

All In

I was a tomboy when I was a kid, all rough and tumble and dirty. I still get dirty and I'm sixty years old. I scoop horse poop most mornings and then curry my trusty steed before I ride. If we work hard we're both hot and sweaty. I come home grubby and often get more so. My hands dig deep in the dirt when planting the spring flower boxes and working in the garden.

I don't think of myself as vain. I clip my nails short and never wear polish - except the one time I went to Africa to be the Matron of Honor in a good friend's wedding. The polisher showed up on a bicycle the day before the wedding with stacks of wooden cases strapped to the back of his bike. Each case contained small jars of paint and a wealth of tiny brushes. He went to work, painting our nails bright red with jagged white lightning bolts running down the center of each nail. Days later, I couldn't get the paint off, even after soaking my fingers in Acetone. I had to file and scrape it off. It took hours. I swear it was car paint.

My hair is a different story. I get it done every six weeks, just highlights. That takes hours, too. I'm a natural blonde going grey, or in some places, white. If my hair was just turning white I'd leave it, but I'm not having the grey, or wasn't until the Covid lockdown happened.

My hairdresser recommended a brush on color called Color WOW. She'd never used it, but the videos on line made it look easy to apply. "Brush it on. It looks great!"

Except it doesn't work, at least not for me.

I turned sixty during this lockdown, after cancelling a trip to Portugal and Morocco. Instead of adventure, I'm watching myself age. I'm a medic. My coworkers are twelve to forty years younger than me. My last few shifts, EMTs have reached up to help me out of the ambulance, like I'm old and fragile. I'm not having any of it.

I called my hairdresser this afternoon hoping to make an appointment for a time when she thought she'd be open. I live in Washington. We have a four-phase plan in place. She expects to reopen on June 29th. That's still two months away! My EMTs will be building me a coffin.

The forecast this week is sunny and warm. My hairdresser has offered to come to my house and do my hair outside. We'll both wear masks. I don't care what the weather holds – I'm all in. I'm done with growing old.