**Transcript -- Gender Reveal**

**Season 11 -- Episode 158: Chiquitita**

**Tuck:** Shopping for sex toys can sometimes feel overwhelming or dysphoric. But [shopenby.com](https://shopenby.com/pages/about) aims to create a better experience for the queer, trans and gender nonconforming community. shopenby.com is a black and trans-owned sex toy company and 2% of all proceeds are donated to organizations focused on improving the lives of queer and trans people of color shopenby.com is also a carbon negative company, and every sale funds renewable energy and forest conservation projects. Visit [shopenby.com](http://shopenby.com/). That's s-h-o-p-e-n-b-y dot com and use the code *GENDERREVAL* at checkout to get 10% off and bring more pleasure and affirmation into your life. That's code *GENDERREVAL* at [shopenby.com](http://shopenby.com/).

*[Gender Reveal theme music by Breakmaster Cylinder plays]*

**Tuck:** Welcome to Gender Reveal, a podcast where we hopefully get a little bit closer to understanding what the hell gender is. I'm your host and Resident Gender Detective, Tuck Woodstock.

*[Gender Reveal theme music ends]*

**Tuck:** Hey, everyone. Hope you're all hanging in there. This week on the show I am very excited to share my conversation with Brooklyn drag performer Chiquitita. I love Chiqui, I've been going to her shows for years, and it was very fun to finally get to chat with her. Instead of just boringly watching her perform. We talked about her very adorable t4t meet-cute with her boyfriend, about getting half of a Lana Del Rey tattoo. We also talked about why trans people make the best drag queens even when they're naked, and like, what's up with family members that refuse to acknowledge, like, your whole deal?

**Chiquitita:** It's like how many times are we gonna ignore... that I have tits!?

**Tuck:** But before we get to all that, one, just super quick thing, we are running out of copies of 2 Trans 2 Furious somehow and I cannot imagine ever doing another print run. So if you think you might want a copy ever in your life, I would grab one within the next few days at [2trans2furious.bigcartel.com](http://2trans2furious.bigcartel.com/) or save some money on shipping and ask your local independent bookstore to order it or save all of the money and ask your library to order it, even better. And now, it's time for this week in gender.

*[This Week in Gender segment theme music plays]*

**Tuck:** So, as part of my little job, I get a lot of press releases, sometimes are relevant, sometimes they're not. And a week or two ago, I got an email that began with the following: “Reaching out on behalf of a mobile application created to foster a brighter and more gender affirming future for trans and nonbinary individuals to introduce you to a powerful platform that allows those in transition to both share their experience and be affirmed and supported by their community.” And if you are thinking, “Hey, what?” I agree, both in terms of content and grammatical structure. So, I clicked on the link to learn more about the app and the website says: “The premise was simple, create an easy-to-use application for folks in transition to better track their journey to transition is to continually strive to be your most authentic self. We wanted to build a place not only to celebrate you but to assist with tracking the many dates and possible events related to your transition.”

Now, next to this text is a preview of the app's interface which includes options like photo tracking, voice tracking appointments, shot reminder, binder reminder, and you might be thinking, “I swear I've heard about this before. Are you sure you are not talking about that app made by that binder company that bought Autostraddle that you already covered two weeks ago, or the Euphoria suite of apps that we talked about a couple of years ago?” And unfortunately, I am sure this is a different company funded by a different Silicon Valley investment thing. This app does not sell binders, although it will remind you about your binder. And it also does let you buy a black trucker hat with a purple triangle on it for $26 if you need that. And this app, this app that primarily exists to catalog trans people's photos, voices, and medical information... this app is called Trace. No red flags there! Anyway, on its website, Trace refers to the people who use the app to track their transitions as tracers, and refers to friend requests as ally requests. They brag that Trace is, “The only application that helps you document your transition and connect with your allies.”

And that's maybe giving like, chaser central. But the website clarifies that on Trace, anyone can be an ally to anyone. And, “it is through supporting all allies along with tracers that we believe we can foster the ultimate experience for our transitioning users.” That's right baby, Trace said all allies matter. This app just received a big investment from Hope Lab, a group that describes itself as a social innovation lab and impact investor. Those words mean nothing to me. Hope Lab is particularly focused on the needs of BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth aged 10 to 25. Honestly, that seems like a great thing to focus on. However, the Hope Lab investment in Trace goes beyond money.

