that proudly describe themselves as champions of freedom, the picture isn't always rosy. In parts of both the United States and the United Kingdom, books featuring LGBTQ+ people have increasingly been removed from some school or public libraries following political campaigns.

Can you imagine the outrage if libraries suddenly removed football books?

- **"Sorry, no autobiographies by Messi."**
- **"We've had to withdraw all books about the World Cup."**
- **"No children's books about footballers, I'm afraid."**
- **The tabloids would spontaneously combust.**
- **There would be emergency debates in Parliament.**
- **TalkSport would probably debate it on air for a fortnight without sleeping.**

Yet somehow removing books that simply acknowledge LGBTQ+ people is presented by some as perfectly reasonable.

Here's another thought.

Imagine if football supporters had to check whether it was safe to wear their team's shirt before travelling abroad. (an away match at Millwall may be something to think about though).

Imagine if displaying your club colours could land you in prison.

Imagine if celebrating a goal had to be done in secret.

For millions of LGBTQ+ people around the world, that isn't satire. It's everyday life. So perhaps we've been asking the wrong question all along.

The question isn't, *"Where's Straight Pride?"*

The World Cup has answered that.

The real question is:

Why are some people perfectly happy with enormous public celebrations of identity, provided the identity is one they've always been comfortable with?

The World Cup is a wonderful celebration of belonging.

Pride is exactly the same.

The difference is that one celebrates a football team.

The other celebrates the freedom to exist.



Dear Penny,

I am a trans women but very much in the closet. I am too scared of what my family and friends would say if they found out. Am I still valid as a trans woman?

Dear Love,

Oh, sweetheart… come closer. You've asked a question that so many trans women whisper into the dark, afraid it might make them disappear if they say it out loud. So let me answer you with the full warmth and clarity you deserve:

Yes. You are valid. Completely, utterly, unquestionably.

Not "valid once you come out". Not "valid when your family understands". Not "valid when you feel brave enough".

You are a trans woman because you *know* yourself, not because anyone else has given you permission.

Let's talk about that fear

You're carrying a heavy weight, and it makes perfect sense. Family expectations, friendships, cultural noise, they can all feel like walls closing in. Being in the closet isn't a sign of weakness; it's a sign that you've been protecting yourself in a world that hasn't always been gentle.

But please hear this: **Your fear does not erase your womanhood. It simply shows how much you've had to survive.**

You haven't failed at being trans

There is no exam. No checklist. No timeline. No "right way".

Some women come out in their teens. Some in their forties. Some in their seventies. Some never come out publicly at all — and they are still women, still real, still deserving of dignity.

Your journey is yours, and it is not measured by visibility. It is measured by truth.

What your family and friends think does not define you

Their reactions, whether loving, confused, or disappointing, are reflections of *them*, not of you. You are not responsible for their understanding. You are responsible only for your own wellbeing, your own safety, your own happiness.

And sometimes, staying quiet for now is the safest choice. That doesn't make you any less authentic.

You are already living your truth

Even if it's in private. Even if it's in small moments. Even if it's only in your heart right now.

Your identity is not a performance. It's a reality.

And here's the part I want you to hold close

You are a trans woman because you *are* one, not because you've announced it, not because you've transitioned socially, not because others approve.

You are valid because you exist.

When you're ready, whether that's tomorrow, next year, or never, you can choose how much of your truth you share with the world. But your womanhood is already whole.

