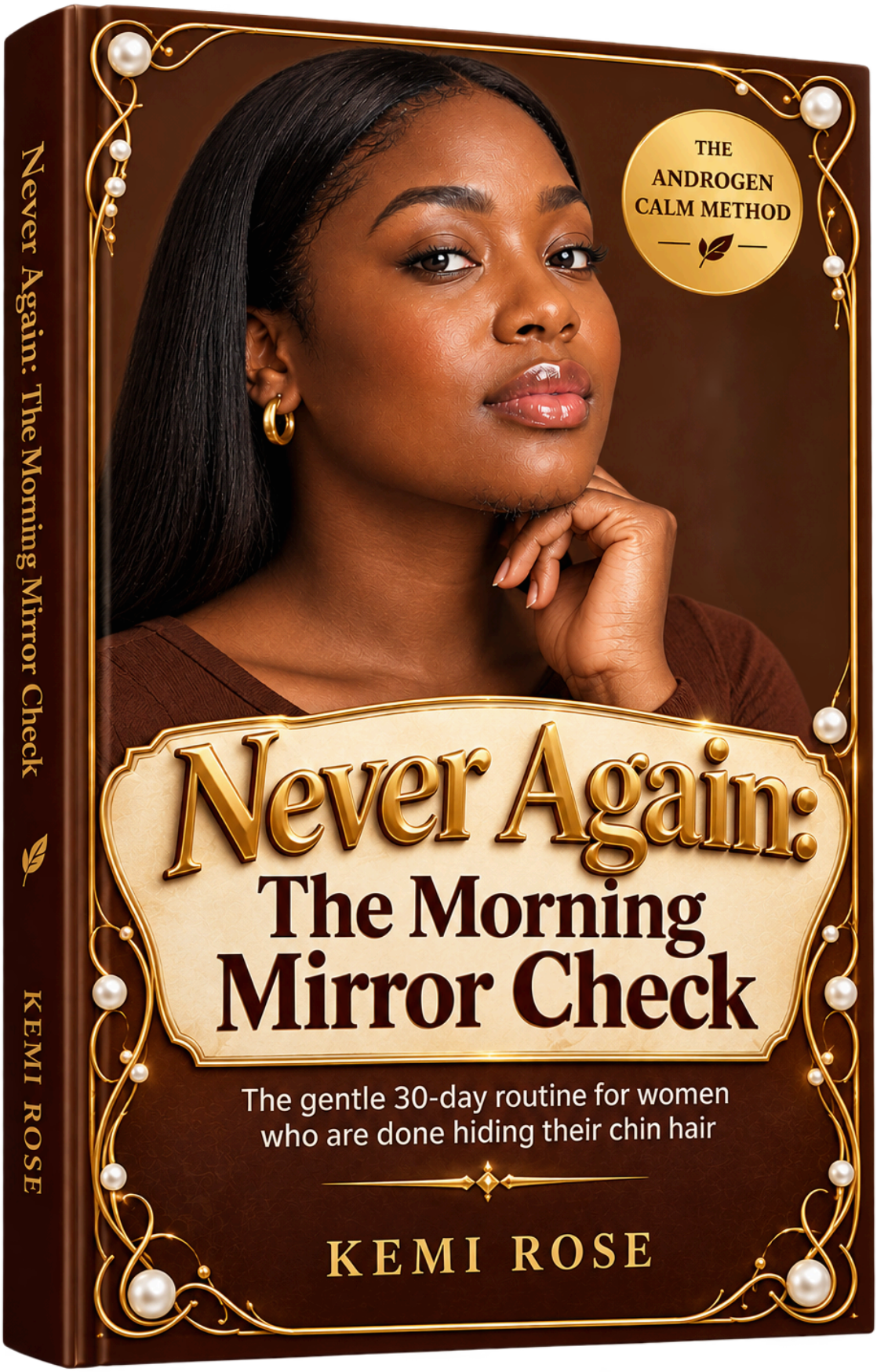

THE
ANDROGEN
CALM METHOD
Never Again:
The Morning
Mirror Check
The gentle 30-day routine for women
who are done hiding their chin hair
KEMI ROSE
Never Again: The Morning Mirror Check
KEMI ROSE

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Introduction
Come, Let Me Tell You What Nobody Told Me

Let me guess. You shaved again this morning. Perhaps you did it right before brushing your teeth, or while sitting in traffic on Third Mainland Bridge, tilting that small car mirror down to see. And now, barely a few hours later, your fingers reach up to feel that same rough prickle. That familiar little shadow under the daylight.

Does that sound like you? Come, my sister, lean in and let me share the very words I wish someone had told me years ago.

There is nothing wrong with you. You are not strange, nor are you any less of a woman. Your body is simply navigating something nobody ever took the time to clarify, leaving you to carry this quiet battle all by yourself for way too long.

I know, because I did the same thing for years. I know the mirror check. I know the fear of daylight. I know the lie you tell when someone gets too close: "Oh, I just have a small bump there."

I'm not a doctor, and I won't pretend to be. Where something needs a doctor, I'll tell you plainly. But I am a woman who walked this road and found a calmer way through it. And I'm going to walk you through it step by step.

I also won't promise you a miracle. Anyone who does is selling you something. What I can promise is this: by the end of these 30 days, you will understand why this happens. You will stop damaging your skin. You will have a simple routine that takes minutes, not hours. And you will know exactly when to see a doctor and what to say when you get there.

Here's how we'll do it. First, we'll understand what is really going on. Then we'll act, gently. Then we'll lock it in, so you're not starting from zero every few weeks.

Read one chapter at a time. Do the small steps at the end of each one. Don't rush.

Ready? Let's start with the thing you do every single morning that nobody sees.

Chapter 1
The Morning Mirror Check Nobody Sees You Do

So now you know why I wrote this. Let's start where it all begins: that little moment in front of the mirror.

The Little Mirror in Your Car
You know the one. You're sitting in traffic. The sun hits your face at the wrong angle. And your hand goes up to your chin, almost by itself, to check.

Or you're at a friend's house, and the bathroom light is brighter than yours at home. You lean in close. You turn your head left. Then right. You check under your jaw. Then you wash your hands and walk out, smiling like nothing happened.

I used to have a whole routine. Bathroom mirror at home. Car mirror on the way out. Phone camera in the office toilet. Then once more before lunch, "just to be sure."

I don't think I ever went more than three hours without checking.

How many times did you check this week? Be honest. I won't tell anyone.

The Things You Stopped Doing
Here's what nobody says out loud. It isn't only about the hair. It's about everything you started avoiding because of it.

You stopped sitting near windows. You started picking the seat at the back of the room, away from the light. You stopped leaning in close when someone talked to you. You turned your face at an angle for every photo.

Maybe you stopped letting a man rest his hand on your face. Maybe you started wearing makeup to bed. Maybe you wake up before him, just to "fix" yourself.

And all the while, you smiled. Because that's what we do, isn't it?

Why Nobody Talks About It
Okay, so check this out. If this is so common, why have you never heard anyone talk about it?

Because shame is a very good secret keeper.

Your friend is shaving in her own bathroom, thinking she's the only one. Your cousin is plucking in her own room, thinking the same. Your aunty is doing it too, and she's never told a soul.

