

STYLE


THE SUNDAY TIMES

17 DECEMBER 2017

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A COMPASSION
COACH?

PEAK PEFIE
WHY EVERY
MAN SHOULD
READ THIS

FASHION

COLOUR POP HOW TO REFRESH
YOUR WORK WARDROBE





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LORRAINE CANDY



Editor-in-chief

'Twas the week before CHRISTMAS...

EDITOR'S BUYS



A heel height that lasts the duration
Sequined mary-janes, £39; topshop.com



This two-tone tote is super-practical
Leather bag, £39, Kin; johnlewis.com



For an even skin cover with the softest applicator pad
My Armani to Go Cushion Foundation, £59, from January 24

Only eight days to go, people, and I am both frazzled by relentless festive evening shenanigans and giddy with seasonal excitement. This is a mindset unique to mid-December — and I rather like it.

My to-do list is far from sorted, though. There are more gifts to be sourced (a little help on page 8 for those of you in the same situation) and various activities to plan (again, page 21 is there if you're wondering what to do before new year). I'm hoping the BBC's adaptation of *Little Women* on Boxing Day won't be an anticlimax, having implored my two teen daughters to read it, and I am getting ready for the promise that 2018 will be the year of Abba.

As a working mum, this next week ahead is always tricky now my four children are on holiday and our usual routine is thrown off kilter without school runs or afternoon clubs and activities. I have to get used to relentless text messages from my two older daughters looking for things at home (these are usually in plain sight in the fridge), and now FaceTime interruptions from my six-year-old, wondering what time exactly I will be home to watch *Shrek the Halls* again.

This juggling act with my blended work/home life keeps me on my toes as I try to micromanage everything on the domestic front from the office, while micromanaging an almost continuous mini hangover. Whatever you are doing, however you are managing it, I wish you a happy eight-day countdown to the big feast.

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STYLEPLAY > Watch #TeamSTYLE count down to Christmas and get more gift ideas at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay

Cover shot by
Mattias Bjorklund
Styling Flossie Saunders

Wool rollneck, £630,
Victoria Beckham.
Double-breasted jacket,
£1,110, and matching
belted trousers, £810,
Ellery; matchesfashion.
com. Shoes, £238, Yuul
Yie. Gold hoops, £95;
georgianascott.co.uk



Enjoy responsibly - www.moet.com drinkaware.co.uk
for the facts

FONDÉ  EN 1743

MOËT & CHANDON

CHAMPAGNE



CLAUDIA WINKLEMAN



@CLAUDIAWINKLE

Can we talk about... **SKIWEAR**

Now, I think I've made it clear that I can't understand skiing. But just in case you missed my 2016 rant, or have forgotten, let me reiterate: I. Don't. Get. It. Waking up early; sharing a chalet with 12 people; communal rabbit stew; wearing inflatable dungarees; getting "bladdered" (only skiers use this term, fact) at 4pm while wearing ski boots; hurling yourself down a mountain after a bottle of white and dropping your kids off to break their limbs with total strangers called Andre. I mean, let's be frank, it isn't a holiday. I don't know what it is, maybe a torture thing? Maybe a nostalgia thing? "Mum and Dad would bundle us up and we'd all do the kids' slopes before hot cheese suppers and chocolate roulade," or "Yah, went skiing with Rupert on my gap yah — great larks, shagged everyone," or, more recent, "The whole trading floor goes. I mean, do you want to talk about powder or do you want to talk about powder?" I think it's a holiday that people choose just because the exercise makes them feel better about unlimited rösti and beer. Maybe they choose skiing because it's reassuringly expensive. I mean, seriously, it's cheaper to go to Bali and eat oysters all the way there. A ski pass and a pretty basic plate of old potato and bubbling gruyère is about the same price as a small flat. I simply don't comprehend skiing.

I've tried, I've concentrated. I've nodded when people talk about the magic of Courchevel and cream puffs and hot chocolate. I've looked at photos of twinkly sleigh rides and Marigold bombing down a black run. I've oohed and aaahed when they've wanged on about the joys of heli-skiing or après-ski (this just means, like, the afternoon, right?) and I've tried really hard to understand how nice it is to

I THINK SKIING IS A HOLIDAY PEOPLE CHOOSE BECAUSE THE EXERCISE MAKES THEM FEEL BETTER ABOUT UNLIMITED RÖSTI AND BEER



be hot and cold at the same time. Guys, have you read any medical literature? Rule one of how not to get flu is, stick to one temperature. Skiing merrily chucks this down the drain; you're both sweating and freezing constantly.

