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## beautiful dreamers

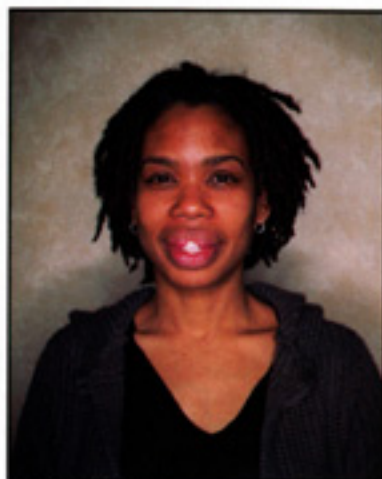
If *Extreme Makeover* had been an option for Quasimodo, maybe he could've moved out of that bell tower.

By Nikia Dawkins

ABC's *Extreme Makeover*, which airs Thursday at 9–10 p.m., is basically a modern day fairy tale with doctors and stylists swooping in to make their clients' aesthetic dreams come true. As Kiné Corder, one of the show's first contestants, said to plastic surgeon Dr. Garth Fisher during her consultation, "I feel like Dorothy right now and I'm in Oz and you're the Wiz." Although the show's contestants aren't at all lacking in brains, heart or courage, most of them are lacking in self-esteem. The videotapes sent in to ABC by *Extreme Makeover* hopefuls play like the opposite of a beauty pageant, with people exposing their flabby stomachs, pointing out their disproportionate facial features and tossing off self-deprecating jokes — all in the hopes of having a world-renown wizard like Dr. Fisher change their lives forever.

During each episode of *Extreme Makeover*, two lucky souls are selected to receive a complete and utter overhaul from the show's Extreme Team, which includes plastic surgeons, eye surgeons, cosmetic dentists, hair and makeup artists, fashion stylists and personal trainers. Once selected, the makeover recipients are flown to Beverly Hills, California — *Extreme Makeover*'s version of The Emerald City — where they stay in a luxury hotel for six weeks, while their faces and bodies are buffed and polished to perfection. During this time, they have no physical contact with their family and friends, who only see the life-altering makeover results during a special ceremony at the end of the process. Although the makeover recipients are spoiled from beginning to end — traveling around in their own personal limos, eating specially-prepared organic food delivered right to their door and staying in exclusive after care facilities — the show doesn't allow the magic of television to edit out the pain and discomfort of each patient's recovery. Viewers are able to see the patients' bruised, bandaged and swollen body parts as they're wheeled out of the operating room. And during Kiné Corder's makeover, she was seen lying in bed post-op, groggy from the anesthesia, drooling uncontrollably into a tray on national television. Unsurprisingly, the fashion, hair and makeup alterations that take place after the patient's recovery — although expertly done and essential to the contestant's new image — are decidedly less extreme than the plastic surgeries themselves.

The final, and much awaited, unveiling takes place during the last segment of the show, when the contestant's friends and family all gather around a curtained stage upon which the contestant will make his or her first public appearance. The sight of the makeover recipient's new face and body usually incites a combination of gasps and tears. But for a moment, before the contestant steps off the stage and into the crowd, he or she — grinning and fabulously dressed — is on display like a fine work of art. And needless to say, it's one hell of a curtain call.



Kiné Corder before



Kiné Corder after



Tammy Guthrie before



Tammy Guthrie after

## kiné corder, makeover recipient

**AGE:** 29

**PROCEDURES:** Upper and lower lip reduction, breast lift, liposuction of the abdomen, teeth whitening and straightening and lasik eye surgery

**HOMETOWN:** Chicago, IL

**OCCUPATION:** Barber, fashion stylist, actress and public speaker

**MOTTO:** "If you're going to let the insults crush you, then you'll have to let the compliments boost you."

Watching Kiné Corder's transformation on *Extreme Makeover* inspired a combination of shock and awe. The only thing more stunning than her before and after photos is the fact that neither her family nor her friends seemed to realize how self-conscious she was about her looks. Before her surgery, she had redundant lip tissue that covered her smile, breasts that were beginning to sag, a flabby stomach and glasses. And although she was quite active in Chicago theater, she was hesitant to audition for film roles because she was insecure about the size and shape of her lips. After her makeover, she had a brighter and wider smile, perky breasts, a completely flat stomach, 20/20 vision [with which to see herself better] and enough confidence to pursue her acting career. Now, having moved to Los Angeles, Corder's more than ready for her close-up and will appear in two upcoming movies, *Grass is Green* and *Beauty Shop*, a spin off of Ice Cube's *Barbershop* set to star Queen Latifah.