Everyone is hiding. So everyone thinks they're alone.

Here's what I learned after I finally opened my mouth to one trusted friend: she went quiet for a second. Then she said, "Kemi, me too." We laughed until we cried. That one conversation took a weight off me that I'd carried for years.
You are far less alone than you think.

What It Has Been Costing You
Let's talk about the part we hardly ever count. Not the feelings, the money. Let me show you with small small numbers, just like calculating prices at the local market.

- Threading, twice a month at least ₦1,500: **₦36,000** a year
- Razors and shaving sticks at about ₦1,000 a month: **₦12,000** a year
- Four creams that didn't work, at ₦5,000 each: **₦20,000**

That's about **₦68,000** in one year. And that's before anyone quotes you ₦150,000 for laser.
Now add the time. Ten minutes every morning is over 60 hours a year, standing in front of a mirror.
And then add the peace of mind, which has no price tag. The constant worry. The tight feeling in your chest when someone looks at you for a second too long.
Sounds about right? It was for me.

The Day I Stopped Pretending
Let me tell you about my worst day. We were celebrating a friend's engagement party at an open-air venue, under the sharp afternoon sunlight while a photographer moved through the crowd capturing moments. The entire time, my fingers remained glued to my chin. I kept claiming I was “thinking”. Every photo of me from that day had my hand on my face. Fifteen pictures, fifteen "thinking" poses.
That night, I looked at those pictures and something broke in me. Not because of the hair. Because I realised I had spent a whole day at a party I was supposed to enjoy, being afraid.
That was the day I decided: this isn't how I'm going to live.
I didn't fix it overnight. It took time, and a lot of learning, and some mistakes I'll help you skip. But that was the day it started.

Your First Step Today
Before we go any further, I want you to do one small thing. It takes five minutes. It's the first step in everything we're going to do together.
1. Take a piece of paper or open the notes on your phone.
2. Write down how many times you checked your chin or jaw yesterday. A rough guess is fine.
3. Write down how much time you spend on removal each week.

4. Write down roughly how much you spend each month on razors, threading, waxing, or creams.
5. Look at the three numbers. Then put the paper away.

Treat this as a starting line rather than a sentence—there is no need to judge yourself.
We will revisit those figures once you complete this guide, and I suspect the difference will amaze you.
If you hold onto only one lesson from this chapter, let it be this: checking the mirror is not a personal failure. It is simply a response rooted in fear, and any habit can be reshaped.
But here's the thing. Before you can change anything, you need to understand why you've tried so hard and still ended up here. Everything you've tried, the razor, the thread, the cream, the wax, probably made things worse. In the next chapter, I'll show you exactly why. And I promise you, once you see it, you'll stop blaming yourself.

Chapter 2
Why Shaving, Plucking, and Creams Never Fixed It

If those totals startled you when you wrote them down, don't feel bad at all. It simply shows you are beginning to pay attention.

So come, let me ask you one honest question. With all that energy and hard-earned money spent, why hasn't it gone away?

Perhaps you thought it was all on you, wondering if you needed a harsher product or a different technique. Trust me, my sister, I felt that exact same guilt.

The honest truth is you were never the problem. The tools you were given were simply working against you, and I am about to show you how.

The Razor: It Grows Back Thicker

I'm going to start with the biggest lie.

Everyone told me the same thing. "Don't shave it, it will grow back thicker and darker." So I tried to stop shaving. And every time I stopped, I felt too ashamed to leave the house. So I started again.

Okay, so check this out. Shaving does not change how thick your hair is. It does not change the colour. It does not change how fast it grows.

So why does it feel thicker?

Because of how a razor cuts. A hair that grows naturally has a soft, thin tip. A razor cuts straight across and leaves a flat, blunt tip. A blunt tip feels rough and looks darker, like a tiny black dot under the skin. That's the shadow you see by afternoon.

It's the same hair. It just feels worse. You can stop being afraid of the razor. The razor is not the villain. The way we use it can be, and we'll fix that in Chapter 4.

The Tweezers and Thread: The Dark Marks

Now let's talk about plucking and threading.

When you pull a hair out from the root, your skin gets a small injury every single time. And darker skin has a habit of responding to injury by making extra colour. That's why you get small dark spots where the hairs used to be.

I called mine "my chin freckles." I thought they were part of me. They weren't. They were scars from years of pulling.

And that's not all. When you pluck, the new hair sometimes grows back curled and trapped under the skin. That's an ingrown hair. It looks like a small red or dark bump, and it can hurt. Then you pick at it. Then the mark gets darker. Then you pluck again.
Does this sound familiar?
I want you to hear this clearly: every time you pick or pluck an irritated spot, you're feeding the cycle.

The Cream: The Burn That Looked Like a Solution
Let me tell you about my cream story.
A woman in the salon told me about a hair removal cream. "Just apply, wait five minutes, wipe it off," she said. "Smooth like a baby."
I was so excited. I bought it that same evening, rushed home, and applied it. I didn't do a patch test. Who has time?
After four minutes, my chin started to burn. After six, I was running to the bathroom with tears in my eyes. When I wiped it off, my skin was red, raw, and stinging. It looked like I'd been slapped. For two weeks, that area was darker than the rest of my face.
Those creams work by dissolving the hair with strong chemicals. Chemicals that dissolve hair can also upset your skin, especially on a delicate area like the chin. If you've used one and your skin burned, it wasn't "just you being sensitive." That's what these products can do.

The Wax: Pain, Money, and a Risk
Waxing is a bit like a polite punishment. You pay money to feel pain.
It pulls hair from the root, so you get the same injury as plucking, just across a bigger area. If the wax is too hot, or the person is rushing, it can lift skin. And it only lasts a few weeks before you're back on the chair.
I tried it twice. The second time, a small patch of skin came off with the wax. I was embarrassed to go out for a week.

The Laser Quote: The Big Number
At some point, someone tells you, "Just do laser."
So you go and ask. The woman at the clinic looks at your chin for ten seconds and says, "That will be ₦150,000, plus the sessions." And your heart drops.
Here's what I've learned. Laser can work, but it isn't magic. It usually needs several sessions. The right machine matters a lot on darker skin, because the wrong one can burn or leave

marks. And if there's a hormone reason behind the growth, the hair can come back anyway, because the cause is still there.

I'm not saying don't ever do it. I'm saying don't spend ₦150,000 until you understand what's happening in your body. We'll talk about the right questions to ask in Chapter 4.

The Real Problem: You've Been Fighting the Hair, Not the Reason

Okay, so here's the bit that changed everything for me.

Imagine your roof is leaking. Every time it rains, water drips onto your floor. And every morning, you mop the floor. Then you buy a better mop. Then a stronger cleaner. Then you hire someone to mop for you.

Meanwhile, the roof is still leaking.

That's what we've been doing. The razor, the thread, the cream, the wax, all of them are mops. They clean up the water. None of them touch the leak.

The leak is **why the hair grows in the first place.** For many women, it has something to do with hormones, and I'll explain exactly what in the next chapter. When you don't understand the cause, you spend years and thousands of naira cleaning up the same mess.

And the mops themselves have been hurting your skin.