It's relentless hell, and cramped and over-indulgent and calorific, and the chat in a bubble car is about as depressing as anything on earth. "Do you like truffles on top of your caviar while you're in the hot tub or is that just me?" and "I bought the bloody car, but I'll never actually drive it because I can't be arsed to get a driving licence! Ha! I mean, what's Brian for if it's not to get me from A to B?"

So, skiing, absolutely not my thing, but there is something deeply confusing about it. In among the 60-quid fondue, champagne, carrying bulky kit and dripping boots, right there in the middle of the roaring fires, kids on iPads, injected mouths and bright white lip balm, the really strange thing about this sport is that some of the clothes are absolutely awesome. Cosy knits, the right combination of Scandinavian thick sweaters and skinny jeans, the polo-necks and figure-hugging boots. The pastime is obviously ridiculous and always to be avoided, but the fashion (other than the hilarious salopettes, obviously), not so bad.

Take this all-in-one navy star-print onesie by Perfect Moment. I don't want to wear this up a mountain, under a quilted pair of salopettes, walking through the snow in Gstaad on my way to the top of a terrifying mountain just carrying two slats of wood. Nope. But I do want to wear this on Boxing Day hanging about my house. I'll scare the bloke from next door and I might worry the husband, but I'll be cosy. Not just any cosy, Olympian cosy. It's as soft as butter and as comforting as soup. Skiing, then — it has something going for it. ■

MERINO-WOOL STAR ONESIE, £355, PERFECT MOMENT; NET-A-PORTER.COM





GUCCI
BLOOM



#InBloom

Edit Jane McFarland



1



2



3

1 Coat, £90; hm.com.
2 Single candleholder, £312, Lara Bohinc for Lapidica; alexeagle.co.uk.
3 Spirituelle candle, £79, Mad et Len; farfetch.com.
4 Madeleine silk eye mask, £50; libertylondon.com.
5 Bloom notebooks, from £12, Esme Winter; store.wallpaper.com.
6 Satin sandals, £36; mango.com



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ELEVENTH-HOUR GIFTS

6



7

There's only eight days to go, but panic not — here's your last-minute shopping guide



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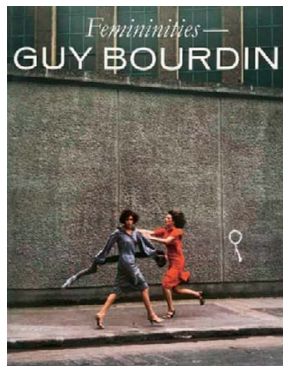


10

7 Mother-of-pearl earrings, £290; ninakastens.com.

8 Femininities by Guy Bourdin, £22, Chloé; ideanow.online. 9 Wool blanket, £55, Klippen; arket.com. 10 Lace crossover bralet, £50, Hanky Panky; harrods.com.

11 Embellished Daphne mules, £574, Giannico; farfetch.com



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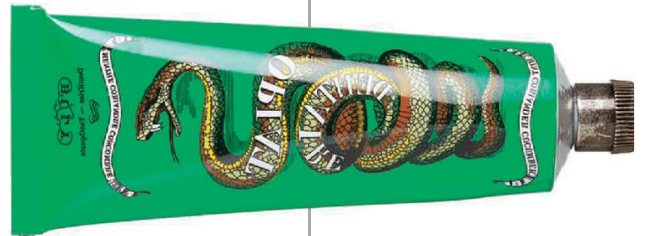


12 Mini Sylvie bag, £1,620, Gucci; harrods.com. **13** Cashmere hot-water bottle, £113, Allude; matchesfashion.com. **14** Janus warrior ceramic tray, £26; octaevo.com. **15** Velvet and Perspex boots, £690, Ellery; selfridges.com

15



18



17

16

16 Velvet jumpsuit, £79, & Other Stories; stories.com. **17** Hoop and pearl bead earrings, £10; zara.com. **18** Mint, coriander and cucumber toothpaste, £24, Buly 1803; net-a-porter.com. **19** Rose and violet selection box, £27; rococochocolates.com. **20** Carice wool-blend coat, £1,100, Acne Studios; matchesfashion.com



