



“I’m honestly not quite sure how to start this. I am 32 years old and the unexpected happened to me this last April. On April 23, I received THE phone call that shook me to my core and changed my life. My biopsy was cancerous. So, on May 21st I had my first surgery, a bilateral mastectomy. This was the first time I felt like a part of me, my femininity was taken from. But, I could do it. I told myself that I am far too young to worry that the cancer was coming back. I didn’t want to think about leaving my 8 year old son and husband behind. I wanted to do everything in my power to prevent that and having the surgery would greatly increase those odds.

After the surgery I was set up with my oncologist. We talked about options and we all felt (my doctor, then fiancé and myself) that chemotherapy was the way to go. I remember my doctor pausing when I said, “okay, when do we start?” He asked when my fiancé and I were planning on getting married, and we replied this September. He really wanted to inform me that there was a good chance that I wouldn’t have my hair, or very little of it, at that point. I hadn’t even thought of it. I just had a major surgery the week before that had already changed my perception of myself. I was also in full survival mode. I wanted to give myself the best chance of beating this. I looked at my fiancé, who just smiled and said he would love me and marry me, with or without hair. That amazing man made the decision to start chemo, right away, that much easier. I was also informed that most insurances would cover or help with the cost of a wig.

After my first round, I already started to lose my hair. Losing my hair was one of the hardest things for me. It may sound silly or even a bit vain, but just like many women, my hair had become part of who I was, my identity. I took time to do my hair, to show the world that I cared; to show that I was present in life. It wasn’t just hair. This was how I presented myself to the world. For me, I felt like I was losing myself again and the last of my femininity with my hair.

I did however, continue to plan my wedding. I stopped one day at Kristen’s Bridal, where I met the owner Nancy. She was amazing! Not only did she help me find my dress, she led me to Amy. Amy has made going through this process easier. Right away, she put me at ease. I knew that she would take care of me. When it got to the point that I was losing more hair on a daily basis than was worth keeping, she cut the cutest pixie cut while I waited for my wig to come in. I had went in with my fiancé totally prepared to have it completely shaved off. Amy always has a way to make me FEEL beautiful. She has been an absolute angel.

When my wig arrived, I had lost most of my hair, it was patchy and awful. For me that was just another reminder that I was sick. Something that I didn’t like to think about often. My family and I focused on the fact that this situation was just a step to getting to a healthy, happy life. I could do that most days, until I looked in the mirror and I saw that I still had a ways to go. This wig brought back my confidence to hold my head up and know that my situation is VERY temporary. I felt beautiful and more like the woman I was before my journey started.

I feel that many women do identify their hair as part of who they are and their femininity, losing mine felt detrimental at times. Amy helped to fix that for me as did so many wonderful people in the community that came together to make my husband and my wedding a true fairy tale. We are unbelievably grateful and feel blessed to have met those amazing people and to find such kindness in our community. That day wouldn’t have felt the same without the hair that Amy helped me find. I wouldn’t have had the confidence that I did for the amazing pictures taken, to enjoy the beautiful reception that was provided and to simply live in that beautiful moment. For me, this is more than a wig, it gave me back a piece of myself. Amy was a huge part in that part of my healing process. This has not only been a very physical journey, but an extremely emotional one.”

Kristen Baden

