

FOREVER FAMOUS

From the time she was a toddler, **Brooke Shields** has always been at ease in the limelight.

By David Masello

IN AN AGE OF WHICH it has been said that everyone is famous but nobody is memorable, Brooke Shields is both. “I’m glad I was famous early on,” she says, alluding to her public debut, at the age of eleven months as the Ivory Snow baby. “Otherwise, that’s when you can get the feeling of having something stolen from you.” Now, forty-two years later, her current role is that of a decidedly grown-up film producer on the hit NBC show *Lipstick Jungle*.

Print and TV profiles of celebrities often include images of the featured star from years, or even just months, earlier. These mug shot-like depictions are used as incriminating evidence to prove how much a person has changed. But as I wait outside a Lower Manhattan branch of Le Pain Quotidien to meet Shields for breakfast, I spot her blocks away on the sidewalk, her head bobbing jauntily above the crowd. Even though she is un-made-up and a swath of her face is concealed by a pair of Jackie O–scaled sunglasses, there is no mistaking her for anyone else.

And so, when she arrives at the door and removes her Dior shades, anyone’s first thought might be “Oh, of course, this is Brooke Shields.” There are the luxuriant eyebrows. The long, shiny hair. The tall, curvaceous carriage. And, yes, too, shallow crow’s- >192

Shields says that after having her two daughters—Rowan, five years old, and Grier, two and a half—with her TV-producer husband, Chris Henchy, she felt *more* free to be ambitious because one of her greatest wishes had been fulfilled. Here she wears a coral Oscar de la Renta strapless tulle gown with organza-flower embroidery (\$15,490). James de Givenchy for Taffin necklace of garnets and natural akoya *keshi* pearls (\$55,000).


*Photographs by Joshua Jordan
Styled by Kate Dimmock*







Hostess or hosted—
Shields can assume either
role when she wears this
Carolina Herrera organza
gown (\$8,990), accented
with a Fred Leighton
19th-century diamond
fringe necklace (\$130,000)
and circa-1925 diamond
bracelet (\$300,000).
Her own ring. Opposite:
Chloé silk dress (\$7,250);
Badgley Mischka hematite
and crystal bracelet (on
her right wrist, top; \$250);
Lulu Frost Crystal Collage
bracelet (on her right wrist,
bottom; \$600); Erickson
Beamon for Donna Karan
Swarovski-crystal and
glass-pearl cuff (on her left
wrist; \$893).



Briefly off set during the filming of episodes for the second season of *Lipstick Jungle*, Shields wears a Prada nylon jacket with jewel detail (\$2,580) and Prada earrings of Swarovski crystal on grosgrain ribbon (\$390). Christian Louboutin pony-hair Bouclette sandals (\$995); Hue tights (\$12.50). Opposite: Louis Vuitton silk-satin bow blouse (\$1,875) and silk-crepe skirt (\$2,700); Fred Leighton diamond pendant earrings (\$65,000) and 24.5-carat-alexandrite and diamond ring (\$200,000); Badgley Mischka crystal cuff (\$500).



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feet that etch themselves about her eyes when she smiles—frequently, in her case.

Shields has, indeed, evolved into the woman we all expected her to become. Her look doesn't change—and hasn't in all the years she's been a public figure. At breakfast she wears tight-fitting white jeans, and her brown hair is tied in a simple ponytail. And yet that evening, when we meet again, at a reception at the J. Mendel store on Madison Avenue, which is stocked with the new fall collection, and she is in full makeup, her hair blown out into cascading waves, her size-eight-and-a-half Fendi sandals ramping her up to over six feet, I am not surprised to see the same person who is Brooke Shields. She sports a diamond and topaz ring by Turkish designer Sevan ("I love everything he makes," she declares), and admirers—everyone from her best friend, the actress Stephanie Venditto, to other guests at the private function—hold her hand to admire the jewelry as if she were royalty.

