OK!
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WILLIAM AND KATE

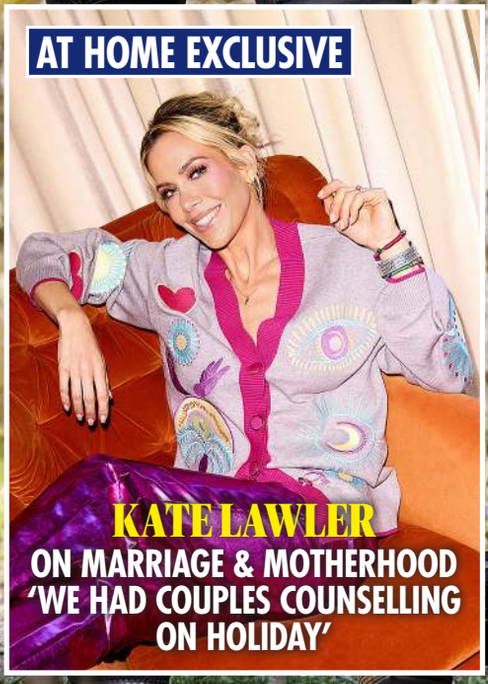
INSIDE THEIR CHALLENGING DILEMMA AS HARRY RETURNS HOME WITH MEGHAN



'They've got used to life without him and are in a difficult position'

'There are calls for William to accept an olive branch from his brother – but it will be a bitter pill for him to swallow'

AT HOME EXCLUSIVE



KATE LAWLER
ON MARRIAGE & MOTHERHOOD
'WE HAD COUPLES COUNSELLING ON HOLIDAY'

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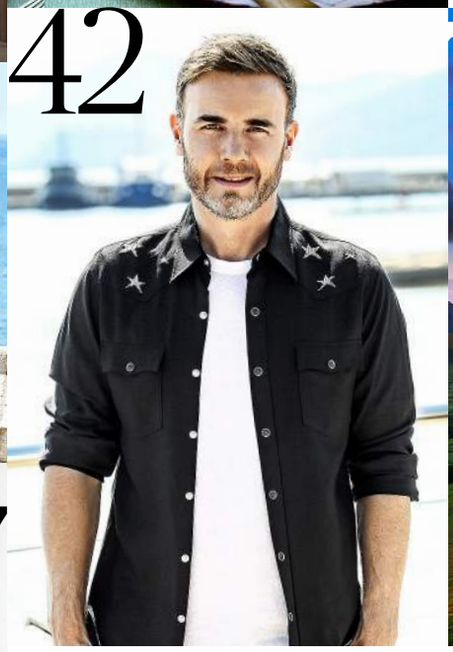














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‘I’m a proud mum, but it’s the hardest job in the world’

DJ and podcaster *Kate Lawler* on the highs and lows of motherhood, couples counselling and her new passion project





KATE WEARS: TOP LEEM £110, JEANS SOUTHOFTHERIVER.CO.UK £79, EARRINGS SIF JAKOBS £89, NECKLACE KATE'S OWN

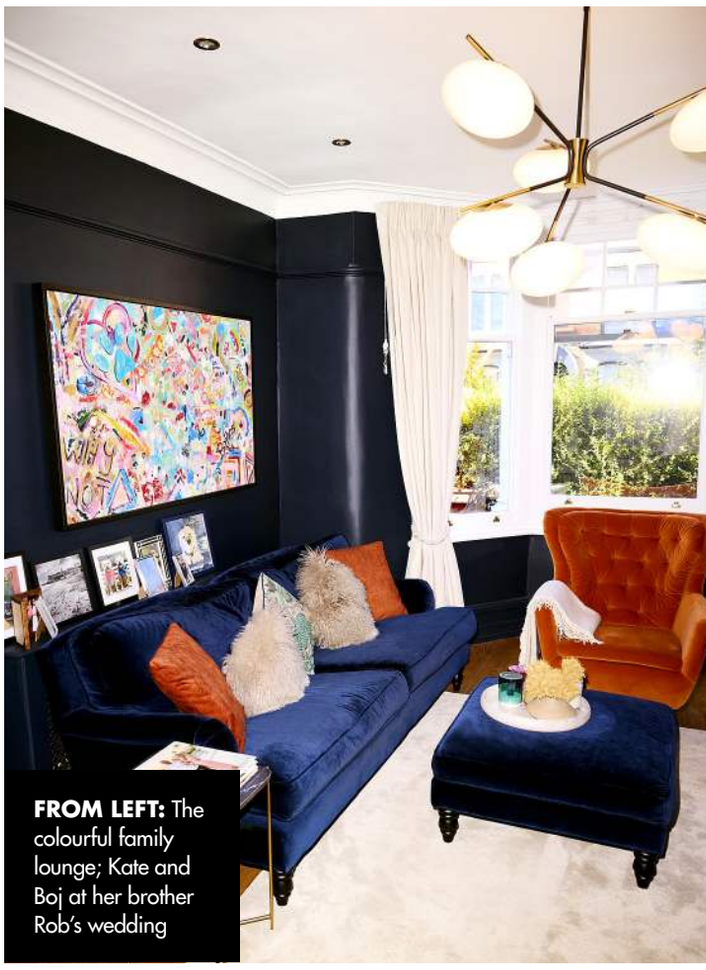
Kate Lawler is the first to admit she never wanted to be a mum. But after years of turning down her partner's pleas to have a child, the star - who once told him, "It's not for me, babes, but I'd happily get another dog" - had a sudden epiphany on her 40th birthday.

"I woke up one day and thought, 'I'm in my forties. I'm officially a 40-year-old woman. I feel like I'm ready for something different,'" she says. "My husband was like, 'A baby?' After seven years of campaigning for us to have a child I said to him over dinner, "Okay, I think I'm finally ready.'"

Until that point, Kate admits she just "didn't have that maternal instinct". She says, "I didn't have that urge to procreate, but eventually I changed my mind. I was fortunate to get pregnant quickly and I had a really lovely pregnancy and a great birth."

Kate, now 46, welcomed daughter Noa in February 2021 with her husband Martin Bojtos, 43, who she affectionately calls Boj. But despite her positive experiences of pregnancy and childbirth, she is adamant she doesn't want any more kids.

"When people say, 'Just the one?' I like to joke and say, 'Yes, we stopped at perfection.' But everyone is ▸





FROM LEFT: The colourful family lounge; Kate and Boj at her brother Rob's wedding

different," she tells us. "I'm a proud mum of one, but I'm still a child-free by choice advocate.

"I don't believe you need to have kids to have a fulfilled life. I don't believe the only thing that gives you purpose in life is children. I was happy before I had Noa and I would never turn back the clock, but I didn't know what I was missing out on before Noa. I would have been happily child-free for the rest of my life, but it is also the most amazing feeling looking at your child and thinking, 'I can't believe you're mine.'"

Incredibly, it's been 24 years since Kate won series three of *Big Brother*, aged just 22. It was an iconic year, with the late Jade Goody, *This Morning* presenter Alison Hammond and DJ Adele Roberts among the legendary housemates. Kate has since carved out a successful career as a DJ, author and podcaster.

It's a scorching August afternoon when she invites us into her gorgeous North London home where – in her typically open and honest style – she sets about putting the world to rights. It's this brand of straight-talking that has made Kate a hit on social media, where she is known for her candid views on marriage and motherhood.

But she tells us she does receive a few unwelcome comments, especially when it comes to her choice to have just one child. And as headstrong as she might be, she admits it's sometimes hard to brush the negativity under the carpet.

Listing some of the remarks she's had, she says, "That's so selfish, what about Noa – who's she going to play with?, surely you want to give her a brother or sister. But there's no guarantee she'd get on with her brother or sister. And what if I can't afford to have another child? Or what if I'm trying or can't have another one? Someone messaged me, saying, 'An only child is a lonely child, you should give Noa a sibling.' I was like, 'Oh, please.'"

"I do feel guilt – I think mum guilt exists forever," she continues. "I don't think there is going to be a stage in my life where I'm not going to feel guilty about something I'm doing as a mother, or not doing.

"Noa's in this make-believe era where she keeps pretending she's got siblings. I start to feel guilty, where I'm like, 'Oh God, is that because she wants one?' But she's a really happy girl. She's got a great social life, so we're never short of playdates and she's got lots of cousins. We've thought long and hard about whether or not we'd cope having a second child and concluded that it's much better to give Noa a happy and healthy Mum than a sibling."

As her regular followers will know, Kate's first year of motherhood was far from plain sailing. The star suffered with postnatal depression and, looking back, describes that period of her life as "apocalyptic".

"When I was pregnant, we began filming a TV show for MTV called *Celebrity Bumps*. The obligation was that after you give birth, you do a couple of episodes ▸



'I WAS HAPPY BEFORE I HAD NOA, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS MISSING OUT ON'

Kate's home is filled with quirky art and plush furniture







KATE WEARS: CARDIGAN RIVER ISLAND £69, TROUSERS AMY LYNN AT SPORTSDIRECT.COM £8 (SALE PRICE), SHOES KURT GEIGER £179, EARRINGS SIF JAKOBS £89, PINK AND GREEN BRACELETS CARAVAN OF STONES £799, BLUE BRACELET CARAVAN OF STONES £1,500





'I FEARED HAVING A BABY WOULD CHANGE MY RELATIONSHIP WITH BOJ'

where they come to your house and interview you," she recalls. "I was in a hole crying. They could see I wasn't great and they offered me help.

"My husband saw me go to rock bottom and was like, 'You need help, they've offered you counselling, take it.' I accepted the help and I went to the GP where I was given antidepressants for eight months to help me get through. My husband was incredibly supportive and suggested a night nanny for three nights a week until I was better. It was the best decision."

On a mission to support others who might be going through the same ordeal, in 2022 Kate wrote a book charting her experiences, *Maybe Baby: On The Mother Side*. It was a *Sunday Times* bestseller and the star is clearly proud that it may have helped multiple other new parents navigate those stressful, sleep-starved early days of having a baby.

"I just think motherhood is the hardest job in the world," she tells us. "That's not to say I don't enjoy it. Can I just say how much I love being a mum now? Loads of people said to me when I was in that first year in the trenches of postnatal depression, 'You will find it so much easier in a few years,' and I couldn't see it.

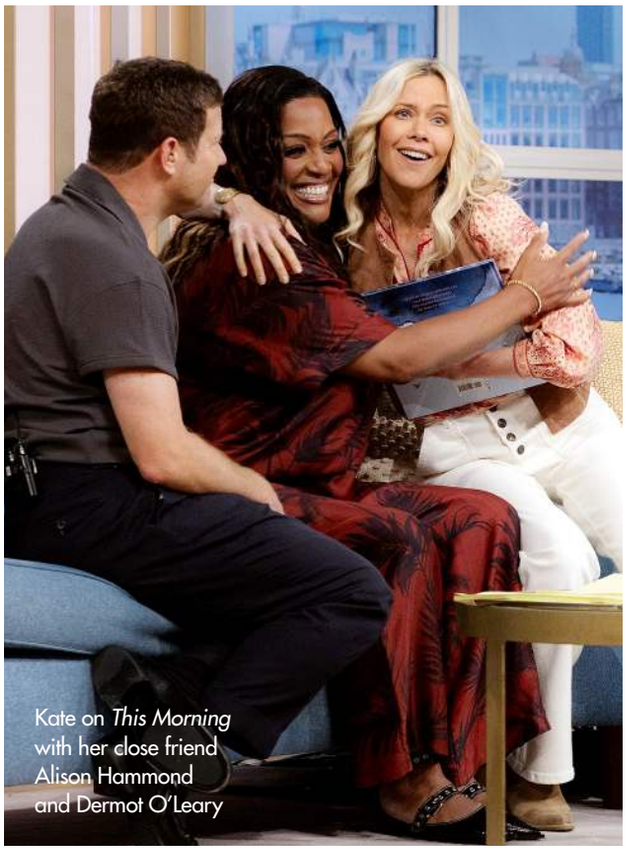
"But there was never a moment when I didn't love Noa. It's crazy the journey I've had. I was very open and candid about it and I do think people need to be honest about the highs and lows in motherhood. It isn't all sunshine and rainbows."

Another struggle, Kate admits, has been adapting her relationship to life with a child.

