

# MAKEOVER MARVEL - CASSANDRA'S

BY CHERI VALENTINE

## THE BEFORE



No one plans to be homeless. Sometimes you can do all the right things - love your children, maintain healthy habits, work hard - and still not have enough money to pay all the bills and support your family. This is what happened to Stacy Vega Simpson, a delightful young woman and mother of four children who despite her best efforts wound up without a home. I had the pleasure of meeting Stacy at Cassandra's Salon & Spa in Nashua, NH, where the owner, Sandra Katz (Sandy) and two of her dedicated associates joined Marguerite's Place, and Applaud Magazine in providing a new look for a deserving woman by giving her a makeover at the salon. Susan Caldwell, the owner of Applaud Magazine has been sponsoring a makeover annually for the past few years.

## THE MASSAGE



Marguerite's Place offers transitional housing to women in crisis who have the ability to live independently, work or go to school a minimum of 20 hours per week, yet need support in regaining stability in their lives. Patti Joseph, Stacy's social worker at Marguerite's Place, lit up when she explained why she selected Stacy as the recipient of the makeover. "Stacy is so ready to make a change in her life, to get up and do it for herself and her children. She is so creative and makes beautiful jewelry, and is aware of how looks have an effect in her industry." Patti's admiration for Stacy was clearly evident as she talked to me about how "together" she thought Stacy is, that all she needs is more self confidence to get moving in a more positive direction.

## THE CONSULT



Sandy met with Stacy beforehand to plan her makeover day. Sandy, who is loved and respected by all who know her, recently won an award from the Better Business Bureau for Market Place Standards. Having spoken to Sandy on several occasions and being a customer myself, I was not surprised. I have personally witnessed her passion and dedication to providing customer service, using quality products, and offering education and training to her staff. If you ask any of the 65 talented people who work for her, they will tell you that Sandy has a huge heart and is such an inspiration to all of them by giving to others and living with integrity. So it was no surprise that Kristen Atkins, a full time hairdresser with Sandy for fifteen years, and Leah Smith, an esthetician of eight years gladly donated their time and expertise. They both agreed that it's great to have the opportunity to help others who have had challenges and obstacles.

I first saw Stacy lying on the table wrapped in preparation for her first ever facial. She looked radiant. "Her skin is healthy, so the focus will be to relax and hydrate," said Leah who used an ultrasonic facial that is very nourishing



## THE CUT



## THE BLOWDRY



to the skin. It gently exfoliates the skin so that it can then absorb more of the nutrients and allow for more hydration. "We use Glymed products," explained Leah, "Which actively treat and replenish and are great for all skin types." After the facial was complete, Leah used an ancient Middle Eastern technique, called threading which is an alternative to waxing and is used to shape and clean eyebrows. Leah explained that threading is gentle and a great alternative for sensitive skin. The results were immediately visible. Stacy looked even younger than when I first saw her and exclaimed, "That was fabulous, and so relaxing and interesting."

Stacy's childlike appearance belies the inner wisdom of this young woman. In spite of the challenges she has faced, she remains optimistic, positive and gracious. She gives credit to everyone who has given her support, yet underestimates her own resourcefulness. She has the long-term goal of working in the medical field and in the immediate future plans to attend classes to learn office management and billing. She will receive aid from the Nashua Soup Kitchen to pay for the courses.

Stacy was led to the hair station where Kristin began her magic. This was a lengthy process since first Kristen had to apply a filler to tone the blonde. "Filling the hair to cover over the blonde will help with the end results," explained Kristen. "The hair will take on a richer tone with longer lasting results." Stacy I talked some more. Stacy grew up in Nashua, and graduated from the local high school, now known as Nashua South. She studied business management at NH Technical College for one year, yet had to quit, unable to balance the school work with being a working mother.

Ultimately Stacy did not have enough income to cover all the expenses of raising four children, despite the fact that she consistently held a full and part time position in retail. She was left homeless. Family and friends generously opened their homes to Stacy and her children but not wanting to take advantage of their kindness nor interfere with their lives, she moved from place to place. Then one day she heard about Marguerite's Place, made a phone call, passed the intake process, and three months later had the stability of a 3-bedroom apartment she can call home. "They gave me a hand up, not a hand out," Stacy appreciatively remarked.

With Stacy's blonde hair covered, Kristen next applied a deep rich chestnut brown as the base color. This is close to Stacy's natural hair color so it can be easily maintained, and new growth won't be so visible. Next Kristen meticulously chose strands of hair and added a pinot noir wine colored highlight for vibrancy. "We use Goldwell hair color products. Kristin explained. It deposits color onto the hair, not lift color out with durable results." With all the color applied, Stacy was ready for the dryer as everyone awaited the outcome of Kristen's professional vision.


Once Stacy's hair was washed and rinsed, Sandy performed the first round of cutting being sensitive

to Stacy's desire to maintain the long length of her hair. Kristen expertly layered the strands, then dried and styled Stacy's new coiffure. The results were stunning. The color was a complement to Stacy's fair skin tone, and gave a sparkle to her green eyes.

Kristen then took Stacy to another station and expertly applied makeup. Cassandra's uses an all-mineral makeup line by Jane Iredale. It is oil and talc free and won't clog skin's pores. Mineral makeup is more forgiving than conventional makeup and one shade can cover several skin tones because it does not absorb the light. Kristen used beige undertones in the foundation and then lightly applied a bronzer. Plum tones on her lids, with a gold shimmer just popped Stacy's hazel/brown eyes. For the final touches, she applied a plum color to her lips. With Stacy's new hair color, this subtle color palette was stunning.

As a final surprise for Stacy, Sandy dressed her in a Caribbean blue halter dress. All involved in the makeover agreed that when you look good, you feel good, and can act with more confidence. We were all stunned by the amazing transformation, a makeover that preserved Stacy's essence and gave her the look of the accomplished woman we all know she can be. Stacy thanked Susan Caldwell of Applaud magazine, the staff at Marguerite's Place and Cassandra's Salon and Spa for making the makeover possible.

Cassandra's Salon & Spa is located at 225 Daniel Webster Highway, Nashua, NH. To schedule an appointment, please call (603) 888-3300. For more information, check out their website at [www.cassandrasalon.com](http://www.cassandrasalon.com).

Marguerite's Place can always use help. For further information, please call (603) 598-1582 or visit their website at [www.margueritesplace.org](http://www.margueritesplace.org). 

## THE MAKEUP



## THE RESULTS