The press release I received specifically says that Hope Lab will be helping Trace reach the youth demographic. So, to recap, they are recruiting trans youth to use an app that literally tracks your gender, including your medical transition. And meanwhile, at least 19 states have passed laws restricting gender affirming care for trans youth, some at least five with the possibility of a felony charge. Now, this is the part in the script where I have a tktktk response from Trace, because I reached out to Trace a week ago last Wednesday and asked them some very basic questions. Will this information be encrypted and stored securely? If the government or another entity tries to subpoena this information, will you be complying with the subpoena? And then also a couple of questions from, again, professional software girlie MB about content moderation and how they would handle, you know, if people started acting up in the social elements of the app. At first, the Trace folks said, sure, we'll get you answers end of day Monday, and then they said end of day Tuesday, and then they said end of the week, at which point it would have been nine days since I asked those questions. I didn't mean for those questions to be stumpers. I thought they would have thought about it. Maybe they have thought about it, and they can't quite find the right words. But if it takes them more than a week to just tell me if the app is encrypted and whether they'll be complying with subpoenas about trans youth's medical transition, it might be, you know, something to think about.

I can't stop you from doing whatever you want. But I do want to point out that there's nothing this app does that you can't also achieve with the tools that come free on any cell phone such as a calendar, an alarm, a camera, and the texting feature. And by the way, I say this all the time, but I'll say it again. Re: texting, please consider using Signal as your primary messaging app. It is free. It is end-to-end encrypted, and it is endorsed by Chelsea Manning, and no one knows more about that shit than her. Okay, PSA over; new PSA starting. Many of you are living in places where accessing health care is or could be criminalized, whether that's medically transitioning or getting an abortion. And if that is you or could ever be you, please be extra careful with what you share online, and that includes places like the Gender Reveal slack. I don't run Slack. I can't protect you there, if we know one thing from Calvin's book, it is that Slackbot cannot be trusted. So please be careful.

And if you think I'm being paranoid, it's very possible that I am. But I also went through a different security thing and every time I thought I was being paranoid, it turned out that I was right to do it. So, I just err on the side of not messing stuff up for yourself later, you know what I mean? Anyway, whether it's their explicit intent or not, gender tracking apps are literally creating a database of transsexuals that are hackable and subpoenable by people who hate us. And I am counting on all of us to show up to support trans babies and baby transes so that they and, we can see opportunities for community beyond whatever the fuck these apps are. This has been this week in gender.

*[This Week in Gender segment chime theme music plays]*

**Tuck:** Okay, so instead of a Theymail this week, I have a bonus ad for you. I'm aware that the juxtaposition between what I just said and what I'm about to read is wild. You have to believe that I vetted this in advance. Okay. “An all-trans research team at University of Michigan is looking for trans research participants, 18 and older to participate in a design workshop for trans technology. Workshops will be online or in person in Michigan. Compensation is $75 plus free food at the workshop. Please fill out a quick screening survey at [bit.ly/transtechdesign](http://bit.ly/transtechdesign). I know what you're thinking: is this for another gender tracking app? It is not! Again, that is [bit.ly/transtechdesign](http://bit.ly/transtechdesign). You get $75.”

*[Gender Reveal theme music plays]*

**Tuck:** Chiquitita is a drag performer, actor, event producer and visual artist. Since being crowned Miss Bushwig in 2018. She has used the stage as a platform to amplify queer performance through celebrated tribute cabaret shows and projects to uplift her community. Chiquitita continues to push the boundaries of what being a drag performer means. Chiqui and her work have been profiled in Allure, W magazine, the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, and Vogue.

 *[Gender Reveal theme music ends]*

**Tuck:** The way we always start the show is by asking in terms of gender, how do you describe yourself?

**Chiquitita:** I guess, like, trans womea.

**Tuck:** Sick.

**Chiquitita:** That's what we're doing these days.

*[laughter from Tuck & Chiquitita]*

**Tuck:** I love that you're stretching in advance. Like, you're like, getting ready to do the show.

**Chiquitita**: Like cracking my knuckles. And I'm like, I, I guess I'm a trans woman. Yeah. Like, now that's kind of the thing.

**Tuck:** Totally.

**Chiquitita:** It's so funny. I feel like people when they see me out, like sometimes people will like they/them me, and I don't know, I just feel like... how do you feel about that?

**Tuck:** Well, I feel like there is two schools of trans thought that are constantly fighting and the one school of trans thought is we should teach everyone to they/them everybody unless you know for sure their other pronoun, and the other school of thought is people should read the room *[laughter]* and it's really hard to get those two groups to agree on what sort of policy should be.

**Chiquitita:** Yeah. And I feel like my brain is both of those people sometimes then when it happens to me, I'm like, god damn it. I'm like, what the fuck am I doing wrong? Oh my god! Cecilia Gentili was just telling me a story about this friend of hers that she had. That was like one of the most beautiful girls I think in Argentina, she was saying that she was really good friends with, and she was so beautiful, like unclockable, whatever. And then one day this guy clocks her and then she goes, listen, I'm not offended, but what gave it away and he straight up just said, “your face.” [Tuck gasps] The way I would have just collapsed to the ground and never gotten up at that moment. My career would be over. I mean, I mean, what do you say to that? I mean, what do you say to that? Your entire face, your whole face.

