The Hairbrush Grades 9-10

Before I can even remember, I was obsessed with my appearance. At the ripe age of eight, my nails were painted bright, luscious red, my hair was combed, and my clothes were clean as a whistle. When the third grade came around, I had encountered my first mean girl. “Why do you look like that?” She would sneer, all while biting into her golden delicious apple, her hot pink nail polish always chipped. I thought to myself, “Who let her go out looking like that?” With her greasy hair hanging low down her back, her jean shorts way too high, and her belly sticking out of her shirt.

Whenever I had finally made it to middle school, I discovered makeup. I thought I was absolutely gorgeous as I rubbed it all over my face, hoping I ended up looking like a beauty queen. Instead, the end result had me looking like a drag queen, but I did not care, I felt beautiful. That feeling was enough for me to strut down the halls acting like I owned them. Although one thing was missing from my beauty brigade. I needed my hair done.

I tore through magazines, skipping over the hot gossip I could not even understand, clear to the back page. I worshipped those models like they were God himself. I wanted to look just like them, I wanted to be them. The things I would have given to be called “gorgeous” as I walked down the street, or out to the playground in my situation.

My bright, red hair was suddenly plain to me. I needed to have that beautiful, blonde hair that I envied. I needed to feel beautiful again. Not only was my hair that stupid red but, it was straight. Those models had beautiful, curly hair, and I needed those curls.

I jogged to my bathroom and dug through my vanity drawers, smiling like a mad man when I had fished out my round hairbrush. This was not just any hairbrush, no this piece of plastic, was utter torture. It was bright purple with a black handle, and bristles that felt like they were made of nails. There was a reason why it was always shoved in the back of the drawer.

I had researched the proper way to have natural, bouncy curls, but I had no idea how to start the oven, how could I possibly use a heat styling tool? Nonetheless, I picked up my trusty hairbrush and got down to business.

In all of the magazines I had read, and the videos I had watched, the instructions seemed simple. Roll your wet hair in the hairbrush and blow dry. That seemed easy enough.

I took a quick shower, too excited to notice that I did not use conditioner. As soon as I was done, I was ready for my bouncy curls. I wrapped my now wet hair around the hairbrush. It said to roll it, right? Or did it say to comb it through? Oh well, I am sure it would turn out fine.

Until, it didn’t. The hairbrush, wound so tight it was touching my scalp, was not moving an inch. I began yanking violently thinking that would free the hairbrush from my tightly wound hair. Starting to tear up from utter panic, I started trying to untwist the tangled strands from the brush.

I ran as fast as my neatly painted toes would carry me, straight to my sister, thinking she could give some justice to the situation. She voiced her disdain at my sudden appearance in her room, my fear written all over my face. “It’s stuck!” I yelled, “Elena, it’s stuck!”

She came barreling towards me, throwing a few insults at the fact that I had disturbed her, but at that moment, my focus was on the horrid piece of plastic stuck in my hair. “Look what you did, Carmen, how are we going to fix this?” She began trying to unravel the bird's nest that was supposed to be my “stunning” hair. We both knew it was too late to fix it. We had to get back up,

we had to tell the giver of nightmares, the one who shall not be named, the one - well you get the point. We had to tell dad.

With so much adrenaline and fear flooding through me, I am surprised I did not throw up, as I ran to his room. Praying to God that this rat nest atop my head could be saved. “Dad, please help, I got it stuck, it won’t move!” I cried, grabbing his arm, begging, praying, he wouldn’t be too upset.

“Carmen, what have you done?” He sighed, his hands grazing my new “hairdo” with fever, trying to come up with a plan to save my precious hair. “Come on, we’ll fix it.” He dragged me to the bathroom, the mess on my head looking even worse in the light.

He began pulling out combs, picks, anything that could help this monstrosity. As he began picking out piece by piece, the first comb broke. Followed by a second, and then a third. With each comb breaking, I began to lose hope. Until, he pulled out something from my nightmares.

Scissors.

I watched as my hair began to fall, along with my tears, touching the cool, tiled floor. I suddenly began to grasp this new concept, that beauty was work. Too much work. As soon as he was done, I grasped the mirror in horror. A new chunk of missing hair had replaced the hairbrush. I thought my life was officially over. This is where it would end, surrounded by my poor hair and broken pieces of comb. Except, it wasn’t. This was something I could make it through.

So, I combed what was left of my hair, and tucked myself into bed. The hair on my head was not a problem, because I still felt beautiful on the inside.