

# Stef's Poem – 16

When I was 8  
Something happened to me  
It was really quite odd  
And baffling you see

I had a small round circle  
At the back of my head  
So smooth, as if  
The hair was dead

Small and insignificant  
So easy to forget  
Mum brushed my hair  
We were hardly upset

But then my hair  
Started to fall and fall  
And we had to give  
The doctor a call

He inspected my head  
Quite thoroughly  
Then stroked his beard  
Knowingly

He said something with  
A confusing name  
and not to worry  
Things would soon be the same

But then we were back  
In the very same room  
With faces as if  
We were meeting our doom

He said treatments would be taken  
With diligence  
And probably take  
Resilience

Tablet and tablets  
Of medication  
Injections, creams  
And meditation

Hypnotherapy  
Cortisone  
Herbal vitamins  
And all things known

By year 6 I had taken  
Every treatment  
And the trips to the doctors  
Became more and more frequent

I had something called  
Alopecia Areata  
And that little round spot  
Was just a starter

He didn't know what  
To do anymore  
So we retried the things  
We had done before

But no matter what  
We did and tried  
Nothing worked  
I cried and cried

Hair fell out  
In chunks galore  
In the kitchen, school  
And on my floor

I was losing hope  
And battling despair  
Everything that was happening  
Was so unfair

I didn't know what  
I'd done wrong  
To deserve a punishment  
So very long

Soon I started  
Wearing hats to school  
Which people thought  
Was really uncool

So the rumours  
Spread like wild fire  
That my circumstances  
Were rather dire

She definitely has cancer  
They all said  
To make up for  
My hairless head

People asked me if  
I was dying  
I said I was fine  
Although I was lying

But really I  
Was hurting inside  
So sad and alone  
It was difficult to hide

A secret like mine  
Was hard to keep  
And made me lose  
A lot of sleep

So for a while  
I tried to hide away  
And tell myself  
It was all ok

But deep down I knew,  
I really was not  
I wasn't dealing well  
With the cards I got

So I made the decision  
To stand up strong  
For this had gone on  
Far too long

I faced my fears  
To stop the lies  
And told my story  
To curious eyes

I wanted to hide  
I wanted to run  
Anything to get from  
The job to be done

I quailed under  
Their stares so intense  
That I started to lose  
My confidence

Then I looked at my friends  
Who smiled at me,  
Gathered my courage  
And counted to three

"When I was 8  
Something happened to me  
It was really quite odd  
And baffling you see,

I had a small round circle  
At the back of my head  
So smooth as if  
The hair was dead

I have struggled a lot  
In the past couple of years  
Experience pain  
And faced my fears

So you can call me brave  
You can call me tough  
But if you call me a freak  
That's enough"

My voiced cracked  
And my speech stumbled  
I really think  
That I mumbled



Then everyone clapped  
And then they cheered  
And I couldn't remember  
What I had feared

It's still one of the  
Hardest things I've ever done  
I felt so sick  
It wasn't fun

Then when I was older  
Something happened to me  
It was really quite odd  
And baffling you see,

I had this feeling  
It's hard to explain  
But it felt so good  
I wasn't to complain

Like seeing the world  
From different eyes  
Away from the hurt  
Destruction and lies

It felt like a hot chocolate  
On a cold winter's day  
And sun on the skin  
In the month of May

Like happiness, love  
And peace combined  
That the world was good  
Or something refined

Then I had a thought

Would I trade in what I'd been  
through  
Just to be well  
My next thought was  
Not a chance in hell

It made me who  
I am today  
And I would never ever  
Give that away.

Stefanie