When summoning up images of Shields, there are years' worth to cite. We winced when we saw her preening as a prepubescent prostitute in the 1978 *Pretty Baby*. She was fifteen when we saw her, limbs akimbo, wiggling into tight jeans and insisting that nothing came between her and her Calvin Kleins. And in the 1980 cult classic *The Blue Lagoon*, we found her marooned with a teenaged male opposite on an island where they diverted themselves with constant attempts at procreation.

By the mid-1990s, though, those often sexually charged images were replaced by more chaste ones of Shields as a thirty-something big-city magazine columnist on TV's *Suddenly Susan*. "When I look back at the stuff I did as a kid, the only real work I'm proud of is *Pretty Baby* and *Endless Love*. But look at those directors—Malle and Zeffirelli. When you start with them, it's got to be downhill from there."

Now in the midst of filming thirteen episodes for a second season of *Lipstick Jungle*, Shields ticks off the personality traits of her character, Wendy Healy, a woman who wants to make good movies and be a good mother to two children. "Wendy is an achiever; she's sensitive and compassionate. She's very bright, and she wants to be an expert in every area of her life. I'm not saying I'm that fabulously bright, but I do get that drive she has."

Despite the continued success of the show, Shields says candidly: "There is much more room for realism with my character. On the series, my costars, Lindsay Price and Kim Raver, and I always look great. Our hair and makeup are perfect. Well, we're in there for three hours every time we go on set! My character's

life—and real life—is grittier than that, and I wish I could show that more."

Proving to the public that she can assume any role, in character or out, Shields defended herself, with a pronounced dignity and resolve, from criticism of her 2005 best-selling memoir, *Down Came the Rain*, in which she wrote of debilitating postpartum depression following the birth of her daughter Rowan, in

2003. With almost messianic zealotry, Tom Cruise publicly derided Shields for seeking help, in part, through antidepressants.

The fury of that storm (which included a later apology from Cruise) has since passed. Perhaps one indication of that calm is her having authored her first children's book, *Welcome to Your World, Baby* (HarperCollins), which takes a sensitive look at the loving effects a new sibling can have on an existing child in a family.

For Shields, who grew up an only child in Manhattan and suburban New Jersey, the premise of the book has particular poignancy. While Shields's mother, Teri, was born and raised in decidedly unglamorous Newark, New Jersey, her late father, Frank Shields, was the son of a star tennis player and grew up in privileged enclaves in New York City, Long Island and Palm Beach. Brooke was five months old when her parents divorced. "I never knew them together, but I grew up knowing both of them," she says.

Just as Teri managed Brooke's career in true Mama Rose stage-mother mode, Frank disapproved of the trajectory his ex-wife had determined for their daughter—"that is, until I was the first in my family to attend an Ivy League school," Shields recalls, referring to her 1987 degree from Princeton. "To my father, that made up for all of the Hollywood antics he didn't approve of."

Her younger daughter, Grier, suddenly appears for our breakfast, and while her nanny is helping her from the stroller and removing the same pink heart-shaped sunglasses depicted in her mother's children's book, Shields says: "Before I had my children, all I could think about was having children. How do I say this without it sounding wrong? My children are the most important thing in my life, but they're not the *only* important thing in my life. It's almost as if now that I have them, my life can start, because a big piece was missing."

Grier comes to the table and puts out her arms, and Shields hoists her onto her lap. And as mother and daughter chat quietly about what to order, Shields looks up at me and says, as if channeling her undergraduate years studying the great French philosophers: "I mean, what's the point of being here? We're here for love, basically. That's really about it." ❖



Shields is always ready for her next starring role, whether it's on-screen, onstage or in print. Here she is garbed in a Versace viscose dress (\$7,035), complemented by Alexis Bittar studded Lucite cuffs (\$275-\$550) and a James de Givenchy for Taffin old-mine-cut-diamond and gold ring (price on request). For shopping information, see page 229.

Hair by Oscar Blandi for oscarblandi.com. Makeup by Genevieve for Nars Cosmetics. Manicure by Gina Eppolito for ginails.com. Set design by Kevin Hertzog for Ford Artists, NYC. Jules sofa in berry mohair from George Smith, georgesmith.com.