"I was so scared to have kids for a number of reasons, but one of the reasons I feared having a baby was I genuinely felt like it would change my relationship with Boj - and I was right, it has," she admits. "But I think I speak for most people by saying your relationship changes once you have children. I read a quote the other day that said, 'If you can get through the stage of parenting where it's all about kids and working, then you can get through anything.'"

According to Kate, the toughest part is how your relationship automatically moves to the bottom of the priority pile after children come along.

"I think becoming parents has been the hardest thing we've ever navigated as a couple," she says. "I think it's important to protect your relationship as much as you protect your little ones. We have couples therapy, we've had the ups and downs and that first year nearly broke us. We got married ▸



Kate on *This Morning* with her close friend Alison Hammond and Dermot O'Leary

the year after and the first year of marriage was great - and then I went through perimenopause."

Couples counselling has been a game-changer for Kate and Boj, with the London-born star admitting they even had it twice during a recent holiday, chatting to their therapist on Zoom while Noa watched a film.

"If we don't continue to speak to our therapist, we forget about the tools we need to have a happy and healthy marriage," she says. "It's checking in with her and talking openly and honestly about what's happening in our relationship. It helped us on that holiday a lot, because you're with each other 24/7 and there's no break."

Kate continues to talk to her Instagram followers about the realities of navigating modern life as a woman, and recently she has shared her struggles with perimenopause and anxiety.

"I'm on HRT to help with my perimenopause symptoms and I'm an advocate for that because it has really helped," she says. "I also take a low dose of anti-anxiety meds for my health anxiety.

"When you become a parent, you can become more health anxious, especially with perimenopause and menopause. I think it's hugely underfunded, given half the population will go through it."

Looking to the future, Kate reveals she would love to do *Strictly Come Dancing*, following in the footsteps of her close pal Alison Hammond, who competed on the show in 2014. The two have remained close friends since their stint on *Big Brother* and Kate has nothing but kind words to say about Alison.

"I love her so much and am so incredibly proud of what we've achieved," Kate says. "It's really ▸

KATE WEARS: WAISTCOAT NEXT £36, SHORTS NEXT £27, EARRINGS DOWER & HALL £295, BRACELETS COEUR DE LION (GOLD £65, RED STONES £155, DARK GREEN £85, LIGHT GREEN £85)







GET MORE

Scan here to see more from Kate



Kate's landscaped back garden

lovely that we're still in touch and still so close."

Alison is rarely off our TV screens these days, but Kate says there was a time when work was quiet for the bubbly Brummie - and she helped inspire her friend to keep pushing on.

"Alison came to me and said, 'I think I'm just going back to work in the cinema,'" she recalls. "I was like, 'No, you're way too talented to give up.' And she carried on and worked hard and she deserves every success. It's a hustle - there's so much competition out there now - but you've got to keep hustling."

And hustling is what Kate does, too. She says she now makes most of her income via social media, but she has a new project that kicks off in September which she can't yet talk about. She's also working on a new passion project and business venture, Soundlings, a company dedicated to promoting reading for kids.

"It's phonics resources for kids, with beautiful products like stylish alphabet posters, flash cards and activity books that encourage learning through play. This is the place to be to give your children the best start on their reading journey," says Kate.

"We're so obsessed with our phones and many kids are on devices from such a young age, but reading with your child daily is such a lovely activity. Why wouldn't you want them to play and learn? I'm so passionate about screen-free fun and bookshops are magical places to visit too. Reading to your child from a really young age can instil a love of reading and creativity." OK!

KATE WEARS: CO-ORD DANCINGLEOPARD.COM £22, EARRINGS DOWER & HALL £155, CUFF DOWER & HALL £975

WORDS: GEMMA McCARTNEY PHOTOGRAPHER: DANNY CRAVEN PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT: JAYDEN GORNALL STYLIST: BRONAGH MEERE HAIR & MAKE-UP: ANNA LINGIS VIDEO: REACH STUDIO FAMILY PHOTO: IMAGETHIRST PHOTOGRAPHY WWW.IMAGETHIRST.COM @IMAGETHIRSTPHOTOGRAPHY

HARRY'S UK RETURN IS AN 'OLIVE BRANCH'

As the Sussexes prepare to move back to Britain, the Prince and Princess of Wales are in a "difficult position"

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex's surprise return to the UK is being hailed as a sign that the prince is putting his family first, but hopes it might help heal the rift with his older brother, Prince William, could be premature, we're told.

According to former BBC royal correspondent Jennie Bond, the Prince of Wales will likely be reluctant to immediately welcome Harry back into the fold, with the "stubborn" royal still smarting over his brother's controversial comments about him and his wife, Kate.

"For William and Catherine, it's anyone's guess how they are going to respond," said Jennie. "Harry is perfectly entitled to move back here, but it has put William in a very difficult position.

"There are calls from various quarters for him to accept the olive branch that Harry has extended, but it is going to be a bitter pill for William to swallow and I don't think he will do anything in a hurry."

Although Harry, 41, has met with his father on a number of occasions since stepping down as a working royal, relations between him and William, 44, are still thought to be frosty and they are not believed to have spoken in person since their grandmother Queen Elizabeth II's funeral in September 2022.

Last week, the royal family gathered for their summer get-together at Balmoral and no doubt the return of the Sussexes would have been a hot topic.

While King Charles - who welcomed Harry, Meghan, Prince Archie, seven, and Princess Lilibet, five, at Highgrove House in July - might be keen to put past troubles behind them, William has found it less easy to move on from his brother's betrayal.



The Sussexes have decided to move back to the UK

Understandably - after Harry shared details of private family fall-outs in his memoir, *Spare*, and his and Meghan's tell-all interview with Oprah Winfrey - William and Kate, who has previously been seen as a peacemaker, have been presented with something of a dilemma.

"They've got used to life without him and are in a difficult position," said Jennie. "That's going to be a whole lot more difficult now, but I hope the brothers will eventually be reconciled, at least in some measure.

"They don't have to be best buddies, or even that close. But a civil, cordial relationship between them would be better all round." ▸









CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP: The Duke and Duchess of Sussex with the Prince and Princess of Wales; Harry and Meghan share son Archie and daughter Lilibet; the brothers with their father, King Charles

Despite making a life for themselves in the US, the duke and duchess are reportedly keen to raise their children in Britain and have already enrolled them at school ahead of the new academic year.

The royal family is said to be as shocked as anyone by the news, with King Charles reportedly learning of the move just days before the public.

Full details of where Harry and his family will live are yet to be disclosed, while reports suggest he and Meghan will retain their homes in Montecito, California, and Portugal.

There is no suggestion that they will resume any royal duties.

Despite the many question marks hanging over Harry's relationship with William, royal sources believe his decision to return to his homeland suggests he is determined to make amends with King Charles - before it's too late.

"I'm sure there must be time pressures at work," explained Jennie. "His father, who is still being treated for cancer, will turn 78 this year. Harry will remember - because he wrote it himself in his book *Spare* - that Charles begged his sons not to make his 'final years a misery'.

"Perhaps he's belatedly trying to honour that plea? We saw baby steps towards reconciliation when Harry and his family met Charles and Camilla at Highgrove last month, but there's more work to be done."

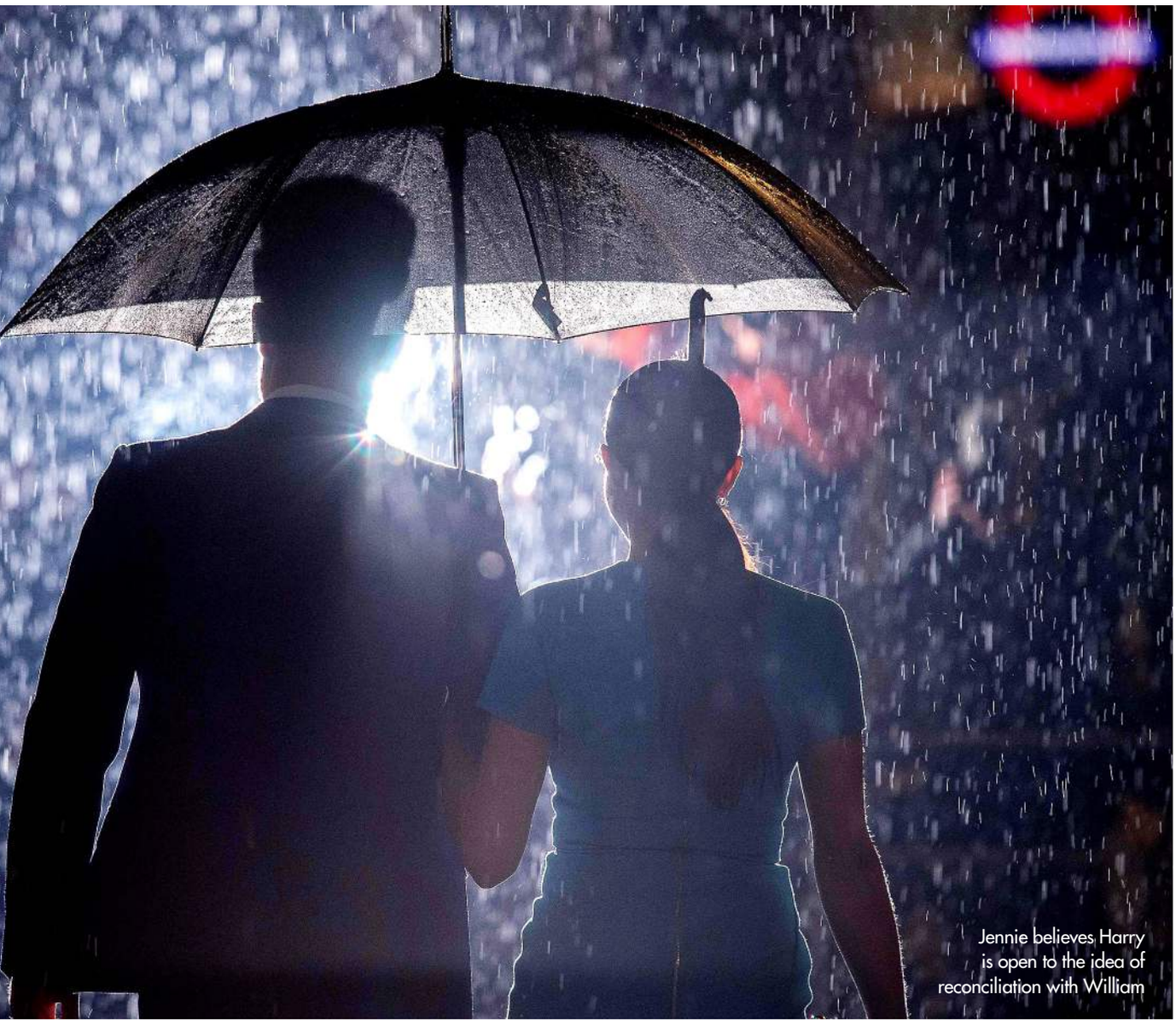
The news of the Sussexes' return comes six years after they rocked the foundations of the monarchy by stepping down as working royals and quitting the UK in early 2020.

They eventually settled in Montecito in the US, where Meghan has been building her lifestyle business, As Ever, while Harry continues to focus on his passion project, the Invictus Games - to be held in Birmingham next July - as well as a cluster of charitable causes including Scotty's Little Soldiers and WellChild.

Although Jennie believes the prince's decision to bring his family back to the UK suggests he may have "finally laid his demons to rest", the move still comes as something of a surprise.

Just last year, after he lost his High Court battle to have his taxpayer-funded police protection reinstated, Harry declared that he couldn't "see a world in which I would bring my wife and children back to the UK".

Jennie said, despite the "row over security rumbling on", Harry has clearly decided where his priorities lie



Jennie believes Harry is open to the idea of reconciliation with William

and may now be putting his father's needs first. Harry flew from California to visit his father within hours of the news of his cancer diagnosis in February 2024 being made public and later said he was "grateful" for the chance to see him.

Speaking during an interview with *Good Morning America* later that month, the prince told viewers how he went to see the King as soon as he could, adding, "Look, I love my family. The fact I was able to get on a plane and go and see him and spend any time with him, I'm grateful for that."

