



# The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair

*Kate Bernheimer, Jake Parker (Illustrator)*

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**The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair** Kate Bernheimer , Jake Parker (Illustrator)  
This hilarious, over-the-top story is perfect for any little girl who doesn't like to brush her hair.

What happens when our heroine neglects her long tresses? Well, one day a mouse comes to live in a particularly tangled lock. Soon after, more mice move in, and the girl's unruly mop is transformed into a marvelous mouse palace complete with secret passageways and a cheese cellar! But as the girl comes to find out, living with more than a hundred mice atop your head isn't always easy. . . .

"This tale will send kids the message that they must take care of their tresses." —*Booklist*

"There are parents who will weep with joy at the prospect of a book that may encourage little Susie or Sam to finally brush that mane." —*The Bulletin*

*From the Hardcover edition.*

## **The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair Details**

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Author : Kate Bernheimer , Jake Parker (Illustrator)

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## From Reader Review The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair for online ebook

### **Paula says**

An obstinate young girl decides she will stop brushing her hair. After her daily ritual of washing, toweling and brushing, she announces one night, to her constant companion doll, Baby, that she will not do it anymore. When the adults in her life question her, her response is "It's just my way." It isn't long before a mouse takes up residence in her tangled hair. She is unperturbed and welcomes the other mice that follow in droves. Soon her hair is a matted mess and a veritable village of mice. They tell her jokes, steal her food and even convince her to stop bathing because they cannot swim. All the mouse activities soon take their toll and even cost her friends at school. She finally realizes things have gotten out of hand when her teacher gives her an ultimatum: it's either the doll or the mice, you can't have both at school. Well, the choice is clear: Baby trumps mice. The mice take the news good-naturedly and spy a little girl with braids playing on the monkey bars; they won't be homeless for long. So the story ends happily for all concerned. The lively narration is paired with muted penciled illustrations that capture the fantasy of the tale and feature her oversized hair and head and the endearing mice, of course. This whimsical tale is a study of the absurd, and very young readers will be delighted by it. It offers opportunities for teaching cause and effect and inference and could be a springboard to other imaginative situations, and it would be a no-brainer as a read-aloud story.

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### **Erika Arechiga says**

A young little girl does not brush her hair because that is just her way. One day, a mouse decides to make a nest in her hair. And soon after, there are hundreds of mice that have moved in. At school, her teacher tells her that she can no longer bring her favorite doll, baby, because she already has too many friends that come to class with her. Baby is her favorite doll though. The doll seems to change her facial expressions as the scenes change too! The mice become such a hassle, that the girl has to choose between them and having a normal life. The illustrations were soft and beautiful. They were calm, just like the tone of the text. I did not think the plot was too interesting, but it was still a good story. I do not know if I would use this in a classroom, but I would definitely consider keeping it in my class library. I could personally see a parent use this book to children that may have a hard time taking baths.

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### **Jill says**

The story begins with a girl who had beautiful brown hair. After her bath each night, she wrapped it in a turban, but refused to brush it. After a few nights, after taking off her turban, she found a mouse had taken residence in a gnarly, ratted section of her hair! The girl was not afraid of the mouse, remember in the fairy tales that mice are the helpers. She left the mouse and told her grown ups "it's just my way". The girl woke up to find another mouse decided to move in, bringing baby mice with it. The girl didn't discourage the activity, so more mice moved in too! Soon, school children stopped brushing their hair too, in hopes of housing mice in their hair.

The girl's mother refused to feed the mice, so the girl was required to share hers. She was hungry! Her new friends didn't like baths and squeaked refusals to her. So, she also refused to bathe. Pretty soon, her hair resembled a palace. And the smell, oh the smell! It appeared the mice were in charge of the girl, not the other

way around. She found it difficult to get to school, because she slept horribly at night, and because she had a rough time dressing with mice in her hair.

Her teacher explained to her that her doll can't come to school because she's bringing too many friends, the mice. She bid the mice farewell that evening, because "baby" was her first ever friend. Carefully, the mice left, singing a sad tune. After they left, the girl took a bath and for the first time, brushed her hair.

This was definitely an interesting story! The pictures were bright, the writing had depth, but it just wasn't my style of book. The plot was well developed, beginning from the first moment she stopped brushing her hair, to the evening she evicted them. A cute book, just not for me.

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### **Caroline says**

My 4 year old saw this at Half Price Books and wanted it. As a reward for her good behavior while out shopping, I bought it.

