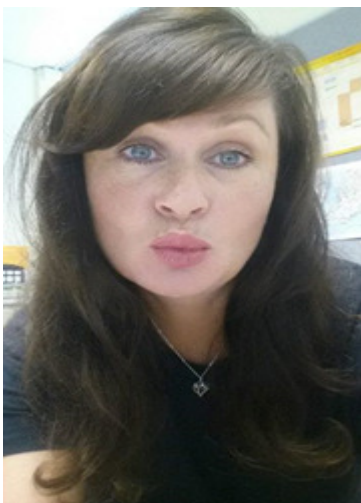


Susan -Life is like a box of chocolates, ya never know what you're going to get.

Have you ever heard of Alo-???????-pecia? The medical term is Alopecia but I prefer to add a descriptive word in the middle – makes it sound more interesting. A year ago my lovely hairdresser discovered a small bald spot about the size of a 20 cent piece on the back of my noggin so I went to visit the Dermatologist who said I have Alopecia Areata and I would most likely just get random bald spots here and there. My hair was the longest it had ever been which meant the bald spots weren't noticeable and I decided I could cope with the bald spots even if the hair never grew back.

In the middle of March this year my hair started falling out in huge handfuls and within 4 weeks my hair was gone. One of my nicknames growing up was brothpot heed (not head, heed, said in a strong Scottish accent) interpretation = large head! As well as having a rather large noggin I had finally got my hair to a healthy and very feminine length and style which I loved so I was not happy about losing all my hair. I have always loved Bruce Willis but I never wanted to look like the bugger!!



Being bald has challenged me in a way I never thought I could deal with but the amazing thing about this whole bloody situation is it has made me realise how lucky I am. My amazingly brave sister (Julie) shaved off her beautiful thick hair so I wouldn't have to be on this journey alone, my parents (June) have always supported me no matter what but they have also been there for me every step of the way, my daughter (Em) has called me regularly to make sure I'm doing ok and sent me messages that make me feel lucky to have such a wonderful daughter, my son (Dan) has given me very long hugs that make me feel like life is worth living, my close girlfriends (you know who you are) have hugged me as I cried about not feeling like a girl anymore, they have taken me wig shopping and

made me laugh when I wanted to hide from the world.

When I get home from work not only does the bra get instantly removed so does my wig (in the next decade it may also be my teeth that get popped in a jar by my bed) but I can honestly say that even though I am as bald as a badger I am a very lucky girl.



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