Penny x

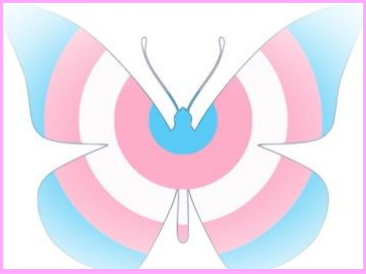


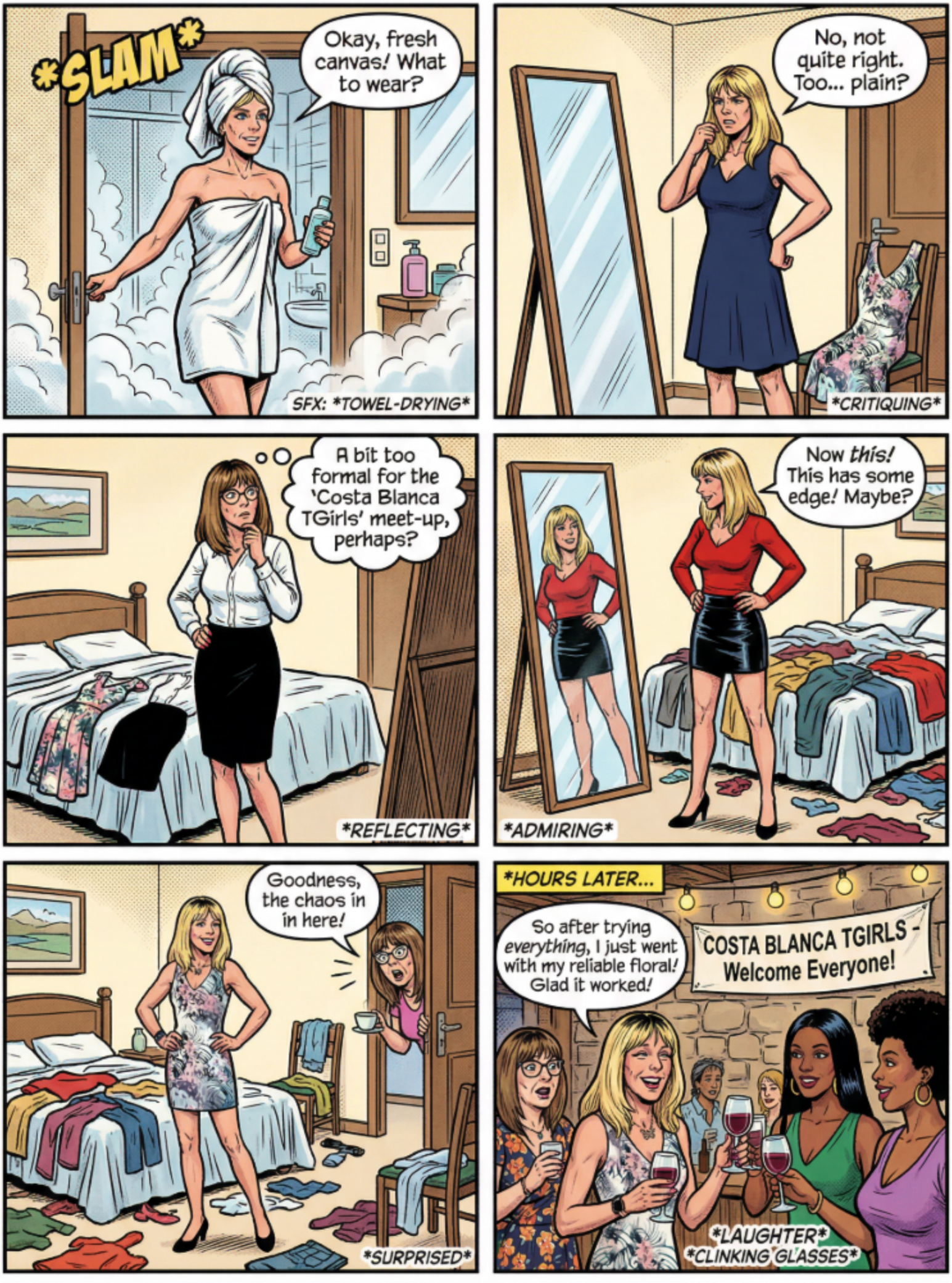
Glad To Be Alive

The journey from he to she…

When we're together,
It's hard to find the words
My heart is drawn towards you
So much so it hurts,
I see you there within me
Joined, we'll never part
When you hold my hand,
You take hold of my heart,
She lives deep inside me,
She took some time to rise
But she rose from the dark recess,
With those beautiful wide eyes
Alert to a world of hope,
She made her way outside
A glowing risen butterfly,
Glad to be alive.

Carla x




SLAM
Okay, fresh canvas! What to wear?
SFX: *TOWEL-DRYING*
No, not quite right. Too... plain?
CRITIQUING
A bit too formal for the 'Costa Blanca TGirls' meet-up, perhaps?
REFLECTING
Now this! This has some edge! Maybe?
ADMIRING
Goodness, the chaos in in here!
SURPRISED
*HOURS LATER...
So after trying everything, I just went with my reliable floral! Glad it worked!
COSTA BLANCA TGIRLS - Welcome Everyone!
LAUGHTER
CLINKING GLASSES