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**CISLESS**

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1. Note to self: I WILL NOT WRITE ABOUT BEING TRANS.

So I thought I'd start with my typical morning routine, cuz well... it's a start innit? As Kelis would say: *I woke up this morning, and seen something bright* – except it's not bright, it's dark, and I feel terrible. All being well I wake up around 8ish, maybe 9 – today it was 10. I like to take things slow in the morning so I roll over and grab my phone, and there's no notifications except for shipping alerts from ASOS for clothes I'm almost certainly gonna hate irl so I scroll for a while.

I'm usually motivated to get out of bed for one of two reasons: a piss or a drink; in or out... Whichever it is I'll sort the other out whilst I'm at it anyway. So far, so average – right? The journey takes me past our bedroom mirror, and since I'm vain I stop to take a look and wish my nose wasn't so big and crooked. For the sake of this example let's just assume my need to pee is greater than my thirst: I head over to the bog, plonk my arse down and let it flow – as you do you know? I wipe, flush, go to wash my hands and wonder if Tyler *really* washes his hands *before*

he pisses. Again, I *am* vain, so I take the opportunity to stop for a moment and contemplate my appearance further in the bathroom mirror and I wish my forehead jutted out a little less. That being done and self-esteem plummeting it's time for a coffee, which means *\*to the tune of twerkulator\** it's time for the percolator. I'll get it down me and maybe have some breakfast if I cba – something easy – and then I'll get washed, dressed and try to make myself more or less presentable. So, it's back to the bathroom mirror and I wish my face wasn't quite so long, back to the bedroom mirror and I wish my jaw were delicate and my hairline curved softly and I despair.

Ash says I should try not to hate the things I can't change so much, and I guess she's right; She also says it's not as easy as just saying it and I guess she's right about that too... It's not like it's all bad though – Some days I'll look in the mirror and I don't entirely hate myself, and my body is nice enough, albeit a bit long for my liking. 6'2" is a lot; combine it with visible transness – whatever that even means – and u might as well be a human lighthouse. Sometimes dysphoria feels a lot like vertigo. I wish I could chop off a few inches and disappear into a crowd.







2. Note to self: *STOP TALKING ABOUT BEING TRANS!!* \ (ಠ\_ಠ) /

As a kid I spent most of most of my summers in Italy. Sounds fancy but it wasn't; My mum's side of the family are Italian so between conception and the age of like 14, I embarked on an annual pilgrimage with my mum, brother, and various other family members to our ancestral home – a small Italian town in the deep south by the name of Matino. The point of the trips was for us to steep in our heritage, absorb our culture, visit the myriad Stefanelli's who still called the town home, and for a while there was talk of sending me to stay and go to school there – which for one reason or another never came to fruition. Anyway, food and feast days aside, I wasn't all that interested in the culture as a kid. Tbh all I cared about was Power Rangers, Transformers, going to the beach, and cartoons. I guess the reason the trips were so long was to ensure we absorbed something besides sunlight, whether we cared or not. What stuck with me was the decor. Most houses had this timeless yet dated vibe about them, they were cluttered in a considered way, and all shared a few common features: Beaded doorways, shuttered

windows, and kitchens covered in gaudy patterned tiles with a TV on the side. It was sat in a gaudy tiled kitchen with a TV on the side in a flat in Italy that I first saw Ranma½ – or as I like to call it: *the cartoon that made me trans.*


Ranma was an anime about this kid – also called Ranma – his grandad, and their many friends, enemies, and romantic interests. At the start of the series Ranma and his G-pa hit some ancient mountains on a mission to get ripped and they fall in these cursed fountains where a girl and a panda drowned thousands of years before. Result? Ranma turns into a hot girl whenever he's exposed to cold water and grandad turns into a panda, and the whole series is basically a comedy of errors built off this premise. Of course I didn't know that back then – the episode I caught was somewhere mid-series and I barely understood any Italian at the time – all I knew was this boy could turn into a girl and I wished I could too.






