It was happening again. His hair was standing straight up as he touched the painted mahogany, as if static was dragging it towards a balloon. He frantically attempted to smooth it down with his hand, his puffy jacket brushing against itself with a *shhh, shhh* sound.

“Sir, are you alright?” His assistant pressed his clipboard to his chest as the morning’s chill ensconced the group further.

“What was that? Oh, yes, yes, I’m fine, I…” he struggled to find a white lie. “I-I must have run out of time this morning, and my hair is just all over the place.” He punctuated his excuse with a nervous laugh. “Back to upholstery quality testing. Where were we?”

His assistant affirmed his words with a matching laugh, as usual. So supportive. “Sir, you had just put forth the direct statement that this old furniture indeed contains high levels of metals, particularly lead.”

“Yes, yes, right. Indeed it does. Moving on. Can anyone tell me why this floral patchwork fabric is difficult to work with?”

The sun had set hours ago, but his workday had just come to an end. The warehouse had kept him and his team inside all day, and he might as well have come out of work at the same time he went in. He couldn’t shake that peculiar feeling, that every touch of the furniture had sent his hair on end. *Yes, maybe it’s just a sign that I need to cut my hair*, he thought absently. He fumbled in his pocket for his keys, and his fingers finally found metal. His hair, again, shot up suddenly as if to escape from his scalp. He dropped his keys, and his hair fell flat again. He bent to pick up the keys, and his hair stood up.

He stood outside of his front door in the dark, playing this game of touching his keys and seeing how the hair on his head would react. This time, he touched the doorknob instead of his keys. *Exactly what I thought*, he mused.

He raced inside, his hands outstretched, reaching out for every metallic thing his small apartment had to offer. Faucet handles, toaster oven (unwarmed, of course), pots and pans, the staticky radio on the nightstand, his sunglasses. He decided to try another experiment: he touched his elbow or his nose to the metallics for good measure. Nothing. But the moment his fingertips, any of the last segment of his hand’s digits came in contact? His hair was proclaiming the presence of metal. At not just at contact, he realized. The closer he got to the metal object, his hair would begin to combat gravity until it was at full force. He couldn’t wait to wake up the next morning for his final test.

At exactly 5:30am, his alarm clock sounded, his hand slapped the *off* button (and of course, his hair stood on end). He slipped on his flip-flops, and soon enough, he was at the beachfront. He immediately put his hands to the sand, and searched for metal better than any of the normal detectors ever could. *I think I won*, he thought.