2015

Why Do You Do That To Your Hair?

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"Why do you do that to your hair?"

Good Question. I'm not really sure.
Why do I take up a metal comb, my artist's wand,
And conjure up grand castles made of sand, my straight hair,
Only to watch it wash into oblivion by the threat of water?
Water, the giver of life melts my castles and now it is mud and slop.
The stuff for pigs.

Burning scalp fills my kitchen, the acrid stench of perfection.
Gone is the fleecy mane, gone is the nappy, tangled forest black as midnight.
Now I am beautiful. Now my hair is nice—whatever that means.
Now I will blend.
Into the translucent mosaic of respectable women.

I am neat and sleek and glossy and they will not dare call me—
they will not call this girl
Ghetto. Because I will blend.
Away the soft auburn streak in my hair, the tainted legacy of a poor Irish immigrant
The soft fuzz on my neck. I will stamp out that Blackfoot and cut off the Choctaw.

"How do you get your hair like that?"
"How long does it take to do that?"
"Is your hair like that naturally?"
"Is that a weave?"

"Why do you do that to your hair?"
I'm not sure. I guess
I do it to look like you