### 3. Note to self: I'VE FORGOTTEN HOW TO TALK ABOUT ANYTHING EXCEPT BEING TRANS

and it's getting me down. I get that it's important to tell our stories, talk, think, and write about our lived experiences, be beacons of hope, examples of excellence but like sometimes it can all feel so stifling, and omg I get so borrrred. I'm even doing it right now in a ~meta~ sort of way and I hate that too, but I feel like I don't have a choice... Think of it as an exorcism, yeah?

I can't be the only one who's noticed that for the most part we only get trans representation when the powers that be decide it's time to talk about , and even then do we really get to talk openly and freely about that? I don't think so. Everything is made with the awareness that the cis™ are watching, and so much mainstream representation is directed towards their consumption, centering them in the discussion, and what we end up with is carefully edited, palatable, and easily digested versions of transness deemed fit for cis consumption; a veritable parade of one-dimensional trans characters and narratives serving us walking talking trans beginners handbook for the cis™ realness.

It's this whole finding yourself, being your true self, being true to yourself thing, and that's cool but like sometimes that's just not how it is. For me a lot of my transition felt more like getting lost, especially in the early days – Losing myself, losing my sense of self, *Losing You* by Solange – because for most of my life I'd pretended I was someone else, and when you do that for long enough it can get pretty hard to distinguish what's pretend from what's real; Basically, I was like Neo for the majority of *The Matrix*: Disoriented, unsure whether he's awake or still dreaming, freaking the fuck out, and desperately trying to get a grip having *come out* into a world where everything is materially shittier in almost every way, except for the fact that everyone wears head-to-toe yeezy. Where's *my* fucking Yeezy tho??

Opportunity only seems to knock at trans doors when it's time to share your trauma, and honestly it just feels like another sly way to keep you stuck justifying your existence/proving your humanity – you know those times when you're in a room and there's a trans person present and something to do with trans stuff comes up and everyone turns and looks at the trans person? It's that, and *that*



is not good enough; I am not a pigeon and *that* is not my hole, darling! I'm not content with existence, I want to *~\*flourish\** babe. My humanity should be mine to explore for myself, not something I spend my time trying to prove to others. I wanna see some complex, messy, nuanced, multi-dimensional trans characters, trans characters with actual emotional depth. Give me more trans characters I love to hate, more trans characters breaking hearts and having bad sex, more trans characters with less than perfect moral track records – Maybe I just wanna see Ranma. I'm a bad person and sometimes I do shitty things, and I just want more stuff that's *actually* relatable... Is that too much to ask!? **BAD 🙌 REPRESENTATION 🙌 NOW!** While we're at it how about we drop the presumption that a character is cis until proven trans? I wanna see trans representation where being trans is a character detail instead of a full-blown overblown story arc. I'm sick of my creative juices being totally spilled on representation. Can I just shut up and be trans without it being the whole plot? For reference here's a scene from my latest **hit show 'CISLESS'**:

*It's 8ish, the radio alarm rings, Kelis' 'Sugar Honey Iced Tea' plays in the background. Gabi sings along.*

Gabi: *(completely in tune)* I woke up this morning, and seen something bright

*The doorbell goes and the dog doesn't bark. It's a huge ASOS haul, full of beautiful garments. Gabi tries them on, they're even better irl. She looks in the mirror and smiles, they all fit perfectly and she looks absolutely stunning. She's vain, and with good reason. She's got too much self respect so she washes her hands before she pisses, and then admires her features in the mirror. She really is gorgeous.*

The point? My transness doesn't play a part in my life, it's just who I am, and without cis people there upholding gross cis standards and making me feel like I have to talk about being trans I can love and appreciate myself – depressing innit?

Anyway, I honestly haven't got time for cis peOple™ to play catch-up any more. I wanna see what trans people have got to say about everything beyond transness; I wanna see what I've got to say about everything beyond transness. Say it with me: GO BEYOND **PLUS ULTRA!!**