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# NanFlory



## Hell hath no fury like a woman shorn

When Grace Fletcher-Spears shaved her head in recent weeks, she laid herself open to a torrent of speculation about not only her mental state, but also that of her boyfriend, Richard Landerline, who apparently put her up to the hairbrained stunt.

It seems that Fletcher-Spears was immersed in the grief and disappointment of having been deprived of the chance to foray into the mad-cap world of celebrity that is a Councillorship of Heslington Ward. After months of intensive PR work and high-profile red-carpet campaigning, hubris finally struck York's answer to Paris Hilton and she failed to win the election.

The head stylists at Campus Ken's Haircutting Studio in Langwith, California, were locking the doors for the night last Friday when a cavalcade of bicycles drew up outside. Fletcher-Spears and R-Land dismounted and marched into the salon.

When owner Ken Fairburn refused to shave off the politics star's hair, Grace took hold of the clippers and removed her locks herself, inevitably snapped by campus paparazzi who have faithfully recorded her journey from naive fresherdom into an increasingly troubled celebrity political career.

While bids mount for the shorn locks on York Small Ads (not to mention for a half-drunk

can of organic carrot and coriander soup she sipped while sniping), theories about Grace shaving her head have been foisted on her more quickly than the multi-coloured bobble-hat she has since donned to conceal her bare scalp.

Does losing her hair equal losing her mind? Or is she finally regaining control of her chaotic life?

Throughout York history, a shorn head has been heavy with meaning. The bare-headed Maths or Computer Science students told of their devotion or renunciation of worldly pleasures. In biblical legend, Ken Batten was deprived of his incredible power and forced into an administration post when his hair was cut off in his sleep. In ancient Derwent, shaved heads were a mark of the slave. Among members of the Medieval Recreation Society, a shorn head, along with a plastic battleaxe, is a symbol of aggression.

With time, a shaven head became fashionable, among men at least, and skinheads in Fusion eventually lost their shock value. The image of a woman with no hair, however, can still pack a visceral punch. In other words, baldness is still relatively rare in women, and is generally treated as a sign of crisis or stress - or, if it is known to be self-inflicted, a sign of madness.

"Her relationship with the public is one of the most signifi-

cant relationships she has had in her life," psychologist Julian Bassey said. "From her point of view, the public validates or doesn't validate her. She probably feels interfered with. This is her saying, 'I need some control of my own.' I think this is about control, about her trying to get into the driver's seat—or the cyclist's saddle."

The public relations guru Max Clifford, however, rubbishes suggestions that her career is so out of control that she and her PR people cannot even organise a haircut in private. "Obviously they knew exactly what was going on; otherwise, they wouldn't have allowed it," he said. "The whole thing was publicly arranged and publicly carried out. She wouldn't have just turned up and done this. Her PR managers would have known."

Every day, however, more hairdressers sit and listen to tales of personal crisis than the massed ranks of publicists and psychologists. Ken Fairburn, a man smart enough to refuse to shave Grace's head for fear she might change her mind and then sue, had little time for elaborate interpretations of what went on on Friday.

"I did say, 'Is this getting rid of the old and starting afresh?' and she said, 'Yes.' Maybe she just got sick and tired of all the extensions and chemicals in her hair, and maybe she just wants a new beginning," said Fairburn.

## Ben TattersallSmith

My new YouTube hero



I'm sorry Lion-O, I have a new hero. If you have even a passing familiarity with YouTube, chances are you will have seen his now infamous duet with pop singer Justin Timberlake: 'Dick in a Box'. The song quickly became one of the most watched videos on the website.

Andy Samberg is a man of the times. In a time when many people in the media are running scared from the unknown potential of the internet to disrupt everything that had once been secure, Samberg has harnessed the power of the web to get himself a job on one of America's most famous television shows and, in the process, has made a sizeable impact on pop culture.

Samberg and a couple of friends decided

to set up a website to promote the short films they were making in their spare time while living in Hollywood 'chasing the dream.' Under the alias 'The Lonely Island', Samberg and his buddies released a collection of videos which include a hilarious rap ode to a stalk and a brilliant parody of the teen drama series *The O.C.* called 'The Bu' (short for 'Malibu'). The series manages to capture the lingering passionate looks and teenage angst of *The O.C.* while also managing to enhance it with ninjas, elements of 3-D viewing and some bizarre costumes.

In an unprecedented move, just on the strength of their internet presence the friends were signed up to work for Saturday Night Live, an institutional comedy show in

the United States. In 2005, they produced a low budget video for the show, starring Samberg rapping about his plans for a Sunday afternoon. The catchy video centred around a play on watching the movie *Chronicles of Narnia* and 'chronic', street slang for cannabis (self-respecting Dr Dre fans knew that already, I am sure). My explanation does not really do it justice - you'll really have to check it out for yourself.

The video became an instant hit online and is credited with giving the then fledgling YouTube site a massive boost as thousands and thousands of people forwarded the clip onto their friends. One American writer heralded the video as not just saving the television show Saturday Night Live, which had been in a ratings slump, but also - although this is perhaps a little over-the-top - for saving the entire genre of rap music itself. The playful, innovative nature of the song could certainly teach a thing or two to a lot of

today's rappers.

Coming back to the present day, Samberg struck gold once again just before Christmas when he starred in the aforementioned duet with Justin Timberlake, in a touching Christmas ballad describing some very special presents they had for their lady friends.

Now I may sound bitter, but honestly, some things are just plain unfair. I have been involved with York Student Television for a couple of years now and helped to make countless shows. Normally we're lucky to get even a couple of viewers for one of our shows. At the end of last term, my housemate strolled up to the University of York's first ever flash mob in Vanbrugh Dining Hall, filmed it with his mobile phone and popped it on Youtube. Within 24 hours he had had more people watch it than had I had ever had watch anything that I'd put on YSTV. Combined.