



### **Occupied**

During the initial days of coming out, I used to be terrified by the thought of peeing. Not only did it stop me from having fun (because I would keep thinking about it) but it also wasn't healthy either. I'd restrict my liquid intake and not drink enough water because I just didn't feel ready to confront the binary space.

For someone who is used to male washrooms 99.99% of their life, it can be overwhelming to use the female one for the first time.

If I entered the men's loo, would I feel safe? Would they stare? Would the stalls be empty? Would the stalls be clean? How would I touch up with men staring? What if someone freaks out? What if someone gets the wrong idea? Among many other things.

Although I felt and presented as a woman, would I be safer in the women's loo? Would women feel threatened by me? Would they feel uncomfortable? Would they freak out? Would they call security? Would their boyfriends beat me up?

It was just too much to process. A simple functional act had turned into an awfully complex undertaking.

This image setting is in the men's loo of my previous office, and one of the many situations in which I found myself. But thanks to women colleagues who proactively invited me in an all-female space that I got the confidence to use the washroom that felt most right.

Now imagine the many trans folks who are still forced to use the wrong washroom - because they're worried for their safety, or want to compromise for other people's comfort, or they are not out yet, or even if they are out they still aren't allowed to use the one in which they feel safer. Friendly reminder that all humans have an excretory system, and you have been sharing washroom spaces with trans people all your life; and you will continue to do so - whether you know of their trans identity or don't. Be kind and go with the flow.

Have you seen the line outside?