

Being Seen, Being Loved

There is a particular fear that many women carry quietly, and almost never say out loud.

Will I still be loved?

It can arrive in the middle of an ordinary evening. You are sitting beside someone, or thinking of someone, or scrolling past a photograph of who you used to be, and the question slips in. Will he still want me. Will she still see me. Will anyone ever choose me now.

That fear is not vanity. That fear is human. We are taught from the beginning that hair is part of desirability, part of womanhood, part of being chosen. When it goes, it is natural to wonder what goes with it.

So let us be gentle and clear at the same time.

Your worth as a partner has nothing to do with what grows from your scalp. Nothing. Not one strand.

If you are already in a relationship, this journey will ask something of both of you. You may find yourself pulling away before you can be rejected, turning off the light, keeping something on your head, flinching when a hand reaches toward you. That is protection, not coldness. But protection can quietly become distance.

Try, when you have the strength, to say the true thing instead. I am afraid you will look at me differently. I am afraid I am less beautiful to you now. Fear said out loud in a safe room loses most of its power.

And let your person answer. You may be surprised. Many partners are not mourning your hair at all. Many are simply worried about you, and have been waiting for permission to say so.

If your partner is struggling, that does not automatically mean they love you less. Change asks something of everyone. Give them a little room to catch up, and tell them clearly what you need while they do. What you should not give is your dignity. Anyone who makes you feel disposable is telling you something about themselves, not about you.

If you are single, hear this plainly.

You are not waiting to become lovable. You already are.

You do not have to wait until your hair returns, or until you feel completely confident, or until you have made peace with every mirror. There is no qualifying round. You are allowed to date now. You are allowed to want intimacy now. You are allowed to be desired exactly as you are today.

You will wonder when to tell someone. There is no rule. Some women say it early, because it filters out the wrong people quickly. Some women wait until there is trust. Both are fine. What matters is that you say it as information, not as an apology. I have alopecia is a fact about you, like your hometown or your laugh. It is not a confession.

And the right person will not flinch. Or they will flinch for a second the way people do at anything new, and then they will keep looking at you, and keep asking questions, and keep showing up. You will know.

Intimacy asks its own quiet questions. Do you keep something on in the bedroom, or take it off. Do you want to be touched there, or not yet. There is no correct answer, only yours, and it is allowed to change. Tell your partner what feels good and what does not. Being known is not the same as being exposed.

There is something tender that can happen here, if you let it. When the usual armor is gone, people meet each other more honestly. Many women find that the love in their lives becomes more real after alopecia, not less. Not because anything was lost, but because pretending was.

And love is bigger than romance. It is the friend who learns to tie a wrap with you. The sister who orders the same scarf so you match. The child who says your head is soft and means it as the highest compliment. Let those loves count. They are not lesser. They are often the ones holding you up.

You will be seen. Not the version of you that used to be, but the woman who is here now, who has walked through something and kept her heart open.

She is worth loving. She always was.

AFFIRMATION

I am worthy of love exactly as I am today. My hair was never the reason anyone should choose me. I can speak my fears out loud and still be safe. I will not shrink to be accepted. I let myself be seen, and I let myself be loved.