

THE NEXT BIG THING

Esquire

MAN AT HIS BEST

MAY 2014

IN CARS,
IN MUSIC,
IN POLITICS,
IN MOVIES & IN
HASHBROWN
POTATOES



Just as we were finishing up
this cover with LAKE BELL...
THIS GUY decided to take his shirt
off, too. →

Hey, Isn't
That

TOM HARDY

The Greatest
Actor of His
Generation?

PAGE 92



THE STATE OF THE

AMERICAN CAR

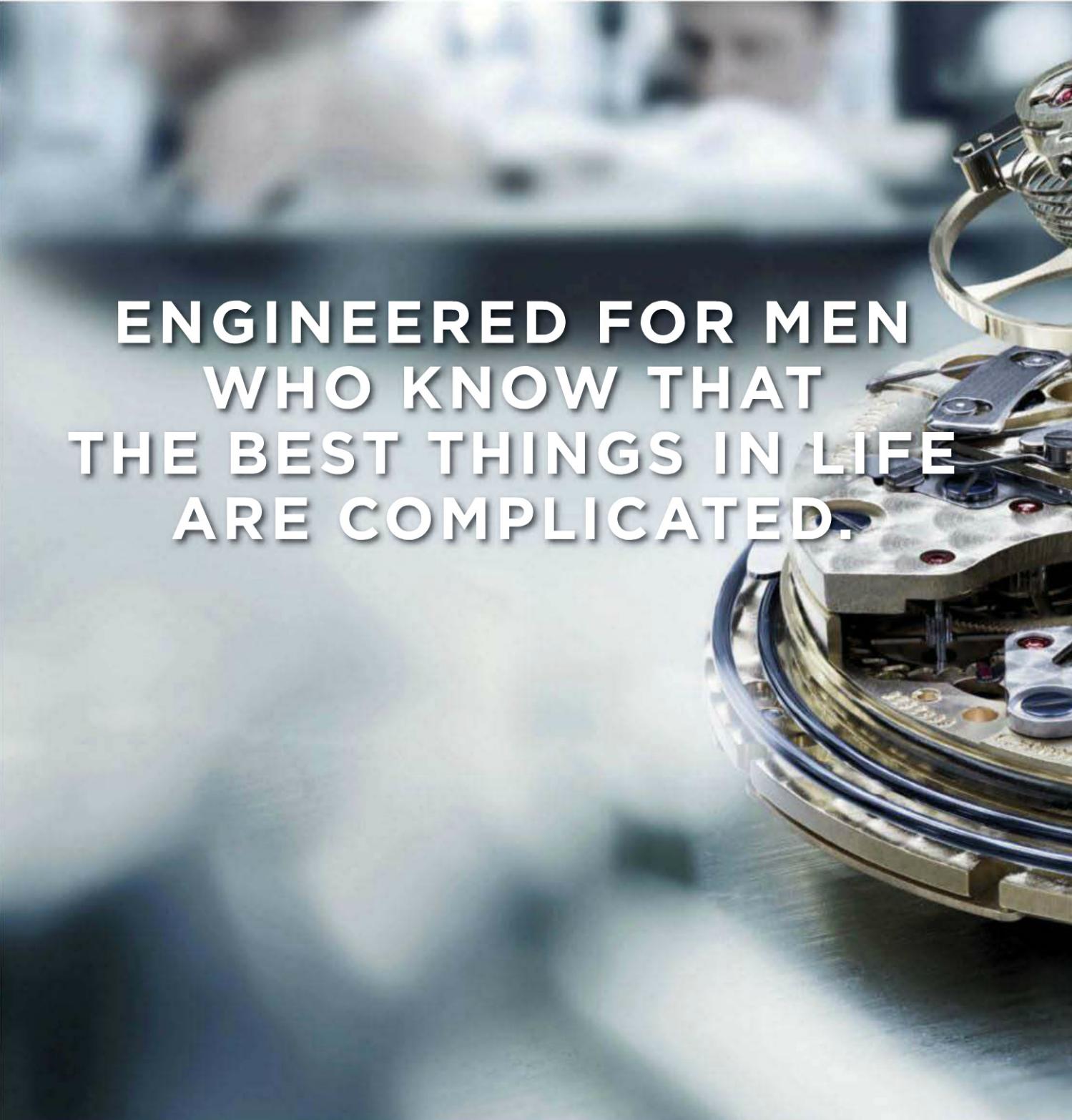
We Drove
Them
All... And
These Are
The Best

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THE MUSIC PAGES:

The Songs You
Need to Be
Listening to...
and a Kris
Kristofferson
Story That Will
Make You Cry

PAGE 116



ENGINEERED FOR MEN WHO KNOW THAT THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE ARE COMPLICATED.

Portuguese Grande Complication. Ref. 3774:

The life of a watchmaker would be different if it weren't so complicated. In fact, it would be pretty monotonous. So it's just as well that IWC Schaffhausen has entire teams of specialists devoted to developing new mechanical complications, that consistently explore the bounds of what is possible. It's something Schaffhausen's engineers have been doing since 1868. And like the early pioneers of marine explora-

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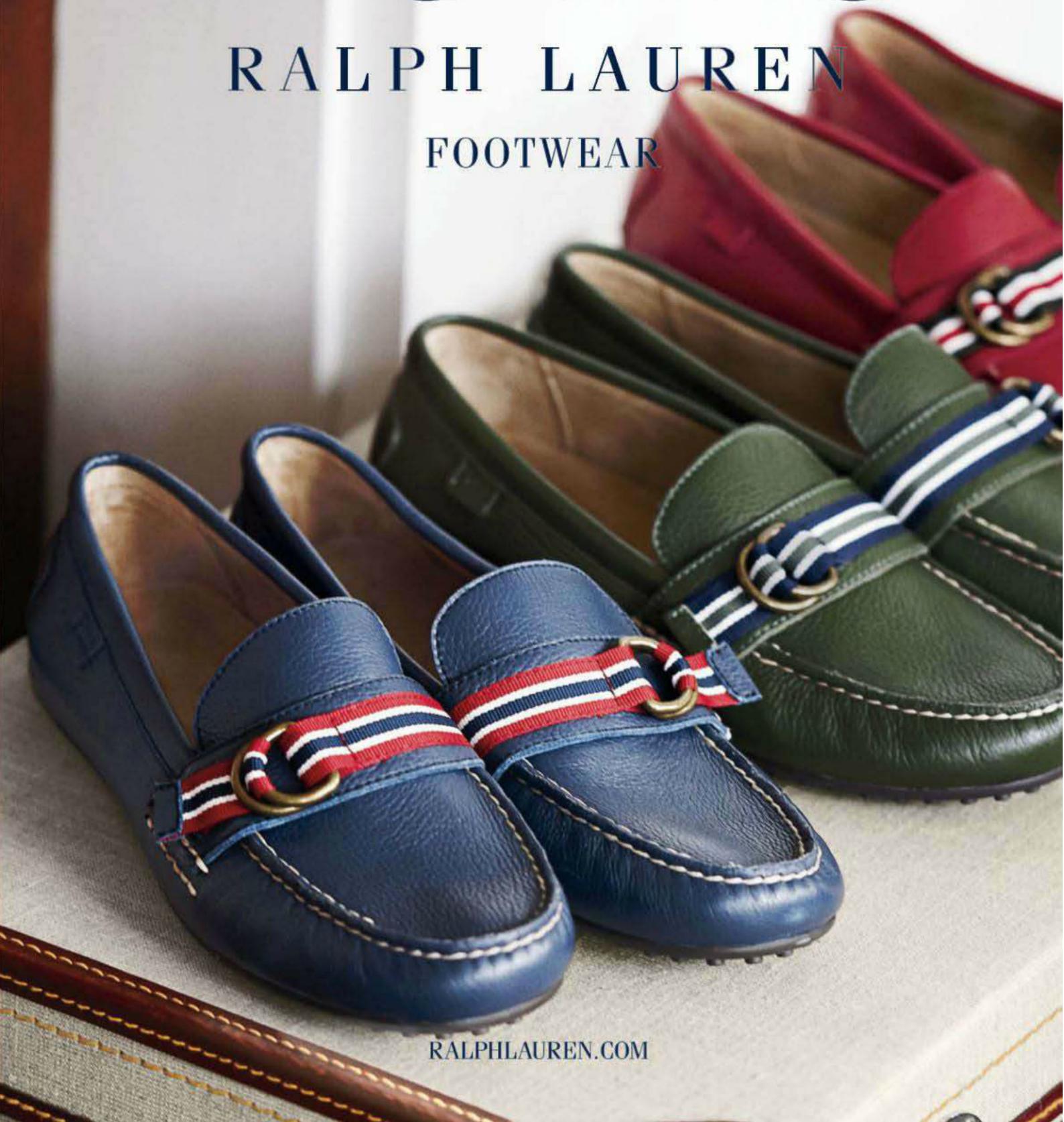




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WELCOME

TO

Esquire

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TOM HARDY SAYS
THINGS MOVIE STARS
WOULD NEVER SAY
AND DOES THINGS
MOVIE STARS WOULD
NEVER DO

Two days in London with the odd mix of ego and low self-esteem that has become Hollywood's new hope.

BY TOM JUNOD

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CAN OUR COUNTRY
STILL LEARN?

Senator Elizabeth Warren wants to teach us how not to make the mistakes we seem doomed to repeat.

BY CHARLES P. PIERCE



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59

QUIET. THE WOMEN
ARE TALKING.

A brief interruption in the testosterone proceedings: We ceded seven pages of this issue to the editors of *Elle*. Just handed them over and asked them to tell us what women really want men to know. Like what they're thinking when we're fighting and if it's okay to send them away for the weekend.

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WHAT I'VE
LEARNED: PELÉ

"I was received in friendship and with affection all over. That is the best prize I ever won."

INTERVIEWED BY
CAL FUSSMAN

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LAKE BELL IS
A WOMAN WE LOVE

Though she's not all that pleased with us for beating her at shuffleboard.

BY PETER MARTIN

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116

THE ESQUIRE
GUIDE TO MUSIC

A look at five impassioned motherfkers: Frank Turner, Kid Cudi, RZA, Tom Morello, and Kris Kristofferson, in a story that will make you cry. Plus, this year's best new songs for men.

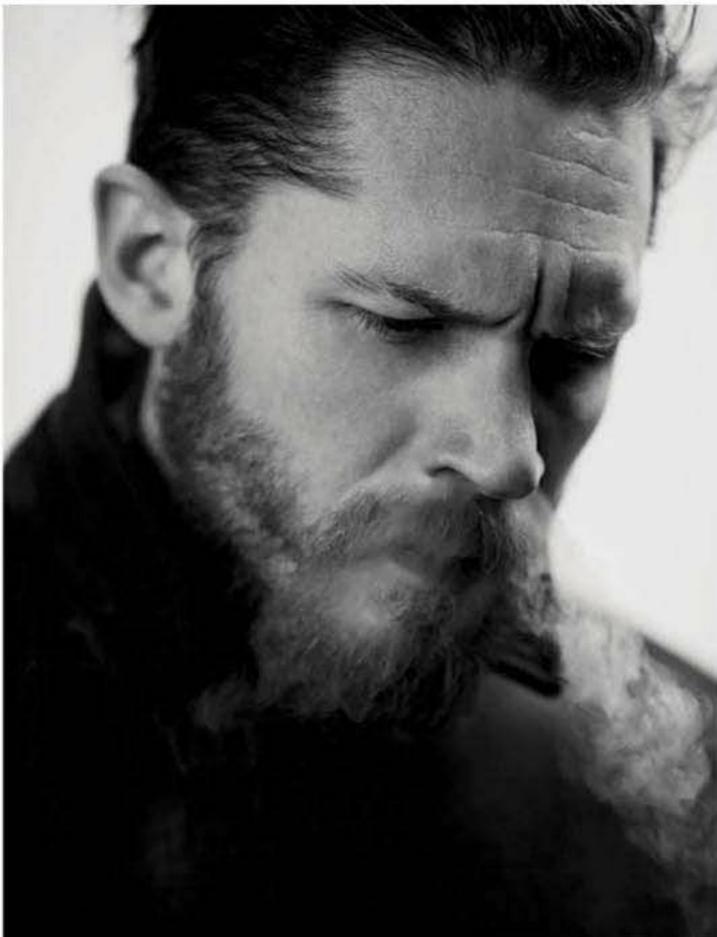
{ continued on page 10 }

ADDITIONALLY...

...A MINI MANIFESTO

In honor of this month's guide to music (page 116), our music correspondent, Andy Langer, assessed the current state of the industry.

1. We're allowing social media to change what it means to be a fan.
2. A music fan is always asking what's next? But he also knows what came before. He knows about the Crossroads. He knows Little Richard. And CBGB's. And at least one apocryphal story about Stevie Nicks.
3. Culture is a commitment. Beatlemania was a commitment. Say what you will about Deadheads and Jugalos, but you have to respect the commitment. Hitting "like" on a Facebook fan page isn't commitment.
4. Only we can stop record stores from becoming record museums.
5. Social media has given us the false impression of a two-way street. A music fan knows the difference between performer and spectator. You've paid for a performance, not a conversation. You bought a seat, not a megaphone.
6. Pro tip: Follow your local music venues on Twitter so you know when tickets are about to go on sale for that show you want to see. Or when a batch of last-minute tickets to a sold-out show gets released. Happens





1973

41 LEGENDARY YEARS BETWEEN LAND AND SEA

The Heritage Chrono Blue is saturated with the azur of the Mediterranean in summer. Tudor glides with ease over the surface of time with this new edition of its legendary chronograph 7169, fusing technical perfection, chic and glamour. Launched in 1973, it has measured magical instants on land and at sea to become the iconic legend it is today.

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more than you think.

7. These days, the answer to what's next? can often be found first across the pond. The UK has prioritized music in the culture the way we used to.

8. What's happening right now on country radio should embarrass you. But a music fan doesn't dismiss genres wholesale. Saying "I don't like country music" makes you look no less shallow than saying "I don't like hip-hop."

9. People who say "I don't like hip-hop" are like people who say "I don't watch television."

10. There are no bad Daytrotter sessions.

11. "Pay what you want" should be read as "Pay what you want over fair market value."

12. The more random the list (i.e., Top Ten Songs About Takeout Chinese), the better the chance of discovery.

...A NOD TO OUR PAST

This month's style feature was inspired by the cover of our **July 1968** issue, featuring James Baldwin. In case you don't have our entire back catalog memorized yet, we wanted to show you the original.



...SOMETHING TO READ (IF YOU LIKE ESQUIRE)

There are two new Esquire-related books coming out this month. The first, *How to Be a Man: A Handbook of Advice, Inspiration, and Occasional Drinking* (Hearst Books/Sterling, \$15), will teach anyone (literally anyone—give it a shot) the



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WELCOME TO ESQUIRE

A mini manifesto **7**
Bike gear **12**
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Editor **18**

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CHRIS O'DOWD

Talks Ireland, the genius of Christopher Guest, the divine light that shines upon James Franco, and how the missus became O'Porter.

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MAN AT HIS BEST: CULTURE

Get ready, it's time to reckon with Zac Efron. Plus, a psychological thriller that reads like literary fiction and a few words on comic self-effacement.

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TECH

Why would you want a curved TV?

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THE PORTFOLIO

Owning a small business is a humbling experience. It humbled me.

BY KEN KURSON

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SEX

An explanation for the seam on your balls and a reason to buy a few mints.

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FUNNY JOKE
FROM A
BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

BY KATIE LOWES

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MAHB: INSTRUCTION

The best hashbrowns you'll ever eat and the least fussy gins you can drink. Combine at your discretion.

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STYLE

If you only upgrade one item in your closet for summer, make it your blazer. Here's what to look for.

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MAINTENANCE

A not-at-all repulsive look at problems your armpits may present you with. Plus: Solutions!

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STEPHEN MARCHE...

is getting fed up with being fed up with our broken government. Just how long can we stay pissed?

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A SPECIAL SECTION: WHAT IS THE STATE OF THE AMERICAN CAR?

To find out, we went to Detroit and drove every one (almost).

We have some big thoughts and also a bunch of littler ones about sedans for men, fun SUVs, cars to recommend to your parents, muscle cars, tiny cars, and a dump truck. And a few thoughts from bigger brains than ours.



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ESQUIRE STYLE

The best new lightweight summer suits let you feel just as cool as you look. Here's how to pick—and wear—them.

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THIS WAY OUT

Corrections and Amplifications





refined art of masculinity. The second, *The Biggest Black Book Ever*, is a curated selection of the style advice presented across the 8-year, 13-issue history of our semi-annual luxury style manual, *Esquire's Big Black Book* (\$31.96; available at esquire.com/blackbook). We hear they make great gifts.

...AND SOMEWHERE TO SHOP (IF YOU LIKE OR KNOW ANY BABIES)

Every so often, people who leave Esquire go on to do good things. A former editor, Buddy Kite, and his wife started what we can safely describe as our favorite baby Web site: Scout-baby.com. They sell highly curated, responsibly made clothes, blankets, and stuffed taxis. Everything you need if you're responsible for a child under two. And it's all adorable.

THE SOUND & THE FURY

THANKS, OH, AND YOU'RE WELCOME?

I love your magazine. It makes my life better. But I won't read a story that describes Michael Keaton as "one of the most beloved actors in the history of American cinema" ("A Normal Day in the Unusual Life of Michael Keaton," February). Thanks for mostly everything else, though.

CLIFFORD FIELDS
New York, N.Y.

A VERY BRIEF LOOK AT THE RANGE OF OTHER RESPONSES TO MICHAEL KEATON

The article on Michael Keaton was ridiculous.

GEORGE SCHMIDT
Fairview, N.J.

ESQUIRE INDULGES A BIKE GUIDE FOR RICK

A longtime subscriber and cyclist, Rick Pepper noted a deficiency in our monthly coverage: biking. For a moment we questioned his motivation, considering he owns a cycling-gear shop himself, but still, he made a good point. So now that the nice weather is back, here's a look at some of the best biking gear available. (With thanks to Alex Leader at New York City's Bicycle Habitat, and Deb Wenof, Esquire's photo coordinator and resident biking fanatic.)

HELMET Specialized S-Works Prevail (\$250; specialized.com). Extremely lightweight and ventilated, with an elaborate sizing system and actually comfortable straps. You won't even know you're wearing a helmet—unless you crash and can still remember your name.

MOUNTAIN BIKE Trek X-Caliber 5 (\$660; trekbikes.com). For less than a quarter of the cost of a pro bike, the 24-speed X-Caliber 5 offers many of the same features—a durable frame, mechanical disc brakes, and a custom fork that increases low-speed handling. Yes, it weighs more (about a pound), but so will your wallet.

LOCK Kryptonite New York Fahgettaboudit Chain 1410 (\$141; kryptonitelock.com). Unlike a U-lock, a chain can fit around the back wheel, the frame, and the removed front wheel. For another \$15, Kryptonite will pay you up to \$3,750 if someone manages to steal your bike in the next three years.

LIGHT Light & Motion Urban 200 Combo (\$119; lightandmotion.com). The Urban 200 Combo is lightweight and bright. More important, it's among the few light sets that features side-lights instead of simple reflectors, making you and your bike visible when you're alongside traffic, too. Which seems nice.

SHORTS Giro Ride Overshort (\$100; giro.com). Bike shorts that aren't tight spandex, that you might actually wear when you're not on a bike? Yes. For everyone's sake.

JERSEY Rapha Club Jersey (\$175; rapha.cc). No, you can't wear just a T-shirt. (The cotton will get heavy with sweat, and the extra fabric will chafe.) But that doesn't mean you have to wear a mesh singlet. The club jersey is made from a polyester-wool blend that wicks away sweat and keeps you cool while you ride. And the extra length in the back keeps your ass from hanging out.

TOOL Park Tool Fold Up Hex Wrench Set (\$14; parktool.com). A cyclist's Swiss Army knife: small enough to fit in your pocket and able to adjust your seat, brakes, and nearly anything else.

BLAZER Lululemon MWB (\$298; lululemon.com). The MWB doesn't have to be stowed in your backpack on your ride into work. It's flexible enough to wear when you're on your bike and stylish enough to wear when your bike is nowhere in sight.



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Keaton was fabulous!

JOSEPH VALVERDE
Phoenix, Ariz.

**BUT WHAT DID HE
THINK ABOUT THE
MAGAZINE?**

It's 7:30 A.M. on a Saturday, and my three-year-old is sitting on my lap eating his breakfast as I read the February issue. I flip to page 38 and he lets out a belly laugh: "Ha-ha... that's Jimmy Fallon! He's a funny!" Jimmy's gonna be just fine.

JESSE NEWBERRY
Wayland, Mass.

JEANS FOR JIM

I browse your style coverage



A NEW ESKY

The movie *For No Good Reason* (April 25) celebrates the life of legendary cartoonist **Ralph Steadman**, who reimagined our mascot, Esky, for the occasion. He also spoke to us. Read the interview at esquire.com/steadman.

each month, admiring your suggestions and taking clues and trying to find similar looks at a more reasonable price. But you can't play that game with the American jean. You can't begin with a grand paean to the universal brotherhood of the jean and then suggest we spend \$365 for a pair. The very appeal of jeans is their ability to level the playing field, not to ride above it.

JIM ADAMS
Boston, Mass.

We agree. That's why there are great options at every price, whether it's \$365 or \$50, like Uniqlo's slim-fit selvage jeans



**SOMETHING TO
WATCH IT ON**

LG and Samsung now make curved TVs. They're supposed to be better. They're certainly more expensive. Read more on page 30.

**THIS MONTH ON THE ESQUIRE NETWORK
ARE YOU A LUCKY BASTARD?**

ON APRIL 16, ESQUIRE NETWORK launches *Lucky Bastards* (Wednesdays at 10:00 P.M.)—a show about six friends who treat Manhattan like a never-ending frat party. You might be jealous (one of them drives a free Maserati) or disdainful (one of them drives a free Maserati), but you'll also be entertained. Here, a few questions to determine if you'd fit in with their crew. (If you answer yes to at least one, you've got a pretty good chance. Whatever your answers, it's still worth watching—even if you hate them, that can be quite satisfying.)

1. Are you a prince or friendly with one?
 Yes No

2. Are you a man over 25 who still carries his father's credit card?
 Yes No

3. Do you run a vanity business?
 Yes No

4. Are you angry and/or disappointed when

5. Are you the son of a tycoon?
 Yes No

6. Is your name Scott?
 Yes No

7. Do you describe the female friends constantly at your side as your

8. Do you make it clear to others that you date only models?
 Yes No

9. Do you consider working to be overrated?
 Yes No

10. Do you fancy yourself a cross between

11. Does your assistant live with you?
 Yes No

12. Look at your wrists. Are you wearing more than four bangles or bracelets?
 Yes No

13. Is that a ponytail?
 Yes No

each month, admiring your suggestions and taking clues and trying to find similar looks at a more reasonable price. But you can't play that game with the American jean. You can't begin with a grand paean to the universal brotherhood of the jean and then suggest we spend \$365 for a pair. The very appeal of jeans is their ability to level the playing field, not to ride above it.

JIM ADAMS
Boston, Mass.

We agree. That's why there are great options at every price, whether it's \$365 or \$50, like Uniqlo's slim-fit selvage jeans

**READER POETRY:
A DEFENSE OF
BOB DYLAN**

Mary Wells of Wilmington, N.C., was less than pleased with our examination of Bob Dylan's mysterious life ("Who Is This Bob Dylan?" February). As people tend to do when they're angry, she expressed herself through the following poem:

*You may grab that LADDER now but the little rooster will climb and crow until he dies.
How dare you reveal the whereabouts and picture of his roost! He will have to fly away now, solely because of YOU.
Oh, what a nest is to a bird! The seabirds laugh, the Malibu waves burst in glee upon a safe shore, all feeding his genius.*

And the white STARS in the night sky gladden the sad savant, who simply wants to be left alone. YOU must look to the black stars to find something other than poetry.

*Dark energy leaps onto our stages—and what do you say then?
You do not have the chutzpah to walk down a dark street alone, as Mr. Dylan has done a thousand times.*

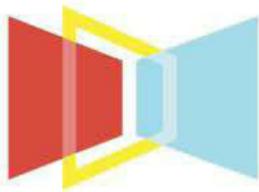
There will be divine retribution for your DEED, and all you can do then is CROW, loudly CROW!



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A NOTE FROM DAVID GRANGER

Green Shoots

A FEW THINGS: IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG TIME BEFORE I forget a ride I took a few months ago with Ross McCammon and David Curcurito. We were in Detroit, having come to the end of three days in which we attempted to drive every American car. (See page 78.) Eddie Alterman, the editor of *Car and Driver*, had suggested we drive the length of Woodward Avenue—as opposed to the highways—to get downtown from Birmingham. So we got on Woodward somewhere above 14 Mile Road and took it all the way to the river.

Woodward used to be the grandest road in America: eight lanes with a wide boulevard on which streetcars ferried commuters from downtown all the way up to Pontiac and back. It was the main artery in a great American city. These days, driving it is the equivalent of exploring an archaeological

dig. The first few miles were unremarkable. But then we hit 8 Mile, the dividing line between suburbs and city. At 5:45 P.M., as daylight became dusk, nearly every car in front of us turned off Woodward. We were alone on the long bridge that ushers you south into the city. For the next six miles, we marveled at the spectacular decay. It is awe-inspiring to see vast tracts of abandonment. For miles along Woodward, no one had cleared the sidewalks of snow, so the rare pedestrians were walking (or rolling their wheelchairs) in the right lane of traffic. It was humbling: an antidote to American arrogance and a vision of one possible future for America's cities.

There's a budding resurgence downtown. Dan Gilbert, Quicken Loans founder and sports entrepreneur, has moved his employees there, and some excellent bars and solid restaurants have blossomed. But it's still chilling to walk out of, say, Sugar House and see the abandoned hulk of the train station looming over you and an entire city.

Happily, the American auto industry is far further along in its recovery than the city that gave it birth. Even though the ghosts

of the past still haunt the industry (witness the Cobalt crisis), five years after the bailout of two of our three automotive giants, driving American cars is an inspiring experience. Not every car, of course. But there are a lot of new cars that fire the imagination. And they make it clear there's a future for the American car. In 2009, no one could have said this with certainty.

WITH THIS ISSUE, we've initiated a new relationship. Three years ago, when our parent company acquired *Elle* magazine, *Elle's* beautiful and charming and accomplished editor, Robbie Myers, sent me a note that said, "Our magazines should date." It took a while, but Richard Dorment came up with a plan that he and *Elle* deputy editor Maggie Bullock executed. In this issue, we ceded seven pages to our sister magazine, and we created seven pages for *Elle's* May issue, in which we try to offer insights into our respective genders. It's constantly surprising to me how easy it is for men and women to misunderstand each other. In these pages, we hope to prepare the ground for greater understanding—or at least make it clear that our hearts are mostly pure.

DAVID
GRANGER
EDITOR IN CHIEF




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IN MEMORIAM

Driving on the snowy streets of Detroit (page 78) can be harrowing—so harrowing that three GoPro Hero3+ cameras were lost in the experience. They went down fighting. We'll always remember them for that.

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MAN AT
HIS BEST

INSIDE:
25

MEN, WOMEN, BOOZE,
JOKES, TV SHOWS,
MOVIES, NOTIONS, AND
A HANDFUL OF
BOLD IDEAS THAT DEFINE
OUR TIME. OR AT
LEAST THIS
MONTH.

No. 01

ESQ&A

WITH

Chris O'Dowd

BY SCOTT RAAB

**Lunch, Union Square Cafe,
downtown Manhattan.**

SCOTT RAAB: I just got back
from Ireland.

CHRIS O'DOWD: Oh? Where
were you?

SR: Not far from Westport.

CO: Oh, I love it up there.

That's a great spot. Matt Molloy's pub is there.

SR: We drove out to Achill. You ever go to Achill?

CO: I used to go there a lot as a kid. That road out to Achill is gorgeous. It feels like it's the edge of the world.

SR: I'd like to live there.

CO: That's one of the nicer

areas. And not far from where I'm from. I actually spend more time in Ireland now than I have in maybe 10 or 12 years, because I do a TV show there. [Moone Boy. Second season is on Hulu now.]

SR: We're huge fans. I'm not just saying that.

CO: You mean of Ireland more

than me.

SR: No, really, you are Ireland to us. You and Van Morrison.

CO: I'll take that.

SR: There must be some term for Americans who romanticize Ireland.

CO: There's "plastic Paddies." It's not necessarily a posi-

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

tive term. But that's not what you're talking about.

SR: That would be someone who's Irish on St. Patrick's Day. **CO:** I'm open to all of it. I like the idea of people having romantic tendencies towards a place they don't know that well. I think it's great. Why not? My dad's view of New York is very similar to Americans' when they talk about Ireland. He just thinks this is the best place in the world. And he doesn't understand why everybody doesn't live here. He will give the name of each pub in the East Village. He's a big music guy, and he knows all the music shops.

SR: So, you're in rehearsals for *Of Mice and Men* on Broadway with James Franco. When's

SR: What's the dialect?

CO: In the time this play is set, accents aren't as well carved out specifically. We're in California, but everybody is a migrant. These people are all economic migrants. The way that I am now.

WAITER: What can I get you?

CO: The cauliflower soup sounds so good. And the broccoli-melt sandwich. I've never heard of such a thing.

SR: I'll have the sirloin carpaccio. And the yellowfin-tuna burger. And the mercury on the side.

CO: And I'll have a glass of red wine. Cabernet.

SR: Franco's handsome is not a real handsome.

CO: In what sense?

SR: I've been around enough of those people to say that some of them you look at and



O'Dowd with Kristen Wiig in *Bridesmaids*.

CO: Sure, can't argue with that.

SR: Goldblum's another one.

CO: He's another tall actor. There's not many of us, you know. I met Tim Robbins recently. He's like six six. And I thanked him for being a trailblazer. John Cusack: six five, six six?

SR: You were a goalkeeper in Gaelic football. Were you good?

CO: I was pretty good.

SR: You've referred to yourself as "sporty."

CO: I was sporty. Sporty apparently just isn't a word they use here. Sporty apparently sounds like I was a teenage-girl field-hockey player.

SR: You have collected more than 1,000 chocolate-bar wrappers. What the hell is that about?

CO: My dad was a graphic designer. So I was really into strong branding images. And this Yorkie bar had an image that I really liked. It was in my county football colors: blue and yellow. I unwrapped a few and put them on my wall, and then I became quite obsessed with them. Almost like a War-

hol kind of thing—where I just had hundreds of them as my wallpaper. My mother took them down when I moved out.

SR: I was watching some of your TV clips. You're a hell of a talk-show guest.

CO: Talk shows are so weird.

SR: I always worry this is like one without any of the upside. Except lunch.

CO: I don't think so. Talk shows are so time restricted. It's like five minutes. I'm not a stand-up. Stand-ups are so good on those shows.

SR: I've never seen a clip in which you weren't prepared with a story.

CO: Absolutely. This is a piece of entertainment that's going out to the people. I feel the same way about it when people on award shows are like, *Oh, I didn't prepare a speech.* I'm like, what did you turn up for then?

SR: I think it's a no-win situation.

CO: No, I think the win is you create another piece of great entertainment. I don't understand entertainers not being prepared to entertain. Otherwise, you're literally just there to be honored. Which is contemptible. *Oh, my God, I never expected to win.* Well, there was a 20 percent chance. It's not like they just gave it to the janitor. Self-indulgent cunt.

SR: I've got to rescue that word or at least bring over its usage in Ireland, because it's entirely too charged a word in this country.

CO: Yeah, my director actually said it yesterday. We were talking about the word. There are words in the play that we use that feel very weird to use. Like the *n-word's* in the play. I think I said *cunt* in a conversation yesterday. Some guy was like, "I don't know if I've ever used that word."

"I don't understand entertainers not being prepared to entertain at an awards show. Otherwise, you're just there to be honored. Which is contemptible."

the last time you performed onstage?

CO: Five years.

SR: Do you have to play anyone with an American accent?

CO: Yes. I guess the true answer should be "I hope so."

SR: Well, if you were doing something wrong, you would have heard about it by now.

CO: I think that's all going fine.

you just go...

CO: Yeah, you've been *lit* well. Not him.

SR: He's not relying on any crew.

CO: He's been lit by Christ.

SR: He's what—five three, five four? I'm kidding.

CO: He's annoyingly tall.

SR: But you've got a lot going for you.

THE ESQUIRE DOSSIER

CHRIS O'DOWD

Date of birth: October 9, 1979

Which makes him: 34

Country of origin: Ireland

Parents' occupations: His mom, a psychotherapist, ran one of the largest counseling centers in the west of Ireland. His dad is a graphic designer.

Siblings: Five; one brother and three sisters

His order in the line-up: Fifth

His childhood served to inspire: His Irish

TV show, *Moone Boy*

Which is about: The

youngest boy of four

kids in Boyle, County

Roscommon, and his

imaginary friend

(played by O'Dowd)

Spouse: Dawn

O'Porter

Her occupation: UK

television immer-

sion journalist whose

work includes a se-

ries called "Extreme

Wife," for which she

lived with a polyga-

list family

American break-

through: As Kristen

Wiig's love interest,

Officer Rhodes, in

Bridesmaids

Other American film

and television ap-

pearances: An arc on

Girls, This Is 40

Making him: An or-

biting planet in the

Judd Apatow galaxy

Has been referred to

by a member of boy-

band One Direction

as: The King of Ireland

Another tenuous

connection with a

teenage pop star:

Made headlines in

February when he

came to the defense

of Justin Bieber, say-

ing had he gotten

famous so young,

"I would have killed

a guy by now."

Which: Got him a ton

of media attention.



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NO. 02 → "HORROR"

Scary TV is not scary at all. It's campy. Unintentionally campy in most cases. Showtime's *Penny Dreadful* is but the latest not-scary scary show. A recent history: *True Blood* (2008)—not scary; *The Walking Dead* (2010)—fine, it's scary; *American Horror Story* (2011)—campy, a little scary; *Bates Motel* (2013)—highly campy, a little scary; *Penny Dreadful* (premiering this month)—all camp, no fear.

CONTINUED

SR: Is St. Vincent ever coming out?

CO: As far as I know, it's coming out this fall. I'm in it very briefly, but Bill Murray is going to be terrific. He was a very warm and fun man. Am I eating a broccoli sandwich?

SR: I thought it was a very girlish order.

CO: I thought it was really brave. It's tasty. Want some?

SR: No.

CO: It's really good. It's nice doing a part where I feel like I have to put on a couple of stone.

SR: I never figured out the stone thing. How many pounds are in a stone?

CO: 14 pounds in a stone.

SR: And unlike the Celsius thing, it stays consistent?

CO: I just don't understand why you haven't taken on Celsius. That's the one thing.

SR: That's the one thing? How about guns?



On HBO's Christopher Guest-directed series *Family Tree*.

CO: Oh, there's a bunch of stuff. The other thing I find really odd is how often you get carded. Where did that come from? I honestly think it's a way of the state infantilizing its people so it can control them easier. It's like, Hey, we need you to feel young and helpless against our strength unless we need you to go to war. You're 16? Go for it.

SR: Have you ever done manual labor?

CO: I spent every summer cutting turf. All of Roscommon, where I'm from, is a bog.

SR: What's the tool?

CO: Turf cutter.

SR: Is it a scythe?

CO: No, it's got a big handle like that but almost the size of a broom. And like an L shape on the bottom. Hard work.

SR: The turf is peat?

CO: Yes. This is what I don't understand about whiskey: If we have all this peat, why isn't our whiskey peaty? I love Irish whiskey, but as I get older I'm more and more drawn to Scottish-Ireland whiskeys. The single malts. But I particularly like the ones that are very, very peaty. It's weird because Ireland is so full of peat, but all Irish whiskey is done on coal and it doesn't have that flavor.

SR: I read that your mom was a psychotherapist. I'm thinking Ireland is not a country flush with psychotherapists.

CO: She was a trailblazer. She ran one of the biggest counseling centers in the west of Ireland. Just grew this whole counseling center that now has, like, 20 therapists taking care of all these people. The way that psychotherapy works in rural Ireland is you have to travel to do it, because you'd be too embarrassed to do it in your hometown.

SR: It's really a mark of shame.

CO: I'm hugely influenced by the fact that both of my parents were self-employed. So going into a career like this isn't scary, because it's all scary. I'm a grafter as well, so I was never broke.

SR: Grafter? I hear graft I'm thinking political corruption.

CO: Grafting is even when things aren't going, like my dreams aren't being fulfilled, I'll supply my family. I'll be all right.

SR: So it's a state of mind as well as a state of being in the world?

CO: I think so.

SR: You'll find a way to keep body and soul together.

CO: Don't let pretentiousness get in the way of making a living. It's all just work when it comes down to it. Speaking of work, who's your dream interview?

SR: Your fellow Irishman Van Morrison would be a big one.

CO: Can you imagine? I went to see him two nights in a row. The first show was 45 minutes, and it was awful. He would just mumble it. Just couldn't have given less of a shit. The next night was three hours of the most magical performance.

SR: Amazing.

CO: He's a true nutjob.

SR: *Family Tree* is coming back on HBO, right?

CONTINUED

Thing or Not a Thing?

Thing

Thing?

What is this, a joke?

Please.

Not a Thing.

Aasif Mandvi, go-to humorous Indian person for middlebrow comedies (Million Dollar Arm, The Internship)

Adam Carolla, populist contractor ambusher (Spike TV's Catch a Contractor)

Adam Carolla, populist Republican (prescriptive political book President Me: The America That's in my Head)

Angelina Jolie's return to film (as the wicked witch in Maleficent)

The overstuffed action franchise (X-Men: Days of Future Past, The Avengers)

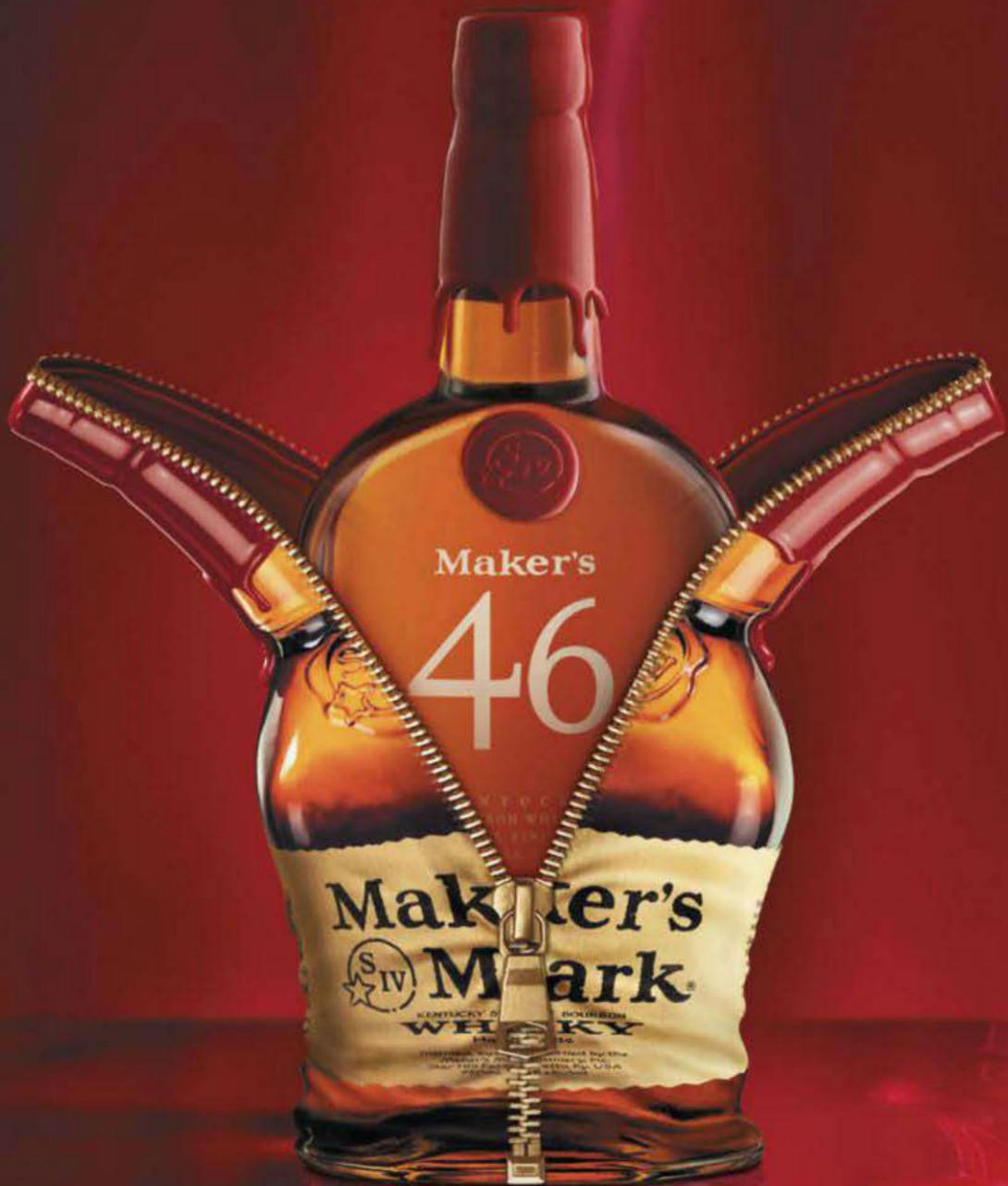
Lily Allen, feminist (new album Sheezus)

Seth MacFarlane, R-rated comedy mogul (period comedy A Million Ways to Die in the West, Ted)

Seth MacFarlane, movie star (A Million Ways to Die in the West)

Hulu supplanting Netflix as the best importer of British shows (Chris O'Dowd's semi-autobiographical Moone Boy, comedy thriller The Wrong Mans, college sitcom Fresh Meat)

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NO. 03 → ... ACTUAL HORROR

You want horror? Go see Tom Hardy in *Locke*, out this month. The film? Terrifying. One guy. With one big problem that can't be solved. Takes place in a BMW X5. For an hour and a half. Real time. This is a horror movie for men, because only men will find it terrifying. More on page 92.

