

what would you do for...

A FREE FRÉDÉRIC FEKKAI MAKEOVER?

We wanted to know how far *you*, our normally levelheaded *Marie Claire* reader, would go for a free haircut—albeit one by arguably the most famous stylist in the country

*our runners-up:



Mary, 27, bookkeeper:
"I would not talk for an entire day—and I'm one of those people who could talk to a brick wall."



Nicole, 27, teacher:
"I would give up my fashion-police badge for a day—and stop picking out my son's and husband's clothes for them. It might kill me, but it would be worth it."



Lauren, 23, model:
"I would read *Ulysses* and give a lecture on the book to a bunch of high-school kids. Everyone assumes that models are vapid idiots."

*our winner!



Jessica Plotnick, 34, co-owner of a cosmetic medical practice
"I'd jump out of an airplane. I've always wanted to try skydiving, but I've been too scared to go through with it. I would love the opportunity to conquer my fear."



COURTESY OF SKYDIVE THE BRANCH SKYDIVING SCHOOL

THE PRIZE:

A day of pampering and beauty courtesy of the Frédéric Fekkai Salon & Spa—including a manicure and pedicure, makeup application, highlights, and a haircut by the master himself.

THE VALUE:

\$1000

“I’m hurtling through the air at 125 miles per hour, a little nauseous but OK—alive.”

—Jessica >>

»» Livin' the High Life

When Jessica told us she'd skydive for the first time to win the prize, we knew we'd found our gal. Here, how she learned to let go of her fears—and embrace a 13,500-foot fall:

This better be some makeover, I joke to myself as I speed toward Skydive the Ranch Skydiving School, where I'll be flinging my body out of an airplane. Just the thought of what I'm about to do makes me queasy, and I consider backing out before anyone (i.e., me) gets hurt. But I have to go through with this—jumping out of an airplane was *my* idea!

Why? For one thing, I *really* wanted to get my hair cut by Frédéric Fekkai. I could never afford his prices, and getting an appointment with the man himself would take months. Also, skydiving is something I've wanted to do, but I've always been too afraid of heights (and death!) to go for it. Most of my friends have done it. I'm sick of watching while they have the experience of a lifetime.

Last summer, I realized that if I continue to live my life with my feet always on the ground, I'm going to miss out. So I finally decided to leave my job as a physician's assistant to open a cosmetic medical practice with a childhood friend. That was something I'd wanted to do for years, but I always held off because I was afraid to go out on my own. We now have a thriving, beautiful practice—which is another reason why I so want this makeover. I'd like to project a polished image to my patients, and my outdated long hair just won't do.

Over at Skydive the Ranch, everything happens so quickly that I don't even have the time to panic. There's a waiver to sign (eek!), a blue jumpsuit to put on (so *Top Gun!*), and different techniques to practice. I try to pay attention, knowing that all of my attempts at clear thinking will be useless at 13,500 feet.

We lift off, and as the plane circles

higher and higher, I'm amazed at how surreal everything seems. Here I am in a plane, my heart pounding like crazy, with a stranger strapped to my back (I'm doing a tandem jump with an instructor). A close friend once told me that he didn't enjoy his skydiving experience until he'd almost landed, because he was so nervous the whole time. It hits me that being scared for even one more minute will prevent this from being a life-affirming experience. And just like that, the fear is gone. Not a moment too soon, either—the airplane door is opening. That's my cue to stand, back up onto a six-inch step, and arch my back into the void.

I'm hurtling through the air at 125 miles per hour, a little nauseous but OK—alive. We're falling and falling, and the whooshing of the air is loud. This feeling of having no control, of moving faster and faster, is like nothing I've ever experienced. After about three seconds, an overwhelming feeling of happiness washes over me, and I can't stop smiling—so this is what it feels like *not* to be afraid. I smile the rest of the way down.

At 6000 feet, my instructor puts my hand around the chute cord and yells, "Pull hard!" I yank the thing as hard as I can. And *thwump!* The parachute jerks us upward. I look down for the first time. The world is breathtaking from above.

I land on my feet. I had been airborne for a total of six minutes, and it takes a second to get used to standing again. But I'm in one piece and feeling amazing. I'm about to cry. There are so many feelings surging through me—relief, giddiness, dizziness. But mostly a feeling of being so proud of myself for doing something that had long terrified me. ♦



"I can't believe she jumped out of a plane for a haircut with me!" says Fekkai.

"That is quite an honor. How could I say no?"



"I love my hair," gushes Jessica. "I never thought I could look as good as I did when I left the salon. I looked hot!"

what would **YOU** do for...

A HOGAN HANDBAG?

Write to us and let us know what crazy, hilarious, or meaningful challenge you would agree to (and why!) in order to win this blue Hogan bag (value: \$820). Send letters to: MCchallenge@hearst.com.