What the Next 30 Days Can Change

Now, here's the promise. And I'll be careful with it, because I don't want to lie to you.

I'm not going to tell you this guide will make your hair disappear. That would be a lie, and you've heard enough of those.

But here's what 30 days of the Androgen Calm Method can do:

- Help you understand why this is happening in your body.
- Help you stop damaging your skin so the dark marks and bumps can fade.
- Give you a simple routine that takes minutes, not an anxious hour.
- Show you what to say to a doctor so you don't leave the clinic feeling dismissed.
- Help you stop the mirror check, because when you know what's going on, the fear loses its power.

That's it. That's the promise. It's not a miracle. It's a calm, step-by-step way out of the cycle.

Your Step Today

You don't need to change everything yet. For today, just do this one thing:

1. Pick **one** habit that hurts your skin the most. Maybe it's dry plucking, picking at bumps, or using that burning cream.
2. Write it on a piece of paper.
3. For the next three days, don't do it. If you feel the urge, put your hands in your pockets or make a cup of tea.
4. If your skin is sore or red, leave it alone. Don't shave or pull until it calms down.

That's all. Small steps. Big difference.

If you take nothing else from this chapter, remember this: you were never failing. You were using mops on a leaking roof.

Now comes the part I find most interesting because the leak has a name, and once you know it, a lot of things start making sense. In the next chapter, I'll explain what's really going on inside your body, in simple words with no big grammar. I'll also show you the signs that mean you should see a doctor. And honestly? This is the chapter I wish someone had handed me ten years ago.

Chapter 3
The Real Reason It Grows

So you now know you were using mops on a leaking roof. That's the hardest part, because it means you can stop blaming yourself.
Now let's find the leak.

Meet Your Hormones (No Big Grammar)
Every woman has some male hormones in her body. Yes, you read that right.
They're called **androgens**. Don't let the word scare you. Your body makes them in small amounts, mostly in your ovaries and in two small glands that sit on top of your kidneys. You need them. They help with your energy, your bones, and even your mood.
Men have a lot more. Women have a little. That's normal.
Now, think of androgens like pepper in a pot of soup. A little pepper is perfect. But if there's more than usual, or if your tongue is very sensitive, you'll feel it fast.
The hair follicles on your chin and jaw are some of the most sensitive in your whole body. When androgens go up a little, or when your follicles are extra sensitive to them, those follicles wake up. The hair that was thin and soft turns thick and dark.
That's the leak.

The Three Things Behind It for Many Women
Now, I'm not a doctor, so I can't tell you which one is yours. But there are a few common reasons I want you to know about. Many women have one. Some have more than one.

1. PCOS (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome)
You've probably seen this word before. I saw it while I lay in bed by 2am.
PCOS is very common. Studies suggest around 1 in 10 women of childbearing age has it, and many don't know. It means your body is making more androgens than usual, and your ovaries aren't releasing eggs as regularly as they should.
Signs include irregular periods, chin or jaw hair, acne, and sometimes weight gain around the belly.
I'll say this carefully: having chin hair does not mean you have PCOS. Many women with chin hair don't. But it's one of the first things a doctor will want to check.

2. Insulin Resistance
Insulin is the key your body uses to let sugar from your food into your cells for energy.

In some women, the cells stop listening. So the body knocks harder. It makes more and more insulin, like someone banging a door because nobody's answering.
Here's the bit that matters: that extra insulin can tell your ovaries to make more androgens. So the problem starts in how your body handles sugar, and ends up on your chin.
This is why, in Chapter 5, we'll talk about food. Not a crazy diet. Just small swaps that keep your blood sugar calmer.

3. Stress, Medication, and Family Pattern
Long, heavy stress can push your body to make more of certain hormones. If you've been under pressure for years, with work, money, family, and all that, your body feels it.
Some medicines can also increase hair growth as a side effect. If you started a new medicine, or a different contraceptive, before this began, tell your doctor or pharmacist. Please don't stop any medicine on your own. Always speak to a professional first.
And sometimes it's simply in the family. If your mother, aunty, or grandmother had the same thing, your follicles may just be more sensitive. In that case, your hormone tests can come back normal, and you still grow hair. That's real too, and it's not your fault.

What I Did When I Finally Found Out
I went to a clinic when I was ready to stop guessing. The first doctor looked at me for a minute and said, "Just lose some weight." That was it.
I left feeling smaller than I walked in.
It took me a second visit, with a list of questions I'd written down, before someone took me seriously. I'll give you that list in Chapter 6. For now, just know this: if one doctor brushes you off, you are allowed to ask again.

Your Pattern Checklist
This is not a diagnosis. It's a way to notice what's going on in your body so you can talk about it clearly. Read each line and tick the ones that fit you.

- I have dark, coarse hair on my chin or jaw
- I also get hair on my upper lip, sideburns, chest, or the line below my belly button
- The hair started or got worse in my teens or twenties, slowly over time
- My periods are irregular, far apart, or sometimes missing
- I get acne along my jaw and chin, even as an adult
- I gain weight mostly around my belly
- I have dark, velvety patches on my neck or underarms

- My hair on my head is thinning
- I've been trying to conceive for a while without luck
- Someone in my family has PCOS, diabetes, or the same hair pattern

Now count your ticks.

0 to 2 ticks: This may be a mild pattern. Mention it at your next normal check-up.

3 or more ticks, especially irregular periods: Please book a visit and ask for a hormone check. Don't wait years like I did.

Write your number somewhere. We'll use it again in Chapter 6.

The Signs That Mean "See a Doctor Soon"

I don't want to scare you, but I also won't hide this from you. Most chin hair growth is slow and gradual. But some changes need attention fast.

Please see a doctor soon if you notice:

1. Hair growth that appeared suddenly, within a few months, and fast
2. Your voice becoming deeper
3. Fast muscle gain or a big change in your body shape
4. Your periods stopping completely
5. Severe acne that appeared suddenly
6. Thinning hair on the top of your head, in a male pattern
7. Milky fluid coming from your breasts when you're not pregnant or breastfeeding
8. Purple stretch marks, easy bruising, or very high blood pressure

If any of these sound like you, don't wait. It doesn't mean something terrible. It just means you should get checked properly, and soon.

Your Step Today

Here's what I want you to do before the next chapter.

1. Go back to the Pattern Checklist and tick honestly.
2. Write down the date of your last period, and the one before it. If you can't remember, start noting them from now.
3. Write down any medicines or contraceptives you're using, and when you started them.
4. Ask your mother, aunty, or an older cousin, quietly, if anyone in the family had similar hair or PCOS. If it feels too awkward, skip it. You don't have to say why you're asking.

Keep all of this in one place. It will be very useful later.

Chin hair is often your body's way of sending a message, not a flaw in you. Once you understand the message, you can respond to it calmly instead of fighting it every morning. Now that you know what's going on, it's time to stop hurting your skin and let it heal. In the next chapter, I'll show you the 48-hour reset I used to calm down my irritated, marked, bumpy skin, and how to choose a removal method that won't make things worse. This part is where you start seeing real changes, so don't skip it.

Chapter 4
Stop Hurting Your Skin

With the leak finally having a name, you can see that you were never failing, just mopping. This is where things begin to change. We're not fixing the hair just yet. First, we're giving your skin a break, starting with your chin.

