

“Beau-ti-fy”

by C. N. Nevets

I look at the beautician. “Chop it all off.”

The beautician, my usual, a glamorous middle-aged woman who had probably never seen the inside of any store that ended in “Mart,” gasped. She touched my long blonde curls with a reverence that was at once affirming... and creepy. “Chop all this gorgeous hair?” She stopped there, as if her grief could permit no further words. Then, after a moment, she squeaked, “Off?”

I raised my eyebrow and guided her hand from my hair to my nose. “Not the hair,” I corrected sternly.

“But... ?”

“The nose. All of it. Off.”

“I’m a beautician.”

“And would you say my nose is beautiful?” I pressed.

She winced and removed her hand from it, as if suddenly realizing she had left her finger in a vat of putrefying meat. “No!” She frowned deeply. “Your nose is your worst feature. I’ve seen better noses on tapirs, darling.”

“So beautify.”

“That’s really more of a surgery.”

“So sterilize your shears.”

“But...”

“If you don’t do it, I’m going to Super Cuts.”

“But...”

I re-clarified the word by breaking it down into easy-to-understand syllables. “Bew. Tih. Fye.”

Her hand trembling, she reached for her shears and started pouring alcohol over the cutting surface. Finally convinced it was going to get no more sterile, she raised the shears up to the level of my nose. She took one deep breath to steady her nerves, and then –

I laughed and pushed the shears away. “Just kidding, not my nose, silly.”

“Oh, thank god!”

“But I’ll bet now you’re willing to cut my hair off.”

“Gladly, darling.”

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