**Tuck:** Just the face.

**Chiquitita:** I'm getting chills. I'm getting chills thinking about it. I hate it. I hate it.

**Tuck:** I would combust. Okay, this is actually not the first thing that I was going to talk about, but I saw a TikTok that you went to Spain for FFS.

**Chiquitita**: I did!

**Tuck:** I think I tried to confirm it and then I just got YouTube videos of Abba performing Chiquitita in Spain. So, I was like, I just gotta ask.

**Chiquitita:** No, I did. Yeah, actually like last night I was just talking to my boyfriend because he's also trans and we were talking about his top surgery and like the cost of it. And it's crazy because when I think of my own surgery, I can't believe I blew $40,000 on that, but I fucking blew $40,000 on surgery that you should not be paying for first of all. And second of all, it only really hit me once he told me his number for his surgery and I was like, why are we paying for this? Like, so fucked up.

**Tuck:** It's so wild. Like my insurance air quotes “covered my surgery” which means that I only paid $8500 because it was covered, right? *[laughter]*

**Chiquitita:** It's just bullshit. But then it's like, you know, cis people can get gender affirming care and have it all be covered.

**Tuck:** Yeah!

**Chiquitita:** You know what I mean? And it's like no one bats eyelashes even. You know, when they're young and they do it. So, it's interesting.

**Tuck:** Would you recommend Spain?

**Chiquitita:** Oh my god. I had the best fucking time. For context, I went to FacialTeam, which is in Marbella. It was beautiful. Like, honestly, at one point I was there with my ex-boyfriend and at one point *[laughter]* I was like, you know, I know I'm getting surgery on this trip, but it really just feels like the trip is the trip and the surgery is an add on and that is exactly what it felt like even the night before. And I slept like a fucking baby, and I woke up like at, I don't know, 4:30 in the morning or something. And I was just so ready to get surgery. I was like, oh my god, I'm so excited. I was there with an entire pod of trans girls that were staying at the same, same location, like on the same block at different Airbnbs. And it was girls that had just gotten there, girls that just had their consultations to make sure they didn't have COVID and shit, and then the girls that had the surgery and are recovering and it was just like such a sweet fucking pod of people that were just like all here for the same thing. And I don't know, it was just really magical and sweet, but the experience was really great, and the doctors were professional, and it was just all like really, really sick.

**Tuck:** That rules. So, my understanding is that you came out as trans after you've been doing drag for a while and that drag helped you realize you're trans. But also, your drag mother is iconic transsexual Charlene Incarnate. Did she just clock you really hard? Did you all get lucky? Like, how did that start?

**Chiquitita:** No, she clocked me so hard, which I mean, she just got lucky. It was, it was easy I think like to, to clock. And I feel like loves playing that game with people and like seeing who's trans and like who's not and trying to get this person on hormones or trying to get this person off hormones. *[laughter]* You know what I mean? It's like a game that she plays and she's such a beef in that way. But yeah, she clocked me before. I, well, I guess during like, while I was clocking myself because like in high school I was, I wasn't transitioning but I was presenting. And I didn't have an idea of what it meant to be trans. I was just like wearing really tight clothes and like growing my hair out and like wearing a fucking cheap Forever 21 bag as my school bag. You know what I mean? Like, I was a tranny through and through. I was wearing high heels to school, all this shit. And my relationship with my mom kind of is what like brought that all of that. Like, I, I started internalizing a lot of that stuff and I started presenting a lot less. But then once that stuff started coming up again and I had the language for it in maybe 2018-ish, they started bubbling up again and I started presenting again. And once I realized that my mom like, was not going to be okay with that, I made a decision to move out and then that's when I medically started transitioning like, and like, right before COVID actually.

**Tuck:** Mhm. So, yeah. Do you remember the first time that you, like, had the moment of realization that there were trans women who are drag queens?

**Chiquitita:** Hmmm, I think I kind of always had it in the back of my mind actually, because when I first started drag, I'm from Jamaica Queens. But when I first started drag, I didn't want to work in Queens because I was like, it almost felt too close.

**Tuck:** Totally.

**Chiquitita:** It almost didn't feel like I could thrive or like, get out of self in the same borough. So primarily, at least back then the people that do drag are the trans women that live in Jackson Heights. And also pull tricks. So, there was a very specific pod of women, and I was not in a place to be around that pod of women. Like my confidence or any of that would have just been completely obliterated in that environment. So, what do you do? You go to the city and start working with fucking theater gays [laughter] that couldn't make it anywhere else and then you, you know, you just thrive there. But I now, I do wanna check out the Jackson Heights scene and like, see what these girls are up to, you know.

**Tuck:** Yeah. Well, I mean, you dropped out of high school to do drag full time when you were still a teen in high school. I'm just interested in like practically what that was like, like how you started accessing drag spaces, how you were like making that work at the first beginning?