Despite the controversies and upset of recent years, Jennie believes this could be a hopeful new chapter for him and Meghan. "He has surely aired all his grievances by now – loudly and publicly – in court, in his book and in various TV interviews," she said. "As he has conceded, there's no point in continuing to fight. Next month, he will be 42. So it is perhaps time for him to take stock and to try to reconnect with the country he loves and the family he says he misses."

Harry has seemingly been paving the way for a return for some time. In September 2025, he met with his father at Clarence House, with a spokesperson later saying he had "loved" being back in his birth country.

While it's likely the King will be delighted to have his son and grandchildren back on home turf, only time will tell if Harry's relationship with his older brother can blossom into something approaching friendship.

"I think Harry is completely open to the idea of reconciliation with William, but his big brother has had a huge amount to contend with in recent years – far more than Harry," said Jennie. "I think he has found the easiest course is to jettison Harry out of his life.

"[William] is known to be a stubborn character and so, if a truce is ever to be called, it is William who will be doing the calling [on his terms]."

However, as the 30th anniversary of their mother Princess Diana's tragic death approaches, it would certainly be timely if they could draw a line under their differences.

"Next year is going to be a flashpoint," said Jennie. "All eyes will be on her warring sons, William and Harry. Will they finally stand side-by-side, or will their bitter estrangement continue? Either scenario will be a drama." OK!

WORDS: LEO ROBERTS

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES, PA



‘I felt like we were just on top of the world’

Suranne Jones chats about braving the remote snowscapes of the Arctic with co-star Rose Leslie for the new series of *Vigil*

Actress Suranne Jones has come a long way since she first walked the cobbles of Weatherfield back in 2000 as *Coronation Street*’s Karen McDonald. Following her exit from the soap in 2004, the Manchester-born star performed on the West End stage alongside Rob Lowe, impressed as lesbian industrialist Anne Lister in the period drama *Gentleman Jack*, and won a Bafta for her role as betrayed wife Gemma in the hugely successful *Doctor Foster*, which will return for a third series later this year.

More recently, Suranne could be seen soaking up the Spanish sun alongside Jodie Whittaker in the heist comedy adventure *Frauds*. But she had a rather frostier experience making the new series of *Vigil*, as the third instalment of the police drama is set at a remote Arctic research station.

Filming took place around the snowscapes of the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard, where the temperatures rarely rise above freezing, meaning Suranne and her co-star Rose Leslie, who play married detectives Amy Silva and Kirsten Longacre, were often acting in sub-zero conditions.

“Our gloves were swapped out for heated gloves and we also had heated gilets, which was amazing,” Suranne says. “At the end of the day, Rose and I would have the soup from the hotel we were staying in, and it was everything you would hope somewhere like Svalbard would have - warm open fires and throws. It was just gorgeous to warm up there.”



The duo filming the third series of *Vigil*

In the series, which returns to BBC One this week, Scotland-based investigators Amy and Kirsten are sent to an Arctic research station to investigate the murder of a covert British special forces officer. The scenes in Svalbard were filmed first, before the cast and crew returned to Glasgow for the rest of the production.

“Svalbard was amazing,” says Suranne, 47. “Rose and I felt like we were just on top of the world because we went to places that tourists don’t normally visit since we were filming in such remote locations.

“There were reindeer outside the breakfast room every morning, we got to drive the snow buggies and we really had to layer up. The problem was, when we got back to Glasgow we were too hot because we still had to film with all our layers on.

“The people and crew in Svalbard were incredible and we tried some moose and reindeer, which is part of the local cuisine. I had moose stew! It was such an incredible experience and a great start to the shoot.” ▸





CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT: Suranne and Rose loved filming in Svalbard, where temperatures were below freezing; with husband Laurence; the star as Karen in *Corrie* with her on-screen husband Steve McDonald



While Suranne – who married former magazine editor Laurence Akers in 2015 – didn't have much free time while they were in Svalbard, she did get to visit a restaurant unique to the area.

"I went to a husky café where you get to have a coffee and meet retired husky dogs," she laughs.

The unusual locations of each series mean that her character Amy often faces difficult challenges. The first series was mainly set on a claustrophobic submarine, while the second had Amy "fighting drones", as the actress puts it, in the Persian Gulf.

"Each series brings new challenges, with Amy not knowing her surroundings. She's constantly put into these new worlds, with new rules and new characters, so she's always trying to figure out where her authority is in that," the mum-of-one explains. "I also think Amy and Kirsten are kept in the dark with what they're being told and it's their job to find the gaps and piece it together."

The relationship between Amy and Kirsten is at the heart of *Vigil*, and one that has developed throughout the show, much to the delight of fans.

"In the first series you see Amy and Kirsten meet, and they start this relationship. In the second series, Kirsten is pregnant and in this series, you see them as a real family," Suranne reveals. "We're proudly representing two women that are now together. They're married, they have two children.

"Rose and I have always taken the personal scenes and made sure there is weight to them, even if it's one or two scenes. We try to make those count because it's about our connection and always has been.

"I think fans can relate to Amy and Kirsten because they hope for the best in every situation and they try to see the good in everything. They keep fighting, which is hard these days, but they feel quite hopeful, as a duo, to change the world."

While Suranne and Rose have appeared in all three series of *Vigil*, one of the treats of the show – aside from the memorable locations and twisty plots – is the ever-changing supporting cast. Well-known actors have popped up in each series, including Martin Compston, Shaun Evans, Lauren Lyle and Connor Swindells in series one, and Dougray Scott and Romola Garai in series two. The third series is also crammed with acclaimed actors, with Jeppe Beck Laursen (best known for *The Last Kingdom*) and *Outlander*'s Steven Cree among those joining the action.

"What's lovely is having a new cast for every series of *Vigil* because we're in a different world every series, so the cast changes except for a few of us," she says.

"Rose is always my standout of filming *Vigil* because it's always gorgeous to see her and work with her," admits Suranne. "We didn't stop talking the whole time. We got to spend a lot more time together in this series in comparison to the previous ones, because Amy joins Kirsten in Svalbard midway through and they work on the case together.

"We're just like a band of brothers and we're all in it together so we're a real team – that involves the crew too. I loved going into make-up first thing in the morning. It's my favourite place as they're so great and they get you going at the start of the day." OK!

***Vigil*, Sunday 30 and Monday 31 August, 9pm, BBC One**

WORDS: JO BERRY PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES, PA IMAGES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO, REX/SHUTTERSTOCK





‘We’ve had all sorts of deaths taking place here’

‘Lady of the Manor’ *Hayley Karseras* on renovating her home and the ‘macabre’ TV show that’s filmed there

The first time Hayley Karseras, or ‘Lady of the Manor’ as she’s known to her 1.2 million Instagram followers, set foot inside her stunning Grade II-listed home, she burst into tears. And as the 49-year-old content creator shows us around the £6 million six-bedroom manor house she shares with her husband Hugh and their two teenage children, we begin to understand why.

The 16th century, three-storey property is nestled within the chocolate box village of Little Missenden in Buckinghamshire and it’s nothing short of jaw-dropping, largely thanks to Hayley and Hugh’s modern, yet considered renovation.

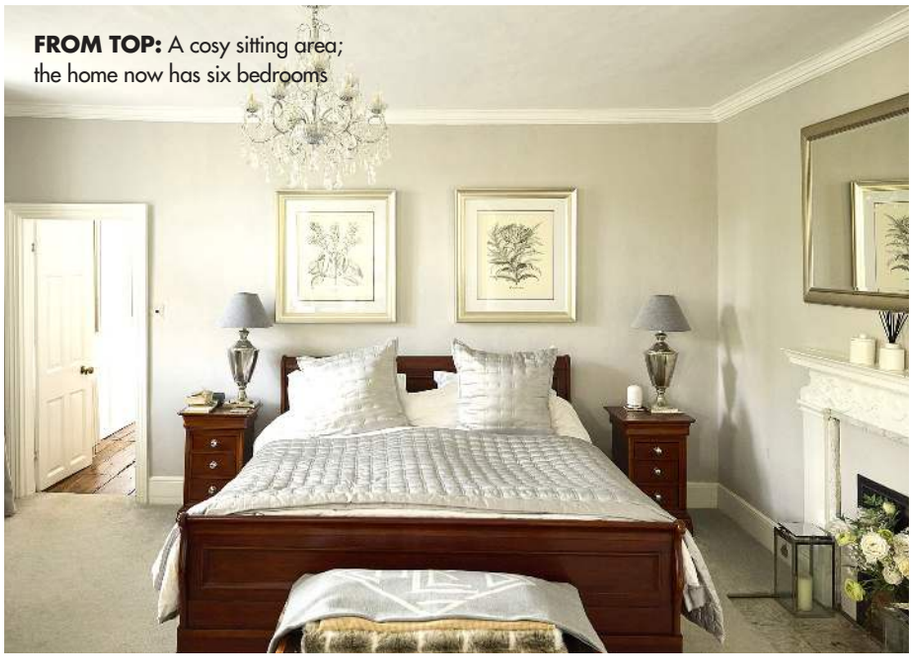
“I walked out into the garden and started crying,” Hayley tells us as she recalls her first impressions of the country pile. “I remember just thinking, ‘This is like heaven.’ I’d never seen anything like it before.”

During an exclusive photo shoot with *OK!*, the fashion, beauty and interiors influencer reveals the story behind the restoration and how she and former investment banker Hugh first found – and fell in love with – their awe-inspiring manor house. ▸

HAYLEY WEARS: DRESS PRICE ON REQUEST ZEYNEP KARTAL, SHOES £69 RIVER ISLAND







FROM TOP: A cosy sitting area; the home now has six bedrooms



HAYLEY WEARS: DRESS £140 MONSOON, HEELS £49 RIVER ISLAND, EARRINGS £189 MISSOMA

The property needed some serious TLC to bring the kitchen, bathroom and key living spaces into the 21st century.

"We bought it for £3 million and we have spent nearly as much on the renovations," Hayley says.

It had been in the same family for over 60 years and most recently was occupied by a lovely retired couple who were looking to downsize.

"While it was in decent nick structurally, the facilities were seriously dated and the decor looked like it had not been touched since the 70s," Hayley says. "The kitchen was charming but basic, with no work surfaces whatsoever, just a very old gas AGA. For such a large house, there were also only two bathrooms and no showers.

"Some rooms were fine, but others had peeling 70s wallpaper and much of the woodwork was painted a gothic black."

The plan was to modernise the property while respecting its historical stature, so the couple hired heritage consultants and architects to help.

Hayley explains, "We didn't use interior designers as we have always had a strong sense of what we like. We lived in the house throughout all of these works, which was tough.

"We went from having nine bedrooms and two bathrooms to having six bedrooms, four bathrooms and a dressing room. We had a break of about two years before the biggest phase, which was the ground floor, kitchen extension and landscaping.

"The actual building works took just under two years, but there was another year for all the architect work, planning ▸



'WE LIVED IN THE HOUSE THROUGHOUT ALL OF THESE WORKS, WHICH WAS TOUGH'







Hayley lightened up the house after it was painted a gothic black

HAYLEY WEARS: DRESS £1,495 CLAIRE MISCHEVANI, HEELS £39.99 ZARA, EARRINGS £179 SIF JAKOBS

and listed building processes and other things, like bat surveys. We saved up and waited for many, many years before doing anything because we wanted to make sure we were doing things respectfully to the house and the history within it.

"We see ourselves simply as custodians of this property. We want to do it justice and keep it looking beautiful, and make sure it doesn't slip into disrepair."

Hayley's favourite room has always been the drawing room. It's the room you walk into and instantly go, "Wow!" because of the double-height ceiling and the grandeur of the space.

In terms of inspiration, they have always liked Ralph Lauren and Restoration Hardware. Most of us have heard of Ralph Lauren, but Restoration Hardware is another American brand that has recently made its way to England.

If you think the interiors of the manor house are stunning, a walk around the nine-acre garden will quickly blow you away. It has a limestone terrace, 18th-century summer house and orangery, tennis court, outdoor kitchen and cedar matching sauna and hot-tub.

Beaming with pride, Hayley says the winding freshwater stream that runs through the grounds - the River Misbourne - is filled with precious memories of her son and daughter playing in it while growing up. Today, however, ▸









HAYLEY WEARS: DRESS PRICE ON REQUEST ZEYNEP KARTAL, HEELS £39.99 ZARA, EARRINGS £179 SIF JAKOBS

FROM TOP: Hayley is passionate about fashion; the games room includes a bar; Hayley has beautifully styled all areas of her home



you're more likely to find it full of trout, rather than children.