The 48-Hour Reset

Okay, so check this out. When my skin was at its worst, it was red, bumpy, and darker than the rest of my face. I thought I needed a stronger product. What I actually needed was to be left alone.

Here's what I did, and what I want you to do for the next 48 hours.

Stop all removal. No razor, no thread, no tweezers, no wax, no cream. Nothing. Yes, even if you feel the roughness. I know it's scary. Keep going.

Don't pick, squeeze, or scratch. If your hand goes to your chin, give it a job: hold your phone, drink water, fold your arms.

Wash gently, twice a day. Use lukewarm water (not hot) and a mild, fragrance-free cleanser. Pat dry with a clean towel. Don't rub.

Calm it with a cool cloth. If it's sore or red, hold a clean cloth soaked in cool water against it for five minutes.

Moisturise. Use a plain, fragrance-free moisturiser. Dry, angry skin heals slower.

Wear sunscreen in the morning. Yes, even if you're Black and people told you that you don't need it. I'll explain why in a moment.

That's the whole reset. It's boring. It works.

And here's the bit I want you to hear: if you can cover your chin with a scarf, a face mask, or a high collar for two days, do it. Not out of shame. Just to protect the skin while it calms down.

Why Sunscreen Matters for Dark Skin

You might be thinking, "But Kemi, my skin is dark. I don't burn."

You might not burn easily, but the sun still makes your dark marks darker. Those spots from plucking and bumps? Sunlight tells your skin to make more colour in exactly those spots. So you fade them with one hand and darken them with the other.

Pick a sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher that doesn't leave a white cast on your skin. Many brands make ones for deeper skin tones now. Apply it every morning on your face, chin, and jaw. It's the cheapest, most boring thing in this chapter. And it might be the most useful.

Healing the Dark Marks

Let me be honest with you: dark marks are slow.

Mine took months to fade, not days. Anyone who promises you “clear skin in seven days” is selling you hope in a jar.

Here’s what actually helps, in the gentlest order:

Stop causing new marks. That’s the reset above. Every new injury makes a new mark.

Sunscreen, every single day.

Be patient. Give it at least 8 to 12 weeks before you decide it isn’t working.

If you want to add a product, talk to a pharmacist or a skin doctor first. Ingredients like niacinamide and azelaic acid are commonly used for dark marks and are usually gentle. Start with one product only, and do a patch test first (I’ll show you how below).

Now, please listen carefully. Do not reach for those strong “fast-fading” or “skin lightening” creams you see in the market and on social media. Some of them contain harmful ingredients, including steroids and other chemicals that can thin and damage your skin over time. Check for NAFDAC registration, and when in doubt, ask a pharmacist.

I made that mistake once. My skin looked lighter for two weeks. Then it became patchy and thin and took far longer to recover.

Dealing With Ingrown Hairs and Bumps

If you have bumps that hurt, here’s the gentle way.

Hold a warm, clean cloth on the bump for 5 to 10 minutes, once or twice a day. This softens the skin.

Do not dig for the hair. I know the temptation. Resist.

Keep the area clean and moisturised.

If a bump is very red, swollen, filled with pus, or warm and painful, see a doctor or pharmacist. It might be an infection and need proper treatment.

Most ingrowns calm down on their own once you stop pulling and picking.

How to Shave Without Making Things Worse

Now, here’s the part you’ve probably been waiting for. If you choose to shave (and many women do, and that’s perfectly fine), let’s do it in a way that stops destroying your skin.

Wait until your skin has calmed after the 48-hour reset. Don’t shave irritated or broken skin.

Wash your face with lukewarm water first. Warm water softens the hair.

Use a clean, sharp razor. A blunt, rusty one is a bumpy-skin factory. Replace it often. Don’t share it.

Use shaving cream or gel, not dry shaving. A pinch, thick, plain, fragrance-free cleanser lather is better than nothing.
Go with the direction the hair grows, not against it. Going against the grain gives a closer shave, but also more bumps.
Use light strokes. No pressing. Let the razor do the work.
Rinse with cool water, pat dry, and moisturise.
Don't shave the same spot over and over. One pass, maybe two. That's it.
It took me a while to get used to going slowly. But my skin thanked me.

The Honest Comparison
Now let's talk about every method, one by one, so you can choose with your eyes open. Prices are rough guides and change from place to place.

Method	Roughly what it costs	How it feels	Risk of marks on darker skin	How long it lasts
Shaving	Very cheap	Painless if done well	Low if done gently, higher if rushed	Hours to a day or two
Threading	Low, but repeated	Sharp, brief pain	Medium to high if skin gets irritated	2 to 4 weeks
Waxing	Moderate, repeated	Painful	Medium to high, especially with hot wax	3 to 5 weeks
Hair removal cream	Cheap	Can burn	High if you react	A few days
Laser	High (sessions add up)	Stinging, like a rubber band	Can be high if the wrong machine is used	Reduces growth over several sessions, may need top-ups
Electrolysis	Moderate to high	Stinging, slow	Low to medium with a trained person	Can be permanent for treated hairs

Here's my honest take.

If your skin is calm and you just want something quick, gentle shaving is a perfectly good choice. Don't let anyone shame you for it.

If you want longer-lasting results and you have a small area like the chin, electrolysis is worth looking into. It works on any hair colour and any skin tone, but it's slow and needs a trained, certified person.

Laser can work well, but on darker skin the type of machine matters a lot. Ask for a clinic that works regularly with deeper skin tones and uses a machine suited to them. And remember, if a hormone issue is behind your hair growth, it can return even after laser treatment.

I'd avoid creams and hot waxing unless you've patch-tested and your skin has shown you it can handle them.

There's also a prescription cream that doctors sometimes use to slow facial hair growth. Ask your doctor about it when you go to Chapter 6. Don't buy anything like that online without advice.

The Patch Test

Before you put any new product on your chin, do this.

Apply a tiny amount on the inside of your forearm or behind your ear.

Leave it for 24 hours (or the time the product says).

If you see redness, itching, burning, or swelling, don't use it on your face.

It takes 30 seconds of effort and can save you two weeks of regret.

Questions to Ask Before You Pay Any Salon or Clinic

Please don't hand over money until you ask these questions. A good place will answer without fuss. A shady one will get defensive.

Have you treated clients with skin as dark as mine? Can I see examples?

What exact machine or method do you use, and is it right for my skin tone?

Will you do a patch test first?

Who exactly will treat me, and are they trained and certified?

How many sessions will I realistically need, and what's the total cost, not just the first one?

What happens if I get a burn, mark, or reaction? Who takes responsibility?

Do you use clean, single-use or properly sterilised tools?

Can I talk to a doctor first if I think there's a hormone cause?

Write these on your phone and read them out. If you feel pressured to "pay the deposit today," walk out.

Your Step Today

Here's what I want you to do before the next chapter.

1. Start the 48-hour reset tonight.
2. Buy a gentle cleanser, a plain moisturiser, and a sunscreen you actually like the feel of.
3. Do a patch test on any new product you want to try.
4. Take one photo of your chin in natural light. Just for you. Don't delete it. In 30 days, we'll compare.
5. Save the salon questions on your phone.

