Harry Parnell: Photographer of the Stars

I've always been interested in photography. When I was a child, I used to borrow my parents' camera. This annoyed them, so, when I was about ten years old, they bought me my own camera. After that, I spent my free time going around taking pictures. I enjoyed taking pictures of flowers, trees and animals, but most of all, I liked taking pictures of people. I still have my childhood photo albums. Most pictures weren't that great, but I like looking at them. They remind me of what I first felt when I started taking pictures.

When I finished school, I did a photography course and then I got a job working for my local paper. I liked the people I worked with, but I found it quite boring after a while. I used to have to take dull pictures of local buildings and new types of cars; that kind of thing. After a couple of years, I trained in digital photography and portraits with another photographer. Then, I moved to a national newspaper and that was more interesting, but I finally decided to work for myself taking pictures of famous people. I like exploring how settings and people interact. Many famous people got to know me and liked my artistic talent. I have been working as a portrait photographer for many years now.

When I tell people what I do for a living, they imagine that I'm an unpleasant person who follows famous people, takes embarrassing pictures of them and makes a lot of money. Actually, I don't do that. Usually the people I photograph want me to photograph them. We create an atmosphere in their own garden or outdoors where they can feel comfortable. The only thing that can happen is that sometimes they suddenly decide they don't want to be photographed. That can be annoying, especially if they've asked you there in the first place. But that doesn't happen very often.

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I find my job exciting and challenging. It has a creative side and also a technical side. I have to imagine and shoot the best photo and I also have to use different accessories to get different effects.

1 What does the writer say about his childhood?
- A He liked taking pictures of his parents.
- B He discovered he enjoyed taking pictures of people best.
- C He disliked taking photos of nature.
- D He never had his own camera.

2 What did the writer do in his first job?
- A He took pictures of ordinary people.
- B He photographed uninteresting things.
- C He travelled around the country a lot.
- D He stayed in the office most of the time.

3 What does the writer think people believe about him?
- A He doesn't earn much money.
- B He has an embarrassing job.
- C He will probably be famous one day.
- D He isn't a nice person.

4 When talking about the people he photographs now, the writer says
- A they are usually happy to be photographed.
- B they're often unpleasant.
- C nobody ever upsets him.
- D they sometimes forget to pay him.

5 Which of the following is the best description of the writer?
- A The talented photographer who has worked in different places but has always enjoyed his career.
- B The photographer who prefers taking pictures of people and enjoys embarrassing the rich and famous.
- C The photographer who likes working for himself and enjoys his work most of the time.
- D The photographer who has taken pictures for many years and has always wanted to be famous.

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