"We don't fish them out, we just like to know that they're there," says Hayley. "And there is a family of kingfishers that live on the river bank, too."

The sleepy village of Little Missenden, with its two pubs, church, village hall and cricket club, clearly holds a special place in Hayley's heart, but the manor house itself has a somewhat controversial past. It was formerly the home of a physician who was a member of the notorious Hellfire Club – a network of high society clubs founded in the 18th century and known for its debauched goings on, she tells us.

"The Hellfire Club got up to all sorts of really awful things, notably taking prostitutes down into the Hellfire Caves [beneath West Wycombe Hill] for their entertainment – and worse," she explains.

More recently, Hayley's home has featured in several episodes of TV's *Midsomer Murders*. She says, "We've had all sorts of deaths and horrendous events taking place here. In one recent episode, a person was murdered and hung from the beam in the garage in the stables. That was quite macabre.

"I did get to meet some of the cast on the last episode filmed here – Neil Dudgeon and Nick Hendrix, the two leads. I had a particularly nice chat with Nick, who shares my passion for historical homes. Otherwise, we've had a few big stars in the village for movies, like an upcoming Beatles biopic starring Paul Mescal."

Hayley's own career has most definitely taken flight in recent years. It began organically in 2017 after she started styling local women in the village. Things quickly blossomed and she became a hit on social media. Since then, her content has expanded to include interiors and beauty.

Key to her success has been helping women enjoy transformative experiences.

"It actually goes deeper than just, 'This is a nice outfit.' It's to do with how women look and feel. That is a powerful thing," she explains.

While she might relish her status as 'Lady of the Manor', Hayley has some down-to-earth tastes. In fact, you're more likely to find her in M&S than Miu Miu.

"It was never about aspiring to one day be working with Louis Vuitton," she says. "I don't want that. I want to keep it real." ▸


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Scan here for
more from Hayley



FROM TOP: the garden has a sauna; the family enjoy their outdoor kitchen

On how she finds the time to look and feel amazing, Hayley reveals, "We've always been a very active family and one of the first things Hugh did was to set up a proper gym with weights and some cardio machines in the coach house.

"We all use that and I also follow Joe Wicks' workouts. I think he's fantastic and his workouts are fun, but also tough. I tend to do about 30 minutes most mornings.

"For my morning beauty routine, I cleanse, moisturise and use an SPF before my make-up. As with clothes, I believe you don't have to spend a fortune to access good quality products."

We can't finish without mentioning her latest venture into the beauty world – creating a Timeless Beauty Edit for our very own *OK*! Beauty Box.

"My favourites in the edit? That's a really tough question, because I love everything in it and chose only the products I use regularly. I'd have to start with the Pai Cleanser because it's so gentle for my sensitive skin but easily removes all my make-up and leaves my skin feeling soft.

"I'd also include the Gatineau Collagene Expert Plump & Revive Eye Cream, which helps to revive my tired eyes and reduce under-eye bags. And I have to mention the Rodial Collagen Booster Drops, which I find really hydrate my skin and leave it feeling nourished and plumped." OK!

Timeless Beauty Edit by Lady of the Manor, £49.99 using code OKMAGIO at the checkout (normally £59.99). Worth over £250, including £85 Rodial Collagen Booster Drops worth more than the price of the entire box. Available at Okbeautybox.co.uk, only while limited stocks last

WORDS: SHELLEY SPADONI PHOTOGRAPHER: MATT MONFREDI PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANT: JACQUES DE JAGER STYLIST: LAUREN GOODWIN-GRAFTON STYLING ASSISTANT: GRACE BELLAMY HAIR & MAKE-UP: CAROLINE PIASECKI VIDEO: REACH STUDIO BEAUTY BOX PHOTO: DAVID VENNI



The beauty box is packed with treats

HAYLEY WEARS: DRESS £1,395 CLAIRE MISCHEVANI, SHOES £29.99 LINZI



‘Neither of us had been in love before’

Reality TV star *Alicia Douvall* talks about being “swept away” by her new husband, her wedding dress drama and her plans for the future

She had long given up on finding Mr Right, but model and former *Celebrity Big Brother* contestant Alicia Douvall has finally got her fairy-tale ending and married the man of her dreams.

Alicia, 47, tied the knot with businessman David Anstiss in Hertfordshire at the beginning of August, and says she has never known happiness like it.

“I’ve always been the runaway bride who never wanted to get married,” she tells *OK*! exclusively. “But when I finally did, it was the most amazing thing ever. Neither of us had really been in love before, which made it even more special.”

Alicia, who took part in *CBB* in 2015, first met David, 45, in November 2024, but while he was instantly smitten, Alicia was initially hesitant. “I’d switched off,” she admits. “I’d been celibate for 10 years and wasn’t looking for anyone.”

That soon changed when David began wooing her with romantic dates at Michelin-star restaurants and boutique hotels. “They were the most incredible dates I’d ever been on. I kind of got swept away,” she smiles.

David proposed in the Maldives six months after they met. “Initially it was just going to be a holiday,” he says. “But the way our lives had intertwined, it just felt natural.” ▸









With the ring he had chosen, he got down on one knee at sunset, leaving Alicia stunned. "It was a complete surprise. I had no idea whatsoever," she recalls. "Of course I said yes – and then I made him propose again every day, in different places all around the resort."

David was overjoyed she had accepted. He beams, "I was absolutely elated. It felt like my best friend had said yes."

On returning to the UK, the wedding planning did not go entirely smoothly. Alicia originally chose a designer gown costing over £12,000, but after falling out with the team behind it, she walked away.

"I said, 'You know what? I don't want it.' Suddenly I had five weeks to find something else," she says. In the end, she designed her own simple gown, made for her by a small boutique.

As if that wasn't stressful enough, Alicia then lost over a stone during a pre-wedding health-kick, meaning her gown and a more informal evening dress had to be altered at the last minute.

But when the big day arrived in early August, it couldn't have been more perfect. They chose not to invite celebrities, so just 90 family and friends joined them at the church, where the ceremony began with a performance by Vocal Works Gospel Choir, who have supported Take That on tour.



Emotions ran high as the pair exchanged vows, although Alicia remained dry-eyed.

"David's the crier," she laughs. "I can't cry, so he wept for us both."

The groom admits he was overwhelmed when he saw his bride approaching in her dress and five-metre veil. "She looked absolutely gorgeous – breathtaking."

Alicia's daughters Georgia, 31, and Papaya, 14, were bridesmaids, while David's cousin was best man. Alicia was given away by her dad, also called David, and after having what she describes as a difficult relationship in the past, the moment was especially poignant. "It felt so good to let bygones be bygones," she says.

After saying "I do", the newlyweds walked back down the aisle to Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper's *Shallow*. Then came a lively reception at a nearby country house. "We had dancing girls, a magician from The Magic Circle, a country band and lots of cocktails," says Alicia. "Everyone was line-dancing by the end of the night."

There was even an unusually personal touch on their wedding cake. "Alicia found this Barbie cake topper that looked just like her, with the hair and boobs and everything," says David. "But for me, she got a cheap version of Ken from Temu!"

Once married, Alicia and David enjoyed a minimoon in Spain, with a proper honeymoon in the Seychelles planned for next year. And although Alicia thought being married would feel no different, she says it has made them closer.

"There's a sense of security and of being a proper team now," she says. "We're excited to plan things together."

David has clearly been a steadying influence after a turbulent few years for Alicia, who has spoken openly about her past addiction to cosmetic surgery, and the pain of being branded a "bimbo". The scrutiny led her to live reclusively for ▸











CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The happy couple with Alicia's daughters Papaya and Georgia and Alicia's mum; the wedding post box; the favour bags containing products from Alicia's beauty brand Douvall's, the wedding cake

more than a decade, but she is now keen to warn others about going under the knife.

"I'm so proud of what I've done to put that chapter behind me," she says. "It's a scary world, with so much fakeness. We need more honesty about self-acceptance and mental health," she says.

Alicia admits seeing elements of her own experiences in her friend Katie Price, who appeared in *Celebrity Big Brother* alongside her. "I think she's going through what I went through 20 years ago," she says. "It's a sad place to be. I've got a lot of empathy for her. I'll always be there for her."

Looking ahead, Alicia is focused on growing her beauty brand Douvall's, and building deeper foundations with David.

"We both feel like we're 20 because life for us has only just started," she says.

She is especially happy that Georgia and Papaya, who she raised largely on her own, have bonded so well with David. "They've got a dad for the first time ever," she says - and it's a sentiment he clearly shares.

"I've never had biological children of my own, so to have two daughters to call mine is amazing," he says. "I adore both girls. Alicia has brought up two amazing ladies and I'm lucky to have them in my life."

They may even expand the family further. "We'd love to," says Alicia. "Although with our ages, it could be a huge problem. We'll just have to live to 110." OK!

WORDS: ANNA POINTER

PHOTOS: JONATHON WIGGINS/WIGGINS PHOTOGRAPHY



Nicole with Sandra Bullock in *Practical Magic 2*

‘I was very fearful and deeply vulnerable, which is exposing’

Actress *Nicole Kidman* on her break-up from Keith Urban, facing the future with hope and making movie magic

With music pumping at 1am in Ibiza, few clubbers will have been aware that Nicole Kidman was dancing beside them wearing a dark wig and glasses this summer. The Oscar-winning actress, 59, has revealed she has been partying and embracing love in the wake of her split from country singer Keith Urban, 58, last year.

Nicole says it has not been the easiest year since she filed for divorce in September 2025. But she adds, “At the same time I’m like, ‘OK, I didn’t expect this. I had a different view of what my life was going to be, but this is what it is now.’ You make all these plans and you have all these ideas of what it’s all going to be like and then it’s... not. You have to adjust. You adapt. The future, it’s completely unknown to me right now.”

She admits, “There was a point where I was very fearful and deeply vulnerable, which is exposing. At the same time I’m going, ‘Well, I can either really not confront it and just curl up, or I can just go forward with an enormous amount of hope. ▸


CHRYSLER
LeBARON



'SOMETIMES I'LL WEAR A WIG TO HIDE, A LITTLE DARK WIG, AND THEN I CAN JUST DANCE'



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Nicole with Tom Cruise in 1992; winning her Oscar in 2003; with her daughters in March; with Keith Urban in 2025

"I've always wanted to live a well-examined life, so what does that entail? Trying things, making mistakes, failing, getting back up, moving on, embracing love, staying open, keeping the heart open and the possibilities."

Nicole and Keith tied the knot in 2006, and have daughters Sunday, 18, and Faith, 15. Their divorce was finalised in January.

In her interview with *Vogue*, Nicole also speaks about her 10-year marriage to Tom Cruise, 64, which ended in 2000. They have two adopted children, Bella, 33, and Connor, 31.

She says, "I got married so young. Suddenly I was 22, 23 years old and I had this huge movie star husband. It just seemed completely natural. We just fell madly in love."

Nicole has spent her summer in Paris, London, Portofino and Ibiza. "Sometimes I'll wear a wig to hide, a little dark wig, and then I can just dance," she says of her nights out there.



Next month Nicole stars in *Practical Magic 2*, a sequel to her 1998 film about sisters who are witches. She says, "It was an actual demand from people. They were like, 'Do we get this? Can we please?'" OK!

The full feature is in British Vogue's September issue, out on 20 August

WORDS: JAMIE DOWNHAM
IMAGES: VENETIA SCOTT/ VOGUE, GETTY IMAGES

‘It was really special seeing things for the first time’

Singer *Gary Barlow* can’t resist life on the road – whether it’s for stadium gigs with Take That or to tour the wineries of New Zealand for his new ITV show

Take That’s all-conquering summer 2026 stadium tour may have come to an end, but singer Gary Barlow has plenty of projects to keep himself busy over the next few months.

He and fellow band members Howard Donaldson and Mark Owen sang their final encore at Aviva Stadium in Dublin on 4 July, having performed to more than 700,000 fans during the ambitious *The Circus Live* tour, which featured a 30ft mechanical elephant, flamethrowers, tightrope walkers and even a hot air balloon joining the boys on stage.

