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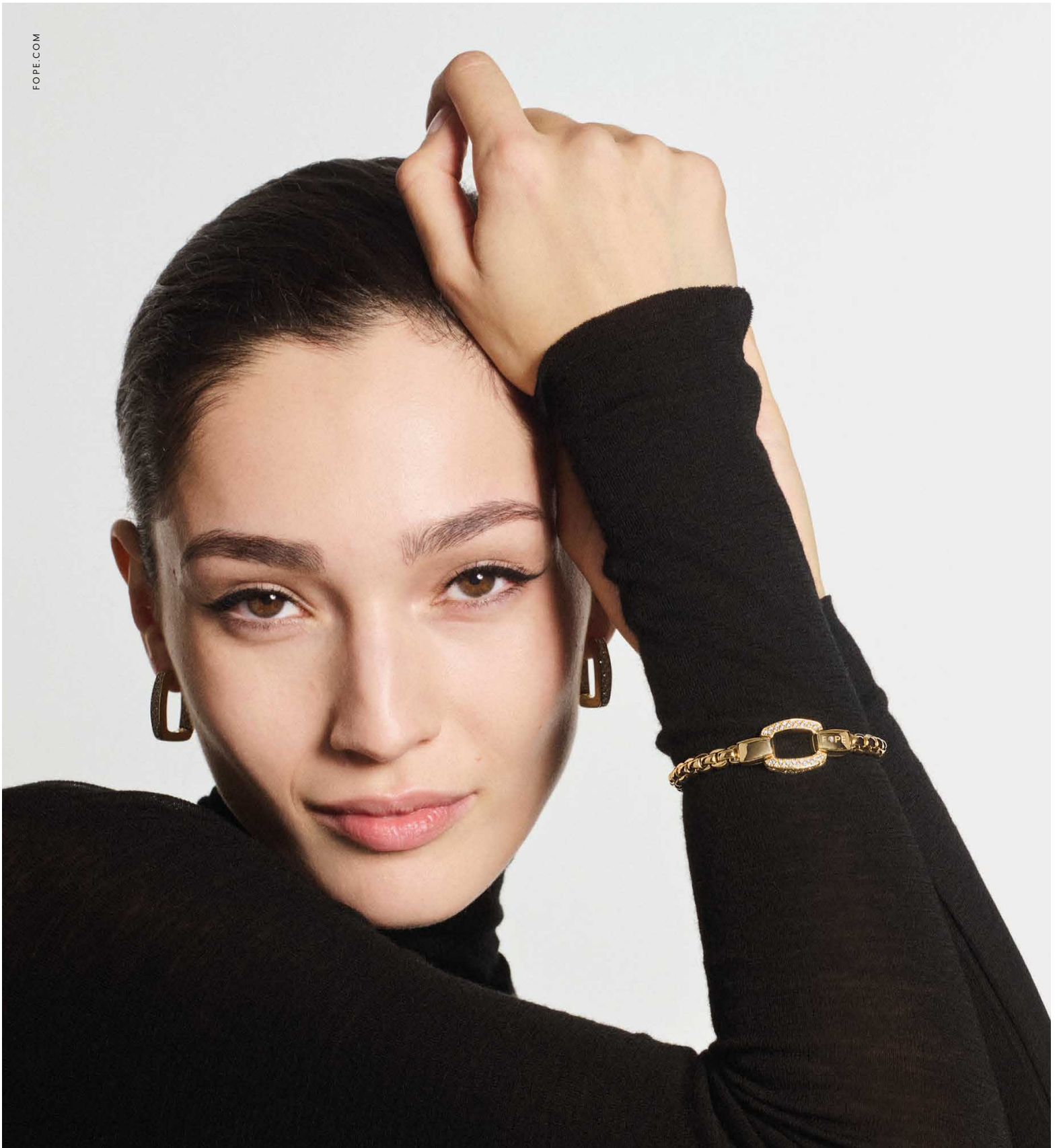
HANGING OUT WITH
THE FUNNIEST WOMAN
IN HOLLYWOOD

31 AUG 2026
ISSUE 941



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FOPE

▶ IN THIS ISSUE

NEWS

- 7 *Grazia* view
- 9 Polly Vernon has her say
- 11 Chart of lust
- 12 What's new now!
- 14 **COVER STORY**

10 hot stories, including get the Scandi girl look, Gigi and Bradley take their relationship to the next level, and the MP who's campaigning for more sex talk

FEATURES

- 34 **COVER STORY**
- Leslie Mann: queen of midlife chaos
- 42 'Breast cancer isn't just a disease of older women'
- 44 **COVER STORY**
- Inside Brand Beckham
- 47 'At 50, I suddenly feel sexy'
- 48 **COVER STORY**
- The 'back to work' angst ruining summer holidays
- 51 Culture debrief with Otegha Uwagba

FASHION

- 53 Tory Burch delivers a new It bag to lust after
- 54 Heirloom-in-the-making jewellery
- 60 **COVER STORY**
- The cult dresses to know now
- 66 Why we all need an 'awkward' shoe
- 68 Take Note: all your fashion news

HEALTH + BEAUTY

- 32 Join the *Grazia* Beauty Club
- 71 It's new + we want it!
- 72 Supermodel Arizona Muse is our 'less is more' beauty inspo
- 80 Gracie Abrams on the appeal of a signature scent
- 81 Harness the power of peptides
- 82 Beauty girl problems: can fake tan and a heatwave ever mix?
- 83 Add to basket: post-vacay blues busters to snap up

LIFESTYLE

- 85 Give your tea break an upgrade
- 86 Discover H&M Home's collab with A-list designer Kelly Wearstler

AND THE REST

- 89 Never miss an issue of *Grazia*!
- 90 The last word... Jorja Smith

▶ MEANWHILE, ONLINE...

YOU'VE BEEN READING...



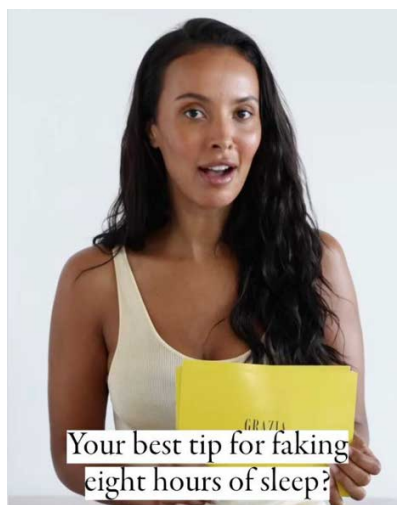
Em Austen's piece on how career women have to perform their jobs online, as well as IRL.

COMMENTING ON...



The news that Sienna will be back on our screens this autumn with TV show *War*.

WATCHING...



Previous cover star Maya Jama sharing her beauty secrets over on Instagram.

BUYING...



Baseball caps – officially *the* accessory of the summer, as endorsed by the A-list.

HAVE YOUR SAY...

Email us at feedback@graziamagazine.co.uk
Find us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram @GraziaUK

WOW! I JUST finished reading Polly Vernon's piece on *The Secret Lives Of Gypsy Wives*. I live in the US and haven't seen the show but this beautifully written review makes me want to watch it as soon as it becomes available. The sincerity and honesty of this thoughtfully crafted critique moved me in a way I wasn't expecting. Kudos, to you, Polly!

Courtney

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WELCOME TO THE ISSUE

NOTHING BEATS THE restorative powers of a girls' trip, a chance to set the world to rights, eat industrial amounts of crisps and laugh until your face hurts with the people who know you best. The importance of making time for your friends is at the heart of our cover star Leslie Mann's new film, *Spa Weekend*, another pitch-perfect comedy from the actor who knows how to milk the laughs from midlife chaos. Hopefully, you're reading this horizontal in the sun somewhere, but if you're already getting the back-to-work wobbles, our digital director, Rebecca Holman, tackles the fear of re-entry on page 48, and our beauty team has picked out some post-holiday pick-me-ups to take the edge off (page 83). See you in September.

HANNA WOODSIDE,
DEPUTY EDITOR

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Hattie Brett is on holiday



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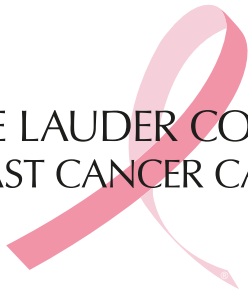


Selected stores. Subject to availability



DON'T HOLD BACK – A PUBLIC SNOG MIGHT DO YOU THE WORLD OF GOOD

Lovers of PDAs, we have good news for you: showing affection while out and about is now proven to be **good for your relationship**. Couples who pack on the public displays report higher levels of satisfaction, according to a new study. 'Even small everyday gestures, such as holding hands, **hugging or kissing** can help partners feel valued, emotionally secure and connected to each other,' says researcher Dagna Kocur, who led the study for scientific journal *Plos One*. Some call it cringe when a couple cuddle up in public, but we call it just good science, so we're officially declaring this the **summer of the smooch**. PDAs shouldn't be reserved for teenagers – whatever your age, start showing the love.



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In defence of Pilates princesses (by a Pilates princess)



HAVE YOU MET the internet's new favourite female punch bag? The one it's perfectly OK for you to have a pop at – use as the punchline on a throwaway Instagram gag that makes you look dead cool – while still thinking yourself a Good Feminist? It's... wait for it... *women who do Pilates!*

Because they're not just 'women who do Pilates', are they? No! They're *actually* 'toxic white privileged middle-class muppets who aspire to a reductively feminine Trad Wife-ish slender physique, which is why they've chosen Pilates (won't bulk them out) also it won't make them sweat (so gross and unfeminine) which also means their clean girl minimalist no-make-up make-up won't budge. And that neat little bun? No flyaways shall escape it! Not a one!'

But the worst, truly unforgivable thing about these... I know! Let's call them 'Pilates princesses', ref their prissy, controlled, precious demeanour, their local neighbourhood ballerina aspirations... The smoking gun on how truly awful they are? They're the manosphere's preferred type of lady! Dream girl to all the new wave misogynists! Everything Andrew Tate and HS Tikky Tokky think a woman should be!

How *could* they? Right? How could Pilates women live with themselves knowing they're coveted by the very worst kind of men? Knowing they embody

everything those a**holes think desirable? Clacking about with their designer water bottles and their tiny bums, just... being pleasing to *those* eyes?

Except that... I mean, just a thought, and (transparency!) one informed by my doing Pilates for 14 years (something that has saved my back, Pilates being principally a physiotherapeutic practice), I dunno... *What if we imagine, for a brief second, women aren't in fact responsible for how random men on the internet perceive them?*

And also – again, bear with me, but: maybe Pilates princesses have their own reasons for doing Pilates? Reasons unrelated to staying skinny/unsweaty for the titillation of misogynist online shouty dudes? Maybe it sorted out their back pain, too. *Maybe they just like it.*

And I know it's 'just Pilates'. I know it's niche, First World problems-y, doesn't *really* matter... Except that it *does*. Because the lusting after/lampooning of Pilates princesses is the latest incarnation of the Same Old Story. The one where women are *still* only ever how we're perceived – never who we actually are. We are nothing at all but the assumptions made about us, based on: how short our skirt, how blonde our hair, how slim our body, how matchy-matchy our Lycra. That – and which ideologically unsound stranger has the hots for us.

CURRENTLY OBSESSED WITH...

1

**Vivobarefoot's
Tabi shoe**
Insanely cool in
their beautiful
freaky weirdness.



2



Sézane's Youry top
Another week of heatwave
deserves another good top.

3

**Missoma's
beaded anklet**
How pretty?



5

Prequel Gleanser
Newly released, yet in
like a rocket to my top
five cleansers.



4

**New
season
Ba&sh**
Also: how
pretty?



Sudden sun. Spontaneous picnic. Surprise strawberry centre.



2 Secret Centre Strawberries

Win over the picnic crowd with our strawberry shaped mousse, revealing a zingy compote centre, all on a crunchy white chocolate and digestive biscuit base.

WAITROSE

The home of food lovers

2 Secret Centre Strawberries, Selected stores. Subject to availability. Minimum online spend and delivery charges apply. Prices may vary in Channel Islands, Little Waitrose & Partners & concessions. Serving Suggestion shown.

Who we're loving and living for right now...

CHART OF LUST



1. Up

JOSÉ MOURINHO

'The special one' according to... well, *him*. Football's most enigmatic character, 'deeped' via a new Netflix documentary.



2. Non-mover

SAM REID

Heavenly star of the heavenly *The Newsreader*; now being (forgive us) epic in *The Vampire Lestat* on iPlayer. One of our fave actors. Potentially ever.



3. New in

HIMESH PATEL

Of *The Odyssey*, sure (we haven't watched it yet, THREE HOURS LONG?) but also? Of *Station Eleven*, now on Sky and it's so good.

4. Non-mover

ANNE HATHAWAY

Showcasing some truly immaculate pregnancy style, ref, the duck egg blue cloak-type-thing with the red lining, over the jeans.



5. Up

THE 1980S

Looking just impossibly glam in new TV show *The Shards*. First *Rivals*, now this! (Don't ask what it was really like...)



6. Up

JAMES NORTON

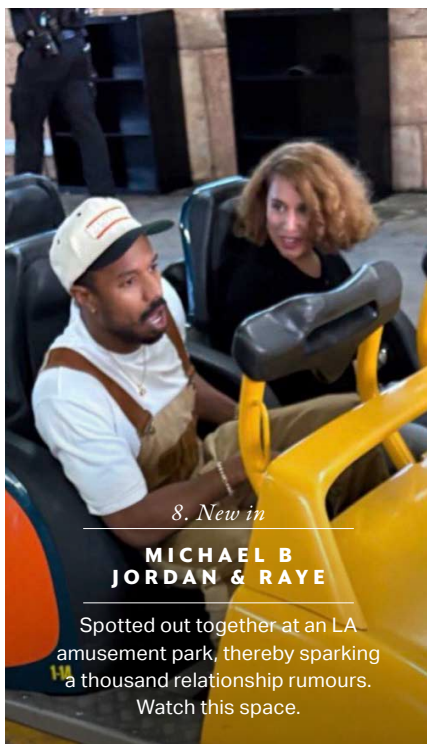
Freshly confirmed for the M&S Christmas ads. It's early to get excited. Let's call this 'seasonal pre-excitement'?



7. Down

'TOUCH BASE'

Barely a third of Gen Z employees understand this phrase, according to new research. Which is good because it's AWFUL. Let it rot.



8. New in

MICHAEL B JORDAN & RYE

Spotted out together at an LA amusement park, thereby sparking a thousand relationship rumours. Watch this space.

9. Up

PE GUYS

It stands for 'private equity', not phys ed, and they're apparently *the* boyfriends of the summer. Reese Witherspoon and Olivia Rodrigo have one each.



10. New in

FOOD DIVORCE

A new trend that has couples food shopping, cooking and eating separately. Apparently a v good way to avoid rows of the 'what shall we have for tea?' variety.



WHAT'S NEW NOW!

Summer holidays may be in full swing, but we're already planning our autumn wardrobe



Gant joins together with Yale University for a collaboration packed full of pep and prep – right on time for the start of a new term. Ivy League or not, we'll be wearing this logo cap for the foreseeable. **£60, gant.co.uk**

With evenings set to take a chillier turn, be ready to banish the breeze with M&S's new season techy windbreaker, the ultimate gorpcore wardrobe staple. **£55, marksandspencer.com**



With an adidas Stan Smith revival underway and ballet flats taking the 'shoe of the year' top spot, it seems only natural for a Stan-Smith-ballerina hybrid to have emerged. Sounds bizarre, right? But it just works. **£85, adidas.co.uk**

In need of some style inspo? Look to Next's new season campaign for easy-going, off-duty outfits to try. Exhibit A: flannel button-downs and slouchy jeans. Classic, simple and oh-so chic. Check mate. **next.co.uk**



Switch out plain tees in favour of preppy striped polos for a fresh take on wardrobe basics. Layer up over long-sleeve tops for an added sartorial touch. **£18, matalan.co.uk**



The next step to lingerie-inspired outfits? Flashing your bra... no, really. In the meantime, a flippy lace camisole will do just the trick. **£18, F&F at tesco.com**



Suzie Kondi's terry-cloth flares are our current obsession and if the street-stylers of Copenhagen Fashion Week are correct, you're about to see these everywhere. **£267, suziekondi.com**



While you wait patiently for your next haircut, keep flyaways in place with Lié Studio's rather splendid hairpin. Far more sophisticated than that elasticated bobble you can never find. **£70, lie-studio.co.uk**



Take note from the '00s and get behind oversized, bug-eyed sunnies. **£400, Oliver Peoples**



The chicest way to wear your jewellery right now? Mix your metals. Mejuri's contrasting cuff is our latest jewellery box addition. **£228, mejuri.com**



Get prepped for a back-to-work wardrobe refresh, starting with a laptop-friendly handbag. DeMellier's Stockholm style in tobacco suede nails the brief. **£525, demellierlondon.com**

10 HOT STORIES

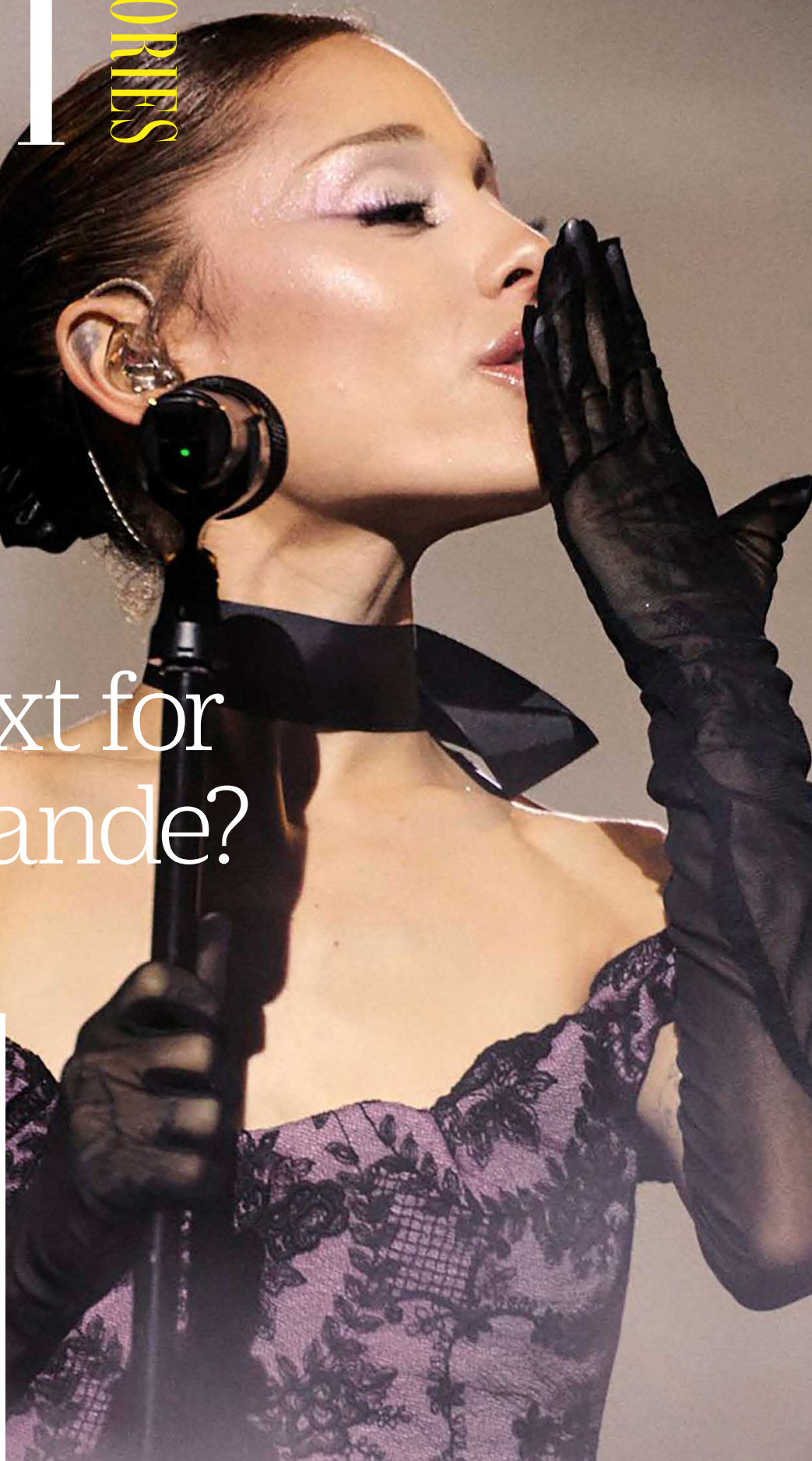
1.

What's next for Ariana Grande?

No wonder the star needs a break, says *Georgia Aspinall*

ACROSS 41 SHOWS, concentrated into just 87 days, Ariana Grande has performed more than two hours a night on her arena tour for her *Eternal Sunshine* album. Singing 23 songs, the five-act theatrical performance includes six outfit changes and a high-wire aerial show, all in between energetic choreography. It is, as described by those close to her, 'a very physical show', and wraps on 1 September after a 10-night stint at London's Wembley Stadium.