19

20





1



2



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4 British merino rollneck, £155; margarethowell.co.uk. 5 Athlete grooming kit, £80, Aesop; mrporter.com. 6 Le Labo Santal 33, £120 for 50ml EDP; libertylondon.com

3



1 Burnt-orange scarf, £80; mournertextiles.com. 2 Cuttings whisky glass, £106, Martino Gamper; jhillstandard.com. 3 Bitflex boots, £135, Astorflex; kafka.co.uk

5



6



Practical, beautiful gifts to suit the men in your life this Christmas

7



8

9



7 Lumber jacket, £156; johnlewis.com. 8 Endless Forest soap, £30, Mote; conranshop.co.uk. 9 Blue polo shirt, £195, P Johnson; pj.com. 10 Archie brogues, £450; grenson.com

10



Style Gifts



11

11 Canvas backpack, £199, Sandqvist; libertylondon.com.

12 Woollen socks, £15, farmersmarket.is.

13 Ruark MR1 MK11 bluetooth speakers, £330; johnlewis.com.

14 Arbury hat, £39; oliverspencer.co.uk



12



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16



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19



17



18

15 Zebrano shave set, £213, Czech & Speake; bicester village.com. **16** Dap shoes, £150; youmustcreate.com.

17 Cognac magnum gift box, £66, Hennessy VS; clos19.com. **18** Card set in leather case, £65, Thomas Lyte; matches fashion.com.

19 Fold-up broly, £65; trunkclothiers.com. **20** Duffel bag, £260, Forty Knots No Smoke; suchandsuch.co

20



STYLEPLAY > Watch #TeamSTYLE count down to Christmas and get more gift ideas at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay

STYLE

By Laura Atkinson

Barometer



● **Simone Garcia Johnson**

Daughter of 'The Rock'; wants to be a pro wrestler; just signed a modelling contract with IMG. Into it



● **The Loewe basket bag**

Drops in January, costs £250, will be the new street-style hit. Shopping fingers at the ready, people



● **Gym tarts**

Aka using every free gym-trial day you can get your hands on, then never signing up, so you get to work out at better places than you can afford. Cheeky!



● **Headphone bars**

Spiritland in London lets you try out the latest headphones while sipping Japanese whisky. The new cocktail bars



● **Cinderella**

Disney's version is this and next season's unlikely pin-up. See the Off-White c/o Jimmy Choo collaboration, the Kirakira app and her sparkly headband. V now



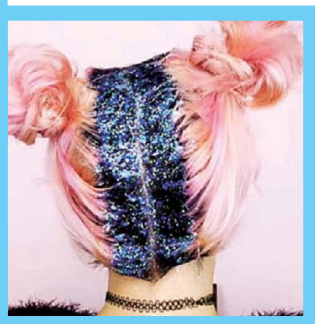
HEATING UP ...

COOLING DOWN ...



● **Sparkle roots**

Just looks like you have sparkly dandruff, tbh. Not for us



● **Sample-sale scrapping**

It's sample-sale season, which means only one thing: fights over cheap clothes (at the Alice + Olivia one in New York, one customer scratched another's face). Watch out

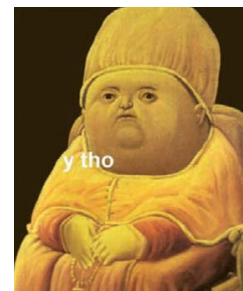


● **Millennialsplaining**

When a young person attempts to explain something to you that they think you won't get. Cheers, guys

● **Bog-standard fried-chicken shops**

Not good enough now: we're all about the Drake-themed chicken pop-up, A Wing and a Prayer, just opened in Glasgow. See you there



Next episode playing in 10 seconds



● **The Netflix window of doom**

The 10-second countdown before the next episode automatically plays on Netflix. So, so dangerous

PRADA CANDY GLOSS



THE NEW CANDY

GIVE A GIFT * THAT * MEANS MORE

WHY NOT SHOW THEM HOW SPECIAL THEY
ARE BY TAKING THE TIME TO FIND
THEIR PERFECT SCENT THIS CHRISTMAS



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Our commitment to value means that we match the prices of high street competitors (this excludes online-only or mail order businesses). Service conditions must be comparable. See our 'Never Knowingly Undersold' leaflet in our shops or online for details.

