

# The Hair-apist – Usage & Copyright Disclaimer

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THE HAIR-APIST

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## THE HAIR-APIST

(A one-act play)

By: Jordan B. Fischer

"*The Hair-apist*" is a comedic yet poignant exploration of self-identity, societal pressure, and the transformative power of embracing one's natural beauty. Zora, a teenager grappling with the expectations placed on her hair and appearance, finds herself at a crossroads when her personal struggles with self-acceptance clash with her family's demands. In a moment of introspection and guided by an unconventional mentor, Zora must decide whether to conform to others' ideals or step into her true self. This play blends humor and heart, offering a reflection on the journey toward self-love and confidence.

## Main Characters

1. Zora Williams (16-17, Black, Female) - The protagonist. A high school student struggling with her natural hair and self-image. She's intelligent, witty, and slightly dramatic. Her frustration with her hair represents deeper insecurities about societal beauty standards.
2. The Hair-apist (Ageless, Gender Ambiguous, Black) - A flamboyant, mystical therapist who specializes in "hair trauma." Over-the-top, poetic, and eccentric, but deeply wise beneath the theatrics. Their true nature is ambiguous—are they real, or just a manifestation of Zora's mind?

## Supporting Characters

3. Mama Williams (40s-50s, Black, Female) - Zora's mother. A tough-love type who believes in tried-and-true hair care methods. She's from the generation that pressed and permed, so she doesn't always understand Zora's frustration. She's also hilarious in that "*Black mama who doesn't play*" way.
4. Nurse Keisha (30s, Black, Female) - A nurse at the hospital who's been working double shifts and has no patience for dramatics. She's quick-witted and funny but ultimately wants to help Zora.
5. Doctor Pierre Toussaint (50s, Haitian, Male) - A physician with a thick Haitian accent who believes everything can be solved with "a little rest and relaxation." Overworked and unimpressed, he sees Zora's case as routine.

## The Hair Gods (Ensemble / Narrators)

A divine trio who serve as both narrators and guiding spirits. They shift between poetic wisdom, humorous commentary, and reflections on Black hair culture. They appear in Zora's subconscious, shaping her journey. Each one represents a different facet of Black hair identity:

6. Locsandra (50s-60s, Black, Female) - The elder, representing tradition and history. She speaks with the cadence of an old storyteller, full of proverbs and lessons. She's regal, rocking silver locs wrapped in a gele. Think of her as the grandmother of all Black hair wisdom.
7. Silkressa (40s-50s, Black, Female) - The sassy, judgmental press-and-curl auntie. She believes straight is sleek, edges are laid, and wigs are divine. She's always got a comb in her hand and an attitude to match. Dressed in a silk robe, rollers, and gold hoops.
8. Afrodita (20s, Black, Male) - The free spirit, representing the natural hair revolution and self-acceptance. He is playful, unpredictable, and effortlessly cool, rocking a teeny-weeny afro or faded cut. They constantly hype Zora up, pushing her toward self-love.

**SCENE 1: THE MORNING STRUGGLE**

*Zora's bedroom, early morning. A messy but lived-in space—posters of Black icons, hair products cluttering the dresser, a bonnet half-off her head.*

*Zora sits in front of the mirror (the audience), battling her hair with a comb. She sighs dramatically.*

**ZORA**

*(Staring at her reflection, exhausted)*

Why? Why must I suffer?

*(Tugs at a knot, winces.)*

What do you want from me?! Haven't I fed you oils and creams?

*(She picks up various hair products—shea butter, leave-in conditioner, eco gel—and piles them into her hair like an alchemist.)*

**ZORA**

Okay. Leave-in conditioner for moisture. Curl cream for definition. Eco gel for the edges. Castor oil for the ancestors.

*(She rubs them in dramatically.)*

Now, all I need to do is—

*(She grabs a brush, attempts to slick her hair into a ponytail. The brush snaps in half.)*

**ZORA**

Oh. Oh, so we fightin' today?!

*(She stands up, pacing.)*

Maybe a twist-out? Nah, no time. A puff? Shrinkage be playin' games. A scarf? But it don't match my outfit!

**MOM (OFFSTAGE)**

Zora! Girl, if you don't get out this house in the next five seconds—!

**ZORA**

*(Grabbing a scarf, fumbling to tie it, but it keeps slipping off.)*

I'm coming, I'm coming!

*(She dashes toward the door but—WHOOSH! Her foot slides on spilled hair product. Time slows as she flails like a cartoon*

*character. The Hair Gods step into the dim light, watching her fall.)*

**LOCSSANDRA**

And so, the battle was lost before it began.

**SILKRESSA**

A warrior... felled by her own weapon.

**AFRODITA**

Tragic. Beautiful. Poetic.