Posting on Instagram after the final concert, Gary said that it felt like he’d “completely fallen off a cliff since the end of the shows” and admitted he was “always sad at the end of a tour” but he also teased exciting things to come, including a 10th album from the band that should be out before the end of the year.

In the meantime, another project close to Gary’s heart is on its way – the latest chapter of his *Food & Wine Tour* series for ITV, which focuses on New Zealand.

Having previously visited South Africa and Australia to share his love of local cuisine and wine with viewers, this time Gary headed off in a camper van on a road trip across the country and took his pal, comedian Jason Manford, along for the ride.

Gary admits that he asked Jason, 45, to be his travel companion because he realised he needed someone who he would be happy to spend a lot of time with, even though he was worried that Jason would be too busy to join him.

“I messaged him saying, ‘Listen, I know this is going to be a no, but I have to ask, would you consider coming to film this wine show in New Zealand?’ And I literally counted to five and he replied, ‘I’ll move whatever I need to move to do this. It’s somewhere I’ve always wanted to go, spending two weeks together would be great fun and filming a TV show would be amazing – the only downside is I don’t know anything about wine!’ And I said, ‘Well that makes the perfect guest – we’ll learn together!’” Gary says.

“It wasn’t like we were filming and then went off to our trailers, we did actually spend every waking hour together and it was great fun. Even when we didn’t need to be together in the evenings at the hotels or whatever, we still hung out and had a really fantastic time.”

The 55-year-old admits that he has now ▸



Take That on stage back in May



'YOU DON'T WANT TONS OF BAGS WEIGHING YOU DOWN'











CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT: Gary spent time with his daughter Emily in Australia; on stage in London in June; with his wife Dawn; on his New Zealand road trip with friend Jason Manford

completely fallen in love with New Zealand, having visited sights including Lake Wakatipu, Cook Strait and Te Mata Peak while making the series.

"It was really special seeing things for the very first time and going to places that I'd never been to before. The amount of times I've told people to put New Zealand to the top of their visiting list is crazy," he says.

"I think in a funny way New Zealand gets overlooked. I think what a lot of people do is say, 'We'll go to Australia and we're going to tag New Zealand on to the end' and most go to Australia for two weeks and give the last two days to New Zealand, but it's a holiday in itself."

"I realise how far away it is – from the UK it's literally the opposite side of the world – it's a hell of a trek to get there, but you'd be doing the country a serious injustice by only going for two days. It really is a destination you should do as one. Even though I saw a lot on this trip, there's a lot more that I want to see. Honestly, this comes from the heart. I was there and it really stayed with me."

Dad Gary is certainly a seasoned traveller so knows what he's talking about, and this year especially he has been racking up the air miles. Before filming the series in the spring, he visited his 24-year-old daughter Emily, who lives in Australia (Gary and wife Dawn are also parents to Daniel, 26, Daisy, 17, and Poppy, who was tragically stillborn in 2012).

"I had five wonderful weeks visiting my daughter and writing songs," he told his Instagram followers about his time in Sydney. He added that they also travelled to see the Formula One Grand Prix race in Melbourne before he flew on to New Zealand to meet up with Jason Manford and the ITV crew.

Gary's journeys this year have also included a stay at his beach house in Santa Monica, a family holiday to Los Cabos in Mexico, and a trip to New York in January to celebrate his 26th wedding anniversary with wife Dawn.

"I think one of the bonuses of being a seasoned tourer is that I don't overpack," he says. "So the idea of taking your own pillows and things like that is just not feasible. You don't want tons of bags weighing you down. I think if anything, you learn what not to pack, so we all travel very lightly to be honest."

There is one humble thing that the star, rumoured to be worth £100 million, appreciates most when he returns to the UK, however.

He says, "As soon as I get on board a flight [to come home] I always say, 'Make me a nice cup of tea, please.' You know that you're almost home when you taste that tea. Because anywhere you go in the world, tea never quite tastes the same as it does at home and in your own house, I think. A great cup of tea when you get home is always the best thing!" OK!

Gary Barlow's Food And Wine Tour: New Zealand, Sunday 30 August, 12.30pm, ITV1

WORDS: JO BERRY PHOTOS: GETTY



‘I have to remind myself to have love for my body’

Strictly Come Dancing judge *Motsi Mabuse* on prioritising her health and making sure she’s there for her daughter

Strictly Come Dancing will soon be back on our screens for its 24th series and Motsi Mabuse, who joined the judging panel in 2019, has revealed how she makes sure she’s fighting fit ahead of the show.

She explains, “I’ll eat healthily, I’ll swim... It’s not about dieting, it’s about giving back to my body. I expect so much from my body. I expect it to perform, to be a mum, to work, to travel, to dance.”

Motsi, 45, changed her approach to her health after she started experiencing perimenopausal symptoms at the start of 2025. She says, “I noticed a complete shift in my energy levels and I started having pain in my knees. I had moments when I thought, ‘I’m not feeling [okay] in my body, I’m not comfortable with myself.’ I love dancing with my husband, I love moving – and I couldn’t do that any more. It was making me unhappy.”

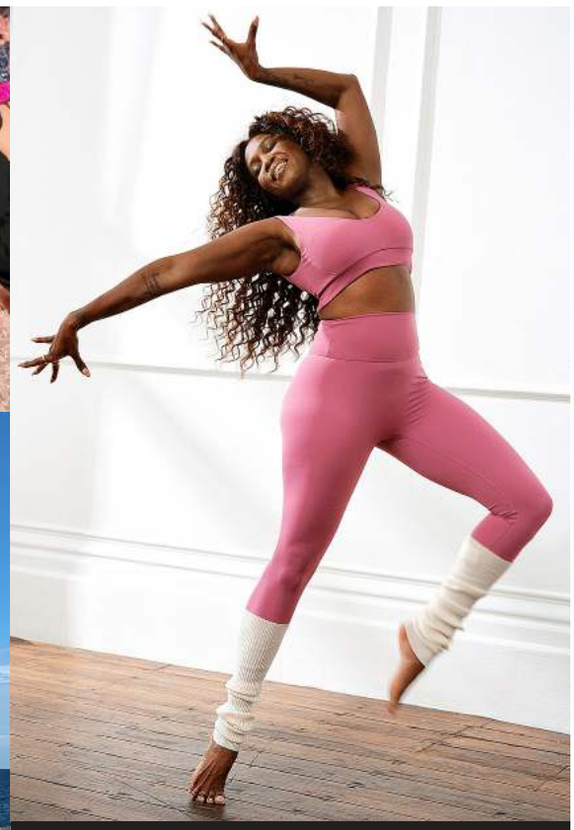
This led her to get her health assessed – and that served as something of a wake-up call. She explains, “We did a full-body check-up and my doctor said, ‘Mrs Mabuse, you can’t continue like this.’ My parents and grandparents have type 2 diabetes and I had gestational diabetes when I was pregnant, and my doctor said, ‘The numbers show you’re at risk. If you want to stay healthy in the long ▸











CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT: Motsi with her sister Oti; dancing has been her lifelong passion; with her young daughter and husband Evgenij

'FOR ME, THIS JOURNEY WAS NEVER ABOUT BECOMING SMALLER'

term, we need to make some changes.'"

She embarked on a fitness journey that started with taking short walks. Over time she added PT sessions, swimming and Pilates, as well as overhauling her diet.

"For me, this journey was never about becoming smaller," she says in her interview with *Women's Health*. "It was about becoming stronger."

Talking about how her body image has changed as she's got older, she says, "Every dancer has had that conversation with a trainer who says 'lose weight' and it's the most painful thing you'll ever hear. [As I grew older] I had to learn to accept my body wasn't the body of an athlete dancer any more and it would never look like it did.

"But I don't think there will be a [time] in my life when I'll say, 'This is it, I've arrived.' [Even now] I have to remind myself to have love for my body. If I see somebody with a six-pack, I'll channel my mind: 'You're healthy, you're doing the best you can for your body.'"

The star, who runs a dance school in Germany with husband Evgenij Voznyuk when she's not judging on *Strictly*, also takes care of her mental health – and her family's. Speaking about her eight-year-old daughter, who she keeps out of the media, she says, "I take everything she says really seriously. I ask her all sorts of questions because I want to know where she is mentally. There's nothing worse than your child having a mental [health] problem and you not being aware of it." OK!



Read the full interview with Motsi in the September issue of Women's Health UK on sale now

QUOTES FROM *WOMEN'S HEALTH UK*
PHOTOS COURTESY OF IAN HARRISON/ *WOMEN'S HEALTH UK*



HAYDEN'S TURMOIL LAID BARE

A memoir of late actress Hayden Panettiere revealed a troubled life of personal struggles with family and addiction

When Hayden Panettiere signed a six-figure deal for her memoir last year, her battles with addiction, fractured family relations and a tumultuous personal life were all expected to be laid bare. But when the book, *This Is Me: A Reckoning*, was published just three months before her death earlier this month aged 36, even her closest friends were shocked by its contents.

One pal said, "It was almost like she had nothing to lose... she just thought 'f**k it... I don't care any more.' The brakes were well and truly off."

It wasn't just the darkness of the revelations - including harrowing domestic violence claims - that took those around her aback. It was also the scores she appeared to want to settle along the way.

One person in the firing line was her mother, Lesley Vogel, a former actress who secured Hayden's first commercial when she was 11 months old and managed her career as a child actor.

Lesley's business acumen led her to secure deals for her daughter aged four in US TV show *One Life To Live*, then at eight, another soap opera, *Guiding Light*. But when Hayden, aged 16, landed a huge









CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Hayden with her ex-fiancé Wladimir in 2013; with her daughter Kaya; starring as Juliette in *Nashville;* with her mum and dad Lesley and Skip and her brother Jansen in 2007

role in superhero series *Heroes*, their relationship broke down.

Of the moment she decided to cut ties, Hayden wrote, "I asked Mom to come to my trailer on the *Heroes* set one day, and that's where I broke the news. 'Mom, I can't work with you any more,' I said. 'I just want you to be my mom now.' I wasn't in the mood for an argument, so I didn't mention anything that had helped build the wall of resentment between us.

"All I wanted was to discover what it was like to have a 'normal' mother-daughter relationship, and that dynamic didn't involve contracts, producers, boho tops, or drinking wine at industry parties. Mom picked up her purse, clenched her jaw, and looked straight at me. 'You owe me,' she answered. Then she walked out of my trailer. When I heard the click of the door, I took a deep breath, then burst into tears."

The allegations were given a second lease of life on her book publicity blitz. On Jay Shetty's podcast, she described being beset with anxiety following the estrangement.

She said, "Part of me was like, 'Oh, I'm relieved that it was short, like, rip the Band-Aid off.' Then it was like this dark looming cloud over my head going, 'What does she mean by I owe her? What form of payment is she expecting?'"

Lesley, who is in her 70s, described the claims as a vehicle to sell books, saying, "You cannot save someone who does not want to be saved."

She said after severing contact with Hayden, "The smear campaign begins: Accusations, anger, belittling, gaslighting, etc are the classic signs of this behaviour style... After 20 years of trauma, I took the advice of professionals and chose the no-contact route. As many parents of entertainment children [know], we are all too familiar with the painful observation of watching the self-destructive paths they sometimes choose."

Friends say Hayden was braced for such a reaction. One pal said, "She was quite cavalier about dropping bombs left, right and centre. It all washed over her."

Others in her sights included an Oscar-winning actor and director who it is claimed cornered a 19-year-old Hayden as she was about to leave a party and exposed himself to her. She reveals how a friend pressured her on a yacht to sleep with a 30-something British singer-songwriter who lay naked in bed. Hayden settled in under the sheets before changing her mind, she said.

Members of her team allegedly fed her "happy pills" to cope with the red carpet, and to make her more talkative. Friends say it is little wonder she spiralled into alcoholism. Stints in rehab followed, and she gave up custody of her daughter Kaya, now 11, to her ex-fiancé, former boxing champion Wladimir Klitschko, to help with her recovery.

A friend said, "Everyone forgets just how young she was as she slid into addiction. She was vulnerable and seen as easy pickings by some figures in the industry."

Her romance with actor Brian Hickerson, who she met in 2018, was rocked by domestic violence. In April 2021, he was sentenced to 45 days in county jail. They split up, and friends were aghast by their reconciliation. Police have confirmed that Brian Hickerson was present when she died of an apparent overdose in a South Carolina apartment.