CONTINUED

CO: I think it's gone.

SR: Christopher Guest is a genius.

CO: He was just the loveliest man, very gentle. Obviously, that whole show is kind of improvised, so we didn't really know what was going to go on in each scene. We do a scene, and I go and do some bits and try to be funny. And I kind of thought I needed to do jokes, essentially. And after day two, he's like, "All right, cut. Okay, Chris, that was great. That was so funny. That joke that you did about the skeleton and everything? Really, really funny. I mean obviously not for this show. But keep it for something. All right. Going again."

SR: That's gentle.

CO: He's a genuine genius.

SR: Any false notes would sink any one of his projects.

CO: Particularly here, where everybody's doing that. Like that kind of place where there's no need for it. Like, even in *Moone Boy* there was no need for, like, this kind of mocky-doc thing, really. And *Modern Family*, there's no need for it. But people do it because it works so well, and that was him. Which was amazing.

SR: How did the missus decide to take the O from O'Dowd?

CO: You know, I thought she was joking when she mentioned it at first. And then I just thought it was so cool.

SR: It is cool.

CO: I mean she got a lot of stick for it in the UK. I think the people thought it was a silly celebrity thing or something. She's a feminist, so she didn't want to give her name away. But she also thought she wanted to take something of her husband's, you know, and the O is hugely meaningful. O only exists in Ireland. So you're taking on my nationality as part of your name. I found it very touching. I would have loved if we were both called O'Porter.

SR: I think very few men would even consider it.

CO: I love the idea.

SR: So you would go from O'Dowd to O'Porter?

CO: Yeah, because I'm essentially keeping the most important part of it for me.

SR: The O?

CO: The O. 



THE SUPER RECAP

So, You Never Saw 24

BY RYAN D'AGOSTINO

24? 24 invented binge-watching. First of all, it's in real time. Every episode lasts an hour, every season lasts exactly one day—24 episodes, 24 hours. You binge-watch it because each episode ends in a cliffhanger—and the next episode picks up... *one second later!*

The premise is always that this one day is a very, very challenging day for Jack Bauer. Jack (Kiefer Sutherland) is an agent at CTU, which stands for Counter Terrorist Unit, a fictional omnipotent combination of all the U.S. law-enforcement agencies, which would be great if it existed in real life.

There have been eight seasons of 24, and each has followed the same perfect formula: The first four hours always bring some terri-

ble crisis. In season one, it's that somebody is trying to assassinate a senator who's running for president (played by the Allstate guy, incidentally). In season four, it's a catastrophic train wreck during which a man is murdered. In season six, Jack's a prisoner on a Chinese ship and they torture him. Jack always surmounts each crisis, only to uncover a much bigger, much more insurmountable crisis, which takes exactly the next 20 hours to surmount. (Respectively: the kidnapping of his wife and daughter; terrorists getting control of America's nuclear power plants; a nuclear bomb detonating in Los Angeles.)

Another part of 24's perfect formula is that in between the minor crisis and the major crisis, there's always some tertiary crisis involving CTU. Jack is famous in the ranks of American antiterrorism because he is always saving the world in one day, yet his supervisors never believe that the world is under siege again, so they constantly lock him up or take away his badge. *Dammit.* So then he has to go rogue, fighting the terrorists and everyone at CTU—except Chloe (Mary Lynn Rajskub), the computer nerd who always helps him. Chloe is always nervously looking over her shoulder as she finds information for Jack, thwarting her supervisors.

In the end, CTU always says, "Well done, Jack."

The last season aired in 2010. The minor crisis was an assassination threat at the UN. The major crisis was that some nuclear fuel rods were smuggled into Manhattan to blow it up. CTU didn't believe Jack or Chloe about any of this, so they went rogue. With any luck, this new season, *24: Live Another Day* (premiering May 5 at 8:00 P.M. on Fox), will be the same as all the others, because they were perfect. 

No. 05: The Fat Movie Chef Finally, a chef we'd want making our food



Adrian Grenier in *The Devil Wears Prada*.



Aaron Eckhart and Catherine Zeta-Jones in *No Reservations*.



Linguini in *Ratatouille*.



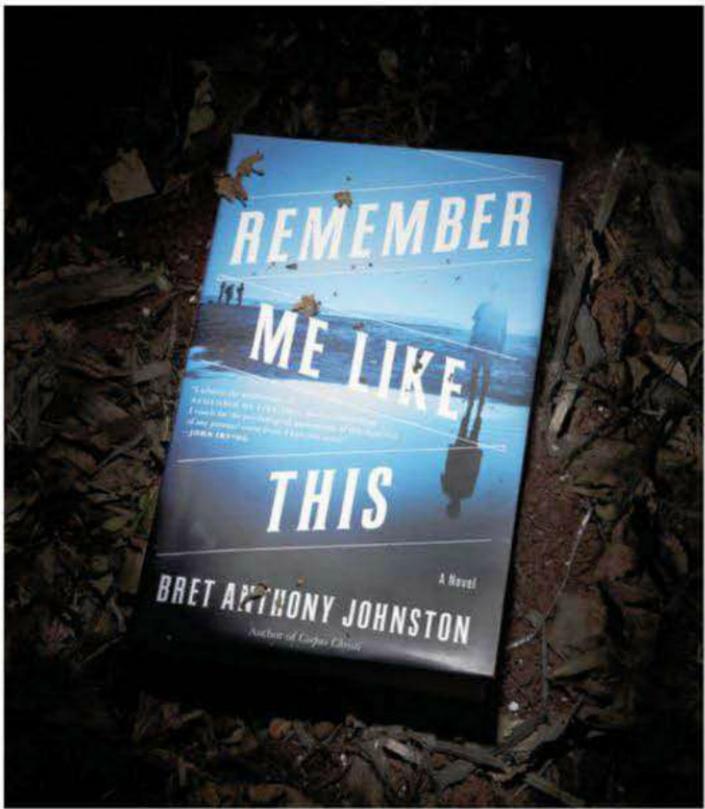
Jon Favreau in *Chef* (out this month).



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THE RULES → **Rule No. 603:** Beware the restaurant where the waiter steers you toward the burger. **Rule No. 604:** Related: No matter how “killer” the mac and cheese is purported to be, it will be, invariably, pretty good. **Rule No. 726:** Everything in human history—joys, sorrows, scandals—will now be relived and readjudicated, as the Internet missed it the first time around. **Rule No. 853:** When in doubt: gardenias.



No. 06 THE END OF HAPPILY EVER AFTER

AN ENTHRALLING NEW NOVEL STARTS WITH THE JOYOUS MOMENT A MISSING BOY IS FOUND. THINGS DON'T GO WELL FROM THERE.

BY STEPHEN MARCHE

I know the novel you’re looking for. It’s the thriller that also has interesting sentences. It’s the one with a driving plot but fully realized characters as well, the one that flows like it was plotted by Dennis Lehane but feels like it was written by Jonathan Franzen. The high-end potboiler. The literate page-turner. It’s a surprisingly rare breed even though it’s so obviously the novel we all want. Fortunately, there’s Bret Anthony Johnston’s *Remember Me Like This* (Random House, \$26). The most interesting books of the past couple years have been fusions of the literary and the

genre: high-art science fiction and reappropriated westerns and so on. *Remember Me Like This* is a similar beast. It has all the features of a trashy psychological thriller, but with all the resources of literary fiction brought to bear on the psychologies in question.

It’s the story of the Campbell family, a foursome living in Southport, Texas. Their lives are brutally interrupted when their eldest son, Justin, is kidnapped and then, four years later, against all hope, discovered again. The book is riveting, with the elements of suspense neatly folded into an elegant series of interlocking arcs. “Will they find the boy?” is followed by “What happened to the boy?” is followed by “Will they recover?” is followed by “What happens to the kidnapper?” The book obeys the first rule of great pulp writing: There is nowhere you want to stop.

But the plot in *Remember Me Like This* is interstitially tied in to the psychological details of the characters, and that’s what makes it interesting. Johnston has a gift for creating characters that are perfectly ordinary but also deeply peculiar. Griff, the younger son, who is left with his devastated parents after the disappearance of his brother, is a skater kid of the type you’ll find in any midsize city, the kind with parents whose marriage is falling apart and girlfriend problems. But in one scene, when the girlfriend in question slips out of the room, he quickly takes off his socks, spritzes them with her perfume, and tucks them away in his bag, to be smelled later.

Even moments of action are shot through with that level of psychological detail: When the disappeared boy’s father, Eric, learns from the police that his son has been abused by the kidnapper, he throws up into a wastebasket in the police station. “For the first time in decades, he recalled how nauseated his mother had been in the last year of her life,” Johnston writes. “She’d started carrying a green Tupperware bowl from room to room, in case she couldn’t make it to the toilet. His father, Eric knew, still used the bowl.” The memory within the memory is the revealing detail, the source of the sense of realism, which gives the psychological horror of the unfolding story only more heft and jeopardy. Real people’s lives are at stake in the plot’s whirlwind.

The shifting of psychological perspectives is a technique borrowed from high modernism, from James Joyce and the Faulkner of *As I Lay Dying*, but also from dime-store novel classics, like Kenneth Fearing’s *The Big Clock*. In the end, the high literary technique and the pulp elements of *Remember Me Like This* contribute so seamlessly to each other you wonder how they got separated in the first place. It doesn’t need a name. It’s just good to read. ■



No. 07: A Man We Must Now Reckon With: Zac Efron

It all started in early 2012, when the condom (a Magnum, by the glint of it) tumbled from his pocket onto the red carpet at the world premiere of a children’s movie. He picked it up, 1,000 flashbulbs popping, and

laughed a little before walking into the theater. Whether or not he had intended to get laid after (or at) the premiere of a children’s movie, the implication was clear: Zac Efron was a man we could do business with.

Later that year, he was the only actor to emerge from *The Paperboy* with his dignity intact. Earlier this year, he starred in a comedy clearly not meant for children—*That Awkward Moment*—and he has another on the

way, *Neighbors* (in theaters May 9), which features binge drinking and a bad Travis Bickle impersonation. Both are explicitly, enthusiastically, movies for men, and Efron, in both movies, is the man. —RICHARD DORMENT

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NO. 09 → TV IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE REST OF US

For those of us who don't mind flat TVs, there's still good news: This year brought substantial across-the-board improvements in image quality, both in terms of dynamic range (the distinction between the lightest and darkest pixels) and color saturation. And unlike most technological improvements, you'll actually see the difference. —P.M.



TECH

The Benefit of Curves

DO YOU REALLY NEED YOUR TV TO BE CURVED? WHAT ABOUT YOUR PHONE? TURNS OUT CURVES OFFER A FEW MINOR ADVANTAGES AND ONE MAJOR ONE: AESTHETICS.

BY PETER MARTIN

Flat was the next big thing. In the early 2000s, we couldn't handle the slightly distorting convex glass of tube television. We needed it to be flat. A few years after that, we didn't want tube televisions at all. We wanted plasmas and LCDs, and we wanted them to be flat, too. Preferably flat and thin and able to be mounted on the wall—decoration instead of furniture. But lately, flat hasn't been good enough. Not from the buyers' perspective—we're more than happy with sets as thin as three millimeters—but for the manufacturers themselves. They needed something else, so they added a curve.

Curved TVs debuted last year at the Consumer Electronics Show. In Samsung's booth, a sign celebrated the "world's first" curved OLED TV. But it must have been a tie, because a similar sign hung next to LG's version of the same. The TVs curved in ever so slightly, more warped floorboard than boomerang, and it felt like you were looking at something special. Both were beautiful, as OLED TVs tend to be, thanks to a picture so sharp and saturated that it looked practically 3-D. But they felt like concept cars or Pac-12 cheerleaders: made to show off potential but never intended to go home with you. Then last summer, LG started selling the 55-inch **[1] EA9800** (\$8,000; lg.com) and Samsung launched the 55-inch **S9C** (\$9,000; samsung.com).

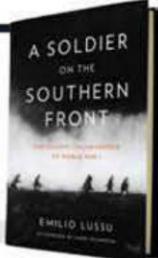
Suddenly this concept was a real possibility. Then in January Samsung did us one better by announcing the slightly more affordable **[2] U9000 series** of curved UHD TVs (\$3,999 for a 55-inch set). The picture is stunning, although not quite as good as an OLED's, and the TV itself certainly makes a statement.

That's why you buy a curved TV: to be the guy who owns a curved TV. It may not be practical, but it's not supposed to be. What it's supposed to be is more immersive, with a better viewing angle. And though you do feel a bit more immersed in the experience, V. Michael Bove Jr. at the MIT Media Lab says the curve actually reduces the sweet spot of watching. You need to be very close—within four or five feet—and directly in front of the screen to enjoy the benefits. He sees curvature as more of a potential boon for the gaming industry, since gamers sit within a few feet of their screen at all times.

TVs weren't the only thing to change shape over the past year, as LG and Samsung also introduced curved cell phones.

[3] The Samsung Galaxy Round (not available in the U.S.) curves in on the vertical axis. According to Anthony Andre, a professor of human factors and ergonomics at San Jose State University, that's a good thing when holding your phone in portrait mode. The narrower grip reduces the stress on your hand. The **[4] LG G Flex** (\$300 with a two-year contract; att.com), however, bends on the horizontal axis. Andre says that won't benefit you much in portrait mode or when you're speaking on the phone, but it does help a bit in landscape mode. And it's true: There is something much more natural feeling when you use the G Flex to watch a video. Although the phone is huge, it bends with your hands, making for a slightly more comfortable angle on your wrists. Besides, even if it doesn't help you ergonomically, there's something to be said for the minor joy you get when, holding the LG in portrait mode, every Web page you read feels like the scrolling introduction to *Star Wars*.

Should you get one? If you're talking TVs and you have a basement screening room that you always wanted to think was your own mini-IMAX, sure. As for the G Flex, it's a great phone, but if you buy one, you'll also need to buy some sort of carrying case, a pretty purse, or an assistant. Because curved or not, there's no way you're getting this thing in your pocket. ■



No. 10: These Chilling Sentences

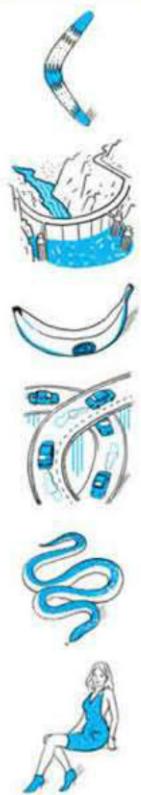
"Tell your commander that you found me here, that you found Colonel Stringari here, commander of the Alpini groups, ready to die."

"Yes, sir."
"And you tell him that here we all have to die. All of us have to die. That's our duty. Tell him that. Understand?"

"Yes, sir."
I ran back down on the double to report to the major.
—From *A Soldier on the Southern Front*

(Rizzoli Ex Libris, \$27), an engrossing World War I memoir by Italian infantryman Emilio Lussu, newly published in English

A FEW OTHER CURVED THINGS





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NO. 12 → SMALL-BUSINESS MISTAKE NO. 3.5

In some ways, it's the single most important to avoid, if only for its power to screw up the rest of your life: Don't ever sign a personal guarantee for a business loan—and that includes putting up your house as collateral. If a lender insists, walk away. Trust me on this. —K.K.



THE PORTFOLIO BY KEN KURSON

Small Business Is Humbling

MY FOUR MISTAKES

1 **Here's what happens when** you write about money: You think you know a little bit.

Five or six years ago, the world collapsed. And there I sat with a great job and a pile of cash. So I went shopping. First, I bought a print shop in Hoboken, New Jersey—a mom-and-pop place on the main drag (“An Investment Like No Other,” February 2010). Then I bought a laundromat in Westfield (“How to Buy a Laundromat,” March 2011). Look at me with my little empire.

I don't operate them—I have a business partner who handles the day-to-day stuff. But I do like to come by every now and then to see how things are going and even sometimes like to feel like a man by helping to fix a broken cutting machine or a leaky pipe. I derive a ton of satisfaction from employing some very good people and the day-to-day strategic challenges of running a business. I assumed that my great brain and innovative thinking would unleash hidden value.

That arrogance was Mistake No. 1, and it's made by many new owners. They—I—assume that the people running these businesses successfully for years have gotten soft or lazy or are too deep in the weeds. The truth is usually the opposite. The seller has maximum knowledge, about both how to run the business and its trend lines; the buyer has only the representations the seller has made on paper.

Speaking of paper, that was Mistake No. 2. Price is *everything*. We bought the print shop for what seemed like a sensible number. We looked at past revenues and past expenses and paid a price that was supportable, if a small reach. But no battle plan survives contact with the enemy, and in the case of small business, the enemy is called real life. It doesn't matter if you're holding a piece

of paper that “proves” revenues were \$60k a month for the past five years. Once you buy and discover they're more like \$45k a month, you're looking at a real-life problem.

Even bank statements can be fudged—a smart owner who envisions a sale a couple years down the road can pretty easily add some of his own money to the week's deposit to make the balance sheet appear prettier than it is. I have no reason to believe that's what happened with our shop, but I do know that we never experienced the revenues that the former owner showed on the pro forma.

Mistake No. 3—and ultimately the most devastating—was borrowing more than made sense. For the print shop, we put up only about \$100,000 in cash and borrowed the remaining \$450,000 of the purchase price. We got good rates, but we left ourselves almost no wiggle room.

And Mistake No. 4 was having a bunch of bad luck. In Hoboken, one of the anchors on our street was a big Barnes & Noble. Students at the Stevens Institute would go there and then come to us to rent our computers by the minute or to photocopy stuff from the textbooks they'd purchased.

Well, that Barnes & Noble disappeared, and in its place appeared Office Depot. It didn't kill us, but it hurt. And one of our side revenue streams—shipping via FedEx—completely stopped. We fought back by steering our biz toward more professional b2b stuff, but that undermined the rationale behind paying huge rent to be on the town's best street.

Meanwhile, at the laundromat, we took lessons 2 and 3 to heart. Having concluded that I overpaid for the print shop, I beat the hell out of the seller of the laundromat. I walked away from the deal twice, only to have him call me back with a lower price each time. And that's the key: You really have to be willing to walk. And I paid cash, so any short-term dips wouldn't have me suddenly scrambling to fund the payments.

Unfortunately, the laundromat was not immune to Mistake No. 4. Part of the revenue model was based on the fact that the place came with a dry-cleaning machine; unlike most drop-off places, we could dry-clean in house. Three months after we took over, an inspector from Union County demanded to see all these crazy certifications that you're required to have before you can use perchloroethylene (a dry-cleaning chemical that is basically the nastiest shit in the world). I wanted nothing to do with that—we paid a small fortune to have the giant machine removed and to certify that the ground had not been contaminated. But it left us minus a revenue stream we'd been counting on.

These were tough lessons. I hate failing, but I especially hate it when others are counting on me. These businesses were never my main job, but for a dozen or so people, they've been a livelihood. So we're fixing things. At the print shop, no more renting computers by the minute—it's a pure print shop, and revenues have stabilized. More important, we've negotiated an early termination of a crushing lease and will now be paying about a third as much for a place that better suits the new model. At the laundromat, we have less flexibility—washing clothes for \$3.50 is about as elemental as it gets—but we're negotiating with the landlord, who'd hate to lose a good tenant at a time when vacancies are plentiful.

We'll be fine. And if you need a large-format poster or want to drop off 25 pounds of dirty clothes... ■

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SEX WITH STACEY WOODS



No. 13 DOES THAT MINT TRICK FOR ORAL SEX REALLY WORK?

The mint alone is probably not going to be enough. You'll still have to brush, floss, and maybe use a tongue scraper afterward. But if you find yourself with extra mints lying around, you might want to try mentholingus (coinage: mine). It's a wholly sustainable perversion that costs just pennies a year or less if you buy in bulk and never get laid. Really, anything mentholated—mints, balms, even an unlit Kool—will probably work. “I’ve used Tiger Balm and ginger root,” says sex instructor Madison Young before clarifying that “ginger’s mostly used for anal.” (As if we didn’t know that.) “You take some ginger root and peel back some of the skin to create a butt plug to use on your partner”—and later in a stir-fry.

I know of no specific dangers

associated with any of this—it’s true I haven’t looked for any—but some people, like sexologist Sonia Borg, worry: “Altoids have sugar, and sugar causes yeast infections.” That sounds plausible, but I’m told by ob-gyn Meredith Shur it’s “theoretical at best.” I imagine you’d have to work much harder than that to get a yeast infection or everyone would have one. Still, says Borg, “I do not let anyone use it on me for personal use.” (Personal use is fine, but I certainly wouldn’t use it with intent to sell.) In all, be levelheaded and courteous with your mentholingus. Don’t spring it on people, use it as a weapon, or do anything else that might ruin the whole rave.

No. 14: What's with the seam on my scrotum?

There are no seams anywhere else on my body.

We’re terribly sorry, sir! We’ll steam it out right away, and I’ll tell Julio “No creases” from now on. This won’t happen again.

But if I may: It’s not really a seam. Very few men outside of some German clubs I’ve visited have actual seams. “In anatomy, it’s called the perineal raphe,” says biologist Alexander Sandra. Your raphe results from the embryonic fusion of tissue that was supposed to become the labia majora, but then the Y chromosome and testosterone big-footed their way in there and started turning all the female parts male—kind of like what happened with the Style Network. The tissue of the testes, which would otherwise become ovaries, “gets exposed to small amounts of testosterone, and it migrates down and emerges outside the body,” explains evolutionary psychologist Gordon G. Gallup Jr. of the State University of New York at Albany. I’m sure there’s an IMAX movie or something on Discovery that examines this in greater detail, so investigate on your own time. And incidentally, there is a seam elsewhere on your body: The spine is one long seam—a classic straight stitch tied around the brain. That’s just plain to see.

No. 15: What words, other than vagina, can I use to refer to my wife's privates during sex?

It’s funny—to my mind, that sentence should read “What words, other than *privates*, can I use to refer to my wife’s *vagina* during sex?” *Vagina* has had an awfully good run since comedy writers discovered it in 2008, but it’s time to bid it goodbye. Please say “pussy” in all sexual exchanges. I know, I know. I don’t like it either, but it’s standard usage.

Got a sex question of your own? E-mail it to us at sex@esquire.com.

No. 16 And Other Topics



Why do people feed birds on the street if they’re not going to stick around and watch?

They have other birds to feed. Go ahead and watch. No one's stopping you.

Why is there powder on some pieces of gum?

That's the pollen. Blow it into the wind.



Why does hair gel expire?

To keep itself honest.



Why are movies better on planes? Because it's more like your phone.

Why does the desert get so cold at night?

It keeps out the riffraff.

Do the cool kids still sit in the back of the school bus?

Yeah, I'd check there first. Or they might be vaping in the boys' room.

Become a morning person...



A great day starts with a good morning.

Add any Astroglide Personal Lubricant to your morning and it could cause you to smile all day long. Available where you already shop, in the Family Planning or Feminine Hygiene section of your favorite store. To find out how to get your morning glow, visit www.astroglide.com

NO. 17 → ANSWERS TO POTENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. Mull-EH-fuh-CENT. 2. Yes, awful, awful title. 3. No, you're thinking of Rachel McAdams. Elizabeth Banks is in *Walk of Shame*. 4. The band's name is tUnE-yArDs, yes. 5. We're thinking "Tune yards," but we're not entirely sure.

No. 18 PEAK SELF-EFFACEMENT

IF WE COULD JUST PAUSE FOR A MOMENT TO NOTE WHAT BELEAGUERED CHARACTERS ON SMART TV COMEDIES ARE ACTUALLY COMPLAINING ABOUT



"I got kids and work. It's hard sometimes, but boilerplate misery—alone in the world, might as well be a maggot sucking a dead cat's face. What's the point?"

No. 19: Alternative Movie Capsules for Men



The Other Woman (out April 25)

Two attractive 40-something women team up with Kate Upton's breasts (combined age: 40-ish) to get revenge on an unfaithful lover.



Neighbors (out May 9)

Seth Rogen is annoyed by his immature pot-smoking neighbors.*



Million Dollar Arm (out May 16)

A power broker (Jon Hamm as a sports agent) captures young men (recruits cricketers) and has them perform feats of physical prowess for the amusement of ticket holders (play baseball). See also: *Gladiator*.



A Million Ways to Die in the West (out May 30)

The indignities of life in 19th-century Arizona include a high mortality rate and Seth MacFarlane being able to have sex with Charlize Theron.

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No. 20

Funny* Joke from a Beautiful Woman

AS TOLD BY

KATIE LOWES

A GUY IS TELLING HIS FRIEND that he is scheduled to be operated on tomorrow.

"Oh, what type of operation is it?" the friend asks.

"This sounds a little odd at my age, but I'm going to be circumcised."

The friend, trying to be reassuring, replies, "Well, I had that done a week after I was born."

The guy asks, "Did it hurt?"

"Hurt? I couldn't walk for a year."

ABOUT THE JOKESTER:

Katie Lowes was about to become Connie Britton's personal assistant when *Scandal* came calling. The 31-year-old actress had done just about every other side job in Hollywood, but the *Nashville* and *Friday Night Lights* actress encouraged Lowes to go out for another round of auditions instead of working for her. It was advice well-taken: Lowes landed her part on ABC's monster hit a week later. She plays Quinn, the newest member of Kerry Washington's team of fast-talking fixers. The show has had the Queens, New York, native running around Washington in professional business attire in one scene and having a tooth forcibly removed in nothing but a duct-tape bra in the next. We're pleased to present her in a slightly more relaxed state.

—MATT GOULET

* Esquire cannot guarantee that this joke will be funny to everyone.

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NO. 22 → OTHER SMALL-BATCH "GINS" HAVING THEIR DAY

Historically, both Old Tom gin and genever relied on a rich, almost whiskeylike base spirit, the Old Tom using London dry-type botanicals and the genever a very simple juniper-led formula, with the base spirit dominant. Some craft distillers—such as Ransom Old Tom and Merrylegs genever—take these traditions seriously, others do not. In other words, you're on your own. —D.W.



All These Precious Gins

DRINKING BY DAVID WONDREICH

If you order a **dry martini** in one of the pleasant little cocktail bars where so much modern tippling takes place, the gin in your cocktail as likely as not will be called something like "Pug" or "Devilchair" and have been imported not from England or Holland but from two ZIP codes over. Its manufacturer won't be a third-generation distiller but rather somebody who was writing computer code until two years ago. Welcome to the world of craft gins, as they're called, made by small, independently owned distilleries. (Knowing Tanqueray's Tom Nichol, who has been distilling spirits since you were a child, we suspect he'd punch you in the nuts if you told him he wasn't making a craft spirit.)

In any case, there are hundreds of these things. Since gin doesn't normally require aging and nowadays has far more cachet than vodka, it's often the first thing a new distillery will market. Plus, it looks easy: Take your neutral grain-spirit base, which you can buy from Archer Daniels Midland; add your chosen botanicals, as the various berries, seeds, peels, leaves, fruits, roots, and barks that flavor gin are known; and run it through a still. Bottle. Sell. Easy.

Many, if not most, small-batch American gins follow a different style, though. Variously known as New Western, Contemporary, or (our favorite) **International**, they are essentially freestyle: The distiller chooses whatever botanicals he or she sees fit, throws in some juniper to meet the legal definition, and fires away. If the label talks about innovation or uses words like *unique*; if it lists botanicals that are unusual (e.g., sencha tea), "local," or "hand-harvested," odds are you've got an International gin. Now, these gins can be pleasant and even delicious, but they're rarely subtle. (If you're using sencha, you're gonna want people to taste the sencha.) Those unusual floral notes might enliven a Tom Collins or gimlet, but when mixed with vermouth they cause a botanical food fight.

The best thing you can do is tell your bartender what gin you usually like and see what he or she suggests. If you're nice enough and the bar is slow enough, you might even get a preliminary taste. Even if it tastes like Grandma's sachet, at least you'll have learned something. Then you can do as we do and say, "Yeah, I'll have an old-fashioned." ■

Actually, not so easy. All too often with these gins, one (or more) of the botanicals is out of whack and beats up on all the others, or there's just too much of everything and the gin ends up being weirdly pungent. So how to tell the good ones from the bad ones; the ones that will help your cocktail from the ones that will hurt it?

It really depends on your cocktail. The martini, for example, is pitiless. You want a gin that calls itself "**London dry gin**" if possible (which can be made anywhere, not just London) and that doesn't monkey too much with the botanicals or the base spirit: light-bodied and crisp, with lots of piney juniper, some citrusy coriander, and earthy angelica or orrisroot for depth. If you see lots of other botanicals listed on the label, be wary; the more ingredients, the harder they are to balance, and if they include exceptionally pungent ones—cardamom is the prime culprit here, although chamomile also really makes itself known—you'll often end up with a muddy, potpourri-tasting cocktail. If the distillery makes its own base spirit and tries to showcase its flavor, you may have problems there, too—your dry martini might, for instance, turn into an apple martini.

No. 23 The Styles of Gin, with Examples



LONDON DRY

Classic: [1] Tanqueray, \$20 (bold), Beefeater (softer), Bombay Sapphire (softest) Craft: Junipero (bold), Big Gin (softer), [2] Death's Door, \$30 (soft)



INTERNATIONAL

Classic: [3] Hendrick's, \$35 Craft: [4] Dorothy Parker, \$32, Cao-runn, Aviation



PLYMOUTH STYLE

Classic: [5] Plymouth, \$30 Craft: [6] Fords, \$31 ("Plymouth" refers both to the brand above and a legal and geographical designation. Fords, while not a "Plymouth" gin, is as light and dry as Plymouth's gin.)

I'M TYPE E*

I DON'T WANT MY
**GOLDEN
YEARS**
TO BE JUST
GOLD PLATED.



WHEN YOU HAVE
401(k)s FROM
THREE PREVIOUS
JOBS, IT'S NICE TO KNOW
E*TRADE OFFERS
**ROLLOVER
OPTIONS.**



I OPENED UP
A ROTH IRA
ON E*TRADE.

MOSTLY BECAUSE I DIDN'T
WANT TO GET PENALIZED
WHEN I WITHDREW MY
MONEY AND JUST A
LITTLE BECAUSE MY HIGH
SCHOOL CRUSH HAD THE
LAST NAME ROTH.



MY RETIREMENT YEARS
WILL NOT TAKE PLACE IN A
**WINDOWLESS
CONFERENCE ROOM.**

I USED THE RETIREMENT PLANNING CALCULATOR.
NOW I KNOW "WHEN" I'M GOING TO RETIRE. NOT "IF."
DID SOMEBODY SAY SCUBA DIVING?

BEFORE DECIDING WHETHER TO RETAIN ASSETS IN A 401(k) OR ROLL OVER TO AN IRA AN INVESTOR SHOULD CONSIDER VARIOUS FACTORS INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, INVESTMENT OPTIONS, FEES AND EXPENSES, SERVICES, WITHDRAWAL PENALTIES, PROTECTION FROM CREDITORS AND LEGAL JUDGMENTS, REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTIONS AND POSSESSION OF EMPLOYER STOCK. THE E*TRADE FINANCIAL FAMILY OF COMPANIES PROVIDES FINANCIAL SERVICES INCLUDING TRADING, INVESTING, INVESTMENT ADVISORY SERVICES AND RELATED BANKING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES TO RETAIL INVESTORS. SECURITIES PRODUCTS AND SERVICES OFFERED BY E*TRADE SECURITIES LLC, MEMBER FINRA/SIPC. SYSTEM RESPONSE AND ACCOUNT ACCESS TIMES MAY VARY DUE TO A VARIETY OF FACTORS, INCLUDING TRADING VOLUMES, MARKET CONDITIONS, SYSTEM PERFORMANCE AND OTHER FACTORS. ©2014 E*TRADE FINANCIAL CORPORATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

E*TRADE ARE YOU TYPE E?

NO. 25 → THE NEW ONE-CUP COFFEEMAKER

Coffee with those hashbrowns? This thing looks like someone MacGyver'd it on a camping trip, but it is in fact the coolest coffeemaker ever whittled. Place it over your mug, add coffee, pour hot water over it, wait a few minutes, and be caffeinated. Comes in cherry, walnut, birch, or oak. (From \$49; canadiano.co)



No. 24 HASHBROWNS HOW YOU LIKE 'EM

EAT LIKE A MAN BY FRANCINE MAROUKIAN

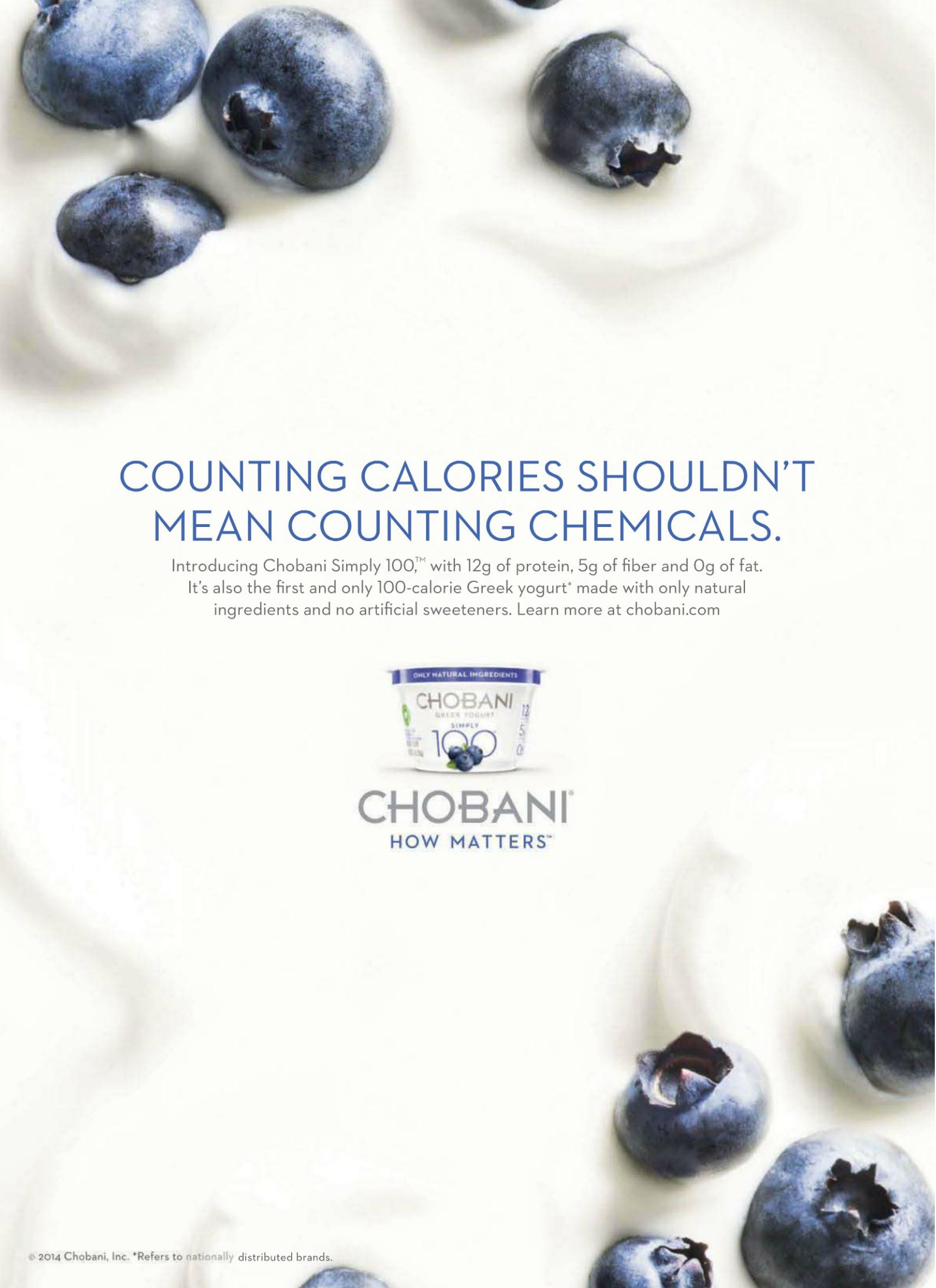
If you're good at refolding paper road maps, you're probably old enough to remember diner food. Not maniacally sourced, "reimagined" American classics, but bona fide farm-free diner food served with watery coffee in cups so thick it was like drinking out of a flowerpot. During their chrome-and-neon glory days, diners pioneered the open kitchen because speedy service required constant communication between the waitresses and the cook, which they did in a lingo all their own: "Adam and Eve on a raft" was two poached eggs on toast, a "cowboy with spurs" meant a western omelet with french fries, and "mystery in the alley" was a side of hash. Waffle House, the legendary southern restaurant chain that never closes, has been famous for turning complex menu items into short orders since 1955. If you want your hashbrowns spread across the griddle to get extra crisp, then sprinkled with diced raw onion and topped with cheese that melts into a dome and holds the onions in place, just say "Scattered, smothered, and covered." Four words and you're back on the road and on with your life. If you don't happen to be on the road, make these—and call them whatever you like. ■

ESQUIRE'S BACON-CHEDDAR HASHBROWNS

- 4 thick slices (about 4 oz) fatty bacon
- 2 large Idaho potatoes (1 heavy lb), scrubbed but not peeled
- salt and pepper
- 2 oz (½ cup) cheddar, grated
- 1 scallion, sliced into thin rounds
- Lay the bacon strips in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, place it over moderate heat, and cook slowly in order to render the fat.
- Start this next step just before the bacon is done: Using a box grater on a clean kitchen towel, grate the potatoes using the largest holes. Gather the towel ends and twist directly above the potatoes to create a cloth-covered potato ball. Rinse the ball under cool water to remove starch so the potatoes don't get gluey, then firmly squeeze out water.
- Remove bacon with a slotted spoon (leaving fat in the pan) and place on paper towels. Turn heat to high. (There's a lot of moisture in potatoes, and you want them to brown on contact, not steam.) Add the potatoes in a single layer, covering as much of the pan as possible. Don't clump the shreds. Scatter them so the pan shows through, like a snowflake.
- Sprinkle with salt and pepper and let the potatoes brown for at least 3 minutes. When you see bits start to crisp, flip the potatoes in two or three sections.
- Lower the heat to medium-high. When the potatoes are cooked and crisp, about another 3 minutes, turn off the heat. (Stop here if you want plain hashbrowns, which are great, too.) Scatter cheese and scallions across surface of potatoes and crumble two strips of bacon on top.
- Transfer to two warm serving plates and top each with sunny-side eggs and one of the extra strips of bacon. Serves 2.

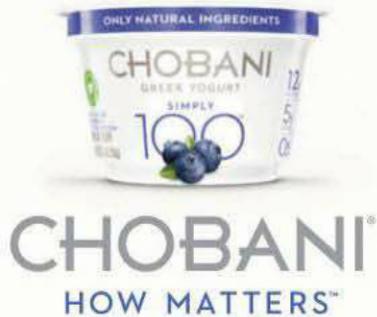


The Esquire Culinary Institute recommends: the 12-inch cast-iron skillet by Lodge (\$37; lodgemfg.com).



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style



THE EXTRA 10 PERCENT UNSTRUCTURED BLAZERS FOR EVERYBODY

It's been 80 years, give or take, since Italian tailor Vincenzo Attolini devised the single greatest improvement in men's clothing since the invention of pants. Motivated by the sticky heat of a Naples summer, Attolini removed sweat-inducing padding from a suit jacket and bequeathed mankind the unstructured blazer. These days, countless brands have their own take on it, and, like sex and pizza, it's kind of hard to find a bad one. A close fit in the arms and torso is key, and if you want a bold color or pattern, so much the better. Lord knows you've got options. *From inside out: By CH Carolina Herrera (\$850); Etro (\$1,280); Bonobos (\$348); Eidos Napoli (\$695).*



A TALE OF TWO JACKETS

BOTH ARE BLUE AND WHITE AND UNSTRUCTURED, BUT ONE IS MORE SERIOUS AND SOBER THAN THE OTHER. HERE'S WHY.

The pattern: The more subtle and refined the pattern (like, say, the slight windowpane on the left), the more formal the jacket. Compare that with the bold blown-up check at right, which is far better suited to a boozy Derby Party than a big day at work.

The buttons: With sober-minded suiting, the kind worn by presidents and news anchors both real and fake, buttons should be neither seen nor heard. With casual jackets, the buttons should pop right off the cloth—visually, anyway—in a contrasting color.