SARAH JOSSEL



@SARAHJOSSEL

...is the #Beauty**BOSS**

Let's praise the non-gimmicky face masks.

Somewhere along the way, face masks have become silly. They've become more of a parody or, worse, a selfie accessory for Instagram, rather than a serious skincare ritual. For example, Topshop has just launched a Disney-branded Princess Jasmine face mask called — wait for it — A Whole New World (£4). Glamglow's big launch of the year was a slimy green goop called Power Rangers GravityMud (£24) — though this is a goodie with a silly name. And one of the most viral beauty videos of the year was a slippery mask that foamed into bubbles.

What needs to be remembered is that, among the bubbles and kiddie cartoon characters, there are some seriously brilliant, no, genius, face masks out there, ones that will hydrate, plump and brighten in a way that no jar of cream can. Masks play a crucial role in your skincare regime. You just need to get past the amateurs.

My all-time favourite is Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Concentrated Recovery PowerFoil Mask (£17). Victoria Beckham is a fan of this glow-inducing mask, too, for good reason. If your skin is dry, dull and, well, bleurgh, order it right this second. It's like magic. Prepare to look like the Tin Man for 15 minutes — it doesn't slip, slide or drip, so you can get on with your chores. Then peel it off and rub in the extra serum for bright, hydrated skin.

Two cheap-as-chips options: if you have time on your hands (about 40 minutes), try Dr Jart+ Dermask Vital Hydra Solution (£6). It's excellent at plumping and refreshing. Then there's Biobelle I Woke up Like This Botanic Fiber Facial Mask (£4). The vitamin C brightens sun spots and exfoliates.

Finally, Lancôme's new Advanced Génifique Hydrogel Melting Mask (£17) is a must-try for parched skin — the jazzy mesh dissolves at skin temperature.

Put simply, one sheet mask is an instant hit of hydration. It's time to get these skincare heroes back into your weekly regime. On your masks... (sorry)..



Face time Biobelle I Woke up Like This Botanic Fiber Facial Mask, £4; victoriahealth.com. Dr Jart+ Dermask Vital Hydra Solution, £6; selfridges.com. Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Concentrated Recovery PowerFoil Mask, £17. Lancôme Advanced Génifique Hydrogel Melting Mask, £17

SARAH'S SECRETS



SHOW BEAUTY PREMIERE DRY SHAMPOO, £30

This is primarily a dry shampoo, so it sorts greasy roots and gives great volume. But it also has the kind of grit and hold I get from salon styling. I've been using it to prolong my blow-dry — four (OK, five) days and counting.



ESSIE GEL SETTER TOP COAT, £10

I'm not really a fan of gel manicures, as my nails tend to get weak and brittle. However, this top coat gives great shine and gloss, and comes off with normal remover. It's so glossy, I sometimes wear it on its own.

STYLEPLAY > Sarah and Eyeko founder Nina Leykind reveal the perfect mascara at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay

MRS MILLS

Answers your QUESTIONS

CHRISTMAS GIVING

How best to discipline some old family frenemies who give me the same boring green tin of M&S biscuits every Christmas? I have always felt obliged to accept graciously, but have now decided enough is enough. I find their unimaginative gift gravely insulting as they blatantly can't be bothered with anything more personal. How can I let them know my true feelings? Tact can be dispensed with, I'm beyond caring.

