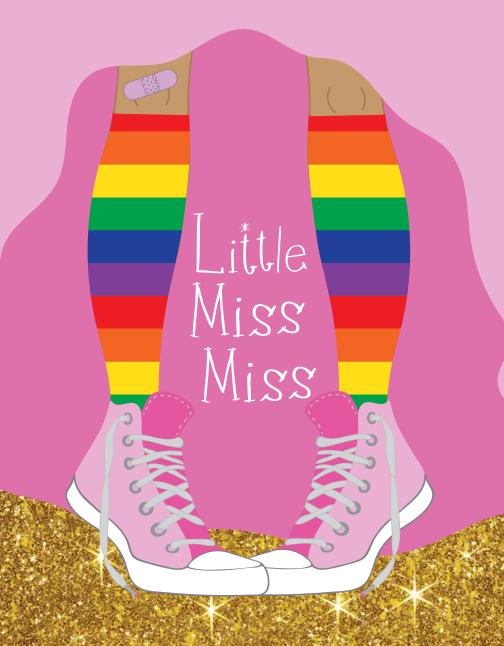
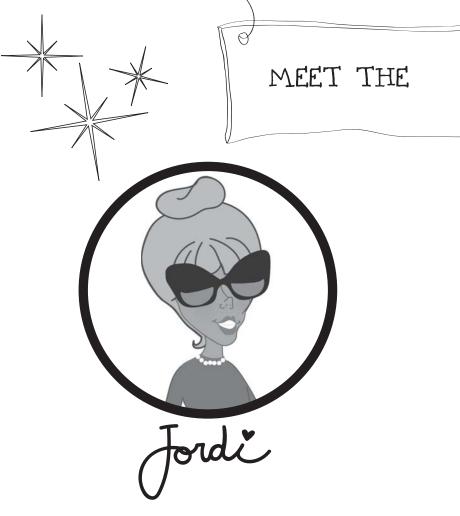
Jeff Cottesfeld





Age: 12 (looks 25) Special Skill: can spot an uneven spray tan from six blocks away Best Sport: shopping Future Goal: to be on TV Best Quality: does what her mother says



Age: 12 (looks 13)

Favorite Dinner: pork chops, green bean casserole, and applesauce Secret Wish: to spend a year in Spain Future Goal: to be a high school PE teacher Best Quality: respects her parents 1

NEVER SAY NEVER

Tracy Jones walked into day camp. It was mid-June. School had ended two days before. Sixth grade was finally over.

After five years, the camp felt old. All the games and songs were familiar. The staff had barely changed. Other kids went on big trips in the summer. But for Tracy, camp was the only option.





I'll never go on a big trip, Tracy thought. We're too poor.

Tracy loved her parents. Both were teachers. They worked hard. But they did not make much money.

Liza was waiting under a tree. She was Tracy's best friend. "Ready for camp?" she asked.

Tracy looked at Liza. Her parents were doctors. Their family was rich and took many trips. But Liza also really enjoyed day camp. She was the nicest person Tracy knew. Everyone liked her.

"As ready as I'll ever be," Tracy joked.

"There's a cool new girl on staff," Liza said. "Her name is Ashley. She's doing water sports. Last year, she won Miss All-State. But she isn't stuck-up at all."





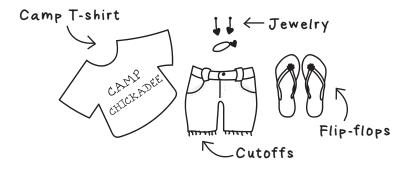
Tracy sniffed. Miss All-State was a big pageant. "How do you know?"

"She told me."

"Maybe she's lying."

Liza laughed. "No, I looked her up on my phone. Oh! There she is." She waved to a tall girl in a camp T-shirt. "Hey, Ashley. Come meet my friend!"





Ashley ran over. "Hi, Liza!" Her smile was warm and welcoming. She stuck her hand out to Tracy. "I'm Ashley. And you are?"

"I'm Tracy. Tracy Jones."

Ashley shook her hand. "Liza said you two come here every summer. I'll try to make it feel new."

"Is it true you won Miss All-State?" Tracy asked. She really wanted to know.

"Yes!" Ashley grinned. "I did. Why? Are you going to enter? I mean, in about five years. They pay for the winner's college. Did you know that?"





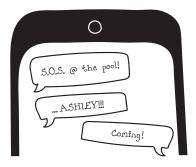
Tracy shook her head. "It's not really my thing."

"Too bad. There's Little Miss Miss here in two weeks. It's for girls your age. They want to find a good role model. The prizes are pretty nice. I was asked to be a judge. But I don't have time."

"What are the prizes?" Tracy asked.

"There's money. Flowers and a crown, of course. I think first place wins a trip too. Not sure where. Stuff like that." Ashley's phone buzzed. "Sorry. I have to go. See you at the pool. Nice to meet you, Tracy." She waved and left.





"Can I use your cell?" Tracy asked Liza. Her phone was old and slow. Liza's was much better.

"Sure. Want to post a pic?"

Tracy shook her head. She was getting an idea. "Nope. I'm looking up this Little Miss Miss thing."

"What? Why?" Liza's mouth fell open. "You're not a pageant girl. That's not something you'd do."

Tracy turned to her friend. "Liza, my bestie? Never say never."



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Little Miss Miss

My daughter is going to win this pageant. Nothing can stop her. You don't stand a chance!