So if you take nothing else from this chapter, remember this: your skin has been through a lot. Healing it is not a luxury, it's the foundation.

Now, we've dealt with the outside. But remember the leak? There's another part of the story, and it happens in your kitchen. In the next chapter, I'll show you how small changes to what's on your plate, using food you already know and love, can help calm the very thing that wakes those follicles up. No expensive diets. No strange ingredients. Just smart Naija swaps. And honestly, this was the chapter that surprised me the most.

Chapter 5
Feed Your Hormones the Naija Way

Now that your skin is resting and you know why you should stop mopping, let's fix the leak a little from the inside.

This chapter is about food. But please relax. I'm not about to tell you to stop eating eba or live on boiled vegetables. I love food too much for that.

The Small Thing That Changed for Me

Remember what we said about insulin? The key that lets sugar into your cells? When your body keeps getting big sugar spikes, it keeps banging that door harder and harder. And that extra banging can push your body to make more androgens.

So the goal is simple. We want calmer blood sugar. Not perfect. Just calmer.

I didn't go on a crazy diet. I changed small things, one plate at a time. After a few weeks, I noticed something I didn't expect. My afternoon crashes became fewer. My cravings for sweet things reduced. And my skin looked calmer.

I can't promise it will do the same for you. But it costs very little to try, and it's good for your whole body.

The Rules I Followed (Easy Ones)

1. Never skip meals to "compensate." Skipping breakfast and eating a huge lunch makes your sugar swing wildly. Eat regularly.
2. Protein and vegetables first, then the starch. Start with the soup, fish, egg, or beans. The starch comes after. This slows down how fast sugar enters your blood.
3. Make the swallow smaller, and the soup bigger. I still eat eba. I just serve a smaller ball and load up on egusi, efo riro, or okra.
4. Don't drink your sugar. Soft drinks, packaged juice, and sweet malt hit your blood very fast.
5. Walk for 10 minutes after your biggest meal. Even around your compound or office corridor. It helps your body use the sugar.

That's it. No counting. No weighing. Just five habits.

Swaps That Don't Break the Bank
Here's what I changed, using food you can find in any market.

Instead of: a big plate of white garri or eba
Try: a smaller ball of eba, or switch some days to unripe plantain flour (elubo), or a swallow made with sorghum or millet if you can find it. Eat it with plenty of vegetable soup (or your preferred soup).

Instead of: only white rice and stew
Try: ofada rice, brown rice, or half-and-half. Jollof is fine, but add chicken, fish, or eggs, plus salad or vegetables. Reduce the rice and increase the protein.

Instead of: plain white bread and tea with lots of sugar
Try: oats, or whole wheat bread with eggs. Use less sugar in your tea. Reduce it slowly until you get used to it.

Instead of: a big plate of fried yam alone
Try: boiled yam or unripe plantain, a smaller portion, with eggs or fish and vegetables.

Instead of: soft drinks and sweet juice
Try: water, zobo with little or no sugar, or lemon or ginger water. If you must have a soft drink, make it occasional.

Instead of: biscuits and sugary snacks in the afternoon
Try: groundnuts, garden eggs with groundnut, boiled eggs, or a small piece of fruit like orange, apple, or pawpaw.
Beans is your best friend. Ewa, moi moi, and akara (baked or less oily when you can) give you protein and fibre, and they're cheap. If your pocket is tight, beans can carry you through the week.

A 7-Day Local Meal Plan
This is a guide, not a rule. Swap things around based on what's in your market and your pocket. Portions are up to you. Eat until you're comfortably full.

Day 1
- Breakfast: Oats with groundnuts and a boiled egg
- Lunch: Small eba with egusi soup and fish, extra vegetables
- Dinner: Moi moi with pap (little sugar)

Day 2
- Breakfast: Whole wheat bread with scrambled eggs and tomatoes
- Lunch: Ofada rice with stew, chicken, and salad
- Dinner: Pepper soup with fish and boiled unripe plantain

Day 3
- Breakfast: Akara with a small portion of pap
- Lunch: Beans with plantain and vegetable sauce
- Dinner: Efo riro with a small ball of swallow

Day 4
- Breakfast: Boiled yam with egg sauce
- Lunch: Jollof rice (smaller portion) with grilled fish and coleslaw
- Dinner: Okra soup with fish and a small ball of eba

Day 5
- Breakfast: Oats with milk, groundnuts, and a piece of fruit
- Lunch: Ewa agoyin with whole wheat bread
- Dinner: Vegetable soup with chicken and a small portion of swallow

Day 6
- Breakfast: Moi moi and pap
- Lunch: Brown rice with stew, egg, and plenty of vegetables
- Dinner: Catfish pepper soup with boiled plantain

Day 7
- Breakfast: Pancakes or toast, with eggs (rest day, enjoy it)
- Lunch: Your favourite family meal, with soup and protein first
- Dinner: A light meal, like soup with fish or a vegetable omelette

One more thing. If you are diabetic, pregnant, breastfeeding, on medication, or have a health condition, please check with your doctor or a dietitian before changing how you eat. This plan is general, not personal medical advice.

Sleep and Stress: The Part We Ignore

Okay, so check this out. You can eat perfectly and still undo it with sleep and stress.

When you sleep badly, your body struggles with blood sugar the next day. You also crave sugar and carbs more. When you're stressed all the time, your body keeps releasing stress hormones that can mess with other hormones too.

I know what you're thinking. "Kemi, in Lagos? With NEPA, traffic, and rent due? Who has time to relax?"

I hear you. So I'm not going to ask you to go to a spa. Here's what I did instead:

1. Aim for 7 hours of sleep. Pick a bedtime and protect it as much as you can.
2. Put your phone away 30 minutes before bed. Don't scroll until your eyes close. I know it's hard. Start with 15 minutes.
3. Do slow breathing for 5 minutes.** Breathe in for 4 counts, out for 6. Do it in bed, in the car, or before a tough meeting.
4. Take 10 minutes of quiet each day. Pray, meditate, or just sit without your phone.
5. Say no to one thing a week. One extra "aso ebi" invite. One money request you can't afford. One WhatsApp group you don't need.

These are small things. But they add up.

What the Research Says (And What Is Just Noise)

Let me be honest with you here, because you've probably seen a lot of nonsense online.

What has good support:

- For women with PCOS who are carrying extra weight, even a modest weight loss can improve hormones and sometimes reduce hair growth over time.
- Eating in a way that keeps blood sugar steadier, with more fibre, protein, and less sugar and refined starch, helps insulin.
- Regular movement helps your body use insulin better.
- Better sleep helps blood sugar and cravings.

What might help, but the evidence is small:

- Spearmint tea. A couple of small studies suggest drinking it twice a day may lower androgen levels in some women. The studies were small and short, so don't expect miracles. If you enjoy the taste, it's a harmless thing to try. If you have any condition or take medication, check first.
- Supplements like inositol. Some studies show promise for PCOS, but this is something to discuss with your doctor, not something to buy off a WhatsApp seller.