The grand finale will be the last time fans can expect to see Grande for a while, as she takes a break, following frenzied speculation about her health. 'Ariana looks



Ariana on
her Eternal
Sunshine tour

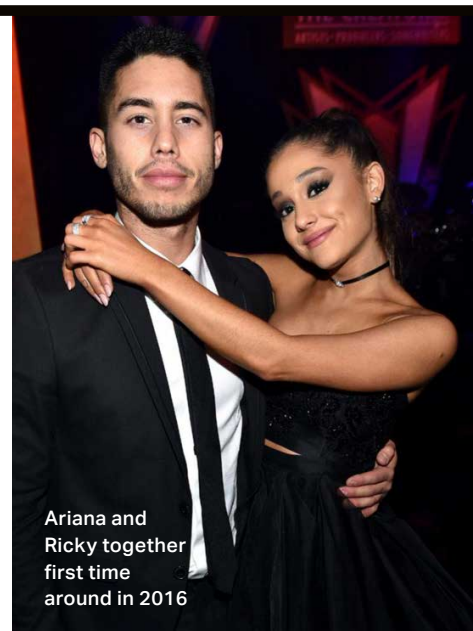
PHOTOS: @KATIATEMKIN, GETTY

forward to finishing the tour and ending it on a high note, both healthily and happily, and then taking a much-deserved break from public-facing work and appearances, which has led to endless, ongoing public scrutiny,' her representative said in a statement earlier this month. For years there has been invasive commentary around Grande's weight, which experts agree can be harmful, with well-meaning comments quickly descending into public pile-ons.

When she takes a step back from the limelight, Grande is expected to hunker down with her new-old boyfriend Ricky Alvarez in her £3.6 million mansion in the Hollywood Hills. You may remember hearing Alvarez's name in the 2019 song, *Thank U, Next*, in which Grande sang 'wrote some songs about Ricky, now I listen and laugh'. Seven years later, she's updated the lyrics, singing on stage recently, 'wrote some songs about Ricky, we always find our way back'. Her former back-up dancer, Alvarez and Grande reportedly maintained a friendship following their 2016 split and rekindled their relationship in June after celebrating a mutual friend's birthday. While her break-up with actor and *Wicked* co-star Ethan Slater was confirmed publicly in June, the pair actually separated amicably several months beforehand.

'Once things are more settled, Ari is keen to do some travelling,' a source close to Grande says. 'For so many years now she's been running on fumes. It was as though she was in this state of perpetual motion, living to work versus working to live, and this is something she's determined to change about her life moving forward.'

Certainly, Grande has barely paused for breath in the last two years. Four movies, two albums, the global expansion of her multimillion-dollar brand REM Beauty, not to mention the monster press tours that accompany each project. In Hollywood, it's no longer enough to put out good work, the promo circuit must also involve international red carpets, themed PR activations and fan events. One second you're being dressed by Law Roach for a premiere in Singapore, the next you're in the Hot Ones studio in Los Angeles eating spicy chicken wings. After that? Thirty



Ariana and
Ricky together
first time
around in 2016

five-minute interviews back to back. Then a lie detector test on camera. Don't forget to nail the Glambot at tomorrow's award ceremony, lest you be trolled forever on TikTok. Oh, and post about every moment on your own socials. Be funny, energetic, but natural. Don't forget to smile, smile, smile!

'Hollywood has definitely changed in recent years and not for the better, from Ariana's perspective,' the insider says. 'Ari has found the relentless obsession with social media to be utterly toxic and it's only added to the pressure she's been under.'

Grande is not the only celebrity fatigued by the constant hustle. This month, just two years since their debut, Katseye announced a second of their six members, Sophia Laforceza, is taking an extended break, citing the need to prioritise her wellness. Zendaya too has confirmed her plans to 'disappear' from Hollywood next year after a mammoth year of promotion.

It all begs the question, has the fame machine become too gruelling to be sustained? Many A-listers have also hit back at parasocial fan behaviour that demands constant accessibility. Chappell Roan, Taylor Swift, Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez have all called it out. And Grande alluded to it on stage at a recent concert, telling fans, 'boundaries need to be set, human beings do need a break sometimes'.

Even now, the pressure to continue grinding doesn't stop for Grande. November will see the release of *Meet The Fockers* sequel *Focker-In-Law*, in which Grande stars alongside Ben Stiller and Robert De Niro. 'The hope is that she's strong enough to be a part of the promotions,' the source explains. 'But everyone involved is keen to emphasise that there's no pressure, she must not rush herself back.'

2. It's a Scandi girl summer

Peekaboo bra

Underwear as outerwear has long been a favourite. This time, however, choose hints of cool cotton bras peeking out of deep-V sweaters and unbuttoned flannel shirts.



Sweater,
£59.95,
United
Colours of
Benetton

Sunglasses,
£19.90,
Uniqlo

Bra, £54,
Cou Cou
Intimates at
Selfridges

Trousers,
£119,
& Other
Stories

Belt, £6,
Tu Clothing

NOW IN ITS 20th year, Copenhagen Fashion Week has established itself as a major player on the sartorial calendar, playing host to some of the industry's most exciting brands.

But the pavements are just as captivating as the runways. Copenhagen street style is like no other, where the rules are... there are no rules. Nowhere else would you see lace bonnets, sharply tailored suits, bloomers, babydoll dresses and pom-pom hats all in one place. It's a city where people experiment with their wardrobes, trying new outfit combinations, styling tricks and unusual pairings that, at first glance, might appear a little outlandish for 'real life', but ones you'll soon find cropping up repeatedly on your algorithm. Naturally, a few outfits are designed to capture the attention of the street-style photographers, but it's the more understated – often the simplest – ensembles that truly inspire our mood boards. Here are a few of our favourites to try...



Jacket,
£149.99,
Calvin Klein
Jeans at
Zalando



Jeans,
£230,
Closed at
Zalando



Wrap skirt,
£35.99, Mango



Sunglasses,
£75, COS

Broderie layers

If you loved the lace layer trend (a lacy hem visible beneath a T-shirt), this is for you. Add a broderie anglaise mini over jeans, PJ pants and tailored trousers to soften your look.



WORDS: JULIA HARVEY
PHOTOS: GETTY

Bandana,
£39.99 for
pack of 2,
Hugo at
Zalando

Bloomers, £285,
Staud at
mytheresa.com

T-shirt, £35,
Rokit

Necklace,
£125,
Daisy
London

Shoes,
£45.99,
Parfois

Bloomers and bandanas

Blousy cotton trousers might not sound sexy but they're surprisingly chic. Pair with vintage tees and bandanas for the ultimate Scandi-inspired outfit. Bloomin' lovely.



Vest,
£19.99,
Weekday

Heels,
£120,
Massimo
Dutti



T-shirt, £115,
Flore Flore

Skirt, £16,
Primark
by
Coleen

Pile on

More is more when it comes to upping the ante on your wardrobe basics. Layer up jersey T-shirts and tanks up top, then tie colour-pop knits and checked shirts around your waist.



Comfort tripping

An annual favourite of Sienna Miller, the 44-year-old took her family to Deià, Mallorca, staying at the five-star boutique retreat La Residencia.

As bohemian chic as the Millennial icon herself, it's both WFSL (work from sunlounger) and newborn approved.

Which A-list holiday tribe are you?

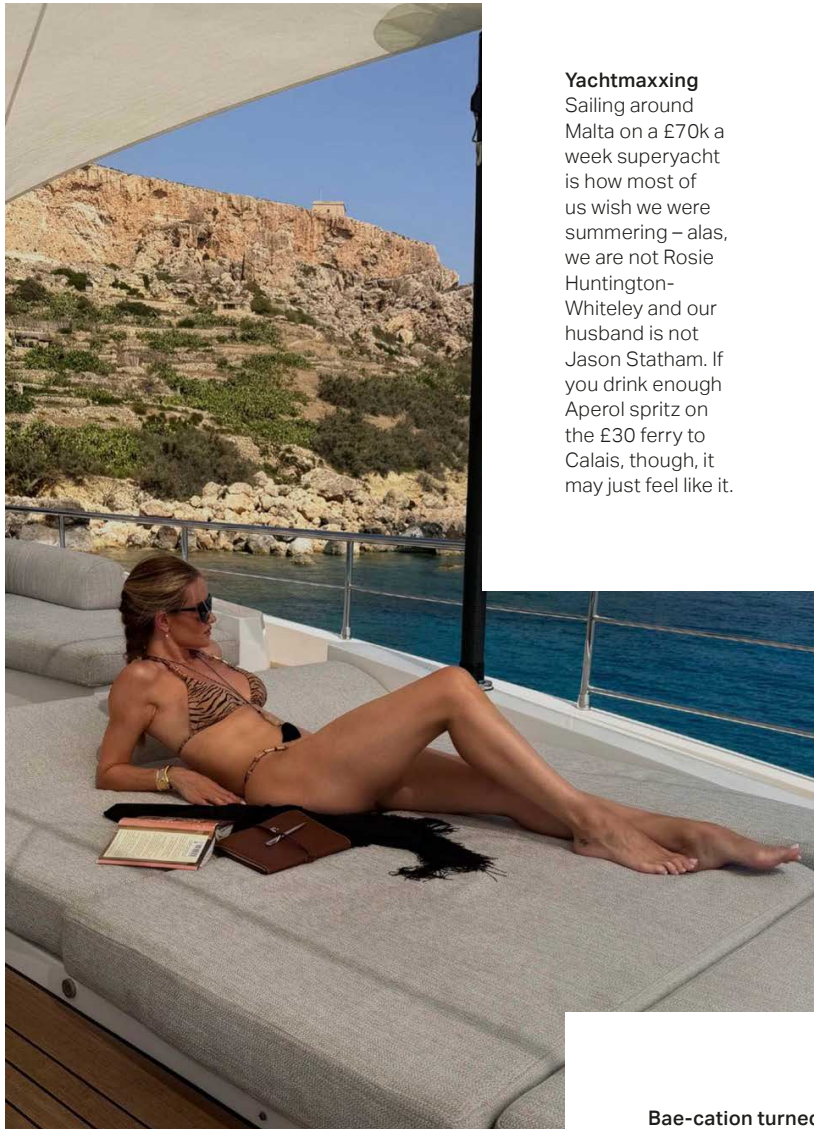
3.

IF MONEY WERE no object, how would you be summering? The A-list are seemingly enjoying back-to-back vacations, providing us with reams of summer-maxxing content that's as envy-inducing as it is aspirational. Whether you're the boozing-on-the-beach kind of sun seeker, à la Kate Moss, or dream of yachting around Europe with the kids like Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, there's a tribe for all of us...

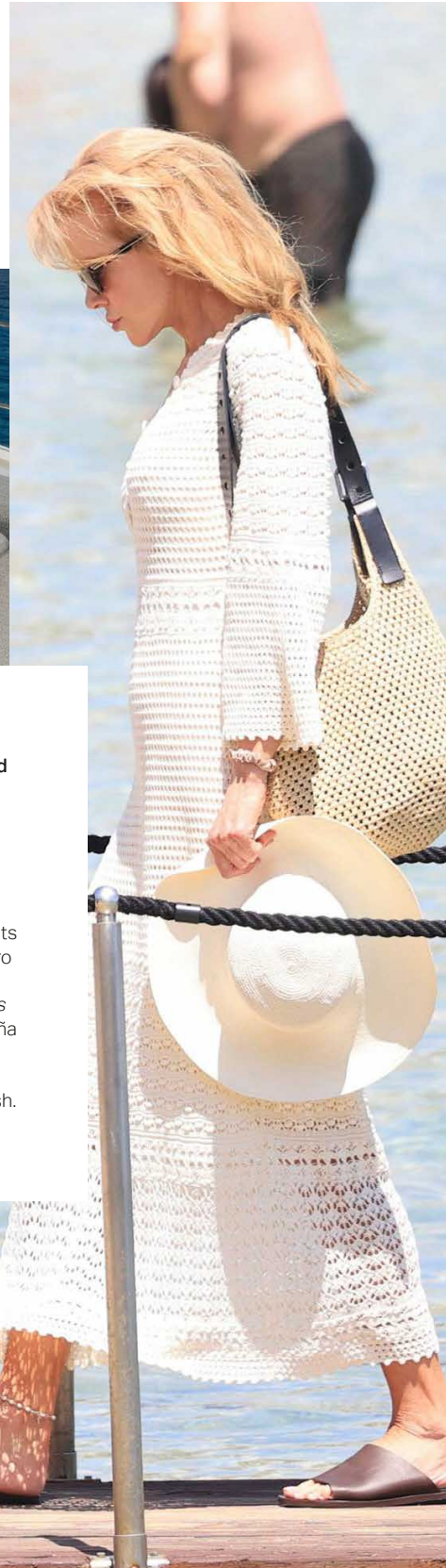
WORDS: GEORGIA ASPINALL. PHOTOS: BACKGRID.
INSTAGRAM/ROSIE HUNTINGTON-WHITELEY

Bottomless beach

Where else would Kate Moss vacay other than the party capital of the world? Spotted in Ibiza enjoying a vape and a cigarette before taking a dip, drink in hand, she does Beefa better than anyone. This one goes out to all the midlife ravers.



Yachtmaxxing
Sailing around Malta on a £70k a week superyacht is how most of us wish we were summering – alas, we are not Rosie Huntington-Whiteley and our husband is not Jason Statham. If you drink enough Aperol spritz on the £30 ferry to Calais, though, it may just feel like it.



Bae-cation turned girls' trip

After an Italian getaway with her new boyfriend Michael Reinstein, Nicole Kidman swapped flirty chats with the finance bro (worth \$500m) for drinks with *Lioness* co-star Zoe Saldaña in Mykonos. Oh, to be a fly on the wall for that gossip sesh.

Island hopping

Vying for co-parents of the year award, Jodie Turner-Smith and Joshua Jackson reunited for a Caribbean getaway with their daughter. To recreate this trip would mean holidaying with your ex. But at least they'd have to take your revenge bikini pics!



Lindsay Clancy
is on trial in
Massachusetts

4.

‘We’re failing women with postpartum psychosis’

The trial of Lindsay Clancy has highlighted a devastating and misunderstood illness, reports *Maria Lally*

THIS MONTH THE trial of mother Lindsay Clancy – which has been called ‘America’s saddest murder trial’ – shone a light on the devastation caused by postpartum psychosis. Clancy is accused of murdering her three children, aged five, three and eight months. After their deaths, she jumped out of a window and is now paralysed from the waist down. Clancy does not deny the killings, but is pleading not guilty; her defence team argues that she was suffering from undiagnosed postpartum psychosis and was not criminally responsible.

The court heard that Clancy, who was described as a ‘very loving mother who cared about her children’, told health professionals that she had insomnia, numbness and suicidal thoughts. This did not lead to a diagnosis. At the trial, Dr Nicole Kumi, an expert in postpartum mental health, said the case highlights ‘a significant gap in care for mums in the postpartum period’.

‘Postpartum psychosis is a severe and life-threatening mental illness that can onset rapidly in the days and weeks following childbirth,’ says Dr Jess Heron, CEO of the charity Action on Postpartum Psychosis. ‘It affects women of all cultures,

backgrounds and social circumstances. Women with bipolar are at high risk, but many women who develop it have no previous mental health history.’

The illness is highly treatable and a full recovery is possible, including in maternal care-giving and attachment. Postpartum psychosis-related infanticide is a very rare occurrence: there are around 1,200 cases of the illness in the UK each year and, in the decade up to 2021, fewer than 0.05% resulted in infanticide.

Evie Canavan had postpartum psychosis in 2010 after giving birth to her son Joe and is now the co-founder of Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week and @perinatalmhpartnership. ‘I had never experienced mental illness and had never heard of postpartum psychosis,’ she says. ‘It started quickly, and my mum says in the hour after I gave birth, I looked dazed.’

What followed included hallucinations and a fear of her son. ‘He was so beautiful, but I was terrified of his very presence,’ says Evie. ‘I shook when I was near him and, for six long weeks after Joe’s birth, I descended into hell.’ After seeing her GP, Evie was admitted to a psychiatric mother and baby

unit where she gradually got better.

‘There is a huge gap in support for new mums,’ she says. ‘We need to make it safer for women to open up but, more importantly, we need to listen. Postpartum psychosis is a psychiatric emergency requiring urgent medical support. I cannot emphasise enough that it is a total break from reality. My mind was not my own and I said and did things far removed from reality. Mothers need kindness, support and the correct treatment to recover. We are failing and judging so many women going through this.’

According to the charity Tommy’s, around one in 1,000 women will develop postpartum psychosis (one in 10 will develop postnatal depression). Symptoms include severe depression, mania, agitation, withdrawal, confusion, insomnia, racing thoughts, hallucinations, delusions, suicidal thoughts and sometimes thinking of taking your baby with you because of bad feelings about the world around you.

‘It was a slow, hard recovery,’ says Evie, ‘but we got there. My son is now 16 and my absolute world.’

For support and information, visit Action on Postpartum Psychosis at app-network.org

PHOTO: ALAMY

5.

The cult streetwear collab to know now

SOFIA PRANTERA, WHO co-founded the cult London streetwear label Aries, has joined forces with Marks & Spencer on what might be the most unlikely collaboration of the year – a 26-piece capsule collection reviving St Michael, M&S's iconic archive label, reworked through Aries' subcultural lens. Tailoring, knitwear, sportswear, slip dresses and accessories, priced from £10 to £150, land in stores and at marksandspencer.com from 18 August. It's a bold step for Prantera, a designer more used to being a disruptor. 'I can't think of a better brand that has such a history of Britishness,' she says of M&S. 'It's such a symbol, you know, it's almost like going to visit the Queen.' Her reverence shaped the look of the collection. While M&S half-expected Aries to push the collection 'younger' or 'wilder', Prantera says she pulled in the opposite direction – pinstripe tailoring, striped shirting, smart cashmere and neck ties are mixed with sportswear. 'Young people don't go to M&S for streetwear,' she says. 'They go to M&S because it's reliable, because it offers excellent quality and strong pieces that are kind of forever.' Hence, the drawstring waist pinstripe trousers (£50), and floppy black silk dress (£120) sit alongside the fab graphic hoodie. 'It was more about Aries reinterpreting M&S.' Perhaps the most talismanic piece is M&S's iconic green carrier bag reimagined in soft green leather, transformed from a piece of shopping history into a modern collectable.

Cardigan,
£89

Tie, £25

Blazer, £90

Sweatshirt, £50

Shorts, £25

Jeans, £65,
all St Michael x Aries

WORDS: REBECCA LOWTHORPE

ST MICHAEL X ARIES



6.

Children suffer in the small-boats crisis

BBC journalist *Sue Mitchell*, who has spent eight years investigating migrant crossings, reveals the story behind this heartbreaking picture

A SMALL BABY, still wearing a bib to keep its sleepsuit clean, is snatched from the sea. This shocking photograph, taken earlier this month near Écault in northern France, resonates with all of us.

What will the future hold for this child? Where is the mother? Is she still in the water and trying to climb aboard, or already crushed on to the overcrowded boat? We may never know, but the image will endure as a symbol of the cruelty created by people-smugglers with their illegal journeys between France and England.

The wealthy smugglers who own this dinghy are trying a new tactic. The boat moves slowly along the coast and potential passengers wade into the sea at arranged spots, trying to board. The fact that the boat is already at sea makes it much harder for police to act; if they intercept in the water, there's a risk to the lives of those onboard. The French coastguard can only watch from a distance.

In the chaos that ensues, anything can happen. Recently, a pregnant Eritrean woman passed her three-year-old son on to a boat but was then unable to get on herself. The child crossed the Channel without any family, while his mother collapsed on French sand, terrified that she had lost her son forever. Days later she made the journey on another dinghy and was reunited with him.

I've been covering these crossings since the first boats left French shores in 2018 – they were mostly second-hand dinghies carrying a dozen or so migrants. Today they are sourced from suppliers in China and, at up to 15 metres in length, roughly the same size as a double-decker bus. Police across Europe lack cooperation and the smuggling gangs are well-organised, working across borders with ease and evading authorities at every turn.

The dinghies are death traps – 173 passengers were recently rescued when one capsized after its engine caught fire. The baby in this picture made it to the UK, but many men, women and children have not. I went with my colleague Rob Lawrie to Ranya in northern Iraq, and visited a memorial to commemorate them. It was heartbreaking to see the photos of children proudly posing with their parents before their journeys began.

The smugglers care little about whether their passengers live or die. They sell a dream of life in the UK – cash-in-hand

work, housing and medical care. There's a lot of money to be made for a smuggler: the average cost of a crossing is around £1,500, and if a boat has 80 people onboard, that's well over £100,000.

We've investigated cases where men have abandoned their wives and taken a child with them, figuring this would bolster their asylum case. One dad told us his wife had died and he'd fled Afghanistan with his four-year-old daughter – but we proved he'd abducted the girl from her mother. Had it not been for photos of her that we took in the French camp, and our investigation into the case for BBC Radio 4's *Girl Taken* podcast, her mother might never have seen her again.

We met Mana, 13, in the French camp just as she was preparing to make the crossing with her parents and younger siblings. As the only English speaker, she was negotiating the price of the crossing with smugglers, who eventually gave a discount for her baby sister. Once on the boat she kept her fear in check, even when a ferry as big as a city passed close enough to throw up enormous waves.

Mana remembers her dad yelling that they needed to turn back, saying that he couldn't risk the lives of his children. She was the one who told him that they couldn't go back to France – there was no money left. This was their only option.

For many migrants these boat crossings are the last hurdle they face, the culmination of long and dangerous journeys. They know that once they arrive in the UK, they will get food, accommodation and some help.

Seven-year-old Marianne was on one of the first boats to sink as it crossed from France to the UK. When I met her, she showed me livid scars on her arms and legs – burns caused when engine fuel combines with salt water. She knew she was lucky to have survived. 'It was so cold, so much cold it made me want to die.'

After the rescue and the hospital discharge, the family came back to the Calais camp with nothing: everything they owned had been lost at sea. Just weeks later they were back on a French beach, taking the same risks. Risks that will continue unchecked, day after day, as long as this illegal immigration crisis goes on.

Listen to Sue and Rob's investigations into the small-boats crisis, Intrigue: To Catch A King and Girl Taken, on BBC Sounds

The baby survived the dangerous crossing to the UK, but many people perish

PHOTO: IOANNIS ALEXOPOULOS/LNP

7.

Gigi and Bradley
stroll through
Paris, city of love,
on 3 August

Has Gigi and
Bradley's
relationship
levelled up?