*(Zora lands HARD. BLACKOUT. Silence.)*

*(A soft, eerie hum as the Hair Gods gather around her unconscious form.)*

**LOCSSANDRA**

She fought bravely, but the journey's just begun.

**SILKRESSA**

One cannot win the war... without first understanding the battle.

**AFRODITA**

And babyyy... this one has much to learn.

**SCENE 2: THE HOSPITAL (CHECKUP & PRESCRIPTION)**

*A hospital room. Dim fluorescent lighting. Zora lies in a bed, groggy and confused. Machines beep softly. A daytime talk show plays faintly in the background. A thin hospital blanket is draped over her—her bonnet is gone.*

*At the foot of the bed, Nurse Keisha stands, popping gum and flipping through a clipboard. She's tired and unbothered.*

**NURSE KEISHA**

*(Not looking up, flipping through paperwork)*

Alright, Miss Williams. You took quite the tumble. Slipped on some—

*(Squints at the chart)*

—Shea Moisture Curl Enhancing Smoothie?!

*(Looks up, unimpressed)*

I knew that stuff was dangerous.

**ZORA**

*(Groggy, sitting up slowly)*

Wait... what happened? Where am I?

**NURSE KEISHA**

Hospital. You slipped. Fell. Hit your head. Been out for a minute.

**ZORA**

*(Eyes widen, touching her head)*

Oh my God. Am I—?

*(Dramatic gasp)*

BALD?!

**NURSE KEISHA**

Relax, baby, your edges are still intact.

**ZORA**

*(Sighs in relief, then panics)*

Wait... where's my bonnet?

**NURSE KEISHA**

Gone, child. Didn't survive the impact.

**ZORA**

*(Whispers, devastated)*

No...

*(Clutches her head, mourning)*

*(A beat. Nurse Keisha watches her, deadpan.)*

**NURSE KEISHA**

Look, sweetie. Doctor Toussaint gon' check you out, make sure your brain's still workin'. But... we gotta talk about one thing.

**ZORA**

*(Side-eye)*

What "thing"?

**NURSE KEISHA**

Well... after you passed out, you woke up talkin' nonsense. Rambling 'bout hair products attacking you, crying over your twist-out fail.

**ZORA**

*(Embarrassed)*

That doesn't sound like me.

**NURSE KEISHA**

Mmmhmm. Well, Doctor Toussaint thinks you might need a lil' rest in the psych wing. Just to make sure you ain't gone off the deep end.

*(Before Zora can protest, Doctor Pierre Toussaint enters, buttoning his coat. He's warm, theatrical-like every diagnosis is a dramatic monologue.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Ah, Miss Williams! How you feel? Head still attached?

**ZORA**

Barely.

*(He pulls out a small flashlight and examines her eyes.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Follow my finger.

*(Moves it left to right. Zora follows.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Good, good. No brain scramblin'.

*(He pulls out his stethoscope, places it on her chest.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Deep breath in... hold... exhale.

*(Zora does. He nods approvingly.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Strong lungs. A survivor's lungs.

**ZORA**

*(Sarcastic)*

Great. So, I can go now?

*(He raises a finger of authority. The Hair Gods lean in.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Not so fast.

*(Pulls up a stool, sits with serious doctor energy.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

You see, Miss Williams... I've treated all kinds of injuries—broken bones, concussions, and more than a few women who've come in after 'I-thought-I-could-relax-my-own-hair' disasters. But your case... your case is different.

*(Leans forward, voice lowering like he's revealing a great secret.)*

This is not just a physical wound. No, no, no. This... is a crisis.

*(A dramatic beat. The Hair Gods react, exchanging knowing glances.)*

**ZORA**

*(Squints)*

...A crisis?

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Oui. And not just any crisis.

*(Pauses, then delivers it like a Shakespearean monologue.)*

You, my dear, are suffering from... a Hair Crisis of the Soul.

**ZORA**

*(Deadpan)*

A what now?

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

The symptoms are clear! Emotional distress... loss of confidence... an unnatural attachment to products that do not serve you. And worst of all—

*(Dramatic pause.)*

...you have lost your bonnet.

*(The Hair Gods shake their heads solemnly, mourning her loss.)*

**ZORA**

*(Scoffs)*

Okay, first of all, I don't have a crisis. Second, it's not that serious.

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Ah, denial! The first stage of Hair Trauma.

*(He stands, places a hand on her shoulder.)*  
But do not worry. There is hope for you yet.

*(Pulls out his clipboard, scribbles something down with flair.)*  
I'm prescribing you a *hair-apist*.

*(His accent sounding like he said "therapist")*

**ZORA**

*(Blinks)*  
...A therapist?

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Oui! You need guidance. Reflection. Healing. A professional.

**NURSE KEISHA**

*(Nods, chewing her gum)*  
Mmmhmm.

