

Shirley Temple

Shirley Temple was my idol, perhaps because she was the same age as I. I don't remember ever missing a movie in which she starred. I can remember being transported, via the silver screen, into the plot of her movies. I became the heroine, who could sing and dance my way ^{out} of any situation.

You can imagine my delight when mother told me I was to get a "Shirley Temple" permanent as a birthday present.

I watched as the hair dresser wound my straight bobbed hair on to iron rods and clip them in place with metal clips that were wired to an overhanging device. I thought of the villains of the movies who were sent to the electric chair and worried that the device might not be safe.

As my hair was being fried, I began to imagine what it would be like to be "Shirley Temples" double. I began to believe that having curls would magically give me the ability to sing and dance, and I even thought I might develop the dimples that made her face famous.

I nervously awaited this transformation, as the hair-dresser unwound each curl. She was over generous in her complements as she undid me from the torture chamber.

"How beautiful your hair had taken the permanent. Just look at the bounce she had in her hair" she exclaimed to another hairdresser. To listen to the hairdressers I was certain my transformation would be complete.

At last the moment came as she turned me around to face the mirror.

Staring back at me was ME. Only my hair was poofed out all around my head. It looked as though someone had laid a huge bunch of sausages on my head. I tried a weak smile, there were NO DIMPLES! As I slid from the chair I knew it was useless to try a any dance steps. And I didn't feel like singing a chorus of the "Good Ship Lolly Pop"

I ran to my mothers arms and said "I'm NOT Shirley Temple."

"No, your you, and I love you, just because your you." She then began to play with my hair and show me how pretty the curls were when they bounced about my face.

I was not disappointed to find that a permanent wasn't permanent, and my straight hair would return, for I had learned a valuable lesson. I learned to accept myself for myself, thanks to a mothers love.