The couple have defied the naysayers to go the distance – and now they’re wearing ‘wedding’ bands

STROLLING HAND IN hand through the Louvre gardens in Paris, Gigi Hadid and Bradley Cooper headed to dinner at celebrity hotspot Loulou. For the first time since rumours of an engagement swirled in January this year, the couple were spotted wearing matching Boucheron wedding bands, each on their ring finger. Given the secretive nature of A-list nuptials nowadays, it’s no surprise that the rings have got people assuming they’ve pulled a ‘Tom and Zendaya’, who married in secret and only confirmed the news months later.

At the time of going to press, reps for Hadid and Cooper had not publicly responded to speculation they have tied the knot, with conflicting reports that the wedding bands could be symbolic ‘promise rings’ instead. It’s unlikely the couple will comment on the rumours, with Hadid saying in a 2025 interview, ‘You just have to let [rumours] go, you can’t always correct everything.’

Whatever the rings really symbolise, clearly the pair are serious – and their relationship is going the distance. ‘I just feel really lucky,’ Hadid said last year. ‘I respect him so much as a creative, and I feel that he gives so much to me: encouragement and, just, belief... [Our relationship is] very romantic and happy.’

There was some cynicism when romance rumours first broke, after they met in 2023 at the birthday party for the daughter of Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds. With a 20-year age gap (Hadid is 31, Cooper 51), many wondered if they could they sustain a long-term connection. However, with both used to life in the public eye and each co-parenting children from previous relationships, their lives were more compatible than some thought. Both split from their ex-partners within two years of having their first children. Cooper’s daughter, Lea De Seine, with model Irina Shayk, was born in 2017,

while Hadid’s daughter Khai, with singer Zayn Malik, arrived in 2020.

‘Getting to the point where knowing what you want and deserve in a relationship is essential,’ Hadid said of why the relationship with Cooper felt different. ‘And then to find someone that’s in a place in their life where they know what they want and deserve... and you both do work separately to come together and be the best partner that you can be. Yeah, lucky is the word.’

Now the pair mix city and country life, living between their properties in Manhattan and New Hope, Pennsylvania, with Cooper buying a £4.8m 33-acre farmhouse near to Hadid’s mother, Yolanda.

Blending their families has reportedly been smooth sailing so far. Hadid gets on with Shayk, 40, who is now in her own age-gap relationship with 29-year-old basketball star Devin Booker. Booker previously dated Hadid’s best friend, Kendall Jenner. Yes, Hollywood is apparently as incestuous as your uni friend group. And as luck would have it, Cooper gets on with Malik, too.

‘It was a pretty seamless process, blending the families,’ a source close to the couple says. ‘Lea and Khai are already very close. Gigi loves being with a mature guy who’s done so much with his life already, yet retains a huge amount of ambition. And he says Gigi is a very wise soul.’ He’s even been encouraging her to pursue acting, a quiet dream of Hadid’s for a while. Could they become our next favourite Hollywood power couple? We wouldn’t bet against it.



THE NEW A-LIST STATUS SYMBOL: A SECRET WEDDING

Keeping your nuptials under wraps is the new power move for celeb couples in 2026. Zendaya revealed a surprise wedding band in February, with husband Tom Holland only confirming they were married in June. Their big do came later, after their *Spider-Man* promotions were finished, with a three-day celebration at Beaverbrook in Surrey, rumoured to have cost £500k. Around 250 guests attended, phones not permitted, with Robert Downey Jr, Timothée Chalamet and Kylie Jenner all said to have been there.

Similarly, the details of Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce’s \$30m wedding in July have been largely kept under wraps. We know Adam Sandler officiated and Swift did karaoke at one point, but for all of the buzz around her dress, we haven’t, at the time of writing, had a glimpse of her custom Dior gown by Jonathan Anderson. Harry Styles and Zoë Kravitz are likely to follow suit, with the pair only confirming their engagement in April after a glimpse of Kravitz’s giant sparkler. And now, Jennifer Gardner has fuelled similar rumours after sporting a diamond ring in a new IG post – rumoured to be from longtime (on-and-off again) boyfriend John Miller.

In an era of constant oversharing online – where influencer engagement and wedding content seems to last weeks, months, if not years – is keeping your marriage plans off-grid the new way A-listers are setting themselves apart? While some might attempt to monetise every major milestone, they don’t need to – and now they’re making a point of proving that.

8.

Monica Barbaro: style star on the rise

MONICA BARBARO, THE actor best known for her Oscar-nominated turn as singer-songwriter Joan Baez in Bob Dylan biopic *A Complete Unknown*, is now starring alongside Callum Turner in new romcom *One Night Only* (the jury is still out on this one, perhaps save it for a really hungover Sunday afternoon). She has also steadily become one of Hollywood's most underrated dressers. That should change. Lately she has been on a genuine style tear, stepping out in looks that make you sit up and pay attention. There are thigh-skimming minis, sharply cut Tom Ford trousers, Dior gowns and high-waisted skirts from Khaite. Needless to say, she isn't conjuring this wardrobe from thin air. Barbaro, like fellow actors Elizabeth Debicki, Gwyneth Paltrow, Saoirse Ronan and Julia Garner, has the magic touch of super-stylist Elizabeth Saltzman behind her, and it is clearly paying off. Watch this space.

WORDS: HENRIK LISCHKE. PHOTOS: GETTY

All buttoned up

Is it a double-breasted jacket, is it a skirt? Somehow both, and neither. This hybrid high-waisted piece by New York label Khaite, worn with a plain T-shirt, sums up Barbaro's whole approach: sharp and smart without ever tipping into try-hard.





The thigh's the limit

For her appearance on *The Tonight Show*, Barbaro wore a dress by the Greek-born London-based designer George Trochopoulos, a man known for his body-skimming knits. That is one way to make knitwear work in summer.



Minimalist luxury

This bias-cut Christian Dior gown is the sort of dress that demands someone with enough presence to wear her clothes, rather than the other way round. Barbaro has got that mastered.



Boardroom energy

Proving she is as fluent in tailoring as she is in gowns, this Tom Ford by Haider Ackermann look – a contrast tuxedo shirt and trousers cut with real precision – is further proof that oversized tailoring is making way for something sleeker.



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The MP on a mission to talk about sex

Samantha Niblett wants to start a national conversation, sideline shame and get us all more clued up

'UNTIL RELATIVELY recently, I struggled to say the words "vulva" and "clitoris"', admits Samantha Niblett. 'I'm rubbish at saying what I want in bed, because I've been embarrassed to use those words.' It's not exactly the soundbite you'd expect from an MP, but Niblett, who represents South Derbyshire, is far from typical. She believes that Britain's collective prudishness has transformed into something actively harmful, and she's looking to dismantle that.

That's why the Labour MP has declared this the Summer of Sex and launched the 'Yes, Sex Please, We're British' campaign with Cindy Gallop of MakeLoveNotPorn, inviting the public to email them with experiences and views on sex education. Niblett has secured a debate on the subject

in the Commons this autumn, and the responses will help to shape her speech. It's the first debate of its kind since 2001.

Her ability to talk about these topics without blushing is what's earned Niblett the moniker of 'the sex MP'. This doesn't mean she has it all figured out, though. 'I made this very clear when I launched the campaign – I am not some dominatrix sex madam. I am on my own journey.'

Rather, she's hoping that talking about sex – the kind that's real, awkward and messy – can help strip away the shame, guilt and embarrassment surrounding pleasure. She wants to position sex education as something to be integrated into the public health system at every life stage – and looking at the statistics, it's a revamp that is alarmingly overdue.

Research shows that 46% of parents don't feel comfortable discussing pornography with their children, while 85% of adults say they were never taught about consent. Niblett also notes that STIs are on the rise in older women. 'Doctors are not even asking them whether they're sexually active and that in itself is a problem,' she says.

Niblett knows a different kind of sex education is needed, one that goes beyond putting condoms on bananas. More young people are taking guidance from porn, a medium that's become increasingly violent. 'Fourteen-year-old boys are thinking of strangulation,' she says bluntly, 'and I'm not kink-shaming, but if your starting point is what would be an actual assault in real life, you're starting off a sexual relationship screwed up.'

Sex has always been a subject that's piqued Niblett's interest, something she says may be down to her Catholic roots. 'I was brought up where sex was supposed to be shameful,' she explains. 'I always had the intention that when I had a child, I would not make it something dirty.' Niblett says she and her 18-year-old daughter share an open dialogue. 'Nothing is out of bounds to talk about and it feels so healthy.' It's the opposite of how many of us grew up, fumbling with euphemisms.

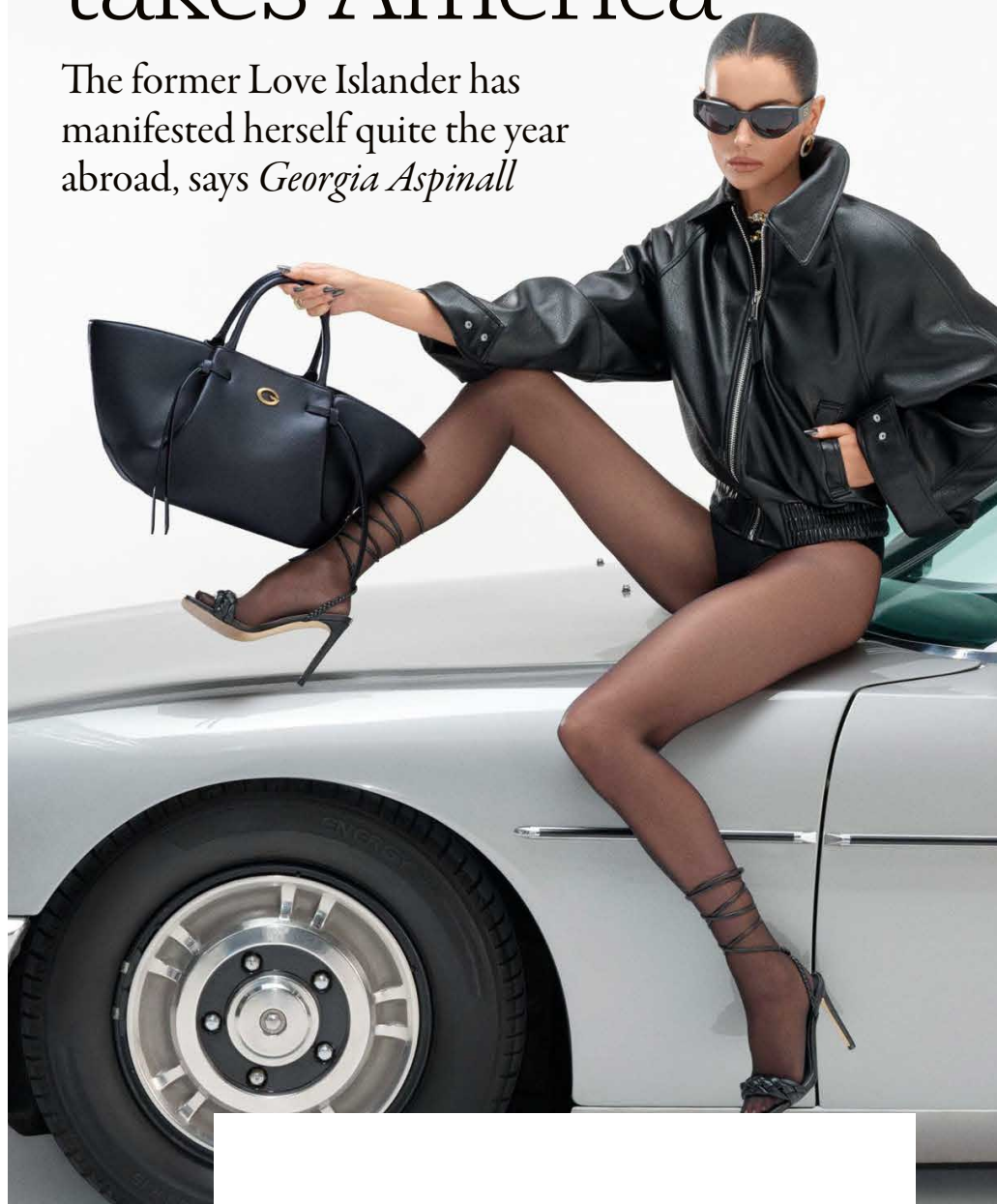
But while she spends her days talking about sex, Niblett says she has as much to learn as anyone from the campaign. 'I've had some great sex, but I've probably had more adequate or poor sex,' she says. 'If I can also use the platform I've got to stick my head above the parapet and improve the lives of others, isn't that a good thing?'



Samantha Niblett in the Commons and (top) at the launch of the sex campaign

Maura Higgins takes America

The former Love Islander has manifested herself quite the year abroad, says *Georgia Aspinall*



the fashion world. Attending New York Fashion Week and making her Cannes Film Festival debut in May, Higgins' theatrical, risk-taking looks are the work of stylist Kris Fe, best known for creating custom ensembles that incorporate archival pieces.

Higgins' partnership with Guess is a natural fit, then, with its brand identity built on bold, sexy statement pieces. 'I wear what I want, I say what I think and I don't apologise for it,' Higgins says. But she wasn't always this self-assured – like many of us, she's had to work at it.

'Confidence isn't something you magically wake up with every day,' she explains. 'I still get nervous. But I trust the people around me to help me feel my best and once I'm on set or in front of a camera. I have fun with it, and I think that's when the best moments happen. *Dancing With The Stars* is definitely a different kind of pressure because you're learning something completely new every week, and have to perform live to an audience of millions watching, but that's also what makes it exciting. Growth only happens when you push yourself a bit.'

Last month, Higgins also landed on the coveted *Time* 100 Creators List, something she calls 'surreal'. 'I have hoped for and manifested so many things that have come true this year alone – the *Time* 100 List being one of them. I'm just so grateful and it feels nice to know all the hard work is paying off. To be recognised like that is incredibly special and it makes me even more motivated for what's next.'

So, what *is* next? Higgins says *DWTS* will be her last reality turn as a contestant. 'Presenting and hosting is the space I plan to solidify myself in – I loved my time hosting *Aftersun USA* and I'd like to do more presenting – helping guide new sets of contestants through their time on similar shows to the ones I've been on.' There's talk she could be the face of the Disney+ *Blind Date* revival. 'I'd love to end the year by lifting the *Dancing With The Stars* mirror-ball trophy to celebrate all that this year has brought... and then it's time to update the vision board and go again!'

Maura in the new Guess campaign with Allegra bag, £125, sunglasses, £125, and bomber jacket, £120

'IF YOU'D TOLD me a few years ago that this would be my life, I wouldn't have believed you,' says Maura Higgins. Now the face of Guess for its A/W '26 Allegra campaign, Higgins has managed to pull off what no other *Love Island* graduate has done before: she's broken the US.

After three years hosting *Love Island USA: Aftersun*, her recent meme-making stint on *The Traitors US* (in which she came runner-up) and upcoming appearance on *Dancing With The Stars*, she's become a mainstay of US TV. And this year she has also turned her attention to

10.



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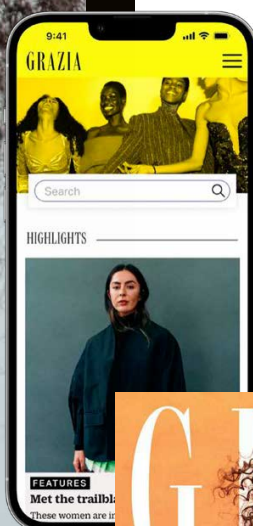
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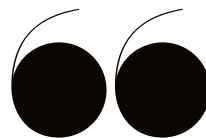
INTERVIEW GRAZIA

FUNNY BUSINESS

Queen of midlife
comedy Leslie Mann
talks to *Victoria Moss*
about marriage,
wellness fads and
parenting daughters

PHOTOGRAPHS HOLLIE FERNANDO
STYLING ANNIE HERTIKOVA





'YOU GET
SUCKED INTO
THE WELLNESS
VORTEX. YOU
FEEL LIKE
YOU'RE NEVER
DOING
ENOUGH'

LESLIE MANN IS BACK in Los Angeles after escaping the UK heatwave. 'With no AC or ice!' she heckles. 'No ice! What are you going to do? You guys are going to have to get air conditioning, right?'

Not all comic actors are funny in real life, but Mann – who's been a scene-stealer in comedies including *Knocked Up*, *This Is 40*, *Funny People*, *The Other Woman* and *Blockers* – fills most sentences with amused laughter and is reassuringly self-deprecating.

She has returned to California primarily for her cats. 'There's no reason to be back in LA, just my cats, and they hate traveling. Now that my kids are older I spend a lot of time talking to my cats, we're close, we're tight. It's hard to be away from them.'

Along with the three cats, Mann, 54, lives with her husband, writer-producer-director Judd Apatow. Their two daughters, Maude, 28, and Iris, 23, are both successful actors, having cut their teeth as young children in their parents' movies.

Mann and Apatow's 29-year marriage is a happy anomaly in Hollywood. 'I don't

believe people when they say that any part of this is easy,' she says. 'I think you're faced with learning lesson after lesson. It's rewarding if you can get through. We'll see if we make it to 30, that'd be kind of lame if we didn't. I've learned everything from this relationship, we've grown up together and taught each other everything.'

She's long played comedic roles to sharp, realistic effect with healthy doses of the unexpected (like when she threw up on Steve Carell in *The 40 Year Old Virgin*). For a swathe of her career Mann's lived out a fictional midlife crisis on-screen, becoming the poster woman for tackling being a grown-up with deadpan humour. In her latest movie, *Spa Weekend*, her character joins three girlfriends (Anna Faris, Isla Fisher and Michelle Buteau) on a riotous weekend opt-out of their draining lives. Think *Bridesmaids* goes to *The White Lotus* but no one dies.

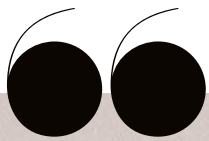
'It's nice, first of all, to have a movie for women,' says Mann. 'I guess you can bring

Continued on page 41 ▶

A full-page photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a white plush robe with a deep V-neckline and a matching belt. She is also wearing large black sunglasses, a pink bra, and multiple gold necklaces and bracelets. She is posing with one hand on her hip and the other behind her head, standing in front of a light-colored wall with vertical architectural lines.

THIS PAGE
Robe, £45, **The White Company**; bra, £95, **Torlowei**; sunglasses, £234, **Jimmy Choo**; bracelets, £6,000 to £9,000 each, necklaces, from £17,380 each, ring, £4,950, all **Fope**

PREVIOUS PAGE
Shirt, £145, **Roberto Cavalli**; shorts, £155, **Ami Paris**; socks, £45, **Leset**; ring, £1,920, **Fope**



'IF I DON'T EAT
AND SLEEP
REALLY WELL
I'M EXHAUSTED
AND A
NIGHTMARE'



THIS PAGE

Tank, £54, **Wolford**;
jeans, £100, **Levi's**;
vintage sweatshirt,
price on request, **Ebay**
archive; bracelet,
£8,840, **Fope**;
necklaces, price on
request, **Roxanne**
First; (on chairs) shirt,
£95, **With Nothing**
Underneath;
sunglasses, £234,
Jimmy Choo; jumper,
price on request,
archive **Stella**
McCartney

OPPOSITE

T-Shirt, £50, **Cowboys**
of Habit; shorts, £127,
Onitsuka Tiger; shoes,
£330, **Petar Petrov**;
ring, Leslie's own





Dress, £900,
Sportmax; shoes,
£725, Christian
Louboutin

Continued from page 36

your husbands and your kids too, but it's a fun movie for women, to show the importance of spending time together and taking time out for each other. I love that.'

The movie is directed by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore, the duo behind *Bad Moms* and *The Hangover*. 'I was supposed to work with them a long time ago,' says Mann. 'I had to back out of the movie and I always regret doing that. They came to me with this and I thought, "I don't want to make that mistake again." They filmed on the Gold Coast in Australia and for the most part the cast 'did daytime hangs. I used to be able to go to work – not that this is a good thing – eat candy, drink coffee all day and smoke cigarettes and I was totally fine and felt great, and now if I don't eat perfectly and sleep really well, I'm exhausted and a nightmare,' she says, singing from an all too familiar hymn book.

The film touches on the socially conditioned tropes of Millennial and Gen X women, namely people pleasing and failing to make time for themselves. Mann thinks it's 'training from previous generations. I don't think my girls are like that as much as I was like that, and I'm not as much like that as my mother was. It's being worked out of us, which is a good thing.' As you'd expect, it happily skewers wellness culture. There's goat yoga, mud baths, Isla Fisher trolling guided meditation. As a California native, how invested is she in the Goop life?

'I do guided meditations and I've been doing that for probably 12 years. The second I get to LA, I am doing the latest thing. You go to the dentist, then your dentist is telling you about this amazing face laser she had, the next thing you know you have an appointment with that person, and then that person tells you about this amazing hair colourist, and then you have an appointment with that person, and then the next person tells you about this amazing food diet and then you're doing that. You get sucked in the wellness vortex. Then when I leave, I don't think about that stuff at all. It's weird, you feel like you're never doing enough. It is fun, then it gets exhausting, then you want to go be somewhere outside of Los Angeles...'

Apatow has often credited Mann with inspiring him to write better roles for women. She reflects, 'I think scripts for older women are better written than for

younger women, for some reason. I mean, I haven't been reading young women's parts lately to see how they're doing, but I hear from my daughters... The best thing to do is to write your own stuff, if you can.'

She grew up in Newport Beach with a riveting, if bleak, three-month English sojourn when she was 14. 'My mom was

going through a divorce and she took me out of school and brought me to Rye, East Sussex.' The house they stayed in 'was so miserable. It had coin-operated electricity. It was for sure haunted. I still have nightmares about that house.' So much so that on her recent trip to the UK she decided to go back. 'I stood there on the street, looking at this house, and just remembered that person who was 14 years old, living in that house, and how different I feel, how much I've grown, how I'm a lot happier... But who's happy at 14?' she muses.