The cloth: Shinier, tighter weaves of the wool-and-silk variety tend to hold a press (and convey a little gravity) way better than the easy-to-rumple cotton and/or linen variety.

The fixins: An all-business blazer requires a spread collar, a shiny silk tie, and a suite of polished, well-tailored pairings. A laid-back blazer, meanwhile, looks best with a button-down oxford and accessories with texture and personality. Choose accordingly.

Left: Wool-silk-and-linen jacket (\$2,195) and cotton shirt (\$345) by Ermenegildo Zegna; silk tie (\$135) by Thomas Pink; wool trousers (part of suit, \$650) by Tommy Hilfiger; leather monk-straps (\$750) by Fratelli Rossetti; leather belt (\$128) by Coach. // Right: Cotton-and-linen jacket (\$795) by L.B.M. 1911; cotton shirt (\$60) by Nautica; silk-and-linen knit tie (\$65) by Tommy Hilfiger; cotton chinos (\$68) by Dockers; suede shoes (\$695) by Bally; canvas belt (\$40) by Nautica.

SO YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A BASIC NAVY BLAZER . . .

You'd be well advised to head to Brooks Brothers, which just recently launched a comprehensive choose-your-own-fit navy-blazer program. You have a choice of four different fits, ranging from slim—the Italian-inspired Milano, with soft shoulders and a short-jacket body—to full, all in lightweight Loro Piana wool, all priced at \$648, and all as simple and straightforward as blazers come.



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THE GO-TO-HELL BLAZER

AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE, WITH HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS FOR WEAR AND CARE



1. Green: Wear it just as you would your navy-blue blazer, and avoid looking like a former champion at Augusta by opting for a dark shade of green and a pattern or texture in the weave. *Two-button cotton jacket (\$2,130) by Salvatore Ferragamo.*

2. Windowpane: A large check walks the line between understated and bold, offering plenty of interest without shouting “Look at me!” *Two-button cotton-and-linen jacket (\$1,180) by Paul Smith London.*

3. Light blue: If you and your navy blazer need to chill the hell out, a lighter shade of blue is your best bet. Best paired with a deep tan and a large cocktail. *Three-button cashmere-linen-and-silk jacket (\$545) by Boss.*

(\$6,807) by Kiton.

4. Plaid: Sometimes you’re looking to attract a little attention and make a big statement—we all have our days—and a bold plaid is the way to do it. Just make sure it’s anchored by a crisp white shirt and simple pants. *Three-button linen jacket (\$1,495) by Boglioli.*

5. Pink: Just as you occasionally put your pink shirt into the rotation to break up the monotony, do the same with a salmon-colored jacket. It’s a breath of fresh air when butched up against your favorite dark jeans and brown loafers. *Two-button cotton jacket (\$545) by Boss.*

SPOTLIGHT ON... THE UPPER-RIGHT-HAND CORNER

The six square inches where any man can make his mark on a blazer



Beginner: If you’re taking off the training wheels, look for a lapel pin that matches the color of the jacket and a simple pocket square. *Cotton pocket square (three for \$30) by Brooks Brothers; linen jacket (\$795) by Eidos Napoli.*



Intermediate: Introduce a little pattern-on-pattern play between your jacket and pocket square, and try a pop of bright color with a pin. *Linen pocket square (\$125) by Brioni; hemp-and-wool jacket (\$4,195) by Isaia.*



Advanced: Experienced practitioners of *sprezzatura* should opt for a contrasting-color lapel pin and a silk pocket square. *Silk pocket square (\$135) by Ermenegildo Zegna; cotton-linen-and-mohair jacket (\$795) by L.B.M. 1911.*

JACKET

OVER WHAT?



← INADVISABLE

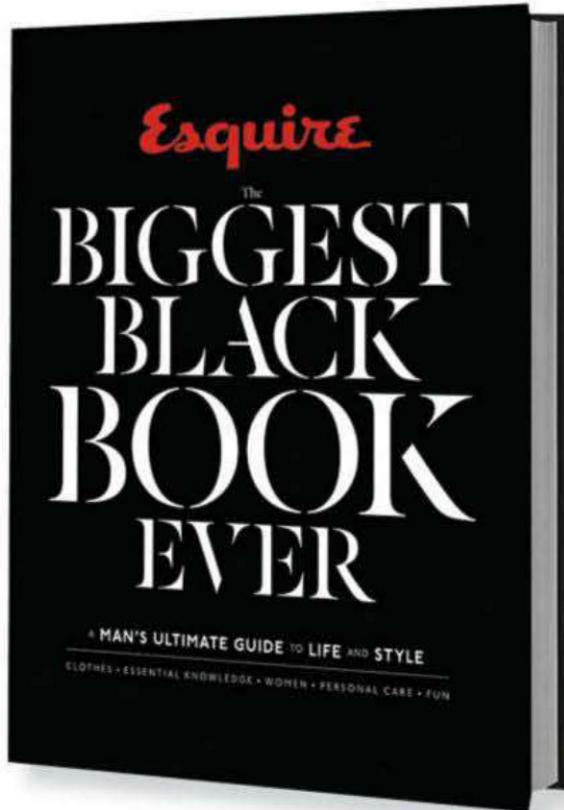
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- **3 things you should never bring to a meeting.** See page 12 for more smart office tips.
- **Get fast service at a crowded bar.** Page 73 makes you a happy-hour hero.
- **Make an off-the-rack blazer look like it was tailor made.** Page 109.
- **3 secrets for beating jet lag.** Read page 21 and feel great the moment you land.
- **How to check out women without getting caught.** Page 34 is a lifesaver.
- **And so much more!**

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UNCLE AL CAN FIX IT

WHAT A GOOD TAILOR CAN DO FOR YOU

Iown four blazers. The oldest is black: bought in Chinatown, fitted for me by a Taiwanese guy named Mr. Henry who refused to change out the brass buttons. I wear it often enough. The second is corduroy, which I wear only outside. The third was custom-tailored in Bloomington, Indiana, of all places, blue and vaguely plaid. Semiretired, that one. Which brings me to the Burberry: I bought it on eBay for a mere \$39 and loved it from the moment I pulled it from the crushed shipping box. I wore it to poker games,

to literature classes, when getting coffee. I hung it every night and thought, *It even hangs like a champ*. But one afternoon, I noticed it seemed a little flappy in back and that it popped out at the top button—sort of tenting out in front of me.

So I took it to my uncle Alfred.

My uncle Alfred lives in Florida. At 88, he sometimes enjoys an afternoon of low-limit poker. The sign on the front of his shop in Delray Beach says 40 YEARS IN MANHASSET, which I believe says it all (and also sounds like a chapter in *Moby-Dick*). My uncle Alfred is a tailor.

He fitted the blazer in the den of his house. He tugged the lapels twice, pressed them flat, then went around behind me and made two small marks on the flap and at the waist. Thirty seconds end to end. "That's it?" I said. "Not much work, eh?"

My uncle Alfred shrugged, the way he does, using mostly his chin and the pinch of his lips. The man gives away very little. "I didn't say that," he said. "It's just I know from the marks what I have to do. Doesn't have to take so long to mark it, you know. A tailor knows his own notation."

Next day in the shop, he hung the Burberry and pulled out a tiny knife. "With a coat, it's mostly just touch," he said. "You put your hands on it and pretty soon you know. You feel the shoulders. Is it a smooth curve? Can you feel the pad too much? Finger the lapels: Are they curling already? Lapels should lie flat."

He slid the blade under the lining, pulling away the stitching and then turning it, pulling the whole deal inside out. "In this job, you gotta have a sharp knife," he said. Soon the whole construction looked like a flayed animal carcass. "A blazer is built from the lining out," he went on. "The lining makes a foundation for the outer fabric. The lining has to give something to the structure. In a lousy jacket, the lining gives you no tension; it just hangs—it was made backwards. Usually, I'm saying. It isn't generous beyond the seams. They made it outside in."

My uncle Alfred worked for several minutes without talking. Chin down, glasses perched on his nose. Soon he rejoined the center seam by using his sewing machine. "You don't gotta hand-stitch under the lining. I never do. People go off their cuckoo for hand-stitching, but the truth is the machine can be pretty damned good. You let the tailor make the best choices for the coat, and then you wear it."

My uncle Alfred stitched, yanked some more, pulled twice, and then, just like that, my Burberry reemerged like a pigeon from a magician's scarf—not even wrinkled. "This is a nice coat," he said. Then I put it on and we went to play cards. I asked him if I was dressed for it. He said I was dressed for anything. —TOM CHIARELLA

THE EXHORTATION: BUTTONS ARE THE SHOES OF BLAZERS

Just as you can tell a lot by the shoes on a man's feet, you can tell a lot about a blazer (and the man wearing it) by the buttons



WHITE MOTHER-OF-PEARL

What it says: "Which way to the clam-bake?" By Banana Republic (\$275).



BLACK MOTHER-OF-PEARL

What it says: "My PowerPoint for the 10:30 is locked and loaded." By Boglioli (\$1,895).



GOLD

What it says: "Ahoy." By J. Crew (\$425).



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Ask Nick

Style

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YOUR QUESTIONS

What technique do you use to fold a suit jacket when you're packing for a trip? I just can't seem to find a method that doesn't create annoying creases.

CALVIN SPIRES
WICHITA, KANS.

► You and me both, brother. I've lost count of the number of methods that just don't work. However, I did learn this method [Fig. 1] from the chap at the old Piombo store in Milan. (It works best on jackets that have next-to-no padding or lining.) Step 1: Turn the left sleeve and left half of the jacket inside out. Step 2: Place the inside-out shoulder into the shoulder of the right half. Step 3: Pop the collar all round and straighten up. Step 4: Loosely fold the jacket in half and then in half again, but do not press it flat. It works for me up to a point, provided I unpack the moment I get where I'm going.

I have a Mandarin-collar suit, but I'm not sure how to wear it. How do I button the suit jacket without looking like a priest? What kind of dress shirt goes with it in terms of collar and color? And do I need a tie?

NAME WITHHELD
EDMONTON, ALBERTA

► Name withheld: I will get back to you when my head no longer hurts. Meanwhile, here's some inspiration [Fig. 2].

What is pick stitching, and why I should own a suit that features it?

T. C. CALLOWAY
VIA TWITTER



fig. 2



fig. 3



fig. 4

fig. 5

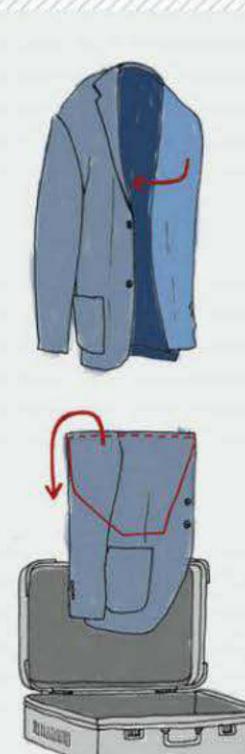
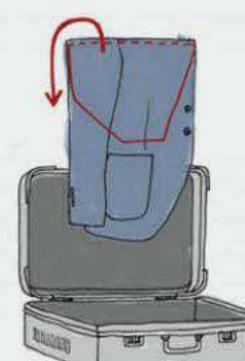


fig. 1



► If you're talking about suit pants, first check that you're not wearing them too high on the waist. If you're not, have a local alterations guy let them down. (There should be extra cloth in the hem.) But if they're chinos or jeans, you probably bought them too short and your only course of action is buying a new pair. Next time, go an extra inch on the inseam, as you can always roll them up.

My shoelaces always tend to wear out well before my shoes. Is there a good place to buy replacement laces?

DAN P. MCMAHON
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

► Shoelacesexpress.com. An inexhaustible supply of laces [Fig. 4, by Hook + Albert, \$8] in different colors and lengths for not a lot of dollars.

I am in the market for a nice special-occasion suit. My budget is \$500. I would appreciate any suggestions, as you are the experts.

KEVIN MURPHY
PHOENIX, ARIZ.

► Thanks, Kevin! I do love a challenge. As with all things, if you up your budget a tad, working within the \$500 to \$700 range, you will find more choices. But there are good solutions within your budget, thanks to the folks at Suitsupply, which makes bafflingly affordable tailoring that looks like it's worth much, much more. This Napoli suit [Fig. 5] in plain navy wool, now online at Suitsupply.com, is right on the money at \$499.

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Maintenance

A Scientifical Look at Your Armpits

YOU KNOW WHAT DEODORANT DOES. (HOPEFULLY.) BUT HOW DOES IT DO IT? AND WHY? AND DO YOU REALLY NEED IT?

BY RODNEY CUTLER

The Smell

Your body has two different types of sweat glands: apocrine (found in places like your armpits, groin, and, oddly enough, eyelids) and eccrine (everywhere else). Eccrine glands are constantly active, regulating your body temperature through the release of an inoffen-

sive mix of water and salt that evaporates on your skin. Your apocrine glands, however, activate in response to emotional stresses, like adrenaline and sex. When you're worked up, so are they. Unfortunately, bacteria love the oily, sticky sweat apocrine glands secrete, and they break down its proteins into the acid compound at the root of bromhidrosis, or body odor. The good news is there's an enormous market dedicated to covering whatever unpleasant odor you might experience. We like [1] Axe Peace Fresh deodorant stick (\$4; axepeace.com), which smells a lot like pine needles and lemons.

The Sweat

Sweat production varies greatly from person

to person. (And gender to gender: Men sweat up to four times as much as women.) If you're on the mid to high end of the sweat spectrum (a good test is to look at the shirt you're currently wearing; if there are visible rings of moisture near your armpits, pay attention), you need an antiperspirant like [2] Old Spice Sweat Defense (\$4; soap.com) or [3] Every Man Jack Sandalwood antiperspirant (\$6; everymanjack.com). Their aluminum compounds turn into microscopic plugs that seal your sweat glands as soon as they come into contact with water. The best time to apply antiperspirant is before you go to sleep, when your armpits are dry. That way, the chemical reaction happens in the pores, not at the first bit of moisture. The effect lasts for a few days, so showering isn't a problem. For extreme cases,

clinical-strength antiperspirants, like [4] Gillette's new Clinical Endurance Clear Gel (\$8; drugstore.com), contain the highest amount of aluminum compounds allowed by the FDA. If they don't work, you're in trouble.

Possible Alzheimer's and Other Issues

We've all heard that aluminum compounds can lead to Alzheimer's or even cancer. However, neither the FDA nor the American Cancer Society has drawn any formal conclusions, so there's likely no need to worry. What you may need to worry about is the yellowing of your shirts. If this happens, dissolve a denture tablet in a bowl of warm water and scrub. A small percentage of the population will also experience skin irritation. If you're among them, look for something with natural antibacterial ingredients, which curb body odor without drying out your skin. Every Man Jack makes an all-natural deodorant that uses grapefruit seed and lichen extract, which may

not stop sweat as effectively as an antiperspirant, but will limit your sweating—and stink—without the skin irritation. We also like [5] Jack Black Cool CTRL deodorant (\$18; get-jackblack.com), which uses baking soda to control odor and smells like a traditional deodorant despite the hippie ingredients.

Application Options

► Spray

Pro: Simple
Con: Coughing

► Solid

Pro: Simple
Con: Clumping

► Cream

Pro: Simple
Con: White stains

► Gel

Pro: Simple
Con: Slippery

► Roll-on

Pro: Simple
Con: Inadvertent depilatory effect

► Crystal

Pro: Simple
Con: Doesn't do anything

With thanks to dermatologist Dr. Thomas Rohrer of SkinCare Physicians and Douglas Tomczak, deodorant research and development manager at Unilever.

Rodney Cutler is an Ironman triathlete and the owner of Cutler salons in New York City.





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THE FRAGRANCE FOR MEN

WHAT ARE WE REALLY THINKING?

I. THE RANDY COMMUTER

"I'm reading my book, I'm reading my book," I chant in my head as the BART train rumbles toward San Francisco. But the truth is, all I'm doing—all I can do—is check out the chino-clad package inches from my face.

I steal a glance upward to check out the man attached to this conspicuous body part. He looks like he's chewing on a worry, his jaw muscles clenching and releasing. "Oh, so *serious*," I think, part concerned mom, part belittling dominatrix. "Someone must have some very important work to do today." As if on cue, he looks at his watch. It's fancy, to be sure, but I'm distracted by his hand as it falls to his side. Long, slender fingers and a thumb that juts out at nearly a 90-degree angle—the digital equivalent of a strong jawline.

This is how I spend a fair amount of my commute, in a boy-watching reverie. Just as I'm dangerously close to losing myself in the dark hairs trailing up Serious Man's wrist, in walks a young guy with laughably large headphones, sagging pants, and loosely tied sneakers that make a *thunk-thunk*. He grabs the railing above his head, exposing a pair of sheer white cotton boxers. There is something so vulnerable and unstudied about them—an intimacy shared. Next to him is a short, slightly pudgy twenty-something. He's not exactly Ryan Gosling, but I can practically see the testosterone sweating from his pores. Without needing to smell him, I know his signature scent: whiskey and cigarettes. Crushed in his hands is a weathered paperback that he's folded in half, breaking the spine. It makes me think of that Internet meme of interspecies cuddling—a mouse nuzzling a cat, a gorilla, a kitten. Someone save that book, I think. Honestly, he's the one who needs saving, and that is more attractive than I care to admit.

There is so much to admire here. The tech worker in a hoodie, tapping at his iPhone with precise, fast-moving fingers. Hmm.... The hipster with his ill-conceived tattoos. (Impulsiveness can be sexy.) The gym rat whose meaty pectorals form mountains under his T-shirt. (How many times my weight can he lift?) A man doesn't have to be conventionally hot to catch my eye. All it takes is a marker of maleness: the flex of a forearm, a hint of stubble, chest hair poking above a collar.

I sometimes think men would be



relieved to know how often women check them out. Or maybe they'd just be scared.—Tracy Clark-Flory

II. THE PTA CRUISER

I watch men. Yes, I do. Why?

Because I can.

As a divorced, financially independent mother of two middle schoolers (*Cougar Town! Woot, woot!*) I'm no longer seeking a man to father children or provide. This frees me up to look at men pretty much for the sport of it. Camouflaged in my sensible mom-wagon with its Obama sticker, I lurk in the parking lot at pickup at my daughters' L.A. school, which teems with alterna-dads. They've transformed this mundane ritual into a kind of street dance bursting with physicality, biking up all sweaty in black Lycra shorts, as if to say, "I've finished a 100k, just in time to get Dylan."

Here's the thing. As opposed to

girls, who from age 13 are hyperaware of their looks, gorgeous young men—tousled waves of hair, deliciously fleshy pecs and biceps, wasp waists—have little idea that they're beautiful or why. Ah, I see them in college, lounging on beanbag chairs in their boxers, in all their noble glory and abject grossness. I still see, in super-slo-mo, the glorious twist of a sinewy caramel torso as some 19-year-old Adonis rises up to spike a volleyball against a perfect blue sky. It was Doug, Randy, whoever, careening through life, eating three entire

boxes of Cheerios while standing at the sink, and still dropping weight.

And then, the peculiar phenomenon that by age 30, the very hottest stone foxes—I recall the captain of the water-polo team, Jeremy (water polo! a moment of silence for those glistening-in-droplets bodies)—are standing under flabby clusters of REUNION! balloons in a hotel lobby, a bunch of shortish balding dudes with an extra 50 around the middle. But the Jeremys seem as oblivious to being Michelin Men as they once were to being Brad Pitt. Yet in a way I admire their wonderful goddamn confidence.

Thank God for the late bloomers. From their thirties to sixties (it's L.A., after all), they sport soul patches and legible black Ramones T-shirts that can't be originals (c'mon—my own is in ribbons). They've kept their shit together.

That said, the whole twisted romance of hot young men was that they were unavailable and aloof. By contrast, these dads are cheerful, helpful, energetic! They pump along with toddlers in bike seats, babies in jog strollers, and, in one case, I saw a dude in a fedora giddily motoring by on an electric scooter, arms around his sixth-grade daughter who was white with embarrassment. "Daaad! OMG! This is L.A.! We have an actual car!"—Sandra Tsing Loh

SOME LIGHT HOMEWORK

If you really want to understand us, consider this list of films, books, music, and television—each illuminates a different facet of the female psyche—your guide to next-level enlightenment

Baby Boom
What that whole "having it all" thing feels like

Joni Mitchell's *Court and Spark*
Why we don't always want to make up our minds

Jami Attenberg's *The Middlesteins*
Why we get to be both funny and dark about food/body issues



HE'S GOT GAME

I've never been the kind of woman who pays a great deal of attention to a man's shoes. But the first thing I picked up on about him—well, after the impressive height, the bedroom eyes, and the just-raunchy-enough sense of humor—was his long, narrow oxfords. So choice of sheen, so perfectly round of toe, yet so clearly worn with any-given-weeknight nonchalance, they might as well have been a flashing neon sign: THIS GUY'S GOT GAME! By the time I learned they were Prada, I'd also noted the slimly tailored suits—he had a "guy"—the Noguchi-esque coffee table, the discreet tube of hair product in his medicine cabinet (let's not be coy: We all check the medicine cabinet). By then I also knew that he'd motorcycled solo across Turkey. Attended business school in France. That he was a lawyer (educated) in the music industry (cool). So it didn't come as a complete shock that a man who could navigate the restaurant scene and my anatomy with equal assurance would also own footwear that was twice the price of any of my shoes. I was 26. I was dating a bona fide, grown-up Man. And it was bizarrely intoxicating.

I say bizarrely because, as a girl who'd invested considerable romantic capital in slack-jeaned, tender-hearted indie souls, spurning the advances of any male who reeked of overly conventional employment, I was completely unprepared for the effect that this—well, not cockiness or showiness, exactly, but this sublime alpha *competence*—would have on me. Because it wasn't his money. Okay, maybe it was a little bit his money. Mostly, it was the fact that he knew things, he just *knew* them: how to dress, how to plan, how to operate (and purchase) non-Victoria's Secret

undergarments. Date night? Done. He'd made a reservation at that little place we'd just read about in the *Times*. Weekend away? Sorted. He'd packed the suit and the swimsuit, just in case. Point is, he practiced all of these skills of his own accord, without needing to be lectured or cajoled or counseled. Which, it turns out, is ridiculously hot. Because, believe it or not, we do not want to tell you how to do these things. We'd rather you just know.

Game alone does not make the man. Of course, the smug certainty with which I say this now was hard earned over two long years of stops and starts and late-night assignations and drawn-out, completely idiotic confusion—which is how long it took for me to finally, *finally* figure out that even a man whose exterior life is in perfect working order can have an interior life that looks like something out of *Hoarders*. Or maybe he just wasn't that into me.

But don't get me wrong, fellas. Game—that trust-me, taking-care-of-business competence—is good. Game works. Game is something we want you to have. And it comes in many forms. When I met the man who is now my husband, he had no shiny designer shoes, and, as far as I could tell, not much else, either. Literally. The guy owned one glass, and that he'd pilfered from the bar he lived above. But he could make things with his hands, he'd started his own company, he wrote *actual thank-you notes*. And he had as innate and effortless a command over the interior stuff—the sweetness, the openness—as Mr. Lifestyle had over, what? Stuff. Things. And occasionally, he even surprises me with dinner reservations at that little place we read about in the *Times*.—Maggie Bullock

MEN WE LOVE

**WILLIE GEIST:**

Because there's a badass beneath that baby face. Have you ever known Matt Lauer to quote Jay Z?

**MICHAEL CHABON:**

Because the man can write the hell out of a sentence. Also: that hair.

**CHIWETEL EJIOFOR:**

Because of his emotional intelligence and the whatever-o'clock shadow on his face—may we please touch it?

**RAHM EMANUEL:**

Because sometimes only a true alpha male can get the job done.

**SPIKE JONZE:**

Because we want to be in the company of all the women he's been with: Sofia Coppola, Karen O, Drew Barrymore, Michelle Williams....

**ROBINSON CANO:**

Because he has all of Derek Jeter's great qualities without any of the self-congratulation.

**Fiona Apple,
Extraordinary Machine**
Why we had to break
that window (and other
ex-girlfriend behaviors)

**Sex and the City
episode 2.7
"The Chicken Dance"**
How a minor
transgression can cause
major heartbreak

Bikini Kill, "Rebel Girl"
Proof that girl crushes
don't have to be sappy

**Julia Louis-Dreyfus,
the full oeuvre**
How just when you think
you've got us figured
out, we reinvent
ourselves

Gillian Flynn, Gone Girl
Fair warning: why we
should never be
ignored, taken for
granted, and/or
underestimated

**Alice Munro,
the complete works**
The language of all
female relationships,
decoded

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Irrésistible



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And doubles as a bottle opener (seriously)
Sunglasses, WILLIAM PAINTER, \$145, collection
at Shaper Studios, San Diego



WE LIKE AN UNOBSTRUCTED VIEW
And Velcro is so JV
Calfskin card holder, DIOR HOMME, \$280,
at Dior Homme stores nationwide



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Will get you the promotion—and the girl
Leather briefcase, TOD'S, price on request,
at Tod's boutiques nationwide



IF GOLDILOCKS BOUGHT MEN'S JEANS
Not too skinny, not too wide, not...whiskered
Denim jeans, A.P.C., \$185, at A.P.C., NYC



FROM THE DOG PARK TO DATE NIGHT
These 24-7 kicks say "I know what's up"
Leather and mesh sneakers, COMMON PROJECTS,
\$845, collection at Odin, NYC



IS THIS SHOULDER TAKEN?
A hoodie we'll want to cuddle up to
Cashmere sweater, EVERLANE, \$140,
visit everlane.com



PUT THE KIBOSH ON BAGGY, SAGGY TRUNKS
These are board ready but far from boring
Printed swim shorts, ORLEBAR BROWN, \$280,
visit orlebarbrown.com

LOOKS TO ACE EVERY OCCASION

(Even if you're famous only in our eyes)



BRUNCH!
Alexander Skarsgård



BAR CRAWLING
Eddie Redmayne



GALLERY HOPPING
Victor Cruz



MEET THE PARENTS
Ryan Gosling



BLACK-TIE WEDDING
(helmet optional)
Daft Punk



OFFICE PARTY
Michael B. Jordan



ANYTIME, ANYWHERE
Idris Elba

HOW TO MAKE THE RUNWAY YOUR BITCH

By ELLE's resident Fashion Know-It-All, Anne Slowey

Dear FKIA,
I like to consider myself an open-minded, fashion-savvy kind of guy, but even my gay friends make fun of me when I start talking florals and stripes. Are there style lines that straight men just shouldn't cross?

-Justin, NYC

Dear Justin,

I moved to New York in 1982, back when most people wouldn't have bothered to do a double take at a man wearing lipstick or a skirt. Glam-rock studs such as Mott the Hoople's Ian Hunter and Marc Bolan of T. Rex were still inspiring the attire at clubs like Area, the World, and the Saint. The spheres of the supremely wealthy and the abjectly yet artistically poor were colliding, and both were extremely titillated by fashion excess, fueled by a haze of kamikazes and cocaine. Style was comprised of attitude as much as it was of artifice.

But don't worry! Nostalgic as I am for all that, I'd never ask you to attempt the kind of Swarovski-dripping fashion triple axel that would require the bravado of a Johnny Weir. In fact, please don't do that. But I do applaud your willingness to venture further afield than the



David Bowie as
Ziggy Stardust, 1973

prevailing style choices of your gender: the downright heinous (pleated khakis and ugly sweater alert!); the ridiculously cliché (tech nerd, gangsta kingpin, faux-hemian hipster); the dully conventional (suits, V-necks, blah, blah, blah).

In clothes, as in life, there's nothing more appealing than a man who has both the taste to espy what's intelligent and humorous and the ability to walk that fine line between clever and silly. Thankfully, many designers are here to help you find that middle ground for spring. At Burberry, designer turned CEO Christopher Bailey went for preppy combos of bold color with classic silhouettes that couldn't be snappier. Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons layered pinstripe jackets over striped shirting and loose trousers that were the epitome of relaxed chic. Miuccia Prada's vacation-print zipper jackets were artistically appealing—though her silk boxer shorts might be best reserved for pillow talk. And at Lanvin, Alber Elbaz delivered a Thin White Duke suit that would make you the hit of an East Hampton wedding (note: I do recommend adding a shirt).

As for me, I'd encourage my guy to try—just try!—Dries Van Noten's wild prints. Van Noten is a classicist, and his show was an exploration of flower prints over the centuries, as well as the men who wore them, from Louis XVI and Oscar Wilde to Jean Cocteau and Jimi Hendrix. The designer opened a career retrospective at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris this past March, and has clearly been doing some digging in the museum archives. You might want to skip the eighteenth-century rococo moiré trousers, but trust me, the surf shorts and printed pants are worth a shot. As for your eye-rolling cohort: Van Noten's prints should be aristocratic enough to stay any criticism. If not, you can send them my way. •



SO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT WE FANTASIZE ABOUT?



Is the woman you sleep with more likely to be spinning fantasies about being "forcibly taken," as rape is sometimes euphemistically described, or being wined and dined before escaping to an impossibly elegant room at the Four Seasons to be caressed with kisses, starting at her neck and ending...? We're sorry. We'd like to give you an easy answer, we really would—we're the caretaker sex, after all—but the role that fantasy plays in any woman's life is ridiculously complex. Sometimes we fantasize about things we want. Sometimes we tell our boyfriends we don't have specific fantasies, not really, because it's easier than explaining we like to imagine fucking this guy we used to date or going down on this girl at work—especially because we worry that might lead said boyfriend to ply us with drinks at the next company party in hopes of a threesome. And sometimes we imagine things we'd never want to even come close to happening in

real life, like the roughly 45 percent of us who fantasize about forced sex. Or is it 13 percent, as a 1987 survey found? Or 62 percent, as was found more recently?

When it comes to female fantasy, the studies are few and far between, and often completely contradictory. Ten years ago, one concluded that women's fantasies had more romantic undertones than men's, were less explicit, and tended to focus more on their own pleasure. (Men, on the other hand, were more likely to fantasize about their partner's sexual pleasure.) Whereas two studies in the past two years found that men's and women's fantasies were pretty much exactly the same when it came to graphic and emotional content.

A few things we do know. In spite of a 1973 *Cosmopolitan* article claiming that "Women do not have sexual fantasies, period. Men do," these days, at least, the vast majority of women fantasize. And our erotic inventions are just as varied as yours. Flip through Emily Dubberley's recently published female-fantasy roundup *Garden of Desires* and you'll find not only David Bowie, burlesque, black lingerie, and the requisite selection of vampires and alpha male bosses, but also Barbie brothels, humanoid aliens, and, in one instance, a boyfriend who demands rough sex while wearing nothing but cat ears. "The idea that women always fantasize about gentle, loving, vanilla sex, I don't know if that was ever true," says adult-film director Nica Noelle. "But it's certainly not true now." —Molly Langmuir

Q: SCRUFF OR NO SCRUFF?

A: Yes, scruff! But by that we are not suggesting you just let the fur fly. "Women start to complain about stubble probably around the quarter-inch mark," says celeb groomer Cheri Keating, who praises Braun's cruZer5 shaver for its many settings—one of which makes any time of day five-o'clock-sexy (still ladies' choice). For those who have a little more to work with, we love the look, but be kind: Keating says a softening dab of hair conditioner or beard oil will be "good for the man, good for the woman kissing him."



Dude No. 1 Beard Oil, MCMC FRAGRANCES, \$65, visit mcmcfragrances.com

TICK, TICK, TICK...

A spousal-resentment management system that can work for you

My husband makes mistakes—a lotta, lotta mistakes. Case in point: After having the consultation and signing the papers, he put off actually scheduling his vasectomy because a friend told him that another friend had told *him* that ever since he got the operation, his balls ached when he flew more than 40,000 feet above sea level. Guess who's pregnant with our fourth child? (Yes, I know that could be reasonably filed as my mistake, but I'm the one writing this article, not him. And, while we're on the subject, why would you ever call our fourth child a mistake? What a horrible thing to say.) And when I was racked with morning sickness, on the rare mornings he was actually home—and not spending quality time with his testicles on a plane flying to Paris for work while I got our kids fed, clothed, and off on their days before getting my own pregnant ass to work—he would tell me, "Don't worry, I'll get up with the kids; you sleep." But when I arrived downstairs an hour or so later, awoken by the piercing whining coming from our living room, what would I find? My husband, nose in his laptop, an empty cereal bowl in front of him, and our unfed children, still in pajamas, teeth and hair unbrushed, not-so-quietly starving in miserable piles around him, while inappropriate television played in the background. I do way more than my fair share of the child care and household management, and he leaves his sweaty workout clothes hanging all over the bathroom. Also, nearly every night he promises to fill the humidifier in our bedroom, but nearly every night he forgets.

Recently a friend wondered why, given all my complaints, I'm so happily married. She's right; I am still very much in love with my husband and feel grateful every day to be married to him, and not just because I can't afford the mortgage on my own. My friend's question stumped me—I spend a lot of time dwelling on things that are going wrong, but I don't tend to waste energy unpacking the stuff that works. My husband is handsome and funny, but then, I know a lot of men whose pecs and wise-cracks have not saved them from divorce court. So I began to observe him. How was he doing it—pissing me off constantly, yet never enduringly? The answer, gentlemen, is both simple and brilliant: He listens. And when I say he listens, I don't mean that he obeys my commands like a dog. When I'm ticked off, he just pays attention to what I'm saying. He doesn't ignore me or storm out or lob his own accusations. He remains calm and lets me get it all out. And then sometimes he even changes—but not always! For example, he has started feeding our children, but he has not stopped sweating all over his running shorts.

When I finally asked him about his spousal-resentment management system, he told me he tries to "chip away" at any complaint he decides is valid, i.e., not just me being "irrational" and "blowing off steam." See? He sometimes thinks I'm being irrational, but he doesn't say so and escalate the fight. And by listening he is able to pinpoint what I actually care about and make me feel that we're making progress, even if he doesn't budge on half of our conflicts. He keeps his effort relatively low, while reaping high returns. It's really quite Machiavellian.

I know a lot of men might find it emasculating to let their wives or girlfriends attack and not mount a counteroffensive, but I find it manly—sexy, even—that he can hang on to himself when I'm flying off the handle. He's like an action-movie hero, dodging bullets, defusing bombs, and then brushing off the dust and making a witty quip. He's so reasonable, in fact, that at the end of a tirade, I often find myself apologizing to him and telling him I love him. "Even after all that?" he'll say, in an end-of-fight ritual that began early in our relationship when our fights were more bruising but has turned into a kind of sweet coda. "Yes," I always say. "Even after all that." —Rachael Combe



A GENTLEMAN, ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

Anybody can be one of the guys. Being a gentleman in today's world requires a decidedly stronger constitution. A gentleman adheres to an unspoken code of chivalry, manners, confidence, and charisma. Read on, and commit to memory—colleagues will respect you, friends will admire you, and your mother will be proud.

RULES TO LIVE BY



1. MIND YOUR Ps & Qs

Open doors, hold elevators, send thank-you notes, bring hostess gifts. Manners matter more than you think.



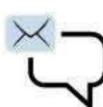
2. KEEP IT CLEAN

Hair combed. Nails trimmed. Face shaved (or beard kempt). No excuses.



3. LOVE HER MADLY

Compliments. Flowers. Love letters. Cliché? Perhaps. Effective? For certain.



4. LINK RESPONSIBLY

Like it or not, your behavior in the technosphere reflects how people see you in real life. Return emails, calls, and texts, and never post anything crass or unkind.



5. RELY ON COMMON SENSE...AND A DISTINCTIVE SCENT

Wear Givenchy Gentlemen Only. Elegant and masculine, classic and contemporary, it's the quintessential fragrance for a modern gentleman.



6. PICK UP THE CHECK

If you can't afford it, go to a cheaper restaurant.



7. LISTEN MORE. TALK LESS.

You'll be surprised what you learn when you really pay attention.



8. TAKE THE HIGH ROAD

That parking place/cab/spot in line isn't worth it.



9. TIP WELL

Whether it's for good service or just good karma, no harm ever comes from spreading the wealth.

10. PACK RIGHT & TRAVEL LIGHT

It's hard to command respect with your toiletries in a resealable plastic bag. Elevate your travel gear and avoid red-faced incidents in the security line.

Esquire
&
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want to give you the ultimate gentleman's tool kit. Receive your limited edition dopp kit and amenities with a qualifying Givenchy Gentlemen Only purchase at Macy's and Dillard's stores beginning April 9th, 2014. Visit Esquire.com/events for participating stores and more information.



THE
WISH LIST

THANKS, GUYS!

Effortlessness, or the illusion thereof, can be a good thing in many realms, such as the making of omelets and the lifting of heavy things (especially when that thing is us). Gift giving is not one of those arenas. More than the expense of an item or the grandeur of a gesture, it is the output of effort—and all that it implies—that will actually win us over. And with the following tips, putting your back into it couldn't be easier.

OBSERVE Women have preferences, see, and we don't make a secret of them. Each of us has a favorite flower, ice-cream flavor, fragrance, cocktail, jewelry designer. If you're paying attention, it's virtually impossible not to know what we like.

INQUIRE If you have failed to note any of the above, going rogue is not the answer. Pick up the phone and dial her sister or her best friend. Not only will you score with the gift, you'll make a lifelong ally.

BYPASS Skip the airport gift shop (unless she has a kitschy snow-globe collection, in which case, kudos, Mr. Thoughtful!) as well as any clothing store your mother likes. Think to yourself: Can I imagine the woman I love shopping in this store? In addition to the stuff, would she like the music? The smell? Does the salesgirl look like someone she'd be friends with?

EXPERIENCE She'll value holding your hand that night at the theater/baseball game/Beyoncé concert far more than any dumb scarf.

WRAP Every gift, every time. Even if—especially if—the wrapping costs more than what's inside. *Effort, man. Effort.*

An updated classic
Shoes can be iffy, but a stunner by the next-gen Manolo? A sure bet.
Patent leather pump, GIANVITO ROSSI, \$760, collection at Bergdorf Goodman, NYC



A design icon

She'll wear this Juste un Clou every day for the rest of her life. (And if she doesn't, send it to us!)
Rose gold and diamond bracelet, CARTIER, price on request, at Cartier boutiques nationwide



A rock 'n' roll heart

That looks sentimental only in the box.
Black gold ring, REPOSSI, \$618, collection at Dover Street Market, NYC



A rescue pooch

The gateway gift to actual commitment is best served with a gift certificate for A.M. walks and (cheerful) cleanup.



A silky little something

Look at you, buying the niche Belgian lingerie label du jour!
Silk, satin, and lace bra, \$540, shorts, \$430, both, CARINE GILSON, collection at Barneys New York



An honest-to-God letter

Stamped and delivered to her honest-to-God mailbox. Especially effective if you cohabit.



Road trip!

Rent a vintage ride, pack a picnic, drive to Lookout Point. Backseat makeout guaranteed.



A flight to visit her far-flung BFF

She gets girl time; you get a dudes-and-brews weekend; you both get missed-you sex on the flip side.



Fleetwood Mac tickets

There is not a woman alive who does not want to sway to the sweet, sweet sound of Stephanie Lynn "Stevie" Nicks.

Fail-safe flowers

Even if they're from the deli—buy just one type, buy a lot, and just say no to baby's-breath filler.



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BESPOKEN CLOTHIERS	NOAH WAXMAN
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BROOKLYN TAILORS	REVOLUTION NOW
CADET	SHWOOD
CARLOS CAMPOS	SKULTUNA
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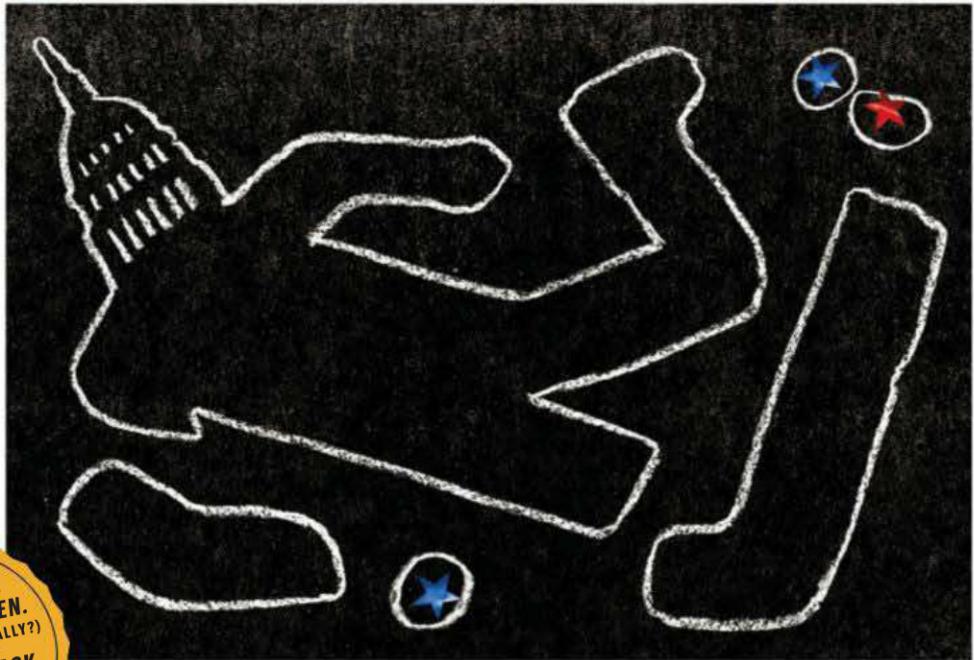
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STEPHEN MARCHE
IS GETTING FED UP WITH
BEING FED UP...