Her mum Lesley said, "This person in her life that we have been trying to get rid of for quite some time was with her at her death, and that was Brian Hickerson."

Describing Hayden as amazingly talented, Lesley said the industry was "challenging... and it's not unusual for them to sadly find the wrong path". OK!

WORDS: TOM BRYANT

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES, REX/SHUTTERSTOCK



‘I feel I’ve been born again – I know I’m a lucky man’

Opera singer *Russell Watson* talks about his miracle recovery after two brain tumours, living on a farm with his rescue animals and his plans for turning 60

For almost 20 years, opera singer Russell Watson accepted that he would never feel like his old self again. Two benign brain tumours left him reliant on a daily dose of steroids that made him feel like he had “a two-ton weight” on his back, and he often felt so depressed he could barely get out of bed.

So earlier this year, he was stunned when his doctor told him his body was making an extremely rare recovery. Tests showed that his pituitary gland - which controls vital hormone function - had unexpectedly started working again and began producing cortisol, which regulates energy, sleep and the immune system.

The breakthrough has enabled him to dramatically cut his steroid use, with the result proving breathtaking.

“I feel I’ve been born again,” Russell, 59, tells us exclusively. “It’s a one-in-a-million thing, so not unheard of, but it’s a miracle to me. I did get a bit emotional when I found out, especially because I’d been told umpteen times that I’d never go back to normal again.”

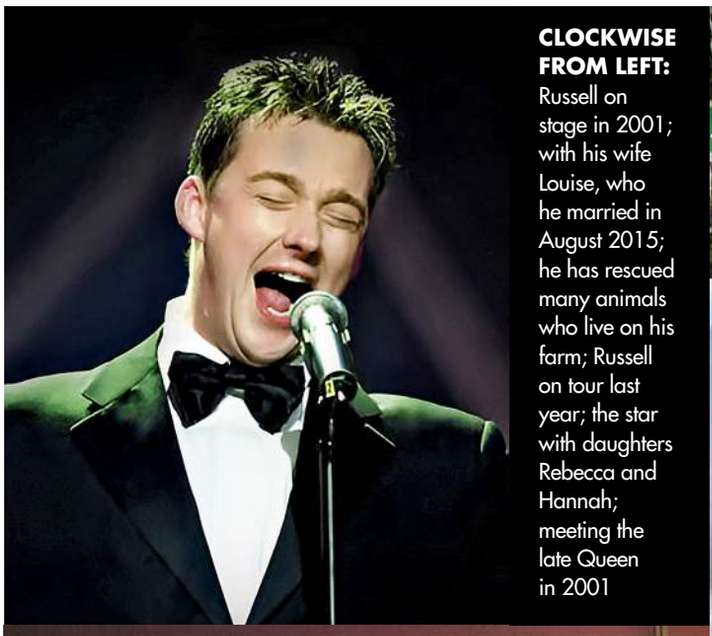
Russell now needs just 5mg of medication per day - down from 20mg - and in the last six months his blood pressure has reduced and he has lost weight, which he put on after he started taking the steroids.

“I was up to a 38-inch waist and despite swimming, biking and eating healthily, no weight would come off,” he says. “Now I’m down to a 34-inch waist, which is phenomenal.”

More significantly, the debilitating “fuzzy” feeling that once plagued him has gone. He says, “My head used to feel full of cotton wool. Some days it was as though I had a dark cloud over me. Now I feel 100 times better. I don’t like to tempt providence because something could happen to me tomorrow, but I feel so good.”

Russell now lives on a farm in Cheshire with his wife Louise and a menagerie of rescued animals. His ordeal started in 2006 when he began suffering from severe headaches and blurred vision.

His symptoms were blamed on stress, but shortly before his 40th birthday, a scan revealed a tumour the size of two golf balls. It was removed surgically through his nose, but a year later it had regrown and was bleeding into his brain, leading to another operation and radiotherapy. ▸





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Russell on stage in 2001; with his wife Louise, who he married in August 2015; he has rescued many animals who live on his farm; Russell on tour last year; the star with daughters Rebecca and Hannah; meeting the late Queen in 2001



Russell was at the height of his extraordinary career, but behind closed doors the Salford-born crossover singer was struggling to get through each day.

"Before the tumour I was fit and felt fabulous," he says. "I had number ones here, there and everywhere. But then this thing hit and turned my whole world upside down. For three or four years I didn't want to leave the house. I didn't want to see anyone or be in the public eye, and only worked because I had to."

In his lowest moments, Russell sometimes felt he couldn't go on, which inevitably affected Louise and his two daughters, Rebecca, 31, and Hannah, 26, both from his first marriage.

"Everyone who has lived around me has been through the mill," he admits.

He and Louise got married in Spain in August 2015, and Russell calls her his rock.

"She's been great. We've been together for 16 years and she's grown with me, so she understands it all," he says. "Some days I'd just feel exhausted and would want to stay in bed until 11am, but she'd never be like, 'What are you doing? Get out of bed.'"

'BEFORE THE TUMOUR I WAS FIT AND FELT FABULOUS'

Although she was frequently wracked with worry, Russell says, "Louise has a more pragmatic outlook on life than me. She's a lifter, so whenever I felt down she'd say, 'Come on Russ, let's go out and do something.'"

His illness made the couple closer than ever. He says, "We've built this life together and I think that shows in everything we have with the farm and the rescuing of animals."

Rebecca and Hannah were very young when their dad fell ill. Both still live near him and check up on him regularly.

"They seem to follow me wherever I go. I see them at least once a week," Russell says. "They still worry about my health and my mortality. They're very protective. They'll ring and say, 'You OK, Dad? I haven't heard from you since yesterday.' I'm like, 'It's only been a day.'"

But he wouldn't have it any other way. He says, "My love for my daughters is unimaginable. God knows what I'd do without them."

He and Hannah are especially fond of trips to John Lewis. "I like to look at the menswear and she'll go and spray just about every imaginable perfume on herself," he says. "Then we meet for coffee, cake and a good old natter about life."

Russell, who appeared on *I'm A*







Celebrity... Get Me Out Of Here! in 2020, is looking forward to becoming a grandfather one day, but says, "There's no pressure. But when I see parents with young kids I always say, 'Make the most of every moment, because they soon grow up.'"

At home, he spends much of his time tending to the animals.

"We've got four dogs, two cats, a parrot, alpacas, goats, sheep, horses, chickens - and an ostrich out the back."

But while the set-up has been compared to Jeremy Clarkson's farm, Russell jokes, "It's the exact opposite. We produce nothing - other than homes for unwanted animals. If anybody did a TV documentary on our place, it would just be chaos."

He reveals that 16 newly hatched chicks have just joined the family.

"They're in the conservatory at the moment chirping their heads off. They're hand-reared, so they all think Louise is their mother. And the goats follow her around the field like Little Bo Peep."

However, a new rescue kitten recently sank its claws into Russell's neck - which required a major patch-up before he appeared on *The One Show* sofa. "There was blood pouring out and I was thinking, 'I'll look like Bruce Lee on TV,'" he laughs.

Meanwhile, Russell's new book looks back at his career, which began with him singing at working men's clubs before his debut album *The Voice* in 2000 made him one of Britain's biggest singing sensations.

A tour to accompany the book starts next month. Russell explains, "It'll be little short stories about the ups and downs, my ill-health and rise to fame, as well as singing for the Emperor of Japan, the Pope, the late Queen and American presidents. And I'll sing a couple of songs."

Russell will turn 60 during the tour and though he'd love to celebrate somewhere tropical like Tahiti, that won't be possible.

"Louise won't travel that far, or leave the animals," he says. "The longest I got her away this year was five days in Marbella."

But reaching his milestone birthday carries more meaning than any lavish bash.

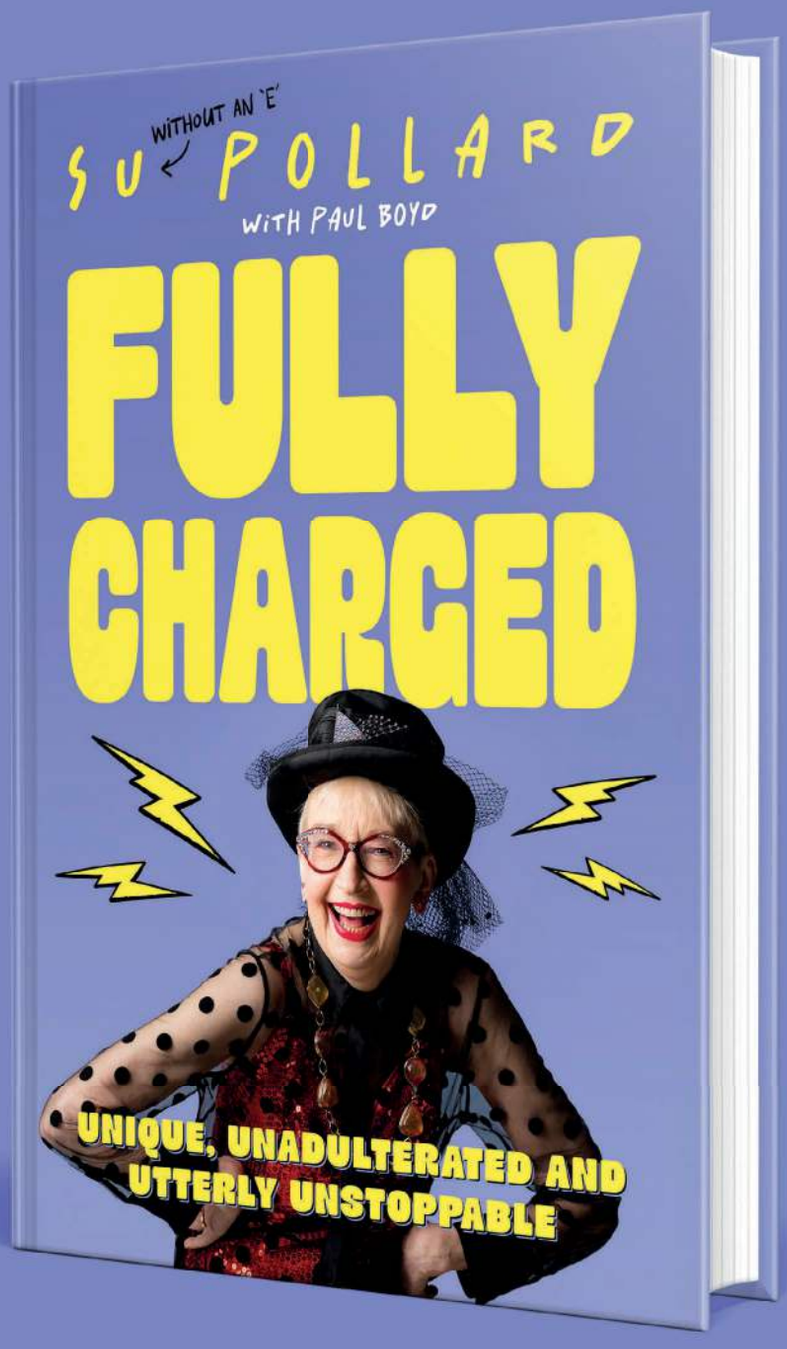
"I want to have as many great memories as I can possibly fit in," he says. "Nobody knows how long they've got left. There's never a day that goes by when I don't walk around the farm and just feel blessed."

As he reflects on his recent change of luck, Russell adds, "I've gone through my trials and tribulations, but coming out the other end and feeling how I feel now, I know I'm a lucky man." OK!