She and Apatow moved into their current home after their daughters had flown the nest. 'That was devastating,' she recalls. 'I remember walking through our house, looking into their rooms and at all the photos throughout the years and being so sad we had to sell our house because I couldn't be there any more. Now we're in this weird house that has no warmth, but it's soothing somehow, this cold modern house.'

She has found each parenting shift difficult, but 'this new stage is really fun, they're the coolest women I know. If I could go back and give my younger self advice, it would be to trust that it keeps getting better, and not to be sad about what's going away, but be excited about what's [to come].' Mann speaks constantly to her daughters. 'I try to keep us together as much as possible, that's my one goal in life.'

She wasn't sure that they would follow her into the business. 'We were open to whatever,' she says. 'But, being a kid growing up around us and our friends, it is a fun world to be in so I don't blame them for wanting to stay in it. It is good fun.'

Neatly, she stars in her daughter Maude's directorial debut, *Poetic License*, which premiered to acclaim at the Toronto International Film Festival last year. 'I was a little worried because I didn't know what she would be like as a director,' she says of the project. 'She turned out to be the greatest person to work with, I felt so safe. It's not just a mother-daughter thing, she was so smart and capable.'

Mann plays a woman having (another) midlife crisis, this time meeting two young men in a poetry class who both fall for her. 'I'm just getting it all out through these movies,' she quips. '[Midlife] is a rough time for sure. But I'm feeling good today! Fingers crossed... I don't want to jinx it.'

'Spa Weekend' is in cinemas 21 August



From top: Leslie with Katherine Heigl in *Knocked Up*; in new film *Spa Weekend*; with her family; with Maud and one of her beloved cats



'BREAST CANCER IS NOT JUST A DISEASE OF OLDER WOMEN'

Current NHS risk assessments miss 95% of under fifties who will develop breast cancer, reports *Charlotte Lytton*

WHEN LAURA PRICE found a lump in her left breast, doctors told her that due to her age – 29 – it probably wasn't cancer and was more likely a fibroadenoma, a benign breast lump. By the time she had a mammogram and biopsy four months later, she had stage-three cancer, with her tumour having more than doubled in size from her first test.

Earlier this month, research revealed that NHS risk assessment guidelines are missing 95% of women under 50 who will go on to develop breast cancer. Only those who have a strong family history of the disease are offered early screening, despite the fact that only five to 10% of breast cancers fall into this category. Researchers at the University of Cambridge found that using family history alone to predict risk did not flag the vast majority of those who went on to develop the disease – a leading cause of death in women under 50 in the UK.

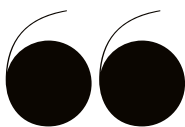
The researchers tested a different system of assessment called Boadicea (breast and ovarian analysis of disease incidence and carrier estimation algorithm), which calculates risk based on factors including genetics, but also lifestyle and reproductive history. This successfully predicted eight times more women under 50 who went on to develop breast cancer, using data from the Breast Cancer Now Generations study between 2004 and 2011.

With doctors using these alternative

metrics, 26.5% of women under 50 would be considered higher risk and sent for further assessment, compared to the current referral rate of 1.4%.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), which sets NHS guidelines, said that while it 'welcomes the findings of this study and recognises the potential of multifactorial risk models in improving the identification of women at increased risk of breast cancer in the future', the current evidence 'does not warrant a change to our existing familial breast cancer guideline at this time. NICE remains committed to reviewing new evidence and will consider further updates as more data on feasibility and clinical outcomes become available.'

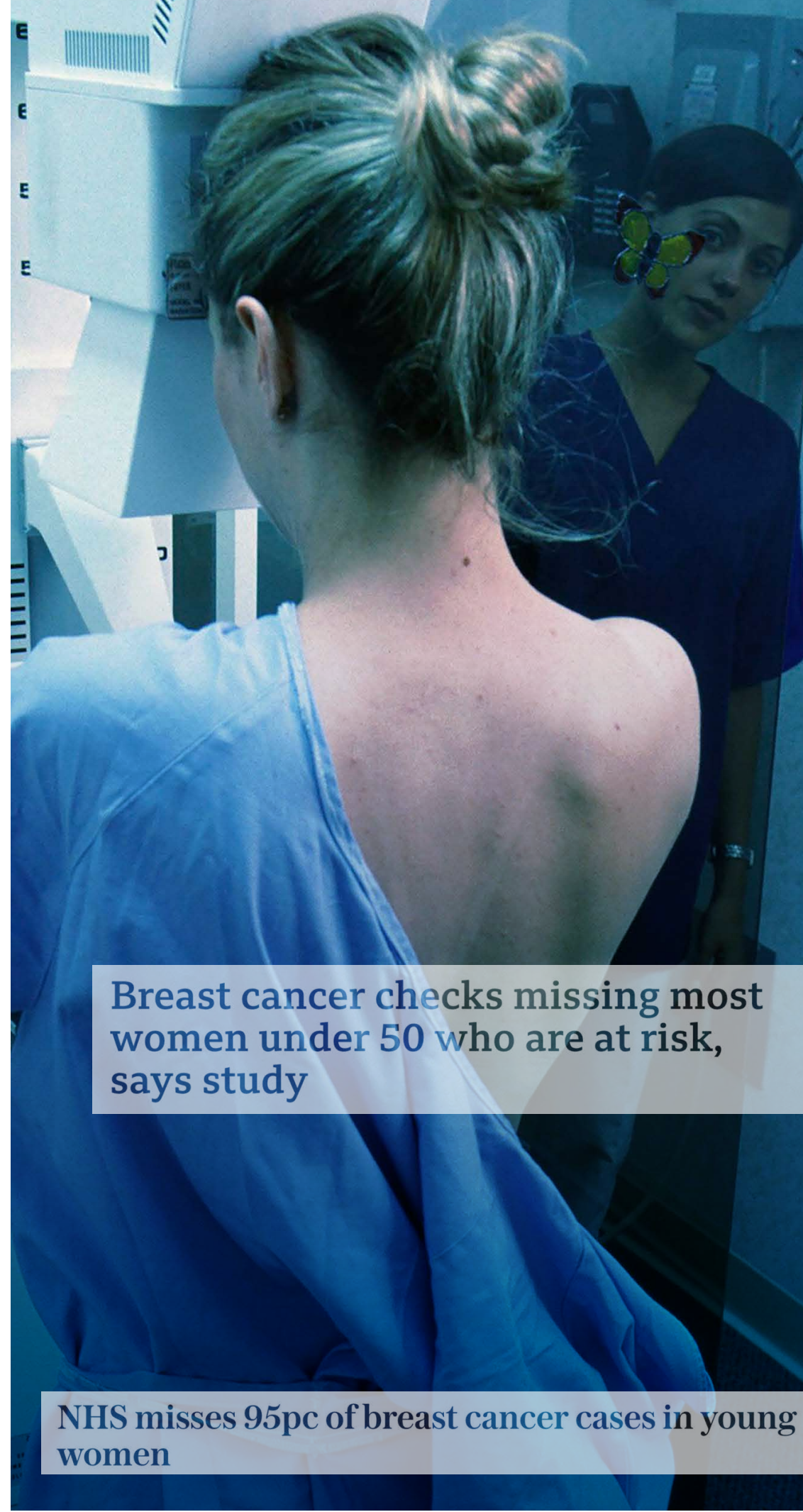
Routine mammograms are offered every three years to women between 50 and 71. But 'each year, one in six breast cancer cases occurs in under-50s – and that number is



KNOWING
YOU'RE AT
GREATER RISK
COULD BE
REALLY HELPFUL

GPs' breast cancer guidelines 'miss' 95% of young women who will develop disease





Breast cancer checks missing most women under 50 who are at risk, says study

NHS misses 95pc of breast cancer cases in young women

on the rise,' says Natalie Haskall, CEO of charity CoppaFeel! An OECD report published this year found that, between 2000 and 2022, cancer incidence among 15- to 49-year-old women had risen by 16%, with breast and thyroid cancers accounting for 80% of that jump.

Those who develop cancer younger are at greater risk: women diagnosed with stage three breast cancer at 25 have a quarter of the chance of surviving for 15 years after surgery compared to a 65-year-old.

'The route to a breast cancer diagnosis isn't designed to support younger people,' Haskall says. 'Even when they present with symptoms, too many are dismissed simply because of their age.' It's something that has happened to one in three young women, according to a CoppaFeel! survey last year. 'This needs to stop.'

In 2022, a decade on from being declared cancer-free, Price published *Single Bald Female* about her experience. At her book launch, however, she found herself suppressing her greatest fear: that it was back. She had terrible pain around her sternum, but it took more than half a year of investigation – including scans after which she was repeatedly told she was fine – to find that her cancer had spread and was now stage four, or incurable.

Since her secondary diagnosis four years ago, Price, 44, has been taking tablets and injections, 'and it's all going really well. But, at some point, that treatment stops working and there are a limited amount of treatments I can try after that. I'm really, really lucky to still be here after four years.'

Her maternal grandmother was diagnosed with breast cancer in her thirties and died at 40. Neither Price nor her mother were offered early testing, though she adds that screening should extend beyond hereditary links. 'Anything that can help us have an idea of whether we're specifically at greater risk, so we can make changes to our lifestyle, could be really helpful,' she says.

Price knows many young women whose cancer was detected too late. 'The statistics are really dire,' she says, adding that the fact women are still routinely dismissed from treatment based on their age is 'just not acceptable. All doctors need to be taking all women seriously, and we need to get over this idea that breast cancer is just a disease of older women,' she says. 'The sooner cancer is caught, the better the chances are of a long and healthy life.'

PHOTO: GETTY



INSIDE **BRAND BECKHAM**

An explosive new book claims to reveal the real story behind the Beckham family feud

WORDS JESSICA BARRETT



IT'S BEEN A bumper year for the Beckhams. Victoria was made a Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Ministry of Culture, David received his star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Cruz relaunched his music career, Romeo made his Met Gala debut, and 15-year-old Harper is gearing up to launch a skincare range. The family were the most high-profile spectators at the World Cup, cheering on England to the semi-finals, Victoria's unique brand of enthusiasm for each goal becoming a meme in the process.

Of course, the glaring family absence from all these landmark events was eldest son Brooklyn. The 27-year-old has been infamously estranged from the family since January, when he posted a nuclear six-page statement that devastated his parents. In it, he wrote that they prioritised 'Brand Beckham' over personal relationships. 'For my entire life, my parents have controlled narratives in the press about our family,' he wrote. 'The performative social media posts, family events and inauthentic relationships have been a fixture of the life I was born into.' He added, 'My family values public promotion and endorsements above all else. Brand Beckham comes first.'

Eight months on from that statement, then, and Brand Beckham – today worth an estimated £1 billion – might still be very much business as usual, but privately the family are girding their loins as a new book is set to expose a barrage of secrets relating to the feud, including claims that Brooklyn and his parents were, in fact, not on speaking terms for three months *prior* to his wedding to Nicola Peltz because of their issues with the American heiress and her family.

Alison Boshoff, a showbiz writer of almost 30 years' standing, has delved into exactly how and why things fell apart quite so spectacularly in *Brand Beckham: The Fame. The Feuds. The Fallout*. Boshoff describes the crux of the family's issues as 'power and control', adding that the Beckhams have 'written the playbook on image control and manipulation'.

In Brooklyn's bombshell statement he referenced that trademarking had been at the heart of the family feud. Indeed, Boshoff reveals that in 2022 Victoria had refused to allow Brooklyn to use their

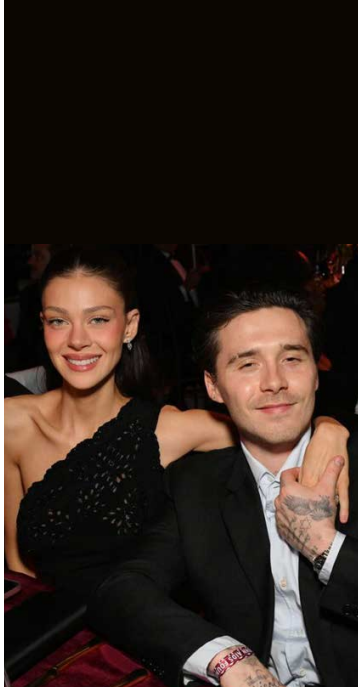
family name on a big-money Boohooman brand deal because, Boshoff tells *Grazia*, 'Victoria didn't want the Beckham name associated with fast fashion.' It was one of the first big cracks that emerged prior to the wedding.

Boshoff adds, 'Turning the kids into part of the family brand was a fairly recent thing. They believe that they do have a say in the kids' [careers] as part of Brand Beckham. In the end, Brooklyn was the first casualty in the making of this family brand. The other kids seem happy to be part of it, for now, they all use the same legal and management team.' She adds that the nixing of the Boohooman deal (after, she claims, the clothes had already gone into production) angered not only Brooklyn but his soon-to-be in-laws the Peltzes, who, she claims, advised Brooklyn not to sign the trademarking legal papers that he referenced in his statement after their legal team looked over it.

The book has excellent groundwork on how the Beckhams met, married and combined their selling powers to become what Boshoff describes as the 'original influencers' throughout the '90s and noughties. But the biggest draw is the exhaustive look at the fallout surrounding *that* \$3 million Palm Beach wedding.

In his statement, Brooklyn had alleged that Victoria 'hijacked' his first dance with his wife and 'danced very inappropriately' with him in front of everyone. Boshoff says that's not quite what happened. 'It wasn't the literal first dance,' she says. 'Nicola had gone upstairs during the wedding, she had changed out of her Valentino dress into her party dress. This was the new part of the evening. The whole stage revolved to reveal Marc Anthony. Then this [dance] moment happens, and you can see it just drops like an absolute bomb.' Nicola is said to have left the party in tears and the Peltzes, who Boshoff said ended up footing the \$250k bill for the Anthony performance arranged by the Beckhams, were fuming.

Boshoff reveals in the book how relations between Victoria and Nicola had soured after they had started off on pretty good terms. There had been loving social media posts and front-row appearances at Victoria's fashion shows, but a power struggle began as the wedding planning kicked off, details Boshoff. Then the falling out over the wedding dress that Victoria was designing (which Boshoff said the Peltzes are adamant she then cancelled six weeks



From top: Brooklyn and Nicola; David gets his star on the Hollywood Walk Of Fame; Cruz performs on the first night of his band's tour

IT'S SIMPLY A
HUMAN STORY
ABOUT PEOPLE
WHO DON'T
GET ALONG

prior to the big day) was the breaking point.

Cracks had long been emerging, however, explains the author. 'There's definitely an issue of power,' she says. 'The Beckhams' friends will deny that they wanted to exert control over Brooklyn. They just say they're loving parents who are alarmed because he's been sucked into someone else's orbit. But I think what they fail to understand is that you don't get to have any say in who your children bring home. Nicola is actually so like Victoria, controlling and sensitive. The psychodrama of it all is that he's taken on a girl who's just like his mother, and then his mother doesn't like her.'

Social media has played a starring role in this feud – and continues to do so. Boshoff notes in the book that 'likes' and comments on birthdays or Mother's Day posts are a big part of Brand Beckham's MO. She notes that Victoria and David started to 'withhold social media approval' for Brooklyn's relationship with Nicola in 2021, purposely not liking posts with Nicola in them and excluding her from their posts. It was via social media, during the World Cup, that Brooklyn fanned the flames further when he signed a deal with Doordash for a rumoured seven-figure sum, taking a swipe at the family's falling out, calling it a 'long story' (this did not go down well in Camp Beckham, says Boshoff).

As far as both camps go, business has never been better. While Brooklyn has been growing his Cloud23 hot sauce and signing brand deals, Boshoff says the only way is up for David and Victoria. 'As we've seen during the World Cup, which had so many deals for David [he made a reported £19 million in commercial partnerships], we can only expect more deals and money from here. Victoria's beauty line is going from strength to strength. David has never been more financially powerful. Brand Beckham is thriving.'

Victoria and David's relationship also has 'never been better', says Boshoff. 'Thanks to Brooklyn, they have never been closer. And this has humanised them to their critics. At its heart this is simply a human story about people who don't get along.' While the loss of their eldest son from the fold is hurting them, they're at an impasse, says Boshoff. 'Currently there is no path forward because their view is they have done nothing wrong and have nothing to apologise for.'

'Brand Beckham: The Fame. The Feuds. The Fallout' is out now



Sophie, living her best life at 50

the years that I wasted them.

I've also done some serious research into hairdressing, finally ditching the frizz for a messy bob that's still low-maintenance but works better for me. Make-up skills were improved by a couple of sessions at Charlotte Tilbury – you can reimburse their tutorials against the cost of the products. I've been all too aware of my 50th birthday coming down the line and of wanting to wake up on the day feeling good about myself. I never thought I'd be one of those awful people who posts thirst traps (pictures of themselves looking hot in the hope of getting compliments) online – where did they find the nerve? Well, now that awful person is me.

Perhaps I've even taken it too far. Some friends muttered dissent when I recently instagrammed a cute selfie with my legs stretched out on my bed. A 30-something I ran into two nights running said, 'Hi Sophie – even shorter dress than yesterday, I see.' She wears minidresses and posts the odd thirst trap herself. Could ageism be at play here?

I'm sure you could call this my midlife crisis, but I'm not sure anyone's ever enjoyed one as much as me. Our 22-year-old fashion-student lodger helped design my outfit for my 50th party: a sheer black silk kimono with a black lace bra peeping out. I thought back to my own mum's 50th birthday, an equally lovely but different occasion, and couldn't quite understand how we'd ended up here. But it's 2026; each to their own.

Anyway, thirst traps work. Guys you dated will reappear in your DMs. A more serious ex-boyfriend sent a lovely birthday message saying my party looked amazing, and I couldn't help but reply with, 'Sorry you missed my hot era.' Cheeky, yes, but I meant it literally. He'd always been committed to gym workouts and to ironing his clothes, whereas I spent our relationship giving up exercise and forgetting to wash my hair. There is something to be said for making an effort: I did not. But now I do.

I kicked out my last party guests at 5am, having had more fun than the younger me could ever have believed possible. Turning 30 wasn't a patch on this.

'AT 50, I SUDDENLY FEEL SEXY'

Until recently, *Sophie Heawood* had never considered wearing a miniskirt or taking a thirst-trap photo. If this is a midlife crisis, it's a fun one

THE GATEWAY DRUG was my teenage daughter's miniskirt. The two of us were on holiday, hand luggage only, and I'd already run out of clothes for a night out. She still seemed to have a whole landfill of fashion available, hers being so much skimpier to pack. 'Why don't you wear my black miniskirt?' she asked, pulling out a hair scrunchie instead. No wait, that was the skirt. 'Ha, there's no way I can get away with wearing that,' I said.

She looked at me, confused – a 13-year-old unsure of what 'getting away with it' meant. I faltered as I began to explain. What was I actually saying about middle-aged women? Sod it, I thought, as I wriggled the Lycra bandage on. 'You look

amazing!' my daughter said, a compliment so unexpected that I vowed to accept it. Suddenly, my girl and I were young and beautiful together – in spirit, at least. I was 49, a single parent and, as we walked through the island, I reflected it had been a while since I felt this free.

Once home, the discovery that I could simply buy miniskirts myself – for the first time in my life – was mind-blowing. Yes, I had recently lost weight, but my close friends pointed out I'd always been quite leggy, it's just I'd never shown those pins in public, wary of trying to dress sexy. Now, when I think about how much the (younger) man I've recently started dating loves my legs, I feel a bit sad for all

IS FORE* RUINING YOUR LAST DAYS OF SUMMER?

(*FEAR OF RE-ENTRY)

Back-to-reality anxiety is impacting our enjoyment of precious holidays, says *Rebecca Holman*

I KNEW SOMETHING was wrong on the second day of my longed-for summer holiday. Instead of playing with my children in the pool or getting stuck into a book on a sun-lounger, I was gloomily counting down the days until we flew home. I had been looking forward to the trip for months – a chance to get away from the daily grind of work and domestic life – but



once I was there, all I could do was worry about how I'd feel when I got home.

There's nothing more bittersweet than the end of summer – that last glass of rosé by the pool – but when does your back-to-reality dread become something sinister?

I'm not the only one to feel the fear. A survey last year found that 78% of workers feel anxious returning from work after time off, and many fail to disconnect from work while they're away. 'A degree of back-to-work reluctance is completely normal. There is a real contrast between the sense of freedom and greater autonomy over our days on holiday and the high responsibilities and mental load waiting for us when we return,' says SaraLou Wylie, a former GP and women's life coach specialising in burnout and overwhelm.

'But sometimes the dread is about more than simply preferring holiday to work,' she says. 'While we are away, we may step outside all the roles we normally carry: leader, parent, organiser or problem-solver. As the return approaches, our brain begins bringing that entire mental load back online – we are anticipating the version of ourselves we feel we must become again.'

Charlotte Davies, career expert at LinkedIn, thinks unwinding on holiday is now a dying art. 'We are permanently online as professionals,' she says. 'While I think there are so many benefits to hybrid working, there is also this blurred kind of boundary between work and personal life.'

A separate study found that 66% of us work longer hours to compensate for the 'break' we're about to have – which is familiar to me, as I work on double-speed in the run-up to taking annual leave. I've been known to smugly log off for a holiday with a full handover and inbox at zero, only to find myself totally wired as I step off the plane.

'Unfortunately, this compounds the problem,' says Wylie. 'You arrive completely depleted and spend the first few days trying to come down from the adrenaline. Just as you begin to relax, your mind starts anticipating the return to "normal" and everything it brings.'