**ZORA**

*(Skeptical)*  
So, I hit my head, and now I need therapy?

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Yes, hairapy. This is not just about your head, Miss Williams. This is about your spirit. You'll be in excellent hands. Trust me.

*(He hands her a slip of paper with the therapist's info. The name is smudged so she can't read it clearly.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Your appointment is in one hour.

*(Zora sighs, realizing she has no choice. She flops back into the hospital bed.)*

**ZORA**

Fine.

*(The Hair Gods smirk in the background, silent but knowing. Afrodita leans against an invisible wall, clearly entertained.)*

**DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Nurse Keisha will take you there soon.

*(He stands, adjusting his coat, looking down at Zora like he knows something she doesn't.)*

*(The lights flicker.)*

#### **DOCTOR TOUSSAINT**

Miss Williams... healing is a journey. And every journey must begin with a single step.

*(Pauses, then, with a knowing smile—)*

Yours begins now.

*(He sweeps out of the room dramatically, coat billowing. The Hair Gods hum ominously in the background.)*

#### **SCENE 3: THE WAITING ROOM**

*A mystical waiting room that feels both otherworldly and familiar. The walls are adorned with various hair-themed artwork—stylized portraits of different hairstyles across cultures. The lighting is warm but slightly eerie, and the vibe is cozy yet unsettling. A few chairs sit around a coffee table with hair magazines, beauty products, and a half-empty bottle of curl cream.*

#### **Locsandra**

To twist or not to twist, that is the question. We—the keepers of the curl—know the struggles that come with each strand. The weight, the bounce, the pride... But we also carry the burden of those who doubt you.

It's a journey, sister. One that starts with acceptance—of yourself. Of your natural state.

#### **Afrodita**

Oh, darling, don't get it twisted... You think this is about hair? Please. It's about self. We—who shine the brightest in the night—carry the legacy of the fro, the knot, the twist that dares to defy.

You must honor your roots... but also know when to let go. Release it all, darling. Let it go... and let it flow.

#### **Silkressa**

There is no separation between our souls and our strands. The crown we wear—be it locs, braids, or an afro—holds our history. Each twist and turn speaks louder than words ever could.

You—she who stands before us—are about to understand the weight of that crown.

*(They all move upstage, revealing the waiting room. They stand silent but powerful, watching Zora enter.)*

*The waiting room feels oddly welcoming yet strange. Zora enters, hesitating at first but then slowly walking toward an empty chair. She notices the Hair Gods standing upstage, and thinks they're other patients, and gives them a wave.*

**ZORA**

*(Trying to act casual.)*

Hey, y'all.

*(She picks up a magazine from the table, flips through it, clearly unsure of how she feels about this place. A flickering light appears. The words "The Hair-apist Will See You Now" slowly glow on a neon sign above a door at the back of the room. The atmosphere becomes more intense, like something supernatural is about to unfold.)*

**ZORA**

*(Softly, to herself, still distracted by the magazine.)*

Okay... Okay, let's just get this over with...

*(The Hair Gods watch, still silent, standing in stark contrast to the unease in the room. Afrodita slightly winks in her direction.)*

*(The door to the therapist's office opens, and Zora walks through, still uncertain but feeling pulled forward. The Hair Gods' gaze lingers on her as she steps through the threshold.)*

**ZORA**

*(Taking a deep breath, to herself.)*

Here goes nothing.

*(She enters the office, and the door closes behind her with a soft click. The Hair Gods step to the side, fading into the background shadows.)*

**SCENE 4: THE HAIR-APIST'S OFFICE**

*The office is a mix of luxury salon and sacred temple—both fabulous and mystical. A giant gold-framed mirror sits behind the Hair-apist's desk, flanked by velvet curtains. The shelves are lined with crystal spray bottles, silk scarves, and*

*ancient-looking combs that seem to hum with energy. A plush chair sits across from the desk, clearly meant for clients.*

*Seated in a throne-like chair, dripping in charisma, is the Hair-apist—a larger-than-life figure with impeccable style. Think: silk robe, dramatic jewelry, maybe even a fan they flick open for emphasis. Every movement is intentional, every word seasoned with confidence and flair.*

*Zora steps in hesitantly, arms crossed, shoulders tight. She's on edge—ready to defend herself if necessary.*

*(The Hair-apist looks up from their desk, eyes scanning Zora like a fashion critic at a runway show.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Well, well, well... Look at you, walking in here like a lost lamb in a rainstorm.

*(They gesture dramatically for Zora to sit.)*

**ZORA** *(immediately defensive)*

I'm fine standing.

**HAIR-APIST** *(chuckles, tilting their head)*

Ohh, you're one of those. The "I'm fine" girls.

