

## Brazilian Bikini Wax â€” So it goes

by Jason\_Love

I was picking lint from my collar when my editor called with a dangerous mission: to get a Brazilian bikini wax and report back to you. Apparently, men are ripping hair from the shyest parts of their body, and no one knows why. They needed someone on the inside.

I arrived at the day spa without a reconnaissance. Lauren the hostess guided me through the cutting and curling and dyeing to a waiting room. Scratch that. Any room so fancy should technically be called a foyer. The chandelier tinkled to the sounds of Beethoven, and cinnamon candles warmed the room. I sat on a couch with entirely too many pillows and tried not to touch anything. Lauren hurried away to do hostess things.

Odd place for a man condemned to wax.

Men are not cut out for hair removal. A man can eat nails, drive a Harley, become a Navy Seal, and still snivel before a pair of tweezers (or as I like to call them, Devilâ€™s Chopsticks). It is baffling that women endure this painâ€™repeatedlyâ€™ for any cause, including their own salvation.

Lauren circled back for me and soon I lay in the waxing chamber, where everything was fresh and folded and blindingly white. Was I in for surgery or hair removal? As instructed, I removed my clothes and assumed the position. It was like lying on a chiropractorâ€™s table, only face up with legs spread in gynecologic uncertainty and, on second thought, nothing like the chiropractor at all.

A cheery voice interrupted my willies: â€œYou muss be the lucky man.â€•

And in she walked, a stout Argentine woman whom you liked instantly even if she was about to rain terror on your netherparts. Her name was Blanca, but she answered to anything that sounded like cries for mercy. Blanca was an older woman, better for the wear, and had an accent straight out of Evita. Her voice soothed like a lullaby, but you sensed that she could beat you silly if she had to.

For some reason, it only now occurred to me that Blanca would see me naked. I felt like we should get to know each other, have a drink or something, but she went right to work like a mother changing a diaper. She had seen every size, shape, and color, and mine did not bear mention. So it goes.

Blanca showed me the instruments of destruction: liquid wax, cloth strips, and a box of Kleenex (for my eyes). Her arms were brawny as if from subduing previous customers. I asked Blanca what made a wax Brazilian. Despite my hopes, it had nothing to do with live samba dancers.

“The Brazilian es when everything goes, even where the sun no shine. The French, however, es when you leave a leetle strip!” She demonstrated.

I asked her if we could start with a colder, more conservative country, say, Poland.

Blanca laughed as she dipped her rag in hot “extremely hot” wax. She laid the strip on my skin and, coaxing me in tender tones, rrrripped the hair from Mr. Giggles.

It is hard to describe the pain that attended. Normally we are present to a range of sights and sounds, grounded for the most part in reality. The moment Blanca took back her strip of cloth, my awareness of Other came to a searing standstill, and nothing existed outside the sting between my legs. Somewhere in the distance a dog barked.

I yelped in some new language and had a mini-seizure.

“Es okay, beautiful, see.” Blanca showed me a strip of fur that belonged somewhere else.

So it went, strip after strip, my torso arched backward like one demented Slinky. Blanca assured me that “es almost over,” then rrrripped again. I looked to her the way one does a flight attendant in turbulence: her smile was all I had.

“Beautiful, es almost over,” she said, and I, in my fever, believed her. We were almost done for 30 minutes.

Tears welled up, but I sucked them back in with my eyeballs. Women wax all the time, right? I thought about my wife. Maybe she would take me for ice cream afterward.

With every pass, the wax got hotter. I asked Blanca if the heat would max out at some non-scalding temperature.

“Hot wax es better,” she said. “It grabs the hair from underneath.”

Her perfectionism was killing me.

“Es almost over.”

Blanca told me to close my eyes and relax, but every time I got to my happy place, she ripped it out of me. It’s a little-known fact that the man who coined “mind over matter” died of a Brazilian bikini wax. I’ve endured tattoos, carpentry stabbings, and a bee sting that made my lips look like Meg Ryan’s, and none of it could have prepared me.

Finally, mercifully, we reached the end—the real end. Blanca had clear-cut Florida, Georgia, and Alabama, leaving no shrub unfelled.

She wiped her hands and said brightly, “See, I told you eet was almost over.”

I looked down at my new friend, a turkey made hairless, waddle and all. Blanca told me to let it air out for a while, be naked if possible. Good thing I work at home; that could have been awkward for everyone.

“Thank you for trust me,” she said. “Will you do eet again?”

“Perhaps if I encounter some issues with my memory down the line.” I tipped Blanca not for the wax but for the psychotherapy.

AFTERMATH

It has been a week, and Iâ€™m still not myself. Iâ€™ve acquired a facial tic and other hints of post-traumatic stress disorder. The draft in my basement wonâ€™t go away. I feel less manly, Samson without his pubic hair. Iâ€™ve stopped showering at the gym, and it may be years before I can eat Brazilian nuts.

My hair is returning slowly, in patches, like Earth after nuclear winter. Blanca said that if I wax often enough, the hair will stop growing altogether, but then what will we do for fun? My compulsion to scratch is severeâ€™greater, in fact, than my need to be accepted by other people in the restaurant.

As nice as it was to clean Richard and the twins, I have decided that my private parts will remain private. Some say that waxing improves sex, but I donâ€™t think Iâ€™m good enough at it to tell the difference. I did find this, however: shavers and waxers donâ€™t mix. My wife is a shaver, and I, bless my editor, am a waxer. Now when we make love, it feels like grating glass down there, which, of course, is not enough to keep me away.

Blanca sees musclemen, swimmers, and guys who like to roam the beach showing off their circumcision, but still it is mostly women. They are the only ones tough enough to return. Blanca would like to have more male clients, but something tells me I didnâ€™t help her cause.

Still, I will always recall fondly this woman who knows me better than do most of my ex-girlfriends. Even now, as I scratch and scratch, her accent echoes in my mind: â€œEs almost over, es almost over!â€•