**Chiquitita:** Yeah, I love looking back at this stuff. I don't know about you, but I have a really terrible memory. So, I have to like verbally recount a lot of the things that have happened in my life but also like trauma, like you just don't, you can't live in the moment, especially when you're trans. I think it takes up a lot of head space to think about like how clocky you might be in a space or like, make sure you're walking or talking the right way. So, it's really hard to live in the moment. But yeah, I started going out before I dropped out of high school just to like little bars here and there. I remember actually in Williamsburg at TNT and Charlene was on the mic. This was like in 2014 or 15, Char was on the mic and I only realized it was her like later because I was telling her the story of like, I saw this queen at TNT all these years ago, she was like, girl that was my show! But she basically just like gets on the mic talks her shit until she decides that she wants to do a number for like 4.5 hours, *[both laughs]*five hours, the entire fucking night. And I remember stumbling in because they weren't carding that night. And so, me and my friend hopped in really quick or whatever and Charlene instantly clocked us and was like, “oh, they're not fucking carding tonight,” I guess, like, whatever, da da da da. Like, “there are some teenagers in the audience!” And I was just so like, “Ugh! Like, clocked, bitch.”

But I started going out in Queens to, to a couple of places, and one of the first queens I met actually was Aja, she had one gig in Queens at this space called Pride Lounge. Terrible name. But it's also where I did like my first number, and I bombed off like terribly. MoMo shade literally at one point was like, “Aja, you need to get your friend, because like....” She said this on the microphone, and I was just so embarrassed. But it's fine, because I'm still doing drag.

**Tuck:** [Laughter] Won in the end. Incredible. Yeah. Well, now you have a hand in so many different shows. Oops, Presenta, Trans Excellence, Met Gayla. Maybe that's called something else now.

**Chiquitita:** Oh, yeah. The, the Gala that I do sometimes.

**Tuck:** Yeah. So, do you wanna just kind of give us a little overview of the different shows that you do?

**Chiquitita:** Yeah. I'm really interested in casting a really wide net and having people that enjoy different things get like tastes of me through different kinds of programming. Like sometimes I'll bring Ru girls to town with the show that I do called Welcome to the stage. And these are all usually first Fridays at Cmon Everybody, but I'll do welcome to the stage or sometimes if I'm feeling up for it, I'll do an album tribute which I'm doing next Friday for Carly Rae Jepsen. Or sometimes I'll do Trans excellence if I'm feeling like I just want to see and be around trans people. Sometimes I'll do this show called LSFYL, which is we recreate iconic Drag Race lip syncs, I play Rupaul of course. [laughter] And what else do I do? I did Cheek to Chiqui with Macy Rodman where we did Cheek to Cheek - this is before Tony Bennett died. She was Tony Bennett. So yeah, I do a little bit of everything.

**Tuck:** I mean, I feel like even when you're not doing the show Trans Excellence, like you book a lot of trans girlies for your shows, which I love, that's like one of the reasons they appeal to me. Other than general excellence, are there ways that you feel like trans drag is distinct in some way? Or you know, there's anything that makes it a little bit different?

**Chiquitita:** Oh yeah, I mean, who better to present and emote gender than trans people who are thinking about it all day every fucking day? I mean, come on. That is literally why trans women make some of the best drag performers. And it's because we're so conscious of the way our bodies move of like the faces that we make or like, I mean, at the very least the way we smell, Jesus Christ. I enjoy celebrating my community and seeing a lot of these hidden stars and hidden gems in our community. Kind of just even if they're not drag performers give something that is authentically them, whether that's through music or interpretive dance or dare I say poetry. God, I hate poetry. *[laughter]* You know what I mean? I can't, I can't, I can't do it but, but some people are really good at it, you know? And, and so that's, that's kind of what trans excellence is. I've been looking for a clown for so long or like, I specifically want like a magician also, you know.

**Tuck:** Oh my god.

**Chiquitita:** And I can't find any of those anywhere.

**Tuck:** I feel like someone wrote into this show and told us about a trans music-- or trans magician, and I will look it up and see where they are at for you after this.

**Chiquitita: I**t needs to happen. I want a trans magician like to interlude every show where I'm like, okay, we're gonna be back in five minutes. I need to change. I just need a magician on stage. It would be the best part of the show. It's the best part of the show. I mean, come on.

**Tuck:** Yes. Well, I'll be there when you find them. What was I gonna fucking say? I got distracted by this clown. Like you're trying to manifest into the world.

**Chiquitita:** Tranifest.

**Tuck:** Tranifest, yes, tranifest destiny. So, this is really stupid but there's the famous Rupaul line that we're all born naked, and the rest is drag. But I have noticed a trend of trans girl drag performers actually performing extremely naked, as is your right, and as I appreciate; but this is such a silly question. But if it's not the clothes, what makes it drag?

