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# HOME ALONE

ELICIA LEE  
ILLINOIS POST



## Slices of life

# Caterpillar in your hair, like you just don't care

I read a quote that resonated with me on multiple levels. Upon checking it out, it originated from someone known as MrsMopar on iFunny and it went something like this: "I admire those with hairstyles. I don't have a hairstyle, but thankfully I have hair. Most days it has zero caterpillars in it. That's about as good as it's going to get."

My first reaction to this quote was a wry smile and perhaps even a modicum of laughter. How many of us have found ourselves with caterpillar-laden hair? Okay, not many.

So why does this resonate? A caterpillar in our hair. We likely haven't experienced it, but we can all imagine it. Most of us can probably even feel it – in a creepy-crawly sort of way.

No one plans for caterpillar hair, but we all wind up with experiences and caterpillars in our lives that we never could have imagined - before they happened. Maybe bird doo-doo on your shoe. Maybe a spider in our soup. Maybe an unexpected ending – a divorce or a death. Maybe a



By **JILL PERTLER**  
Columnist

caterpillar in our hair.

But beyond this, the message meets us on another level. Having a caterpillar hanged atop one's head is a good way to think about life – and hair – in general.

We all find ourselves entangled in messes of one sort or another. We get in messes at home, at work, at school and at the superstore. Clean up on aisle five!

On the days that we don't find ourselves in a mess – well, isn't that about as good as it can get? If I can avoid a mess on any given day (or make that any given hour) I call it a win.

Another level is a bit more concrete and has to do with hairstyles or the lack thereof. I think this may be why I immediately identified with this quote. I've always had a love-hate struggle with my hair. I've never been able to formulate a hairstyle, but do feel fortunate to have the messy mop that rests atop my head. Do I long for lengthy, luxurious locks? Of course! But I'll take what I can get, sans caterpillar, whenever possible.

And that's as good as it's going to get.

Isn't that, in and of itself, a prolific statement? If only we recognized this in our own lives. Sometimes "as good as it's going to get" is

better than good. Better than we probably deserve, yet we refuse to recognize it as such.

We should all aspire to take what we have and refrain from judging ourselves against the hairstyle (or whatever style of others, and realize it's about as good as it's going to get.

And most times, that's pretty good.

Unless you find a caterpillar in your hair. Then, by all means, carefully pick it out and put it on a leaf in a tree or a bush somewhere outside. And wish it well. It probably felt even more out of place on your head than you did finding it there.

Finally, look at it this way: A caterpillar in your hair means you have been outside, somewhere in nature and Mother Earth is smiling on you just because of that.

A caterpillar is new life on the cusp of another new life – something unimagined and most likely unexpected, because caterpillars become butterflies and having one in your hair might just be a sign of good things yet to come.

So, maybe not finding a caterpillar in your hair is as good as it's going to get. But maybe actually finding one there might be even better.

How about that?  
*Jill Pertler is an award-winning syndicated columnist, published playwright and author. Don't miss a slice; follow the Slices of Life page on Facebook.*

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