### WHY DO YOU THINK YOU WERE SELECTED FOR *EXTREME MAKEOVER* OVER ALL THE OTHER APPLICANTS?

I think number one was my story. I came off very confident; however, I said I had this insecurity about my lips, so they were like, "OK, let's discuss that." How could somebody be confident and insecure at the same time? And everybody who watched the show said exactly the same thing, "Oh, you're beautiful, how could you be insecure?" But once they really looked at the show, they understood it was just that small thing. And if that was gone, then I could be this one hundred percent go-getter.

### DID YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR A LOT AFTERWARDS?

I looked in the mirror a lot more because this was what I always dreamed I would look like. And I just needed to picture it and get it solid in my head because I looked different, but my memory was still of the girl before the surgery. Sometimes I would even pass by the mirror like I was going to walk by without looking, but stop for a second and think, "Oh wow, they did such a good job." (laughs)

### DO YOU GET HIT ON MORE OFTEN?

Yeah, because I smile more. Also, because of the way my lips are shaped now, it's easier for me to smile or it's easier for you to tell that I'm smiling. So, people think I'm nicer, but I'm not any nicer. (laughs)

### YOU WERE ALWAYS NICE.

Right, but you can tell now.

### ON THE SHOW, YOU SAID BEFORE THE MAKEOVER THAT YOU WERE SHYING AWAY FROM INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH MEN. HAS THAT CHANGED?

Not yet. That part, I think, will take a little longer. But I'm more open to it. [Those feelings] are deep-rooted and that's not going to change in six weeks.

### HAVE YOU WATCHED ANY OF THE OTHER REALITY MAKEOVER SHOWS? HOW DOES *EXTREME MAKEOVER* COMPARE?

I think they're in totally different ball parks. It would be like the major leagues versus high school.

### SO, *EXTREME MAKEOVER* IS THE MAJOR LEAGUES?

Yes, I mean, they're really changing people's lives, going deep. I mean, we get psychiatrists. It's not like, "Here, put on a dress, go!" It's not like, "Oh, look how pretty you look today." (laughs) The other makeover shows are for the moment whereas *Extreme Makeover* is for life. I will be *Extreme Makeover* every day for the rest of my life. But somebody on *What Not to Wear* or *Ambush Makeover*, they'll mostly remember that one day they got that makeover. That's how I see the difference.

### IF YOU COULD GO BACK IN TIME, DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD'VE HAD THE LIP SURGERY SOONER?

No. I think that flaws build character and helped me become the girl that I am today. I'm the girl that doesn't have anybody to sit with at lunch. I'm the girl who listens to your problems instead of talking about my problems. And I think that's just because of what I had to live with for 29 years.

### WHAT'S ONE OF THE BEST COMPLIMENTS YOU'VE RECEIVED SINCE THE MAKEOVER?

My niece calls me in the morning and she's like, "I look pretty like you." And she didn't do that before. But since the makeover, she's just so excited about the whole thing, seeing me on TV, seeing me more glamorous. Before, I would play down my looks.

### WHAT WAS ONE OF THE WORST THINGS THAT ANYONE SAID TO YOU BEFORE THE MAKEOVER?

I kind of blocked most of that out, but I would just say that men, when I was like thirteen, and I don't even know if you can write this, but men, like 30 or 40 years old, used to say really derogatory sexual comments to me. And that was the most hurtful. It was disrespectful and it made me not like men. That's also part of why the whole intimacy thing is tough for me.

### ARE MEN MORE RESPECTFUL NOW?

I'm just a very strong woman, and you just wouldn't say something like that to me. It's changed not in the aspect that they don't want to say it. It's changed in the aspect that they're like, "If I say that to her, I might get smacked down." (laughs)

### SO, DO YOU HAVE ANY REGRETS AT ALL WITH REGARD TO BEING ON THE SHOW?

No, not one. I'd do it all over, every second of it.

### EVEN WATCHING YOURSELF DROOL ONTO A TRAY ON NATIONAL TV?

(laughs) That was the funniest part! I was like, "Oh my god, they did not put that on there." (laughs harder) I would say that was easier to take than some of the insults I took when I was nine or ten.

## dr. garth fisher, plastic surgeon

Ever wondered what interior design, blackjack and plastic surgery have in common? Well, Dr. Garth Fisher, a firm believer in patient education, can tell you that and much more. A board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon who practices in Beverly Hills, California, Dr. Fisher has a deep appreciation and understanding of beauty, and that's no surprise to anyone who's met his wife, Brooke Burke. Selected as one of the top plastic surgeons in the United States in *Best Doctors in America* (an authoritative listing of the nation's top physicians), Dr. Fisher has become one of the busiest plastic surgeons in the world and is now the resident plastic surgeon on *Extreme Makeover*.