The Post-Outrage Era

HOW MUCH MORE DISAPPOINTED CAN WE GET?

THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM IS BROKEN. Nobody doubts it anymore. The only remaining question is how best to describe the brokenness. Is the U.S. government a fragmented one or an outright failure? Wrecked or cracked? Is it like an old car that needs new parts and a going-over by a loving and competent mechanic, or is it like a dropped vase, to be quietly swept up and thrown away? Signs of failure can be found wherever you look: The current Congress, which has an approval rating hovering around 10 percent, is testing the country's capacity for negatives with its passing of a mere sixty-five bills into law last year, putting it well on track to becoming the least productive Congress in history. Meanwhile, the number of countries whose governments want to imitate the American Constitution has plummeted. In 2012, Ruth Bader Ginsburg said to an Egyptian journalist, "I would not look to the U.S. Constitution if I were drafting a constitution." And this is a woman who deals with its inner workings every day. After so many exhausting cycles of hope and despair since 2000, so many appeals to change and so many failures to change, the only thing left to do, it seems, is to revel in the damage: How much angry fun can we have in this mess?

Outrage has become one of the United States' main forms of entertainment. Practically a genre in and of itself, it possesses its own standard characters (the Professor, the Preacher, the Outsider, and the Regular Guy), a classic good guy/bad guy narrative structure, and a tone of rising dismay, culminating in a desperate sense of the absurd. Conservatives invented the genre on talk radio with what David Frum called the "conservative entertainment complex," but liberals truly have mastered its comforting tone of hectoring lament. Does anybody know what Rachel Maddow would sound like



CONGRESS QUANTIFIED

The 1947 to 1948 Congress was the original "Do Nothing" Congress, yet it passed 906

bills—almost fourteen times the record to date of the current Congress. Of the scant number of bills signed into law last year, one was the Reduc-

ing Flight Delays Act, which brought furloughed air-traffic controllers back to work just in time for lawmakers to fly home for a weeklong recess.

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Esquire

STEPHEN MARCHE

IS GETTING FED UP WITH BEING
FED UP...

if she weren't outraged? Nobody knows, because nobody would watch her if she weren't. Those who play the center, those who reach for the elusive "balance," showcase two extreme opinions instead of one, which just turns out to be lukewarm and boring. Outrage is the key to virility, as an extensive Chinese study of Weibo's five hundred million users showed. The title of that study was poetry: "Anger Is More Influential Than Joy."

Exposure to constant outrage, exposure to outrage as a primary conduit of basic information, has led directly to a new and overpowering breed of political despair. The best and most important political books of the past year thus far are Mark Leibovich's *This Town* and George Packer's *The Unwinding*—each a masterpiece of extended, justified, thoroughly researched bleakness. The social collapse they describe is nearly total, and their approach to it may be described as "beyond outrage." Talk radio and cable news throw hand grenades into the structures of American government. Leibovich and Packer go around smashing the remaining ruins into powder.

But the appetite for their total despair is limited. A more popular brand of modulated, cheerful, distinctly American cynicism can be found on television, particularly on two massive-hit series: *Scandal* and *House of Cards*. Both are utterly ridiculous, but their very ridiculousness is what makes them so consumable. We find Olivia Pope sleeping with the president and rigging an election in his favor, and we have Frank Underwood writing a self-incriminating letter in order to earn the trust of a man he is betraying. The fantasy in both is one of control: The intelligence of both Pope and Underwood allows them to surf the waves of power as incredible operators who pervert the system for their own purposes—if only that were possible in real life. These shows offer a massive public wish fulfillment of the idea that somebody actually runs things, that identifiable individual actors are responsible, that the system operates with enough continuity that an intelligence can maneuver in it. In real life, the problem with the American political system is the exact opposite: Nobody can do anything. Paralysis has set in to such a degree that it's no longer clear whom we should blame. After the pointless government shutdown, the failure to finalize even the smallest appropriations bills, and the country's being taken to the brink of default, the idea of a conspiracy amounts to a wild hope.

How long can this last? At what point does the brokenness become so extensive that the Big Fix becomes necessary, that the expanding cycle of hope and despair, encompassing a larger and larger orbit, simply spins out of control and demands a substantive response? The Constitution, as the saying goes, was "designed by geniuses so that it could be run by idiots," something that has been true enough for two hundred years. Now a small voice is starting to insist "Yes, but there are limits." Both sides already have started to consider radical solutions: Democratic senators have proposed constitutional amendments to limit campaign spending; Ted Cruz and a few

Are You a Cynical Bastard?

A HANDY QUIZ

Choose all that apply and add up the assigned points to find out how cynical you are.

1. Do you agree with the assessment of German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk that "present-day cynics can be understood as borderline melancholics, who can keep their symptoms of depression under control and can remain more or less able to work"?

Pardon? (0)
Not that guy again. (11)

2. Political affiliation?

Democrat (0)
Republican (0)
Other (0)

3. The U.S. government: cracked or wrecked?

Cracked (2)
Wrecked (6)

4....Old car or dropped vase?

Old car (2)
Dropped vase (6)

5....Band-Aid situation or more of a FUBAR-type deal?

Band-Aid (2)
FUBAR (6)

6. Finish this sentence: If I work hard, I will be ____.

Rewarded with a sense of pride (-10)
Rewarded with Social Security (-5)
You meant social "security" (7)

7. Does cynicism have any positive effects?

George Bernard Shaw

claimed its insistence on the truth eliminated phoniness in plays, so that's something. (3)

Keeps the kids off the lawn. (5)

8. Which movie character do you most relate to?

Clint Eastwood in *Gran Torino* (5)
Peter Finch in *Network* (5)
Walter Matthau in *Grumpy Old Men* (5)
Imagine Clint Eastwood in *Grumpy Old Men* (10)



9. Choose a personal approval rating for Congress ranging from 0 to 100, with 0 being the lowest score.

0 (0)
5 (-5)
10 (-10)
15 (-15)
20 (-20)
Higher than 20 (-100)

10. Did you just reflexively choose the last one?

Yes (0)
No (-5)

ANSWER KEY

Fewer than 0 points:

God bless you.

0 to 20 points: You actually took this quiz.

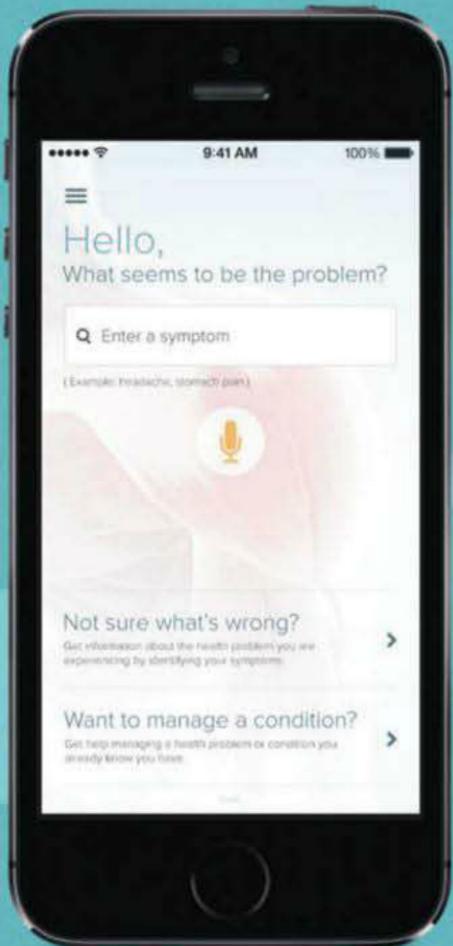
More than 20 points: You are rolling your eyes.

other Republican senators want to get rid of the Seventeenth Amendment and to reinstate selection of the Senate by the state legislatures. At least they're willing to acknowledge the notion that changing the sacred document is possible.

At this point, the actual text of the American Constitution is smothering the spirit in which it was written. "No society can make a perpetual constitution," wrote Thomas Jefferson in a 1789 letter. "The earth belongs always to the living generation." No sensible person can imagine that a political arrangement can be maintained sensibly for 224 years. The premise of the framers was that when government wasn't working, they had the intellectual and physical courage to reorder government to fit their present moment.

But, of course, that was a lot of work. It took guts and brains. It involved an actual revolution, which is a serious pain in the ass. Despair is so much easier.

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THE STATE OF

THE AMERICAN CAR

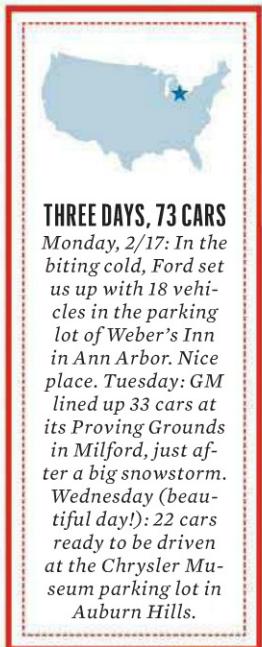
FIVE YEARS AFTER WE—ALL OF US—BAILED OUT TWO OF AMERICA'S THREE AUTOMAKERS, WE WANTED TO KNOW HOW THINGS WERE GOING. SO WE WENT TO DETROIT. AND WE DROVE ALL THE CARS.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATHANIEL WELCH



February of this year, three editors from Esquire went to Detroit to assess the state of the American car five years after the great trauma—the bankruptcy and government bailout that transformed the industry and upended two of the Big Three American car companies—and just weeks before the eruption of the GM safety scandal, a problem that reflects the hangover of past management that plagued the industry for years. ¶ Our intention was to drive every American car and truck, talk to lots of people, and see what that told us about the state of the automotive industry. In three days. ¶ And the carmakers miraculously said yes. ¶ Here's what we learned: First, you can't actually drive every American car. Despite the downsizing of these companies, there are more models of cars and more choices within each model than ever before. Under the guidance of Esquire cars columnist Sam Smith, each of us drove seventy-three cars over a three-day period in Detroit. This ➤





THREE DAYS, 73 CARS

Monday, 2/17: In the biting cold, Ford set us up with 18 vehicles in the parking lot of Weber's Inn in Ann Arbor. Nice place. Tuesday: GM lined up 33 cars at its Proving Grounds in Milford, just after a big snowstorm. Wednesday (beautiful day!): 22 cars ready to be driven at the Chrysler Museum parking lot in Auburn Hills.





represented pretty much every model. (Driving every car would mean driving every model “trim,” as carmakers refer to it, and that would mean hundreds of cars.) Second, there is clearly a demand for cars that get their drivers to their destinations reliably and comfortably, if not compellingly. So not every car offered a thrill ride.

Third, if you are planning to drive seventy-three or so cars over three days in Detroit in February, consider waiting until April.

Fourth, the idea of an “American car” is being refined and redefined practically on a daily basis and in different ways by the different companies.

In the beginning, “American car” meant democracy—practical cars made for Americans by Americans to build the nation. Then it meant power, grace, and a certain level of arrogance. Later it came to represent bloat, even second-ratedness and resistance to change.

There have been worlds of change in the last five years. Some of that change was in the pipeline before the recession. Some of it was caused directly by the bailout. Some of it was just engineers innovating. These are smart people in charge of these companies. And you cannot build and sell cars in the world today without trying to surpass the Germans and the Japanese, and the best of America’s cars aren’t just competitive—they’re better.

In the course of our three-day rigors (see page 83), we got a sense of the character and reach of each company’s offerings. Each makes wonderful cars and each makes the occasional shitbox.

GM is the most sprawling and the most ambitious. It makes cars and trucks to address every possible need and price point. GM has experimented with every possible form of powertrain,



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whether electric, gasoline, diesel, hydrogen-fuel cell, or hybrid. They are so ambitious in fact that some brands can seem a little diffuse—less a single coherent philosophy than a collection of needs met. But GM is the only American car company to start over philosophically and build a new car from emotional scratch, which it did with the ATS, and now (pretty much) with the CTS. The ATS is very good; the CTS is so good you have a hard time believing it came from Detroit. A shift like this is an almost impossible thing to do with a corporation full of engineers, so you have to be proud of them for pulling it off.

Ford went the opposite direction. We praised it back in 2009 for eschewing bankruptcy and for Alan Mulally’s financial sleight of hand, which enabled it to save itself. Unlike GM’s, Ford’s inexpensive cars hold the most fun. The Fiesta: Even the bargain-basement, three-cyl-

inder, standard-shift \$16,000 model is a riot to drive. Focus: hilarious and exciting, especially the 2.0-liter EcoBoost ST. The midrange is blander, though well-styled bland clearly causes the pulse of much of America to quicken, given the sales of the Fusion. And Dearborn occasionally lets its freak show. There is something amazing about the Ford Flex, the big, low, comfortable hauler that is probably the best replacement for what the company lost when it discontinued the Lincoln Town Car. And there are few things as raw and animal fun to drive as the Mustang GT. We are intensely curious to see how the all-new fiftieth-anniversary edition works out when it launches later this year.

Chrysler (now owned by Fiat) is the best-defined brand. Whether through Dodge, Chrysler, Ram, or Jeep, the company has been making what it sells for a long time, and it has fine-tuned just about every car in its lineup. The 300 and the Jeep Grand Cherokee are two of the finest cars America makes. But it’s difficult to see where things are going. Especially after you’ve driven some of Chrysler’s Fiat-derived offerings (CEO Sergio Marchionne’s plan means that much of Chrysler’s future will ride on Fiat bones), which can seem insubstantial.

Where you see the Chrysler soul best is in the proud engineering of the SRT line of vehicles. For no particular reason other than the love of driving, the engineers of SRT take five cars—the Charger, Challenger, 300, Viper, and, especially, the Grand Cherokee—and deliver them to their full potential, creating street machines that were built for the track.

One thing each of the three companies proves is that the classic American luxury car now is the truck. This country’s great luxury-car brands are either gone or have morphed to become more competitive with their European brethren—sportier, sleeker, and sexier. There’s no equivalent to the big, graceful 1960s Lincoln Continental or the glorious Cadillacs of the early *Mad Men* era. Except for tricked-out, extended-cab trucks. Their seats are big and comfy. The cabs are quiet. The backseats have more legroom than any car. And the amenities are luxe: elegantly stitched leather, electrical outlets, the most ingenious compartments for tools or guns or fishing tackle, multiple backup cameras, amazing sound systems, and, occasionally, plastic-lined storage units set down into the floor of the backseat that are certainly not intended to be filled with beer and ice.

What the bailout has done is inject these companies with an entrepreneurial mind-set that got squashed by the bloat of the preceding few decades. In the Golden Era, American cars felt both like they were produced by massive corporations and also, oddly, like they were built by a small business of guys who gave a damn. That’s not common in the rest of the world. That’s American. And when they’re good, these cars feel like they’ve done more with less. It took utter fear and a lot of intervention to make it so, and it’s going to take a long time for most Americans to realize it, but, miraculously, the state of the American car is stronger than it was five years ago. Hell, it’s stronger than it was fifty years ago. And it’s getting better.

THE LITTLE GUYS

THE FIESTA WAS A HIGHLIGHT



2014 CHEVROLET SONIC RS HATCH

Fun little thing that not a lot of people will buy. Although the top speed is around 120, we were terrified at 80. \$21,150*



2014 CHEVROLET SPARK 2LT

Looks silly. Drives decently. \$16,115

THE FUN SUVS

ALL SUVS ARE PRACTICAL FAMILY HAULERS. THESE ARE SO MUCH MORE.



We loved that Jeep painted the tow hooks bright red.



2014 JEEP CHEROKEE TRAILHAWK

The Cherokee, like the Dart, is based on the Alfa Romeo Giulietta platform. Like the Dart, its goodness varies in direct proportion to how you spec it. Base four-cylinder is so-so. But what we drove, the V-6 off-road model, feels like an actual Jeep. The nose is an acquired taste, but it's grown on us. Not the most powerful SUV, for sure, but it's selling well, despite production stoppages related to the quality of its nine-speed transmission—a first for the segment, and aimed at generating fuel-economy numbers. Beautiful profile. The clearance is handy if you're climbing large boulders, which this car will make you want to do. \$30,490



2014 CHEVROLET SUBURBAN 4WD LTZ

A Silverado turned into a wagon, basically. One of the best things GM makes because it makes no bones about what it is and because it does its job extraordinarily well. Everything good about a good pickup and everything good about an old-school body-on-frame SUV. If you need something like this, there's nowhere else to go. \$62,395



2014 CHEVROLET TAHOE 4WD LTZ

Essentially Chevy's Silverado pickup with more rear seating and a roof, turned into an SUV. Ford and Chrysler don't do this anymore; GM does, and it sells. \$60,355



2014 CADILLAC SRX AWD PREMIUM

A premiumized version of the Equinox (see page 86). Styling and seating position are really the only reasons to buy this. A very comfortable ride. \$52,080



2014 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE SRT

The only SUV you will want to drag-race. And we can say from experience that you can outrun a Challenger or Charger SRT in it. Possibly the best American car being made right now. A little pricey. \$64,990



2014 DODGE DURANGO R/T AWD

Aggressive, big, cave-like SUV that shares a lot with the Grand Cherokee under the skin. Think of it as a Grand Cherokee for people without Grand Cherokee money and who don't care about off-road trails. \$42,390

Esquire
CARS



2014 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE SUMMIT 4X4

Shares bits with the current-generation Mercedes-Benz ML SUV. Which means it's one of the best things they build. The remarks of three Esquire staffers while getting out of it (we drove the diesel version, by the way): "Awesome." "Absolutely great." "I would buy it." Big and heavy, and the most comfortable SUV on the market. \$52,190



2014 JEEP WRANGLER SPORT

Noisy. Rugged. You can see the painted body panels from inside the truck. Wanders on the highway and rides terribly due to massive tires and soft springs. But we love it because of all that. Jeep's most valuable brand name and product, no matter how it sells. \$23,390



2014 FORD FLEX LIMITED AWD

We love the Flex... even if it's an aging people hauler. It's not bad to drive and uses space well. Looks good. Less an emblem for "family" than a minivan, but accomplishes the same task. \$40,445



2014 FORD FIESTA SE HATCH

Handles very well. Interior quality is the biggest downside. European in idea and execution. Great first car. \$16,875



2014 FIAT 500 ABARTH

Sportier version of the regular 500. Expensive but a riot to drive. It's like a tiny Ferrari. \$22,895



2014 FORD FIESTA ST

Pure fun. Great fourth car. \$22,195



**2014 DODGE CHARGER SXT RWD**

Sportier but still comfortable version of the Chrysler 300, same pattern as the other Dodges: eschews features for a more budget-oriented performance bent. Exterior better than interior. Looks meaner than it is. \$30,290

**2014 DODGE CHALLENGER SRT 392**

Challenger coupe with a big-power Hemi V-8, stiffer suspension, and more aggressive interior and transmission. Fixes a lot of the Challenger's problems. And feels like an old-school muscle car. Great headlights. \$45,680

**2014 CHEVROLET CAMARO 2SS CONVERTIBLE**

Meant to be a convertible. Sold almost entirely on styling. Huge interior. Choppy ride. Not quite as compelling as the outgoing Mustang. \$43,250

**2014 DODGE CHARGER SRT SUPER BEE**

Fast, fun, and loud. But not stupid loud. Like the Challenger SRT coupe, but with four doors. Same driveline and suspension basics. Re-refined American muscle. \$44,380

THE CARS ONLY AMERICA CAN MAKE

THE MUSCLE CARS AND THE CORVETTE.
(CHRYSLER WOULDN'T LET US DRIVE THE VIPER. TOO DANGEROUS IN THE COLD.)

**2014 CHEVROLET CORVETTE STINGRAY COUPE 3LT**

They've finally solved the Corvette's problems—no more shitty interior, no intimidating road manners. Fast, graceful, and one of the best sports cars in the world. And the best fast-car bargain on earth. Huge accomplishment. We had fun in this going 20 mph. \$62,000

**2014 DODGE CHALLENGER R/T SHAKER**

Retro-styled big coupe to compete with the Mustang. No interior space, dark inside, but sells on the retro vibe. \$38,490

**2014 FORD MUSTANG GT COUPE**

We didn't drive the 2015 car that was just unveiled. Nobody has. This is the last of the old-school Mustangs, with its solid rear axle and satisfactorily simple interior. One of the best things Ford's ever built, because it's fun, noisy, and true to itself. You can't not peel out in it. \$32,005

3 DAYS OF THE AMERICAN DREAM: A DIARY

HOW TO TEST-DRIVE 73 CARS...OVER THREE DAYS...IN DETROIT...IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER

By David Curcurito

HERE,

you figure it out. So, we're four guys with three days to test-drive seventy-three cars from the Big Three American automakers. Not seventy-three divided by four, as in eighteen and a quarter cars each. Each of us drove everything; it's like speed-dating for seventy-two hours straight, except that while there's all the variety to be found in speed dating, here there will be the possibility for actual emotional attachment. Faux minivans, fast cars, really fast cars, tiny cars, electric cars, sedans your parents would love, a bunch of weirdo hybrids, a first car for your kid, trucks that would make a tough guy wet himself, and everything in between if there's anything left...and there is, like the fifteen-ton cowboy-themed dually pickup, the delivery truck, and, oh yeah, a dump truck.

Of course, when you're putting yourself out there, a drink does help to loosen things up. We arrive the night before our first drive and stop at a restaurant called the Redcoat Tavern, where the hamburgers are as big as Al Gore's head and the people are really nice. And the way they pour the Scotch, it's almost surreal because the bartender doesn't quit until there's a hearty meniscus above the rim. I'll come to regard this way of filling a glass the Michigan Pour, and every place we drink has the exact same pour. Either they really know how to live here, or they've completely given up, with both being a distinct possibility. The only problem with the Michigan Pour is our call time for the next couple of mornings was 6:45 A.M.

First up: Ford. It's 5 degrees as we pull up to a place called Weber's Inn in Ann Arbor. There isn't a lot of talking on the way from the hotel in our Dodge Durango. We couldn't talk if we wanted to, as we are all pretty bundled up, with just eyeholes so we can survey the parking lot full of Ford cars and trucks. Our home base is in a corner of the Inn, where a couple Ford reps have thrown a pile of keys down on the bar for our taking. Ford has given us a map of the area with a suggested route for a maximum driving experience. I'm in no mood to study a map, so I follow Ross, who's in the Mustang 5.0-liter...I'm in the tiny 1.0-liter five-speed manual, three-cylinder Fiesta. I manage to stay with the Mustang around the curves and bends in the road, until I can't. Then I'm lost, but that's okay because I like this car a lot and we just want to be alone for a while. It reminds me of my first car, a five-speed manual hatch that I may or may not have lived in for a while when my mom got sick of my bullshit.

I find my way back to the test lot, to a flurry of Fords. A lot stood out, like the 2015 Super Duty F-250 (trucks are so much better now than they were before, more luxurious), and the Flex was just as nice-looking, solid, and fun. The Mustang is a giant erection with wheels, and although my colleagues weren't excited by the Lincoln MKZ, I was happy it was different from the others. We limp out of this round to dinner with the *Car and Driver* magazine guys. I keep looking for Eddie, the editor, and his editorial crew with their tats, cut-off denim shirts, huge biceps, and unusual mustaches to show up. You know, like the cast of some hot-rod-

gear show on cable. Instead, they looked more like a nerd-show mash-up. Nicest guys you'd ever want to meet. They brought us to Vinsetta Garage, an old car-repair-shop-turned-restaurant, where an entire wall is plastered with a black-and-white print of Jungle Pam Hardy in her short-shorts and her massive braless breasts in a tank top at the starting line of an Ohio drag race in 1973.

The next couple days passed like one of those black-and-white movie montages with the spinning newspapers—through GM's welcome center in Milford (just off the Proving Ground, which is more of a secret than Area 51) to the amazing Walter P. Chrysler Museum in Auburn Hills. With dozens more American cars to get to know, our trusty Durango already smelled like fried cheese curds and a giant Michigan Pour, with maybe a hint of coffee.

Because of the snow on the roads near the Proving Ground, we started with the pickups, crossovers, and SUVs. We drove nearly every variation of the Chevys, the GMCS, the Cadillacs, the Buicks, and we pounded them pretty good. The third straightaway on our route was all snow,

and they handled great. I'm convinced trucks are the greatest American export, after kung-fu movies. (Wait, those weren't ours?) After most of the snow melted, I drove the Cadillac CTS and its big brother, the V, and both were a thrilling, white-knuckle, pee-pee-stain kind of drive. I saved the Corvette Stingray for last, but I am ashamed to admit that I was tired at that point, or I was just scared of the wet roads with some slush, or, I don't know! All I do know is that I acted like a pussy behind the wheel. And I'm still plagued by regret. If she's out there now, reading this, she just needs to know that I'd like one more chance.

The way Chrysler presented its cars was perfection. We drove all its brands: Jeeps, Chryslers, SRTs, Dodges, and Ram trucks, which had secret compartments in the floor, under the mats. This might have been the most intriguing feature of the week, but the rep pretended to ignore my comments about it being an ideal place to hide the contraband. At the end of the day they rolled out the Fiats. I wanted to ask the Fiat rep if there was a compartment for your clown makeup. How could we end it this way, on a fleet of tiny Italians? I asked the Chrysler rep if we could take one more spin with the SRTs. We tore through our route, took the extra-long spin on the highway, and even had a little drag race between the Challenger SRT and the Super Bee.

I don't know how this happened, and I did not see it coming. But after fifteen hundred miles (collectively), seventy-three cars, trucks, and dirigibles—some incredibly sexy, some with just really nice personalities—I was in love.



Editor in chief David Granger, articles editor Ross McCammon, design director David Curcurito, Esquire cars columnist Sam Smith.





2014 BUICK REGAL GS AWD

Rebadged version of a car GM sells in Europe, through its Opel subsidiary. Very un-Buick. Fast, turbocharged four-cylinder. Just got all-wheel drive (was formerly just front-wheel drive) in an attempt to make it appeal to Northeast buyers and young Snowbelters who would otherwise consider an Audi A4. \$40,195



2014 CHRYSLER 300S AWD

The second generation of Chrysler's big, out-of-a-cartoon sedan. The 300's bones are ten years old at this point, but still a great car. And people buy 'em. An emblem of sturdy American competence. \$37,360



2014 CADILLAC ATS AWD PREMIUM

GM's version of BMW's 3 Series. The cabin is crazy small, but it drives amazingly. A lot of money for a little car. \$47,120



2014 CHEVROLET SS

Unassuming exterior, but it's a beast. 415 horses seemed like 550. Great car. \$44,470



2014 CADILLAC CTS-V COUPE

Big, meaty rear-drive thing with an engine related to the last Corvette ZR1's. Supercharged V-8. Previous-generation CTS, but still a great car. \$65,825



2014 CADILLAC XTS V-SPORT PLATINUM

Big, awkwardly styled car. Drives like a Cadillac should, but lacking in sex and true authority. Though Bob Lutz would disagree (see page 86). \$70,020



2014 CADILLAC CTS AWD PREMIUM

All new. Looks great. Drives amazing. Second only to the Corvette in the line of the best things GM builds. Somehow it feels European without seeming un-American. \$64,725

SEDANS FOR MEN

PRACTICAL AND AGGRESSIVE AT THE SAME TIME



ESQ + A

Mark Reuss

**EXECUTIVE VP OF
GLOBAL PRODUCT
DEVELOPMENT, GM**

By Sam Smith

ESQUIRE: Describe GM before the bankruptcy.

MARK REUSS: Up until the bankruptcy, it felt like the company was always too big. Every year we had to do a reorganization. Meanwhile, we were trying to produce products that people wanted to buy. We had a loyalty base that was second to none, which artificially sustained it a little bit. During that timeframe, the company was really just a structural cost-reduction entity. Once in a while, we would have cars or trucks that were truly revenue generating. Products that people really wanted. We made great pickup trucks.

ESQ: How did you begin turning things around?

MR: Defiance is really impor-

tant to me. I love to prove people wrong about what they think of the company or the city. I love that. I mean Cadillac—I don't know if you've driven the V-Sport or were in it today, but that thing is absolutely world class. To be able to do a lighter car than BMW, and with a 420-horse twin-turbo, not a big V-8?

ESQ: It's a good car.

MR: And it's made in Detroit in the Rust Belt in the cold.

ESQ: Which postbankruptcy change has been the most counter to the company's historical culture?

MR: For two decades, we had vice-presidents of quality report on quality. To have that person actually have one of

the most respected jobs in the company now? That focus on quality? That's huge.

ESQ: Seems like you're saying the company ended up with a reputation for the good stuff being almost accidental.

MR: Occasional. Very occasional.

ESQ: "Everything must be amazing" is a tall order.

MR: When we go out on a ride, I tell our guys, We're going to pick five things, and we benchmark what we are going to do with the best in segment today. Two years from now, when we introduce the car, there's got to be five things, five reasons why someone is going to drop the best in segment and come in to our showroom and give us a

THE SMALL, AMUSING, AND MOSTLY FAST

CARS FOR NINETEEN-YEAR-OLDS



2014 CHEVROLET CRUZE TURBO DIESEL

Almost gets out ahead of itself, it's so thin, lightweight, and quick. It's GM's Focus competitor with a diesel in it for fuel economy and torque. Checks a lot of boxes. \$25,810



2014 FORD FOCUS ST

Boy-racer version of the Focus. Lots of torque steer, but the chassis is amazing, and the car handles really well. Turbo four-cylinder is truly powerful and the car just goes. Lot of car for the money, and as fast as European sport sedans of a few years ago. \$24,420



2014 FORD FOCUS SE HATCH

Arguably the best mid-size American small car. And its bones underpin a lot of what Ford makes. Interior quality could be better. Fun to drive. \$19,420



2014 DODGE DART GT

Based on the Alfa Romeo Giulietta (the small hatch sold in Europe) and the first product of the Fiat buyout of Chrysler. Decent in the right spec (you want the GT), not great (tiny, slow, coarse) in the wrong one. If we were in the market for a base Dart, we'd go with the Focus. \$21,990

look and buy our car or truck. Get rid of the price thing, okay? There has to be value. It's got to be, "Oh, my God, I love the design and I want to be seen in it." The other piece of it is to do that on global platforms, in places like India, Thailand, China, Brazil. So when you set up one of these cars, the bandwidth has to be able to span those markets that are more mature to the ones that are a little less mature. And I tell our guys, "Don't design anything for an emerging market." Because by the time we get there, it's not going to be emerging anymore.

ESQ: What's the next big step?
MR: I think we got to finish overhauling our dealer net-

work. It will take ten years for people to know we're for real.

ESQ: How do you keep making better cars?
MR: Heavy capital spending. But if you have products and we don't know how to sell them or the customer experience is terrible, what have we really done? You won't make money on those, either, because you end up discounting the cars for different reasons. Because no one wants to talk to your dealers or service people. We're just seeing our first lessees coming back into our showrooms right now. You're going to see good things happen, I think, on a loyalty basis. I'm compensated on a retention and loyalty basis, and so is everybody

else. If you say, We are going to have x number of J.D. Power awards, that's our goal for the year, you know that's probably not the right focus. Although it's very important. But you got to do it all.

ESQ: What's the one thing you want to get done before you retire?

MR: Have dominant vehicles in some of the tougher markets to make money in.

ESQ: India?

MR: India.

ESQ: Why are they harder to make money in?

MR: That's a whole book.

ESQ: In a sentence.

MR: No one knows the rate of infrastructure improvement that's followed by wealth that

allows the greater population to buy vehicles and drive them. And so to match that up is very difficult. And really important. And in other markets... Take Cadillac—if we can say there's an honest choice for the customers who normally buy BMW, Mercedes, and Audi—a choice that is better than those brands and have people be proud of that for America? To have a truly global brand by the time I go? That would be something.

[Editor's note: This interview was conducted before GM announced its safety recalls in late February and early March. GM declined to make Reuss available for follow-up questions regarding the recalls.]

THE OUTSIDERS

OPINIONS ON THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY FROM THREE KEY (AND, FOR THE MOST PART, OBJECTIVE) PLAYERS

Interviewed by Matt Goulet



STEVE RATTNER

The Obama administration's "Car Czar" in 2009 and lead advisor to the Auto Recovery Task Force

ON THE STATE OF THE AMERICAN CAR: All three are more profitable than we expected when we did the restructuring. With Chrysler and General Motors, the performance of these companies has greatly exceeded our projections. First, car sales came back faster than we assumed. Second, the curtailment of the discounting and getting prices back to a rational level happened faster than we thought it was going to and to a greater extent. Third, the companies did a great job of managing their costs. The restructuring gave them a balance sheet they could actually operate with, rather than having a huge amount of debt sitting on top of them. There's still more work to do, particularly at GM on the cost side. GM does not yet produce the same profit margins as Ford, and they really need to. I'm optimistic about all the companies. I see no reason why they can't make good profits indefinitely.

WHAT HE DRIVES: In New York, I drive an Audi S5, and in Washington I drive a Chevy Volt. I wanted to experience the next generation of car. And it's terrific.



JOHN D. DINGELL

United States congressman representing Michigan's 12th District, the home of Ford, and former longtime chair of the House Energy and Commerce Committee

ON THE STATE OF THE AMERICAN CAR: This industry has pulled off a major miracle. If you like the word *thought reform*, as the Communists and Chinese use, tremendous thought reform is going on. There is one thing I tell the industry all the time, and they all agree: There is absolutely no way that you or I or an auto producer or an auto-worker can look at somebody else in the industry and say, "Pardon me, but your end of the boat is sinking." We all go down together. Detroit is a tough town. It's a town where we have a lot of boom and bust, because the auto industry is naturally unstable. And with the savage foreign competition, it's even harder. But if I weren't optimistic, I wouldn't be living in Michigan. And I wouldn't be in Congress.

WHAT HE DRIVES: I drive an Escape. I've had it about two years and have put a huge number of miles on it, without ever any expectation of failure on the part of the vehicle. In this office, we all drive American cars.



BOB LUTZ

His forty-seven-year career has included vice-chairman and senior advisor to GM, executive vice-president of Chrysler, and executive vice-president of truck operations at Ford

ON THE STATE OF THE AMERICAN CAR: You have a newer generation of people in charge now. Guys like Marchionne, CEO at Chrysler, who is not American born, and Mark Reuss at GM in charge of product development, who has long suffered under the bean-counter mentality. Mary Barra, CEO at GM, is a certified engineer. The short-term financial thinking that characterized the industry for forty years is gone. I would place American cars ahead of Japanese cars, probably about where the Koreans are, and, in many cases, ahead of the Germans. But it's going to take Americans another ten years to figure it out. The companies are poised well [in the event of another downturn]. They're hoarding cash because everybody is scared shitless some terrible thing is going to happen again.

WHAT HE DRIVES: I have the new Cadillac CTS with the so-called Vsport powertrain. It's the size of a BMW 5 but about three hundred pounds lighter and with a rigid body. It's got a 420-hp twin-turbo V-6, and they made it with an eight-speed automatic transmission. It's brutally fast. It's hands-down the best car I've ever driven.

A PARADE OF PRUDENT CHOICES

STURDY SUVS. BUT NOT AS COMPELLING AS THE ONES ON PAGE 81.



2014 DODGE JOURNEY SXT AWD

An aging almost-a-minivan-not-quite-an-SUV—definitely-not-a-car thing; neither terribly useful nor terribly impractical. Of course, it does have ice coolers in the floor. Whoever came up with this needs to be promoted. \$27,690



2013 GMC TERRAIN DENALI AWD

Equinox with a better interior. \$37,830



2014 FORD EXPEDITION KING RANCH EL 4X4

Old Detroit thinking in a dark hour. \$59,850



2014 CHEVROLET TRAVERSE AWD 2LT

The thing people buy when they want a Suburban but really need this. \$39,740



2014 GMC YUKON XL DENALI AWD

The Yukon XL is essentially a Chevy Suburban. \$65,065



2014 JEEP COMPASS LIMITED 4X4

Small SUV built on the same bones as the Patriot. Has gotten slowly better with time since its launch ages ago but is not an impressive truck. \$28,890



2014 FORD ESCAPE TITANIUM 4WD

The Focus SUV, basically. Drives really well. And selling really well. \$31,745



2014 CADILLAC ESCALADE AWD PLATINUM

Fast as hell, even if it's a little... much. And expensive. \$84,065



2014 CHEVROLET EQUINOX AWD LTZ

Built to replace its minivans. Douchy. \$34,275

THE NEW LUXURY CARS

(OFTEN CALLED "PICKUPS")

AMERICA'S MOST IMPRESSIVE SEGMENT, ACROSS THE BOARD



2015 FORD SUPER DUTY F-250 KING RANCH 4X4 CREW CAB

The F-150 sent to the gym. Big and angry and agricultural—rides stiffly and feels like a tractor in a lot of ways. Work truck. Ford's most impressive vehicle. Handles surprisingly well. Back end never kicked out on us. \$53,905



2013 FORD F-150 KING RANCH 4X4 SUPERCREW

The base 150 has been the best-selling vehicle in America, no caveats, for years and years. Interior quality's a bit poor compared with the competition's, but probably the most fun and well-conceived truck on the market. \$49,210



2015 CHEVROLET SILVERADO 2500 4WD LTZ CREW CAB

Chevy's F-250/Ram 2500. Interior is the best of the Big Three truck makers'. Probably the most refined to drive, too. \$50,320



2013 RAM 1500 SPORT 4X4 CREW CAB

The base Ram pickup. Great truck for the money. Surprisingly nimble for something its size. \$44,285



2014 GMC SIERRA 1500 4WD SLT CREW CAB

Rebadged version of the Silverado pickup. (GMC is the work-truck-plus-a-bit-of-luxury division of Chevy.) \$46,005



2014 RAM 2500 OUTDOORSMAN CREW CAB

The heavier-duty version of the same truck—rides stiffer, carries more stuff, more built for work. \$44,945

2015 GMC SIERRA 2500 DENALI 4WD

Same thing but with added luxury. ("Denali" = "fancy.") \$54,835



2014 GMC ACADIA DENALI AWD

Same as Enclave and Traverse, with slightly better interior. \$49,750



2013 FORD EXPLORER SPORT

The Taurus SUV, basically. With the same issues as the Taurus. \$42,570



2014 JEEP PATRIOT LATITUDE 4X4

See Jeep Compass. \$24,890



ESQ+R

Jim Farley

EXECUTIVE VP, GLOBAL MARKETING AND SALES, FORD

By Sam Smith

ESQUIRE: For a decade or so, Ford has had a lot of good products. But it's been hard to get the traditional Honda- or Toyota-buying public to look at it differently.

JIM FARLEY: The burden was on us to surprise them with the reality of product. Especially in the areas of fuel economy and technology, the biggest perception gaps we had. But second of all, we wanted to be a company that people rooted for. Americans love an underdog. And some Americans are willing to take a chance on a brand. And that burden was on us.

ESQ: Do you really think that people see the Ford Motor Company as an underdog?

JF: During the crisis, yes. We had many people who loved the fact that we improved ourselves by our own bootstraps. We made the adjustments that we needed to, and we made the investments in the product that we needed to. There was a group of customers who were excited about that, and they turned to the brand. We made bold decisions in the middle of the crisis—aluminum for the F-150, walking away from the V-6 for midsize sedans.

ESQ: What's wrong with Lincoln?

JF: Everything has to be improved. The product excellence isn't enough. Perception is even more important in the luxury space. So you have to be dramatically different on the product. And we have to transform the dealer experience: not just a fancy facility or a cappuccino. It will take time. The excellence in Lincoln will probably be first seen in China in that way because we're starting from scratch. We can really innovate there. And use those learnings even in North America.

ESQ: What's your major focus now?

JF: To become sustainable—for the next crisis, or growth period. Everyone focuses on the recovery. But I think we should talk more about how sustainable the companies are.

ELECTRICS AND HYBRIDS

THE MOSTLY GOVERNMENT-SUBSIDIZED WONDER CARS



2014 CHEVROLET VOLT

Range-extended electric vehicle or complex hybrid, depending on whom you listen to. Basically an electric car with a gas engine, so you don't get "range anxiety." A few years after its introduction, it just seems smart but less out-there. And really expensive. And the dash and interior feel dated. \$34,995



2014 FORD FUSION ENERGI TITANIUM

Eh. \$37,295



2014 CADILLAC ELR

Essentially a Volt coupe but with Cadillac handling. Very expensive. Great looking. \$75,995



2013 FIAT 500E

The 500 makes the most sense as an electric, given its small size. For now, sold only in California. \$32,500



2013 FORD C-MAX ENERGI

Hybrid Focus microvan, basically. Not spectacular, but good. \$33,715



2014 FORD FOCUS ELECTRIC

A decent electric vehicle, though it feels heavy and doesn't make a good case for itself from a price or spec standpoint. Base Focus makes more sense for just about any job or person we can think of. \$35,965



2014 CHEVROLET SPARK EV 2LT

Goofy little car. Impractical and not the most compelling EV, as these things go. Looks like a Barbie Dreamhouse on wheels. \$27,820



2014 LINCOLN MKZ HYBRID

MKZ, but with less power. \$37,085



ESQ + A

Joe Veltri

VP OF PRODUCT PLANNING,
CHRYSLER

By Sam Smith

ESQUIRE: How do you tell people that Chrysler is still an American car company if it's owned by the Italians?