When work is intense, the pressure to have the perfect holiday also ramps up. 'The more stressful life has got, the more I've fetishised my holidays,' agrees Maya, 42, who works in finance. 'But now that two-week break has become the main



IT'S NOT KNOWING WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO COME BACK TO

event of the year. The pressure to have a great time and justify the rest of the year's work stress can ruin the whole thing. If my kids or husband are grumpy I totally over-react. If we can't enjoy ourselves on a beach in the sunshine, then what hope is there the rest of the time?'

Then there's the expense. Data suggests the cost of a family holiday has increased by between 30% and 50% over the last 10 years. So no wonder pressure has also mounted. The last thing you want from this precious break is to come back just as tired as you left.

So how can you banish fear of re-entry or, at the very least, stop it ruining your trip? Davies says that what causes much of the anxiety is not knowing what you're going to come back to, so work out in advance what *must* be done before your holiday, what can wait and who will cover urgent issues in your absence. Then set a clear out-of-office message.

If you're still anxious, you have a more serious burnout on your hands. 'Do you also get the Sunday scaries? Are you being impacted by a poor workplace culture, a mismatching role, for example? Do you need to reassess your boundaries? It could be that you need to have a career conversation with yourself,' says Davies.

If we can no longer holiday well and enjoy our time offline with loved ones, then we all need to have a conversation with ourselves. As for me, I'm trying to take the pressure off my next holiday being 'perfect' and put more emphasis on not feeling totally depleted before I get there. I plan to start September feeling like I've had a break, not like I'm ready for a breakdown.

Jacket- by model's partner
Trousers - by model's partner
Make-up - by model's partner
Inadequacies - by model's partner
Desperation - by model's partner
Fear - by model's partner

**Coercive control by your partner
can take over your life.**



From the colour of the lipstick you wear, to what you think, say and do, living with a controlling partner means that your decisions are not always your own. Coercive control is as serious as physical abuse, which is why it's now against the law. If your relationship doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

We are here. 10am-6pm
chat.womensaid.org.uk

women's aid
until women & children are safe

CULTURE DEBRIEF

WITH OTEGHA UWAGBA



Amanda Knox has turned her trauma into comedy – but should she?

WHAT TO MAKE of Amanda Knox's decision to turn her infamy into yet another media project, this time as an Edinburgh Fringe comedy show titled *Cartwheel*. This, following two memoirs detailing the aftermath of that fateful study year abroad, various true crime podcasts and her role as executive producer of a Hulu miniseries dramatising her fight to prove her innocence.

A one-woman show, *Cartwheel*'s title is reference to allegations that Knox had performed cartwheels in her cell after her arrest for Meredith Kercher's murder (something Knox later clarified was untrue). The show has already attracted strong criticism from Kercher's family, friends and the wider public. A petition calling on the Fringe to cancel it has, at the time of writing, more than 40,000 signatures, the majority of those accruing even before any performances had actually taken place. In response, the Fringe has defended Knox's right to stage her show, on the grounds of freedom of expression – and rightly so. Though it was impossible not to be moved by Kercher's sister, Stephanie, speaking of her family's immense pain in a recent BBC interview criticising Knox's decision, the question of whether Knox's show should be *allowed* – in a liberal, democratic society – is moot.

But what of Knox's choice to do this at all? To once again rehash this macabre story, inviting the breathless media coverage that inevitably ensues? She has been clear that any comedy in her show isn't directed toward the fact or nature of Kercher's death, and indeed early reviews have described it as very respectful. Rather it dissects Knox's vilification by the police and media, attempting broader social commentary about misogyny.

Still, her latest media endeavour raises a thorny question: to what extent does a person have the moral right to turn their experience into art (or comedy – or even financial gain) if that experience also



involves other parties whose suffering outstrips theirs, as Kercher's family's surely does Knox's? What moral obligations does she have – and who 'owns' a story like this, given that Knox was *also* a victim?

Clearly Knox has every right to tell her story – yet I confess to finding her continual leveraging of what was undoubtedly a devastating experience to be in increasingly poor taste. Her defence of her show being a way to 'honour' Kercher's memory also strikes me as disingenuous. One imagines that the best way of honouring her memory would be to allow her family to grieve in peace, not endlessly retraumatise them. Loath as I am to commit the same transgression as Knox in speaking for Kercher (who, Knox suggested in a recent interview, would have found *Cartwheel* funny), I suspect that *that* is what Kercher would want.

The media's portrayal of Knox as an unsympathetic 'weirdo', both during and after her ordeal, was, in many ways, underpinned by flagrant misogyny. Still, as she embarks on the latest step of a media career built on *not* being Meredith Kercher's killer, I can't help but understand why she was regarded as such.

ON MY RADAR

WATCHING

Wasteman, a viscerally thrilling prison drama starring the newly appointed Black Panther David Jonsson.



READING

Tayari Jones's new novel **Kin**, another stunning epic from the author of the Women's Prize-winning *American Marriage*.

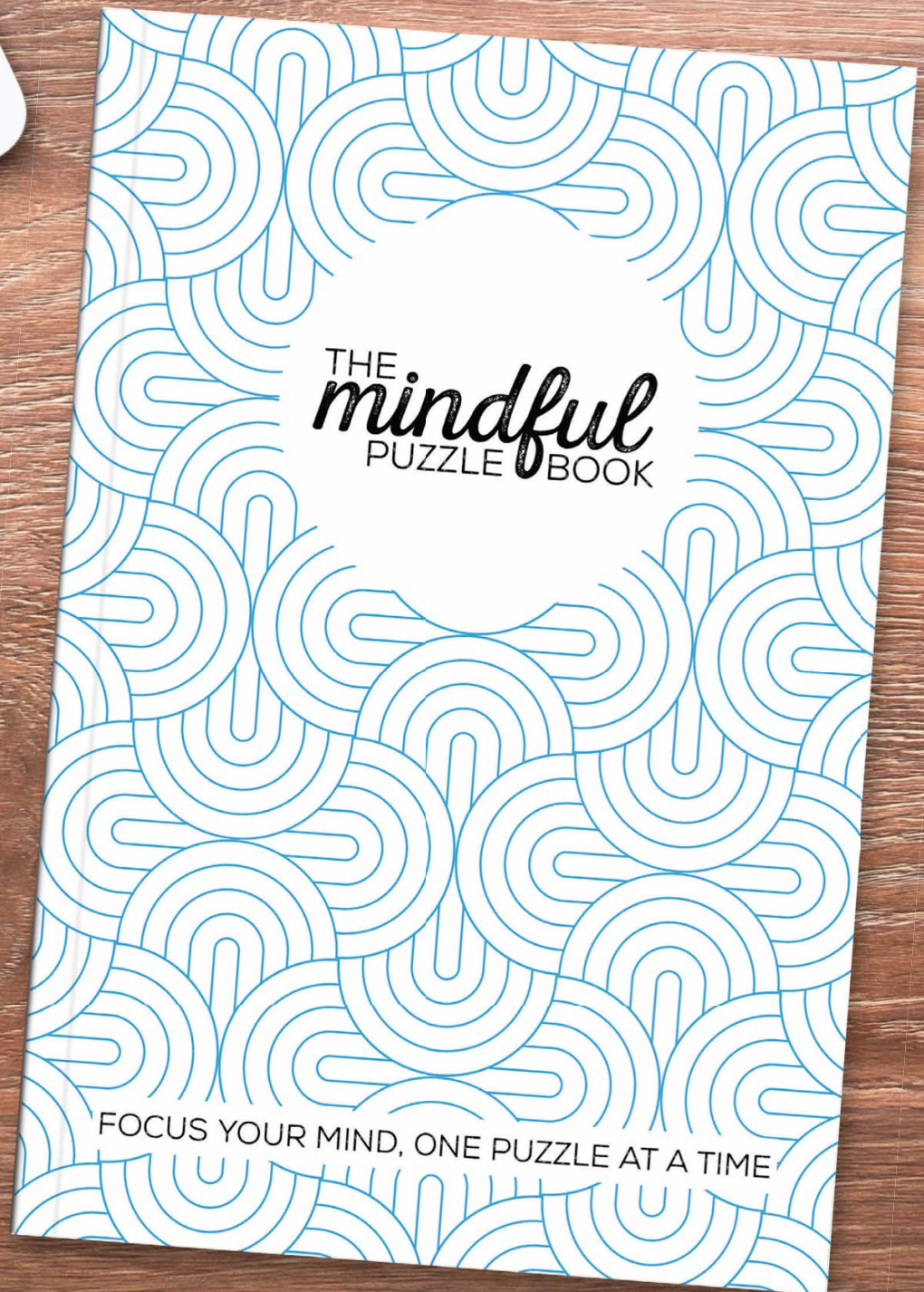


LISTENING

To **Ride**, a comedy podcast hosted by besties Benito Skinner and Mary Beth Barone that consistently has me in hysterics.



Puzzles for a peaceful mind



SCAN HERE TO
BUY ON AMAZON

GRAZIA FASHION



PHOTOGRAPH **CAMERON BENSLEY**
STYLED BY **JULIA HARVEY**
EDITED BY **MOLLY HAYLOR**

PHILANTHROPIST AND SOCIALITE Bunny Mellon was the inspiration behind Tory Burch's Bunny Knot bag, after the designer discovered a quilted cushion formerly owned by Mellon. Soft yet elegant, this will be a faithful companion for now and years to come.

Bag, £865, Tory Burch



THE GREAT DRESS GUIDE

Sometimes, all you need is one great dress.
Find your favourite and wear on repeat

EDITED BY JULIA HARVEY



£270,
By Malene Birger

£99, John Lewis
& Partners



£110,
Hush



£44.99,
H&M



1.

HOT HUES



Special occasions call for a real showstopper. For maximum impact choose from sunset shades of magenta, cherry and burnt umber and keep an eye out for details that elevate: drapes, ruches and fringing.



£69, Omnes



£825,
Retrofête



£40, M&S



£29.99,
Stradivarius



£290,
Essentiel
Antwerp



£110,
French Connection

£315, Ganni



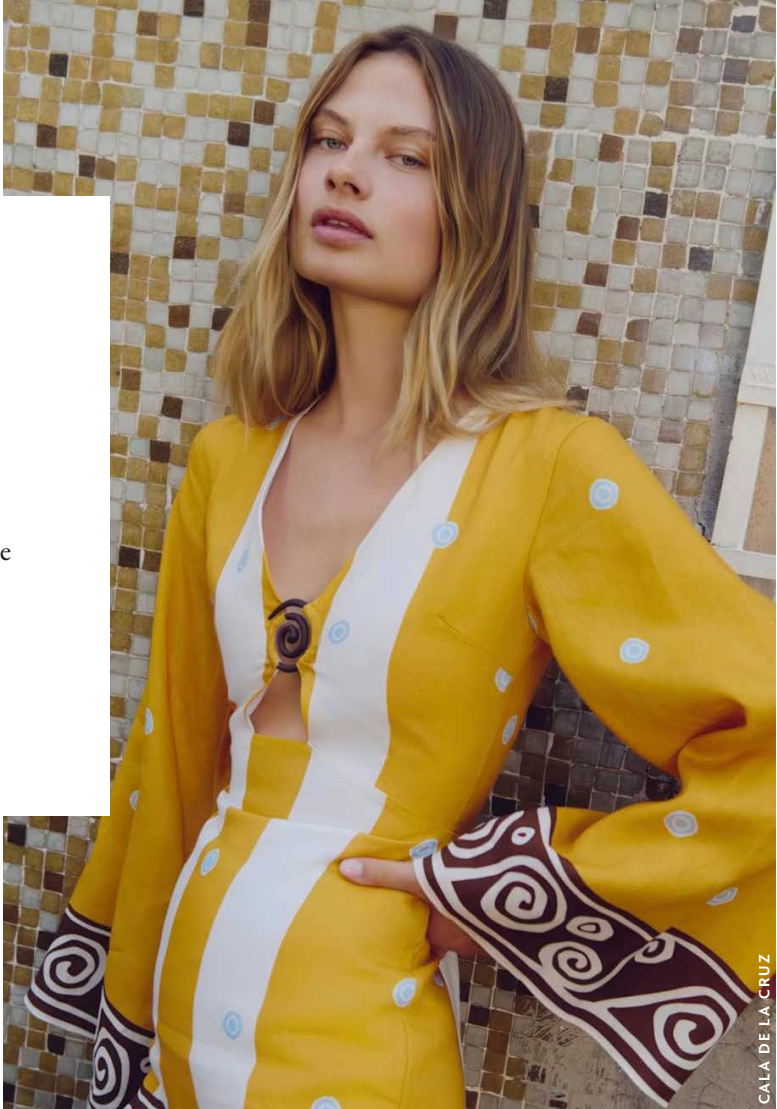
2.

PRINTMAXXING

Nothing shouts summer like prints and patterns, so lean into the sunshine vibe and hero printed dresses in mood-boosting brights. For full effect, add equally bright bags and shoes that will pack a punch.



£69.99, Zara



CALA DE LA CRUZ

£375, Wiggy Kit



£420, Alemais



£158, Free People



£630, Missoni



£295, Rat & Boa



£425, Staud



£1,180, Dries Van Noten



£1,190,
Cecilie Bhansen



£85,
Damson
Madder



£90,
If Only If



£18,
Primark



£402,
Posse

3.

THE BABYDOLL



Behold fashion folk's current obsession. Cute, fun and surprisingly simple to wear, it's easy to see the charm of these blousy mini dresses. Wear with bare legs and ballet flats or layer over jeans and kitten heels.



£205,
Gimaguas



£155,
Dissh



£385,
Matteau

£385,
Ganni



£478,
Døen



FAITHFUL

£225,
Toast

£95, COS

£160,
Rise & Fall

£70, Albaray x
Anna Unwin

£115,
The Frankie
Shop

4.

THE BIG EASY

There's nothing more satisfying than finding a new go-to dress, something muted in tone, ankle grazing and loose-fitting. For minimal effort but maximum impact, wear with leather thong sandals and a pendant necklace.

WITH NOTHING UNDERNEATH

£35.99,
Weekday

£290,
Ba&sh

£320,
Toteme

£170,
Bimba y
Lola

5.

SHARP SILHOUETTES

Refresh your work wardrobe with structured shapes in checks, denim and grey for hardworking staples you'll come back to time and again. Dress them up or down with a few easy accessory swaps.



MASSIMO DUTTI



£16, F&F



£159, Jigsaw



£97, & Other Stories



£198, Reiss



£205, Bimba y Lola



£169, Aligne



£26, Tu Clothing



£990, Victoria Beckham



£35.99, Mango



£42, River Island

EDITED BY JULIA HARVEY
+ MOLLY HAYLOR

TO TREASURE FOREVER

FOPE

Calling all jewellery aficionados,
the new icons are in town

BREAK THE MOULD

A NEW WAVE OF timeless jewellery staples has arrived, each designed to expand and contract to fit to the body. Fope's new Flex'it collection sees its patented spring-bound system transform rings, bracelets and necklaces into flexible mesh pieces, while Cartier's iconic Love Unlimited bracelet (a certified fashion pack favourite) returns in an all-new stretchy style. Now that's a flex.



Amalfi bangle, £3,480, Pragnell



Diamond bangle, £5,800, Bucherer



Gold and steel ring, £1,700, Bulgari



Bangle, £5,900, Aariya



Flex'it bracelet, £7,940, Fope



Flex'it bracelet, £9,200, Fope



Gold and steel bracelet, £2,850, Bulgari



Love Unlimited bracelets, from £8,300 each, Cartier



Bracelets, £135 for set of 2, Roxanne Assoulin



Trisa collar necklace, price on request, Marina B

SIZE MATTERS



Tiffany T True ring,
£2,400, Tiffany & Co



My Dior ring,
£3,350, Dior



Tubogas ring,
£4,170, Bulgari



Mini quilted ring, £1,450,
Chanel Coco Crush



Superdelic
Mini
Cloud ring,
£4,000,
Jessica
McCormack



Small quilted
ring, £2,650,
Chanel Coco
Crush



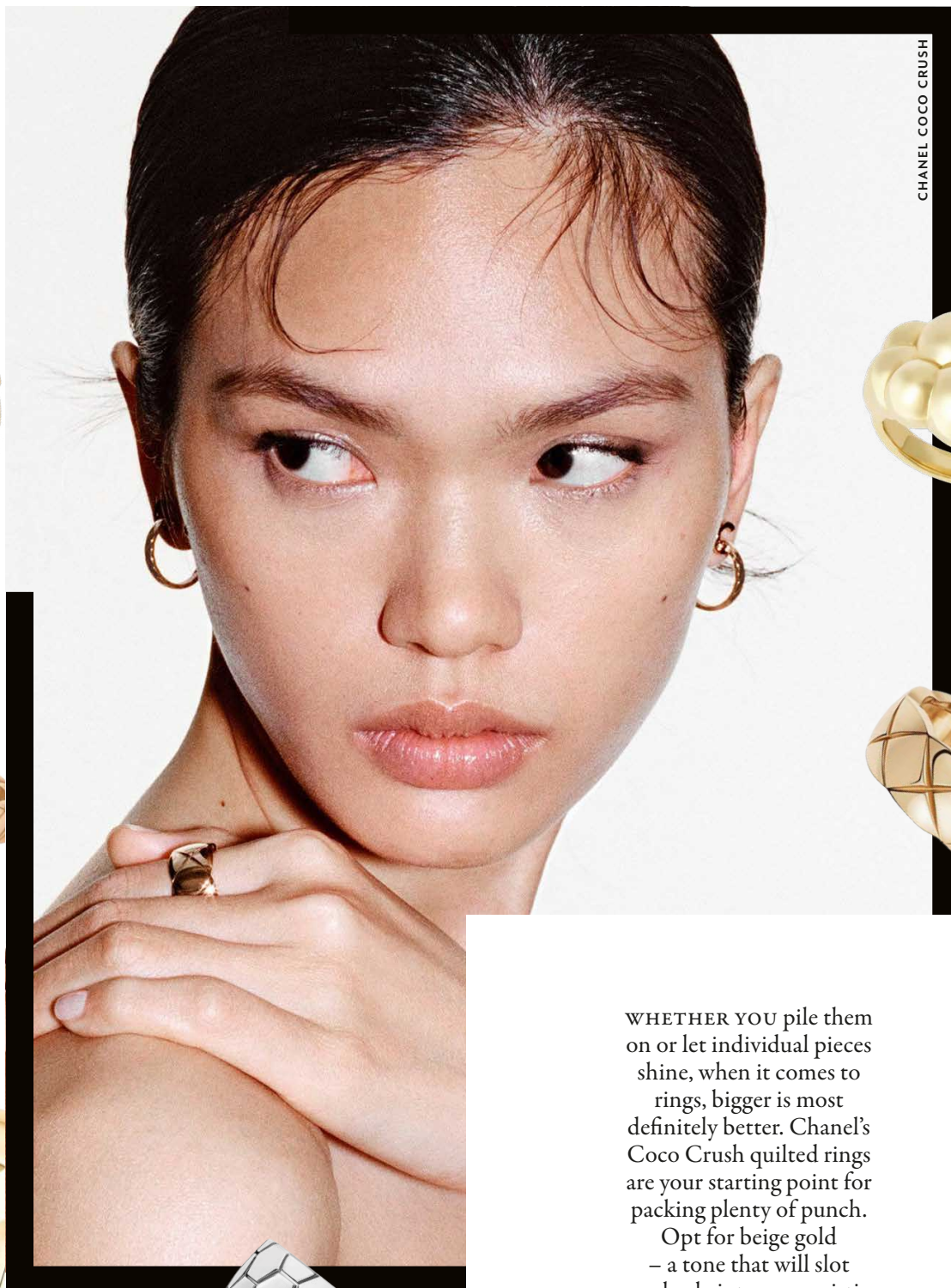
Move Joaillerie signet
ring, £4,720, Messika



Bee De Chaumet white
gold ring, £3,980,
Chaumet



Perlée signature ring
£2,440, Van Cleef & Arpels



CHANEL COCO CRUSH

WHETHER YOU pile them on or let individual pieces shine, when it comes to rings, bigger is most definitely better. Chanel's Coco Crush quilted rings are your starting point for packing plenty of punch.

Opt for beige gold – a tone that will slot seamlessly into your existing jewellery collection.

THE BRIGHT SIDE

FINE JEWELLERY takes a techy turn with the addition of colourful cord and rope. Take Messika's Move Uno bracelets, which combine diamond pendants with neon green and aqua strings, while Tiffany & Co's latest additions to its T Smile collection see the hardware updated with Tiffany blue and cherry red cords.