JV, Abingdon

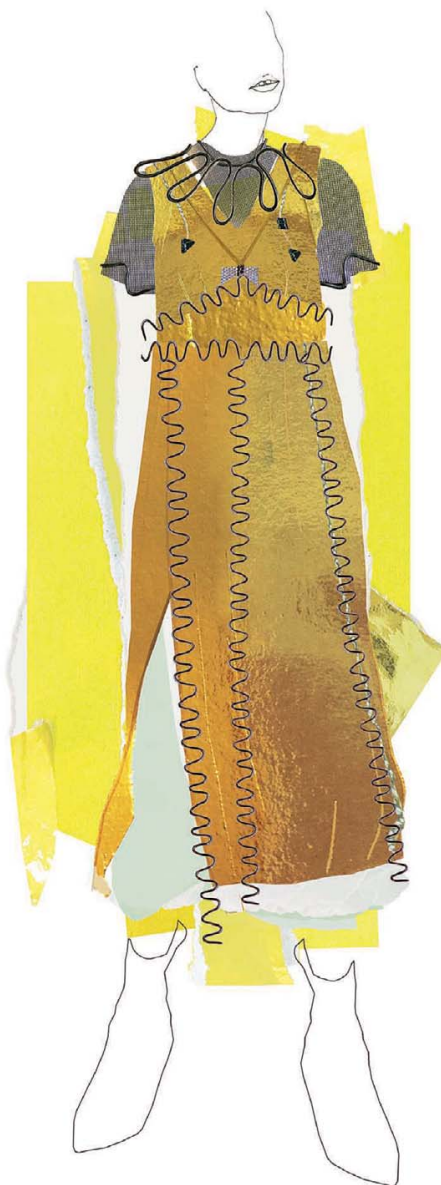
Am I missing something? *I don't understand why you're so exercised by this. There must be more going on here than you have said. If you really feel strongly, then the most effective way to communicate your utter disdain for their present would be to regift it back to them next year, making sure you have scuffed the packaging and attempted (but failed) to obscure the use-by date.*

BIRTHDAY BILLS

Last year, for my birthday, we invited a few friends round for dinner. On the invitation, it stated no presents. My wife cooked an excellent meal for 10 guests. A few months later, we received a similar birthday invitation, along with a menu for a top-end restaurant and the request to choose whatever we would like. We arrived with an expensive present as we thought this was a nice gesture. At the end of the evening, our host came round with the maître d' and his credit-card machine to take payment for what we had ordered plus a proportion of the drinks and tip. A few months after that, we had another invitation. On arrival, we were presented with an Indian takeaway menu. And, once again, we had to pay our share. In a few months' time, it will be my wife's birthday. Any suggestions would be appreciated.

DS, by email

Although your friends seem well organised, and one can understand



why they might be unwilling to bear the financial burden on their own, being invited to a celebratory party and then being surprised with a bill does rather contravene our sense of hospitality. However, it is increasingly the way things are. Similarly, couples ask for "a contribution" towards their honeymoon as a wedding present. It's a result of an exaggerated sense of entitlement leading to pretentiousness. People think they "deserve" to have their birthday dinner in a fancy restaurant, even though they can't afford it. Our parties are always bread and cheese at home, PBAB. You should do the same.

WHO'S COUNTING?

How often should we be having sex? My girlfriend and I moved in together last year and were told the frequency would fall off a bit after a few months, but we seem to have arrived at totally different numbers. Hers is very much lower than mine. What's normal for a couple in their late twenties?

JS, Reading

I did know a couple *who kept up a phenomenal 16 times a month — unfortunately it wasn't always with each other, and they are no longer together. There's no prescribed figure, and it should be said that quality is far more important than quantity. However, if the quantity falls below 0.8 times a month (9.6 annually), then there is cause for concern. Use the festive season to boost your average.*

Follow Mrs Mills on Twitter
@MRSMILLSST

Send problems to: Mrs Mills, The Sunday Times, 1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF, or mrs.mills@sunday-times.co.uk. No correspondence can be entered into

THE WAY WE LIVE NOW

OVERELABORATE COOKING SKEWERING SPLIT FIGS ONTO CINNAMON STICKS TO ROAST AROUND PARTRIDGE STUFFED WITH OATS, PRUNES, PARSLEY AND JUNIPER BERRIES, I SUDDENLY THOUGHT, WHAT AM I DOING? WHAT'S WRONG WITH CHICKEN AND PAXO? COOKING HAS BECOME SO COMPLEX — WE WATCH IT ON TV AND BUY THE BOOKS, BUT RARELY DO WE ACTUALLY DO IT. AFTER THREE HOURS WITH MY FINGER UP A PARTRIDGE, I UNDERSTAND WHY.

MONT 
BLANC
LEGEND
THE FRAGRANCE FOR MEN



SCARLETT CURTIS



@SCARCURTIS

The gen Z hit list

SIDE HUSTLING

I have mentioned the concept of the side hustle in this column before, but with the new year rearing its cold, dreary head, it feels like a good time to revisit it. A side hustle is essentially a job you do when you're not doing your real job, and it can be a great way to bring in extra cash or build up your profile in a field that you're truly passionate about. I started my blog in 2011 and any measure of success I've had since then has been largely down to that scrappy little Wordpress site. Blogging taught me to write, to stick to a schedule and to be my own boss. With only a couple of hundred readers, I set myself the goal of publishing three times a week, and nothing could come between me and my schedule.

