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Elvis Died at the Florida Barber College

Roger Dean Kiser



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by Roger Dean Kiser

At ten years old I could not figure out what it was that this Elvis Presley guy had that the rest of us boys did not have. I mean, he had a head, two arms and two legs, just like the rest of us. Whatever it was he had hidden away must have been pretty darn good because he had every young girl at the orphanage wrapped around his little finger. About nine o'clock on Saturday morning I decided to ask Eugene Correthers, one of the older boys, what it was that made this Elvis guy so special. He told me that it was Elvis' wavy hair and the way he moved his body.

About a half an hour later all the boys in the orphanage were called to the main dining-room and told that we were all going to downtown Jacksonville, Florida to get a new pair of Buster Brown shoes and a hair cut. That is when I got this big idea, which hit me like a ton of bricks. If the Elvis hair cut was the big secret, then that's what I was going to get.

All the way to town that was all I talked about. The Elvis hair cut that I was going to get. I told everybody, including the matron from the orphanage who was taking us to town, that I was going to look just like Elvis Presley and that I would learn to move around just like he did and that I would be rich and famous one day, just like him.

I was smiling from ear to ear when I got my new Buster Brown shoes and I was very proud as I walked around the store showing everyone. They shined really, really good and I liked looking at the bones in my feet through this special x-ray machine that they had in the shoe store that made the bones in your feet look green. I could hardly wait for my new hair cut and now that I had my new Buster Brown shoes I would be very happy to go back to the orphanage and practice being like Elvis.

We finally arrived at the big barber shop, where they cut our hair for free 'cause we were orphans. I ran up to one of the barber chairs and climbed up onto the board that he put across the arms to make me sit up higher. I looked at the man and said "I want a Elvis hair cut. Can you make my hair like Elvis?" I asked him, with a great big smile on my face. "Let's just see what we can do for you, little man," he said. I was so happy when he started to cut my hair. Just as he started to cut my hair the matron motioned for him to come over to where she

was standing. She whispered something into his ear and then he shook his head, like he was telling her, "No". She walked over to another man sitting in the office chair and spoke to him. Then the little man walked over and said something to the man who was cutting my hair. The next thing I knew, the man who was cutting my hair told me that they were not allowed to give us Elvis hair cuts. I saw him put this comb thing onto the end of the clippers and then I saw all my hair falling onto the floor.

When he finished shaving off all my hair and made me smell real good with this powder, he handed me a nickel and told me to go outside to the cracker machine and buy myself a candy bar. I handed him the nickel back and told him that I was not hungry. "I'm so sorry, baby" he said, as I climbed out of his barber chair. "I am not a baby", I said, as I wiped the tears from my eyes. I sat down on the floor and brushed the hair off my new Buster Brown shoes so they would stay shinny and new. I got up off the floor, brushed off my short pants, and walked towards the door. The matron was smiling at me sort of funny like. The man who had cut my hair walked over to her and said to her, "You are just a damn bitch, lady." She yelled back, real loud, at him and then she walked toward the office, as fast as she could. The man hit the wall with his hand and then he walked outside where he stood against the brick wall, smoking a cigarette. I slowly walked outside and stood beside him. He looked down, smiled at me, then he patted me on the top of my bald head. I looked up at him with my wet red eyes and said, "Do you know if Elvis Presley has green bones?"

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