Necklace, £280,
Dries Van Noten



ZARA



Bracelet, £590,
Annoushka



Bee De Chaumet
bracelet, £1,120,
Chaumet



Bracelet, £5,700,
Ksenia Mirella



Leather bracelet,
£270, Prada



Leather bracelet,
£395, Hermès



Move Uno bracelets,
£638 each, Messika



T Smile bracelets, £700
each, Tiffany & Co



Necklace, £160,
Veronica Beard

PEARLY QUEENS

Necklace, £2,400,
David Morris



Necklace,
£6,500,
Jessica
McCormack



Fluid brooch, price on
request, Tasaki

Happy Hearts
bangle, £3,610,
Chopard



Earrings, £3,000,
Lucy Delius

Beaches bracelet, £4,200,
Jessica McCormack



Petit Balance earrings,
£2,180, Tasaki



Fluid ring, price on
request, Tasaki



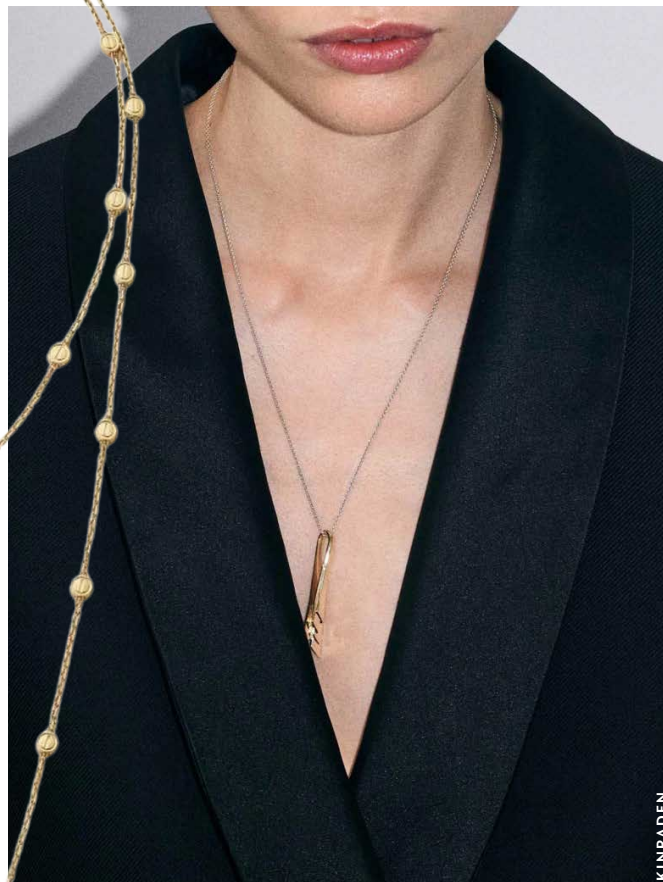
NO LONGER RESERVED for prim and proper strings, pearls take on a contemporary feel for the new season and beyond with floating settings, sculptural hardware and changing tones – think *Girl With A Pearl Earring* 2.0. For model examples, look to Tasaki's new Fluid collection, which sees Niccolò Pasqualetti reimagine pearls with fluid-form brooches and molten metal statement rings.

ALL IN THE DETAIL

WHILE OVERSIZED statement pieces steal the show, don't disregard the discreet elegance of more subtle staples. Look to Chopard's Ice Cube collection for delicately detailed pendants in white gold and diamonds – you'll buy once and wear forever.
Ice Cube ethical diamond pendant, £4,080, Chopard

FOR THE JEWELLERY connoisseur, nothing beats Van Cleef & Arpels' Alhambra pendants. Choose a single statement pendant on a gold chain for a necklace to treasure.
Magic Alhambra necklace, £6,000, Van Cleef & Arpels

YOUR NEXT INVESTMENT comes courtesy of Cartier's Love collection. The 112.5cm chain can be double layered or worn as a single strand for jewellery that will work around you.
Love necklace, £10,500, Cartier



KINRADEN

IS THERE ANYTHING more timeless, more elegant than a single solitaire diamond? For those looking to begin their collection, nothing beats a Tiffany rock.
Solitaire diamond, from £1,075, Tiffany & Co

MESSIKA'S MOVE UNI hand bracelet will quickly become your favourite get-ready step. Wear every day for a radiant final flourish.
Move Uno hand bracelet, £3,390, Messika

It's a bit frumpy,
a little odd and
your mum would
approve. But
then, so would
fashion's finest...

WHY YOU NEED AN AWKWARD SHOE

TOD'S

TORY BURCH

KHAITE

WORDS LAURA ANTONIA JORDAN

JIL SANDER

September is now lurking (already! How?) just around the corner, meaning it's time to start thinking about new school shoes. At least, *I've* been thinking about them. Specifically, about

how all my, admittedly limited, negotiation skills were forged during the annual footwear upgrade of my tweens. My mum wanted me to have quality shoes that supported and protected and didn't land me in detention on the first day of term; I wanted silly, popular-girl shoes that flouted heel-height rules and would require a door-to-door drop-off service. Who cared if they disintegrated on the first rainy day or that I would require a nonstop supply of plasters?

Well, my mum did. And, since she was the one with the money, the result was a *compromise* (yuk!), something that, ultimately, satisfied neither of us. They remain etched in my memory: big round toes, buffed black leather, sturdy soles and mid-height, middle-aged heels. The overall effect? Clunky in the way that any design that can't settle on what it wants to be is. *Awkward.*

But on the eve of this September, now in control of my own finances and not beholden to a girls' school uniform policy, something strange is happening: I actually *want* a pair of those awkward shoes. And, thankfully, I'm not the only one.

The A/W '26 collections are packed with shoes that fit the awkward brief. What we're not talking about here are shoes that are provocatively foul, the type that sit under the cool kid ugly footwear banner (your Vibrams, Tabis or 'sneakerinas') nor those defiantly functional shoes beloved by graphic design-meets-granola mums (your Birbies, your clogs. Crocs can sit in either group). Both of those categories are still going gangbusters, of course, but they're not this.

The awkward shoe is one that can't entirely settle on what it wants to be. It's having something of an identity crisis. It's a bit frumpy, but not worn as if it is. It's classic but with the right amount of odd. It's sensible but secretly not. It looks like it might want to speak to the manager or wait, maybe it *is* the manager. Your elders would 'get' it (they would probably even approve, shudder!) – except they wouldn't really.

What do they actually look like? They are primarily pumps, maybe a loafer or a

PIMP YOUR PUMPS
5 of the best



£448, Proenza Schouler at mytheresa.com



£451, Aeyde



£420, Aeyde



£850, Phoebe Philo at mytheresa.com



£189, Arket

court or some sort of slip-on that would defy easy categorisation. They are the kind of court shoes you might have clattered off to work experience in. Toes are defiantly clumpy – bulbously rounded or plumply squared, definitely *not* pointed. Heels are there, but low or blocky. And the most definable detail of all? The high-cut vamp, or upper. This is a toe-cleavage-free zone.

'There is something incredibly modern about the return of the high-vamp pump in

particular,' says Tiffany Hsu, Mytheresa's chief buying and group fashion ventures officer. 'By covering more of the foot, these styles feel more understated and intellectual than a classic court shoe, and that quiet confidence is exactly what makes them so compelling.' Hsu recommends Phoebe Philo's suede pumps, Proenza Schouler's Glove pumps and The Row's Liisa Three pumps.

Khaite's cool girls wore them with leathers and shades; sure she'd still be party hopping, but she doesn't rely on a cab to do it. At Calvin Klein, they had a tactile, tonal, minimal vibe. Tod's angular loafers were worn with skinny stirrup pants; at Jil Sander, Simone Bellotti paired them with blue socks or white stockings (awkward!). Celine's Michael Rider – who's already done wonders for the dance flat – put a nubby little kitten-heel pump with a thick black tight and leopard coat. And Tory Burch proposed some of the best of the season – in olive green and cement and mustard – and teamed them with patent leather skirts and slouchy cords inspired by the ones her father used to wear.

Aeyde's Giulia pump also hits the mark. 'The super-slouchy construction with a raised frontline creates a unique shape and glove-like feeling when wearing it,' says the Berlin brand's creative director and founder Luisa Dames.

The awkward shoe is having a streetstyle moment too. Ferragamo's Vara courts with their neat, structured little bow are trending with a whole new set. And, at this point, it hardly warrants mentioning that seemingly everyone at any fashion do will be wearing those angle-toed, two-tone Chanel pumps. Even Charli XCX is walking around in an office-friendly pump – with a ratty little T-shirt dress, sure, but still.

So why now? It can't just be about arch support and making the commute walkable. Nor can it be about being sensible (yes, a great wear-to-death investment is madly satisfying but you have to admit a lot of shopping – shoe shopping in particular – is about unreasonable desire), although their versatility is a charm.

No the appeal, I think, is that they are radically un-people-pleasing. They're not 'f** me' heels, they're better 'f** you' heels. As in, f** you if you don't 'get' them, those who need to know, know. Just don't tell my mum I put it like that – or she won't let me get them.



STILL NOT convinced you've got a boho side? Along comes Chloé creative director Chemena Kamali with the house's new autumn/winter 2026 campaign, making a compelling case for embracing your free-spirited alter ego.

TAKE NOTE

Your need-to-know fashion news



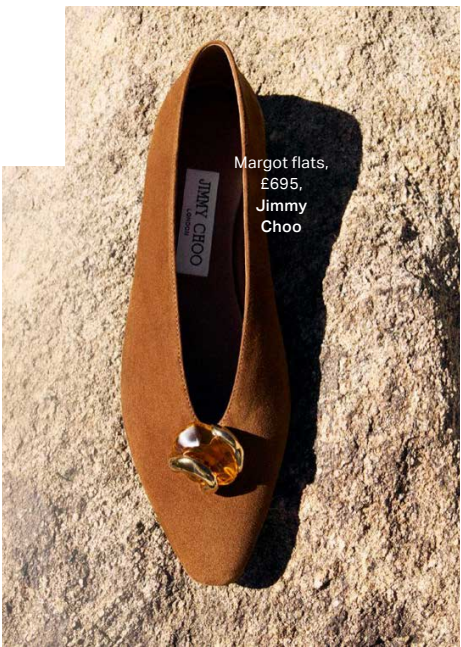
SOMETIMES, ALL you need is a soft, fits-everything bag with just the right hint of bohemia to keep life organised. Etro's new Vela Blossom is ready to do exactly that.

Bag, £2,115



Shirt, £390, Sstein at net-a-porter.com

LOOKING FOR your new season hero piece? Start with the humble flannel shirt. It's about to be everywhere and Japanese label Sstein, best known for its well-cut unisex tailoring, gets our vote.



Margot flats, £695, Jimmy Choo

IT MAY be high summer, but we're edging closer to falling leaves and the return of suede. Before we wrap ourselves up completely, though, let Jimmy Choo's new flats ease you gently into an autumnal mood.

EDITED BY HENRIK LISCHKE



Shoes, £95

COS HAS turned its attention to sneakerinas, giving the hybrid shoe a luxe twist. Its latest pair is shaping up to be one of the hits of the season.

LIP BALM made in space? Meet Spacelip by Exist, developed using ingredients cultivated aboard the International Space Station.

Spacelip, £58



Bracelet, £450

LONDON-BASED jewellery designer Julia Tyrrell Bunge transforms industrial remnants and cast metal fragments into beautifully wearable forms. The result is sculptural silver jewellery that feels worlds away from anything dainty.



Mavi EDP, £220 for 50ml

ANYONE WHO'S stayed at an Aman hotel will tell you there's nowhere chicer. Luckily, you can bring a little of that feeling home with Aman Essentials' new grapefruit-scented fine fragrance, Mavi.



OLIVIER MARTY and Karl Fournier, the duo behind architecture and design firm Studio KO, have created everything from the YSL Museum in Marrakech to London's Chiltern Firehouse. Now they've created a coffee table book that deserves pride of place in every design lover's home.



A Few Interiors, £75, Rizzoli



WANT TO win the scented candle stakes among your friends? Start here. Wedgwood's new Jasperware Bacchus candle is easily the prettiest one we've laid eyes on this year.

wellwoman[®]

DAILY WELLNESS

Tess Daly



From Boots, Superdrug, Holland & Barrett, supermarkets, pharmacies, health stores & [wellwoman.com](https://www.wellwoman.com)

Contains vitamins B6, B12, magnesium and iron which contribute to normal energy release. Wellbeing of Women is a registered charity. England & Wales: 239281. Scotland: SC042856. *UK's No.1 women's supplement brand. Nielsen GB ScanTrack Total Coverage Value & Unit Retail Sales 52 w/e 4th Oct 2025. To verify contact Vitabiotics Ltd, 1 Apsley Way, London, NW2 7HF. Tess Daly Image Credit: Billie Scheepers.

Wellwoman
supports




VITABIOTICS

HEALTH+ BEAUTY

IT'S NEW
+WE WANT IT!

PHOTOGRAPH **AMY CURRELL**
EDITED BY **ANNIE VISCHER**

FROM EMBELLISHED CASES to embossed lipstick bullets, the new Dior Beauty Lucky Clover collection is a collectable tribute to Christian Dior's lucky charms – a set of talismans he famously kept close, which still inform the house's designs today.

Dior Beauty Rouge Dior Velvet Lipstick in 951 Talisman, £44



FOR THE LOVE OF LESS

PHOTOGRAPHS **VICTOR BASTIDAS**
MAKE-UP **AMANDA GROSSMAN** USING **CLARINS**
STYLING **SIMONE KONU-RAE**
WORDS + BEAUTY DIRECTION **ANNIE VISCHER**

Supermodel and climate activist *Arizona Muse* says the secret to good skin is a minimalist approach to make-up

WHEN ARIZONA MUSE arrives for her close-up, the studio is a hive of activity. We're on the edge of Regent's Park mid-heatwave and an industrial-sized fan is working overtime to cool the crew as lighting engineers erect spotlights and the lead make-up artist sets out her stall.

Scouted as a teenager, Muse's career took off in 2011 when she opened and closed Prada's spring/summer 2011 catwalk show in Milan. Since then, she has appeared on countless magazine covers and fronted campaigns for the likes of Yves Saint Lauren, Louis Vuitton, Chloé and Karl Lagerfeld; she's a big deal but disarmingly understated as she breezes through the doorway unannounced. Having politely turned down the offer of a car, Muse arrives on her beloved bike, an Instagrammable affair – sage green with a brown seat and handlebars. 'I love it, it's so cute,' she enthuses. She bought it for £82 on Ebay. 'I mustered up the courage to start cycling around London last year and I haven't looked back.'

It's a fitting ride for Clarins' first-ever CSR (corporate social responsibility) advocate. 'It's possibly my favourite role to date,' she says. 'I love talking about the impact they're having through regenerative farming, visiting those farms and witnessing firsthand how they're changing their formulas to have a positive impact on the planet.' Muse is discerning in her brand affiliations and clued-up in the sustainability department; she doesn't take on collaborations like this lightly.

Muse is just as considered when it comes to her beauty buys. 'They have to be non-toxic, ingredients must be pure, regeneratively grown, sustainably sourced and packaged in glass, tin or be refillable at least.' If you're staring guiltily at your own make-up bag, know that Muse is human – she's a sucker for a pretty label too. 'I look for good design, aesthetics are important to me.'

When I ask what make-up she makes a play for, I do so somewhat deferentially, assuming she probably doesn't wear much at all. Carole White, founder of Premier

Model Management, once said that successful models possessed an 'alien like' quality, an otherworldliness. Muse, dressed in ripped jeans, an Organic Basics crop top and a men's Bermuda-style shirt by Wax London, all curly hair and surfer girl skin, has that in spades, plus a supermodel glow that looks God-given.

'I wear make-up every day,' she insists. 'I finish my skincare routine with a face oil, then go in with concealer and a big foundation brush – I concentrate on red or purple areas around my eyes, my nose, then I fade it out over my cheeks.' She sweeps on coral shades of cream blush and adds a swipe or two of mascara. Muse leaves her eyebrows alone but dyes them regularly. 'You'll love this,' she laughs. 'I use a men's beard-dye kit – I mix it up with a little mascara wand, then slap it on.'

Muse, named after her home state (she was born in Tucson, Arizona), has fond memories of make-up growing up. 'My mum's cosmetics bag was like a tribute to the late '70s.' Her mother, Davina Muse, is a British former model. 'Her make-up products were relics left over from her London days; she couldn't buy top-ups in the desert.'

Muse remembers a favourite powder. 'It was iridescent and gleamed pink or blue depending on the light; it smelled amazing.' Nowadays she channels her magpie-like love of colour and sparkle into nail art. 'I do my own at home, I love experiment-

ing.' Before the on-set pro gets to work, Muse is sporting summery streaks of orange and pink on each nail, as well as stickers on her toes, supplied by her seven-year-old daughter, Cy.

In a world in which the Sephora tween reigns supreme – Muse also has a 17-year-old son, Nikko – how much does her experience of the fashion and beauty industry play into her parenting? 'I think back to my own teenage years and remember feeling like I knew everything, I was so confident. Flash forward to my early twenties and I had no confidence at all,' she says. 'I don't want to damage my kids' self-esteem, but I do want them to be realistic about things, so I try to talk about my experiences as much as possible in case something resonates with them. I want them to know they can always come to me for advice.'

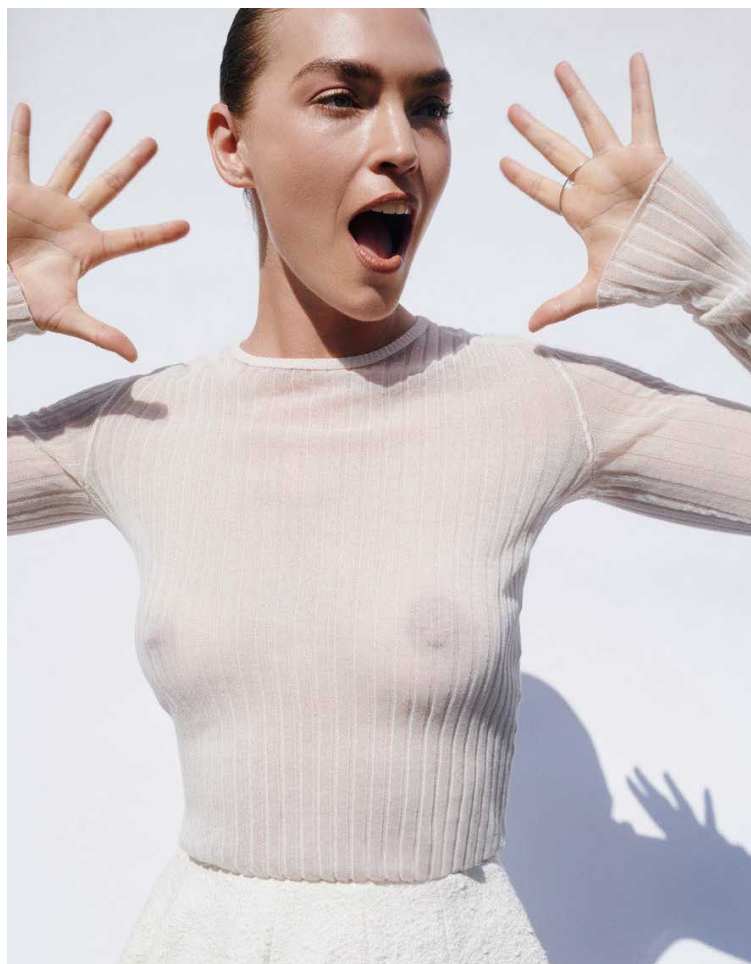
Muse's own childhood was peppered with visits to her grandparents' home in West Sussex. 'Their house was surrounded by 26 acres of grass and ponds and forest and a little lake. It was so special,' she says. 'I'm sure it's why I ended up living in England, it always seemed so lush compared to the harsh, spiky desert landscape I was used to, full of rattlesnakes and scorpions.' Nowadays, Muse lives in London, where she has curated a hub of little havens. 'I'm always booking in at Psyche,' (she heads to a Pilates class at the fitness studio after our shoot wraps) 'and I love the Hackney Wick Community Sauna.'

Muse might have taken a step back from the high-fashion hamster wheel – the never-ending whirl of fashion weeks, fittings and cover shoots – but her diary is as jam-packed as ever. Her primary focus right now is World Beauty Forum, a community and platform she co-founded to reposition beauty across cosmetics, fashion and film as a power for good, rather than an emblem of toxic consumerism. As a Vinted and Depop aficionado, a no-make-up-make-up wearer and an avid cyclist, it's a vision Muse seeks to embody every day. 'My mother always told me that it's not that less is more,' she says, 'it's that less is enough.'