**Chiquitita:** I think, I mean, back to the like sense of self. I mean, I think being able to keep an audience with nothing on, I mean, it though, it sounds easy. I mean, if you don't know what you're doing or if you don't know how to move it, then you just are naked and running around.

**Tuck:** I would say it does not sound easy at all whatsoever.

**Chiquitita:** I prefer, I prefer performing naked. I just feel like it. I just like to feel like my skin, you know, like I, every time I get home, like I just like take my socks off instantly. I feel there's like energy being repressed, you know. Yeah, I, I guess I would say the, the way that you can continue to elude an audience after you've removed all those things and I love all of it, right? Like I love seeing people do the absolute most with their looks and like finding little details that in the grand picture you wouldn't notice. But I also like seeing people get so in touch with their bodies, which is so difficult to do. And I've always had trouble doing that too. Like I hated dancing in public when I was a kid or like dancing with family or whatever because it's like, I didn't know how my body was supposed to move and I didn't know what steps to make or whatever. So being able to perform mostly naked I think is a little empowering also even for the people watching it, you know.

**Tuck:** Totally. Because of that element of performing, I could be misremembering this... I feel like you have a tattoo on your leg that says like I'm fucking crazy or something like that?

**Chiquitita:** I do, I do.

**Tuck:** Is there a story for that beyond just being fucking crazy? Because I love that.

**Chiquitita:** Okay, so, have you ever watched Lana Del Rey's Ride music video?

**Tuck:** Oh, maybe not.

**Chiquitita:** Oh, that's why, that's why. So in like 20 what 12, 13, she came out with Ride. And in the music video she has an entire like monologue in the beginning and end of the music video where she's just like talking about like whatever, having all of these adversities which I'm like, no, you don't girl like what are you talking about?

**Tuck:** *[laughter]* Totally.

**Chiquitita:** First of all, yeah. And like looking back, I'm like, why are you wearing a Native American headdress? Yeah. Yeah. But she has one lyric that has always stuck with me where she says I am fucking crazy, but I am free. But the problem is I didn't have enough money for the I am free. [laughter] So I just ended up getting the I am fucking crazy, and I feel like it's too late now to get the rest of it done because and I am really fucking crazy to literally wait like 10 years to finish the tattoo. And also, it's kind of like in an Instagram font. Because this is when Instagram really started popping off and my artist was just taking a very big inspiration from Instagram. And so, it's kind of in this Instagram font, but I, I love it. I was like 14 by the way when I got that so.

**Tuck:** Beautiful. Yeah. I mean, it sucks because we can't talk about TV right now because of this strike. But theoretically in a world where WGA and SAG and all those people are getting the money they deserve, is acting something you're interested in doing more?

**Chiquitita:** 100%. Yeah, I, I love acting. I mean, I feel like a lot of the work that I do on the stage kind of also reflects that a little bit because I'm very chatty and I know how to put on a character or put on face. Yeah, I don't know. I like it. I love it. It's fun.

**Tuck:** This is such a basic question. But do you have like favorite looks or characters? Or looks you've been most proud of?

**Chiquitita:** I love my Michael Jackson character. She is such a good time. Sometimes I whip her out if you know, the audience is being a little difficult, you know, and TS Jackson really can bring people together. It works.

**Tuck:** Wait, I also just remember having been to your shows that in most shows there is a time where you suddenly start performing a Nicki verse. What's up with that?

**Chiquitita:** What's up with that? That is honestly such a good question. What is up with that? I don't know. But it's, it's a very specific verse. It's from Moment 4 Life, and me and Zenobia, shout out Zenobia. She's an amazing performer in Brooklyn, god. She's been inspirational for me ever since the moment I met her. But she, we have this running joke where every time I mention being from Queens or South Side Jamaica, they have to play that verse from Nicki where she goes, “Grew up out in Baisley, Southside Jamaica, Queens, and it's crazy.” And so, we literally just do the entire verse until it gets to that point. And every time you hear that [singing], everyone just knows what's gonna happen again. And it's just like, “She's doing this again!”

*[Excerpt from Moment 4 Life by Nicki Minaj plays]*

**Chiquitita:** It has become a thing now, I think, you know, and anything can be a thing if you just stick with it long enough. Right.

**Tuck:** Right. Well, you changed your drag name a few years ago, and I was reading a little bit. It sounds like you spent a long time deciding what to change your drag name to. Do you feel like you put as much or more thought into this as other trans people do choosing their like new legal name?