Russell Watson's An Intimate Evening With 'The Voice' tour begins on 11 September. See awaywithmedia.com/tours/russell-watson for details and for his book, see awaywithmedia.com/buy-books/entertainment/russell-watson

WORDS: ANNA POINTER

The revealing and comical memoir of one of Britain's most iconic stars of stage and screen



"CANDID, WITTY, AND REFRESHINGLY HUMAN"

– CHRISTOPHER BIGGINS

ON SALE FROM ALL GOOD BOOKSHOPS AND AMAZON

AMAZON

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Skirt £30
Sandals £20
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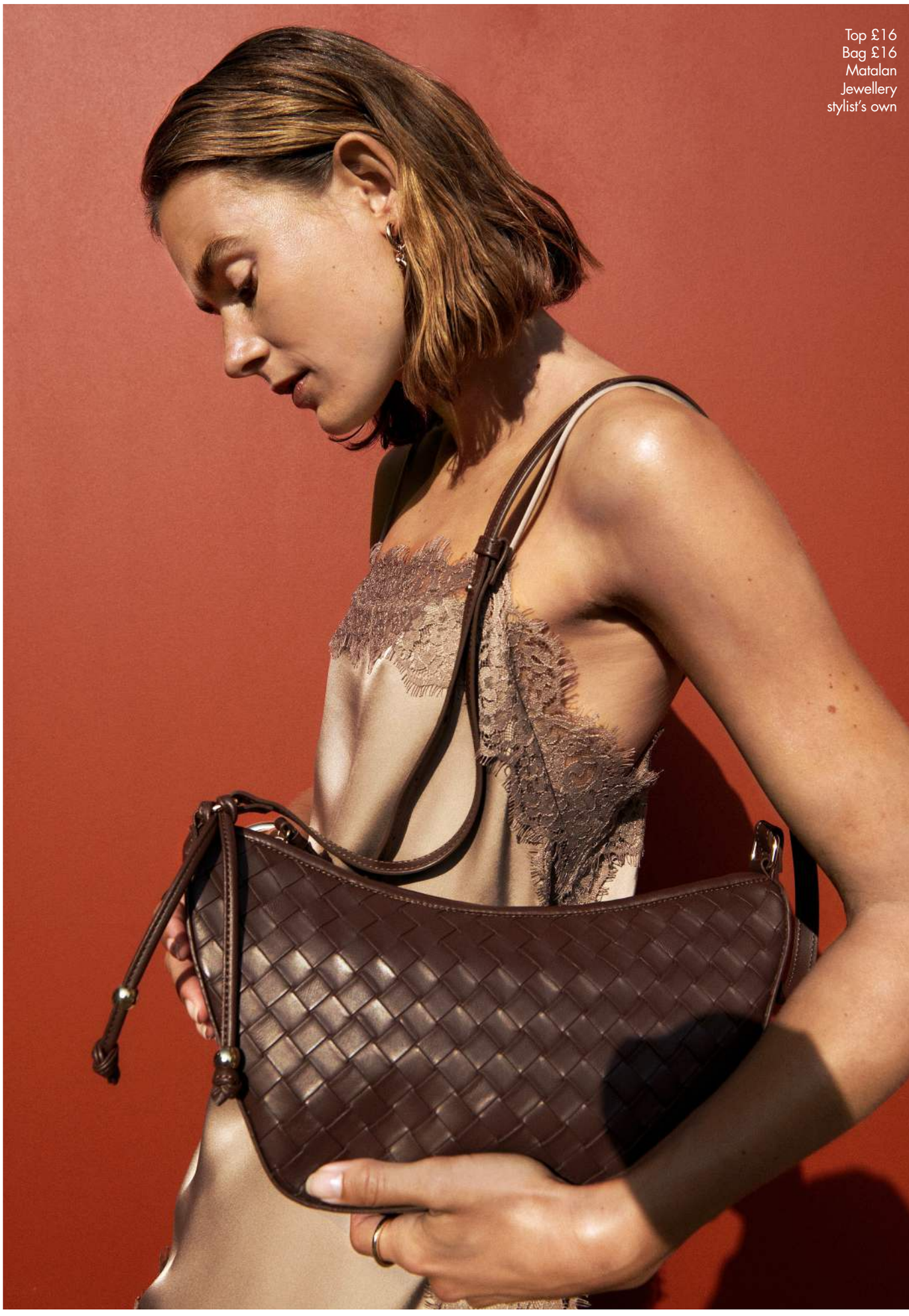
GROUND CONTROL

Rich brown tones are the chicest way to bridge the gap between summer and autumn

COMPILED BY: ZOE CRIPPS



Top £20
Skirt £22
Bonmarché
Jewellery
and shoes
stylist's own



Top £16
Bag £16
Matalan
Jewellery
stylist's own



Top £29
Skirt £99
Scarf £45
Albaray



Top £39
Trousers £52
BHOĒM at Next
Accessories and
shoes stylist's own



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Shorts (two pack) £29
T-shirt (two pack) £22
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Jewellery
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OK! LOVES

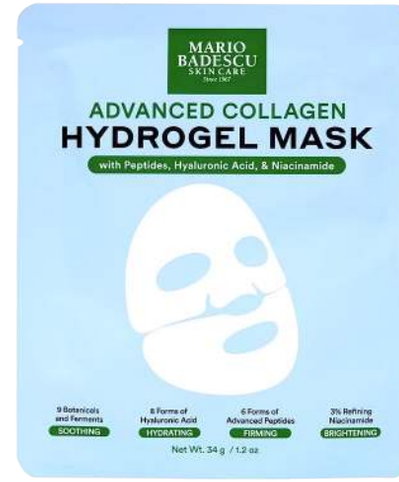
Here are the best buys topping our wish list this week



Necklace, £37.99, H&M



Matcha Scalp Serum, £30, REHAB



Mario Badescu Advanced Collagen Hydrogel Mask, £24, Space NK



Coola Body Spray SPF30 Coconut, £27, Boots



Waistcoat, £55, Marks & Spencer



Shorts, £30, Marks & Spencer



Hazelnut Coffee Pods, £5.25, Grind



Swimsuit, £28, Bonmarché x Lisa Snowdon

HEAD OF SHOPPING LOVES



Glow Pop Tinted Lip Oil, £14, TIRTIR



Pimentae Spicy Mezcal Margarita, £4.35, Waitrose

COMPILED BY: GRACE SALMON



Pyjama Set, £48, Their Nibs x French Bedroom



Handbag, £129, Luella Grey

HEAD OF SHOPPING LOVES

Jack Daniel's x McLaren Mastercard F1 Team, £28.50, Sainsbury's



Estée Lauder DayWear 24H-Moisture Creme, £35, very.co.uk



Leather Weave Ballerinas, £58, The Set at Next



Head In The Clouds 10 Forehead UV Protection Patches, £18, BEAME



Skirt, £24, Tu Clothing

Nina Campbell Footstool, £139, Next



Beauty buzz

Octavia Lillywhite shares this week's must-haves, trends & tips



Natural charm

I love a full, fluttery lash as much as the next girl, but I'm smitten with the new trend for looking natural. We saw it on Zendaya at the *Odyssey* premiere and, sure, Zendaya could pull off any look and still be staggeringly gorgeous, but now iconic brand Jones Road is in on the action, too. Jones Road Minimalist Defining Mascara, £24, gives natural definition with zero clumping for a real and refined look. It's available in black and brown (brown mascara will be big this autumn).



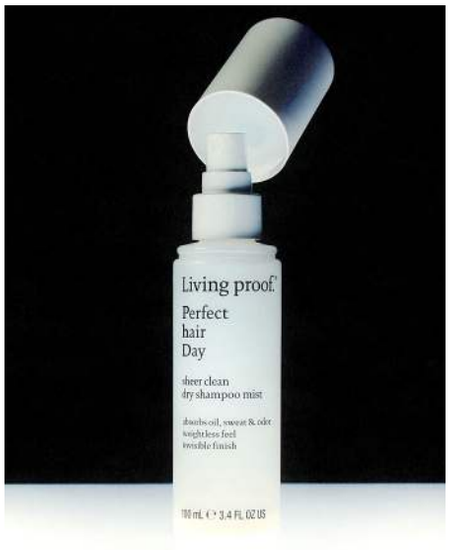
VANILLA NICE

Like the comfort blanket of the beauty world, vanilla is back in vogue. The Body Shop is rocking it with a whole new, layerable range: scrub, £19.50, shower gel, £8.50, body butter, £19, and fragrance mist, £14. Don't expect saccharine sweetness. It's a grown-up take on a vanilla scent – creamy and rich, with a little sandalwood.

TAKE TWO

This is the year that lip liner came back. (Other things happened too, but let's focus on positives). But it's not just about the line, it's about the fill too. My favourite duo for sultry nude shades is Huda Beauty's new Liquid Matte Mousse – a redo of its Liquid Matte Lipstick in a softer, mousse format – and the Lip Contour 2.0. You can mix and match or select one of the colour-matched pairs: a Softcore Matte Duo for £40 (saving £4).





DRY CLEAN

Living Proof stakes its reputation on its dry shampoos – some of the best in the business – and I wasn't sure where else it could go in this niche area of haircare. Well, colour me surprised because the new Perfect Hair Day Sheer Clean Dry Shampoo Mist, £27, is a revolution. It's a clear, non-aerosol spray that's incredibly light, with no residue. It leaves hair feeling like it's day-one clean rather than zhuzhed. Magic!



ESSENTIAL SKINCARE

Supermarket skincare buys feel like they're part of the 'essentials' budget, rather than the 'treat myself' one, right? So I'm thrilled by Asda's new Glow Theory range. There are eight products, all with a bit of a Korean skincare feel, priced at £4 and £6. Think melting cleansing balm, gel peel masks, clarifying pads and ultra-hydrating creams with clinical-style ingredients, like hyaluronic acid and PDRN. What a treat. Er, I mean an essential.

A culinary odyssey

Journey back to Greece with classics to make you feel like you're on holiday again

Greek village salad

The iconic horiátiki saláta, widely known as traditional Greek village salad.

SERVES 4

Ingredients

1 cucumber
450g vine tomatoes, quartered
1 red onion, thinly sliced
1 green pepper, stem and seeds removed, thinly sliced
100g pitted Kalamata olives
200g feta cheese, broken into chunks

For the dressing:

2-3 tsp dried mint
4 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
3 tbsp red wine vinegar
Salt, to taste

1. Peel the cucumber and slice it in half, lengthways. Use a spoon to scoop out all the seeds then cut it into 1-2mm slices. Transfer to a large salad bowl along with the tomatoes, the onion and pepper slices, and pitted olives.
2. Put all the ingredients for the salad dressing in a cup or jar and stir gently to combine. Pour this over the salad.
3. Add the feta chunks, mix the salad thoroughly to coat everything in the dressing and serve.



Courgette feta dip

Think tzatziki made with courgette instead of cucumber, and feta cheese as well as yoghurt.

SERVES 4

Ingredients
1 courgette, roughly chopped
3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
200g feta cheese
100g Greek yoghurt (10% fat)
1 garlic clove, grated or crushed
Handful of dill fronds, finely chopped
½ lemon, juiced
Salt, to taste

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas mark 6 and line a large baking tray with baking paper. Slice the courgette into rounds roughly 5mm thick. Place the slices on the baking tray and drizzle with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil. Toss to coat them evenly in the oil then bake for 25-30 minutes, until soft.
2. Transfer the courgette to a serving bowl and add the feta and yoghurt. Mash with a fork to a smooth consistency, mixing for about 2 minutes to ensure everything is combined. Add the garlic, dill, lemon juice and remaining oil and continue mixing until well incorporated. Check the seasoning and add salt to taste.
3. Serve the dip at room temperature or chilled – it will keep until the next day covered and stored in the fridge. Enjoy with flatbread or pitta bread.

AIR FRYER:
Another way to cook the chopped courgette is to place it in an air fryer and coat in a tablespoon of olive oil and a pinch of salt. Air-fry for 12 minutes at 180°C, turning halfway through.



COMPILED BY: OCTAVIA LILLYWHITE PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDREW BURTON

Fried feta cheese parcel

Owing to its parcel-like appearance, this is often referred to as ravasáki: a 'love letter'.

SERVES 2

Ingredients
3 filo pastry sheets
5 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
½ block of feta cheese (cut horizontally from a 200g block)
20-30g runny honey
1 tsp white sesame seeds
1 tsp black sesame seeds

1. Lay out the filo pastry sheets on a work surface and put 2 tablespoons of the oil in a bowl. Brush the surface of one sheet with oil, lay the second sheet of filo on top and brush that too, then repeat with the third sheet.
2. Place the block of feta in the middle of the filo. Fold over the bottom edge of the pastry layers first, then the top, then bring the sides to the middle, encasing the feta as if you're wrapping a parcel.
3. Pour the remaining 3 tablespoons of oil in a frying pan and place this over a medium-high heat. After a minute, add the feta parcel and fry on both sides for 1-2 minutes until golden and crispy.
4. Place the feta parcel on a plate lined with kitchen paper to absorb any excess oil. Next, transfer it to a serving plate and top with the honey and sesame seeds. Serve warm.



