

Appeasement

by John Wentworth Chapin

This is what they say about my hair: Brillo. Jew-fro. Nigger wool. Seriously, people: *nigger wool*.

Nice, right? Buncha fuckin low-lifes, right? No, I'm not at the junior high bus stop. I'm at the dining room table with my *parents*. My unwieldy hair embarrasses them. That my dad is technically a Jew, even though he's Methodist, isn't even an unhappy irony. To them, it's irrelevant. I disafuckingree.

My cousin Theresa, who I haven't been able to look in the eye since the incident in fifth grade with my unwilling shriveled cock and her fingernail polish, is getting married Saturday, and I'm supposed to look nice, get my hair cut. Look nice? I don't wanna even fucking *go*, much less look nice.

I flinch, and my mother rolls her eyes. I say, "You can't call yourself a hippie and use the N word, Mom, for fuck's sake."

"You call yourself a hippie, Denise?" my dad asks. I'm pretty sure he's stoned.

"Niggerniggerniggerniggerniggerniggernigger," she says. I'm sure she's drunk. I snap.

"OKAY!" I shout over her mantra. "I will get my hair cut before the wedding." This appeases them.

I will get it cut, and it will look nice for a brief moment in time... And then, dressed in my suit, I will hack it all off with nail clippers in the church bathroom and then walk into the sanctuary and take my spot amongst the groomsmen and watch my mother and Theresa squirm.

