

ONCE UPON RAPUNZELS

First it was my granddaughter, Emelia
whose flowing blonde tresses
whipped the air long and loose
during tae kwon do maneuvers
or was up in an elegant bun during dance recitals
or pony-tailed on the basket-ball court
or neatly French-braided in the classroom

A fifth-grade girlfriend came to school
one day sans her long dark hair
and when Emelia asked why she had cut it
her friend said she donated her hair
so a child with cancer
could be given a wig of natural hair

Emelia was so impressed
about what her friend had done
that she told her mother
she wanted to cut hers also, but

twice she made appointments
and twice she cancelled them
because cutting such pretty hair
that took so long to grow
was not a simple decision

Still, Emelia knew she wanted to do it
wanted to make a sick girl smile
with the gift of her golden locks, so
she made another appointment
and this time, she kept it and bravely
allowed the hairdresser to cut

When her younger cousin, Alana, saw her
sporting an adorable blonde bob
and heard the story about why
Emelia cut her hair, Alana decided
she wanted to do the very same thing

Alana's hair was even longer than Emelia's
and Alana's parents really liked
their daughter's long hair long
and were reluctant
to set up the appointment, but

Alana kept reminding them to call

One day Alana exclaimed:

*Mommy, donating hair is much nicer
than having hair like Rapunzel!*

Her mom picked up the phone
and called the salon

As Alana sat in the chair
the stylist separated her tresses
into four braids, took the scissors
and cut each braid to the exact
specifications the charity required
Then she packaged the hair carefully
for mailing to "Wigs for Kids"

Alana flipped her new, stylish
shoulder-length hair this way and that
and smiled at her reflection in the mirror

pleased and hopeful that somewhere
some little girl who lost her hair
due to cancer treatments
would receive her donation
and that the little girl would be happy
and the cancer would go away

Maude Carolan Pych