**Chiquitita:** Interesting. I spent more time probably picking my drag name because there was a moment. I mean, I'm sure like every trans person has this moment right where we, we either do a shortening of our name or like, we'll choose a middle name and like shorten that or something. And so, I was going by Alex for a while because my middle name was Alexander. And in that time, yeah, I was like, still trying to figure out what I was gonna change my drag name to because for anyone that might not know my drag name used to be Harajuku, which you know, I'm, I'm not Japanese. I've never been Japanese again. I was in the midst of changing or knowing that I was going to change my name. It was kind of a transition in itself, right?

And then the pandemic happened and on my birthday of 2020 that's when I decided to like, announce that I was changing my name to Chiquitita.And that was only the case because in 2019, I did a performance with Charlene at Bushwig, but we both performed to ABBA’s Chiquitita together and it was basically her, like, reassuring our audience in Brooklyn, essentially that they could trust me and that I'm someone that she's like giving a moment to and that she respects and that she wants to honor and it was a really great moment I think, to like, have my work acknowledged almost and also this new era that I was entering like in my trans body. And that, that, that really marks the beginning of a new beginning, I think for me, that performance. Yeah. So, I changed my name to Chiquitita, but I also chose it. This is my first time saying I also chose it because at some point, I don't know when it is. Yeah, I just turned 25. So, it could happen at any moment now. But at some point, I'm gonna shorten it to Chiqui, because I'm aging girl. I can't have...

**Tuck:** You can’t have the -ita, totally! [laughs]

**Chiquitita:** Like, totally cannot have Chiquitita, I mean, I can, you know, but also, I mean, we'll, we'll see what happens. But that's kind of always been the idea and the plan I feel.

**Tuck:** Yeah, I mean, speaking of aging, like, do you feel like drag is your like forever career?

**Chiquitita:** Definitely. Like, I want my future to be due to the career that I built off of drag and acting or activism. Any and all of those things that I'm working on right now. I want to be what carries me for the rest of my life eventually. The idea of starting a brand-new career or going back to school to like, I don't know, like maybe do something that I'm gonna enjoy a lot less.

**Tuck:** Totally.

**Chiquitita:** It, you know, it just which, which I love drag. I love drag so much. But anyone that is a drag performer will tell you how exhausting it is on the mind and body and at some point it gets really hard to keep up. And I think after the pandemic, I started really rethinking and reframing the way that I was going to be working and working smarter not harder. Which is something I tell the girls all the time. I'm like stop taking these gigs that are not gonna pay you girl because that's what you're gonna keep getting.

You know, and even my drag daughter, Serena Tea, the other day was like, “Girl, like you rejected a few gigs this pride, like why?” And I'm like, well, it's not that I, I want to, it's that I have to. And also, when I reject jobs that claim that they don't have money to back us up, it's only for the better of, of all of us essentially like I'm looking out for everyone. I'm not looking out only for myself. I'm also looking out for the next girl that they reach out to so that they know that this girl might not take this job because we had this moment with this girl. And there's a lot of people that are happy to not pay you and that are happy to lowball you because they have a history of people taking those jobs and saying yes. And even though I know it's out of necessity, there has to be someone that says I can acknowledge that you are trying to take advantage of us and hopefully for the future, it can benefit you to have that festering in your brain if that makes sense.

**Tuck:** Totally. I mean, I guess while we're talking at like a, a serious moment for, for just a moment, obviously, this is like a really fucking dark wild time to be trans and a drag queen. And as someone who is both whose whole life has been bold, I was just wondering what are the like conversations that you're having with like other queens about like how to exist other trans queens about how to exist in this environment?

**Chiquitita:** You know, this isn't even particularly a conversation that I have with other performers, but I do have this conversation a lot with my boyfriend and my roommate. I am at the intersection of two groups of people that are not respected or accepted entirely in society. And though there are a lot of people that will try to convince you that that's not true, there's an even larger group of people that would rather just like not see us at all. But even having these conversations with family is actually really difficult. Like I tried talking to my sister about this a couple of weeks ago because there's two girls that I went to school with and one girl that I met through nightlife of whom are trans and have passed away. But it happens a lot and I was talking to my sister about how close it feels and how terrifying it is.

And she turned the conversation to being like, you can't live your life in fear. Like, don't live your life in fear. And I'm like, you don't understand that. Telling people to just pretend it doesn't exist is the problem. You know, I don't understand how it's so easy for people to ignore what it is that people in their lives are telling them and convince themselves that it's ok to ignore it. I don't, I just don't, I just don't get it. I don't get it. And sometimes, you know, my family will say how selfish I am and how I don't invest enough time into my relationship with my mother, even though she's transphobic and it always falls back on me. Right. It always falls back on the trans people about the way that we're making people feel or the things that we're doing to their lives and how inconvenient it is and how they shouldn't be expected to change for you.