I USE A MEN'S
BEARD-DYE
KIT [ON MY
EYEBROWS]. I MIX
IT UP AND
SLAP IT ON

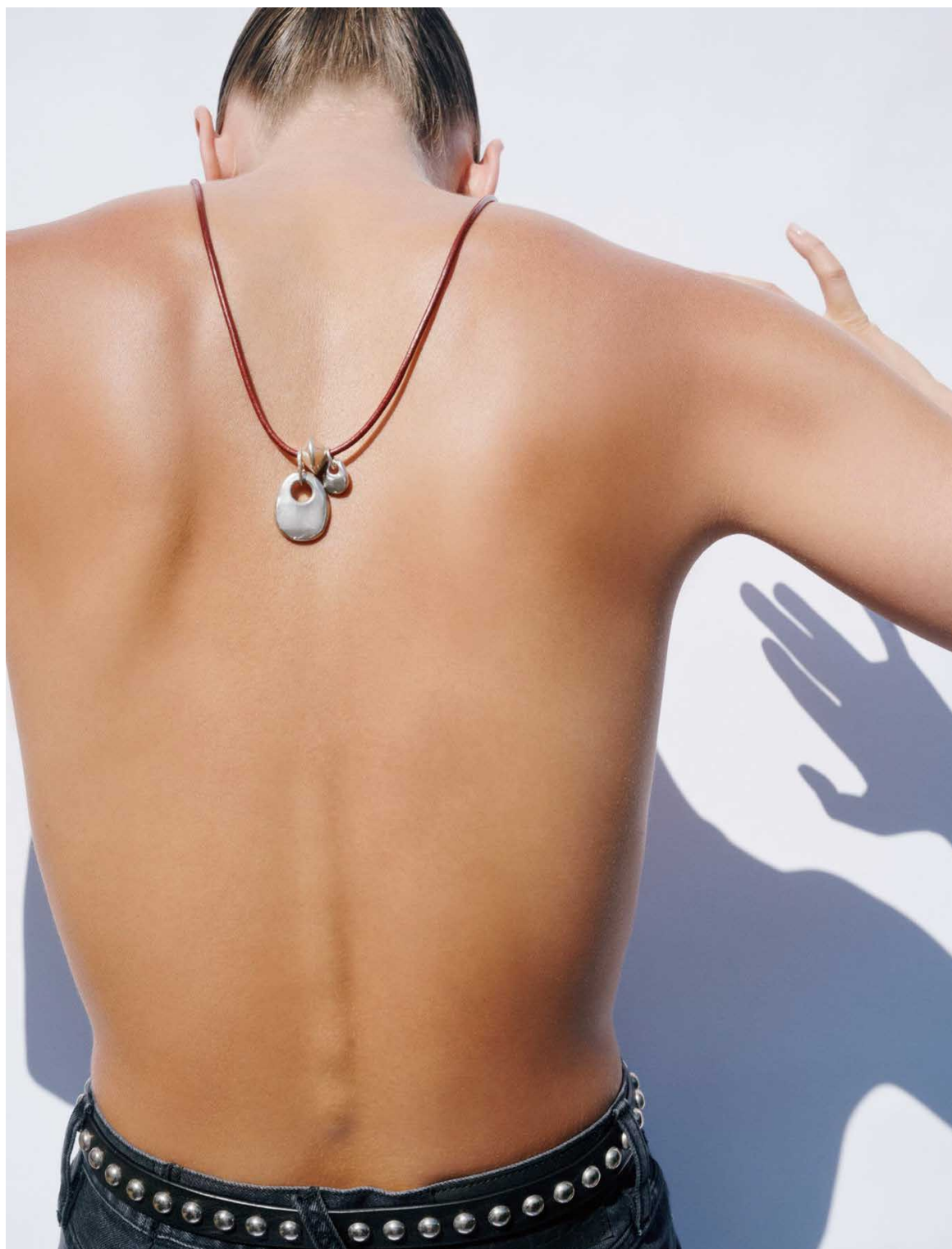




GET THE GLOW

'To even out your complexion without masking your skin's natural glow, lighten up shadows and neutralise areas of redness with a radiance-boosting skin tint or concealer and blend it out,' says Amanda Grossman, the pro behind these looks. 'Concentrate on dark circles, your T-zone, your nose and around your mouth. ▶

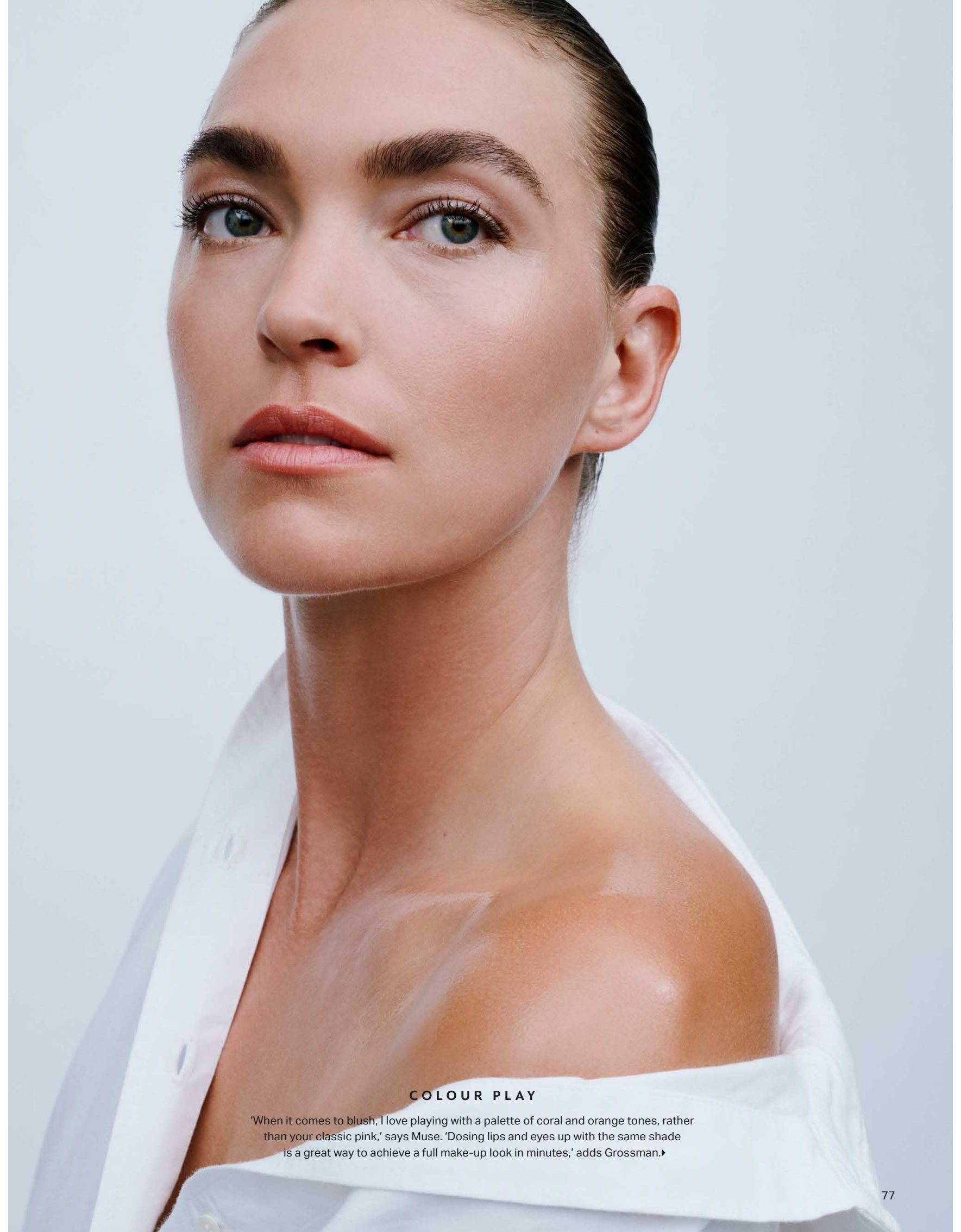
ARIZONA WEARS: (LEFT) DRESS, PRICE ON REQUEST; MUGLER AT EBAY; SHOES, £340; DEAR FRANCES, RIGHT: TOP AND SKIRT, PRICE ON REQUEST; BOTTEGA VENETA; RING, £175; BAR JEWELLERY; OPENING PAGE: NECKLACE, £2,175; KINRADEN



BARE NECESSITIES

'If you want to lend your body a little lustre, avoid shimmer-loaded oils and thick, bronzing lotions that risk transferring on to your clothes,' says Grossman. 'Instead, smooth in a rich moisturiser and let the glossy residue do the talking.'

LEFT: NECKLACE, £595. ALIGHIERI; JEANS, £224. DALA; BELT, £125. J&M DAVISON. RIGHT: SHIRT, £100. SAMSOE SAMSOE



COLOUR PLAY

'When it comes to blush, I love playing with a palette of coral and orange tones, rather than your classic pink,' says Muse. 'Dosing lips and eyes up with the same shade is a great way to achieve a full make-up look in minutes,' adds Grossman.▶

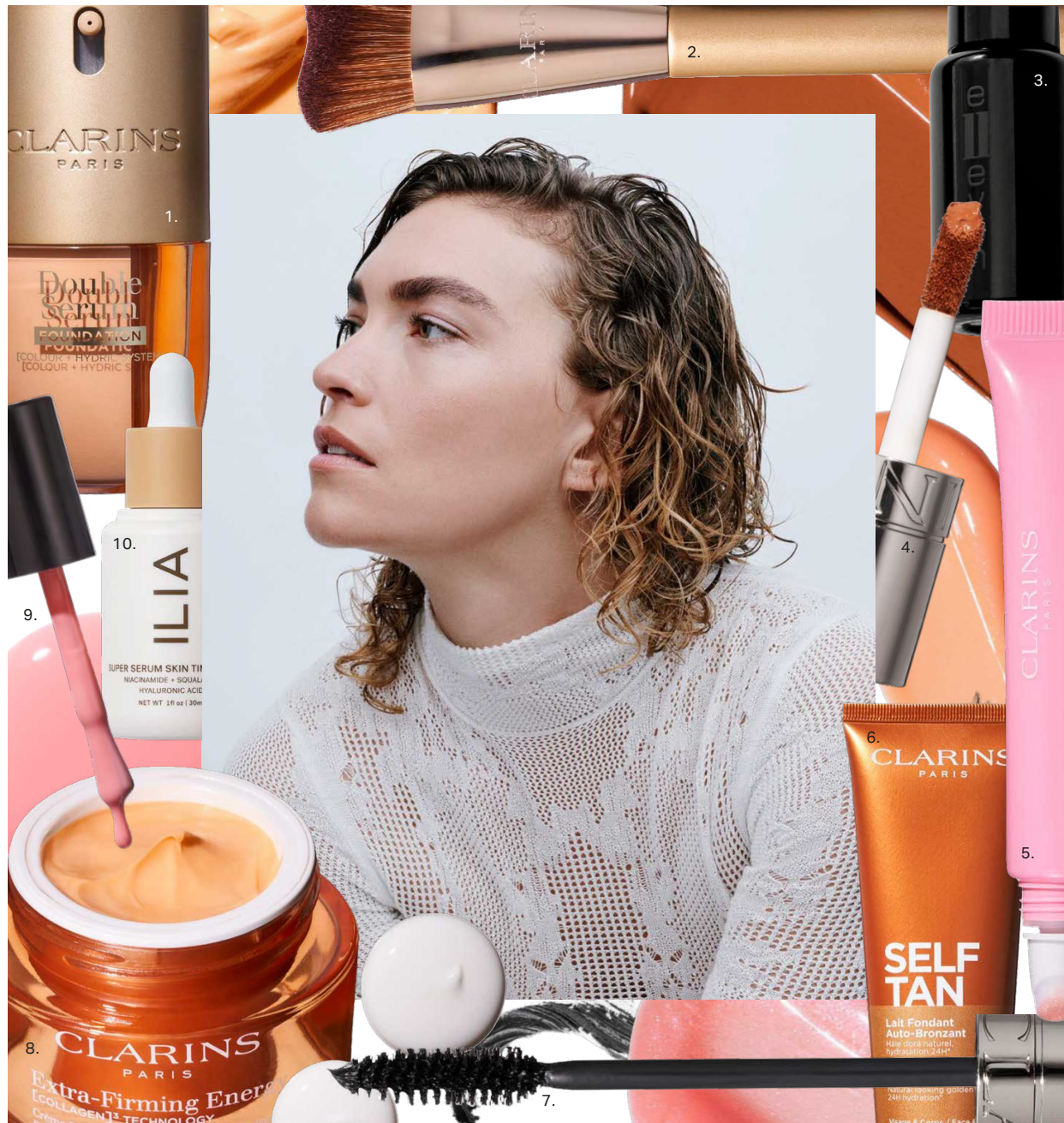


BRIGHT EYES

'For wide awake eyes, apply waterproof mascara to your top lashes (waterproof formulas are always lighter so your curl lasts longer) and keep your lower lashes bare,' says Grossman. 'This will make you look far more than awake than you feel.'

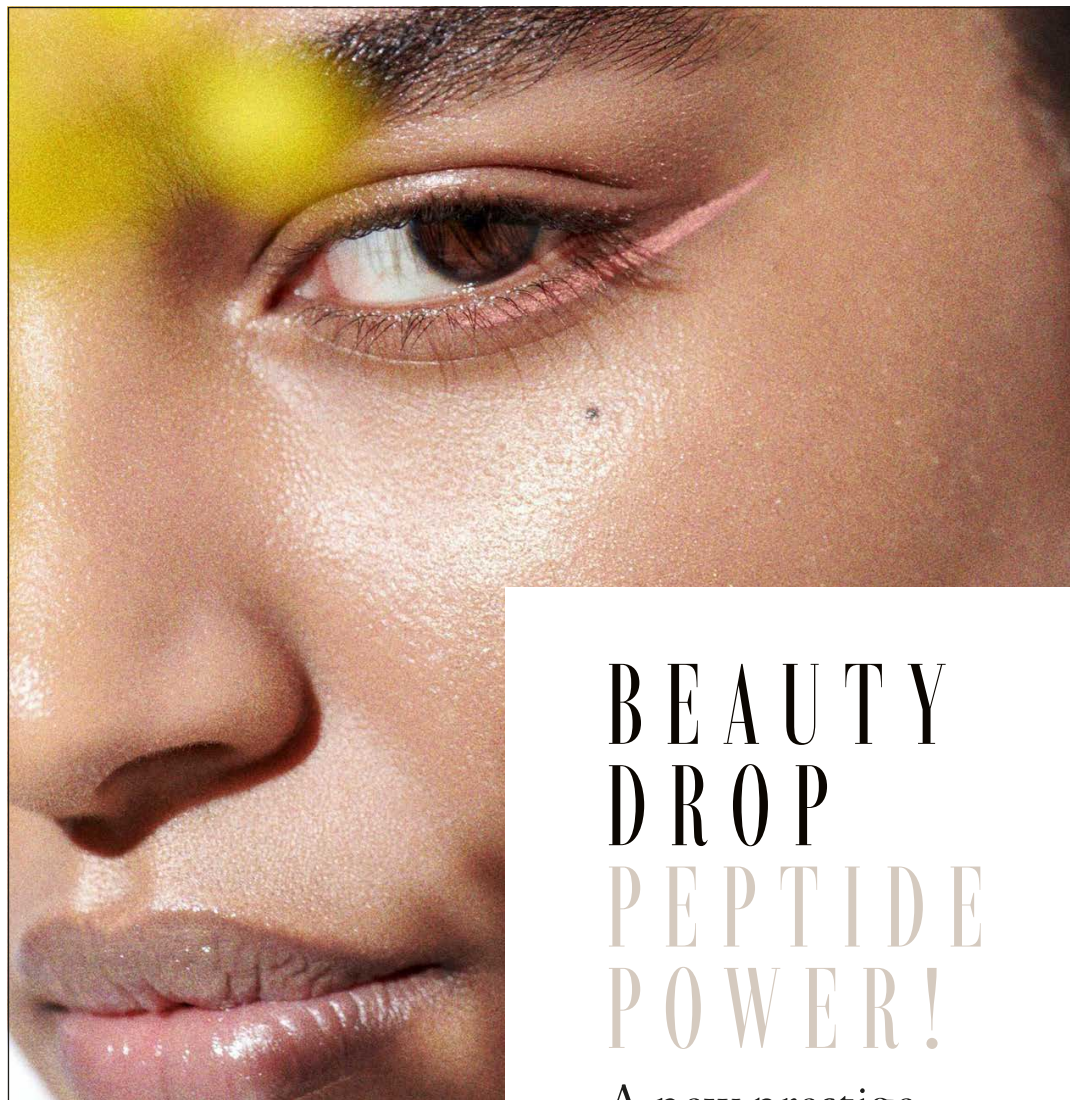
BARELY THERE BEAUTY

From lightweight tints to planet-friendly polishes, get acquainted with Arizona's go-tos



LEFT: TOP PRICED ON REQUEST, CHLOÉ. HAIR: DAVID WADLOW. MAKE-UP: AMANDA GROSSMAN AT FORWARD ARTISTS. NAILS: EMMA WELSH AT SR COLLECTIVE. SHOOT PRODUCER: ANNA DEWHURST. PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANTS: LIA LAZARO, BARNEY CROUCH. FASHION ASSISTANTS: LIV BELLAMY, JACK BOOTH

1. CLARINS Double Serum Foundation, £49 . 2. CLARINS Gua Sha Inspired Foundation Brush, £39. 3. E11EVEN Fragrance Oil, £80. 4. CLARINS Skin Illusion All-In-One Concealer, £29. 5. CLARINS Lip Perfector, £25. 6. CLARINS Self-Tanning Milky Lotion, £28. 7. CLARINS Wonder Perfect 5D Mascara, £30. 8. CLARINS Extra-Firming Energy, £79, and Refill, £63. 9. NAILBERRY Oxygenated Nail Lacquer in Kindness, £17. 10. ILIA BEAUTY Super Serum Skin Tint SPF 30, £42



BEAUTY DROP PEPTIDE POWER!

A new prestige serum with a high street price tag

IF YOU HAVE SPENT the first half of the summer screaming, 'It's Marks & Spencer!' in the face of anyone who compliments your linen co-ord and waxing lyrical about the high street retailer's recent glow-up, wait until you clock its latest beauty move. Its trusted own-brand skincare range, Formula, is entering an exciting new era, relaunching with 12 new products designed to cater to most routines – expect staples such as micellar water and face oil as well as active formulas like the AHA Exfoliating Toner and Retinoid Renewal Serum.

The M&S strategy is to provide for in-the-know skincare aficionados without overcomplicating things. 'Most people just want to know what it does and whether it works,' says the ever frank Emma Willis, broadcaster, TV presenter and the face of this new iteration of Formula. 'Formula takes genuinely advanced science and explains it in a way that feels simple and approachable. It's skincare you don't need a

PhD for – just brilliant ingredients, proven results and products that fit into real life.'

Take this capsule collection's hero product, the new Ultra Peptide Serum. At £29 it's the priciest product in the range, and yet it still doesn't set you back any more than a pair of M&S jeans would – a refreshing move in itself. Powered by two buzzy ingredients – peptides (the building blocks of collagen and elastin) and NAD+ booster (fuel for skin cells) – it's a high-performance serum that, according to a four-week user trial of 110 women, delivers results you can see in the mirror in less than a month.

For those looking to up the ante in the skincare department without risking a state of overwhelm as you window shop around for your next buy, look no further.

IN A
NUTSHELL

WHAT IS IT?

Formula Ultra Peptide Serum, £29

HOW DO I USE IT?

Apply 1-2 drops to cleansed skin in the morning and/or evening.

WHAT DOES IT DO?

It improves the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, firms, hydrates, brightens and smooths – a real all-rounder. You'll start to see results within four weeks of consistent use.

WHAT WILL I BE TELLING MY FRIENDS?

'Take it from me, peptides and NAD+? They're the Dua Lipa and Callum Turner of skincare ingredients – ultimate power couple.'



Formula
Ultra Peptide
Serum, £29

GIRL CRUSH

Musician *Gracie Abrams* on the value of a signature scent

GRACIE ABRAMS ISN'T your average Chanel girl – her roots are more Palm Springs than Paris. But looks-wise you can't get more Coco than Abrams' elfin features, her signature slick of black liner and glossy '20s-style crop. And now the talented musician is the new face of Chanel Coco Mademoiselle Crush Absolu.

The daughter of director and screenwriter JJ Abrams (*Mission: Impossible III*, *Star Trek*, *Lost*) and Katie McGrath, who serves as co-CEO of Bad Robot Productions, the singer showed an early flair for writing, journalling from a young age before pivoting to lyrics in her teens. Flash forward to 2026 and Abrams has a Grammy-nominated duet with Taylor Swift (*Us*) in the bank, a Billboard Women In Music award for songwriter of the year and now the Chanel campaign.

The house announced her as the face of Coco Mademoiselle Crush Absolu last month. And it means something to be the face of a Chanel scent – Abrams joins the likes of Margot Robbie, Marion Cotillard, Gisele Bündchen and Keira Knightley. 'It feels pretty surreal now to be part of this lineage,' she says. 'I grew up admiring the short films and going to the airport and seeing their pictures everywhere.'

Abrams' first memories of Chanel revolve around her grandmother. 'She had a beautiful vanity with an oval mirror,' she says. 'I remember her lipstick and her fragrance; she wore No.5.' It's the sort of beauty ritual that speaks of self-care; seeing it in action had a profound effect on Abrams. 'I remember feeling, "Wow, this is womanhood." It



Chanel Coco Mademoiselle Crush Absolu, £160 for 100ml

was the pinnacle of growing into yourself.'

And Abrams' knows the value of fragrance. 'I feel different when I wear perfume. I'll be frustrated if I realise I've left the house without it! You can feel quite naked without your signature scent.' And her favourite thing about fragrance? 'That it leaves people remembering you after you've been in a place... it's like you're still there.'

It goes without saying that Coco

Mademoiselle Crush Absolu is Abrams' current spritz – an intense, ambery take on the cult classic enhanced with lychee, rose and vanilla notes. 'It feels feminine but has a masculine hint. That's what excites me – it's about being able to lean into the softer, more introspective parts of yourself, but also leaving an impression no matter what. It's the push and pull of those notes that I really love.'

So, just for fun (Coco Mademoiselle pun incoming), as a writer and musician who just happens to be half of one of Hollywood's best-loved couples (Abrams and Paul Mescal made their official red carpet debut at the BAFTAs earlier this year), how does Abrams think a 'crush' can develop into something more 'absolu'? 'For me, it's about absolute honesty from the start. It's brave, but it saves time and it's so romantic.' And she's all about getting those memories down on paper. 'I always write down how I feel – like a perfume, capturing a moment in time.'



How to fake tan in a heatwave



ANNIE VISCHER,
HEAD OF
BEAUTY

AS SOMEONE WHO rejoices in the recent fake tan revival (nobody taking their beauty cues from Victoria Beckham, Sarah Pidgeon and frankly any A-lister hitting the red carpet this year will have missed this), trust me when I say that there are few things more debilitating in the faux glow department than a heatwave. Hot evenings deliver a very literal melting pot of tanning hazards; sweat not only slows down absorption of your chosen product, it causes streaks and running, which can lead to a patchy, blotchy tan, not to mention stained bed sheets and pyjamas.

So how to afford yourself sun-kissed skin the safe way (without exposure to UVA and UVB rays) without risking results evocative of your experimental high school era or ruining your favourite bed linen?

‘Start by cooling your prep area and lowering your body temperature,’ advises tanning expert and facialist Michaela Bolder. ‘Switch on an air-con unit or fan in the room you’re intending to tan in, then shower, making sure to turn the water to cold for the final few minutes or as long as you can stand.’ This keeps your skin cooler for longer and gives your self-tan solution the best chance possible to absorb fully.

Take time patting yourself dry with a towel rather than building up heat on your skin with a thorough rub down. ‘You need your skin to be bone dry but cool before you reach for the bottle,’ says Bolder. ‘And make sure to use a fresh tanning mitt too – self-tan residue on an old one can leave skin feeling tacky.’