What is mostly hype:

- "Detox teas" and "slimming teas." Some contain laxatives and can make you feel awful.
- "Hormone balancing" powders that promise to "cure" PCOS in weeks.
- Any single food, like apple cider vinegar or one special herb, that claims to "melt" hair or fix hormones.
- Any seller who tells you to stop your prescribed medicine.

If someone is promising a miracle and asking for money, run.

Your Step Today

Here's what to do before the next chapter.

1. Pick **one** swap from the list above and make it this week. Just one.
2. Add a 10-minute walk after your biggest meal, three days this week.
3. Choose a bedtime and write it on a sticky note by your bed.
4. Do the 5-minute breathing exercise tonight.
5. Take a look at your week's food plan and tick which meals you could swap. Don't try to change everything at once.

You don't need to give up the food you love. You just need to arrange your plate so your body can breathe.

Be gentle with yourself. Perfection isn't the aim. Progress is.

Now, you've started calming your skin and feeding your body well. But there's still one important thing left: knowing exactly what to say when you finally sit across from a doctor, and what to say when your aunty, your friend, or even your boyfriend says something that stings. In the next chapter, I'll give you the exact questions, the tests worth asking for, and the words to use.

Honestly? This chapter took me years to figure out. You'll have it in minutes.

Chapter 6
The Doctor, The Aunties, and The Boyfriend

With your skin healing and your plate slowly changing, you've already handled so much on your own. However, there are three people left in this story, and each one can make you feel small if you let them. The doctor who rushes you. The aunties who say whatever comes to their mouths. And the person you love, who you've been hiding from.
Let's deal with all three.

Walking Into the Clinic Without Shrinking
Remember my first doctor? The one who looked at me for one minute and said, "Just lose weight"?
Here's what I learned from that visit. Doctors are often rushed. If you walk in nervous and vague, you walk out with a vague answer. But if you walk in with your notes, you change the whole conversation.
Remember the things you wrote down in Chapter 3? The Pattern Checklist, your last two period dates, your medicines, your family history? Bring all of it. And bring the photo of your chin from Chapter 4.
Now, who should you see? A general doctor is a good start. Depending on where you live and what's available, they may send you to a gynaecologist (a women's health doctor), an endocrinologist (a hormone doctor), or a dermatologist (a skin doctor). If you're in the UK, US, or Canada, you'd start with your GP or family doctor.

What to Say in the First Minute
Don't start with a long story. Start with a clear sentence, and say it before they've picked up their pen.
Here's the script I used. Change the words to sound like you.
"Doctor, I have dark hair growing on my chin and jaw that I've been removing for years. I'd like to find out if there's a hormonal cause. I've brought notes about my periods and my symptoms."
Then hand over your notes.
That one sentence tells the doctor three things: this is not a small complaint, you've been dealing with it for a long time, and you're serious. It's much harder to brush off a patient who comes prepared.

The Tests Worth Asking About

I'm not a doctor, so I can't tell you which tests you need. Your doctor decides that. But you're allowed to ask, "Would any blood tests or a scan be useful for me?"

Here are the things doctors commonly look at when someone has extra facial hair. Use this as a list of questions, not a shopping list.

Hormone blood tests, such as testosterone and other androgens. These help show whether your levels are high.

Blood sugar tests, such as fasting glucose or HbA1c(glycated hemoglobin) .These help check how your body handles sugar.

Thyroid test. The thyroid can affect periods and hormones.

Prolactin, another hormone that can affect periods.

A pelvic ultrasound, which looks at your ovaries.

Your doctor may order some of these, all of them, or others. Timing can matter for certain hormone tests, so ask when in your cycle you should go.

And here's something I want you to know. A normal result does not mean you're imagining it. Some women have normal tests and still grow hair, because their follicles are simply more sensitive. If your results are normal, you can say, "Thank you. What are the options for managing the hair itself?"

When the Doctor Brushes You Off

It might happen. It happened to me. Here's how I handled it the second time, and how you can too.

If they say, "It's just your genes," you can reply:

"I understand it may run in families. Can we still check my hormones, so we know for sure?"

If they say, "Just lose weight," you can say:

"I'm working on my health, and I'd like to understand if there's an underlying cause. Can we run some tests first?"

If they say, "It's only cosmetic," you can say:

"It's affecting my confidence and my daily life, and I'd like it taken seriously."

And if they still dismiss you? You're allowed to see someone else. Getting a second opinion is not rude. It's your body.

Quick tip: if you can, write down the doctor's answers in your notes, or ask, "Can you note in my file that I raised this concern?" Doctors tend to pay more attention when it's written down.

A Word to My Sisters Abroad

If you're reading this from the UK, US, or Canada, you may be dealing with something different: appointments that feel too short, or a doctor who doesn't seem to know how hair and skin issues look on Black women.

If that's you, book a longer appointment if the system allows it, and say in advance that you want to discuss hormonal symptoms. Ask for a referral to a specialist if you feel unheard. You can also look for a doctor or clinic that has experience with darker skin tones.

You are not being "difficult." You are being your own advocate.

When the Aunties Start Talking

Now let's move to the comments. You know the ones.

"Why do you have hair there?"

"You should marry quickly, before..."

"Are you taking something? Is it hormones?"

"A real woman doesn't have that."

I remember an aunty at a naming ceremony who looked straight at my chin, then at my face, and said loudly, "Kemi, have you not been to the salon?" Everyone heard. I felt my face burn. Back then, I laughed and said nothing. Now I know I have choices. Here are some responses you can use. Pick the ones that fit your personality.

If you want to shut it down calmly:

"Aunty, that's a private matter. How is your health these days?"

If you want to change the subject:

"Thank you for your concern. Please, tell me about the new house."

If you want to be honest and short:

"I'm seeing a doctor about it. Thank you."

If it was a rude public comment:

"I'd prefer we didn't talk about my body at the party."

If you're not in the mood at all:

Smile, say "Hmm," and walk away. You don't owe anyone an explanation.

Here's the secret: most people say these things out of habit, not malice. They don't realise how heavy it feels. You don't have to educate everybody. You just have to protect your peace.

The Conversation With the One You Love

This is the part many women fear most.

You've hidden this from him for months, maybe years. You wake up early to "fix" yourself. You avoid bright light. You turn your face away when he gets close.

And inside your head, you've built a whole movie. "If he sees, he'll leave. He'll find me disgusting."

I need you to hear me clearly: your fear is much louder than the reality. Most partners notice far less than you think, and care far less than you fear. Many say the same thing: "I wish you'd told me. I thought you were pulling away because of me."

When I finally told my partner, my hands were shaking. I rehearsed it five times in the mirror. In the end, I just said it plainly, and the world did not end.

Here's a gentle way to start. Pick a calm time, not an argument, not bedtime, not before an event.

"There's something I've felt shy about for a long time, and I want to share it with you. I've had hair growth on my chin that I've been hiding. I'm working on understanding it and taking care of my skin. I'm telling you because I don't want to keep hiding from you."

Then stop. Let them respond.

Most partners will say something kind. If someone responds with disgust or mockery, that tells you something important about them. That's not a reflection of your worth.

Also, if you don't have a partner right now, you can practise this same script with a close friend. Having one person who knows makes a huge difference.

Letting Yourself Be Seen in Daylight

Now, don't go from hidden to fully exposed in one day. We take small steps.