It's like, how many times are we gonna ignore that I have tits or that I am a woman and that I am perceived by 99% of the public as a woman that I'm perceived in my life as a woman and that I walk as a woman and I live my life as a woman? Like why can't we just, except the truth that we live in at this moment and not have, have it be about you and your, you know, reaction to it. I, I just don't understand that. I don't get it. I don't get it. I'm in this loop right now with my mom and it's been like 3.5 years now since I've come out to her, and we still don't have a relationship with each other and it's hard and it's complicated and I am very aware of both of our own mortalities. I actually was crying about this yesterday because my sister scolded me for it even though it's more complicated than just face value of, of me ignoring my mom or whatever.

But yeah, it's difficult because they don't want to acknowledge the truth and the reality. And I feel like I'm just like gaslit and villainized when I have these conversations and then my sister goes, “What are you talking about? Villainized? Like who's villainizing you? You're not the villain!” It's like, but you literally just said all of these things about things that I should be doing and things that I should change or lowering my expectations. And I'm like, what are you talking about? Like I'm trying to grow with y'all and y'all clearly do not have the capacity to grow as people. And now it's my now I have to dumb myself down and like my interactions with people to make you feel comfortable. It's insane. I don't navigate like that at all with anyone in my life, you know? Every, every relationship in my life, it's about growth. It's about love. It's about understanding and for some reason I'm supposed to feel guilty that, that we don't have the same rapport when I want to do the work. But you don't. It doesn't make any sense to me.

**Tuck:** No, that's the thing. People don't want to grow; they don't want to do any work. They just want you to be easy.

**Chiquitita:** Right.

**Tuck:** But you're talking about more supportive relationships in your life too. And like, I know that you are in an excellent T4T relationship. You have made TikTok’s about how T4T relationships are like the way the truth of light. Tell me about the magic of T4T you.

**Chiquitita:** Yes. So, the idea of T4T actually never really popped up. Yeah, I think I, I just like have been having sex with cis men since I was like 13. So, I just never really thought about it. And also, I think something about the abbreviation just freaks me out. [laughing] It just looks too like meth, like Tina? T and play... It just gives that vibe for me. The T and the four and the T is just do... we have different vocabulary for T4T? Like can we make something up?

**Tuck:**  Yeah, make something up! Get it started!

**Chiquitita:** Oh, it's, the work is always on me. I always have to do the fucking work. [both laugh] But yeah, T4T. Actually, so, me and my boyfriend, I didn't actually clock him. We were on the train, and he has revealed to me now that he clocked me like before I did, and he was like trying to like to catch my attention, because he has this memory of me from a couple of weeks before at Trans Excellence. He was in the audience, and it was in December. He was in the audience, and he turned to his roommate, and he was like, I need to talk to that girl like after the show. And he tried to, but I gave him dust because I was busy. I was like at work, right? And so, he was like, fuck, like I'm in front of this girl again and she's on my train and we're on the Q and I need to get her attention.

So, he tried to get my attention. He got a little closer and I looked over at him and I was just like, okay, like he's fine, I could shout at him, like yeah, we can go fuck. And then he moved to, I was like, you know where the doors you, you open the doors to go between the trains. Yeah, I leaned against one of them, the back of it and, and then he moved to the left where the doors open and then at the next stop, he had moved to the other door. And so, I was like, all right, this boy is really trying to get my attention. *[laughter]* Like he just is getting closer and closer and he's like looking out the window and then he like turns to me like to look towards me and then I had blushed, and I like started looking back on my phone and he like smiled and like kept looking out the window and I was like, all right, don't expect him to ask for your number because it's not gonna happen. Like it's just not gonna happen.

So, we're approaching Canal and then I stood next to him and he kind of like looked over a little bit in my direction and I just like handed him my phone and then he started writing his number down and he was like, “Oh, I feel like I recognize you from some like trans talent show or something like that?” And I was like, “Yeah, like I, I work in nightlife. That was my show,” and he was like, “Oh yeah, like I was there, it was really fun, and I was like, is this a tranny? In my mind, I was like, is he a tranny!? And then I was like, “All right. Well, like, I'll see you later,” and he was like, “I'll see you later.” And then we started texting instantly and our first date was the next day and we, I have never in my life clicked with anyone so fast.

And honestly, the T4T magic I think is like, I think the biggest thing, at least for me is working through the trauma that we feel about our bodies with each other. Specifically, like, you know, when you're really intimate and stuff like that and just learning to, to feel what your body feels and like, not be ashamed of it or not have it be like, I wish this was different or I wish this was that. And of course, we have those moments. But I think knowing that someone can share that experience, then I think makes it a little easier to walk outside. And especially if you're together and feeling really confident in that dynamic where it's not like, oh my god, I'm the tranny that's getting clocked with a guy or something like that. It's like you're both trannies and now you're both just straight people and no one can fucking clock you because it's literally just a girl and a guy and you're straight and there's nothing more incognito than being in a T4T couple so.