This is a cute story about a little girl with long beautiful hair, which she refuses to brush. (Hmm.... sounds like both my daughters!)

What happens when the girl won't brush her hair? Well, little mice move in of course. The girl, not being afraid of mice lets them stay and before you know it, she's got a whole colony of mice! The mice however, do not like the water. They demand that the girl not bathe, and since the girl likes her mice friends, she stops bathing. Before long, nobody wants to be around the girl (not even her baby doll!) She has to make a tough choice: let the mice stay and be stinky and dirty, or send the mice packing and clean up.

I love the artwork in this book. It's a CG style, very much in line with current cartoons like Tangled, about another girl with long beautiful hair. The pictures are bright and vibrant, the mice are adorable. Both my girls (4 and almost 9) enjoyed the story and looking at the pictures.

I had high hopes that this book might encourage my girls to let us brush their hair, alas, those dreams were crushed. They both still cry when it's time to brush their hair, but at least they don't have mice living on their heads!

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### **Pam says**

This young girl refused to brush her long hair. A mouse set up his home in one of the hair nests. Fairly soon after that, she had 100 mice living in her hair. They didn't like water so she gave up bathing to be nice to them.

The changing point came when she had to choose between the mice and her doll. She explained thoughtfully that they would have to find a new home. They agreed and moved. She bathed and brushed her hair and enjoyed the next day at school.

The author provides a visual on the last page as to where the mice went next.

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### **Mary Kate Garst says**

Summary: This book is a whimsical and charming tale about a free-spirited young girl who marches to the beat of her own drum. She patiently explains to her parents that she doesn't want to brush her hair, stating "it's just my way". One day she discovers a small mouse has set up camp in her hair! They become fast friends and come to enjoy one another's company. Soon word gets out that there's a mouse hotel happening in this young girl's hair and before she knows it, she's got an infestation! The kids at school think its super cool that she has a mouse castle for hair but she's finding it increasingly difficult to deal with that many mice all the time. She puts up with it for a while as the mice continue to wreak havoc on her lifestyle. Eventually it comes to a breaking point when her teacher tells her that she is only allowed to bring one buddy to nap with her and since she has so many mice in her hair she'll have to leave her favorite baby doll behind! She decides its time to give the mice the boot and tells the mice she can't part with baby, "it's just my way". They part on good terms and she quickly turns into a dedicated hair curator. All is well until one day at school when another young girl comes to class with a mouse in her hair...

Activity: Write a circular story that begins with "If you let a mouse move in" in the style of "If you give a moose a muffin". Let students make their own circular plot of how having a mouse in their hair would affect their life and how it would be resolved.

Citation: Bernheimer, K. (2013). The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair (pg.40) New York: Schwartz and Wade.

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### **Brielynn says**

This book is a good read for younger kids. This was a funny read for me mostly because my mom gave it to my as a joke since she thinks I "never brush my hair." This is an entertaining read for younger kids because the events that happen to our lovely heroin, will teach them to take care of their hygiene and not think it doesn't matter!

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### **Alasia Kinton says**

This book is a funny tale about a girl who neglects to brush her hair, and eventually has a neighborhood of mice living inside of it. The illustrations are 3-d and wonderfully drawn with solid details and neutral colors. The way the Mice society within the girls hair is drawn is creative, detailed, and complex. The story is a wonderful lesson on self-grooming and how not everything that glitters is gold and how the girl may have liked the mice at first but there is always too much of a good thing.

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### **Samantha Brown says**

This book, The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair is about a little girl who has very long hair and hates brushing it after she takes a bath. She tells her parents that she will not brush her hair before bed and goes to bed with wet, knotted up hair for a few nights in a row. Then one night she finds a mouse in her hair nestled

into one of the biggest knots she has. At first she is concerned but once she realizes he is a nice mouse she lets him stay. This one mouse turns into four mice in the morning and the mice keep coming until she has about one hundred mice!! What will happen to the girl who wouldn't brush her hair? Will her head keep filling up with more and more mice? Read this book to find out!

If I was going to use this book in a class I would probably use it with first graders because I feel that they would get the humor the best and would still think it is cute. For this activity I would have everyone sit in a circle and we would go around the circle with every kid saying one word describing the way that this would make them feel if they had mice living in their hair. Then we would have a short group discussion talking about this question from Bloom's Taxonomy, "Do you agree with the girl who wouldn't brush her hair and the decision she had to let the mice live in her hair? Why or why not?" Then we would also discuss the question "What choice would you have made if you were the girl who wouldn't brush her hair and if you were in her situation with all of those mice living in your hair?" Then I would turn to my chalkboard and I would ask the kids this, "Create a new ending to this story? What are some other things the girl could have done besides making the mice leave her head?" And as a class we would brainstorm more ideas of things the girl could have done.

