

You're Great And You're Awesome, Just As You Are

By Jay Forte

In a town far away on top of a hill,
Lived people so narrow, judgmental and shrill.
They decided on high that all hair should be brown.
They decided for everyone who lived in their town.

"To live here," they cried, "brown hair is a must.
Brown hair is just right, all others are bust.
If other than brown is just who you are,
Then you must leave. Depart! Go very far!
For we won't have people who don't look like us.
Brown is what's right. *Our* rules. It is thus!"

In one of the families, young Trent was born third.
In a family so big and so famous was heard,
A cry of great grief like someone had died,
The aunts and uncles and parents all cried.
Young Trent, their treasure, though brown hair expected,
Was born blond, a towhead, a child rejected.

Though cute and adorable, smart with eyes wide,
His parents knew that his hair had to hide.
If the neighbors and townspeople had any doubt,
That Trent was not brown-haired, the family was out.

From the day he could crawl, Trent's hair was dyed brown.
This gave them permission to live in this town.
His parents feared someday his blond hair would show,
Because hair on a kid never ceases to grow.

Each Saturday night as the bath waters ran,
A small dab of brown came out of the can,
To cover those roots of the hair that kept growing,
Like a lawn after rain that needed some mowing.

And so it was thus, each day spent in "hair-hiding,"
In plain sight, with a hat, and some dye so complying.
And all seemed as okay, no foul and no harm,
Until one day, that day, there came cause for alarm.

That day, at the mirror, young Trent stood there staring,
At brown hair AND blond hair – so great, and so glaring.
He'd been told his whole life about hair not so brown,
These people were gross, not fit for their town.
He realized that day he was different than most.
He was blond, not brown-haired. He's handsome, not gross.

He called to his parents to share his great joy
He was different – unique – not an average boy.
He loved this about him. It gave him great pride.
He was different indeed. He had nothing to hide.

We are each born great, we're remarkable art.
We are perfect, unique, not a kind of half-start.
We can't change who we are. That's a great thing.
We are who we are; it's our hardwiring.

His parents warned, they cautioned and cried.
"Being different's not easy, so please Trent just hide.
Let's dye your hair brown so you fit and blend in.
Let's get the brown back so life's safe as it's been."

But Trent just said, "No!" on that major day.
"Born different, born right," is just what he'd say.
"Born blond, not brown-haired, is how I exist.
Being true to myself is what I insist."

"For someone much greater thought I should be,
A towhead, a blond, not a fake brown-haired me.
Who are these others, with comments to make?
I am who I am. God made no mistake."

The hair dying stopped on that fateful day.
Pretending was done on the 18th of May.
Proud to be done with the hair-dying story,
Trent wanted his real life, a life of grand glory.
A life that was honest and open and clear,
A life to be lived without hiding or fear.

Trent marched to school with hair like the sun.
The gold in it shone, like threads that been spun,
But support did not happen, not a moment or second.
It didn't work out as he thought or had reckoned.
They taunted and teased, chased, hit and called, "Nay!"
It changed all his friends in only one day.

Chased into the woods, with mean words attacking.
Trent stayed hiding there 'til daylight went packing.
He hid in the dark and was sobbing with fear,
That someone who hated his hair could be near.

“How could this all matter?” He wondered. He cried.
“How could being different make others despise?
I have no control of the color of my hair,
Born with it dark or born with it fair.
Like our gender, or height, preference or skin tone,
We get what we get, it's really our own.
For down deep I'm still me, the same me I have been.
Down deep, I'm still Trent, their classmate and friend.”

And in that tough moment, a moment of fear,
Young Trent saw a stranger, approaching, quite near.
A man with a beard, long, thick and so white;
A smile so warm, so kind and so bright.
“What brings you to woods, so dark and so deep?
The old man continued, “And can cause you to weep?”

Trent shared his sad story in every detail.
The old man just listened and grew very pale.
He waited 'til young Trent was all about finished,
Did not interrupt, critique or diminish
The sadness, the pain, the hurt so disarming
That someone so young could find life so alarming.

Once Trent had recounted his unhappy story,
The old man responded with strength and with glory.
His words were bold, his lessons were wise.
Trent listened intently for ways to devise,
A way to be happy when others all yack.
To be strong and courageous when others attack.

