

# A Break in Action

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*Settling into a new life is easier than first imagined.*

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I took a good long look at my now shoulder length hair. It still looked very straight and masculine in contrast to my wig, but at least I had something to work with now. I decided that it was about time to start wearing my natural hair instead of the very nice, but still uncomfortable wig I'd used for four months now. Since I'd left my old life, my chest had grown between an A and B cup (which I still augmented with inexpensive enhancers, to stay at a C cup), and my body had changed proportions drastically with a combination of herbal therapy, and the low dosage of hormones I'd been taking. My body had adjusted well to the combination of living as a woman. The taxi dropped me off in front of the little strip mall where I could finally get my hair cut professionally, and I walked through the front doors hesitating only for a moment as I recalled the last time I'd actually been in a Salon. The pang of missing Penny lasted the entire session as the stylists washed, styled and highlighted my hair to my liking. "Have you ever tried our private brand of shampoo and conditioner?" the stylist asked as I prepared to pay for my hair. "I haven't." "Would you like to try it today?" "No thanks, I'm running a little behind." I made a note to myself to start looking for a job after I finished, since I probably should have done that months ago (to make my lie a truth). 'Okay, that'll be thirty-eight dollars.' After paying the stylist, I began wandering around the mall to see if any of the stores happened to be looking to hire. Once I saw that they all seemed fully staffed, I wandered a little further to some of the mom and pop shops that lined the streets behind the strip mall. None of them had any vacancies either, so I called my taxi back and went to the library on campus. Several web searches provided scam after scam of people trying to make a quick buck online by appealing to other people's impulse to make a quick buck. At least having a business tyrant of a father taught me not to fall for anything that promised money fast. As I was about to give up and call it a day, I noticed a website offering to ship self defense products to your customers if you would only make the sale. I tried a couple of quick searches on them, and found praise after praise after glowing praise for the owner/founder of this little company. I sent them a quick inquiry and then called it a day. When I got home, I used my phone to check my bank balance. I still had enough savings to pay my way through the next five semesters of

school and possibly further with the scholarships and financial aid I'd received in the form of a pell grant. Even though my grant wouldn't kick in until the Fall Semester, it was enough to pay my rent through the next three semesters alone. I thought about it for a few hours before retiring for the night, and decided that I needed to invest in my own computer. As my alarm went off the next day, I collected myself and proceeded to dress neatly casual. I needed to give the impression that I actually knew what I was doing, or whatever salesman would walk all over me while I was shopping around. My first stop was the library, to research a little about computers. I didn't know much except that people talk about fast computers, and slow computers. Apparently I wanted a fast one. My research took a little over an hour, and I managed to figure out the basics of what I needed, and how to cut the cost by not looking for the biggest numbers like stats, but for the ones that most closely matched what I wanted to do with browsing the internet, writing, and possibly a little graphic editing. "Good morning miss, I'm George, can I help you with anything today?" George introduced himself as soon as I walked in the door. "Honestly, yes," I began, "I need a computer, and I'll just be doing some basic browsing as well as a little picture editing." "Hmm, what price range are you looking for?" "I would rather not say, but right off, I would like to have some of my budget left over to get a protection plan if it covers the labor, parts as well as the software." I knew that my salesman was doing a double take in his head, because he would of course try to sell me some sort of warranty or something after we looked at computers. But for now, I needed him focused, so I got that part out of the way. "Right his way ma'am." George led me towards the isles, away from all of the fancy promotions and big name computers. "This laptop here is a great start if you're just doing the minor things you mentioned." I eyed the price tag and immediately decided that I liked George. "Thank you, box it up, make sure you include a copy of Office, and if you have Photoshop, through that in there as well." George complied with my every request as quickly as he could, hoping that I was serious about purchasing the store's warranty and putting a few extra bucks in his pocket. In less than five minutes he had everything up at the front register, ready to go. "You know, I spoke with my manager, and if you'd like, we can set everything up for you before you leave today, and perform a free optimization to ensure your laptop has all of the latest updates." "Thank you George, I'd appreciate that." About twenty minutes later I had everything back in the taxi and was headed home. "Now for the fun part." I plugged my laptop into the socket behind my desk and clicked on the internet icon to take a closer look at that self defense sales idea. When nothing popped up I realized the obvious, that my apartment had no internet. So, a phone call later, I had a date set to get a DSL line in my apartment. After looking at my screen for a moment, I noticed a little icon that told me I had wireless turned on, and there where networks within range. "Those'll do for now." I navigated to the site again, and began reading. The narrative took almost five pages to explain that I could set up a shop online, when people ordered from me, the order would go through them and they would ship it to the customer. Of course they wanted a security deposit, but after weighing the variables, I decided to go for it. After several failed attempts as finding the right web address, I finally settled on myselfdefensesite. It was simple and I could use already set up store software to just add my products and go. Once I finished poking around my new store, I began to wonder at how things were going. I now had a very feminine body,

beautiful hair, I was decent at using makeup, and I had already made a couple of friends here. My classes started on June tenth, and that would get me well on my way to a college education, and my little investment would help me make ends meet as long as I could get customers to start buying things to protect themselves. About the only things I really missed about my old life were James and Penny. I hadn't spoken to either of them since I found out my father from my old life was looking for me. I needed to make sure they were still okay.