

# There's a Pube in My Coffee

*by Nathaniel Tower*

"There's a hair in my coffee," he said to the black liquid. The liquid's only answer was the emission of rising steam waves that danced and disappeared before reaching the man's smooth face.

"There's a hair in my coffee," he mumbled repeatedly to no one in particular as he rose from the table, his hands tightly clasped around the cup, and approached the counter. The cup did not care that the man held the cup so tightly, nor did it care that a thin layer of dirt had caked itself inside the man's fingerprints. In fact, the cup did not even care that there was a hair inside. The liquid seemed not to care either.

Connor Henson had made it a daily routine to leisurely drink a cup of hot coffee, black of course, before arriving at the nearby University where he worked in the prestigious library performing janitorial duties. A hair was not part of his daily routine.

Connor didn't bother to wait in the line of busy professionals, opting to cut in front of the sign that announced "Line Forms At Other End."

Without being acknowledged, Connor confronted the green hat and apron that worked behind the counter. "There's a hair in my coffee," he muttered to the green apron. A brightly decorated badge with the word "Wes" hung near the top of the apron. Neither the apron nor the tag responded to the comment.

"I'm sorry sir, but you'll have to wait in line. These people are in a hurry to get to work," came a voice above the tag and apron.

"But there is a hair in my coffee," Connor repeated, this time projecting his hoarse voice at the person rather than the apron.

Wes removed his green cap to show a very close buzz cut of red hair. "Well, sir, I made your cup and can assure you the hair is not mine." Wes placed the cap back atop his head and said, "Next."

"I'd like a—"

"Well, it surely isn't my hair," Connor interrupted.

"And how can you be sure?" the suit standing by the counter asked, clearly annoyed by the unwanted delay to his obviously important job.

"Because I have alopecia," Connor said to the man's red tie.

"That sure is a nice head of hair you've got there."

"It's a wig, asshole."

"Well, wigs can sometimes lose hair. My dad had a wig once."

"It's a pubic hair."

Three people, two in suits, immediately got out of line, stormed out the door and stumbled to their cars like zombies.

"How could a pubic hair possibly get in your coffee?" Wes asked in a whisper of disbelief and denial.

"I need to see your manager now," Connor barked halfway between his two opponents.

"I am the manager," Wes said defensively, shocked that someone would think of him as just a lowly counter-jockey at a coffee chain. "I'll tell you what. I'll give you a new cup."

"I don't want your pube juice."

A few customers chuckled. Several more checked their watches. Even more headed for the door with their daily dose.

"Then I can issue you a refund."

"You've wasted my time, insulted my medical condition and served me sexually contaminated beverages and all you can offer is a simple refund?" The steam rising from the cup seemed to increase in the presence of his anger. "I'll have you know that I work at the University. I know important people and high-profiled lawyers. You'll be hearing from them soon. I'll be keeping this cup for evidence," Connor said with great airs of authority as he stormed out.

Before reaching the door, Connor turned around and said, "Can I get a lid?"

"They're on the counter over there," the suit said apologetically.

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Connor left the lidded cup in the cupholder of his '87 Accord before he entered the library. Later, he would look up lawyers on the computers. First he had to take a leak.

When he went to wash his hands, he noticed a small curly hair had wrapped itself around his right forefinger. He smiled as he shook it into the sink. He was looking forward to his last day cleaning the library.

