



JEFF HUNTER:

**papas are made —  
not born!**

• Jeffrey Hunter went to England to star in *Sailor of the King* at precisely the time he expected to be pacing a hospital corridor while awaiting the birth of his and Barbara Rush's first child.

Jeff begged for and was granted an emergency leave of one week. Obliging the stork advanced *his* date and Christopher was born on August 29, 1952. But then Jeffrey had to fly east to fulfill professional duties for a period of almost four months.

Though the happiest of new fathers, Jeff's general attitude toward babies had been roughly that they were a bother which descended upon one's friends and thereafter kept them from joining a happy group at Mocambo ringside. Wife Barbara was well aware both of Jeff's enthusiasm over the *idea* of his own fatherhood, and his naivete about the everyday routine required of a parent. So she wrote to him every day during his absence, explaining in detail what attentions Master Christopher required: He took so many ounces of formula and it was prepared thus and so: he took so many ounces of juice; he was awake at such and such an hour, and he slept at certain intervals. He was focusing his eyes nicely; he was gurgling. He grabbed anything held up for him and waved it triumphantly ... he loved soft toy animals, but his favorite toy was a tablespoon. . . .

Jeff returned to this country in time to meet Barbara in Chicago and go to Milwaukee for Christmas with his parents. Young Chris, too small to travel, was left safely in California with his devoted grandmother, Mrs. Rush. So it was that Barbara and Jeff were together again just as they had been in honeymoon days. Except that she talked a great deal about Chris, described him in repeated detail, made endless future plans.

The honeymooners finally came home, and Jeff—his face shining with anticipation—rushed to his son's bed and stared at the minute organism kicking there. Christopher returned his father's scrutiny and slowly one small eyebrow went up, the insignificant nose crinkled, and a thunderous roar shook the rafters.

When Barbara had silenced the tumult with a bottle, Jeff said bleakly, "Are you sure he's all right? One ear is higher than the other . . . and both of them stand out like sugar bowl handles. Don't they *do* something about such things these days?"

Barbara explained that nearly everyone has a high ear and a low one . . . in millimeters, of course; one hand larger than the other, one foot larger, and even the two sides of the face different.

Jeff listened to these reassurances politely but his shoulders still drooped. "I don't think he looks like anybody in your family or mine," was his final sigh.

Conscientiously, Jeff attempted to assume some responsibility, but he nearly drowned in his own nervous perspiration the first time he tried to bathe a wiggly Chris. "I'm going to drop him, sure. How does anybody hang onto a slippery, splashing, organism like this?" he demanded of Barbara.

Barbara didn't blame Jeff for his reserve. "No man is really at ease with a tiny baby. Infants don't seem quite human to the male of the species." Wisely, she made no issue of it. Instead, she sought to combine Jeff's getting adjusted to the baby with pursuing one of his favorite hobbies: photography. Jeff, just to be nice, lined the baby up for a few shots on the sofa. Chris, like a real trouper, supplied a series of varying poses and a gamut of expressions. And that did it. From then on, father and son were joined in happy camaraderie—they shared a hobby. There has never been a richer man than Jeff Hunter upon discovery that his boy was all a shutterbug could desire: photogenic, cooperative, and capable of a truly fine range of dramatic expression.



*Mom just knew how a shoe goes on ...*



*Pop had to learn the hard way!*