

***The main reason for our hair problems is damage. Even daily wear and tear can damage your hair and leave it looking dry and dull. In case of accidental ingestion, contact poison control immediately.  
Store in a cool dark place.***

Waking up is the worst decision and I make it every day. For the first half-hour I am awake, the labels on the bathroom products seem to have a profound meaning that extends past my daily understanding of the world and into some other realm entirely. For the first half-hour of every day I am a sponge, absorbing all of the wrong things and rubbing them around. Living is disgusting, everything just keeps getting dirtier. I read somewhere that for a while there were groups of butterflies destroying trucks that were driving through South Dakota. The butterflies would cover the windshield of a truck and get into the engine through the grill and destroy it. Flutters of butterflies, swarms, rabbles, kaleidoscopes.

***Stop use if irritation develops.***

When we were little my mother would pretend that the car had gotten stolen, and when we were little there was an eight-sided house on our street, and when we were little our father died a slow and painful death. Someone at school told me that the man who built the eight-sided house had eight daughters and they all wanted their rooms to be on the front of the house. He built it so they could all have what they wanted.

***Glaze each time you wash your hair or a minimum of three times a week.***

These are the things we tell the people who lie next to us in the dark. These are the things that prove we exist, that we are a series of interesting little bits to respond to. They are data to be processed and reprocessed based on the new data we receive with all of the new things that happen. Butterflies' coloring is caused by light refracting through their wings, not by pigmentation. In the dark they are just brown. In the dark they are as unremarkable as the rest of us.

***After 2-3 weeks of consistent use you can expect a healthy and shiny look and feel.***

After we broke up I had a dream that he and his new girlfriend had two babies together. They named the younger one Taz. I guess after the devil. The world got them down. The eight-sided house is a thing that hasn't gotten any clearer to me as I've aged. I remember being confused almost all of the time when I was little and while some things get clearer most others seem to stay pretty muddy. In New York I saw a father on the subway explaining to his daughter why he couldn't come home any more, which doesn't sound like a big deal, and maybe it isn't but little by little these things add up and you find that you have had a headache for forty days and that you want to push old ladies who are walking too slowly in front of you out of your way.

***In case of contact with eyes rinse immediately.***

Before I left New York, my brother and I had lunch. He explained that the cars had been repossessed, not stolen, and then he asked me, “you thought 3 different Volvos got stolen from us?” like I was an idiot for not realizing before. And maybe I was. It made me feel the same way I do when I see old people holding hands or when I think about the swarms of butterflies in South Dakota. I think of my brother like a computer, with not enough memory to function properly. He doesn’t want to remember the dark nights of Utah so he doesn’t for the most part, and he has a girlfriend with curly blond hair who goes to the gym 7 days a week.

***Daily use is recommended.***

I woke up the first morning back in my mother’s house to a cardinal slamming himself into my bedroom window again and again. Every time it seemed like it was hard enough to kill him, but every time he would get up and do it again. Moving back to Utah has been almost entirely horrible, and I would like to say it is because we broke up and things were so bad that I took too many pills or pressed a razor into my soft inner wrist, but really it was that I couldn’t afford my student loan payments any more and I had a headache nonstop for almost 3 months. In the dark I would ask him questions. In the dark we would run. In the dark I would say things like, “when I think about it now I still think the eight sides were for eight daughters even though I know that seems so unlikely.” I would confess these endless small embarrassments, these mouse skeletons, until finally feeling purged and clarified I would fall gently asleep.

Eventually I came to realize that it wasn’t the shock of being alone when it was over, but rather the unpleasantness of the realization that I already was, that I had been all along. Every day I am here it feels like I get a little further away from the world. Recently at work they’ve started making me give allergy shots. I’m not qualified to do this and it doesn’t seem all that legal. I’m uncomfortable about puncturing another human’s skin so they have me practice on my colleague, Jean, who works the desk with me, but has allergies, too, so she gets the shots. I have only ever had two dreams in my life where I could fly. I am nervous and Jean yells, “DO IT! DO IT!” through clenched teeth.

***Rinse thoroughly then pat dry.***

The first night I realized he wasn’t ever coming back was the second time I have ever had a dream where I could fly. The first was when my father died. In New York it is never actually all the way dark. The night is just a dimmer version of the day with some more orange thrown in.

***Before stepping into the shower, scrub yourself from collarbones to calves.***

My mother’s face is puffy and she wears thick glasses. She smells like Jergen’s hand lotion all of the time. She came to me early in the morning one day last week with the

dog in her arms. He had been sick for a while and it became inescapably apparent that morning that it was time, as they say. In the vet's office they gave him a shot and he lay on his side and the fluid poured out of his nostrils like his life was coming right out of his nose. My mother cried and I got the idea that she was thinking about my father.

I wanted to tell her that we can only fly when we realize we only have ourselves to rely on, that we can never really see other people because they only speak honestly in the dark, and that wheat proteins expand when they're wet and contract when they're dry which leads to intensification of curls and limits frizzing. Instead I told her that everything would be okay, that time heals all wounds, and that the dog was probably in a better place. It sometimes feels as though living here is just a process of being preserved slowly, like my molecules are slowing down and that I will stay this exact way forever. It sometimes feels that I am simply being stored in a cool dark place.