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Generation Differences

"Boy what is wrong with you? You ain't getting any braids on your head. What are you now, a thug?" This is the response my mother gave me when I told her why I was letting my hair grow long for braids. I didn't understand why I couldn't have them now when I had them as a baby.

I want braids. However, my mother is not very happy or pleased with the notion of braids. She believes it is something thugs do. She has seen rappers on television with braids rapping about drugs and sex and other such things she does not agree with. She has even seen the gang members from our old neighborhood with braids. Because she has observed all the corrupt associations of braids she believes that only thugs or rappers have braids. In her mind there is no reason for me to have braids, since I am not either of those things. Nevertheless, I still want braids. I am no thug and I don't want to be one. I just want to try something new.

Everyday I see guys with braids for their hairstyle. I see the creative designs stylists come up with. A zig zag here, a cross there. Twists and geometric lines flowing from front to end. It is becoming a trend. People believe that the afro is coming back, but it is not. Afros are the beginning of the braid. The hair must be a certain length before the braids can be put in. I just want to see how I would look with a new hairstyle. I am tired of having the played out fade or the "skinhead" look. When I was baby my mother loved to braid my hair. I was always walking around with braids and barrettes. It was okay then but now. Why? I don't see a difference about who wore them then and who wears them now. I know thugs and gang affiliates have them. But not everyone you see with braids is a bad person. I think I would look nice with the braids. My hair is something that has set me apart from other people, always. As a child it was light brown and curly. Then later on people knew who was walking away from them when I had my tail. It started out like six or eight inches long. Then it got cut and everyone knew Centauri was the guy with the mini afro patch on the back of his head. I want braids now.

My mother still does not like the idea but she is letting me grow my hair out. She might be curious too. How will I look? I hope well. I don't want to go through all this trouble; combing, greasing, and washing daily just to cut it all off.