While my blog opened the door to a lot of writing opportunities I would never have had otherwise, more than anything it taught me to get over my fear of self-promotion. Most side hustles, from YouTube to Instagram, modelling to blogging, seem insanely embarrassing until they're successful. During the first two years of doing my blog, my best friend refused to acknowledge its existence because she found it so "cringe", it would make her gag whenever I mentioned it. Putting yourself out there is never going to be cool, but I'd personally choose being lame and successful over being cool any day.

Since then, the world of blogging has been professionalised in a way that's left little room for the amateur to squeeze their way in. But this week's hit list has three ideas for ways you can get your voice and ideas out there and make 2018 the year your side hustle takes over the world.

MOST SIDE
HUSTLES SEEM
INSANELY
EMBARRASSING
UNTIL THEY'RE
SUCCESSFUL



START A PODCAST It's my belief that every human has one business and one podcast inside them. While you may not be destined to be the next Marc Maron, if you've always wanted to thrust an hour of your voice onto an audience of strangers, there's never been a better time to start. Anyone can upload a podcast to iTunes, and while your audience might just be your mum (pretending to listen) at first, all you need to get started is a microphone and a good idea. The Podcast Host website has a great step-by-step guide on how to make your dream a reality, and if you decide to start one, please send it to me, as I'm always on the hunt for new p-casts.

SELL YOUR STUFF Tictail is a new social marketplace that's quickly establishing itself as the deeply stylish and aesthetically pleasing alternative to the occasionally slightly crunchy, weird and homemade Etsy. Tictail allows anyone to set up an online shop and begin to build their brand and sell their products. With a global audience, a wonderful mobile app and the ability to customise your online storefront, it is a great way to start selling your goods from artwork to vintage clothes to handmade pottery.

START A NEWSLETTER Two years ago, my 18-year-old brother departed on a "gap yah" and, in an attempt to keep his friends and family abreast of his travels, he started a newsletter. The emails came every day (he didn't have the most booming of social lives) and his daily musings, stories and pictures of his temporary mohican were a delightful addition to our family's inbox. Online newsletters are the blogs of 2018. They're intimate, easy to use and a great way to practise your writing and develop your voice. If you're looking to start a weekly blast, MailChimp is a useful platform to begin establishing your content, and its microsite TinyLetter is an easy beginners' option. If you're looking for inspiration, The Iris Letter is a wonderful monthly magazine-style mailer; meanwhile the Anna Edit's monthly recommendation-based emails offer very good bang for your click. ■

VICTORIA ADAMSON

STYLEPLAY > Watch Scarlett and Claudia Winkleman solve your problems in the gen X v gen Z series at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay

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THE STYLE GUIDE TO TWIXMAS

Photograph
Lukasz Wierzbowski

*Reached peak Christmas market? Can't deal with another round of Elf? Welcome to our alternative guide to what to do during the festive break. By **Scarlett Russell***

LISTEN



THREE WISE WOMEN
BBC Radio 6 Music
Jodie Whittaker (aka the new Doctor Who), Beth Ditto, the former Gossip frontwoman, and the writer/actress Sharon Horgan will take over the airwaves on separate nights to share their favourite music and general musings.
Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day, from 6pm

TABLE MANNERS WITH JESSIE WARE
iTunes

Singer/songwriter Jessie Ware has one of the best premises for a podcast: her mum cooks meals for Jessie and her celebrity friends (guests include Sam Smith) who pop round for a chat. The latest is a Hanukkah special, with hip-hop star Loyle Carner.
Available now



WOMAN'S HOUR ON HOLLYWOOD
BBC Radio 4

Gal Gadot, Emma Stone, Jennifer Lawrence, Claire Foy... Despite the scandals that have hit Hollywood in the latter part of this year, 2017 has been a tremendous year for women in film and TV. Or has it? Woman's Hour hosts a special episode on the subject.
December 29, 10am