#### WHAT'S THE MOST COMMON MISCONCEPTION ABOUT PLASTIC SURGERY?

I think maybe the average person thinks a plastic surgeon uses plastic, and they really don't. That's one of the misconceptions. I think one of the most common misconceptions is that you can take somebody and totally change them into somebody else just with plastic surgery. I've had men come to me and ask if I can make them look like Brad Pitt, and I say, "No" and they say, "Why not?" But that's not what plastic surgery is all about. You can't do that. You can only enhance somebody's features, change features or maybe slant them in one direction, but you can't make them look like somebody else.

#### WHAT PROCEDURE IS MOST COMMONLY REQUESTED?

Last year, Botox and collagen injections were the most common procedures performed by volume across the board. But that also depends totally on the age group. For the younger girls, probably breast augmentation. For the older patients, probably facelifts and brow lifts.

#### WHICH PROCEDURE IS THE MOST DIFFICULT TO PERFORM?

You know what? They're all difficult when you're trying to achieve a first quality result. They require a lot of detail, effort and commitment to making the results look as good as possible.

#### DO YOU EVER HAVE PEOPLE REQUEST PROCEDURES THAT THEY TRULY DON'T NEED? AND IN THAT CASE, DO YOU REFUSE TO PERFORM THEM?

Oh, definitely. 50 percent of the people we see in our office we turn down for surgery and that's something that happens each and every day. I've had days where I've turned everyone down for surgery.

#### WHAT'S AN EXAMPLE OF A SURGERY YOU TURNED DOWN?

People that come in with false expectations, who think plastic surgery is going to do something that it's not, I don't think they're a really good candidate for surgery. If a patient comes in and we don't have a really good communication line, if it's apparent that what we're telling them, they're not hearing, or if I'm not comfortable with what they're saying, those people usually get turned down. Some people are perfect. And I give them this line: Plastic surgery is a lot like playing blackjack. When you're at ten, you take a card. When you're at 15, you think about it. When you're at 18 or 19, it's best to hold. You know? You don't want to bust. I've always used that line with my patients. There's some people that are so perfect, where are they going to go with this? The risk outweighs the benefits.

#### CAN YOU ALWAYS SPOT A NOSE JOB OR BREAST IMPLANTS A MILE AWAY?

If it's done very naturally, if it's a really top quality result, it's pretty difficult for anybody to tell.

#### WOULD YOU EVER HAVE PLASTIC SURGERY YOURSELF?

Oh, yeah. I had my nose done.

#### WHAT CELEBRITY BODY PARTS DO PEOPLE REQUEST MOST OFTEN?

It depends on the fad. Who's hot now? J.Lo. For the longest time, it was Angelina Jolie. It was Sharon Stone before then, her eyes and nose. People like that. Pamela Anderson in the past. Actually, my wife, Brooke Burke, they ask about her too. It just kinda goes in cycles. Whoever's hot, people want to look like them.

#### HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT BEING ON TV?

It's exciting and fun, but I'm so physically concentrated and focused on what I'm doing that I wouldn't know what was going on around me. I really focus on my surgery.

#### DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE PART DOCTOR, PART ARTIST?

I always compare it to an interior decorator. You can have two interior decorators come into your home, and one sets up everything and you walk in and you say, "Wow, how did you do this? It looks amazing." And they just had a feel for what you wanted when they saw a couple things you picked out. The second interior decorator comes in and he's got a pink lamp, a polka-dotted chair, a striped couch and you say, "My God, this looks awful," and he thinks it looks great. There's those kinds of differences. I think as a plastic surgeon, my sense of aesthetics and beauty probably appeals to more people. So, I think my finished product, what I feel most comfortable with, is what most people feel comfortable with.

#### HOW DOES YOUR WORK AFFECT YOU? DO YOU FIND IT REWARDING?

Oh, it's really rewarding. You know the stories that you see on TV, we see that every day; it's just brought into the public eye now. We see people coming in crying, bringing flowers. We've got a two-year waiting list for consults now. You want to make every patient happy. I tell them, "Look, the most important thing to me is that you're happy. And I only have to do two things to make you happy: Tell you the truth and do a good job. And if I do those two things and make you happy, it's going to be a worthwhile experience for you and you'll be glad you spent your money here."

#### WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A PLASTIC SURGEON?

I think it best fit my skills. I feel comfortable around people and have good people skills. I'm a perfectionist; I spend a lot of time trying to be very meticulous and careful. I love plastic surgery; I love the field; I love beauty. I think it all just fit my needs and my particular strong points.

#### DO YOU SEE YOURSELF DOING THIS FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?

No, I'd say in five years I see myself on a ranch with my kids, rolling around on the ground with them. That's what I want to do. **Zrk**

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