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PERSONAL AND SALON UPDATES

The fall is well underway, and the holiday season is upon us. On a personal note, October and November have been pretty busy months for me. Because I have been working six days a week for 17 years, I have decided to reserve at least one weekend for myself each month, possibly two where feasible. So, I took one weekend in October to go up to the mountains and another to celebrate my birthday. I had a great time with family that Halloween weekend! In November, I've been traveling a lot for UNC. So while I was away from the salon this past weekend, I was still working--though I find all of my work enjoyable. The wonderful coincidence of my recent first time trip to New Orleans was that my son had planned a first time trip to the city for the exact same weekend that we were there. We found out about the happy serendipity during my birthday luncheon. So, we met him for lunch on Saturday, Nov. 12th when he took a break from his crew. And in a final stroke of serendipity, we were all on the same return flight to Raleigh

ALOPECIA SERIES: NATURAL WEAVE

As discussed in the summer issue of Au Naturel, I am dedicating a few newsletter editions to the subject of alopecia. I've spent a considerable amount of time on this subject in the past. But there's always a new spin on an old issue. In the last edition, I highlighted ways to camouflage thinning hair with textured curls to add volume. For this edition, the alopecia challenge is crown baldness. The client pictured below came to us after receiving platelet-rich plasma (PRP) injections at Dr. Jeffrey Scales practice—the NC Center for Dermatology in Durham. Her co-worker recommended her to me so I did a consultation and then proposed an action plan. The main issue for this client is that her baldness has been treated and she is waiting to see if the treatments will be effective. So I wanted to propose a style that would: give the treated area “room to breathe,” work with the client's natural hair which is a lovely texture, length and is in relatively good condition; and prevent undue stress on the hair roots to avoid creating or

from ATL on Nov. 13th. Sometimes, the universe lines up. Years ago, we planned a trip to the Beech Mountain only to discover that this same son had planned a trip on a neighboring mountain the same weekend. I guess we just love each other and are connected like that. 😊

This year, for the first time that I can remember, I'll be out of the country for Christmas. We're taking an escapade to Mexico. I was truly fascinated by our visit to the pyramids of Egypt five years ago so I've decided to visit the North American variety right in our national backyard. I must confess that my husband is trying to figure out why I've scheduled so many trips for us. But honestly, we couldn't afford to go ANYWHERE when our kids were in school and university. Now, I'm making up for lost time. The pandemic has taught me the principal of "carpe diem" so I intend to do just that! If I live long enough, the day will come when I am no longer fit and nimble enough to travel far and wide. So, I intend to see all that I want to see before that day arrives, Lord willing. Within the salon between now and December, everyone will be prepping for the holidays. We're having a private holiday party for our most loyal customers to show our appreciation. I'm really looking forward to the celebration. So with that, it is my aim and ambition to deliver the next newsletter some time between the holiday party and my travels. But if I miss the mark, I'll see on the flip side of 2023!

exacerbating harm. The client is ready and willing to wear her natural hair and I am all too eager to oblige. So, based on her texture, length and curl pattern, I proposed that we do a two-strand twist with her natural hair and that I add twists into her hair in the region of baldness. She agreed so I got to work.



First, I began a regular twist service in the rear of the client's hair working my way up. As I approached the balding area, I sectioned about an inch wide perimeter around the bald spot to cover the area with the client's own hair surrounding the patch. I did so by creatively weaving her hair into a checkered pattern. (Note: The use of the word 'weave' should be taken lightly because I only used braiding and or twisting on the



ALOPECIA CORNER: WHAT IS CCCA?

Over the years, I have recommended Dr. Scales to many clients for the treatment of hair and scalp ailments. In a recent visit to his office for microdermabrasion, I found a flyer on alopecia called “Hair Loss CCCA: Central Centrifugal Cicatricial Alopecia (CCCA).” Well, I’ve read cosmetology books and taught natural hair care class, and I had never heard of CCCA. So naturally, I read the flyer and kept it for research purposes. My interest was primarily peaked because it identified the condition as a “common complaint among African American women.” Further research shows that the condition was first observed in Black women in the 1950s and is the most common form of hair scarring in our community (the cicatricial reference indicates scarring).¹ While the exact cause of the condition is not determined, it is believed to stem from hair care practices, like relaxers, tight braids and weaves. I mention this condition, in particular, because it looks very similar to my client’s photos above. Other photos of the condition can be found [here](#). Because of the central and centrifugal nature of the condition, I personally don’t believe it is caused by braids, though I am sure that it can be exacerbated by a poor, overly tight installation. Instead, I think it is more likely a factor of chemical scarring and hair texture. Bacterial and fungal infections have also been theorized as the culprit. So, if you have itching, burning, tenderness, redness, scaling or pustules in an area of the scalp that where your hair is thinning, see a dermatologist immediately. The condition is best detected early!

client’s hair.) I had extra Nubian twist hair from prior services which I used to fill in the area. Because I didn’t know prior to the consultation what the client’s need would be, I used what I had. But there is Afro Kinky hair on the market which is a closer match to the client’s texture than Nubian twist hair. Once the checkered foundation was established, I latch hooked² the Nubian twist hair onto the foundation and twisted the strands as if they were the client’s own hair. The primary indication one has that the hair is not the client’s own is that 4C hair in its natural state is matte finish while the added hair is a bit shiny. But because the hair is in the rear, it is not readily noticeable. After filling in the foundation, I twisted the client’s remaining loose hair at the sides and front. This client’s own hair frames her face beautifully and is quite an attractive look. The natural twists are approximately the same size and length as the added hair so it would take some real sleuthing to figure out precisely what is going on here. And even if the twists in the bald area fall to the side, the bald spot is not detectable. The installation is intended to be seamless.

Afterwards, I laughed when she looked in a mirror in reverse to see the back and top of her head and replied, “YOU WORK MIRACLES TOO!!” 😊 No miracles, just Black girl magic. That’s what we do. There are no special gifts above and beyond the average sister’s hair skills. But where there’s love and care for your client, creativity abounds. Embrace the beauty of you

Embrace the beauty of you.



¹ Wikipedia

² Some in the field call this technique “crochet” but I assure you the technique is latch hooking and NOT crochet.