AR reading level is 4.3 and the interest level is k-3rd grade

Bernheimer, K., & Parker, J. (2013). The Girl Who Wouldn't Brush Her Hair. New York, New York: Schwartz & Wade Books.

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### **Emmaline MacBeath says**

Again, I was faced with a book full of mice! Rodents creep me out in the worst way. But I was determined to read this book as it looked fabulous and I very much enjoyed Bernheimer's, The Lonely Book.

In this book, a girl with gloriously thick and long hair refuses to brush her hair. One night the mice begin to move in one by one and make a cozy little nest out of the girl's hair. Before long, problems begin. The mice don't like water so the girl doesn't bathe. She can't sleep because the mice are so noisy and she doesn't want to crush them. This goes on until the final straw...the teacher won't let the little girl bring her baby doll to school because she already has enough friends in her hair. The girl chooses baby doll over the mice and bids farewell.

The illustrations in this story are rich, colorful and full of interesting background bits that draw the eye. I wanted to look over every inch of every page. This story brought me back to the days when we spent hours brushing "rats nests" out of my own thick and curly hair. Thankfully it never got so bad that mice moved in. I lost a few things in there occasionally though.

I highly recommend this book to all children (except those like me who are afraid of mice). It has a wonderful message about hygiene and it is hilarious good fun.

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### **Laura McLoughlin says**

Got this from the library in hopes of convincing Kathryn that brusing your hair is a good thing. She still

doesn't enjoy it, but at least she doesn't have a colony of mice living on her head.

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### **Donna says**

This is a cute story about cause and effect. If you let one mouse move in, there will be more. If you have too many mice, they start to boss you around. How can you get them to stop? When a choice must be made between something you have always done and something new. The illustrations move the story along by showing how the girl is feeling start to finish.

Planning to share with my second graders – many who have long hair and could relate to the main character.

(ebook version from Edelweiss)

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### **Craig says**

A new choice from the library that has gone in to heavy (heavy heavy) reading rotation.

It's a cute story, though the message seems to have gone right over my daughter's head as she thinks it would be wonderful to have a collection of mice living in her hair.

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### **Ruthie Jones says**

While the overall story (on the surface) is funny and silly, the underlying message covers two hard lessons: Too much of a good thing is a bad thing, and lazy behavior can have many undesirable consequences.

The mice that quickly take up residence in this girl's hair are cute and sweet (in the illustrations, at least), but when her dirty and unruly hair becomes a village for a ridiculous number of mice, well it's time to make some changes.

Besides having a disgusting rat's nest of a hairdo, this little girl must face other sad consequences of not brushing her hair. The mice take over her life (and her head), causing her to forgo baths, which makes her stink and lose friends. In addition, with all these mice as her constant companions, she has no room for her favorite and faithful friend (her little doll named Baby).

Lesson learned!

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### **Storywraps says**

I loved this book. The digitally coloured illustrations were perfect and brought the storyline to life. All the details in each picture were just delightful to peruse. A little girl with beautiful, long hair refuses to brush it because she says, "It's just her way." Her hair gets matted and tangled and a mouse decides it is the perfect spot for nesting and perhaps a perfect spot for a permanent home. Word gets out that there is a mouse in hair-residence, so the other mice decide to try their luck to see if there is "room for one more." The final

count of the squatters is one hundred. One hundred pesky rodents who tell her knock-knock jokes, set up a film projector to watch movies and even concoct a cheese cellar. These little inhabitants become unruly and bossy, even demanding she cease from bathing because they cannot swim. The little girl finds because of her unkempt and unsanitary state her friends at school and even her parents step away from her. Finally she makes the big decision that she wants her old, hygienic life back, washes her mice-infested hair and gives herself a good scrub in the tub to regain her fastidiousness and her sanity. What will happen to her mice tenants? Will they find a place to reside other than her long, silky locks? Does the story have a "and they all lived happily ever after ending?" I suggest you get a copy and find out the demise of the annoying, furry little critters. The book is a fun read and kids will love the plot and especially the visuals. Who wouldn't want your own animated mousecapades scurrying around in your hair, something that can add some excitement to your boring life? I wouldn't that's who...makes my head crawl and itch just to think about it. But it makes a perfect tale to spin to children and they will love it.

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