



ITALY

ALEX P.

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Palermo, in the gym, where Alex put himself through a rigorous daily training regime.

In search of happiness

Most of us identify with our biological gender. Transsexuals and transgender people are individuals who do not identify with this sex and have a different gender identity or psychological sex. They often live deeply troubled lives due to the constant mismatch between their gender identity and their sex assigned at birth (known as “gender dysphoria”), as well as the continuous prejudice and discrimination they’re subjected to. Many choose to take a long and complex road and transition to their preferred gender, which can go as far as undergoing surgical procedures to modify their anatomical sexual characteristics. During an initial period of approximately one year, transsexuals see the changes their bodies undergo and can experiment socially before deciding whether to go through with the sex conversion surgery.

Alex P., whose birth name is Alessandra, is a transsexual from the Sicilian province of Caltanissetta and lives in Palermo: he’s thirty years old, is a graduate of the Accademia di Belle Arti (Art School) and has hearing difficulties. In 2016, Alex decided to undergo sex conversion surgery. He works as a waiter in an ethnic cuisine restaurant, acts with an amateur theatre group, and is an active member of Arcigay Palermo, of which his wife is the current president. Alex and Ana got married by civil ceremony in 2017 and, thanks to artificial insemination, are now parents to a baby girl called Aria, who was born in 2019.

These images tell the story of Alex’s life between 2015 and 2019.



Alex showing a photo of himself before the conversion.



Palermo, a demonstration of the intense bond between Ana and Alex.



Palermo, Alex watches the audience leave just after finishing a performance with the amateur theatre group he belongs to.



Palermo, Alex among other actors from the theatre group, waiting to go on stage.



Palermo, Alex in the kitchen of the ethnic restaurant where he works as a waiter.



Turin, Alex in his hospital room the day after his hysterectomy and mastectomy procedures.



Ana and Alex in the General Surgery ward at the Molinette Hospital in Turin.



Turin, Ana shows a picture on her phone of Alex taken the day before, as he prepared for the surgery.



Turin, Ana's parents comfort Alex the day after his operation.



Palermo, friends celebrate Alex's return from Turin where he underwent sex conversion surgery.



Palermo, Alex, in his bedroom, treats the wounds on his breasts.



The day of the wedding, celebrated in a traditional Sicilian farmhouse in the countryside, Alex is putting his wedding suit on.



Friends helping Alex prepare for his wedding.



Ana dancing with wedding guests.



A moment during Ana and Alex's wedding reception.



Palermo, Ana and Alex on their bed just before Aria's arrival.



Palermo, at their new house, Alex looks at Ana's final ultrasound scan.



Palermo, sat on the sofa in their house, Alex and Ana smile at each other during the final days of pregnancy.



Palermo, little Aria, just after leaving the delivery room, meets Alex, her father, for the first time.



Palermo, Alex watches the newly-born Aria.



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