The wise man was brilliant and very aware.
He took in a breath, then started to share:
“We are truly born great, just as we are!
Our lives are important. You're amazing, my young star.
But with others, they think, it's for them to say
Who is fine, who is good, who is right, who's okay.”

“For greatness is not in brown hair or blond.
Greatness is not in how our words sound.
Greatness is not on our outside – our skin.
Greatness, true greatness, always happens within.”

“We just can’t know how great you can become
By looking at hair color. That’s crazy, that’s dumb.
Down deep we’re amazing and awesome and bold.
Down deep is our value, our treasure, our gold.”

“No one has eyes to see what you see.
No one can tell you who or what you should be.
That’s your job. Yes it is. It’s all up to you.
It’s *your* work and *your* life. You’ve got to be true.”

“Life isn’t easy, it’s tough and it’s trying.
It gives you hard tests to make sure you’re applying
What you know of *TrueYou*, what gifts you receive,
How great you can be and what you believe.”

“You were born awesome – awesome indeed.
But to live each day awesome you must become freed
From the judgments of others, from perspectives so narrow
To let your light soar like a brilliant gold arrow.”

“The world needs *TrueYou* – the “you” as you are.
Blond or brunette, gay, straight or bizarre.
You are you, and amazing! The “you” born just right.
You were born to shine brightly, to share your great light.”

But you can’t shine in life, when you let yourself hide.
And you can’t change the world, if you’re ashamed inside.
You didn’t choose how you’re born, where you’re from.
But you can surely choose the “you” you become.

Young Trent felt alive and committed to greatness.
He thanked the wise man but feared for the lateness.
His family’d be worried, scared and unbound,
That young Trent was not home, not safe and not sound.

He hurried right home in the dark of the night.
But *this* time for him, a walk without fright.
More aware, more informed and so much more wise.
He got to his door at a quarter to five.

Once home and together, the lost son lamented
With details and stories. The sobbing relented.
Trent shared a new lesson of power and strength.
They stood right by him; they'd go to great lengths
To handle what happens, to just rise above.
To help Trent show up to a life he can love.

The next day with power and confidence glowing,
Trent moved through the town without *any* fear showing.
He let loose his blond hair and wore it with pride.
He stood up to names and to insults so snide.

His courage to be true soon had others inspired,
The insults then stopped, mean comments subsided.
Trent showed that hair color makes no difference at all
Be true to yourself and you'll never feel small.
We didn't choose how we're born, where we're from.
But we can surely choose the "who" we become.

And soon many others with all hair colors flowing,
Appeared in the town, the numbers were growing.
People in fear with hair a fake brown,
Were actually there hiding, still living in town.

Pretending is bad, it loads on the strife.
Hiding restricts us, it limits our life.
We are each given gifts to discover and use,
And we shortchange the world if we don't know or refuse
To be open and honest and accept the real "me".
Trent learned that it takes this to really be free.

In just that one moment, things started to change.
People are people, not weirdoes or strange,
Just people, all different, all great, all divine,
Allowed to be true, to be honest, and fine.

And changed they all were from perspectives so narrow.
They cheered and applauded and hailed Trent like pharaoh.
But Trent just continued to live life each day,
Honest and great, in his unique way.

From that day on, in towns far and near
That kept people out because of some fear.
Now invited them in – all are welcome you know.
We all belong. Yes we do! It is right. It is so.

Come out from your hiding. Join life. Be alive!
When you hide you stay small and afraid - you can't thrive.
You're an original, not a copy or fake.
You're the real deal, just perfect; you are no mistake.

So find your right place, as soon as you can.
Be an accountant, a salesman, a singer or stuntman.
It's all up to you, the directions you choose.
It's all up to you, don't wait, don't you snooze.

Each day that goes by, you never get back.
Each moment, each day, each minute, each track
Is gone. Yes it is, but the next one is here.
Use it wisely. Don't waste it! Let your best self appear.

You were born awesome, no matter what you've been taught.
You were born amazing, born cool – you got what you got.
It's your gift. It's yours. It's all just for you.
It's divine in its nature so, be true to your "who."

Be yourself, be your best. Live life *your* own way.
Be proud, find your place, make the most of each day.
You're great and your awesome, just as you are.
Be your true self, be a bright shining star.