JOE VELTRI: We're legally organized in the Netherlands, we're tax domiciled in the UK, and we'll probably be traded by a few different exchanges

by the end of the year, so the organization has truly gone global, but our brand DNA is still very American. We still have our critical functions—design, engineering, manufacturing, sales, development—all based here. And our brands are recognized around the world as American brands. Fiat's not trying to be American. It's staying true to its Italian roots, and everybody at Fiat has that personality and that brand DNA that they want to keep.

ESQ: What is it about building cars for Americans that a lot of people from somewhere else might not understand?

JV: Eighteen months coming out of bankruptcy, we were producing the Fiat 500 down at our plants in Toluca, Mexico, but it wasn't like we just took the Fiat 500 and just started producing it. We had to make some interior changes to it—simple things like cupholders that Americans love, with Big Gulps and everything else. The other thing is the suspension setups of European cars are

very different from American cars. Europeans are in tune with the road dynamics of their car—the drivability and the handling. Americans, by and large, are less concerned. They just want it to ride nice.

ESQ: One of our editors mentioned that Chrysler seems like it's waiting to put its other foot down; what's available is impressive—the 300 especially—but there's not a lot of new product. What do you do besides just telling people to hold on and wait?

JV: We've become one of the major players in the pickup-truck and commercial-vehicle department. We have clearly set the standard when it comes to SUVs with the Jeep brand. And now we're in a great position because we're complementing that with small-car knowledge and know-how from our colleagues at Fiat. Now we have a really balanced and robust portfolio across the product lineup. Take Hyundai. They have eight nameplates, maybe—if they turned over two

of their nameplates every year, they've completed their life cycle in four years. But as a full-line manufacturer, where we have over twenty nameplates in the showroom, you can't turn them all over within five years. So you're right, we do have some aging products, like we just turned over the 200, and the Avenger will now turn over into the new car. And Journey, a midsize crossover which we'll turn over shortly.

ESQ: Jeep is not so much a brand as an American touchstone. What are your plans for it?

JV: We've added the Renegade, which is a new entry level of the Jeep. You heard us talk about bringing Grand Wagoneer back, which will expand Jeep into the upper end of the price classes. So we have a plan for Jeep. We want to keep it true to its core values, but we think we can expand the brand. Mike Manley, who is the CEO of the brand, and

[continued on page 140]

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EVERYBODY ELSE
IS AF-----
C--- BUT
TOM HARDY IS A
F----- GENIUS.

A JOURNEY INTO THE SOUL OF A GREAT ACTOR

BY TOM JUNOD
PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG WILLIAMS



TOM HARDY IS NOT A MOVIE STAR.

This is not a judgment. Right now, at least, it is simply an observation, a statement of fact.

Tom Hardy is an English actor, London-born, thirty-six years old. He has been the star of—the lead and titular character in—two movies made in England, *Bronson* and the upcoming *Locke*. He has costarred in three American movies, *Warrior*, *This Means War*, and *Lawless*, alongside actors like Joel Edgerton, Chris Pine, and Shia LaBeouf. He also has been directed by Christopher Nolan in two movies of global prominence, *Inception* and *The Dark Knight Rises*. In *Inception*, he is a member of Leonardo DiCaprio's supporting cast, part of an ensemble, billed beneath Joseph Gordon-Levitt and called upon to lend the proceedings a kind of amoral integrity. In *The Dark Knight Rises*, he plays Bane, the supervillain set in opposition to Christian Bale's Batman, with a shaved head, thirty pounds of added muscle, a mask of rubber and steel fitted over his nose and mouth, and an accent—a voice—intense in its artificiality, its almost Elizabethan resonance, and its menace.

To the extent that American audiences know Tom Hardy, they know him as Bane.

Next year, they will know him—or not—as the new Mad Max, in George Miller's *Mad Max: Fury Road*, with Charlize Theron.

Is Tom Hardy a movie star? The only conclusive answer is that we won't know until the summer of 2015, when Warner Bros. finally releases *Mad Max* and the first weekend's returns are in.

But that does not stop the question from being asked. Indeed, the question of whether

a particular actor is a movie star is, in Hollywood, a philosophical one, almost an epistemological one, a matter of chemistry devoid of science. As much as it is in the business of making movies, Hollywood is in the business of finding movie stars, and as bad as Hollywood is—as low as its percentages are—at predicting what movies might be hits, it is even worse at determining which actors are destined for stardom. In truth, the number of actors who can, in industry parlance, "open a movie" is not just small; it's unchanging. There are about a dozen of them in all, and an entire industry is built around their care and cultivation.

Tom Hardy is not one of them. He is not even *like* them.

He says things movie stars would never say and does things movie stars would never do.

He *admits* to saying things they would never say and doing things they would never do.

There are *stories* about him saying things they would never say and doing things they would never do.

And so, there is not only the usual element of uncertainty about the question of whether Tom Hardy will become what Warner

Bros., among many others, is betting on him to become.

There is also an element of something Hollywood hasn't seen in a long time—danger.

Which is the reason people think he's going to be a movie star in the first place.

And which is the reason they also think he can still fuck it up.

+++ OVER THE PAST YEAR, Esquire has put a bunch of movie stars on its cover, among them Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, and George Clooney. They have all been smart, funny, charming, and personable. In some ways, they have been nothing *but* smart, funny, charming, and personable, because they all represent the same ideal—or, as Tom Hardy puts it as we're driving around London, "They're all stand-up guys, but they're all *ambassadors*, Tom. I am definitely not an ambassador." There are many things he means by this. He means that they do not possess the graphic novel of a body he does, inscribed as it is with tattoos everywhere but on his neck, because "when you see a tattoo on my neck, that means I'm checking out." He means that they do not have the history he has, which includes bouts with addiction and alcoholism. He means that they do not display the same lack of circumspection he does, and that they employ the services of publicists.

Or he might simply mean that they don't, as a matter of habit and a matter of course, call people "cunts."

Hardy does. He starts as soon as he picks me up in a big Audi sedan with a scrollwork of scratches and a shattered driver's-side mirror. Is he Bane? Is he the eponymous hero of *Bronson*? Is he big and scary? He is not. He is small, a few clicks under five ten, and the difference between him and his most famous cinematic incarnations makes him look shrunken. He not only has fine hands and fine wrists encircled by bracelets celebrating his sobriety and his allegiance with British Special Forces; he has a fine nose and ears the size of periwinkles, as if he's been built, top to bottom, to a slightly different—and more concentrated—physical scale. He is proud of his crooked teeth and scar tissue, sports a gingery beard, and exhibits but two of the physical characteristics he makes use of onscreen: an active and expressive forehead and eyes as black and opaque as sunglass lenses.

This is not to say that he's not menacing, however. He's a proper menace to nearly everyone who dares share the road with him, and when a young man darts into the street in front of him, he doesn't slow down. Instead, he addresses him in an almost theatrical apostrophe.

"Oh no you don't, oh no you don't, oh no you *didn't*. Did you see that deranged cunt? Did you see what he was doing? He ran across the street to put money in the meter! Him and his fucking little scooter. He almost lost a leg! Try explaining that at the end of your life—'Oh, yes, I risked all, I risked quadriplegia, I risked a prosthesis, I risked this here carbon leg, but at least I didn't get a ticket!' Can you believe that? For a scooter? What kind of man is that? Fucking hell!"

Of course, he is an English actor, so he's not just allowed to curse; he's practically obligated to. He is not in the line of succession to George Clooney or any other American movie star but rather to Peter O'Toole, Richard Harris, and Richard Burton, unrepentant hell-raisers all. He has gone to drama school; he has trained for the British stage; he regards himself as primarily a theatrical actor and employs an array of eccentricities to deal with the anxiety of performance. Where Olivier steeled himself by standing behind the curtain before it parted upbraiding the audience with muttered obscenities, Hardy is in the habit of coming to the theater early and "climbing into every single seat in the house and shouting from every chair. I stand on every single chair and shout from every single chair. And that's my warm-up."

And yet in the end, he is no more an English actor than he is an American movie star, because both English actors and American

movie stars have tended to keep the secret that Tom Hardy can't help but reveal. He is known for playing what he calls "hard men" and for going out of his way to put himself in hard situations in hard places. But it is precisely because he is *not* actually a hard man that everywhere he goes becomes a hard place, even London, where a driver stops in front of him without warning, and he addresses him as follows:

"You! Everybody else is a fucking cunt! But *you*—you're a fucking genius!"

+++ HERE ARE SOME THINGS I've heard about Tom Hardy: that he's the finest actor in the world. That he's crazy. That he's incredibly loyal. That he's incredibly difficult. That if he trusts you, he's your lifelong friend, but that if he doesn't—if you "betray" him—he's your lifelong enemy, and that he senses betrayal everywhere. That he loves guns and dogs. That he regularly trains with British commandos. That he's going to play Elton John in a biopic called *Rocketman*. That he's often compared to Brando. That he's taken swings at directors and costars and had a publicly acknowledged fistfight with Shia LaBeouf. That on the set of *Mad Max: Fury Road*, Charlize Theron found him weird and scary and wanted him kept away from her. That when the head of Warner Bros. went to visit the *Mad Max* set in Namibia, he offered to let Hardy spar with him so that he could work out his issues. That Hardy's performance in *Mad Max* is career defining. That he's a Friend of Leo. That he's going to be a big movie star.

Here are some of the things I've heard about Tom Hardy from Tom Hardy: that he's a bugger, a wanker, a tosser, a scalawag, a saboteur, a trickster, a bit of a dick, a little petit bourgeois pain in the ass, a liar, a thief, a pretender, a phony, a fake, and a colossal fraud. And that he's difficult precisely to the degree that he's afraid of being exposed.

See, he does it all for you. That's the thing about Tommy, as his friends call him. If you get him, you love him, so he makes sure you get him right away—he either doesn't hide anything or he does the more complicated trick of hiding everything by seeming to hide nothing. There's nothing you can say about him that he hasn't said himself, and his desire to be understood is so powerful that it makes him seem, for all his purported menace, vulnerable and

**TOM HARDY IS ON THE COVER
BECAUSE WE SAW HIS PERFORMANCE
IN LOCKE. AND BECAUSE IT'S BEEN
A LONG TIME SINCE WE'VE MET AN
ACTOR WHO IS ACTUALLY DANGEROUS.**

innocent. Indeed, it's so powerful that the night before we spoke for the first time, he wrote, by hand, two pages of notes that he subsequently read to me, gripping the paper in both hands. They begin this way: "Who am I? I have no idea."

+++ HE WAS DRIVING AROUND LONDON, on the way to his house, when I asked him when's the last time he got into a fight. "The last time I got into a fight?" he said.

"Yeah. You've gotten into fights, right?"

"The last time I got into a fight is that I don't get into fights anymore. Oh, I used to, back when I was a naughty boy, back when I



STAR TREK NEMESIS
2002



LAYER CAKE
2004



SCENES OF A SEXUAL NATURE
2006



BRONSON
2008

WE ASKED HARDY TO SHAVE HIS BEARD. HIS RESPONSE: "I AIN'T SHAVING MY BEARD FOR YOU. TO SHAVE MY BEARD OFF WOULD BE TO CUT MY FKING NUTS OFF.... AND GIVE THEM TO YOU TO SELL." MORE ON THIS ON PAGE 142.

was a little bugger. But it's too dangerous now. There are too many real athletes out there, men who can do you real damage. And you never know who they are, do you? That man in the corner of the bar, with the glasses and a ledger? Maybe he's the one. Right? The one you least expect is the one with the goods. You get into a fight with him and you don't know how it's going to end up. The water is *deep*, Tom. And you will be judged."

And then he added: "I'm not a fighter. I'm a petit little bourgeois boy from London. I don't fight, I mimic."

And those are two poles by which he lives.

On the one hand, he insists that what he does as an actor is fakery.

On the other, he lives in an almost symbolic universe charged with threat and significance, where fighting and fakery—and, for that matter, everything else—are judged by the same standard. And where inauthenticity and authenticity meet in the person and the performances of Tom Hardy.

Indeed, when we pulled up to his house in a London suburb, he sat in the car and talked about the test of an actor on the stage, and for all intents and purposes it might as well have been the test of an operative in some dusty capital where the government was about to fall.

"There are two types of acting: There's convincing and not convincing. That's it, right? And so, if you are going to convince people, then put it in the real world. Can you get your passport back? If you needed to get your passport back to get out of a country that you were in danger in, can you do that? Because you will need that skill. And that's how your character is going to need to be convincing. So number one: Can you hustle? In the real world, have you got the asset to get whatever it is that you need by any means necessary without putting your hands on somebody? Number two: camouflage. Can you dress yourself up to look like somebody that you're not? Can you speak another language? Can you do the hustle but in different languages? That's it.

"And you will be judged."

It is what makes him a great actor.

And it is what drives him a little mad.

+++ WHEN WE WERE IN LONDON, he drove around in search of free parking. He doesn't like to spend money; he has a particular aversion to spending money on parking, and his willingness to jam

his car into spaces for which it was not intended accounts in part for its condition. He finally resorted to a cemetery he knew about. It was an old church cemetery on the site of stables once owned by Sir Thomas More, and it lay behind an old wooden gate watched over by an old man selling flowers. Hardy drove through the gate and then drove around the edges of the cemetery, further scratching his car against a hedge and squeezing it between two trees. We got out and walked around, looking for a place to sit down. But everyplace we went was closed, and even in London no one recognized him. We went back to the car, and by this time the wooden gate was closed. Hardy had to get out and open it, and the old flowermonger made a sardonic comment.

"Clever old cunt, isn't he?" Hardy said as he drove away, but then he threw the car into reverse and bought a bouquet of flowers wrapped in plastic.

"Why did you buy the flowers?" I asked. "I thought he was a clever old cunt."

"He is," Hardy said. "But maybe one day when the water gets deep, he'll be the one with the skiff. He'll be the one with the oar, and I'll be glad I bought flowers from the clever old cunt."

Now we went to his flat, and he placed the flowers on the long kitchen table. The flat was like Hardy's torso: more modest than might be expected and crowded with images of personal significance. One wall was adorned with paintings by him and every other member of his family, from his mom to his son, Louis, to his wife; another with a gun-range target of an intruder; another with a mirror decorated with the masks of comedy and tragedy and two feathers, one white and one black, that Hardy picked up at a local park and that, like everything else in his world, he could plumb for symbolic meaning. "I'm the white," he said.

Shortly after we arrived, so did Hardy's wife, Charlotte Riley, along with their two dogs, both of which Hardy found wandering the streets when he was filming in the United States and had to bring home. Riley played Catherine to Hardy's Heathcliff in a 2009 British television production of *Wuthering Heights*, and she is built to his scale and to his temper. Wearing a white jersey and a pair of jeans, she shook my hand and said, "Sorry our home is such a shithole."

"Charlie's very special," Hardy said.

"Well, cheers, babe. You're pretty special too, babe." They kissed, and she said, "Well, this is our home. But we're renting at the moment because we're renovating a place."

"This is our home," Hardy said. "And there's nothing wrong with it."

Riley offered tea and biscuits—cookies—and then, bending at the cupboard, said, "I might have offered you something I don't even have. I've offered you a biscuit, but I'm afraid I don't have any. So there are chocolates."

"Now you've ruined everything," Hardy said. "You've promised something you can't deliver, which is not allowed in this house!"



INCEPTION
2010



THE DARK KNIGHT RISES
2012



LOCKE
2014

Now we have to put out biscuits."

Riley ignored him. "I can make myself scarce if you like...."

"No, I want you to go out and buy some digestives now because you promised the man biscuits and you can't deliver it. Only do what you say you can!"

It was one of his mottoes. It was also something she'd clearly heard before, and she disappeared upstairs. And yet there is no story in Hardy's life that does not eventually assume the shape of a morality tale. An hour and a half later, she emerged smashingly in a short shift. "You look *incredible*," Hardy said. It was the night of Hardy's father's birthday dinner, and when she put her bag down on the kitchen table, she found, among scatterings of stuff, the bouquet of flowers Hardy had cast aside.

"Flowers?" she said. "How nice."

Hardy looked as if he'd forgotten them entirely. "Tulips," he said, and then, with his crooked teeth, smiled as if he'd just bought the last place on a skiff oared by a clever old cunt in the deepest of waters.

+++ OLLY WILLIAMS MET TOM HARDY when Williams was twenty-six and Hardy was seventeen. Williams was an instructor at a London gun club frequented by Hardy's father, Chips. The elder Hardy had said to Williams, "Christ, could you meet my son?"

Hardy's father was and is a writer and creative director for a large advertising agency. Tom is his only child, and, says Williams, "what we saw was this very handsome, very talented kid who had a beef with his father."

The problem, Hardy says, is that "I don't like me very much. Never have." Put another way: "I was a sensitive. I didn't want to be a sensitive."

What he wanted to be was a hard man. Instead, he was a "naughty boy," a "bugger," a "scalawag," a "petit bourgeois pain in the ass."

He was drinking and drugging and getting kicked out of school. "I was a shameful suburban statistic," he says.

What Chips Hardy saw in Olly Williams and his brother, Greg, were two hard men who were also, in Olly's words, "artists and writers and creatives." Olly was a former soldier who was beginning to turn his interest in conservation into art done in collaboration with wild animals. Greg was a photographer who was going to war zones in Chechnya and Sierra Leone.

What Greg Williams saw was "a beautiful boy, with gorgeous eyes and lips and skin, who really wanted to carry my bags into war. I said no, because he was so young. But he really wanted to. The desire to test himself was already there then and has never really gone away."

What Olly Williams saw was a boy who was "looking for a brother." And that's what Olly and Greg became. "There's love there—

you can use that word with Tom without being a nancy boy or a 'thes.' If he loves you, he's a brother. That's it. He's a man who needs a good brother."

It is his basic psychology, and it is no secret to anyone. It is on display in nearly everything he says and e-mail he writes, big or small, serious or comic. It is also on display in his movies, because it is at the heart of his relationship with directors, from those he likes to those he doesn't.

"We talked for ten minutes, and I felt very close to him," says Daniel Espinosa, who directs Hardy as a police detective investigating a serial killer in Stalin's Russia in the upcoming *Child 44*. "We both instantly knew each other, because we're both very interested in family conflict and what it means to be a man. A lot of directors he builds into fathers so that he can rebel against them. Sometimes it doesn't go well. I was more like his brother."

Philip Seymour Hoffman, on the other hand, was more like a father. But he was also Philip Seymour Hoffman, and he also shared a history of addiction, and he was also, in Hardy's phrase for virtually every director he's respected, "a leader of men." And so when Hoffman directed Hardy in a 2010 production of Brett C. Leonard's *The Long Red Road*, the experience became fundamental to Hardy's understanding of what kind of truths could be found in fakery.

"What Tom wanted, more than anything else, was to please Phil," Leonard says. "And Phil was not easy to please. What he demanded was that you be true to the character and the story, and Tom wanted to please him. Finally, Tom said, 'It's really hard for me to play a part that I know you could play better.' And Phil said, 'I wasn't even offered the part. Brett didn't write the part for me, and I'll never have it. I've seen you do every part in this play better than any actor could ever do them, so let's get it together and do this play.' And that was the turning point. It was an amazing thing to be around."

+++ HERE'S HOW TOM HARDY DESCRIBES what goes on in his own head: "And then there's this character that goes, 'Well, fuck it.' Which is a very small voice, but a very dangerous voice, and you'd rather have this character working for you than against. It's a very useful character. It's got me a lot of scripts. It's a trickster—not the best person to have at the driving wheel of the person who is me, but a very useful character to have in the council of the head. I've just got to deploy it in the right position. And celebrate in the right way, because that kind of trickster character makes the wrong decisions at the wrong time. It's very hard to cut your teeth in a business without making a bit of a mess of things, getting a bit of a reputation, but if you don't have a reputation, then no one will fucking want you, anyway...."

The "trickster"—or, as he also calls it, "the saboteur"—has always been part of him, as far back as he can remember. "Tommy, don't touch the fire.' Boom—right away my hand's in the fucking fire." When does it whisper its counsel into his ear? Usually when



things are going well, and he's feeling... inauthentic.

He tells a story about his early success. He was in *Band of Brothers* and *Black Hawk Down* when he was twenty-four; *Star Trek Nemesis* when he was twenty-five. The story is about meeting the hard man he played in *Black Hawk Down*.

"I asked him how he liked the movie," Hardy says, "but really I was asking how he liked *me*. I thought he'd be honored that I played him. He said he liked it fine, but that I looked nothing like him. He said he was the hairiest man in the unit, and I looked like a fucking model, and that besides, the movie made it look like he was connected to the death of another soldier. That stayed with me for a long time. It stays with me now."

Was this—and the consequent feeling of fraudulence—what set loose the saboteur? Hardy says no. He says that he's an addict, and that's all there is to it. But the saboteur nevertheless began speaking, the naughty boy began listening, and he not only drank and drugged, he found the perfect prescription for his "low self-esteem and raging ego":

Crack.

"I was told very clearly, 'You go down that road, Tom, you won't come back. That's it. All you need to know. And that message stayed with me very clearly for the rest of my days. The beginning, really, of a new life."

"I couldn't value life until I risked losing something worth more to me than my behavior. I'm fucking lucky to be here, to be honest. Any near-death experience—if you're lucky enough to fucking realize that it is one—is going to leave an indelible mark on you. And then you add shame and guilt and fear into that, it's a recipe for awareness if you have the ability to become aware from it. And good things can come back into your life."

No, it wasn't acting that saved his life. It was the prospect of death. But it was acting that told him how to keep his life saved once he was sober. In 2007, he played the title character in a movie made for British television, *Stuart: A Life Backwards*. Homeless, alcoholic, sociopathic, a junkie in and out of jail, scrawny, his face askew and his pants falling down, and yet keenly sympathetic, Stuart had not only been a real person; he was a real person Hardy played in order to show some hidden part of himself. "Character transformations started happening to me because I got tired of not being able to get on the floor," he says. He means not being able to get jobs. But the transformation went deeper than that, and to this day meeting Tom Hardy feels less like meeting a movie star than it does like meeting Stuart, cleaned up instead of dead.

+++ WHAT IS HE AFRAID OF? The answer is simple, if unexpected. "I have always been frightened with men," Hardy told me. "To the point where I couldn't go into a gym because of the testosterone, and I felt weak."

"I don't feel very manly," he wrote in an e-mail. "I don't feel rugged and strong and capable in real life, not how I imagine a man ought to be. So I seek it, to mimic it and maybe understand it, or maybe to draw it into my own reality."

"People who are scary, they terrify me, but I can imitate them," he said.

"I can stay terrified, or I can imitate what terrifies me."

In 2008, a year after he made *Stuart*, Hardy made *Bronson*, turning his terror into something terrifying. For four years, he talked to Charles Bronson, known as the most violent prisoner in the British penal system—the hardest of hard men. When Hardy started training for the role, he weighed 150 pounds, and though he changed

his body, he says that he never gained more than 15. He shaved his head and grew a handlebar mustache, and what he calls “intention” did the rest: The physical transformation required by the role allowed him to express everything he knew about men and fear and fear of men, and he succeeded in scaring not just audiences but people on the set.

The screenwriter Kelly Marcel was there, and out of gratitude for the work she did on the *Bronson* script, Hardy has tattooed the nickname SKRIBE on his right arm. “Tommy is excessive, for good and for bad,” she says. “But you have to know what you’re in for with him. You don’t show up without knowing what you’re doing, because he’s going to come at you full force like an uncaged fucking lion.”

Was Hardy difficult during the filming of *Bronson*? The director, Nicolas Winding Refn, says he was anything but. “‘Difficult’ is when they don’t care. So I would never in a million years describe Tom as difficult. He was eager. He wants to be your instrument. He wants you to be part of him, he wants you to devour him, he wants you to use him up.”

But the problems on *Bronson* had less to do with Hardy’s willingness than they did with Refn’s preparation. “The script wasn’t right,” says Marcel, “and Tom was like, ‘Look, I’m not saying this. I’ve given you months, now here it is, and I’m not saying it.’”

When Hardy’s asked about it, he answers as if to Refn himself and as if his objections could never leave the present tense: “If something’s full of holes, don’t be surprised if I point them out. If you’re fair weather and haven’t been able to contribute to the challenge, why challenge me when you don’t have the strength? You said the work would be done and it hasn’t been done, and so whose fault is it that we’re in confrontation? You can call that difficult—I call that not being prepared. You can call that difficult—I call it being *betrayed*.

“It’s full of holes, man. And I can’t have it full of holes. I can’t lie. Because I’m terrified of being found out as a fraud.”

+++ BRONSON DID NOT MAKE HIM A MOVIE STAR. What it did, however, was reintroduce him to Hollywood as an actor with the potential for stardom. He had not worked in Hollywood in six years, but suddenly “*Bronson* became the must-see movie for casting directors and CAA executives,” says Hardy’s producing partner, Dean Baker. Hell, people still remember the experience of seeing *Bronson* and then seeing Tom Hardy walk through the door for a meeting—all 150 pounds of him. It was less a movie-star moment than it was a “how in hell did he do that?” one.

So how did he do it? How does he do it? His answer: He steals. He calls himself a magpie; his friend Olly Williams calls him a black mynah bird to the extent that “whenever I see Tommy, I can tell where he’s been and who he’s been with just by the way he talks.” It’s why Hardy, for all the comparisons to Brando, claims never to have seen his most important movies. “I’ve never watched *On the Waterfront*. People think I’m lazy, but if I watched it, I would steal it, wouldn’t I? Because I steal everything. One day, I’m going to steal you.”

And Bane? Did he steal Bane?

“I dropped a bomb. I was talking with Chris Nolan and said, ‘I have a voice for Bane.’ He said, ‘Okay.’ I said, ‘It’s based on something I saw on YouTube.’ He said, ‘Okay.’ I said, ‘It’s the voice of a Romany bare-knuckle fighter named Bartley Gorman.’ He said, ‘Okay.’ And then I did the voice.”

He never had to try anything else. “At first, I responded with a great deal of trepidation, because like everything else that comes from Tom, it’s off the beaten track,” says Christopher Nolan. “Then I became massively excited, because when you work with a great actor—and Tom is one of the greatest—you start to understand that

they’ve found something. It just becomes part of the character. It’s something that you’re never going to be able to take away from the character. It’s not really a matter of having an opinion about it—it just is. *Okay, that’s Bane.*”

And yet if you seek out the YouTube videos of Bartley Gorman, you’ll find that he sounds very little like Bane. “In saying that he copied this voice, Tom oversimplifies his process greatly,” Nolan says. “What he did is actually quite different from the source material. There is no simple answer for where that voice came from.”

No one cared who I was till I put on the mask: That is how Hardy famously introduces himself as Bane. “People didn’t sit up and take any notice of me until I started putting on weight and kicking people and being aggressive”: That is how Hardy explains the course of his own career. He has used his voice as a mask, he has used his body as a mask, he has used his aggression as a mask, he has used his reputation as a mask, and now the mask has both trapped him and set him free: “The trouble with Hollywood is that they want you to do something, they want you to be something, and then they think you are who they wanted you to be,” he says.

At the same time, Hardy is in such demand that he no longer has to subject his body to the rigors of transformation, and he gets the opportunity to do movies like Steven Knight’s upcoming *Locke*. Hardy does not wear a mask in *Locke*, just his own gingery beard. He wears no added bulk, either, except for an extra cable-knit sweater. He swigs cold medicine only because during filming he had the sniffles. He doesn’t kick anyone; he never even gets out of his car. For almost ninety minutes, he is the only visible character and all he does is talk on the phone via Bluetooth in a low, unwavering Welsh-accented voice lifted from a security contractor who once escorted him to Kabul. There is not a single phone call in *Locke* that any man would wish either to make or to receive; there is also not a single phone call that *Locke* flinches from, and so the movie becomes a thriller about one man’s moral choices. At the start, a concrete contractor named Ivan Locke has a family, a wife, and a job; at the end, he has only his brutal and brutalized integrity. At any time, he could make life easier for himself and those he loves by lying, but he never does. He barely even raises his voice, and when, at the end, he has to endure the most devastating call of all, the only thing that moves on his face is a tear trickling down his cheek.

Of course, *Locke* can be seen as the opposite of *Bronson*. It can also be seen as *Bronson*’s bookend. Spielberg called Hardy after seeing *Locke* at Sundance. And what he asked—what everyone asks after seeing *Locke*—is the same question people asked after seeing *Bronson*:

How did you do that?

+++ THE DAY AFTER I MET WITH HARDY at his flat, I talk with him again in the restaurant of London’s Soho Hotel. He shouldn’t be here. He’s not supposed to be here. It’s the day of the BAFTAs—the British equivalent of the Academy Awards. A few years ago, he not only lost when he thought he should have won for *Stuart*; he cared when he thought he didn’t. “I behaved badly with the camera on me. If you’re like me and have no skin, it’s no place to be.” He swore never to go again, but on this night he’s accompanying Kelly Marcel—nominated for her *Saving Mr. Banks* screenplay—and he’s presenting the award for Best Actress. It’s a movie-star moment, and a tux and a groomer await him in a room upstairs.

Right now, though, he doesn’t look like a movie star. Right now, he’s a bearded man in jeans and a long-sleeved black jersey, rubbing his own head and puffing an e-cigarette as contemplatively as a geezer with a meerschaum. Nobody bothers him. Nobody seems to recognize him, for it’s early yet and the restaurant is still given over to civilians. Then the first [continued on page 142]





THE TEACHER

She has come to remind us who we are, or at least who we once were. She is the only one warning that conditions in the financial sector are in some ways worse now than before the collapse of 2008. Her message has gained her many powerful enemies. And it has a lot of people very eager for Elizabeth Warren to run for president.



SIR THOMAS MORE: WHY NOT BE A TEACHER?
YOU'D BE A FINE TEACHER. PERHAPS, A GREAT ONE. RICH: AND IF I WAS WHO WOULD KNOW IT?
MORE: YOU, YOUR PUPILS, YOUR FRIENDS, GOD. NOT A BAD PUBLIC, THAT... OH, AND A QUIET LIFE.
—ROBERT BOLT, *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS*, ACT I

The best teachers are the ones who remain students at heart, the ones who keep learning from their students, and from the world around them, and from their own drive to know even more about even more things, and who then are able to transmit that knowledge—and more important, the drive to know more—to their students. That's how great teachers echo through time. That's how great teachers become immortal.

It is the faint beginning of dusk at Reagan National Airport in Washington, D. C., the last rays of the winter sun slanting through the big windows in angled shards across the carpet. The waiting area is jammed with people waiting for the last US Airways shuttle of the day from Washington to Boston. As it so happens, this particular waiting area is a target-rich environment if you happen to be a fan of the Washington power elite. You can see your favorite NBC pundits, waiting to fly to Boston in order to get to the Vineyard for the weekend. You can see celebrity television historians from Harvard and celebrity television

BY CHARLES P. PIERCE

astronomers from MIT. If you're really lucky and stay really quiet in your duck blind behind the Auntie Anne's stand, you might even spot a random Kennedy or three, headed back to the compound on the Cape. Tip O'Neill, a cigar jammed into his mouth, once worked this space. So did Ted Kennedy, head buried in some document drawn from his battered and overstuffed briefcase. It is the political junkie's equivalent of the red carpet, especially at the end of a long week.

Not far from the gate, Elizabeth Warren, by the grace of God and somewhat astonishing circumstance the senior senator from Massachusetts, is talking about the day she learned how people make lightbulbs. It was a day on the campaign trail, when she was running against incumbent Republican Scott Brown, and she'd visited a plant where they made lightbulbs, and the process fascinated her, and the way she tells the story fascinates the people listening to her now, because that's what great teachers do.

You cannot understand how she became a senator—hell, you can't even understand how she became a public person—unless you understand the fact that, first and foremost, she is a teacher, having taught at Rutgers, and having been a professor of law at the University of Houston, the University of Texas, the University of Pennsylvania, and ultimately at Harvard

and traps" of the mortgage lenders, seen what it did to families unaware of the deliberate obfuscation of what they'd signed, only to have the teaser rate of the mortgage run out and find themselves underwater. She inveighed against the fine-print piracy of the credit-card companies; she often said that the conditions on a credit card should be as simple as the instructions on a toaster. She brought these lessons back to Harvard, and she was teaching them to her students in September of 2008, when the roof caved in. And she went right on teaching. She had been warning official Washington for months that disaster was coming.

"I'm down there talking to them about it!" she says, her voice rising and her eyes widening. "I'm telling people and nobody wants to—*La, la, la. I can't hear you.* I fly down to Washington. I got to where I just made cold calls. I'd go see congressmen—for me, the lens into what was happening because of subprime mortgages.

"I would explain what was happening here, and how obviously they're packaging these things and selling them up the line. They are selling grenades with the pins already removed. And they're going to explode! And the answer from members of Congress was 'No, I checked with my banker friends, and they're making a profit.' So this is going on and I'm actually teaching

THE BANKS THAT WERE "TOO BIG TO FAIL" ARE EVEN BIGGER NOW. "A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE STRUGGLING TO GET HOLD OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE BIG MONEY MOVERS ON WALL STREET. YEAH. THEY'RE NOT LIKE YOU AND ME."

Law School, where she was teaching bankruptcy and contracts in the fall of 2008, just as the global financial system collapsed and threatened the economy of the entire world. Her first great project as a young law professor in Texas had been to learn about how bankruptcy worked in this country, and more important, it was to learn about the people who found themselves in the process. It challenged her assumptions; she had thought she was going out to study the schemers who were working the system and the moochers who were cheating the people to whom they owed money. She learned from the people in the courtrooms that everything she knew about them was wrong, and then she set out to teach the country that everything it thought about those people was wrong. "It was," she tells me later, "so much like being in church, quiet and hushed. They were in little groups, talking among themselves. Nobody wanted to look at anybody else."

That led her to her first book, and thence into the study of how these people came to be in all these courtrooms, the way the great American middle class was being tricked out of its wealth and scammed out of its birthright and crushed by the tectonic forces of underregulated capitalism and money-drenched politics. She saw the dangers of subprime mortgages because she'd seen the damage of what she called the "tricks

this stuff. And by golly, Lehman crashes. Now, in the spring I had also been teaching bankruptcy when Bear Stearns had gotten bought out. I mean, it wasn't down, but it was on its knees. I'm starting to teach them 'too big to fail,' to keep the big one from going because they're worried about the rest. And in the fall, Lehman goes down. I will never forget this—walking into my class, and it's dead silent.

"Everyone is freaked out. What does this mean? What's going to happen here? So I put it up on the chalkboard. The whole—what had happened in the subprime mortgages. And how they've been packaged together. And then they get sold down the line. And then someone takes on too much risk. So why would the government let it go? Because the government is sending the message that the markets have to discipline themselves. And that the government will not be here to bail them out. And I take everybody through that. And everyone gets it. Very shortly after that, AIG has been bailed out.

"Now, here was the fun. Whatever I was supposed to be teaching that day, we just set all that aside. Then I turned around and said, 'Okay, fasten your seat belts. Each of you is the CEO of a giant financial institution. We are headed for rough times.' And I said, 'So your job, CEO, is to make sure that your financial institution is going to be standing on the other side once the econo-

my settles back down. Some are going to die. So how do you make sure yours is going to survive?" And hands go up. And so I call on the first kid. He says, 'Well, I sell off as many things as I can. Narrow down. Keep only high-quality assets and hold on to cash.' And I'm, 'Mmm. Anybody else?' And all the hands go down because that is the classic answer, right? You keep yourself safe. Kind of the bunker mentality.

"And finally, one kid gasps. Almost like he'd been shot. And the hand goes up. And I just keep standing in the front waiting. And then another hand goes up. And another. And another. And another. And you watch kids, with this jolt, some of them laugh out loud when they get it. And I wait until then—maybe a quarter of them have got their hands up, maybe a third—and call on someone. And the kid says, 'You grow as fast as you can. You buy as much as you can with borrowed money. And you lend and borrow from as many other large institutions as possible. Because then the government can't afford to let you fail.' My students invented 'too big to fail' sitting in a classroom. Because it's not that hard."

She then set about teaching the country, in one way or another, what she'd learned from her students, from the gray faces in the bankruptcy courts, and from her own drive to learn more about more things. Two months after the collapse, Harry Reid tapped her to head the Congressional Oversight Panel—acronym: COP—which would keep an eye on how the big banks whose policies led to the catastrophe were spending the \$700 billion bonanza. She had no subpoena power, but she made herself a burr under a number of saddles; the video of her putting Secretary of the Treasury Tim Geithner on the rack became a popular favorite. The country, it seemed, had awakened one morning to find that its entire economy was headed over a cliff, and almost nobody knew how it happened. She knew, and she began to teach again.

She taught on *The Daily Show*, where Jon Stewart said he wanted to make out with her—it did not begin well; she threw up before going on the set—and on a number of other television programs, starting with an appearance with Dr. Phil. "I started going on television to talk about what was happening in the crisis," she says. "To talk about what was happening in the bailout. And because I believe people had a right to know. And I think that this kind of, you know, econo-speak, that tries to convey what only the insiders understand, what's really going on—it's just wrong. And so that was where I first started talking to big audiences about the economics of this country."

She was able to think clearly about the unthinkable, and to explain the inexplicable, simply and with humor, and with a mildness that was belied by the directness of her message. The system, she said, had been rigged against the middle class. It had been infected with the arrogance of greed and the hubris of the people she calls the "Masters of the Universe." It was "tricks and traps" again but on a massive, economy-destroying scale. And, as she taught the country about this, she was learning about being a politician. She fought for—and won—the creation of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to be included in the Dodd-Frank financial-reform package, and she did it by mustering support from outside Washington. And though President Barack



Top: With Hillary Clinton and enemy-cum-ally John McCain at John Kerry's confirmation hearing to become secretary of state.
Above: Learning to be a candidate, spring 2012.

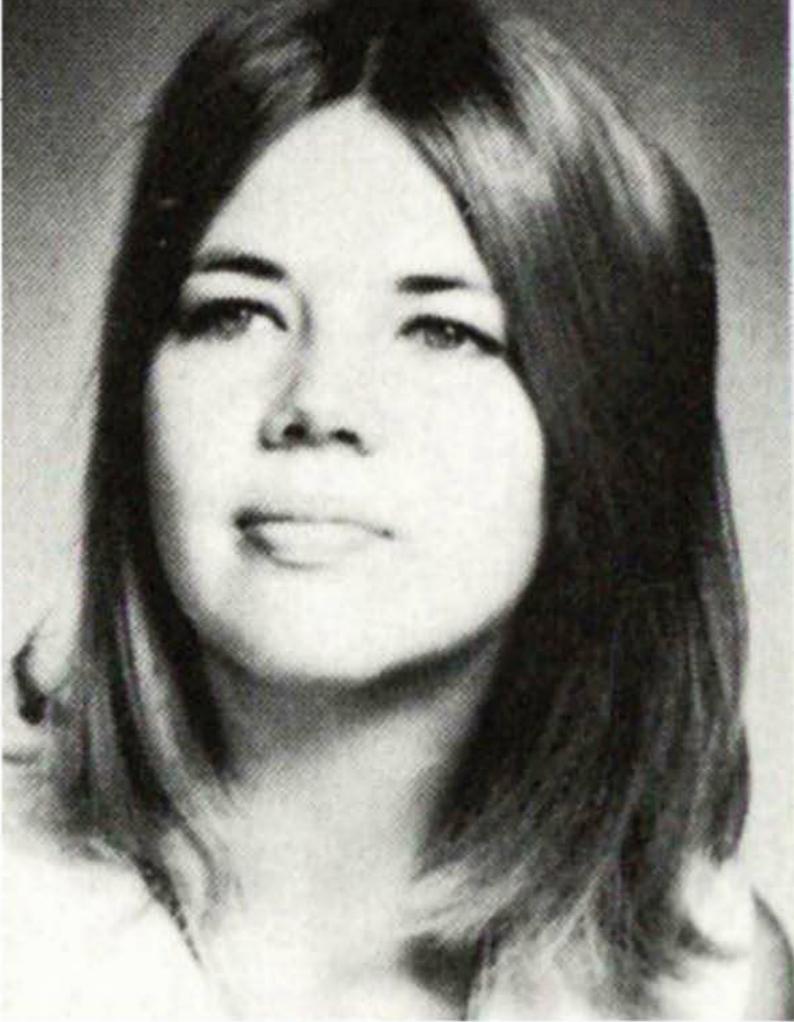
Obama declined to appoint her to direct it because he didn't think she could be confirmed, the battle burnished the credentials she would need to run for the Senate and win in a race in which she was a much better candidate at the end than she was at the beginning. She learned, and you could see her learning, day after day, learning so that she could one day teach.

