

Prompt: Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

Cut it, don't. Do it, stop. Two sides of my brain started arguing as always. But this time was different, because I grabbed my hair—seeking to change, to become someone new.

I have long hair. It's wavy and black, the kind that every teen girl dreams of. There's no better feeling than being called Rapunzel. It isn't, however, without its challenges. Once in a while, I get "you are Indian" from my school friends, but I am not. I'm African. I treat my hair as a mom treats her child. I don't make it stylish though; I always do three common hairstyles. These hairstyles not only reveal the beauty of my hair but also the connection between me and the world, which made me not have other hairstyles through time.

Braid. I usually braid my hair if I stay at home. I'm my dad's favorite child. Nevertheless, it makes my big brother envious sometimes when we go for a walk, cook, or workout together. "You are adopted", says my brother whenever he wants to ruin my good mood. He didn't know how I was detached. I even used to cry when these words came out of his mouth. However, as I became more acquainted with his words, I began to look for similarities between my family and I. Now I realize that I never looked like my brother, but at least I look like my dad: brown skin, button nose, beautiful eyes, strong mentality. A reader and an optimist.

Bun. I do this hairstyle in warmer weather. I'm a heliophile (a person who's attracted to the sun). Watching the sunset, along with the sky's colors, makes my heart at ease. The sun has taught me it won't go down forever but will rise and rise again. I mostly use the sun as an example when I speak about gender equality during my Tuesday morning speeches at my school, at other schools where I am invited or to females whom I mentor in my office. Some girls say "you are like the sun for us", and I say, "I'm still only just beginning to rise."

Ponytail. It was my grandma's favorite hairstyle. My hair is a hereditary gift I received from her. In my childhood, she used to take me wherever she went, like Lalibela—a heritage of Ethiopia that amazes people with its architecture. It's a place I decided to put myself in the architectural area at that time. There, I was inspired to become an architect. I was raised being told I was going to be the next one to amaze the world again. My grandmother always taught me to believe I would amaze the world. Starting from joining the art club in my second grade to conducting research in my junior year, it was Lalibela that sparked and maintained my interest in architecture so that I could grow my abilities.

I love my hair. As I considered whether or not to cut it, my grandmother, the person I adored the most, was gone, not for a week, not for months, but forever—she's dead. Feeling her absence, I realized that thoughts of my hair were actually thoughts about my identity. Should I change myself to become someone else? I waited an hour staring at the mirror. Finally, one thing came

Commented [1]: Should I continue with this idea or the previous one is better (my friends complement me on my hairstyles..) @drjacobson6@gmail.com _Assigned to David Jacobson_

Commented [2]: I like this section exactly as it was when we finished our Zoom today.

Commented [3]: Is it a good transition between the two sentences? @drjacobson6@gmail.com _Assigned to David Jacobson_

Commented [4]: Yes, that transition is good.

to my mind. Not to stress about what I could not change. My grandmother was dead. She would not return. But I could keep her memory alive by remaining the person she helped me become.

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Now I have my Grandma's spirit within my hair. I can see it, touch it and feel it. Every single strand has its own values in order to make my hair long and grow my personality.

I'll let my hair grow until I die. Myself too.

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Assigned to David Jacobson

Commented [6]: You already explain your "future me" very impactfully at the end, where "Myself too" means you will continue growing, just as you continue to let your hair grow. It is possible that including more about the future you will improve the essay, but only if that section is super strong. I cannot imagine a more impactful summary and conclusion about the future you than "Myself too."