

FENTON

MODEL MANAGEMENT





'Insta-famous'



Charlotte McKinney is America's latest bombshell, cementing her status in one of this year's Super Bowl adverts (she ate a burger in a bikini). But it all started on Instagram. Told she was too curvy to model, the 22-year-old took matters into her own hands. Her account now boasts more than half a million followers, and made her Kate Upton's heir apparent. God bless social media...

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HUNTER & GATTI STYLING BY ZOE COSTELLO

CHARLOTTE

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— Spotlight —

The love goddess Venus rises from the sea, gold-wreathed, and her latest incarnation hails from Orlando. Charlotte McKinney first made waves on the bikini beach when she posed in a 2014 ad campaign for Guess, made another splash in early 2015 with a Super Bowl ad for Cat's in the Hat, and then struck right into Season 20 of ABC's *Dancing with the Stars*. Though her range widens through the Internet, her profile still needs to fill out. Who is this new girl, anyway, here for a job?

"I grew up in Florida," McKinney says. "I have two parents that are still together. They own a business—they sell exotic cars. To me, nowadays, it's so lucky to have two parents still together. I believe that's how I've made it so far, having such an amazing family behind me." McKinney's destiny was first set in motion at 14. "The day before my freshman year I woke up and I had these things," she says, giggling. "I didn't really know if it was good or bad. Thank God my older sister, Corinne, was there to help me deal with it. Turns out the weird girls in high school didn't like McKinney or her braids and she was bullied. "I guess they saw me so changed. I was always getting teased with guys because I was funny, and I didn't have a lot of girlfriends back then."

McKinney made other plans. "I knew what I had to do," she says. "I knew school wasn't an option for me—with my diabetes, my grades, the bullying." With close friends Britney Boner, Claudia Schiller, and Christie Brinkley as guiding stars, McKinney dropped out of school at 17 and hit the modeling agencies. The agencies laughed.

"You're too sweet, you want to model, and you have gorgeous boobs" was the refrain McKinney remembers hearing. "This one is going to make it." Before the Guess ad opened doors, she couldn't even get a job for Miami Swim Week. "Who would want a skinny girl in a swimsuit?" McKinney asks rhetorically. The answer is: No one would. "Which is why this is a Venus reimagining. I'm really into comedy. I hope to find an outlet to show what I'm a funny girl." —LAURA JACOBSON

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