Which is how she happens to be here, waiting for the last shuttle, posing for pictures with a half dozen admirers and

charming off the three or four people who ask excitedly if she's going to run for president. The presidential talk became inevitable almost as soon as she got elected to the Senate. She was the face of a country frustrated by the destruction wrought by its financial elite, working with what seemed to be an endlessly compliant federal government. The country's economy was looted. The world's economy was looted. Elizabeth Warren was the country's teacher, then, patiently explaining who the crooks were, and how they worked their dark magic, and why that meant that you lost your job or were foreclosed out of your house. And now, after eight years in which it seemed nobody paid any price for any of the crimes she had patiently explained, the forces that drew people to her lessons now are pushing her to become the face of what appears to be a rising kind of populism in Democratic politics. She does not want to run for president. She demurs politely when asked, and then she goes back to talking about just how danged interesting it was to learn how lightbulbs were made. People around her nod and smile, and now they know how lightbulbs are made, too.

"I had to work really hard to get here," she says. "I said, 'If I get to the United States Senate, I'm going to use that opportunity to work for the middle class and for working families every chance I get.'"

Can this country learn anymore? That is a question that underlies so many others. We have allowed ourselves in our politics to become contemptuous of knowledge, wary of science, and suspicious of expertise. In 1822, in a letter to William Barry, James Madison explained that "Learned Institutions ought to be favorite objects with every free people. They throw that light over the public mind which is the best security against crafty & dangerous encroachments on the public liberty. They are the nurseries of skillful Teachers for the schools distributed throughout the Community.... They multiply the educated individuals from among



Warren in 1970, a student at the University of Houston. It was in Texas that she began to study bankruptcy. Expecting at first to discover how consumers were swindling the system, her whole worldview was instead turned upside down.

his response is to stick his head in the oven. There is an awful kind of surrender in a feeling that institutions have grown too huge, too heedless, and too inscrutable for us to recognize their effect on our lives until it is too late. And the most heedless and inscrutable institutions in our lives are the institutions of money.

"It was moving around with so many zeroes behind it, you know the front number," Warren says, "that it does have an unreal quality to it. I think a lot of people are struggling to get hold of the psychology of the big money movers on Wall Street. Yeah. They're not like you and me."

They're certainly not like the Herrings of Norman, Oklahoma, who lived in a small house at the edge of town, bounded by what seemed like endless prairies. The Herrings, they lost a car to the bank. They moved from one house to another, each smaller than the one before. They finally settled in Oklahoma City, where Don Herring worked at Montgomery Ward and, later, as the maintenance man in an apartment building, and Pauline Herring worked at Sears, Roebuck in the catalog-sales department.

Betsy Herring was a prodigy. The caboose of four children, and the only girl, she graduated from high school at sixteen and did so as a state champion debater. She cobbled together her babysitting money and spent fifty dollars on money orders to apply to two colleges, Northwestern University, and George Washington University in Washington. She chose the latter, but left after two years. She was nineteen when she married Jim Warren, an engineer at IBM in Houston. She finished her undergraduate degree at the University of Houston and, when Jim's work took him to New Jersey, she enrolled in law school at Rutgers, graduating, eight months pregnant with her second child, in 1976. (The Warrens' firstborn, Amelia, eventually would become the coauthor of *The Two-Income Trap*, Warren's seminal book on how the middle class came to be devoured.) The marriage eventually foundered. The Warrens divorced in 1979. That year, in a summer seminar for law professors, she met a lanky Boston Yankee named Bruce Mann, whom she first hit up for tennis lessons. They were married in 1980.

She discovered a gift for teaching, bouncing around as an academic vagabond. It was while she was at the University of Texas that she joined two other researchers in the bankruptcy project that would become the beginning of her public life. She was sure when she began the project that she would chronicle the lives of the profligate and the greedy, people who spent beyond their means and were now trying to Welch on their obligations. That certainty vanished when she walked into the courtroom in San Antonio. There were people who were filing for bankruptcy because they had lost their jobs, or because they had had a major medical emergency and couldn't

whom the people may elect a due portion of their public Agents of every description; more especially of those who are to frame the laws...." We have come very far from this prescription to the age now where we fall, over and over again, for the laughable fiction that somebody running for office is somehow "not a politician," and that "common sense" tells us that democracy, for all its faults, is for suckers.

It would help, then, if the person doing the teaching has a bit of the dusty road in her voice, and has the ability to use the word *golly* with the same impact and to the same effect that Lyndon Johnson used to get out of *goddamn*. It would help if the teacher had a face that was open, with eyes that popped, and that was completely transparent in its impatience with cant and the great clouds of gobbledegook that the financial-services industry uses in the same way that squids use ink. It would help if she sounded as though she could explain, in simple terms and with actual common sense, how rigged the wheel is and that there is no pea under the shell. It would help if that lesson came in the voice of a woman who once led a Brownie troop in which she volunteered to be Cookie Mom not once but twice, which may be unprecedented.

"It was great," she says. "We had these stacks and stacks of cookies in our apartment, and eventually we had to make a path through them so we could get around."

Does this country even want to learn anymore? That's an even more basic question. We learned nothing from the S&L crisis of the 1980s, nothing from the bursting of the tech bubble, and it appears that we've learned nothing from the near destruction of the entire economic system by means of weaponized persiflage. The banks that were "too big to fail" are now even bigger. It is like a child who touches a hot stove and

keep up with the bills. They were people like the Herrings had been, one turn of the wheel away from personal disaster.

"You saw what had gone wrong with their lives," she recalls. "These were people who had built something, but who had been knocked upside down by a job loss or something else. So we do this study. We end up writing this book, and the thrust of our study is: Is bankruptcy being used by people who really could repay? And the answer was when you look at the real data that's all filed under penalty of perjury and with receipts attached and IRS forms and all kinds of other stuff, the answer is no possible way could these people repay more than pennies.

"We asked people to write down why you filed. Just tell us why you are in bankruptcy, in their own words. And that was the part that was just—and that's where people talked about... the baby died, or what it was like to care for a husband for nine years through dementia, and couldn't quite make it to the end of each month, so I'd use the credit cards to pay for his medications. And now he's gone and I have \$140,000 of debt, living on Social Security. And they just tell these stories. And I don't know how anybody could read that and still be the same. So for me it became the big shift on how I came to understand the world. That there are plenty of people out there with plenty of money to tell a story that suits their bottom line. But someone has to speak up for the people who are just getting rolled over."

By 1992, both she and her husband were teaching at Harvard Law School, and her class on contracts became a popular one. In fact, one day, on the first day of the semester, a young man came into the classroom and sat down in the front row. He was wearing shorts and sandals, and he was rather lounging in his chair. She walked in and decided that this was going to be the fellow that she would own that morning. She dropped a pile of books down with a conspicuous thump on a table at the front of the room and began the class.

"So, Mr. Kennedy," she said, "what's the definition of *assumpsit*?"

"It was the first class, first day of law school, and I took the class because she was the professor," says Mr. Kennedy, now Representative Joseph P. Kennedy III, grandson of Bobby Kennedy, grand-nephew of Senator Ted and President Jack, elected to Congress in the same election that brought Elizabeth Warren into the Senate. "I walk in, and I try to take a seat in the last row of the class. I put my head down, and I'd done the reading and I knew the basics of the case, and right before the class, I see that a lot of my classmates are sort of milling

around this seating chart, so I go down to it and I see that my seat is in the first row on the right-hand side. I couldn't believe it. I was mortified.

"I said, 'I don't know.' She said, 'You don't know?' She said, 'Mr. Kennedy, did you do your reading? You realize, don't you, that *assumpsit* is the first word in your reading?' I said, 'Yeah, I saw it, and I circled it because I didn't know what it meant.' So she said, 'Do you have a dictionary, Mr. Kennedy?' I said I hadn't had a chance to get one yet. She said, 'That's what people do when they don't know what a word is. They look it up in the dictionary. Is there anyone in the class who can help Mr. Kennedy?' Every hand in the class goes up.

"She would take classes that were really legal philosophy and bring them down to a real-world setting," Kennedy says. "She managed to get the class pulling for you, and pulling for each other, which is not an easy thing to do at Harvard Law School. She was able to build a sense of camaraderie, where we can all do this together. She said to me once, 'Look, we've got some pretty bright students here. If I can't get through to them, what does that say about me as a teacher?' Nobody at Harvard Law School ever says that about themselves. Nobody ever questions their ability as a teacher. She did."

On the day he graduated from Harvard Law, Kennedy was allowed to pick one of his first-year professors to award him his degree. He picked Warren. As she handed him his diploma, she asked him if he knew the definition of *assumpsit*.

It was a brisk, clear Sunday afternoon at the end of October in 2012. There was a major event at a place called Laborers' Training Academy, which was tucked into the woods in Hopkinton, to the west of Boston, in a curious compound of buildings circling a pond, built in 1969 to help train young people in the various building trades. It looked for all the world like an old WPA work camp. There were picnic tables and playground equipment scattered between the buildings, and the great hall was jammed for a Democratic political event. There were plasterers and plumbers, electricians and carpenters, and their spouses and their children. And there were candidates there to talk to them.

Young Mr. Kennedy from the contracts class was there as a candidate for Barney Frank's old congressional seat. He introduced Elizabeth Warren, who had spent the previous nine or ten months being cast by her opponent as a fake Indian, a Harvard elitist, and a carpetbagger from Oklahoma. In their first debate, Scott Brown had done everything except take off his shirt, flex, and pop a coldie for the cameras, appealing on several occasions to "all you union guys out there" not to be fooled by the fake-Indian professor from Harvard. This afternoon, though, with the campaign for the Senate having begun to sway perceptibly, was a measure of her ability to take what she had learned in her life, and especially in her still-new career as a political candidate, and use it to teach the people in the hall what they needed

"THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO HAVE PLENTY OF MONEY TO TELL A STORY THAT SUITS THEIR BOTTOM LINE. BUT SOMEONE HAS TO SPEAK UP FOR THE PEOPLE WHO ARE JUST GETTING ROLLED OVER."

to know about the system that was grinding so many of them into dust. She connected the corruption on Wall Street to the tricks and traps on their credit cards and their mortgage statements, and she connected that to stagnating wages and crumbling infrastructure. They applauded wildly every time she bore down hard on the word *union*, and it took her a long time to get through the crowd. Scott Brown was finished as a senator by the time she got to the car.

She began the campaign as more of an idea than an actual person. She had become a political celebrity through her work holding various Wall Street feet to the fire, and that had fired the movement to make her a candidate in the first place. At one of her first meet-and-greets, at a house party in Andover, she laid down a refrain that would become familiar when Barack Obama borrowed it lock, stock, and barrel in the presidential election that was still almost fifteen months away. He just didn't say it as well.

"There is nobody in this country who got rich on his own," she said. "Nobody. You built a factory out there—good for you. But I want to be clear: You moved your goods to market on roads the rest of us paid for. You hired workers the rest of us paid to educate. You were safe in your factory because of police forces and fire forces that the rest of us paid for. You didn't have to worry that marauding bands would come and seize everything at your factory.... Now, look. You built a factory and it turned into something terrific or a great idea—God bless! Keep a big hunk of it. But part of the underlying social contract is you take a hunk of that and pay forward for the next kid who comes along."

It immediately became a YouTube sensation. Democrats went over the moon. Rush Limbaugh said she was the heir to Mao's Cultural Revolution. It was superb politics, even if it was impromptu, which she insists to this day it was. Still, there was considerable doubt as to whether or not she would make it as a candidate. She did not begin well. There was some babbling from superannuated Hibernians in the Massachusetts political establishment about how she could never connect with the blue-collar voters in places like Malden and Worcester, and certainly not the way studly Scott Brown could. She had a rough time of it at a forum with a local public-radio host notoriously in love with his own voice.

But she kept rolling on, learning as she went. She accepted the role of work-in-progress, of learning to be a candidate on the fly. She rose to no bait, not even when her work on an asbestos settlement was used to try and dent her reform credentials. This was a skill she'd learned navigating the political shoals in Washington on behalf of financial reform. Because of that ability, she already was a politician. Now she was submitting herself to the people.

The real coming-out party was in Charlotte, North Carolina, at the 2012 Democratic National Convention. She spoke not long before Bill Clinton's bravura performance, so the hall was full and buzzing. Because she was one of the few people who had come out of the Wall Street debacle on the side of the angels, she already was beloved as a concept, if she was

still rather unknown as a candidate. Even before she took the stage, a guy in the Nevada delegation started chanting, "Consumer Finance Protection Bureau," which is not the easiest thing in the world to chant.

Her speech was a politician's speech. It was a candidate's speech. She applied what she had learned in Washington—in the fight over bankruptcy laws, as chairman of the TARP oversight board, and in the brawl to get the CFPB up and running—and she used it with one speech to nationalize the election in Massachusetts. She found the second verse to the refrain she had laid down in Andover.

"Republicans say they don't believe in government," she told the crowd. "Sure they do. They believe in government to help themselves and their powerful friends. After all, Mitt Romney's the guy who said corporations are people. No, Governor Romney, corporations are not people. People have hearts, they have kids, they get jobs, they get sick, they cry, they dance. They live, they love, and they die. And that matters. That matters because we don't run this country for corporations, we run it for people."

You could watch her learn, in public and in real time. She learned how to strike a balance between being a national politician and a local candidate. She convinced Boston Mayor Tom Menino to throw his entire political machine behind her because, as Menino said, over and over again, "She's good people." She pried an endorsement out of the Massachusetts firefighters union. In 2010, when Scott Brown had won his upset victory over Martha Coakley in the special election to replace Ted Kennedy, Menino's people largely had sat out the race, and a great number of the



Campaigning at Laborers' Training Academy in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, with congressional candidate and former student Joe Kennedy, and former senator Max Cleland of Georgia, October 2012.

firefighters voted for Brown. Part of this was the fact that Coakley ran one of the worst campaigns in political history. Part of it was Brown's natural appeal, which he largely abandoned in 2012 in favor of having people show up at rallies pretending to be Indians and derisively calling Warren "Professor," as though that were a curse. None of the hot buttons worked. She stayed resolutely, patiently on message. The system was rigged against the people who needed it the most. She was, as they say, wicked smart, and nobody held it against her, which was the most remarkable thing of all. She won the most expensive Senate race in the country by eight points, going away. On Election Day, she dropped into a burger joint in Medford.

"Holy shit," a woman cried. "It's Elizabeth Warren."

In a huge, quiet room in the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, the Senate Banking Committee has been called to order so that it can hear a report from Janet Yellen, the newly installed head of the Federal Reserve. (Warren and Yellen know each other from Warren's days on the TARP oversight panel.) You look at many of the people on this particular committee and you think about American politics these days, and you wonder why some of them aren't wearing fire suits festooned with the logos of their contributors, like Nascar drivers and their sponsors. The hearing is winding down and Senator Richard Shelby,

Republican of Alabama, seems to be having difficulty understanding the differences between “the banks in mah state” and the Federal Reserve.

Yellen answers Shelby’s question once, then twice, then a third time. Shelby still doesn’t quite get it. Down at the end of the large arc of the committee’s table, down where the rookies sit, Elizabeth Warren is, at this point, looking at Shelby as though he has two heads. She rolls her eyes. She rubs her temples. She looks at Yellen and shakes her head, and Yellen looks back and nods. You keep waiting for Warren to ask Shelby the definition of *assumpsit*.

(Warren and Shelby have something of a history. He was the Republican point man in the Senate in the fight over the CFPB in general, and over the possibility of Warren’s heading it in particular.)

We are, it seems, in a new Gilded Age in which self-government gives way to oligarchy, and in which the forces of the organized money power have sealed off all the avenues of democratic reform even more securely than they did during the last Gilded Age, which fell ultimately to the rising power of the Progressive movement and its own lurid excesses. In 1913, when the Federal Reserve was proposed, Senator Elihu Root of New York warned that by creating the Fed, “We are setting our steps now in the pathway which through the protection of a paternal government brought the mighty power of Rome to its fall.” Money does, indeed, talk. And Big Money repeats itself, age after age.

The Supreme Court has given license to corporate money to swamp the electoral system, and it is the most corporate-friendly Supreme Court since the turn of the last century. The banks that were too big to fail in 2008 are even bigger today, and the country seems to have learned nothing from the economic calamity that befell it. There are powerful forces arrayed against the country’s ability to learn anything from its recent history. There is a fearsome momentum behind the belief that the country’s economic situation is best left to the spells and conjuring words of the financial elite. There is a serious inertial pushback against self-government in every area, but particularly in the economy.

“We think of money differently because we think of money not just in terms of what it buys—a home, a car, or groceries—we think of it in terms of the security it provides,” Warren says. “But for others, the prestige of—you’ve seen the studies now. Or what’s being written about why CEO salaries have gotten so high? Because what’s the difference between whether a CEO makes \$18 million or \$20 million? I know, \$2 million. I can do the math. But why is the marginal \$2 million so powerfully important? And the answer is ‘Cause I got to be paid more than the other CEOs in the CEO club. And so it’s also, you know, in a world of hypereconomics, money becomes for some the only measure of value.”

Warren has been as frustrated as anyone else in the Senate. She has grilled regulators in front of the committee; one video that went viral has her asking a regulator when was the last time he brought a banker to trial. But as a new senator, she’s been

“WE’RE DOWN TO THE SHORT STROKES. EITHER WE PULL THIS OUT NOW OR THE GAME IS TRULY OVER.... WE’RE BACKED UP. WE’VE GOT NOTHING BEHIND US.”

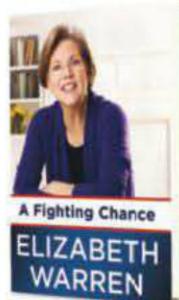
fighting uphill battles, especially on student loans. There has been some sniping back home about her staff’s work and her accessibility to the local media. (*The Boston Globe* ran a front-page story on why she doesn’t stop in the Senate hallways and talk to the press, the way John McCain does.) But if the vaunted new populism in the sclerotic Democratic party means anything, it means that the people of the country have to learn how to use their government again to defend themselves. That’s the final, and most important, lesson that Elizabeth Warren wants to teach, based on all that she’s come to learn.

A few days after the Banking Committee hearing, she’s sitting on the breezy porch of the house where she and Bruce live on the Harvard side of Cambridge. It is suggested to her that, maybe, this time around, the power of organized money may have completed its work of suffocating democratic reform. She comes almost vertical out of her chair.

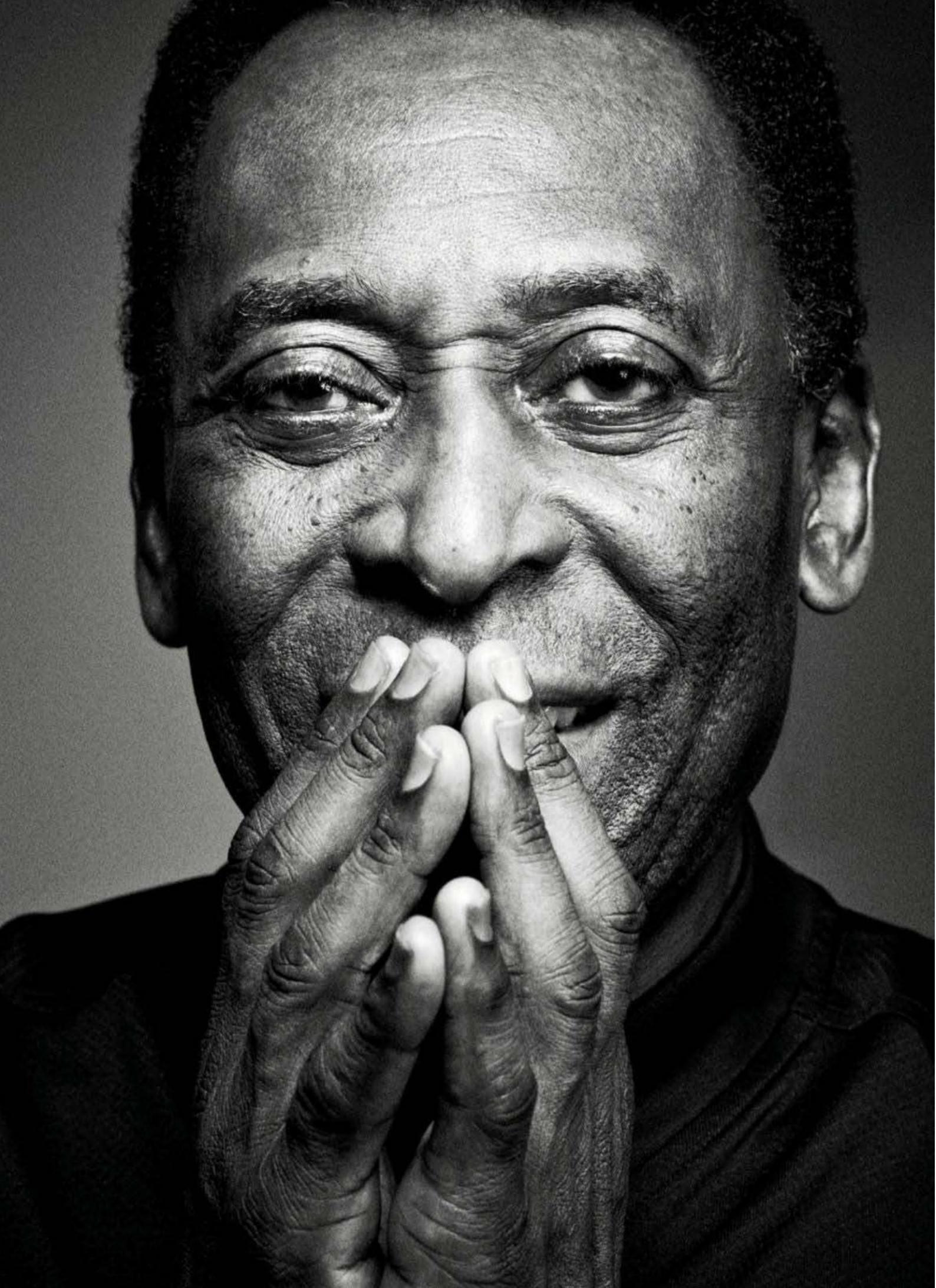
“I have four words for you,” she says. “Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau was number-one enemy for the large financial institutions during the Dodd-Frank reform. And I want you to think about that. Here’s Dodd-Frank reform. It’s going to take on those CDOs that they’ve been trading around and going to put new constraints on their business practices, and what was their number-one priority? Kill the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. They lobbied it. The lobbyists had said they’d killed it. You can see ‘em. You can go back and actually document. The lobbyists said over and over, this would never happen. There will be no financial reform with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Indeed, I was told the only way we’ll get reform through is if we’re willing to throw that over the side. We did not.” And then she gets to the whole point of the afternoon’s lesson. Squirrels dance atop the fence outside. Her voice gets lower.

“We’re down to the short strokes. Either we pull this out now or the game is truly over,” she says. “So, optimistic? You bet I am, because I can see victories, recent victories, victories even after the fire hose of money has been poured upon the system. But that doesn’t mean I know we’re going to beat it. It just means I know we can, because I’ve seen those victories. We’ve got to beat it. We don’t have any choice here. We truly are—we’re backed up. We’ve got nothing behind us. There’s no further place to back up.”

She sees the country in a different way from most people. She has a natural way of expressing the idea of a political commonwealth by anchoring it in the individual pasts of individual citizens, by teaching history, as it were, to [continued on page 140]



Her new book, a memoir, has intensified speculation that she is setting in motion a run for the presidency—a move she clearly doesn’t want to make.



PELÉ

LEGEND, 73, SÃO PAULO

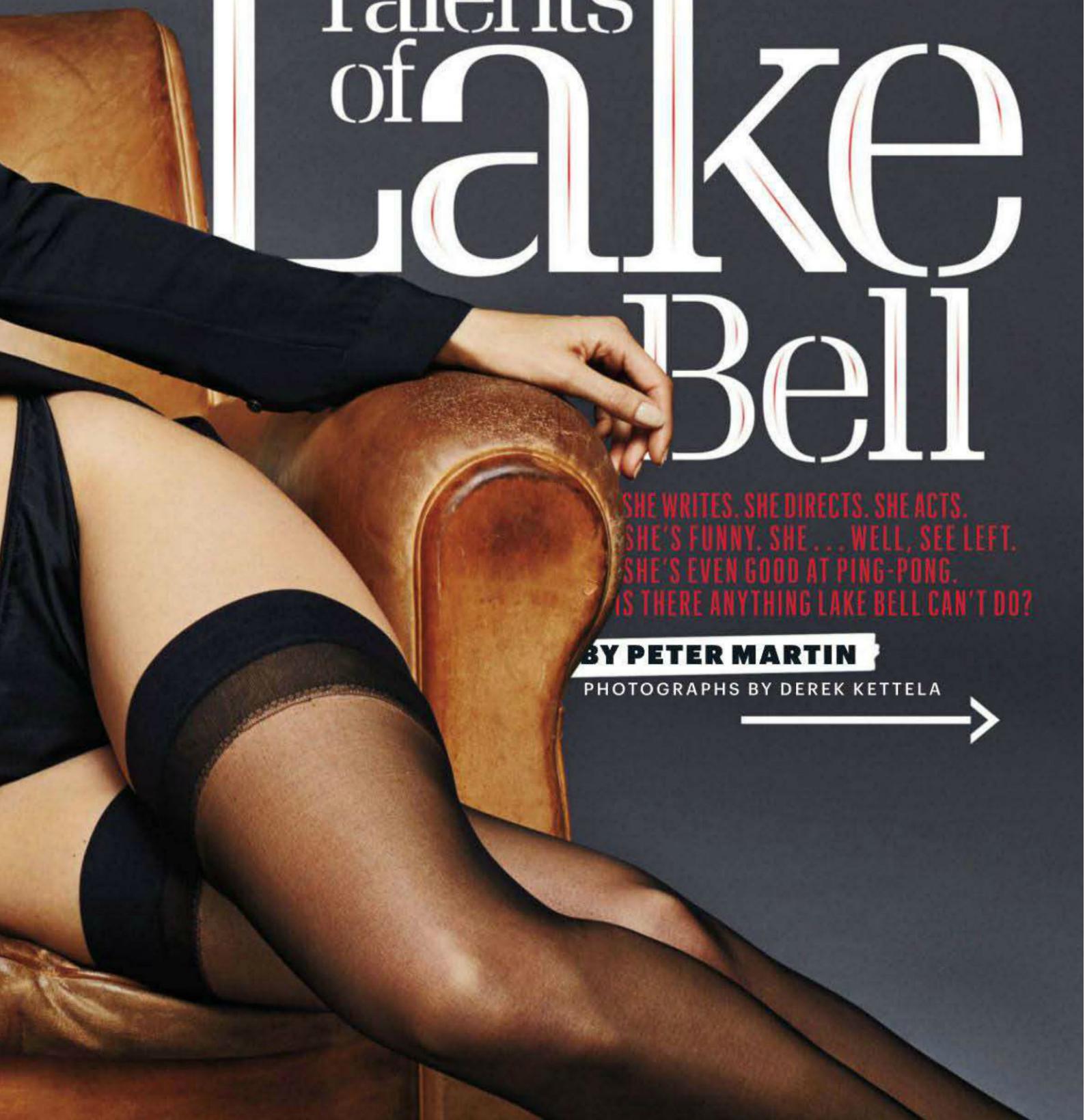
INTERVIEWED BY CAL FUSSMAN, JANUARY 31, 2014

- **Let me take a moment** to think about that. No...no, I have never been anywhere where people didn't know me.
- **The head talks** to the heart and the heart talks to the feet.
- **I was born in a city** called Três Corações, which means "three hearts," in the state of Minas Gerais. Just before I was born, we received electricity in our house. So my father said, "The electricity came when you were born, so I'm going to name you after Thomas Edison." But they took the *i* out, and that's how my name became Edson.
- **There are many athletes** who have impressed me over the years. But the one who impressed me the most was my father. That's because I was looking at him through the eyes of a nine-year-old.
- **Rice and beans.** That's the best food I've ever tasted. And it's good for your health.
- **Brazilians are welcome** wherever they go in the world. Happiness and the music are the most important things that we have.
- **If you're honest** and you want to work, America opens its doors.
- **When my father** hurt the ligaments in his knee, he had to stop playing, and this brought my family many financial problems. I was about ten years old at the time. My mother had to go out and wash clothes to help support us. My mother told me, "Don't play, because your father played and then he got hurt and now he can't provide for the family. Get an education." It was a different time, but she was right. Finally, she said, "You were born to play soccer. You have the talent to play soccer. But you're never going to be a great man unless you go to school and study." That was one of the biggest lessons she ever gave me.
- **Courage can bring** huge benefits to those who are prepared.
- **My father said,** "Don't think you're a great player. You need to train hard. You need to be prepared. You need to respect your opponent. Only then will you be able to be a great player."
- **A friend** is part of your family.
- **Was there a moment** that I knew I had gone beyond my father? I had the luck to be chosen to play on the Brazilian national team when I was sixteen years old, and when I was seventeen I went to Sweden to play in the World Cup. We won and I was champion of the world. That never happened to my father.
- **The most important moment** in my sporting career came in Africa in 1967. My club, Santos, was doing a tour across many continents, and we were invited to play in Nigeria. The club directors said, "How? Are you crazy! We can't play there. There's a civil war going on there." But the organizers said, "No, no, the people want to see Pelé play. We are going to stop the war to see Pelé play." So they stopped the war for forty-eight hours and they got to see Pelé play.
- **If I could do it over again,** I wouldn't change many things. Not for myself.
- **When you marry** for the second time, it's a renewal.
- **It's difficult to explain** because it was something in the moment and I was feeling very emotional. It was my last game for the Cosmos. Everybody was standing and applauding. *Poxa!* So I said: I thank God for all the love that he's given me. And I took advantage of the moment and asked the American people not to forget this love. I asked them to repeat the word three times. *Love. Love. Love.* It's a coincidence—but I was born in a place called Three Hearts.
- **You can't** be scared.
- **My youngest children are twins.** One boy and one girl. My son is playing soccer. He's not professional yet, but it's always emotional to see your son playing. I feel nervous that he might get hurt or not play very well. It's hard to watch. Sometimes I don't even go.
- **It's good on one hand** to be so loved. But sometimes you want that tranquillity that comes with privacy.
- **With soccer,** I traveled around the world. I was received in friendship and with affection all over. That is the best prize I ever won.
- **I hope** to have your friendship, and that I never disappoint you. ☺

Born Edson Arantes do Nascimento, Pelé first played for the Brazilian national team when he was sixteen, and went on to win three World Cups between 1958 and 1970. He is considered the greatest soccer player of all time. His new book, *Why Soccer Matters* (Celebra), has just been released, as his country prepares to host the 2014 World Cup.



A WOMAN WE
LOVE



The Many Talents of Lake Bell

SHE WRITES. SHE DIRECTS. SHE ACTS.
SHE'S FUNNY. SHE . . . WELL, SEE LEFT.
SHE'S EVEN GOOD AT PING-PONG.
IS THERE ANYTHING LAKE BELL CAN'T DO?

BY PETER MARTIN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DEREK KETTELA



She

really sucks at shuffleboard.

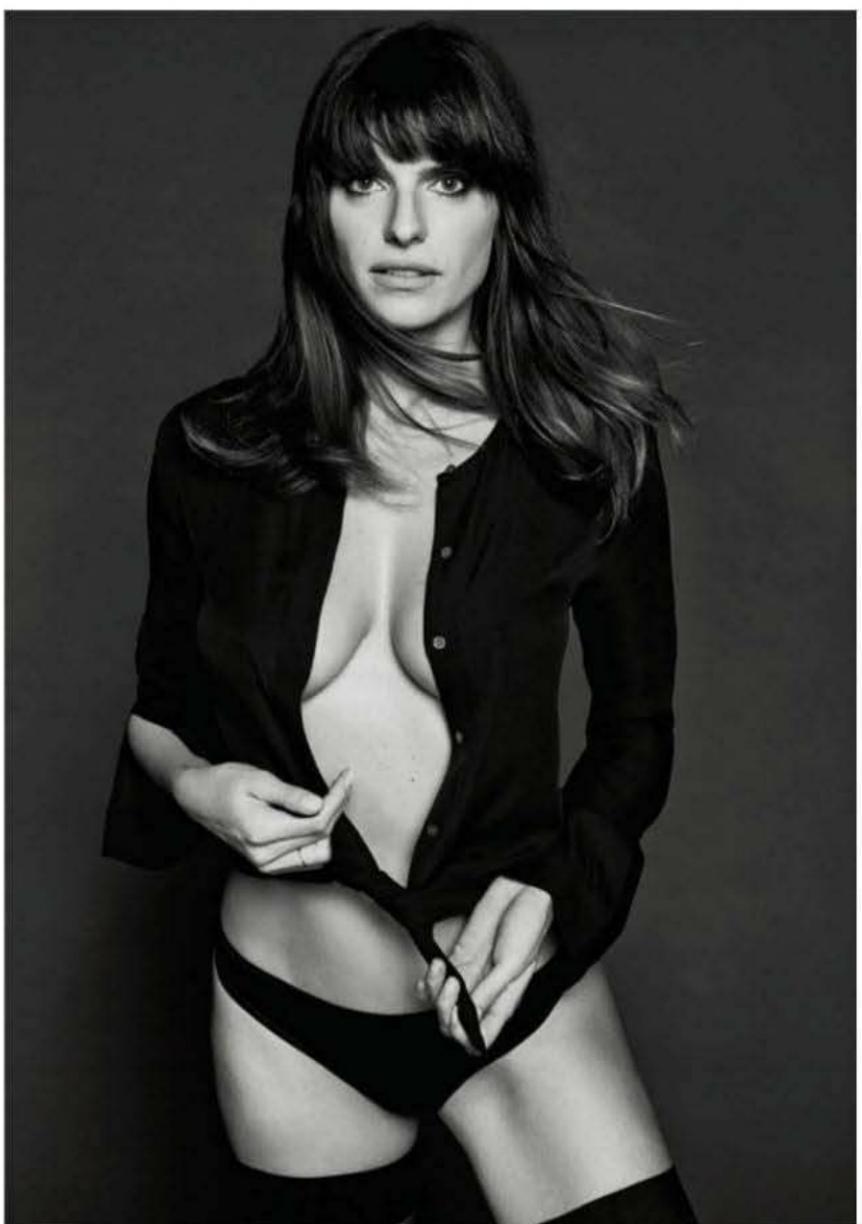
This isn't shuffleboard like you'd play on the deck of the *Caribbean Princess*. This is bar shuffleboard—metal pucks you slide by hand down a narrow, twenty-foot, sawdust-covered bowling lane. After a couple rounds, Lake Bell is behind. And angry.

"Fuuuuuck you," she groans as one of my pucks bangs into hers, sending it into the gutter. We're at Fat Cat in the West Village, a dark, underground playroom with pool, Ping-Pong, and shuffleboard—a place where I'd hoped she'd grab a beer and instead she brought her own coconut water. I also hoped she'd be wearing well, look around this page. But Bell, thirty-five, is comfortably dressed in dark red pants, ankle-high zipped boots, and a black sweater emblazoned with a foot-tall paper clip. The look is very Etsy-chic, as if she were someone who might make her own shampoo if she didn't have better things to do. Bell slides her last puck down the table and we follow it to the other end. We disagree over the scoring rules. She calls me a few names.

She's good at that. She makes it fun. And she's always been good at that, too.

→ THE ACTING CAME FIRST.

Starting at four years old, "I was tirelessly motivated, because I felt very clear about what I wanted to do," she says. "I didn't fully understand what it meant to be an actor, but I knew it was someone who gets to play different characters, gets to pretend to be in different worlds, and gets to make people laugh or feel. I'm sure there was some sort of validation, where the attention is on me and I can make people laugh; that's normal kid stuff. But then it started to gestate into something more complicated and exciting and very fulfilling." After studying drama in London, Bell had some small roles—on *ER*; as a lawyer on *The Practice* and its spin-off, *Boston Legal*; something with Ashton Kutcher. But it wasn't until she played a manic and manipulative dreamer among a group of New York City hustlers in HBO's short-lived *Entourage* of the East, *How to Make It in America*, that her name drew legitimate boldface. Rob Corddry's





A WOMAN WE
LOVE

NO, YOU DON'T
HAVE TO LOOK
LIKE THIS
TO BE A GOOD
WRITER AND
EXCELLENT
PING-PONG
PLAYER. BUT
YOU DO IF YOU
ALSO WANT
TO PLAY DR.
CAT BLACK ON
CHILDRENS
HOSPITAL.





A WOMAN WE
LOVE

**"IF I WRITE
SOMETHING
AND I'M
GOING TO PUT
IN ALL THAT
LOVE AND
ENERGY,"
BELL SAYS,
"I WANT TO
DIRECT IT."**



very funny Adult Swim series, *Childrens Hospital*, didn't hurt, either. On it, Bell plays the spacey Dr. Cat Black, an obtuse and loving doctor who, at one point, tries to convince a pregnant woman that she should give up her baby because it is suffering from no-adoptionitis. "Before you say no," Dr. Black says, "consider this: I *really* want a baby." Although Dr. Black has the intellect and demeanor of a person who snacked on paint chips, she does share a similarity with all of Bell's characters: You can tell Bell is having a great time playing her.

→ THE WRITING CAME SOON AFTER.

When she left New York City to go to boarding school at age fourteen, writing became Bell's way of connecting with her mom. "My mother is a beautiful writer," Bell says. "Writing letters back and forth with her was an athletic endeavor, and it became something I really looked forward to." Those letters led to a journaling habit, and soon Bell stopped writing to Mom so she could concentrate on writing for herself. She focused primarily on dialogue and dialect, although not always to the greatest effect. "I had all kinds of stupid, horrible scenes and...you know, fucking pretentious investigations of the human condition." She found herself paying attention to the vocal tics around her, which led to her discovery of a social scourge she's been trying to bring attention to ever since: vocal fry—the raspy, high-pitched baby voice that women sometimes adopt in an attempt to be sexy. (She does a great impression. Search "Lake Bell" and "vocal fry.") It also led her to the frame of her first major screenplay, *In a World...*: how we talk.

Yes, that sounds boring. And it would have been if Bell had simply left it at that. Instead, she wrote a poignant film about the strain of father-daughter relationships and the persistent bias women still face in the workplace. Bell plays a voice coach and the daughter of a famous voice-over actor whose shadow she's trying to escape. It's full of funny performances from Bell and Corddry and a cast of real voice-over actors whose voices are so lush and velvety, you could almost rest your head on them. Sundance liked it, too, and Bell won the festival's Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award in 2013.

→ AND THEN IT ONLY MADE SENSE TO DIRECT.

"If I write something and I'm going to put in all that love and energy, I want to direct it," Bell says. So after writing *In a World...*, she decided to direct it, too. She'd had some practice directing—if a few plays in high school count. And from the age of fifteen to twenty-two, in a move that presaged and upstaged the current trend of millennial narcissism, she decided to carry a VHS camera around in order to record her life. But what really helped her hone her abilities behind the camera was the ten years she'd spent in front of it. "As an actor, you have access to the trenches—to a myriad of different sets," she says. "You can sponge and learn, or you can go back to your trailer and look at YouTube videos of cute kids falling asleep. There's a time for those videos, but I had a hunger to learn."

She also had a hunger to keep writing. As soon as *In a World...* was done, Bell was already at work on another project, which she's described as an in-depth look at marriage. (Although she is now married—to tattoo artist Scott Campbell, whom she met on the set



of *How to Make It in America*—Bell's views on marriage are, well, nuanced: "Marriage is traditionally old-school in many respects. It is highly antiquated, and, that being said, beautiful.") She plans on eventually directing this one, too. Through all the work, all the stress, Bell makes sure she always focuses on one thing: "I don't think I'd do it if it wasn't fun."

We've moved on to Ping-Pong. We're just hitting back and forth.

No scoring, for the sake of conversation. As we talk, there's a burbling joy just under the surface of everything Bell says—the same glimmer that shows in all of her characters. It's there when she talks about filming a new comedy, *Man Up*, with Simon Pegg. And it's there when she convinces me to take my mom to her newest movie, *Million Dollar Arm* (out May 16). In that one, she stars alongside Jon Hamm, who plays a struggling sports agent who goes to India and creates a reality show in an attempt to find the next great pitcher. "It's sweet. And it's a true story," Bell says. "You're going to cry."

I see it a few weeks later, and she's right. Not about the crying, but it is a touching story. There's a moment in the middle that reminded me of her. Two boys selected in the competition to come to Los Angeles are struggling to find their pitches. Their coach, a diminutive Indian baseball fan who tagged along to basically become the movie's mascot, is sent out to talk them up. What he says is pure Disney, spread on thick: These guys are given a chance to make not just their dreams come true, but his. All they need to do is have fun. ■

ESQUIRE MUSIC PRESENTS

THE IMPASSIONED MOTHERS TOUR



THE FIVE STAGES
OF MUSICAL FAME

THE NEXT SEVERAL PAGES are about five men who seem to be anomalous right now: impassioned musicians in a time of wan covers, insipid pop songs, and Coldplay-esque indie bands who seem more interested in palliative hooks than in stirring emotion. These men sing and rap about things at stake. ¶ And they earnestly ask us to listen. Beg us, almost. Taken together, these men present the five stages of a career. ¶ Frank Turner, from the UK, is a former punk singer turned balladeer. You've probably never heard of him. Kid Cudi, at thirty and in the midst of the successful release of his third album, talks about growing up after some, uh, distractions took him away from his remarkable gift for making concept albums. He's figuring out how to be a man...with a little help from Michael Bolton. RZA is a frustrated leader—the anchor of the Wu-Tang Clan, a group perpetually on the verge of making the most important rap album ever. Tom Morello, post-Rage Against the Machine: in the middle of an unlikely career move. And goddamn Kris Kristofferson, as he approaches eighty, is still touring. ¶ Their music is about taking risks. And caring. Not some distortion of caring, slowed down and squeezed through a reverb filter. Plain, naked sincerity.

