

CORINA'S HAIR GOES WILD

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CORINA WANTED LONG, straight hair. The night before her birthday, she hopped into bed, closed her eyes and made a wish.

As soon as she woke up the next morning, Corina leapt up and landed in front of the mirror.

"Uh-oh!" she said. Corina's hair wasn't short any more. It was long, but still curly . . . and growing upwards instead of down.

She raced outside into the yard. Dad was in his usual position at this time of the morning: hanging upside down off the clothes line.

"What happened to you?" Dad asked. Corina explained.

"OK, let's see what we can do about it. Out of the way," he said, and executed a perfect dismount.

"Right, sit down here while I get a brush and a tape measure," said Dad. He dashed into the house and was back in a flash.

"Now be very still," he said. Dad got to work. He brushed the hair upwards and downwards; tugged it to the left and then to the right; he pushed it and he pulled it; he yanked it this way and that . . .

But Corina's hair wasn't any better. In fact it was worse.

Dad's brow furrowed. His eyebrows were almost touching and the corners of his mouth pointed directly towards the ground. He whipped out the tape measure and checked the length of the hair.

"Well, Corina, it's time to call the Aunties," said Dad grimly.

Corina looked at her father with wide eyes. Her hair had become An Official Family Crisis.

As soon as Dad got off the phone they heard a rumbling noise coming down the street. It got louder and louder and suddenly — *crash!* Aunties Stella, Lenia and Georgia stampeded through the door with Zeus the Great Dane.



The Aunties surrounded her and started circling, staring intensely, inspecting her sternly from all sides.

"You say you wished for long, long hair?" asked Auntie Lenia.

Corina nodded.

"And you didn't add that you wanted it straight too?" asked Auntie Stella.

Corina lowered her eyes and gulped. "No," she squeaked.

"Then this hair is not going anywhere but *up*," said Auntie Georgia. "Ladies, it's time for Operation Big Hair."

They unpacked the Extra-Super-Duper, High Potency, Emergency Hair Wish Un-Wishing Kit, and within minutes they were ready to go.

"First the Full Fat Chocolate Fudge Sauce," said Auntie Georgia.

Auntie Stella gooped it on Corina's hair, and slopped it around until there was an even spread over the steadily rising hair.

"Now for the Extra Sweet Runny Honey," said Auntie Georgia.

Auntie Lenia glopped on some sticky blobs and rubbed it into Corina's scalp.

"And the Unbelievably Crunchy Munchy Peanut Butter," said Auntie Georgia.

Auntie Stella added gooey dollops to Corina's ever-expanding hair while Auntie Lenia kneaded it all together into an enormous mound of mush. The mixture trickled onto Corina's face and into her ears.

Zeus the Great Dane was looking at her strangely.

"What's the matter, boy?" Corina asked nervously.

A drop of saliva fell from the corner of Zeus' mouth.

"Please hurry and take it off!" Corina wailed.

The Aunties began to rinse and dry at full speed.

Dad crossed his fingers and toes. And his eyes (but just a little bit).

"The hair is so shiny, and more radiant than it has ever been," said Auntie Stella.

"I've never seen such glossy hair — and so easy to style!" said Auntie Lenia.

"Yes, but it's *still* growing up instead of down," said Auntie Georgia. "Anyways it doesn't matter which way it's growing — it's just growing!"

Something had to be done soon before Corina's hair took over the world.

Dad got out the tape measure.

"Good grief! It's already two metres tall!" he said. He paced around the kitchen seven and a half times.

"I've got it!" he said, grabbing Corina's hand.

In two seconds, Corina and Dad were in the car. Dad slammed his foot on the accelerator and they tore off down the street. Mostly they used all four wheels, but on some corners they just used two as they hooned towards town.

The car finally screeched to a halt outside a carpenter's workshop, and they jumped out. They raced inside and explained their predicament.

"No problem!" said the carpenter. "I'll just saw it off." Corina scrunched up her eyes while the carpenter went to work. But the more she sawed, the faster it grew and soon they were both buried in hair.





Dad dragged Corina to her school.

“Stop growing upwards right this minute!” ordered the school principal. But the hair just kept growing.

They flew down the street to see Mr Zappit at his store, *Electrocutions Are Us*.

“It’s nothing a few hundred volts can’t fix,” he said confidently.

But Corina’s hair deflected the charge of electricity and Mr Zappit’s hair stood up on end instead. And promptly fell out. Corina and Dad made a quick exit.

On the way to the car, a police officer stopped them. “We’ve been having complaints about your hair, young lady. You’re in violation of Code Four-Two-Two of the Public Hair Safety Act. Your hair is a security risk and I’m declaring it a danger zone. I must ask you to stay in your residence until you find a cure.”

Back at home, Corina plonked herself down in the middle of the sofa. With the giant halo of indestructible, gravity-defying hair, there was no room for Dad, so he went outside to hang upside down off the clothes line some more.

All of a sudden, Corina felt lighter and found it hard to keep her feet on the ground. She let out a sigh as she drifted towards the ceiling. Things were going from bad to worse — no one could fix her hair and now she had to levitate instead of walk. Corina floated off to her room to do some serious thinking.

I guess short, curly hair isn’t so bad. And nowhere near as bad as this, she thought, looking at herself in the mirror. She made a decision. She was going to reason with it. She took a deep breath.

“Hair, I didn’t mean to offend you! I admit that I didn’t like the way you looked and I wanted something different. But I promise to learn to be happy with my natural hair. So, won’t you please please please *pleeease* go back to the way you were?”

Suddenly, Corina found herself lying flat on the ground. She stood up — what was going on? She turned to face the mirror. First she stared, then she smiled.

“I can’t believe it,” said Corina as she ran her fingers through her short, curly hair. “After all that, all I had to do was ask nicely!”