Here's the daylight ladder I used. Try it one step at a time, a few days apart.

1. Sit near a window at home, with natural light on your face, for 10 minutes.
2. Go out without makeup or a scarf for a short errand, like buying something at the corner shop.
3. Take a photo in natural light and don't delete it.
4. Let a trusted person see your face up close.
5. Spend an hour with your partner or a close friend in daylight, without adjusting your face once.

I can't describe the first time I did step five. At first my heart was racing. Then, about twenty minutes in, I realised I'd stopped checking. I'd forgotten.

That was the first morning of my life I didn't do the mirror check.

Your Step Today

We've come a long way and before we proceed to the final chapter, here's what you should do:

1. Write your first-minute script for the doctor in your own words, and save it on your phone.
2. Gather your notes in one place: Pattern Checklist, period dates, medicines, family history, and your photo.
3. Book the appointment. Do it today, even if it's for next month.
4. Pick two comebacks from the aunties' list and say them out loud once, so they feel natural.
5. If you're ready, choose one person to tell. If you're not ready, that's fine, just decide who it could be.

I want you to know that you are allowed to ask questions, to be taken seriously, and to stop hiding. The people who matter will meet you there.

You now have all the pieces: the understanding, the gentle routine, the food, the doctor script, and your voice. But pieces on their own can scatter. In the next chapter, I'm putting everything together into a simple 30-day plan, day by day, so you never have to wonder "what do I do today?" You'll also get your weekly routine and what to do when things don't go as planned. It's the part that turns all of this into a habit that lasts.

Chapter 7
Your 30-Day Plan, Day by Day

You now have all the pieces: the understanding, the gentle routine for your skin, the food, the doctor script, and words for the aunties. But pieces on their own can scatter. So here is everything in one place, one day at a time. All you have to do is open this chapter each morning and do what it says. Nothing more.

Before You Start

Take five minutes to set up. Do it tonight, or tomorrow morning before Day 1.

Find the numbers you wrote down in Chapter 1: how many times you check your chin, how much time you spend on removal, and how much money you spend each month. Keep that paper close. We'll look at it again on Day 30.

Make sure your photo from Chapter 4 is saved on your phone.

Have your cleanser, plain moisturiser, and sunscreen ready.

Pick a small notebook or a notes app on your phone. It's just for quick notes to yourself, nothing fancy.

Don't wait for the "perfect Monday." Start the day you read this.

Week 1: Calm and Understand

This week is about stopping the damage and learning your own pattern. It's the gentlest week, and the most important.

Day 1: Start the 48-hour reset. No razor, no thread, no tweezers, no wax, no cream. Wash gently, moisturise, and wear sunscreen. If you can, cover your chin with a scarf or mask for these two days. Take your photo if you haven't yet.

Day 2: Continue the reset. When your hand goes to your chin, give it a job. Tonight, tick your Pattern Checklist honestly and write down your number.

Day 3: Write down the dates of your last two periods, any medicines or contraceptives you use, and any family history you know of. Put it all in one place.

Day 4: Do a patch test on any new product you plan to use. If you have none, skip this and just keep your skin calm. Check how your skin feels. If it's calm, you're ready for the next step. If it's still sore, extend the reset another day or two.

Day 5: Book your doctor's appointment. Do it today, even if the date is weeks away. Save your first-minute script on your phone.

Day 6: Make your first food swap. Just one. Smaller swallow, bigger soup, or oats instead of white bread. Take a 10-minute walk after your biggest meal.
Day 7: Rest and review. Open your notes and write a few lines about how you feel. How many times did you check the mirror this week? Is your skin calmer? Be kind to yourself. If you slipped on a day, that's okay. Just continue tomorrow.

Week 2: Heal and Shave Gently
Now your skin has had a break. This week, we bring removal back in, the gentle way.
Day 8: If your skin is calm, choose your removal method. If you're shaving, use the steps from Chapter 4: lukewarm water, clean sharp razor, shaving gel, go with the grain, light strokes, one pass. If your skin is still irritated, wait.
Day 9: No removal today, even if you feel the shadow. Give your skin a rest day. Moisturise and use sunscreen.
Day 10: Add a second food swap. Maybe zobo with less sugar instead of a soft drink, or groundnuts instead of biscuits.
Day 11: Do your 5-minute breathing exercise, in the morning and again before bed. In for 4 counts, out for 6.
Day 12: Gentle shave again if you need it, using the same steps. Remember, don't pick or squeeze any bumps. Warm cloth only.
Day 13: Pick your bedtime and protect it. Phone away 30 minutes before sleep, or 15 if 30 is too hard right now.
Day 14: Weekly check-in. Write a few lines in your notes: how your skin looks, any new bumps or marks, how often you checked the mirror, and how you're sleeping. Look at your meals this week. Which swaps stuck?

Week 3: Feed and Strengthen
This week, food, sleep, and stress take centre stage.
Day 15: Try Day 1 of the 7-day meal plan from Chapter 5, or a version of it that suits your budget. Protein and vegetables first, starch after.
Day 16: Continue the plan, and take your 10-minute walk after your biggest meal.
Day 17: Do your gentle removal if needed. Keep the same routine. Check your skin for bumps.
Day 18: Take 10 minutes of quiet. Pray, meditate, or just sit without your phone.
Day 19: Say no to one thing you don't have the energy or money for. One invite, one request, one unnecessary group chat.

Day 20: Do the first two steps of the daylight ladder. Sit near a window with natural light on your face for 10 minutes, then go out for a short errand without covering up.
Day 21: Weekly check-in. Compare how you feel now to Day 1. Are your cravings changing? Is your energy different? Is your skin calmer? Write it down, even if the changes are small.

Week 4: Speak Up and Lock It In
Now we turn this into something that lasts.
Day 22: Go back to your doctor script. Read it aloud once, and do the same for two of the comebacks for the aunties.
Day 23: Take another photo of your chin in natural light, in the same spot as before. Don't compare yet. Just save it.
Day 24: Continue your food and sleep habits. If you've been following them, you probably barely think about them now. That's the goal.
Day 25: Take steps three and four of the daylight ladder: take a photo in natural light and don't delete it, and let a trusted person see your face up close.
Day 26: Gentle removal if needed. Notice how much less time it takes now compared to Day 1.
Day 27: If your doctor appointment is coming up, prepare your notes. If it's already passed, write down what the doctor said, what tests they ordered, and what the next steps are.
Day 28: Choose one person to tell, if you haven't already, using the script from Chapter 6. If you're not ready, that's fine. Just decide who it might be.
Day 29: Do the final step of the daylight ladder if you're ready: spend an hour in natural light with someone close, without adjusting your face once.
Day 30: Look at the paper from Chapter 1. How many times did you check your chin this week? How much time are you spending on removal now? How much money? Compare your two photos, Day 1 and Day 30. Write down how you feel.
Please be fair to yourself. Don't expect your hair to be gone. What you're looking for are the other changes: calmer skin, fewer marks, less time, fewer checks, a clearer head, and maybe the first small feeling of freedom.

Your Weekly Routine After Day 30

Once the 30 days are done, you don't need a full plan anymore. Here's a simple weekly routine that takes very little time.