POSTER BY AESTHETIC APPARATUS





STAGE 1: THE UNKNOWN

YOU'VE PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF FRANK TURNER. BECAUSE HE'S JUST GETTING STARTED. RESTARTED, REALLY.

BY LISA TADDEO

POSTER BY SHAUN ALCOCK

Fresh off the beer line at the Frank Turner show at London's O2 Arena, three punk boys look for the exit. Show's not half over. What's the deal, boys? ¶ "Frank Turner," says the leader, "is bullshit. We came for Flogging Molly. The opening act." ¶ "Bloody hell," says the one with a shaved head, expressing remorse on his mate's behalf. ¶ "Look," says the leader, "some people like that upbeat, romantic, soppy stuff."

SONGS FOR MEN

★★★ BY ANDY LANGER ★★★



• "IF I'M UNWORTHY," **BLAKE MILLS**
For its fifty-five-second guitar solo that not so gently weeps desolation and devastation.

• "BIG CIG,"
THE HOLD STEADY
Nobody writes about damaged women like Craig Finn.

"Bloody hell!" yells the third. "Show her shirt now!"

The leader Supermans open his jacket to expose a heather-gray T-shirt, two sizes too large, with Frank Turner's face sketched into a romantic, moody pose that looks down, possibly, at tears that have fallen upon his guitar.

"Listen," he says: "The bloody T-shirt came with the bloody ticket."

"Ya, it's true," confirms the nerd. "Plus a shot glass and a pendant. See?"

"Anyhow, least I listened to it. This restless bastard"—the leader points to the shaved head—"had his iPod in his ear the whole time, blasting Leviathan, for fuck's sake."

There's a pause, and at last the leader says, "Look, he's all right, right? The girls know all the words to all his songs. But we're blokes, right? Just regular blokes. We came here looking for something else."

UNDER THE O2

Frank Turner leads us through a warren of gray rooms beneath the same stage on which Taylor Swift recently played. His friends ask which seats she sat on so that they can rub their bums across them.

We sit at a table in the heart of the catering room and eat macaroni and cheese the yellow of school buses and the flavor of vinegar. Turner loves it. He squirts some ketchup onto the plate. "I've done—he looks into the air as if to count—one thousand five hundred and twenty...six solo shows now." But he doesn't have to count, because it seems he has a mental tally going. Every time the houselights dim, he clicks it and goes, And there's another.

He's good-looking and his eyes are warm and he has a scruffy beard. He's wearing a white T-shirt, and there are tattoos along his arms and fists.

This is probably the first time you've heard of him—unless you saw the line-up for this year's Coachella—but he has already headlined big venues in the U.S., like House of Blues in Boston, and in the UK he played to a sellout crowd at Wembley Arena, about ten thousand people. He even played the Olympics in London. But a lot of people don't know his name. A British friend living in the States who goes to Barnes & Noble every month to park on the floor with a latte and read every music magazine hasn't heard of him. He says, "I even asked my friends. Nothing."

Might be because Frank Turner made a wholesale change—modifying his sound

from riotous punk to pleasing guitar riffs, changing gears from punk to country/folk/punk. Still punk, sure. But the flavor changed and so did the lyrics. He used to grab a microphone and hold it across his angry mouth sideways. He screamed on a rocky English beach in a video. Now in his videos he's on another beach, barefoot, wearing a vest and strumming a guitar on a dining-room chair on the smooth sand.

In a pre-evolutionary Frank Turner video for "I Am the Party," he sounds angry, and the comments on YouTube are like, *THIS is the same Frank Turner as the one today? Now I get why people like him.*

He didn't, however, come from some Sex Pistols' back alley. Turner, thirty-two, grew up upper-middle class in Winchester. It's been reported that his dad carried on a clandestine affair with another woman for years, a situation Turner learned about only a few years ago, but he demurs when I ask about it, saying he wants to protect his mum. He attended Eton, same class as Prince William, which in England—especially in the "fuckin' punk community"—means a ton of hell, but he went on scholarship. He wasn't a fancy rich kid. He looked like Screech, according to his best friend, and went around saying "football's for twats" to Arsenal and Manchester United fans alike. Suddenly the two opposing sides had something to be united over and kicked his skinny arse into some bushes.

The little boy grew up into someone a little more raw than his background might have foretold, fronting a hardcore punk band, the Million Dead; sporting Jesus hair; and shouting to small, terribly angry audiences about Margaret Thatcher ruining the kids.

But then he met Jay, who performs as Beans on Toast. Jay taught him Townes Van Zandt and the Band and Creedence. Later, when Turner came home from a tour with the Million Dead, which was already beginning to crumble, he'd play Neil Young covers at Sensible Sundays. Instead of, you know, Leviathan.

And so transpired what Turner calls a natural evolution, but what a subsection of fans from the Million Dead days refers to as "a fuckin' bloody sellout situation."

"Sellout," Turner says, "has become a tag that kids can throw effortlessly at bands they're pissed at."

He says there's an innate suspicion in the community about the music industry trying to turn what is truly a rebel home in the woods into another tappable market. Sometimes that suspicion turns into a knee-jerk reaction, an anger over any kind of success or change. "Strangely, then," Turner explains, "punk becomes a conservative statement, which is not what

punk was supposed to be."

"Yeah," he says, picking up a sticky bun, "these days, some of my fans would be utterly disgusted with me, if they still even think of me."

Now he sings of breakups that wreck you. He's always loved a good breakup record: Bruce's *Tunnel of Love*, Frightened Rabbit's *The Midnight Organ Flight*. Arab Strap's he calls "excoriating" and "brutally honest." So he went and made his own. But first he went and broke a heart.

He wrote the bulk of his latest album, *Tape Deck Heart*, from

This page and the next: Frank Turner onstage at London's O2 Arena on February 12. Backstage before the show.



• "ROSIE," LYLE LOVETT

This Jackson Browne composition has long been the best tribute to cleaning your rifle this

side of "I Touch Myself."

In a stroke of genius, Lyle Lovett plays it deadpan.

• "HOOVER STREET," SCHOOLBOY Q

Kendrick Lamar's Black Hippy crew is the gift that keeps on giving.

• "TICKING BOMB,"

ALOE BLACC
There's no Aloe Blacc without James Brown. But most



gym, then listen. It's fizzy and pained and promises that cherry blossoms are around the corner. New girls in new cities. Your career.

You get to this spot in your trajectory and I wonder how many more blowjobs per month that means. Is there a way to quantify fame? Or does the number stay the same but the quality of hair on the head of the girl at your waist improve?

"Look," he says, taking a polite sip of cola, "it's something to do after a show.

"But. It can be boring. No, it can be worse than boring. It can be... soul-destroying. You know what Mike Tyson said of all the women he banged? He said that they were each taking a piece from him. I feel similarly."

Someone heard "Anymore" somewhere and sent it to the ex and she rang him up and, as you might imagine, excoriated him. But you have to listen to all of it, Turner says. "Recovery," "Plain Sailing Weather," "Broken Piano"—as a whole, it tells a story. Anyway, he and the ex have had dinner. It's fine now.

Of course it's fine now. His songs said it would be. In his music, Frank Turner is either receiving redemption or delivering it. Redemption for everyone.

ON THE FLOOR

The major archetype at this show is a twenty-seven-year-old assistant in an office. Indiscriminate, friendly, homey. Young and not exactly inspired, but not the opposite either. Not hardcore. Having a good Wednesday night at the show. Having a beer after. Going to work in the morning. Eating a Danish and skipping the gym.

You know, a bloke.

The U.S. is three juice fasts away from having *Tape Deck Heart* on its iPod. And by the time Turner fully arrives here, a lot of the backstory won't matter much. Maybe being hardcore punk wasn't true to Frank Turner and to his path. Anyway, his lyrics were not that wild and angry, even then. They were conscientiously tak-



ing the leadership to task, but with a rough sound, like a prim uniformed boy raising his hand at Eton and shouting, "EXCUSE ME, BUT MAY I GO TO THE BLOODY BATHROOM?!" These days, anyhow, the angst in the districts is not so overt. It is sore and quiet and takes out the recycling, so maybe this middle-management, middle-core voice suits the future better. This idol doesn't bang a girl every night or indiscriminately despise government ministers. He drinks a Throat Coat before a show and ices his back and reads a Rod Stewart autobiography in the bunk of his dark, clean, fuckless bus.

The guy next to me says he saw him in Peterborough, in the east of England, where he played to three people. "Three," he says, sloshing a gin and tonic with import. "He fuckin' deserves this."

Then the lights go dim.

ONSTAGE

My name's Frank Turner, and it's a real pleasure to be here! he roars into the mic. His white shirt is lit up like a monument at night. There are pyrotechnics. More people listen than text.

He looks recently showered. He used to sleep on couches with the stuffing spilling out and the whole continent smelled of shit beer. His hair was longer and he drank more. Nowadays drinking's not as fun as succeeding.

He's in Climb Mode.

His guitar is no longer just an instrument. It has an air about it. It's like the two of them might have a beer tonight and discuss who's more enchanting.

He used to be in a punk band, but now he wants to leave a folk song as his legacy. "A folk song," he said. "To be remembered through the ages." He pictures a group of boys singing his song around a campfire in the south of England—boys not unlike the one he was, but boys who will grow up to be blokes unlike the one he has become. There are a thousand roads that lead to Rome, but his road is now paved before him, and he has cleared two lanes, for his two buses.

The entire mammoth place is screaming for him. The floor is humming. All of England seems to be waiting, and all the world behind it. Every flag is represented, every coat of arms, every socioeconomic what-have-you, every transgendered chat room, and the room is howling now, spitting with desire, can you feel it, well, yes, you can, and before he fully submerges into that warm milk bath of glory, his guitar seems to jab him in the kidney, as if to say, *Let's go, man.*

Turner closes his eyes. And you can almost hear the weighty click: one thousand five hundred and twenty-SEVEN.

Lesssssgo!!!!

people forget Mr. "Please, Please, Please" was also Soul Brother Number One, a protest singer. Blacc hasn't.

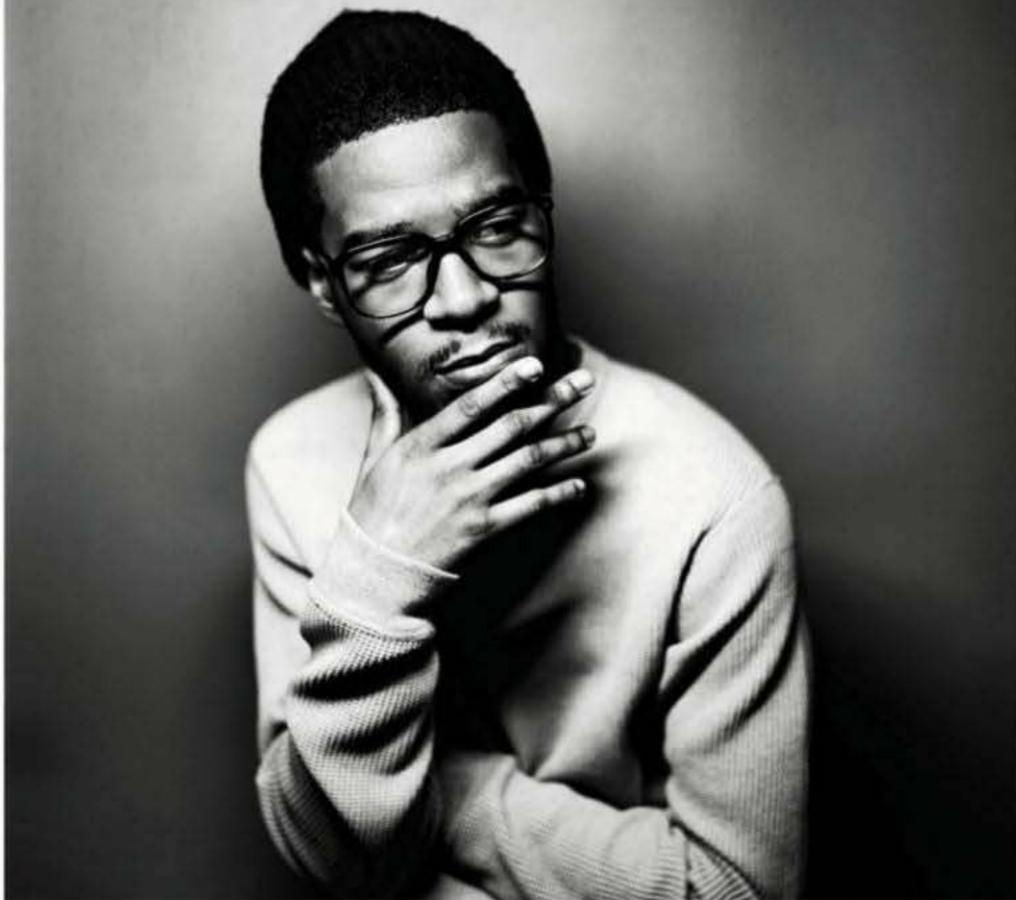
• "LET'S GET DRUNK AND GET IT ON,"
OLD 97's
There's really nothing more to say.

• "AIRWAVES," RAY LAMONTAGNE
It's like Dan Auerbach tried to re-create the vibe of Beck's *Morning Phase*.

• "DIVISIONARY (DO THE RIGHT THING),"
AGES AND AGES
Next time you run across a thread of shitty Facebook



Tape Deck Heart
(2013)



STAGE 2: THE RISING STAR

★THE KID★ POST-WILIN'

STILL ONE OF THE MOST PROMISING VOICES IN HIP-HOP, KID CUDI LOOKS BACK ON A CAREER THAT ALMOST DERAILED RIGHT AT THE START

INTERVIEWED BY ANNA PEELE

I still do juvenile shit here and there. But I'm not doin' no dumb shit, like pissing in mop buckets, because I got respect for people's shit, and I lived a real life. I used to work at restaurants where I mopped the floor. Justin Bieber hasn't worked a real job, ever, in his life. So he don't know what it's like to fill that mop bucket, go to work, see that motherfuckers didn't clean it the night before and you have to pour it out and put clean water in there. He didn't think about that, because he's just a kid. He ain't lived.

► And I hope to God that he goes through all this shit and realizes *Damn, I was wilin'*. He got a couple more mistakes to make, and he need to make them. When you're in our position, you are single-handedly responsible for multiple people's livelihoods. When I was on cocaine, I would lash out at whoever was closest. I got com-

fortable having everything I wanted. So everybody loses their way, because it's not normal. But you have to get to that point where it's like, "All right, man, let's grow up."

► Whatever age you are just before you're famous, that's where you stop the growth. Look at Michael Jackson, who got famous when he was really young

and didn't have a childhood. His whole life he was this child-like person. I got famous when I was twenty-three, so in my mind I'm almost still the twenty-three-year-old Scott, because I've been disconnected from reality and society for the past six years. I have to relearn some things. But you can't be a bitch about it. You gotta go out and just do it.

► Being a young black man coming from hip-hop, people are already expecting you to be one thing. I use elements of rapping in my music, but I'm not entirely a rapper. I'm pretty much this dude that just makes jams. I don't know what you would call it. I don't know how you would describe it. It's just shit that feels right, and that's just how it needs to be.

ESSENTIAL
DISCOGRAPHY
IF YOU LISTEN TO ONLY TWO THINGS...



Man on the Moon: The End of Day (2009)



Satellite Flight: The Journey to Mother Moon (2014)

► **Jay Z's** got it all figured out. He's a grown, mature man who's lived and been through it. I think time is what gets you to that place. You look at people, like Hove, who've learned to manage their lifestyle and live healthier and surround themselves with the right people. To be dedicated to your work, but also be dedicated to your personal life and have a code and an understanding between you and your spouse. You can just look at Jay and Beyoncé and tell that there's this peacefulness within that relationship. I've been around them on many occasions and it just fuckin' annoys me!

► **Michael Bolton** is awesome, man. I reached out to him when I was recording *Indicud*, and he was really into it. That's usually how it happens. Some people are into collaboration when you reach out and some people might not get it. But I don't really have those issues, because I'm reaching out to people that I know are on the same frequency creatively. My collaborations have never been some cookie-cutter shit, where I'm dealing with somebody who I don't really admire as an artist. Every session has been awesome, Michael included. He's like a new mentor figure in my life.

► I was going through some things with the label and Michael told me, "Just make sure you have an alliance with one person up there. One person that's fighting for you, that gets what you're doing."

► I don't usually have anyone telling me when I'm wrong in my life. There's no one telling any celebrities "don't." No one is telling Miley Cyrus "don't." No one is telling Justin Bieber "don't." But it's not even my place to speak about that boy. I don't even know why I got into it. He ain't my son, thank God.

comments, post a link to this instead of to some cats jumping in and out of an Amazon box.

• "SWEET DISARRAY,"

DAN CROLL

A gorgeous meditation on his grandmother's dementia.

• "ALGIERS," AFGHAN WHIGS

Greg Dulli's Roy Orbison impression is in full effect here, and it's successfully utilized.

• "DOLLA DIVA,"

GALACTIC

The most talented dance-music ensemble of our time.



IT ALL FLOWS THROUGH

KRIZZIA



LIVE FRI 9
MAY

ESQUIRE ARENA

WU-TANG CLAN

STAGE 3: THE LEGEND

THE WU-TANG CLAN IS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL AND UNPREDICTABLE HIP-HOP ENSEMBLE EVER ASSEMBLED. RZA IS, ALWAYS WAS, AND ALWAYS WILL BE ITS ZENLIKE LEADER, FROM THE FIRST RECORD TO THE ONE THEY'RE FINISHING NOW—IF IT EVER COMES OUT.

BY TOM CHIARELLA



POSTER BY INDY VISUALS

In 1990, back on Staten Island, he called himself Prince—Prince Rakeem. That was the name he used then, making less-than-average novelty rap numbers, scratching his way toward a possible album, maybe a career of sorts. Prince Rakeem, Bobby Steels, Rzarector: He was all those things until he was just RZA, a name that felt earned by his stepping around the record deals and the management contracts. ¶ The stepping around resulted in his creating the Wu-Tang Clan when he was twenty-two. Nine disparate emcees picked up from the projects around Staten Island united behind RZA to release *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* in 1993, the White Album of hip-hop records, a generous sampling featuring a Chinese kung-fu movie; studio and live performances; throbbing, marauding, simple bass beats pierced by subtle piano riffs; and, rarest of rare, those nine different emcees willing to stand aside to let the others work, having been convinced by RZA—using the fundamentals of the samurai code—to act as one. Loyalty, code, discipline. RZA preached that, and the men listened.

"When we started, our goal was to become the industry," RZA says. "We started in my apartment. I didn't have no power, didn't pay the light bill. No one cared. No one knew any different. Making demo after demo, people just rotating through. I'm the only thing that was always there. And that's how *36 Chambers* was formed—in the demos, in going into the studios as one. We recorded them again. Our own way. The whole industry. To take it [away] from people who had nothing to do with us. Record executives, managers, engineers. We took it. One army."

HERE AND NOW, RZA is a kind of prince. At forty-three, he is regal, elegant, contained—the embodiment of a prince. On this afternoon, there's a robe twisted all the way around him, held at the collar. Him sitting high in a chair, back set rigid, upright. An attendant at his side, a lieutenant dozing along a low garden wall. A woman brings drinks. This on a terrazzo set beneath a trellis, all of that sitting at the top of a tiered garden. The past—how he got here—described as a kind of long spiritual pilgrimage, detailed in a long ramble. Like: "I was spiritual before I became a performer, know what I'm sayin'? And that was after Christianity let me down. The teachings of it didn't work when I weighed it against the people who was teaching it to me. It was like saying, 'You exercise the body enough and everything be fine, you thrive'—only you saying it and you don't

got no muscle. Anybody can see how weak you are, know what I'm sayin'? I'm a boy then. Ten, eleven, twelve. I'm like, 'What the fuck you talking about? It doesn't add up. It's not being practiced.' And it got to the point where I came to feel I was being persecuted by the people who were teaching me Christianity. There was no example for a young man to follow. Because I'm like, 'Don't tell me to turn the other cheek when you aren't turning your own.'" A lot of words, making for a dense patch of seconds. Like any poet or balladeer, like any prince who needs to be heard, the RZA punctuates his words with more words still. "Keep in mind now, I'm the guy who wrote, 'Turn the cheek and I'll break your fucking chin.'" Then he lets fall his conversation hook, the five-syllable rhythmic coda of his every decree: "Know what I'm sayin'?"

REGARDING THE SCENE ABOVE: The robe around RZA is a barber's smock. The throne, a kitchen stool. Around him—manager, driver, assistants, sure. But this is just a haircut for RZA, spiritual father of the ethereal and unending Wu-Tang Clan, in his own backyard. The Clan: RZA, Method Man, Ghostface Killah, Raekwon, GZA, U-God, Masta Killa, Inspectah Deck, the late Ol' Dirty Bastard—aliases all, still odd enough to come from the highly weird, weirdly unknowable future in which names are pure mask and metaphor.

"It flowed through me," he says. His barber slips the number one off the end of his clippers, and RZA assesses the rightness of the edge where hair meets forehead. "It was them, but it flowed through me. That's why I'm on the line every time it does or doesn't happen with us. It's on me right now, on me. Always on me. It's what I'm trying to do with this next album." The Wu-Tang are perennially working on a new album. This year, there are two. The first is a single-copy release—just one physical copy, which you can pay to hear in person, at a traveling display. Called *Once Upon a Time in Shaolin*, it's RZA's reinvention of the album release as public event, which will, he hopes, circumvent the power of BitTorrent and bootleggers. The second is a much-anticipated album that

• "FRIDAY FISH FRY," KELIS

Technically, this is a double entendre, but trust us, she's selling it very convincingly as



a single: "Give me what I want. Give me what I need. I'm begging you please, I'm down on my knees."

• "MR. TEMBO," DAMON ALBARN

This choir-enhanced ode to a

baby elephant is the most upbeat track on his first solo record.



RZA talks about now as if it's hanging in the air right in front of him. To get it done, he's slogging through the familiar process of bringing the Wu together again, one by one. It's always tough.

He is asked what he will call the album.

"It's called *A Better Tomorrow*."

Anyone who knows RZA knows he has a weakness for the spiritual—not religion so much as the spiritual life. But there's a physical self here in the backyard, too. The man looks stouter than he should at forty-three. Standing, he gets broomed off by his barber and slips on a jacket held up by a lieutenant. He pulls at the lapels, releases his arms.



Enter the Wu-Tang
(36 Chambers) (1993)



The RZA-produced
Liquid Swords (1995)



Wu-Tang Forever
(1997)

too. Because I wasn't able to unite everybody, all right? We weren't together. Yeah, I lost some faith in the whole and therefore they weren't as commercially successful or spiritually successful."

In hip-hop, in which tracks are laid on top of samples and samples nudged between beats, manipulation is music. So he's trying to unite them this time for real, because that's where his music has always come from. Fans have been waiting for years, fighting off the forgetting that comes with time, evolution of form, sheer age. RZA, too. "You know, I hear GZA's in L.A. Raekwon. I hear shit. But it goes to who you trust. I trust them. The work they are willing to do. So I'm waiting for others. But I can't wait forever, know what I'm sayin'?"

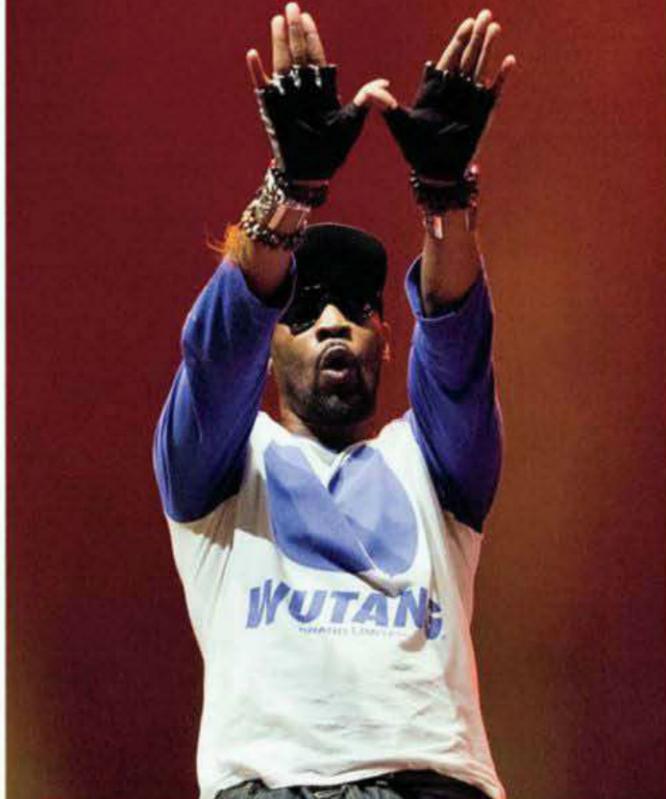
Why not just move on? Why not release without one or two members?

"We aren't members," RZA says. "We a clan. Absent one member, we ain't one mind."

YOU NEVER HEARD THEM ON THE RADIO. You heard them in the backseat of a car, or while smoking weed, or through an open window. This was the mid-1990s. The Wu, immediate legend, RZA,

• "SHRIEK,"
WYE OAK
It's an existential percussion crisis. And it's glorious.

• "COME ALIVE," CHROMEO,
FEATURING TORO Y MOI
For when you switch the treadmill into cooldown mode.



The history of the Wu-Tang Clan is a pattern of dissipating and reuniting, always led by RZA. Above: RZA in Germany last summer. Left: The Wu, characteristically jumbled, at the San Diego Street Scene festival, 2006.

the maker, played concerts standing in front of a curtain, no separation; on street stages; without the requisite torquing spotlights and explosions; without any sad-ass choreography. Mostly it was a lot of waving to one another, tossing control around the stage like a baseball. Voices stripped of decoration, of everything save anger, shouting straight into the dangerous surge of the crowds. Wu hats, Wu shoes, Wu glasses—all of it branded, but mostly the Wu-Tang Clan looked like a bunch of guys who had run into one another in a vacant lot. The music started in with a rumbling down-low pulse but soon became a torrent. They came to resemble a circle of warriors, waving their mics like knives, using their tongues like swords, their words like gasoline. Everything about them was a shiv.

"After *36 Chambers*, everybody had a career to manage. But we agreed to all get together, into the one mind again," RZA says. "So we got a bunch of houses close together in Oakland. The only rule we had: Be there at 8:30 and stay till we finish. And then you free, right? Then okay, go out to clubs, go get some pussy. We worked because we still worked together. It worked because it produced *Wu-Tang Forever*," the group's second album, in 1997. "And that was good." After that record, the Clan lived together in a ten-thousand-square-foot house while recording *The W*. "It was all right, too. One of the best times of my life, sitting around the kitchen, all of us arguing, eating cereal. Then we'd go to work. We never stopped. And that worked—that was the expensive studio productions, that was the million-dollar videos, know what I'm sayin'?"

• "CIGARETTES & LONELINESS,"
CHET FAKER
Songs about broken hearts are a dime a dozen. Songs about

what happens after—when you lose all confidence in yourself and your ability to ever trust yourself again—are much rarer.



That was more than right. It was called for."

At some point, the Clan started carping: Ghostface Killah and Raekwon disowned one album. U-God sued him. Ol' Dirty Bastard completed his bizarre descent—fugitive, prisoner, dead man. Method Man got a TV show. New acolytes were added to the existing company. None of that in any particular order. Because by some point in 2007, the Wu-Tang Clan seemed a dismal soap opera controlled by no one.

People say he quit on it. Says he: "I did. I quit. It was my brother"—fellow denizen of the Wu world—"who picked me up. Put me back on the one-mind thing. You know, I just had to see the power of the whole again. When we started, we said, 'When this thing is over, we want to be the industry.' The whole thing. We believed."

THE AFTERNOON PROGRESSES, the sun descending. Tonight RZA will deejay a party in Chinatown, where he'll stand under a spotlight at a hard-to-find venue with black walls, bars on two levels, can't hear yourself talk. When he goes on, the night starts.

But before that, in his backyard, he rambles a bit about the ultimate fate of a half-eaten apple. It will feed you or it will feed many, depending on where you toss it. He turns to the fate of the Wu: "I started this thing as a dictatorship. The second album? That was the beginning of democracy, right? But, you know, it was like Russia. It ain't working." RZA laughs then, squeaky, self-aware. "So I went back, tried the dictatorship again. But everybody's a father now, everybody's got their own companies, their own ambitions. Career. They run things, they own things. They still might need a dictator. I don't know. For now, I'm erasing the political analogy. I'm just gonna become the spiritual leader. I don't want to be a pol-

ician. I want to be more like the pope."

Not that RZA, once and future prince, is ever unoccupied. He leads the way down the stone steps to what turns out to be his music studio.

There, RZA has a piano and several guitars hang on the walls. He's teaching himself to play both, using the occasional rock star as a teacher. It's clear he's as excited about his banged-up Alvarez acoustic guitar as he is about anything else in his world, save the chord progression he developed the week before while noodling around. He plunks the chords on his piano. He's serious, but not dour. No glasses, no coat, just a plain umber T-shirt—he looks a little unmasked. "This is what I been working on," he says. As he plays, he narrates his choices: "See, then I go here for a while." He shifts chords, a new key. "Then here." He tilts his head just slightly, as if listening to find out where the sound is coming from. He stops, then switches to the guitar, smiling unself-consciously. Guitar is his new thing; he's got the big mitts, the hand strength. He is slow, steady, and accurate when he plays. "Somebody in music challenged me. He said, 'What's a man who never played guitar until he was forty really gonna contribute to music?'" He looks up then, brows arched, eyes wide. "Know what I'm sayin'?" He's saying *Ouch*. But he's also playing guitar in the studio he made for himself in his own house. So RZA quietly, happily, shifts from one well-set chord to another in a simple C scale. Then he barres a handsome B with his huge phalanges and smiles. "So this is what I do, know what I'm sayin'? I gotta go look for new progressions, string them together. That's our work. I can make them. Don't matter where it comes from."

You know what he's sayin'.

STAGE 4: THE COLLABORATOR

TOM MORELLO: POST-RAGE, MID-BRUCE

★ INTERVIEWED BY ANDY LANGER ★

ESQUIRE: Has any musician had a more circuitous career path than you?

TOM MORELLO: With my pre-Rage Against the Machine band, Rage Against the Machine in the beginning and the beginnings of Audioslave as well, the advent of the Axis of Justice nonprofit, my solo Nightwatchman career, a broadening or sort of an openness to doing other projects, and a lot of activism work in my music, my career has become a mosaic of experiences, not a linear, traditional rock-band cycle. One day, I'll find myself in the middle of Zuccotti Park playing at Occupy Wall Street. The next day, I'll be playing the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction of Rush.

Your collaboration with Bruce Springsteen seems less surprising when you put it that way.

I don't know how I parachuted into this life. Rage and the E Street Band might be the two best live bands of all time, and somehow I get to play with both of them. The Springsteen experience, over the course of three, three and a half hours, runs the emo-



tional gamut, and though no two shows are the same, there's a quiet, poignant moment at every show—at some point people are crying. And then it brings the highest heights of joy that you can make happen in a room. Rage shows are about a third of the length, but maybe twice the wattage.

Are you comfortable with your guitar-god status?

Hell, yeah. I named my kid after Randy Rhoads.

Is rock in decline? It's getting harder and harder to break through.

You can name on one hand the number of festival headliners that have emerged in the last ten years—Arcade Fire, the Killers, Kings of Leon, the Black Keys. I'm out. Who am I missing? Even in the early 2000s, each year there would be dozens of multiplatinum rock acts that would emerge and have a shot at the front.

The irony is that the massive bands are getting more massive.

The other night we played three hours and forty-six minutes, and the last twelve songs of the night were hits. And this was after playing for three hours. Whether you're doing that alone by the fireplace or in Santiago Stadium in front of eighty thousand people, you're a successful musician if you're creating something meaningful for you. Anything beyond that is ringtone bullshit.

What were you thinking the first time you took the stage with Bruce?

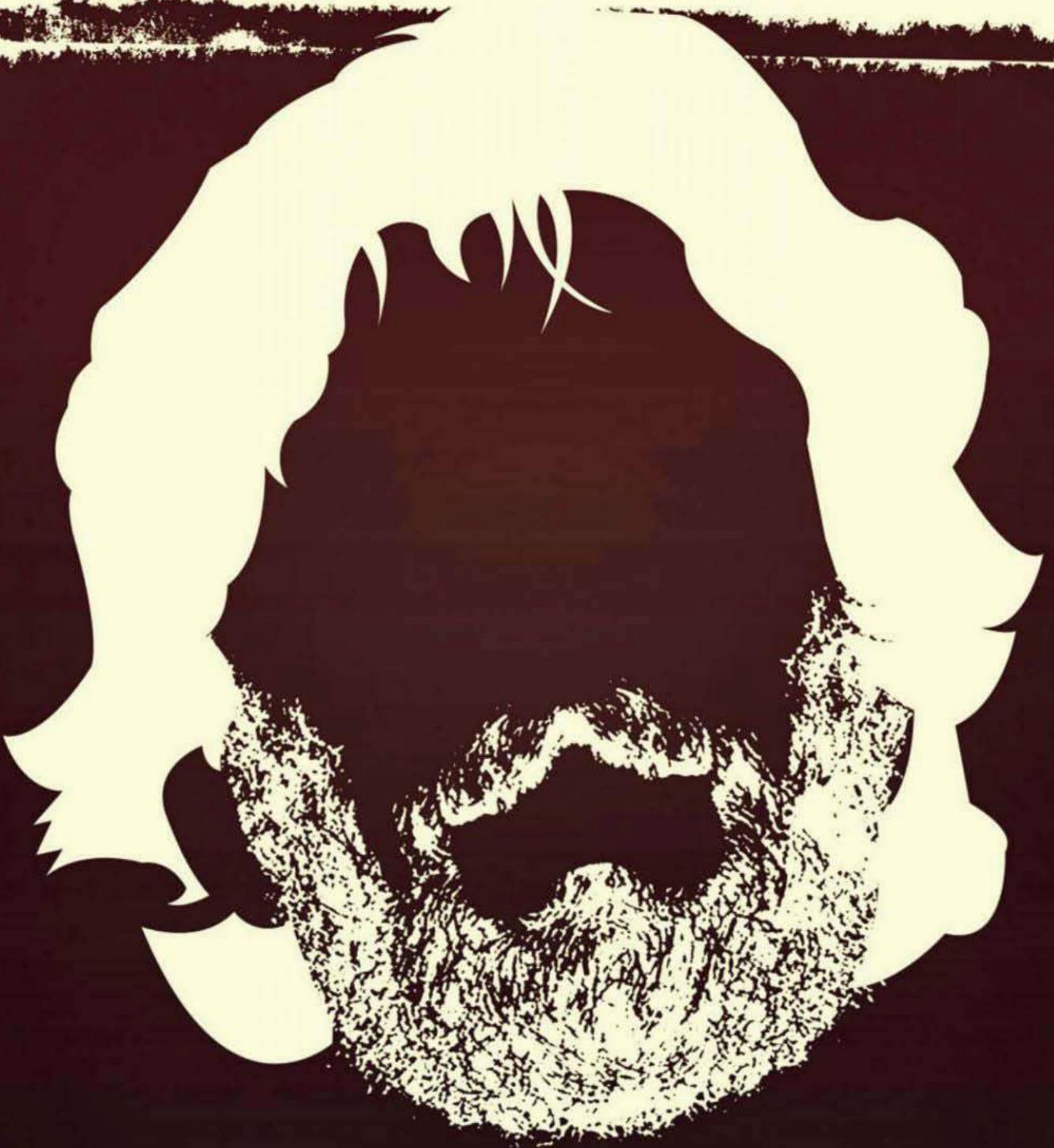
Job one is don't screw it up. Job two is when he gives you the nod, blow the roof off the joint.

• "KLAPP KLAPP," LITTLE DRAGON
Yukimi Nagano is the only singer we know who's got swagger even when whispering.



• "OUT ON THE STREET," SPANISH GOLD
A brilliant addition to the under-rated subgenre of paranoia rock.

• "GLIMPSE OF A TIME," BROKEN TWIN
Danish singer-songwriter Majke Voss Romme is the new queen of superintense slow jams.



**KRIS
KRISTOFFERSON**

THE ESQUIRE ARENA PRESENTS
THE SILVER-TONGUED DEVIL AND I
MAY 10TH, 2014

STAGE 5: THE ICON

THE FOG DESCENDS AND THE MEMORY IS FICKLE, AND A SONGWRITER TO COMPARE WITH THE GREATEST SONGWRITERS EVER IS HAVING SOME TROUBLE SUMMONING HIS OWN LYRICS. BUT AT SEVENTY-SEVEN, BY GOD, KRIS KRISTOFFERSON IS STILL OUT THERE LIVING HIS EPIC LIFE, WITH HIS OLD GIBSON AND HIS HARMONICA, SHARING THE SECRETS OF HIS SOUL.

BY TURK PIPKIN



POSTER BY MIKE KLAY AT POWERSLIDE DESIGN



he Crest Theatre in Sacramento is an old movie palace, one of those places from another time that was magnificent in its day, then spent a long time empty and abandoned, only to be revived by somebody who saw some life there still and knew a good thing when he saw it. And so the Crest is magnificent again. ¶ What Sacramento lacks in magnificence, it makes up for in authenticity. Like one of those places that Kris Kristofferson might write a song about. And so it seems right natural to see the man up there onstage, singing what he says is his favorite of the many songs he has written. ¶ “Busted flat in Baton Rouge, heading for the trains, feeling nearly faded as my jeans...”

¶ All around me, a thousand people sway and sing along, eyes fixed on the man standing onstage alone, with just his old Gibson and a harmonica. Janis Joplin made this a blues song when she made it famous, because every time she opened

her mouth blues came out, but coming from Kristofferson the song is more straight up and down, a country song. The fact that his voice is not great has always been its greatness. Like the voice of his Texas compadre Townes Van Zandt, Kristofferson's never quite seemed to take flight, but his being stuck down here with the rest of us mortals made him that much more one of us. It's a voice held together by scars, and the songs that he made up out of his imagination always had the benefit of being founded on some kind of truth, like that voice in your ear you just know is right.

Kristofferson will tell you the same thing. One day he stepped up to the first tee of Willie Nelson's nine-hole golf course, out west of Austin. Driver in hand, slick cowboy boots on his feet, Kris promptly sliced one into the woods.

“Nobody ever accused me of being a golfer,” he said.

“No one ever accused you of being a singer, either,” Willie replied.

TONIGHT'S HIS LAST DATE in the States for a while—who knows when he'll be back? This show is actually a political benefit, with the proceeds going to local sustainable-agriculture causes and to the support of industrial hemp. But there are no political speeches from the stage, and something as prosaic as politics might just ruin this moment, anyway. And that would be a terrible shame.

“Freedom's just another word for nothing left to lose, and noth-

ing ain't worth nothing, but it's free....”

Beside me, a couple hugs close. The woman reaches up to wipe a tear from her cheek. She turns to the man and smiles sweetly. There is something almost unbearably intimate about this setting and something almost unbearably vulnerable about the man standing up there by himself.

It's not the way he looks, because he looks great. Kristofferson's in black and wearing the same pair of cowboy boots he's worn for thirty years. He still has the lean flanks of the boxer he was coming out of Brownsville. His cheekbones, cut from granite, are tight-wrapped in the kind of wrinkles you get from laughing hard for a long time. As he's aged, his eyes have receded deeper into the geology of his face, deep-blue pools set back in a way that makes you look at them more intently. And the surest sign of his years is in his voice: The deepest baritone will erode to a higher pitch in an old man, and so it is with Kristofferson, whose voice has gone a bit feathery now. You might say that his voice has finally caught up to his words.

The man is seventy-seven years old.

“I'd trade all my tomorrows for a single yesterday....”

These solo performances are still pretty new for him, ever since Steve Bruton up and died, way too young and way too soon for Kris. Bruton was his bandleader and friend for forty years, and when he died at sixty in 2009, Kristofferson decided that he wasn't going to stop performing, he couldn't stop if he wanted to, and that he would just go it alone from here on out. A solo act at seventy-three, still selling out theaters from here to South Africa and Australia and New Zealand, where he's headed for a long spell after he leaves California. He can't perform enough these days, almost as if he has so much left to do and is just trying to get it all in.

