

# SHINE ON

## FINDING YOUR OWN UNIQUE AND RADIANT GLOW

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I was blessed with oily skin. Though for the first half of my life I carried it like a curse, along with the pressed powder I was never without. My teen years were the worst—every hour I'd flip that compact open and pat on the powder, caking it into my nose, cheeks, and forehead to conceal my “embarrassing” shine.

In my 20s, I expanded my arsenal to blotting tissues, toners, and harsh cleansers that sucked my skin dry but didn't dull my insecurity. Then, right before my wedding, my best friend's mom sent me to see her facialist, Carmen, who I hoped could make my oily skin picture-perfect, at least for this one special day.

Carmen was a petite, bubbly Puerto Rican woman who exuded warmth and wisdom, along with a quality I couldn't put my finger on—it was like she glowed from within. Whatever her secret was, I wanted in on it too.

As Carmen worked her magic and glycolics over my enlarged pores, I lamented my struggle to stop being shiny, confessing how ugly this imperfection made me feel. She shook her head, put down her facial wand, and held up a mirror. “Look at those hazel eyes, your beautiful smile,” she insisted. “You are positively radiant.”

She went on to explain that my Sicilian sheen was not a flaw but a gift that would keep my skin youthful, those precious oils my protection against the rages of time and sun. “My other clients would pay dearly for your dewy complexion,” she said.

The change wasn't immediate, but Carmen's words stayed with me. I started to see my skin and myself in a whole new light. I adopted a gentler approach, put down the clogging powders, and began playing up my prominent features. And miraculously, the less I fought my natural skin type, the more manageable it became—until it stopped being something I stressed over.

The other day, as I was at my mirror wielding bronzers, highlighters, and brightener with fearless abandon, I thought back to Carmen and how far I'd come. Had those oils been kind to my skin, or was it that I'd become kinder to myself? And suddenly I understood her secret: When we accept ourselves, we truly shine.