Every day:

- Gentle wash, moisturise, and sunscreen in the morning
- A moisturiser at night
- A walk after your biggest meal when you can
- Two or three times a week:
- Gentle removal, only if you need it, using the steps from Chapter 4
- A food swap or two from your favourite list

Once a week (pick a quiet time, like Sunday evening):

- Take five minutes to check your skin for bumps or marks
- Jot a line or two in your notes about how you're feeling
- Plan your meals for the week
- Do one thing that calms you

Once a month:

- Take a photo in natural light, in the same spot and the same way. Compare it with last month's, not yesterday's. Healing is slow, and a daily mirror hides the progress that a monthly photo shows.

That's the whole routine. It's not complicated, and it doesn't take over your life.

When Things Don't Go as Planned

Let me be honest. You will have bad days. I still do.

Maybe you'll pluck a hair in a panic. Maybe you'll eat a whole plate of fried rice and plantain and feel guilty. Maybe you'll forget sunscreen for a week. Maybe an aunty will say something that stings, and you'll go back to hiding for a day.

That is normal. It doesn't undo your progress. The only thing that undoes progress is giving up.

If you slip, don't wait for next Monday. Just do the next small thing, right now. Wash your face. Drink some water. Take a walk. Start from there.

When to Adjust, and When to Re-Test

Here's how to know when something needs to change.

If your skin is still sore or bumpy after 4 weeks of gentle care, talk to a pharmacist or a skin doctor. You may need a different product or treatment.

If your dark marks haven't started fading after 8 to 12 weeks of sunscreen and no picking, ask a dermatologist about options that are safe for your skin tone.

If your hair growth speeds up, spreads, or new symptoms appear, such as your periods stopping, sudden acne, or any of the red flags from Chapter 3, go back to your doctor soon. Don't wait for the next planned visit.

If your doctor started a treatment, follow their schedule for check-ups and repeat tests. Ask how long to give it before you expect to see a difference. Hormone-related changes usually take months, not weeks.

If you're thinking about laser or electrolysis, go back to the salon questions in Chapter 4, and talk to your doctor first. If there's a hormonal cause, treating it may change what you need. Please don't stop any prescribed medicine on your own, and don't add supplements without checking first.

Your Step Today

1. If you haven't started yet, begin Day 1 today.
2. If you've finished the 30 days, write your first weekly check-in in your notes.
3. Put a reminder on your phone for your weekly check-in, and for any doctor's appointment.
4. Look at the Day 1 and Day 30 photos side by side. Notice anything, even if it's small.
5. Tell yourself one kind thing about the woman in those photos.

So if you take nothing else from this chapter, remember this: perfection over these 30 days isn't the goal. What matters is simply returning to the journey whenever you fall off.

You've now got the plan, the tools, and the words. There's only one thing left to talk about, and it's the part I think about most. It's about the morning you wake up and realise you didn't check. I want to tell you what that morning looked like for me, and what I hope it looks like for you. Come, let's finish this properly.

Conclusion
The Morning You Stop Checking

Look at you now, my sister. You made it through thirty whole days of gentle progress. Perhaps you stayed on track each morning, or maybe you missed a couple of beats before finding your footing again. Either way, you're here, and that matters more than you know.

Now, let me share the story of a morning that quietly changed everything, one I never even expected to hold onto.

The Morning I Forgot

There was nothing extraordinary about that morning. No big celebration, no camera flash, no grand occasion on my calendar.

I simply stepped out of bed, brewed a warm cup of tea, and leaned back near the window with my phone. I scrolled through my chats and replied to a couple. By the time I took another sip, the tea had already cooled down while my mind drifted elsewhere.

Then, right around afternoon time, a sudden thought hit me. My hand hadn't gone to my jaw a single time. Not once. No checking in the rearview mirror while sitting in traffic. No leaning close under the bright restroom bulb. The whole thing hadn't even crossed my mind.

I sat right there holding my lukewarm mug, and tears just filled my eyes. Not tears of sorrow, my sister. The good kind.

For so long, that quick mirror routine was second nature, like taking a breath. Yet that single morning, without making any grand fuss, the heavy weight just lifted away.

I am not sharing this to guarantee you will experience that exact moment right on Day 31. Our paths do not move at the same pace, my sister. Yours might arrive sooner, or it might take a bit more time. You may still encounter tricky days ahead, and there is no shame in that.

I share this simply so you hold the quiet certainty that such a morning is waiting for you.

Look at How Far You've Come

Let us pause together, my sister, and glance backward, much like standing atop a high hill to view how far we have traveled.

Remember where this all began? Your hands were reaching up to your jaw constantly. Your hard-earned money and precious hours were going into harsh tools that only left your skin angry and scarred. Inside, you carried the heavy lie that your body was somehow flawed, while quietly shielding yourself from the very ones who love you.

Now look at what you know.

You know why chin hair grows. You know it's often a message from your body and not a flaw in you. You know how to stop damaging your skin and let it heal. You know how to choose a removal method with your eyes open. You know how to arrange your plate, your sleep, and your stress so your body can breathe. You know what to say to a doctor, to the aunties, and to the person you love.

That's not small. That's a whole new way of dealing with something that used to rule you.

Go back to the paper from Chapter 1. Look at the numbers. Then look at your photos from Day 1 and Day 30. Whatever has changed, even a little, you made that change.

What Changes When You Stop Hiding

Here's what I've noticed, in myself and in the women I've talked to.

When you stop hiding, you get your time back. Those minutes in front of the mirror add up to hours, and those hours can go to the things you love.

You get your money back. Fewer creams that burn. Fewer wasted salon trips. More money for things that actually help you.

You get your attention back. When your mind isn't busy guarding your chin, it can listen to the conversation you're in. It can notice the person in front of you.

And you get your closeness back. The hardest thing about hiding is that it keeps people at arm's length. When you let someone see you, really see you, the distance disappears.

It's not that the hair stops mattering overnight. It's that it stops being the boss of your day.

If You Still Have Hard Days

Let me say this plainly, because I don't want you to feel like you failed if you still have bad days.

You might have a morning when the old fear comes back. You might catch yourself checking the mirror again. You might hear a comment that stings.

That doesn't mean you've gone back to the start. You're not starting from zero. You now have tools, words, and knowledge you didn't have before.

On those days, be gentle. Wash your face. Moisturise. Put on your sunscreen. Take a walk. Breathe in for four, out for six. Remind yourself of what you know, and carry on.

And please remember the doctor. If things change, if you're worried, or if you want answers, go back and ask. You are allowed to keep asking until someone listens.

A Note From Me to You

My dear sister, I've been thinking about you the whole time I wrote this.

I thought about you in your car, with the small mirror pulled down. I thought about you in a bright bathroom at someone else's house, leaning in close. I thought about you at a party, with your hand on your chin, smiling like nothing was wrong.

I wanted to reach through the page and tell you what I wish someone had told me: you are not alone, you are not strange, and you are not less of a woman. You never were.

Your body is not your enemy. It's been trying to tell you something, and now you're finally listening.

Be patient with yourself. Be proud of yourself. And when you're ready, let someone see you in the daylight. I think you'll be surprised by how gently the world holds you.

With love and warm wishes,

Kemi Rose