*(They lean forward, chin resting on their clasped hands.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Tell me, darling, does fine feel like carrying all that tension in your shoulders? Or is that just a side effect?

*(Zora stiffens slightly but keeps her arms crossed.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Mm-hmm. Thought so.

*\*(A pause. Then, without breaking eye contact, the Hair-apist reaches into their desk drawer, rummaging through velvet pouches and tiny trinkets before pulling out—a bright red lollipop.)*

*(They extend it toward Zora with an expectant look.)*

**ZORA** *(frowns)*

What's that for?

**HAIR-APIST**

It's a lollipop, baby. You suck on it, you enjoy life. You let your jaw unclench for once.

**ZORA** *(skeptical)*

What, is this part of my treatment plan?

**HAIR-APIST** *(mock gasp, placing a hand on their chest)*

Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't realize I was dealing with a conspiracy theorist. Relax, X-Files, it's just candy.

*(They wiggle the lollipop enticingly.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

C'mon. I have a rule—nobody sits in my chair all tight and bitter.

*(Zora hesitates, eyes flickering between the Hair-apist and the candy. Finally, with an exasperated sigh, she snatches it and plops into the chair.)*

*(The Hair-apist grins, triumphant.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

See? That wasn't so hard, now was it?

*(Zora rolls her eyes but unfolds her arms, the tension easing slightly from her shoulders. She unwraps the lollipop, not quite willing to admit that she needed the distraction.)*

*(The Hair-apist leans back, satisfied.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Now that we've gotten that out of the way... let me take a good look at you.

**HAIR-APIST**

Hmm... *Interesting.* I can see it already. You, my dear, are in distress. And not just any distress—the special kind. The kind that happens when you look in the mirror and don't like what's looking back.

*(Zora stiffens, caught off guard. The Hair-apist nods knowingly, clasping their hands together.)*

Now, why don't you tell me what really brought you here today?

And don't give me some watered-down version—I want the raw, uncut truth.

**ZORA**

*(Zora hesitates, then sighs.)*

I don't know. I just... I woke up today, and my hair was a mess. I was already late, my mom was yelling, and I couldn't get it to lay right. No matter what I did, it just—wouldn't cooperate.

*(She gestures in frustration, as if reliving the moment. The Hair-apist leans forward, eyes locked on her like a therapist about to dig deep.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Ah. *So it begins.*

*(They flick open a silk fan dramatically and lean back, steeppling their fingers.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Tell me, darling, when you say a mess, what do you mean? Messy compared to what?

**ZORA** *(caught off guard)*

I mean... frizzy. Puffy. Not put together.

**HAIR-APIST** *(nodding, eyes sparkling with mischief)*

And put together looks like...?

**ZORA** *(pauses, then shrugs)*

I don't know. Smooth. Laid. Neat.

*(The Hair-apist lets out a knowing sigh, shaking their head with a slight smirk.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Mmm-hmm. And where exactly did you get the idea that neat equals right?

*(Zora opens her mouth to respond, then closes it. The Hair-apist raises a perfectly arched brow.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Let me guess. Mama always told you to slick it down, keep it controlled. Not too wild. Not too big.

*(Zora shifts uncomfortably.)*

**ZORA**

She just... she wants me to look presentable.

**HAIR-APIST** *(snaps fingers)*

AHA! And *there* it is! Presentable. The magic word.

*(They lean forward, lowering their voice dramatically.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Tell me, darling, when you step outside—when you walk those hallways at school—who exactly are you trying to be presentable for?

*(Zora frowns, thinking.)*

**ZORA**

I don't know... I mean, everyone?

**HAIR-APIST** *(tilts head)*

Everyone? Let's be more specific. Your friends? Your teachers? That cute boy in third period?

**ZORA** *(rolls her eyes)*

I mean, I guess... yeah.

**HAIR-APIST** *(nodding, triumphant)*

So let me get this straight. You're stressing over your own hair—your crown—because you're worried about how other people will see you?

*(Zora doesn't answer right away. The Hair-apist leans back, watching her closely.)*

And let me guess—if your hair doesn't cooperate, you feel...?

**ZORA** *(quietly)*

Like I'm not enough. Like... I'm not pretty enough.

*(The room feels heavier for a moment. The Hair-apist lets the words settle before responding—this time, their voice is softer, almost gentle.)*

**HAIR-APIST**

Oh, sweetheart.

*(They reach for a mirror from the desk and hand it to Zora.)*

Look at yourself. Really look.

*(Zora hesitates, then slowly raises the mirror. She stares at her reflection, unsure of what she's supposed to see.)*

Now, tell me something... whose eyes are looking back at you? Yours? Or theirs? *(beat)*

See, baby, you've been trained to think that loving yourself means pleasing everybody else first. And that? *That's the real mess.*

This play is not over.

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this play sample is not complete.