

I Am More Than My...Alopecia

ARACELI DAVILA,
37, LOS ANGELES

Ten years ago, Araceli found several quarter-size bald patches on her scalp. Within two years and despite myriad treatments, including painful steroid injections, Araceli's hair was falling out in clumps—until her ponytails and colored hair spray no longer cut it as camouflage. She began avoiding crowds when she could just *feel* people staring at the back of her rapidly balding head. Depressed, she became terrified to go out on windy days, scared of losing her hats or wigs, itchy as they were. Finally, one Sunday she thought, *Screw it*, and hit the grocery store as she was. People gaped, but Araceli realized she could take it—and that she'd mourned her hair loss for long enough. Beauty, she now says, can be anywhere, even in baldness.

ELI ANISS SWEET

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