

No Longer Brave: Anna Ceguerra

It all started with a haircut. “There’s nothing like a new hairdo to give one more confidence,” Karen announced after noticing I looked a little down. Karen was known to deliver terrible advice, but my depression had gotten the better of me and I needed change.

“What do you want?” My hairdresser asked after I’d taken a seat on his fading leather chair. I still wasn’t sure. “More confidence?” I offered.

“Ah, I have just the thing. One moment.” Tony rushed to the back of his salon, and returned with what appeared to be typical hairdressing equipment: scissors, a styling brush... the lot. I shrugged internally. *He must say that to all of his clients.*

Tony turned the chair around so I no longer faced the mirror. The lack of oversight concerned me. “You know what leads to more confidence? Bravery.” And with that he began, mindlessly chatting about how he had given his ex-wife a haircut that changed their lives forever. I chewed on the use of ‘ex’ but bit my tongue.

When he eventually turned me back around, I felt... nothing.

“Well, what do you think?”

“I don’t feel more confident...” I confided. “Actually, I don’t feel anything at all.”

He nodded assuredly. “It’s okay, you’ll notice the change after 24 hours. Now don’t wash your hair until tomorrow morning, so the confidence sets in properly.” He winked at me, then took off my cape with a flourish.

The bus home was largely uneventful, until a pregnant woman and her screaming child stepped on. I got ready to bite my tongue after noticing an oblivious couple on the priority seat close to me, but the slippery muscle took on a mind of its own.

“Excuse me,” I gently interrupted. “Could you please make room for this lady and her child?” They awoke from their enamoured slumber, then looked around. “Oh! Yes, of course!” The woman’s gratitude was palpable.

Wow, this confidence haircut is really good, I thought.

Something had blossomed within me. I no longer felt fear, like a little rabbit in the wide world. I didn’t have to feel brave to overcome my fear. Instead, I felt formidable.

I decided to test it out. I picked up the phone and dialled a number I hadn’t entered in 10 years. My father’s. A woman picked up.

“Hello?”

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Edited by Adam Guetti