**Tuck:** Hey, it's me, Tuck just jumping in here. We all know Chiqui is talking about her own personal experience, right? Like we know gay people exist. We're not going to yell at anyone about that. Ok. Great. Back to the show.

**Chiquitita:** I fucking love it. It, it's just, it's everything to me and I don't feel crazy describing my trauma, you know, around my body or my life. I love it.

**Tuck:** Mm. That's great. Yeah. I mean, I think this is all obvious, I feel like we've all talked about it but just like, yeah, there is that thing of, like, not having to feel like a second-class citizen in your own relationship.

**Chiquitita:** Exactly. Exactly. And, yeah, I think everyone should try it. I mean, I think people's biggest hang up is just interacting with bodies that don't, that they're not used to, but nothing is ever really that different. You know, and life is so much more than whatever it is that you're accustomed to.

**Tuck:** Yeah, people should do whatever feels right for them. But like, wouldn't it be sad to get to, like, the whole end of your whole life and be like, oh, I only had sex with one kind of whatever, one kind of genital. One kind of gender. Your whole life! Your whole life?!

**Chiquitita:** Yeah. It's a long life, babe. It's a long life and I think people get really hung up on, you know, what other people might think or what they might think or like what that might mean. And it's like none of it actually means anything. Like I haven't changed in a bad way for interacting with new bodies and new people and understanding also different experiences for people, which I think is really important if we're gonna live on this planet together. And you also got to walk the walk, babe. Like you can't just say that you love trans people and that you love your community if you're not going to, I'm not saying you gotta fuck everyone. I mean I am but there's just a lot of love, there's a lot of love to be found and there's a lot of healing to be done. And I'm not saying all of it can be done through sex, but I think it can play a part of it.

**Tuck:** Totally. Okay, a couple of months ago, I was at a vaguely cursed gay bar and I heard two people arguing for a full hour over whether drag is misogynist. So as a woman, have you ever felt drag spaces are misogynist?

**Chiquitita:** Yeah, I think specifically around people that probably again don't interact with bodies that are different than theirs. You know, like cis gay men, I also don't really like the breasts - it's not even so much that breastplates offend me because I'm not even inherently offended by breastplates. I think it's more like when it becomes the joke, it's kind of when it's a little like, all right. But yeah, I think everyone does drag for different reasons and if people are working through their gender, through their drag and then subjecting us to it, I mean, what are you gonna do? You know, but there is not a lot of inclusion in drag spaces. I mean, even for, you know, drag kings or, you know, women that decided they want to do drag or even trans men, like there's not a lot of inclusion or acknowledgement even that these people are in the same spaces as us, but they are, and some of them are better at their job than you are. So, not *you*. But you know, also you.

**Tuck:** *[laughing]* Also me. All right, the way we always end the show is by asking in your ideal world, what would the future of gender look like?

**Chiquitita:** Hm. You know, I don't know if we're going to see a lot of the advancements in our lifetime when it comes to gender because like everything straight people take so fucking long to catch up. So, I feel like in 200 years, 300 years, people are not gonna be worried about the way that they're presenting in general, I think because things are just gonna be so different and trans people would have had kids and you know, there is like more trans parents or more couples or just people are maybe more comfortable transitioning earlier. So, I feel like all of these steps that we take now are going to benefit our future even though it feels really hard for us right now. You know.

*[Gender Revel Theme music plays]*

**Tuck:** That's gonna do it for this week's show. You can find chiqui on Instagram [@chiquitettas](https://www.instagram.com/chiquitettas/) that is c-h-i-q-u-i-t-e-t-t-a-s or in person at Cmon Everybody and various other gay establishments in the New York City area. You can find us at honestly those same establishments, and also at [genderpodcast.com](https://www.genderpodcast.com/) where we've got transcripts of every episode, an FAQ page, and more. And of course, if you join us at [patreon.com/gender](https://www.patreon.com/gender), you will automatically get access to our monthly bonus episodes, our weekly newsletter, and a whole bunch of other stuff.

Today's episode was produced and edited by Ozzy Llinas Goodman and by me, Tuck Woodstock. Our logo is by Ira M. Leigh. Our theme song is by Breakmaster Cylinder. Additional music this week by Blue Dot Sessions. Warning you now, we've got two episodes left this season, and we'll be back next week with more feelings about gender.

*[Gender Reveal theme music ends]*

**Chiquitita:** I have an idea of what I want it to look like, but in order to get there, I need a lot of like emotional support or not emotional. But I mean, well, yes, emotional but also, I meant financial.

**Tuck:** I was going to say like I thought you were going to say money and then I was like emotional support sounds, maybe easier. Anyway.

*[Excerpt from Moment 4 Life by Nicki Minaj plays]*

**Tuck**: Anyway, on its website, Trace refers to the people who use the app to track their transitions as Tracers. *[laughter]* Yeah. Anyway, Tracers.