Course: English 2010
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Assignment: A Profile: Jamie Lee Curtis (Final Draft)

Will Barbie look perfect forever?

 She was posing for *More* magazine in a sport bra and tight spandex. Before a 3-hour makeover with 13 skilled people, like make-up artists, stylists etc, making sure she looked just right, she was photographed in her underwear as she looks in her own bedroom, without benefits of stylists, makeup, control tops, wonder bra, and even without flattering or gratifying camera angles as well.

Jamie Lee Curtis, famously fitted in movies such as *Perfect* and *True Lies*, looks like what she actually was: a 43-year-old mother of two. Squishy in the middle; Chunky in the thighs; Floppy in the back; Thick at the knees and ankles. “I need to be the person I look at every morning when I wake up and stand in the mirror, you know, kind of as God intended me to look” Curtis said (Ryan).

 On the next page of the magazine was another photograph. “It's “[Glam Jamie](http://www.sfgate.com/?controllerName=search&action=search&channel=opinion&search=1&inlineLink=1&query=%22Glam+Jamie%22)”, as Curtis calls her gussied-up self” (Ryan). She was attractive and dazzling in a glossy black dress, which was carefully chosen to elongate and slim her torso, and a pair of sling-back heels with ankle ties. This transformation finally took 13 people and three hours under the request from Curtis.

 Jamie Lee Curtis was born to Hollywood luminaries Tony Curtis and Janet Leigh on November 22, 1958, in Los Angeles. She spent her early years as part of Hollywood life, and it has given her a very sharp-sighted view of fame. She has performed around 62 films with very great responses, *True Lies*, for instance, which earned her a Golden Globe Award. She even had her own television shows. For example, *Anything But Love* is a famous one and it earned her both a Golden Globe and People’s Choice Award. Moreover, she has successfully sold approximately 2 million books and became the best seller of seven books. However, to Jamie Lee Curtis, none of these really matters. What matters are the things you do not know about her.

 “I don't need any more attention; it didn't do much for me,” she said. “The attention that I have received--both because of the notoriety of my family and because I am an actor--did not give me self-esteem” (Seeber). Jamie Lee Curtis had a very close relationship with her family, her mom and her husband, in particular.

 Janet Leigh, Curtis’s mother, had a big influence on her life. “Without ever planning to, I've walked in my mother's footsteps for a very long time,” she said (Dodd).  However, on October 3, 2004, Curtis lost her mom from a vascular disease. She was with her mom when she died at home in Beverly Hills. “We had a year to say goodbye, say everything that we ever wanted to say to her, and to thank her for everything she ever did for us,” she said. “It was nice to say 'I know you didn't have a lot of help and a lot of guides, and you navigated a lot on your own” (Dodd). After the death of Leigh, she had a new sight about her career and her family. “But the other day I suddenly realized that I don't see those footprints so clearly anymore, and for the first time in my life. I get to make some independent choices” she said (Dodd). The death of her mom brought Curtis a new round of questions about her own life and she found joy in family.

Another person who impacted Curtis a lot was her husband, Christopher Guest. They met in July of 1984 and they got married after 5 months. Then they adopted their first child, daughter Annie, 2 years later. “I like myself more now that I'm a mother. Annie brings out all my good, and my weirdness. I can be this nutty wacko mommy for her”, she said. She believed Annie is just like a highlighter of her basically because her daughter emphasized the best in her. Then they had their second adopted child in 1996, and his name is Thomas. Being a mom, it enthused Curtis to write children’s books since 1993. For instance, *When I Was Little: A Four-Year-Old's Memoir of Her Youth and* *Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born*, and *My Mommy Hung the Moon: A Love Story*, which is her latest book published in 2010. She was so fruitful and sold millions of her books and she was even on the New York Times Bestseller List (Cawley).

 More than 2 decades ago, she was a star in the Hollywood industry and everybody assumed her as a perfectly gorgeous lady. On the pressure in Hollywood to be beautiful and young, she admitted she underwent plastic surgeriesin the past: lower eyelid surgery, liposuction, and Botox procedures. However, she was not pleased with the results of her cosmetic surgeries. “I attempted various types of plastic surgery, minutely but enough to stave off this encroaching middle-aged body. And every time I did, something went wrong. I felt misshapen, just not natural any more. I think it was a big stimulator of my drug abuse”, she said (Ross).

Curtis was prescribed pills for post-operative pain but as she was not satisfied with the results, she began to abuse them and to drink heavily. “She feared she was becoming unattractive, not only to her audience but to her husband” (Churcher). She felt so depressed, and consequently became addicted to painkillers and alcohol. She even stole pills from her sister, Kelly Curtis. She finally quit the drugs and alcohol 13 years ago, after becoming concerned about the toll that her addiction was taking on her daughter, Annie. “My sobriety is a gift from my daughter, and I will be grateful for that for the rest of my life,” Curtis said. “Not that she looked at me and said, 'You are an alcoholic, a drug addict, you're in trouble.' It was that my behavior and attitude and focus were off, and she was authentic enough to say, 'Hello! This isn't working” (Seeber).

Currently, Curtis speaks out against plastic surgery, she urges all women to grow old gracefully as it is rare that people really do feel better about themselves after they go under the knife. That is why she decided to pose in her underwear for *More* with no makeup or retouching. “I wanted to say to women, 'Hello? I look like this. Relax, we all look like this.' I'm 44 and I weigh 150”, Curtis said (Nipped). She likes to remind people everyone will get older and become old, that is normal, and she is just the same as a normal person, that's her, having gray hair, laugh lines, very big breasts, a soft, fatty little tummy, back fat… and all.

So now, she is on a mission. “I want to do my part, as I develop the consciousness for it, to stop perpetuating the myth. I'm going to look the way God intends me to look” (Meredith). Her fifth book, *I'm Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self-Esteem,* which is what prompted the idea for the photo. Furthermore, she is a professional speaker and always is chosen as a keynote speaker of various events. She usually tells the audience to “live wisely; love well” as the main purpose of her speeches. Some of her speech topics are “Journey from Acting to Addiction to Activism”, “Building Self Esteem in Our Children”, “I’m Gonna Like Me: Empowering our Daughters and Ourselves” and “An Afternoon with Jamie Lee Curtis: The Uniqueness of You!”, which will be the topic of her at the coming 2012 Central California Women’s Conference.

Will Barbie look perfect forever? Jamie Lee Curtis tells us the answer is “No”, but that is definitely okay. We still can do various things to stand out ourselves, but not by our outer beauty. We better learn how to live wisely; love well.

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