

As I Was Going Up The Stair...
Excerpt

Peter Cavell

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WILL: As I passed City Hall, I could see a crowd of people gathered by the fountain out front. The mayor was giving some sort of press conference; there were a dozen or so reporters with cameras, and two TV news crews. I paused to consider what kind of high-profile mischief I could cause here. I didn't have anything personal against the mayor, but this was just too good an opportunity to pass up! I sauntered over to where he and a group of other politicians stood, facing the audience. Nonchalantly, I migrated through them until I stood right next to the honourable whatever-his-name-is. I was so close I could actually read the notes on his podium. So, now that I was here, what was I going to do? I waved my hand in front of his face; he didn't see me, nor did anyone else. I made a peace sign behind his head. I messed up his hair a bit. And it was at that moment that I realized the mayor's hair was not his own! He was wearing a toupee! A very *good* toupee, admitted, since nobody seemed to have noticed before, but a toupee nonetheless. I couldn't believe the nerve of this guy, hiding his baldness from the hardworking, tax-paying citizens! Hadn't he promised to bring more accountability to City Hall? Oh, this was too good a piece of mischief to resist! Very carefully and gently, I grasped the hairpiece on both sides, just above his ears, and gave a sharp yank upwards. It sailed into the air, and landed on the outer edge of the podium. The mayor trailed off mid-sentence. The crowd was dead silent. Then, with perfect timing, a gust of wind arose from behind. I took this as my cue: I grabbed the toupee and tossed it into the breeze. All eyes were on it as it soared upwards in a gentle spiral. The crowd gave a collective gasp as it floated higher and higher, finally coming to rest on the top of a nearby flagpole. The mayor stared upwards in open-mouthed disbelief, absent-mindedly covering his baldness with his hand. The other politicians all tried to hide their giggling with coughing fits. Cameras flashed, taking photos that would no doubt appear on the front page tomorrow. Best of all, in the front two rows of the crowd, a class of grade-school kids on a field trip lost all control and began to howl and roll around on the ground with laughter. My work here was done.

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