Recipes from *Eat Like A Greek* by Marina Georgallides (Hamlyn, £25)

ESCAPE TO THE LAKES

OK!'s Laura Mulley finds that a luxurious staycation in the Lake District is still possible even when travelling with a baby



The Lake District holds a special place in my heart; my partner and I visit every year, loving the region's rugged landscape, strenuous hikes and old-fashioned pubs just as much as its many world-class restaurants and hotels. But now with a four-month-old baby in tow, could we still enjoy the same level of luxury staycation as before? We headed to Lake Windermere – and beyond – to find out.

Pulling up outside Langdale Chase hotel, just south of popular tourist town Ambleside, first impressions certainly wowed. Sitting grandly on the shores of the lake with thoughtfully landscaped gardens leading down to the water, the striking 19th-century building – formerly a private home, and the first in Windermere to get electricity – looks like something out of a fairytale.

Stepping through the doors into the main hall is equally breathtaking, with original features such as stained glass windows, giant fireplaces and ornate woodwork preserved following a major refurbishment three years ago.

In the basement you'll find a wine cellar and small cinema room stocked with complimentary snacks and almost every movie you could think of. Two showings are scheduled each day, and in between it's free for guests to make themselves at home in.

We stayed in the Pullwood Bay Suite, which had a little reading nook in the turret with views over the lake, a spacious bathroom accessed – Narnia-style – through a wardrobe door, and a coloured glass ceiling above the bed. Even the cot for our baby was an elegant mahogany design, which he slept in like – well, a baby – in. ▸



DESTINATION FOR DINING

The food at Langdale Chase is a real highlight, and lots of guests were clearly here celebrating special occasions. The floor-to-ceiling windows in The Dining Room ensure every table has views out over the water, and the dishes are beautifully presented modern takes on classics. Highlights included a curried crab custard starter, a light-as-air sticky toffee soufflé, and possibly the most exciting salad I've ever seen – a tall stack of iceberg lettuce filled with blue cheese, caramelised walnuts and pickled okra.

If, like me, you are bringing a baby to dinner, request one of the tables on the right-hand side of the restaurant, which have plenty of space around them for prams and direct access to a lounge area if you need to settle them in between courses. We were worried about our tiny human ruining the fine dining atmosphere, but the staff – and fellow guests – were so kind and accommodating.

Langdale Chase's afternoon tea is worth making space for too. Inspired by local writer Arthur Ransome's children's novel *Swallows And Amazons*, each mouthful is a delight, with lobster rolls, potted shrimp crumpets and gooseberry choux buns alongside the traditional scones and finger sandwiches.



The Dining Room's sticky toffee soufflé



Langdale Chase's afternoon tea is a real treat

TAKE TO THE LAKE

If the weather is dry (never guaranteed in the Lake District…), book onto one of three daily sailings on the hotel's own 1920s motor yacht, Albatros. Unfortunately nature was busy refilling the lake when we visited so we remained under the boat's covers, but it still made for a relaxing hour and a half on the water. Infant lifejackets are available if required, so babies can safely come aboard too.

The road outside the hotel is a busy one and not particularly walkable, but we were recommended Orrest Head viewpoint as a nice pram-friendly amble nearby. Our favourite flat stroll in this area, however, is Elterwater, a 10-minute drive away; start at popular deli Chesters By The River to pick up coffee and baked goods (its legendary veggie sausage rolls are tasty enough to sway even the most ardent carnivore), take the easy walk along the water, and end at The Britannia Inn to quench your thirst.

WORDS: LAURA MULLEY PHOTOS: SALTWICK, REX/SHUTTERSTOCK, JOHN FINNEY PHOTOGRAPHY





CLOCKWISE, FROM FAR LEFT: Langdale Chase; boats in Keswick; Catbells fell; The World Of Beatrix Potter Attraction; it was our baby's first visit







ABOVE AND BELOW: Rooms at Langdale Chase are chic and spacious



The World Of Beatrix Potter Attraction is another family-friendly hotspot for tourists nearby. Or if you're baby-free and fancy a fairly challenging hike, our favourite is up to Silver How, weaving back down through Grasmere to buy a slab of the village's famous gingerbread.

A SECOND OPTION TO STAY

After Langdale Chase we headed half an hour further north to Keswick, on Derwentwater, and our second stop was a more casual setting: The Royal Oak, a traditional pub-with-rooms in the town centre, tastefully refurbished earlier this year in tonal colours and modern prints that reflect the surrounding countryside. While not *the* most buggy-friendly building – the pub doesn't have its own car park, and accommodation is up a few flights of stairs – the bedrooms are spacious and comfy, and there's plenty of room for prams in the pub. The staff couldn't have been friendlier, too – frequently coming over to coo over our little one. Cots are also available in the rooms here as well.

The food at The Royal Oak is proper pub grub done perfectly, exactly what you need after a long day walking – and Keswick is a walkers' town through and through. I thought the pub's midweek lunchtime deal was especially good value, with one, two or three-course offers starting from £12.

With only a few hours here, we skipped the famous nearby peaks such as Skiddaw and the Catbells and instead spent our time milling around the quaint town centre's pubs, chocolate shops and boutiques. We couldn't resist buying our baby something from the Peter Rabbit and Friends shop, a cute souvenir of his first holiday to one of our favourite places.

HOW TO BOOK

Rooms at Langdale Chase start from £400 per night on a B&B basis; to book, visit langdalechase.co.uk. Rooms at The Royal Oak at Keswick start from £125 based on two adults sharing on a B&B basis in low season; to book, visit royaloakkeswick.co.uk.

HOROSCOPES *All you need to know about your week ahead*

ARIES
MARCH 21 – APRIL 20

Someone is relying too heavily on your good nature and it is beginning to wear thin. A friend sees this clearly and offers good advice, so listen. If single, a witty new arrival could brighten everything.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4001**

TAURUS
APRIL 21 – MAY 21

Accept an invitation to join a group venture, as teamwork will bring more rewards than you expect. You may even be asked to lead. Shared money or possessions create tension, but keep your cool.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4002**



GEMINI
MAY 22 – JUNE 21

Don't let your imagination run away with you in romance, or harmless moments may seem loaded with meaning. Shared hobbies and playful interests help draw you closer to someone special.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4003**

CANCER
JUNE 22 – JULY 23

Ideas are flowing and your contribution to family celebrations or professional plans is welcome. A striking proposal near the 27th may demand an immediate answer, yet you need time to think.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4004**

LEO
JULY 24 – AUGUST 23

A quick-fix money scheme is best avoided, however tempting it may seem. Deep down, you already know this. Put your faith in your own ideas instead and approach longer-term plans with patience.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4005**

VIRGO
AUGUST 24 – SEPTEMBER 23

The path is clearing for you to pursue ideas that truly excite you, and at last the right support is arriving. Progress will be swift. A close friend especially values your encouragement and advice.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4006**

LIBRA
SEPTEMBER 24 – OCTOBER 23

You are bubbling over with excitement about a coming surprise and keeping it quiet is proving difficult. Do resist the urge to spill the news. Your charm works beautifully in both work and social settings now.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4007**

SCORPIO
OCTOBER 24 – NOVEMBER 22

A home improvement project is worth your time now. With the right touches, a dull room can become inviting. Good recommendations from friends or social media help you find skilled support.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4008**

SAGITTARIUS
NOVEMBER 23 – DECEMBER 21

You need a challenge to feel fully alive. Competition sharpens your edge. Success around the 27th brings the first of several accolades, leaving you eager to test yourself at a higher level.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4009**

CAPRICORN
DECEMBER 22 – JANUARY 20

A long-held wish could come true unexpectedly. Study, travel or publishing prospects broaden your world beautifully. Love will not arrive by magic – you must step out, mix more and meet it halfway.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4010**

AQUARIUS
JANUARY 21 – FEBRUARY 19

Arrangements already made are shifting again. Although this is frustrating, patience will serve you better than resistance. News arriving near the 27th lifts your mood and restores optimism.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4011**

PISCES
FEBRUARY 20 – MARCH 20

You are stepping into new territory and wondering why you didn't do this sooner. Old anxieties are losing their grip, leaving you more self-assured. Someone close draws out your best qualities.

STARLINE: 0905 789 4012**

RUSSELL GRANT



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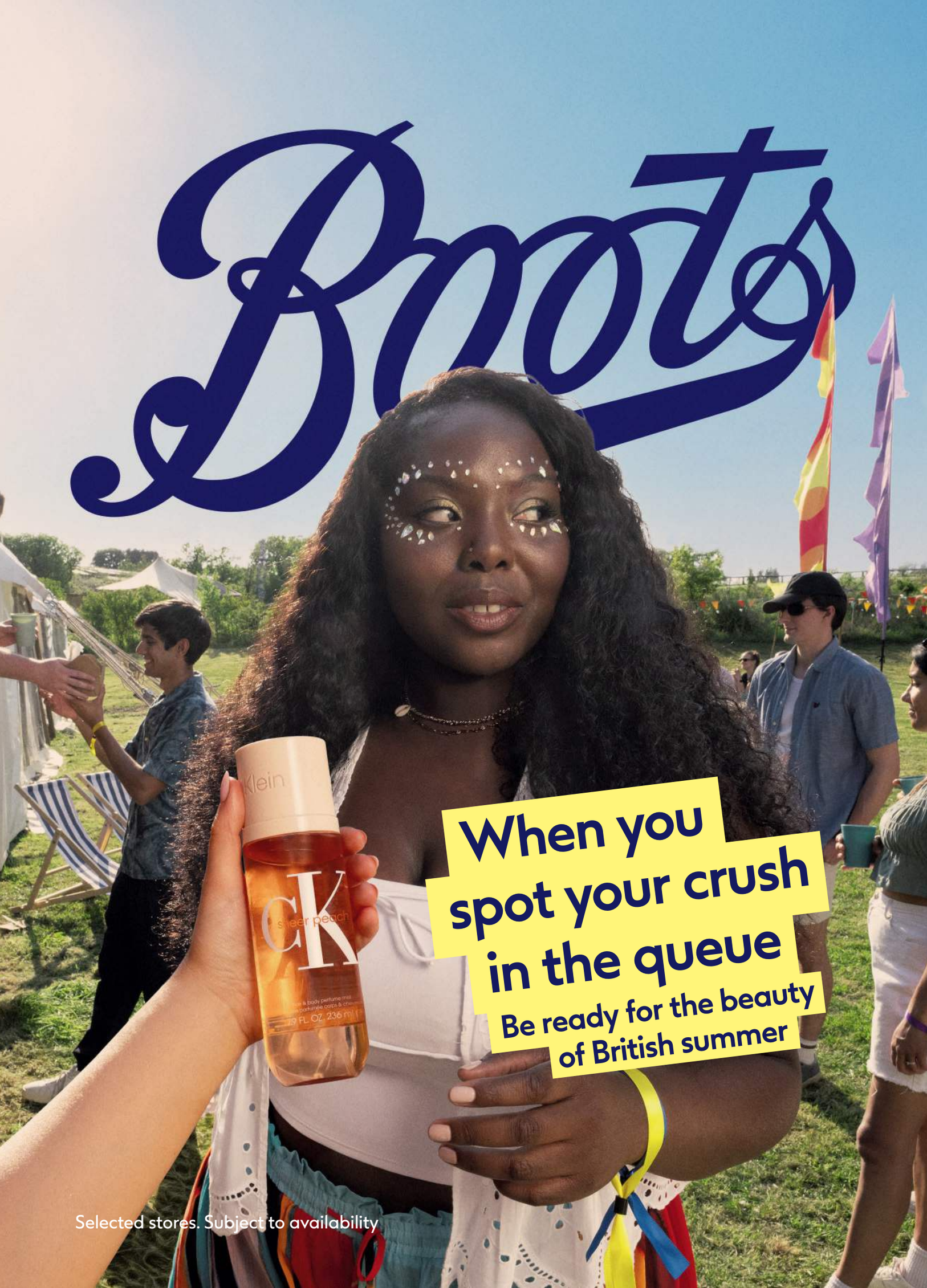
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