

Good Morning Baltimore

Hairspray

- MUSIC AND LYRICS: Shaiman and Whittman
- TYPE: Modern Musical Theatre
- YEAR: 1988
- CHARACTER: Tracey Turnblad

SYNOPSIS:

Tracy Turnblad and her best friend, Penny Pingleton audition for *The Corny Collins Show*, a popular Baltimore teenage dance show based on the real-life *Buddy Deane Show*. On the way to the audition she sings *Good Morning Baltimore*. Despite being overweight, Tracy becomes a regular on the show, infuriating the show's reigning queen, Amber Von Tussle, a privileged, beautiful high school classmate whose pushy stage parents, Velma and Franklin Von Tussle, own Tilted Acres amusement park. Tracy steals Amber's boyfriend, Link Larkin, and competes against her for the title of Miss Auto Show 1963, fueling Amber's hatred of her.

Tracy's growing confidence leads to her being hired as a plus-size model for the Hefty Hideaway clothing store owned by Mr. Pinky. She is also inspired to bleach, tease, and rat her big hair into styles popular in the 1960s. At school, a teacher brands her hairstyle as a "hair-don't" and sends her to the principal's office where Tracy is sent to special education classes, where she meets several black classmates who have been put there to hold them back academically. The students introduce Tracy to Motormouth Maybelle, an R&B record shop owner and host of the monthly "Negro Day" on *The Corny Collins Show*. They teach Tracy, Penny, and Link dance moves and Penny begins an interracial romance with Motormouth Maybelle's son, Seaweed. This horrifies Penny's mother, Prudence, who imprisons her daughter in her bedroom and tries to brainwash her into dating white boys with the help of a quack psychiatrist.

Undeterred, Tracy uses her newfound fame to champion the cause of racial integration with the help of Motormouth Maybelle, Corny Collins, his assistant Tammy, and Tracy's agoraphobic, slightly overbearing, and overweight mother, Edna. After a race riot at Tilted Acres results in Tracy's arrest, Franklin and Velma Von Tussle grow more defiant in their opposition to racial integration. They plot to sabotage the Miss Auto Show 1963 pageant by planting a bomb in Velma's bouffant hairdo. The plan literally blows up in Velma's face when the bomb detonates prematurely, resulting in the Von Tussles' arrest by the Baltimore police after it lands on Amber's head. Tracy, who had won the crown but was disqualified for being in reform school, dethrones Amber after the governor of Maryland pardons her; Tracy then shows up at the competition, integrates the show, and encourages everyone to dance.