Product choice is crucial to Bolder. ‘Look for water-based self-tan products such as mousses that bill themselves as



“express” options,’ she advises. ‘The dry-down time is much quicker than anything oil-based and express formulas do what they say on the tin: they work fast.’ That means the streak hazard window is smaller. Some work in as little as one-to-three hours, a godsend if you’re an evening self-tanner like me – get started early and you could be washing it all off before bed.

Bolder advises standing in front of your fan and buffing areas of your body prone to being particularly hot or sticky with a large make-up or purpose-made tanning brush to accelerate absorption. I concentrate on creases: the backs of my knees, my arms, my neck and I pay particular attention to my armpits. Get those wrong and you’re doomed to wearing sleeves until your patchy tan fades, and that’s a heatwave quandary in itself.

If you’re a type B tanner prone to leaving things until the last minute (ie, mere moments before you’re aiming to hit the hay) make sure you’ve opted for a self-tan formula that doesn’t have a guide colour. That way even if you end up with the odd streak (there’s a maxidress for that), at least your pyjamas and bed linen will survive.

ANNIE'S BRONZING KIT

THE ONE-HOUR TAN

A quick-drying formula for time-poor self-tanners. Leave on for one hour for subtle results, two for a golden glow and three for the long-haul holiday look. **St Tropez Self Tan Express Bronzing Mousse** [1], £34

STEER CLEAR

I’ve been using this for a few months and if I had a pound for everyone who said, ‘Wow, it looks so natural!’ I’d be wearing head-to-toe Chloé right now. It’s water-based and won’t stain your sheets. **Bare by Vogue Clear Tan Water Medium** [2], £24

HANDS ON

Sswerve the dreaded soak-through moment (when your self-tan seeps through a flimsy mitt, staining your hand) by investing in a sturdy model like this. **Filter by Molly-Mae Large Velvet Mitt** [3], £10

HEY BIG BLENDER

Studiously buffing your self-tan into creases and rough patches really does pay dividends. **Isle of Paradise Shape and Glow Big Blending Brush** [4], £13.95

CLICK UNDO

When all else fails, you can count on this to speed up the fading process. Leave it on for five minutes before washing away with a flannel and warm water. **Bondi Sands Self-Tan Remover Foam Eraser** [5], £17.49



GLOSSY POSSE

Restore hair's shine with this luxe bond-building treatment. **Oribe Hair Alchemy Bond Building Elixir**, £75

FIRST BASE

A dense, fluffy brush that delivers a Photoshop finish when used to buff and blend your base. **Trinny Complexion T-Brush**, £28

GOLDEN GIRL

You can rely on this antioxidant-rich face oil to pep up a dry complexion. **Sunday Riley CEO Glow Vitamin C and Turmeric Face Oil**, £68

LIMITED EDITION

Spritz on a good mood with this essential oil-infused scent with lemongrass, geranium and neroli. **Diptyque Lemon Grass and Geranium Body Spray**, £52

BRUSH UP

Keratin-infused bristles gently detangle hair made knotty by sun and salt. **La Bonne Brosse No1 The Shine and Care Hairbrush The Universal in Aubergine**, £146

BRIGHT SPARK

Brimming with hints of hibiscus, brioche and bourbon vanilla, this candle has the treat factor in spades. **Acqua Di Parma Granita Al Gelso Candle**, £71

POST-VACAY BLUES BUSTERS

Mood-boosting beauty buys that keep that holiday feeling alive

EDITED BY RACHAEL MARTIN

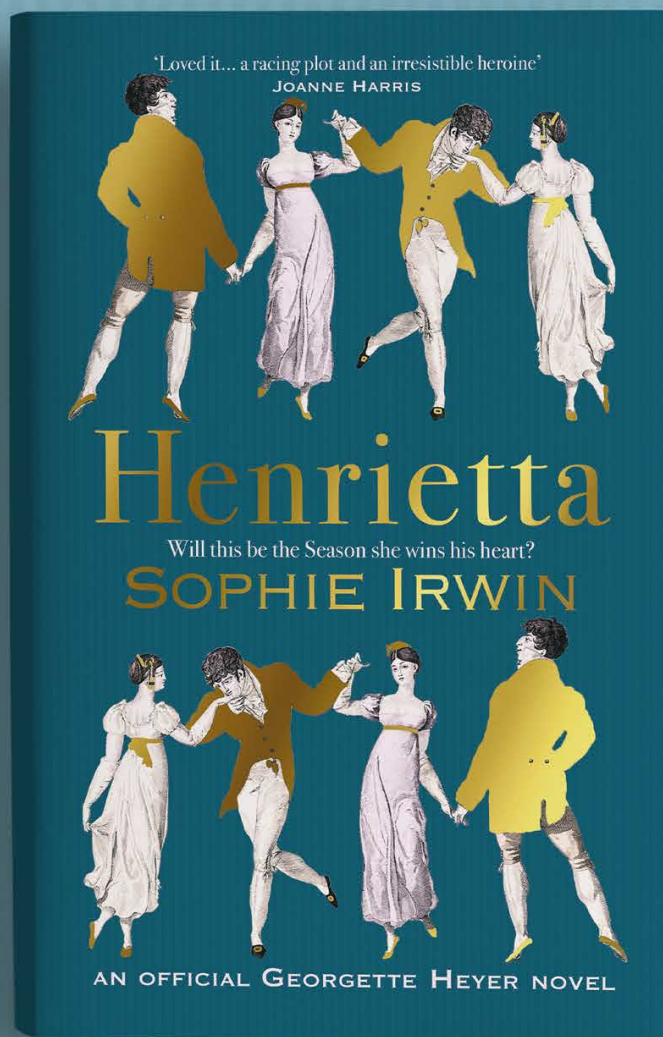
GLOW GIVER

Pearlescent pigments deliver a soft candlelit glow in a matter of sweeps. **Tom Ford Soleil Glow Highlighter**, £49

GOING SOFT

Bring dulling skin back from the brink with this exfoliator made with rosehip oil. **Grown Alchemist Polishing Exfoliator**, £15

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TIME FOR TEA? Then enjoy your brew in style with this cup and saucer set that's handmade in France and finished with designer Emilia Wickstead's distinctive signature geometric border. Most definitely our cup of tea!

Naples tea cup and saucer, £120, **Emilia Wickstead**



Candlesticks,
£19.99 and £29.99

DESIGNED FOR LIVING

Designer to the stars Kelly Wearstler has created a homeware and fashion collection for H&M Home

WORDS **BECKY SUNSHINE**

THERE IS A MOMENT early in our conversation when Kelly Wearstler stops beside one of the oak chairs she has designed for her new collaboration with H&M Home and asks me to pick it up. 'Feel the weight,' she says. It is reassuringly heavy. She looks satisfied by my surprise.

We're walking through H&M Home's installation in a beautiful palazzo in Milan ahead of the 29-piece collection's launch on 3 September. Wearstler is talking me through the idea behind each piece – chairs, occasional tables, stools, lighting, upholstered seating, clothing racks and accessories. This collaboration marks two firsts: H&M Home's first designer furniture collection and the first H&M partnership to bring together interiors and ready-to-wear: Wearstler has also designed an eight-piece fashion capsule that launches the same day.

Yet Wearstler isn't talking about trends, price points or even design, at least not in the way I expect. Instead, she talks about the chair you pull across the room when

friends drop by. The lamp you switch on every evening. The crisp white shirt that's always the first thing you reach for. 'I wanted to design the pieces that you just grab,' she says of both collections. 'Those easy things... the rituals of our everyday.'

It's an unexpectedly thoughtful way to introduce collections from a designer more readily associated with luxury hotels than the high street. For more than three decades, Wearstler has created some of the world's most recognisable interiors, shaping a Californian design language that has influenced hotels, homes and product design alike. Her 50-people-strong multidisciplinary studio is behind celebrated spaces including the Proper and Viceroy hotels in Santa Monica and Palm Springs.



Chair,
£229.99

The studio has also transformed restaurants, retail spaces and many private residences, including those of Gwen Stefani and Cameron Diaz. There are also product collaborations – Farrow & Ball, The Rug Company and Visual Comfort among them. All of which has established her as one of America's most influential designers. Her work is instantly recognisable but never formulaic; bold without being overbearing. Her rooms seem assembled rather than overly decorated, sculptural but still liveable, refined but unexpected. She's brilliant at balancing contemporary design with vintage furniture, art and crafts.

So why has she decided to bring her skills to the masses via a collaboration with H&M? 'For years I've built a design voice,' she says. 'Being able to share it with so many people is incredible.' Working with H&M Home, she says, offered the chance to create something on a global scale while remaining deeply involved in the details. 'The quality has to be up there,' she says. 'We made samples in LA then sent them to the workshops so everything was really tight and exactly how we'd dreamed it.'

After our tour, we chat more. She looks every bit the Kelly Wearstler of Instagram: skin glowing, long, honey hair perfectly mussed, wearing an Alaïa biker jacket, Balenciaga tailored trousers and Chanel courts. Serious fashion worn with complete ease. No wonder she has 2.3m followers.

Mention London and she immediately recommends Relic and Alfie's Antique



Sofa tables, £249 each (four make up the circle)



Dominoes, £49.99



Mirror, £229.99



Lamp, £299.99



Tray, £119.99



KELLY'S DESIGN DETAILS

How to curate your home and wardrobe

Start with the staples. For the home, that means simple seating, sculptural tables and lighting designed to be part of daily routines rather than special occasions. For fashion, a trench, the perfect cropped tee with shoulder pads and easy denim.

Design for changing lives. Flexibility is key. Tables that group together, seating that can be reconfigured and pieces that easily move between rooms as lives evolve. The same thinking runs through the clothing line: timeless separates designed to be mixed and worn season after season.

Materials matter. Don't skimp on quality. Solid oak, marble and tactile textiles bring substance to furniture, while the leather of a jacket or the elegant silhouette of a vase printed on a slip dress elevate the fashion pieces beyond basics.

Beauty lives in the details. A marble tray with sculptural handles, a trench with a leather collar... it's the details that elevate.

Leave room for individuality. Avoid spaces that feel overly prescribed. Like the best wardrobes, the best homes evolve gradually, shaped as much by the pieces we already own as the ones we add along the way and our own taste.

Lamp, £149.99, and side table, £229.99

Market as favourite vintage sources. I ask whether she's discovered Nordic Poetry in east London. She hasn't, but makes a note in her phone to visit next time. 'Oh my God, I'm so excited,' she laughs. It's a tiny moment, but perhaps a revealing one. Despite a career spent designing extraordinary spaces around the world, Wearstler still approaches every flea market, antique shop and artisan studio with the enthusiasm of a keen collector.

Beyond the H&M partnership, our conversation drifts easily between fashion, interiors and art. Peggy Guggenheim's fearless eye for collecting gives way to Kate Moss's instinctive approach to dressing. 'She's just so cool.' For Wearstler, these references aren't separate conversations. Fashion, art and collecting all channel the same instincts. 'I started going to vintage stores with my mom when I was really young,' she recalls. 'And so, I got the bug. You find things that are unique... you're looking for the next thing that you're just going to stop and say, "Oh my goodness, that's so incredible." I have an endless curiosity. But that feeds everything creative, right?'

It certainly seems so. Fashion is Wearstler's greatest inspiration for her interiors, too. 'When we do our hotel projects, we dress every restaurant, the reception, the guest rooms. It's like a story that's unfolding,' she explains. 'H&M is a fashion brand, so it just felt like, why not add that

element too? There's such a strong correlation between how you dress and what your home looks like.' She pauses before adding, 'I dress like I design because there's always something vintage, always mixed materials. There's always something graphic and sculptural.'

That instinct to mix rather than match runs through almost everything she describes. She buys vintage furniture for projects alongside work by emerging contemporary designers. 'If you look at our interiors, it's hard to tell when they're from because it's such a mix of different periods and different designs,' she says. 'That's why I like vintage clothing too.'

It's also what interested H&M Home. As Evelina Kravaev Söderberg, the brand's head of design and creative, says, Wearstler always felt like the right designer to lead its first furniture collection. 'I felt it had to be Kelly,' she says. 'And then, if we were doing something truly collaborative, I realised we couldn't just do small objects.'

Furniture came with its own challenges. 'Everything had to be modular, somewhat portable and there was of course a price point,' says Kravaev Söderberg. During the collections' development Wearstler arrived in Stockholm with her team carrying references, examining materials and questioning every detail. 'She challenged us and we challenged her back. It has been a beautiful partnership.'

Wearstler concurs. 'When I went to Stockholm, I asked Evelina to arrange for us to go to the archives so we could see the H&M vintage fashion collections like the Margiela, Karl Lagerfeld, all these incredible pieces. I was so impressed with the quality so that felt good knowing the fashion collection was going to be amazing.'

Listening to both women, it becomes clear that the home and fashion collections were about identifying Wearstler's principles that mattered most: sculptural forms, honest materials, thoughtful detailing and pieces designed to be modular, mixed and lived with. The result feels like the perfect distillation of the design language she has spent years refining.

Thinking of the oak chair I lifted as we met, it occurs to me Wearstler wasn't really asking me to admire it – she wanted me to understand it, imagine living with it. 'I want people to be able to make these pieces their own,' she says of items that perhaps quietly gather meaning over time and become part of our story.

Clothing rack, £299.99

THE EDIT
Designer style

Throw, £149.99

Vase, £149.99

Glass (plus carafe, not shown), £39.99

Hangers, £24.99 for four

Stool, £199.99

Side table, £299.99

Candlestick, £19.99

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THE LAST WORD

JORJA SMITH

Each issue we ask people we admire to reveal their lasts, from books to box sets. Here, singer *Jorja Smith* shares hers...

The last book I read... *Eleanor Oliphant Is Completely Fine* by Gail Honeyman. A beautiful story on how kindness goes a long way – it should be a film.

The last song I listened to... *Fire Burnin Thru The Rain* by DameDame*. I've had it on repeat. It puts a smile on my face and the bassline is crazy!

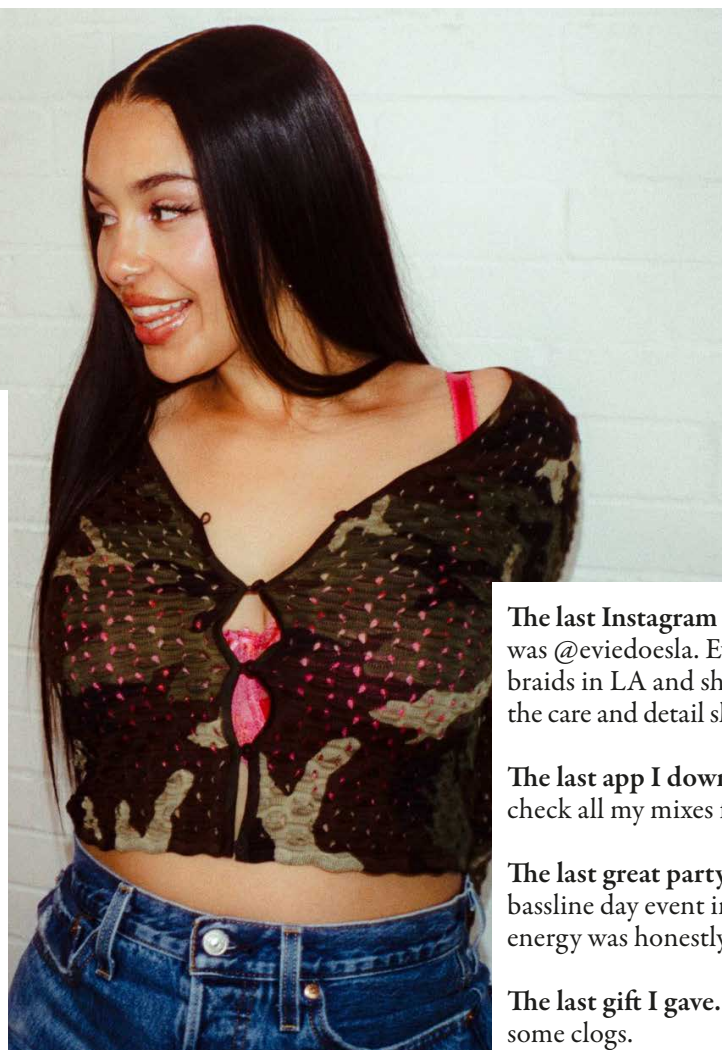
The last TV show I binged... *Half Man* by Richard Gadd. It dives into relationships, brotherhood, control and masculinity in a really raw way. It's a serious watch that completely pulls you in.

The last item I added to my wardrobe... My *What Are The Odds* album merch. I had to get involved and wear it myself! It's always special seeing people wearing something connected to my music.

The last beauty product I finished... Frankincense Intense Age-Defying Cream by Neal's Yard Remedies. I was sad when I got to the end of it, which is a sign that it's a good product.

The last restaurant I ate in... BCD Tofu House in Koreatown is one of my favourite spots in LA. The fact that it's open late makes it even better. I always order the Galbi and Beef Soon tofu with medium spice.

The last holiday I had... I went to Wales in my campervan. I spent time by the beach, watched the sunset, drank some local ale, ate ice cream and just slowed everything down. The perfect escape.



Jorja's last read, the face cream she loves and *Half Man*, her recent TV binge watch



The last Instagram account I followed... was @eviedoesla. Evalyn just did my braids in LA and she's so talented. I love the care and detail she puts into her work.

The last app I downloaded... Samplify, to check all my mixes for my new album.

The last great party I went to... Cru2's bassline day event in Birmingham. The energy was honestly unmatched.

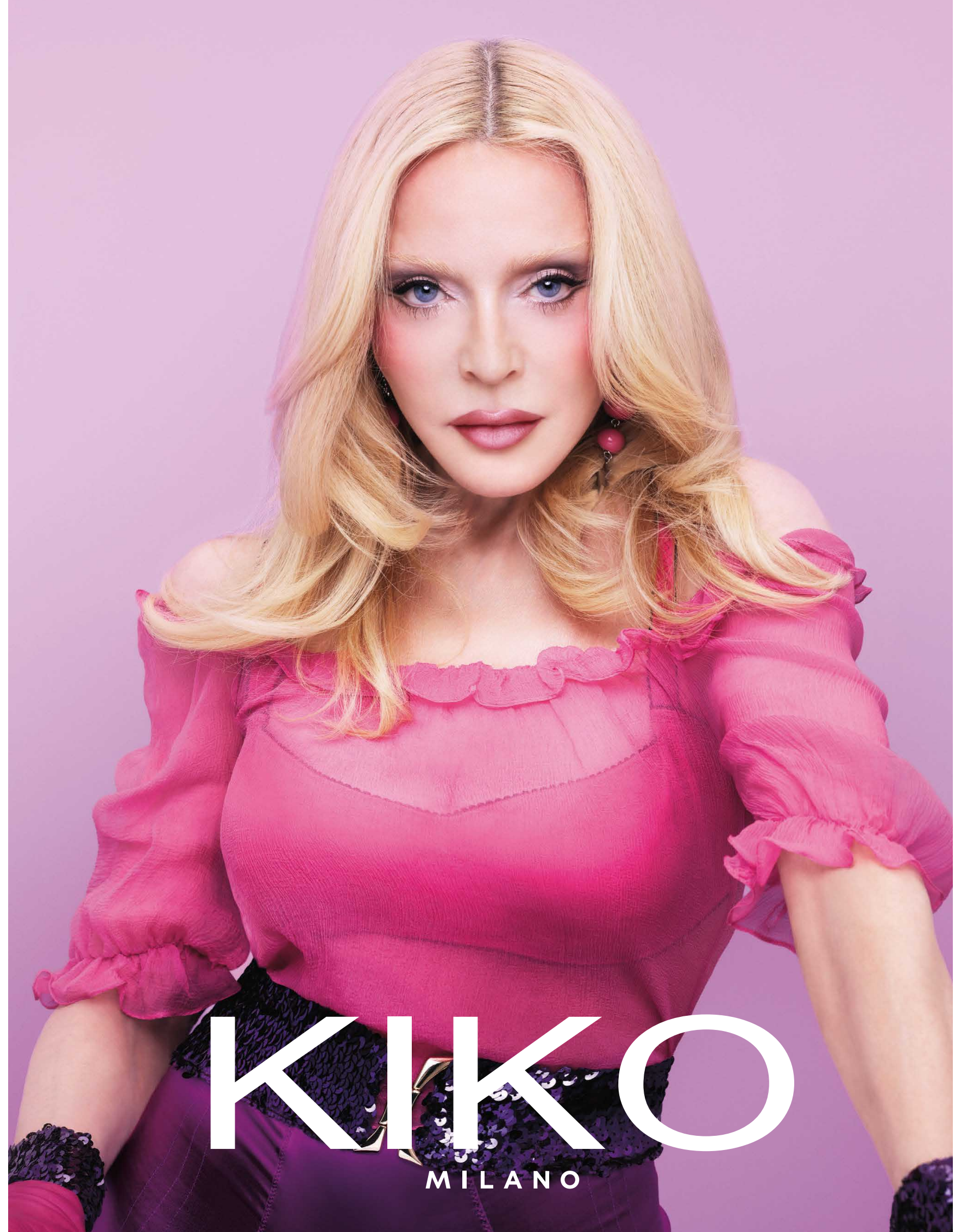
The last gift I gave... I bought my mum some clogs.

The last photo I took on my phone... was of a brand of sparkling water I'd never seen before. I have a very niche interest in discovering different waters.

The last time I felt starstruck... Meeting Jessie J at a festival in Morocco. I grew up loving her music, so it was special to meet someone who was such a big inspiration. We ended up performing together, which was surreal and amazing.

The last promise I made... was to be more forthcoming with my feelings.

The last great piece of advice I heard... Face facts but keep faith in the outcome. *'What Are The Odds'* is out 21 August



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