

## WHAT'S IN A STRAND OF HAIR?

What's in a strand of hair?...

Is it the smell of innocence on crowned glory, the first wisp or cow's lick?

The tiny little curl that Mummy has kept in her memory box, from day dot, the swirl that surrounds the pink spot, the Gypsy braid that he wore with pride at the back of his unkempt hair, all spreads of hazelnut, mousey brown or fayre,  
From the deep red fires of freedom falling, the Scottish bloods that fuelled the rivers, the callings, the pride, the twisted coils of ginger, auburn and orange, as it flowed from head to toe, alongside their kilts their hair was mourning, crying for the right to speak as a Freeman, a free woman, a free person belonging, their hair, our hair, forever growing.

Can it be said that these traits are passed on, from woman to bairn to friends that are gone, shared tips and tricks from old wive's tales, or Witch, the length of their hair could only offer a stitch, in time, a moment of ignorance,  
where thick maines of haggard split ends were a sign of their admission, and now we celebrate in mockery with Pagan tradition, cauldrons and spells, you never could tell, that these long haired women were tortured and fell.

I breathe a gasp when i think of the legends, the sacrifices, the demons that followed their beckon, secret passages and forbidden escape routes, beautifully drawn in their nappy haired roots, torn clothes and bare foot, running for air and blessings just to get out, their master had no clue their meticulous intentions, because all *they* could see was dirty infestations, but all *I* can see is my ancestors patience, the journey that they were all facing,

with their back towards their bondage and their melanin strong with aspiration, fashionable and trendy we are now as a nation, but my mothers that came before me had only vaseline and their imagination, armed with a comb they sculpted a masterpiece, tucking their fingers under, one, two and three, follicles rooted deep like a tree, sat on the floor between mothers legs i felt comfort albeit brief,, at peace with the world a steady heartbeat, we'd laugh we'd sing ...and we'd share our grief..

The ages have come and gone and we find ourselves grey, our wisdom is thankful for giving us this day, still, we are here,

our locks show every laugh, every smile, every tear, pure in beauty no matter the wrinkles, our maine is the *main* reason why our eyes still twinkle,

Of daisies and daffodils I'm particularly fond, oh I wish I had as much fun as a blonde, warm yellow tones that comfort the soul, caresses my youth and makes me feel tall, ditsy and naive are the fundamental factors, if I were to pretend that life didn't allow practice, we all know it's not true and the tone is immaterial, *one's* brain is not their maine although the colour is imperial.

A message to all the strands that made their way into a bowl, a plate of pasta, a bed of salad, I feel for your poor wee soul, whoever you belonged to I'm sure they didn't part, with any type of kindness for you, they surely didn't ask, and I know the receiver did not welcome your presence as they stuffed their open mouth, to find you staring up at them with blame and shame and doubt, how dare they accuse you of disgust and disease, they have no clue of your heritage, for all they know you could be special, a rare, antique vintage,

Scattered families lay cut on the floor of a Butcher's/Barber's shop, scattered and discarded its terribly disheartening all for the sake of a crop, on the other side of the world the virgin hair is silkened, precious gold in the hands of vanity sewn and threaded for extensions, the finest Asian, Malaysian, Brazillian weaves, no longer their own roots, they've cut down their trees, why maintain when you can obtain the best hair for the least fees, don't get me wrong i don't disagree, with changing your natural threads,

After all the seventies made way for punk and colour, dreads and shea butter, perms and chemicals, all different shades and styles to the unknown, the mullet the shag,

Straight back and sleek and the all forgiving brow skimming bangs,

We've lived it all and we've laughed about how it has stripped us bare, so let me ask you the question,

"What's in a strand of hair?"