His finishes up the song and says a quick “Thank you” before reaching over to change harmonicas. “Me and Bobby McGee” is obviously a sincere experience for the thousand present, and they

• “EVERY STONE,”
MANCHESTER ORCHESTRA
It's at the 2:30 mark that great pop songs end. But that's also

the point at which great rock songs kick into gear. The final 1:10 here of rapid-fire drums and overdubbed guitar-drone

sounds realizes the most bombastic display of dynamic brilliance since Nels Cline's 1:10 solo on Wilco's “Art of Almost.”



let him know it, loud and long. Without another word, he starts "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down," and just like that we are all on that sleeping city sidewalk, knowing what it's like to be alone.

When he comes to the line "I don't care what's right or wrong" in "Help Me Make It Through the Night," he can't help but add "Yes, I do."

And then something happens, almost imperceptible. A change comes over him, a slight hitch in the song, a slight disorientation behind his eyes. The poetry that came out of his own mind as a younger man—he can't quite find it, and, well, he is confused. He looks out, imploring, "Did I already sing this verse?" The past couple years have seen his memory slip. His mind is no longer as sharp as it once was.

The crowd laughs, relieving the moment, and he glances at the iPad prompter at his feet to check. Sitting to the side of the stage and streaming his lyrics in case he needs them, his wife, Lisa, laughs and nods her head.

Kristofferson laughs at himself and reads the next few lines of his song. When he sings "This may be our last good night together," the crowd knows it's more than a line in a love song.

FULL DISCLOSURE: Kris Kristofferson ruined my education.

In 1972, I was a freshman at the University of Texas with a heavy course load, two crappy jobs, and absolutely no direction. One day, I wandered into Inner Sanctum Records and picked up an album that had just arrived that day. It was called *The Silver Tongued Devil and I*, and it was by this guy from south Texas, Kris Kristofferson.

I didn't know anything about Kristofferson, except that he had written that amazing Janis Joplin song, and, buddy, that was good enough for me.

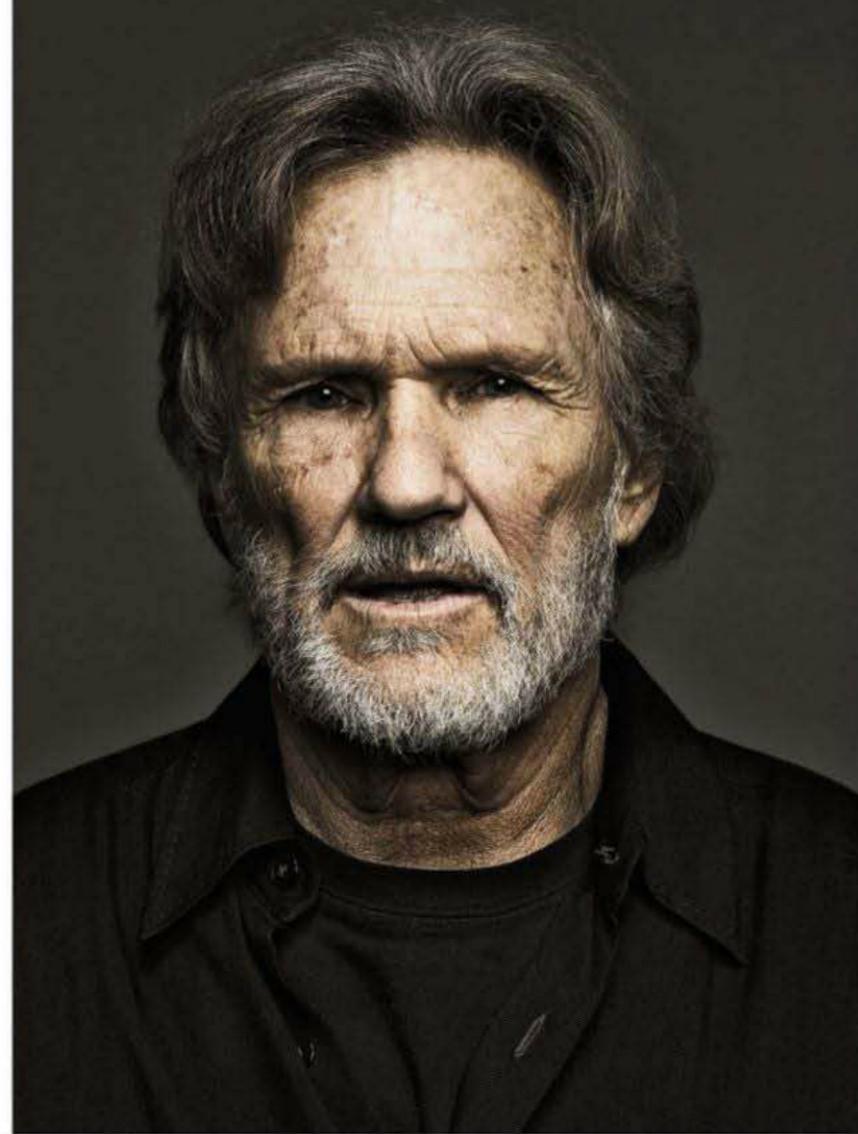
Back at my apartment, I listened to the record again and again. From the heartbreak of Jody and the Kid to the love and loss of a junkie friend named Billy Dee, I was entranced by the stories in his songs and the words in his rhymes, and they changed me. He sang of a freedom, love, and longing that I wanted to get started on right away.

You might say I was impressionable.

One day later, I quit the college I couldn't afford and started my search down a lot of wrong turns and dead ends. Under the incorrigible influence of Kris Kristofferson, this straight-arrow kid from west Texas realized that you don't have to do what's expected, that you can follow your own road and just see where it takes you.

I didn't know that after a Rhodes scholarship to study Blake, Kristofferson had followed his road to the Army as a helicopter pilot. He had even passed through Ranger school before turning down an assignment to teach English literature at West Point, choosing instead to take a job as a janitor at Columbia Records in Nashville—just to be nearer the life he meant to be living. I didn't know that his family never quite forgave him for turning his back on respectability.

He was sweeping floors in the halls as Dylan recorded *Blonde on Blonde*, but he couldn't bring himself to approach the reclusive Dylan for fear of being fired, an uncharacteristic timidity that he would soon make up for. Working weekends flying choppers for oil



companies, Kristofferson had written a new batch of songs while sitting on a drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico, and one day, during a National Guard training flight in Nashville, he made a detour and landed his helicopter in Johnny Cash's backyard. It was Cash who would record Kristofferson's number-one hit "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down," starting a long string of hits that would see him win his first Grammy for "Help Me Make It Through the Night," a song inspired, Kristofferson says, by a quote from Frank Sinatra he had read in Esquire. Asked what he believed in, Sinatra said: "Booze, broads, or a Bible...whatever helps me make it through the night."

I didn't know any of that, because my dusty road out of Texas had taken me to a gig in the Navy and a cruiser in the Pacific, where, among other things, I was a part-time ship's projectionist, trying to get ahold of Kristofferson films because by then he was becoming a genuine movie star. I managed to trade films with another ship for a copy of Paul Mazursky's *Blume in Love*, starring George Segal and Kristofferson. When I say we traded films, I mean a giant cable was slung between two massive ships moving on a parallel track at twelve knots, and the film canisters were slid on pulleys above the churning waves.

Much to my relief, my fellow sailors had refined tastes and loved the quirky little movie about a guy who's in love with his ex-wife

• "HEY MAMI,"
SYLVAN ESSO

The first half is virtually a capella—just folk chants and hand

claps—like the first fifty seconds of "Diamonds on the Soles of Her Shoes." The second half is when things get interesting.

• "MY BABY TOOK MY BABY AWAY,"
BOBBY BARE JR.

Song title of the year.

• "5 A.M.,"
HAMILTON LEITHAUSER

Long live the Walkmen, but if you're the frontman for a band





"My heroes became my friends." In 1985, Kristofferson joined Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, and Johnny Cash to form country supergroup the Highwaymen. It was Cash who first recorded Kristofferson's songs, after Kristofferson landed his helicopter on Cash's lawn to give him a tape.

THREE YEARS AGO, I SAW him tape an episode of *Austin City Limits*, and for the first time that I'd ever noticed, he seemed nervous and had trouble remembering some of the lines to his songs.

Now, I hadn't been so bold as to go and land my chopper on Kristofferson's lawn, but because life is funny and life is good, Kris and I had met by then and become friends. And backstage that evening was the first time he apologized to me in advance for his porous memory.

"My memory's not that good," he said. "I don't like it, but you can't go back and undo the concussions. The doctors say the concussions I had playing football and boxing have added up to me not remembering everything I should, so don't be surprised if I go blank on something," he warned me, his eyes searching mine.

An hour later, he told me the same thing again.

Backstage in Sacramento, I struck up a conversation with a big, friendly guy named Bucky Kahler.

"What's your connection to Kris?" I asked.

"I'm his best friend," Bucky beamed. "Since the fifth grade, when he moved from Brownsville to San Mateo. We did everything together, including football and boxing. It's the concussions from football that are hurting him now."

"I know he was a Golden Gloves boxer, but did you see him get tagged a lot?"

"I tagged him a few times myself," Bucky says. (And from the looks of him, he learned how to use his mitts.) "Tagged him hard. I wish I hadn't, but I did. We just didn't know."

Kris loved his early life in the Rio Grande Valley and credits those years with teaching him how to see the world. "South Texas seemed like the Garden of Eden," he told me recently. "I loved the flowers and the orchards and the ruby-red grapefruits. Brownsville was more Mexico than Texas, and that I loved."

"My mother once took me to a big parade for Jose Lopez, a guy from Brownsville who'd won the Medal of Honor. There was a lot of prejudice against Mexicans then, and at this whole parade we were the only Anglos in the audience. I'll never forget it. That was the kind of thing my parents did that gave me a sense of what I should do. That day affected the way I've lived every day since."

(and with her hippie boyfriend, Elmo, played by Kristofferson). For the next few weeks, Elmo's catchphrase was heard all over the ship. No matter how tough the challenge, there was "Nothing to it."

He still uses that line, even when it's not necessarily true.

"And along the way, I felt like it was my duty, whether people wanted to hear what I had to say about the Contras or nukes or not, that it was my responsibility to speak up, and if I didn't live up to it I wouldn't be doing what God wanted me to do. A lot of people probably think I'm a Marxist or something," he says, laughing. "Hell, I'm not even a good Democrat. I don't much care for politics. It's about doing what you think is right."

"There was a thing Blake said that always rang with me: 'If he who is organized by the Divine for spiritual communion should refuse and bury his various talent in the earth, even though he should want natural bread, sorrow and desperation shall pursue him throughout life, and after death, shame and confusion are faced to eternity.'"

(It must be noted that the man with the fading memory recited Blake perfectly.)

"So if you're given the tools, you have a responsibility to use them," he says. "I'm doing what I'm cut out to do, the best thing I can do, until they throw dirt on me."

"I'm seventy-seven," he says. "For my family, I'm getting close to the end of the line. But I got a little wear left on these boots and I'm in no rush to get there."

On his feet that night in Sacramento, at the golf course outside Austin, and nearly every other time I've seen him, Kristofferson has been wearing the same pair of beat-up cowboy boots.

"They've brought me lots of luck."

A lot of people don't end up thinking they've been lucky.

"Why wouldn't I feel lucky? So many good things have happened in my life it makes me feel like someone else was writing the script."

So, after all these years, did your song come true? Did you beat the devil?

"I guess maybe I did. I'm pleased to find that I'm just grateful for the way my life has been. Lisa and I have been married for thirty-three years, the people who are my heroes ended up being my friends, and I've got eight children who love me. I don't know how much more I could want."

For a couple decades now, Kris has meant to publish his memoirs, to write his life down in what would be an epic book. The press releases from various publishing houses have noted that Kristofferson, being more than enough of a writer himself, would be writing "without benefit of a coauthor." The last release, from 2003, quoted him with regard to the prospect of telling his life story: "William Blake said, 'The road to excess leads to the palace of wisdom.' We'll see."

The last anyone heard, the book was supposed to have come out in 2005. Since then, the publisher has kept a respectful silence. Lisa says that Kris would still like to write the book, someday.

ON OSCAR NIGHT THIS YEAR, THE PHONE rang. It was Kris. All the excitement from Hollywood on the [continued on page 140]

ESSENTIAL DISCOGRAPHY

IF YOU LISTEN TO ONLY THREE THINGS...



Kristofferson
(1970)



The Silver Tongued Devil and I (1971)



Feeling Mortal
(2013)

that splits and you almost immediately release a solo record, your first move ought to be

something you absolutely never could've gotten away with in your old band—like unleashing your inner Sinatra.

• "YOUR LOVE IS KILLING ME,"

SHARON VAN ETEN

"Cut my tongue so I can't talk to you / Burn my skin so

I can't feel you /
Stab my eyes so
I can't see."
Damn. ■



ESQ

STYLE

HOW TO

COOL IT

WITH THE RIGHT SUMMER SUIT,
EVERY ROOM CAN FEEL LIKE YOUR OWN PRIVATE FREEZER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHIL POYNTER



Two-button wool-and-silk suit (\$3,325) and cotton shirt (\$445) by Giorgio Armani; silk tie (\$165) by Paul Smith Accessories; suede shoes (\$350) by Mark McNairy New Amsterdam.

Two-button wool suit (\$2,020) and cotton shirt (\$415) by Dolce & Gabbana; silk tie (\$190) by Marwood; steel El Primero watch (\$8,500) by Zenith.

START WITH
A LITTLE BIT OF
STRUCTURE

The first thing you're looking for is a jacket without a lot of padding or structure to trap body heat. Both of these jackets offer a little help in broadening and shaping the shoulder, but otherwise, the silhouette is all natural and supremely, defiantly comfortable.



Two-button three-piece wool suit (\$4,995) by Ralph Lauren Purple Label; cotton shirt (\$295) by Ralph Lauren Black Label; cotton-and-silk tie (\$255) and linen pocket square (\$110) by Brunello Cucinelli.

THREE-PIECE
IN SUMMER?
THREE-PIECE IN
SUMMER.

There is nothing—*nothing*—that conveys seriousness of purpose like a three-piece suit (well, maybe a bullhorn), but there is something a little odd about adding a seemingly unnecessary layer of clothing (that would be the vest) when the going gets hot. The solution: ultra-lightweight wool, two layers of which feel no more constricting than a single layer of cotton.

Three-button three-piece wool suit (\$995) and cotton shirt (\$175) by Boss; shantung-silk tie (\$165) by Bigi Cravatte; leather shoes (\$755) by Santoni; steel Star Twin Moonphase watch (\$5,300) by Montblanc; leather belt (\$128) by Brooks Brothers; cotton-blend socks (\$30) by Hook + Albert.



ESQ
STYLE



From left: Two-button wool suit (\$1,195) and cotton shirt (\$250) by Burberry London; silk tie (\$215) by Louis Vuitton; leather shoes (\$950) by Di-Bianco; cotton socks (\$32) by Bresciani.

• Two-button wool suit (\$1,495) by Luigi Bianchi Mantova; cotton shirt (\$365) by Hamilton Shirts; silk tie (\$205) by Ermenegildo Zegna; leather shoes (\$695) by Bally; leather belt (\$180) by Church's.

Two-button cotton suit (\$1,395) and cotton shirt (\$295) by Calvin Klein Collection; silk-and-linen knit tie (\$80) by Brooks Brothers; leather shoes (\$1,350) by John Lobb.

LIGHTEN UP

Yes, for all the reasons you learned in high school (lighter colors reflect light, minimize heat absorption, etc.) but, more important, because it's summer, man. Khakis, the lightest grays, royal blues (bonus points for chalk stripes): These are the official colors of the dog days, and for reasons practical and spiritual, it's best to get on board.



**A WORD
ABOUT FIT**

The two suits on these two pages couldn't look any more different—except for the way the jackets fit. High in the arms, narrow (but not pinched) in the torso, and a hem that bottoms out mid-fly: the precision of the cuts ensures a minimal amount of cloth and a massive amount of comfort.

Two-button cotton suit (\$2,995) and silk tie (\$205) by Ermenegildo Zegna; cotton shirt (\$695) by Ermenegildo Zegna Couture.



Two-button wool-and-cashmere suit (\$3,250) by Louis Vuitton; cotton shirt (\$195) by Thomas Pink; silk tie (\$190) by Marwood; leather shoes (\$695) by Bally.

ESQ **STYLE**



IF YOU
MUST WEAR
SOMETHING
DARK...

Lord knows people die in June, just as big important meetings can happen on the hottest day in July. For such dignified occasions, a summer-friendly cloth—lightweight, supersoft kid mohair; good old-fashioned cotton—helps balance out all that requisite darkness.



Two-button kid-mohair suit (\$1,995), cotton shirt (\$680), and silk tie (\$160) by Prada; leather shoes (\$710) by Church's; steel watch (\$6,600) by Bulgari.

Two-button wool-and-mohair suit (\$2,090) and cotton shirt (\$355) by Gucci; silk tie (\$255) by Brunello Cucinelli; steel Carrera GMT watch (\$3,900) by TAG Heuer; silk pocket square (\$115) by Ralph Lauren Black Label.

FOR STORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE 142. GROOMING BY RUBEN ARONOV. SET DESIGN BY SHAWN PATRICK ANDERSON FOR BRIDGE ARTISTS.



Elizabeth Warren

[continued from page 107] a country that has forgotten much of it. People are drawn to her not necessarily by her intelligence or by her willingness to speak truth to greed but by an ineffable feeling that she is reminding them of something they already knew. Somebody mentions to her that his family rose in this country because his grandfather was a cop, and his father a veteran who used the GI Bill to build a career as a public-school teacher. She rises partway from her chair, her lesson having taken hold.

"I love it. I love it," she says. "But you and I grew up in the America that was investing in kids like us. That made education possible. Infrastructure. I gave this speech on infrastructure last night. Why infrastructure is important. Why it's important to the economy, why it's important to families, why it's important to the earth, right? Why we've got to have that basic transportation infrastructure."

"And everyone gets this. But the choices Washington makes right now don't reflect our values. The idea that billions of dollars would be left with billionaires through tax loopholes rather than spending that money on repairing roads and bridges? Rather than spending that money on helping our kids get through college? Rather than spending that money on NIH? And rather than a better future for all of our kids? That's the debate we're on the cusp of having."

There already are forces, even within the Democratic party, gathering themselves to squash that debate. Larry Summers, her old bête noire, whose hands Warren was instrumental in keeping off the Federal Reserve system last year, already is giving interviews about "setting class against class" in anticipation of Democratic losses in this fall's midterm elections. If those losses occur, there will be a fearsome momentum for the party to move back toward the more corporate-friendly Democratic party that elected Bill Clinton, who repealed the Glass-Steagall Act and signed the Commodity Futures Modernization Act, which exempted credit-default swaps from regulation and generally set the tone for the Democratic complicity in the economic catastrophe that hit in 2008. And Elizabeth Warren has come to teach us the greatest lesson the country needs to learn: who we are. Or at least who we once were.

Self-government must be an educational enterprise, with lessons learned over and over again, and that is what Elizabeth Warren is about these days. She is still teaching. She teaches because she has learned, and she has learned because she teaches. The great teachers are the ones who remain students at heart, who keep learning from their students, and from the world around them, and from their own drive to know even more about even more things, and who then are able to transmit that knowledge—and more important, the drive to know more—to their students. That is how teachers become immortal. ■

Cars

[continued from page 88] Sergio [Marchionne, Chrysler CEO and chairman] took the brand in a little bit of a different direction. I call it a tweak, but it was kind of a major tweak. Take the Jeep Liberty. To 80 percent of the people who used to buy a Liberty, it was your daily driver. You weren't going to take it severe off-roading, and yet we built every Liberty as if you were. So everybody was penalized with a heavy car and suspension systems that they didn't utilize. What people really want—the majority of Jeep buyers—is confident, all-weather capability. They want to say, "I can do anything I want, and I'm never going to get stuck, because I have a Jeep." Now, for each Cherokee nameplate—the Sport, the Latitude, and the Limited—we'll build the off-road-capable vehicle. So we have the Trailhawk for 20 percent of the people who will go off road. It has all of the heavy suspension equipment and the skid plates and the all-terrain tires.

ESQ: Please tell me you don't have plans to do this to the Wrangler. Heavy and a little uncomfortable is part of the experience.

JV: We're setting the Wrangler aside. We will build every Wrangler so that it can go through the Rubicon Trail.

ESQ: Why does no one else touch the muscle-car segment that the Dodge Charger is in? Too "American"? Too aggressive and performance-oriented?

JV: It's not just performance. The Charger gets thirty-one miles to the gallon with an eight-speed transmission and a fuel-efficient V-6, so I don't think we play the performance as high as we do the other attributes of the vehicle. But it goes back to brand DNA. If you look at the brands that play into the segment—Ford, Chevrolet—it's difficult for them to make a play like a Dodge can make in that segment. That happens to be Dodge's DNA, and that resonates well.

ESQ: The Viper is a car that barely turns over and is outside the reach of most of middle America. We love the Viper, but why do you still make it?

JV: The Viper speaks to the technological ability of the company. It speaks to the heart and soul of the company—that it's not just mainstream vehicles that you produce. And for a lot of people, it's aspirational, and it says a lot about what the company can be. I don't know if it will be an icon forever, but it has a following and we still have a lot of plans for it.

ESQ: What was Chrysler that it isn't anymore—after the bailout, after Fiat?

JV: I think there was a huge cultural change when Sergio came in. You have to remember, we were in the ditch. We had been through Cerberus and Daimler, and so here comes a new company and everybody was very skeptical. Three months into the alliance, we were putting in plans to start building the 500 in Toluca. We were already putting in plans to start sharing platforms. Things that took ten years with Daimler to do. ■

Kristofferson

[continued from page 129] television had him thinking back on that part of his life. He has been in ninety-three films. "One benefit of my memory slipping is I don't remember all my movies. So I'm really enjoying watching lots of them again. My favorites are *A Star Is Born* with Barbra Streisand and the one with, um, you know, he's nominated tonight... McConaughey!... where I played the badass sheriff. It's called... it's called... "Lone Star!"

Years ago, I wrote a Christmas novel called *When Angels Sing*, and I used Kris as inspiration for a character called the Colonel, a retired Air Force pilot who is emotionally estranged from his son. Last year, a film based on the book went into production, to a great extent because both Kris and Willie agreed to act in it.

The love Kris feels for Willie cannot be overstated.

"Willie had been the hero of serious songwriters in Nashville," he's told me. "We knew all his songs. I remember waiting at his farm where he lived outside of Nashville. I went there and just waited, but I never saw him. The first time I met Willie was in Mexico, on the set of *Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid*. Willie came down to visit. I had him play some songs for Sam Peckinpah. When Willie played, Bob Dylan was in the room, and Bob was so knocked out that he asked Willie to keep playing, and Willie played all day long on the floor in the room."

"He's the great artist of our lifetime. You and I will never meet another artist like him.... Willie will be the last to go. I'm not sure he's meant to die, ever."

When it comes to expressions of love, Kris's mind is as clear as a bright-blue sky. And because your heroes sometimes become your friends, one day I found myself on the set of this movie with Kristofferson, Harry Connick Jr., Connie Britton, Willie, and a supporting cast of Texas music greats. In the scene, the family was singing Christmas carols at a holiday gathering, and Kris, as the Colonel, kept forgetting the final line of an emotional exchange with Connick's character, Michael. It was actually one word he was forgetting, and it was very moving to watch him search his mind for it, take after take. "Michael, I'm not..." he'd say, then he'd go blank, cuss himself, and we'd start again. "Michael, I'm not... Michael, I'm not..." As his frustration grew, I decided to write the word he was forgetting on the palm of my hand, where he could see it, as a spur to memory—the way Lisa stands nearby him with a prompter, to remind him of the words he himself once dreamed up that are now leaving him. But on the last take, without looking at me, the word came to him.

"Michael, I'm not senile!" Kristofferson said.

Then he turned to me. "Nothing to it," he said. ■

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Tom Hardy

[continued from page 99] tuxedoed man appears, and the first woman whose body appears less a manifestation of nature than of will, and there is a chemical change. The patrons become more purposeful, their movements more ritualized; they are not only either more contained or more expansive; they appear to have chosen to be so.

And they recognize Tom Hardy. They are not movie stars; they are not famous people—they are money people; they finance movies and get them made. They recognize Hardy because they've placed bets on Hardy, and they approach him. Among friends, Hardy is big on "cuddles"—hugs—but these men don't cuddle, they clasp, and then talk about the running times of Hardy's upcoming movies. The first man talks about *Child 44*; the second, a few minutes later, about *Mad Max*.

He is especially sleek and satiny; if Hardy ever plays Bond, he'll have to snap the neck of someone who looks just like him. Instead, Hardy asks, "Have you seen it?"

"Yes," the man says. "It's six hours."

"It's going to be awesome, though."

"Yes, at two hours and twenty minutes."

Hardy cocks a playful finger at the man. "Two-forty."

"Two-twenty," the man says, and then is gone.

Hardy sits back down at the table and activates his e-cigarette. His shoulders are frozen in a shrug, and he scans the room.

"Who are these people?" I ask.

"Sharks, Tom," he says. "Can't you see it in their eyes?"

And he will be judged.

He, who has made all of life a test, is finally being tested. *Mad Max: Fury Road* took six months to film, primarily in Namibia. It was filmed primarily in the desert, filmed where there was nothing—anything that existed had to come into existence, had to be built or shipped in. "It was a really hard place for a star," says Kelly Marcel, who came to the set when Hardy needed to figure out his character. Oh, it was madness, really. "Some of the stuff they were doing, it's unbelievable," Hardy says. "Like fifty vehicles out at once, moving across the desert at forty kilometers an hour, the whole movie on the move, cars and vehicles as platforms of action—it's crazy. And none of it's CGI. It's almost too much. It's like trying to fit three alligators in a bathtub. It's like trying to take a shower in a bathtub with three alligators. Imagine that."

And the feud with Charlize Theron?

"The feud with Charlize Theron?"

"All you have to do is enter your name into an Internet search. People are afraid of you."

He is sitting in the restaurant of the Soho Hotel. He leans over his e-cigarette and takes a puff.

"That's disappointing," he says. "I think she's fucking awesome. I think she's incredible. I think she's one of the most talented ac-

treses of our generation. But it's very interesting the concept of what danger is, and this has nothing to do with Charlize Theron or *Mad Max*, actually, but this has to do with life in general. There is a flicker of energy that can come from certain people, whether it's fear-based or whether it's contrived, which can unsettle a room. And if somebody mismanages that, or if a trickster is in the driving seat of that particular asset and has no business being there in said room, well...but I am no more threat than a puppy. People are frightened by passion and heart. I'm terrified of it. And by decision making, especially if it's not their own. There are many sides to a coin as well. Reputation can work for you and against you, but I'd rather have one than not have one. But at the same time, it better be the fucking right one. It has to be authentic. It will have my signature on it. If I punch somebody in the face, they will know it. If I haven't, someone knows as well."

That you haven't?

"Yeah, if there's a transaction that hasn't actually happened and it's a bullshit reputation, someone on the planet knows. And if it has happened, someone on the planet knows, whether it's that person or a witness. But I guarantee there are more witnesses for that which hasn't happened. Because witnesses we don't need." He laughs, the occasional high-pitched whinny he uses not to express merriment but to punctuate his sentences. "If I really wanted to hurt somebody, I would."

I already know he is not an ambassador. I've known that from the first, because he told me. And now he asks a question of his own. It's not in the form of a question, but he puts forth a scenario intended as a test of me.

"There's not a single person who has had to lead who hasn't upset somebody, has a huge fucking demographic of people who dislikes them, hates them, and wants them dead. Well, in that case, if somebody hates me or dislikes me, then that's a compliment. I've done something right. And you only have to judge me on my integrity and whether you believe, whether you feel that I am somebody who you'd let look after your daughter for the afternoon. You don't have to answer that, Tom, but I guarantee that you could leave your daughter with me and my little boy and we'd have a great afternoon, and that would be that."

Esquire has put a lot of movie stars on the cover of the magazine. Tom Hardy is not a movie star. He is not yet a movie star. But we are putting him on the cover because we saw his performance in *Locke* and because we want to ask if all movie stars now have to be ambassadors or if they can be allowed to unsettle a room like Tom Hardy. But here's the thing: We asked Hardy to shave his beard first, so that he would be recognizable. And here's what he said:

"Don't get me wrong, there is part of me that wants to win an Oscar and wants to be on the front cover of a magazine and all that

Credits

Store Information

For the items featured in *Esquire*, please consult the Web site or call the number provided.

Style, p. 45: **Blazers:** CH Carolina Herrera, carolinaherrera.com. Etro, etro.com. Bonobos, bonobos.com. Eidos Napoli, 616-957-3242. **P. 46:** Ermengildo Zegna jacket and shirt, zegna.com. Thomas Pink tie, thomaspink.com. Tommy Hilfiger suit, macy's.com. Fratelli Rossetti monk-straps, fratellirossetti.com. Coach belt, coach.com. L.B.M. 1911 jacket, 616-957-3242. Nautica shirt, nautica.com. Tommy Hilfiger tie, tommy.com. Dockers chinos, dockers.com. Bally shoes, 212-751-9082. Nautica belt, nautica.com. **P. 48:** **Blazers:** Salvatore Ferragamo, 866-337-7242. Paul Smith London, 646-613-3060. Kiton, kitonus.com. Boglioli, alambilzerian.com. Boss, hugoboss.com. Eidos Napoli, 616-957-3242. Isaia, saks.com. L.B.M. 1911, 206-622-5760. **Pocket squares:** Brooks Brothers, brooksbrothers.com. Brioni, brioni.com. Ermengildo Zegna, zegna.com. **P. 52:** **Blazers:** Banana Republic, bananarepublic.com. Boglioli, boglioli.it. J. Crew, jcrew.com. **P. 54:** L.B.M. 1911 jacket, lubiam.it. Hook + Albert shoelaces, shoelacesexpress.com. Suitsupply suit, suitsupply.com.

How to Cool It, p. 130: Giorgio Armani suit and shirt, armani.com. Paul Smith Accessories tie, paulsmithusa.com. Mark McNairy New Amsterdam shoes, markmcnairy.com. **P. 131:** Dolce & Gabbana suit and shirt, dolcegabbana.it. Marwood tie, mrporter.com. Zenith watch, zenith-watches.com. **P. 132:** Ralph Lauren Purple Label suit and Ralph Lauren Black Label shirt, ralphlauren.com. Brunello Cucinelli tie and pocket square, 212-627-9202. **P. 133:** Boss suit and shirt, hugoboss.com. Bigi Cravatte tie, barneys.com. Santoni shoes, santonishoes.com. Montblanc watch, montblanc.com. Brooks Brothers belt, brooksbrothers.com. Hook + Albert socks, hookandalbert.com. **P. 134:** Burberry London suit and shirt, burberry.com. Louis Vuitton tie, louisvuitton.com. DiBianco shoes, scarpedibianco.com. Bresciani

kind of stuff, but there's also a part of me that really doesn't. I'm not the guy you need—I'm not a role model. Don't look too deep, because after you scratch the surface you are going to find out that I'm normal and I've got skeletons in my closet.

"But my intentions are good, and if you want to talk to me about the work, or if you want to work with me on something, then I hope you find that I'm a reliable team player. But you have to be as open and honest about it as I am, because you will be fucking judged, as I've been. But let's have some fun! Some people will hate you, some people will like you, but then most people are completely indifferent about the fuck of my ideas and why the fuck he's even being talked to. Who the fuck is this guy with the crooked teeth and the beard? He's fucking ugly. Nobody buys a magazine with a beard on the front.

"So I ain't shaving my beard for you. To shave my beard off would be to cut my fucking nuts off. You know what I mean? And give them to you to sell—to prove that I am a man. But without them, I am no longer. You sold them! And I am now a lie. Why would I do that? *Oh, I'm a serious actor. Yes, I am. I cut my beard off, how do I look?*"

So now is the time to answer his question and ours: When you close the magazine, take a look at the photograph of Tom Hardy on the cover. How does he look? Does he look like a movie star—or simply like a bloke with balls and a beard? ■

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Credits

socks, 866-267-7909. Luigi Bianchi Mantova **suit**, 515-283-2121. Hamilton Shirts **shirt**, 713-780-8222. Ermengildo Zegna **tie**, zegna.com. Bally **shoes**, 212-751-9082. Church's **belt**, church-footwear.com. **P. 135**: Calvin Klein Collection **suit** and **shirt**, 212-292-9027. Brooks Brothers **tie**, brooksbrothers.com. John Lobb **shoes**, 212-888-9797. **P. 136**: Ermengildo Zegna **suit** and **tie**, and Ermengildo Zegna Couture **shirt**, zegna.com. **P. 137**: Louis Vuitton **suit**, louisvuitton.com. Thomas Pink **shirt**, thomaspink.com. Marwood **tie**, marwoodlondon.co.uk. Bally **shoes**, bally.com. **P. 138**: Prada **suit**, **shirt**, and **tie**, prada.com. Church's **shoes**, church-footwear.com. Bulgari **watch**, bulgari.com. **P. 139**: Gucci **suit** and **shirt**, gucci.com. Brunello Cucinelli **tie**, 212-627-9202. TAG Heuer **watch**, shop.us.tagheuer.com. Ralph Lauren Black Label **pocket square**, ralphlauren.com.

Photos & Illustrations

Cover: Esquire: Jeffrey Westbrook/Studio D. **Welcome to Esquire**, p. 10: Collage: Ben Goldstein/Studio D; p. 12: Helmet, shorts, jersey, lock, tool: Jon Patterson/Studio D; p. 16: Lowes: Frederick M. Brown/NAACP Image Awards/Getty. **Man at His Best**, p. 21: Austin Hargrave/August; p. 22: Suzanne Hanover/Universal Pictures/Everett Collection; p. 26: Suther-

land: Greg Gayne/20th Century Fox/Everett Collection; *The Devil Wears Prada*: 20th Century Fox/Neal Peters Collection; *No Reservations*: Warner Bros./Everett Collection; *Ratatouille*: Walt Disney/Everett Collection; p. 28: Book: Philip Friedman/Studio D; Efron: Charles Eshelman/FilmMagic/Getty; p. 32: Maek123/iStock; p. 34: Lifesaver: Jon Paterson/Studio D; pigeon: Voy/Alamy; Fieri: John Lamparski/WireImage/Getty; plane: anonsaw/E+/Getty; p. 36: *A Million Ways to Die in the West*: Pictorial Press/Alamy; p. 38: Styling by Constanze Lyndsay Han; hair by Sunnie Brook, makeup by Alexis Swain, both for Celestine Agency; prop styling by Ali Gallagher for Jed Root; bodysuit by AQ/AQ; p. 40: Cocktail: Jon Patterson/Studio D; p. 42: Hashbrowns: Philip Friedman/Studio D. **Style**, p. 45: Styling by Peter Tran for Art Department; pp. 46, 48, 52: Jackets, pants, shoes, belts, jacket details, buttons: J Muckle/Studio D; p. 48: Pitt: James Devaney/WireImage/Getty; Gosling: John Shearer/WireImage; James: John Parra/WireImage; Ronson: Claire Greenway/Stringer/Getty; p. 52: Tailor: Kobal Collection; p. 54: *Dr. No*: United Artists/Neal Peters Collection; lapel: Jeffrey Westbrook/Studio D; p. 56: Jeffrey Westbrook/Studio D. **Stephen Marche**, p. 72: The White House: Jonathan Larsen/Diadem Images/Alamy; p. 76: *Grumpy Old Men*: Mary Evans/Ronald Grant/Everett Collection. **Cars**, p. 78: Logo: Richard Majchrzak/Studio D; p.

86: Rattner: Amanda Gordon/Bloomberg/Getty; Dingell: Bill Pugliano/Getty; Lutz: John M. Heller/Getty. **Tom Hardy**, pp. 96-97: *Star Trek Nemesis*, *Layer Cake*, *Scenes of a Sexual Nature*, *Bronson*, *Inception*, *The Dark Knight Rises*: Everett Collection. **Elizabeth Warren**, p. 100: Nigel Parry/CPI; p. 103: With Clinton and McCain: Christopher Gregory/The New York Times/Redux; in red suit: Evan McGinn/The New York Times/Redux; p. 104: Courtesy University of Houston; **106**: Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call. **What I've Learned**, p. 108: Simon Emmett/Trunk Archive. **A Woman We Love**, pp. 110-115: Styling by Stephanie Tricola; hair by Rheanne White for See Management; makeup by Kim Bower for Crosby Carter Management; manicure by Maki Sakamoto for Kate Ryan; prop styling by Shawn Patrick Anderson for Bridge Artists; pp. 110-111: Shirt by Marissa Webb; panties by Kiki de Montparnasse; thigh-highs by Falke; p. 112: Stockings by Wolford; pp. 113, 115: Bodysuit by Kiki De Montparnasse; p. 114: Bustier by Cosabella. **Guide to Music**, p. 118: Mills: Larry Busacca/Getty; pp. 119-120: Turner: Ben Morse; Schoolboy Q: NBCU Photo Bank/Getty; p. 120: *LaMontagne*: Erika Goldring/Retna Ltd.; p. 121: Kid Cudi: Ray Logo/Corbis Outline; Croll: Amy Harris/Corbis Entertainment/Corbis; p. 123: Kelis: Jonathan Alcorn/Corbis; Albarn: Tim Mosenfelder/WireImage/Getty; p. 124: RZA: Frank Hoensch/Redferns/Getty; Faker: Ilya S. Savenok/Getty for Beck's Sapphire; p. 125: Wu-Tang Clan: Frank Hoensch/Redferns via Getty; Springsteen and Morello: Dimitrios Kambouris/WireImage/Getty; Little Dragon: Tim Mosenfelder/Getty; p. 127: Manchester Orchestra: Astrid Stawiarz/Getty; p. 128: Kristoffer森: Mark Zibert/August; Bare Jr.: Dana Nalbandian/Getty; p. 129: The Highwaymen: Rob Verhorst/Redferns/Getty; Leithauser: Tom Mosenfelder/Getty; Van Etten: Timothy Hiatt/Getty.

9:36 AM

Slit open a fresh bag of Sumatran. French-press the morning into proper caffeination.

1:27 PM

Flip open my SOG. Tailor an impromptu vest by removing other jacket sleeve. Pick up Kristina on café racer. She digs the new look.

11:51 AM

Witness accident on way to brunch date. Cut off sport jacket sleeve to fashion makeshift bandage. Dial 9-1-1.

6:41 PM

Slice up a few limes. Nineteen minutes till tip off. Just enough time to recount the day's adventures with my boys.

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CORRECTIONS AND AMPLIFICATIONS

ESQUIRE OCTOBER 2013-ESQUIRE APRIL 2014

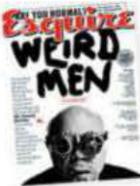
**APRIL 2014**

► A calisthenics move recommended in our health feature, "The Best Shape of Your Life," should not have been included. The move, "high-kick march with toe touch," is not possible. An ice pack might help.

**MARCH 2014**

► The title of the style feature "The New Rules of Denim" was misleading. It has been brought to our attention that many of the rules in "The New Rules of Denim" had been published previously in Esquire; the rule "If your jeans don't fit in the store, they're never going to fit" had itself been published in seventeen different issues, first appearing in "The New Rules for Dungarees," by Ring Lardner Jr., in October 1933.

► That title, too, was incorrect.

**FEBRUARY 2014**

► A short article about the artist Banksy neglected to mention his real name. It is Josh Saperstein.
► A review of *The UnAmericans* described a short story in that collection as an "epic story that jumps from Boston to Moscow to Jerusalem...and includes art smuggling and secret lovers." It is actually about eggplant parmigiana.
► The satirical feature "2014: The Year in Review" included an entry predicting that Alec Baldwin would write an angry, rambling, finger-pointing, delusional article for The Huffington Post announcing his disgust for our obsession with his private life. Mr. Baldwin actually wrote the article for *New York* magazine.

**JANUARY 2014**

► In our regular feature "Funny Joke from a Beautiful Woman," actress Portia Doubleday told a long story about a monkey in a bar that ended with this exchange: "Do you know your monkey stole my beer?" The pianist replies, "No, but if you hum it, I'll play it." Subsequent research discovered that the joke was not, in the common meaning of the term, "funny." We regret the error.

**DECEMBER 2013**

► In our story "George Clooney's Rules for Living," Mr. Clooney disparaged the basketball skills of Leonardo DiCaprio and Mr. DiCaprio's friends. We regret the prolonged public tit-for-tat that never ensued.
► Due to an editing error, our story on the experience of wearing Google Glass, by A. J. Jacobs, was mistakenly titled "I Am Not a Glasshole." Mr. Jacobs is in fact a Glasshole. We regret the error.

**OCTOBER 2013**

► To provide context for our What I've Learned interview with Ronan Farrow, we referred to him as "the son of Mia Farrow and Woody Allen." Up to you.
► Due to a production error, the text of an unrelated cultural essay appeared under the heading "Where Did All These Assholes Come From?" The text should have read: Indianapolis.

DIGITAL EDITION

► In Esquire for the iPad, an arrow indicator usually means to "swipe" in the direction of the arrow. But sometimes it doesn't. Thank you.

A STYLE NOTE

► The style article about the renaissance of the camel overcoat in our December issue left out some crucial context: The universe is an amoral collection of atoms, free will is an illusion, and you will be forgotten soon after you die. We regret the error. ■

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