SEE IN A SHAMANIC NEW YEAR

The new year is an opportunity "to shed what is not working and make space for the new", says the shaman Chloe Isidora (chloeisidora.com). First, light candles, scatter flowers and anoint yourself with essential oils (frankincense is good for accessing the spiritual realm). List whatever bad habits, jobs or relationships are holding you back on a piece of paper and burn it. Now focus on what you want to bring into your life and "release it into the cosmos". Close your ceremony by dancing new energy into your life with a favourite song.
Fleur Britten

Style Christmas

VISIT

WINNIE-THE-POOH: EXPLORING A CLASSIC V&A, London SW7

Tear the kids away from Frozen and visit the most famous bear in literature instead. Highlights include original drawings and AA Milne's manuscript. £8, until April 8; vam.ac.uk



ABBA: SUPER TROUPERS Royal Festival Hall, London SE1

Make no mistake, 2018 will be the Year of Abba. July sees the release of the Mamma Mia! sequel and a hologram tour is in the works. It all starts with this exhibition. From £15, until April 29; southbankcentre.co.uk

TURNER PRIZE 2017 Ferens Art Gallery, Hull As Hull's year-long reign as City of Culture draws to a close, you still have three weeks to see the work of Lubaina Himid, the oldest recipient of the Turner prize and the first woman of colour to win. Until January 7; hull2017.co.uk



THE PARTIES

For the truly brave, there's a Boxing Day rave at the Egg in King's Cross, central London. New Year's Eve sees the launch of London's newest venue, E1, in Wapping, where they will be holding a 27-hour non-stop party. The same night, Manchester's Warehouse Project will be pumping out a heady mix of soulful tunes and heavy beats at its Store Street location, while Bristol hosts the Tribe of Frog psychedelic bash. If you still haven't hit your fun quota come New Year's Day, head to Tobacco Dock, in east London, where they're throwing a party from noon till 10.30pm — there's even a rooftop ice rink. Winter Wonderland for grown-ups. Tibbs Jenkins

THE FOOD

Christmas and New Year can be surprisingly depressing if you're determined to eat well. There are a few possible escape routes. Option one: eat, drink and be merry somewhere like Monty's Deli in Hoxton, east London, with its joyful Christmas-Hanukkah menu mashup. Option two: go traditional with a roaring fire and wooden beams. Those looking for a rural getaway could do worse than the Wild Rabbit in Kingham or the Magdalen Arms in Oxford. Option three: find total seclusion at Inver, overlooking Loch Fyne, aka the middle of nowhere. George Reynolds

WATCH



LITTLE WOMEN BBC1

Nothing says Christmas quite like unrequited love and sisterly rivalry in the American Civil War. The new three-part adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's novel features Maya Thurman-Hawke (daughter of Uma and Ethan) as Jo. Boxing Day, 8pm



SEARCH PARTY 2 All4

The cult hit of 2016 returns. Alia Shawkat (of Arrested Development fame) plays the twentysomething Dory, who, along with her three narcissistic hipster friends, ends up with a dead body on her hands. From Tuesday

300 YEARS OF FRENCH AND SAUNDERS BBC1

How has it been 30 years since the first episode of French and Saunders? This anniversary special, their first show in 10 years, will see the duo in new skits as well as their greatest hits. Christmas Day, 10.35pm

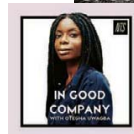


READ

THE CULT READ Sing, Unburied, Sing by Jesmyn Ward won the National Book Award this year. It feels particularly timely, centring on a family road trip through a fractured Mississippi.

THE NEWSLETTER Sign up to Otegha Uwagba's excellent careers newsletter, The RoundUp. Cliché-free advice and practical tips from the founder of Women Who to relaunch your career in 2018.

THE FASHION INSPIRATION Chris Moore has been photographing the runway since the 1950s. Catwalking is filled with the best images of his career, including Coco Chanel's final show.



CELEBRATE THE WINTER SOLSTICE

As of Thursday, the days are about to get longer again. Welcome in the light and celebrate the end of darkness with the Secret Yoga Club's winter solstice party, in a collaboration with Kind Yoga. Expect to enjoy some "uplifting" dancing, heart-opening mantras and, of course, chanting and crystal-bowl sound healing. £20; secretyogaclub.co.uk

STYLEPLAY #TeamSTYLE share the worst Christmas presents they've ever received at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay



MISSONI
PARFUM POUR HOMME

How to wear **SEQUINS**



*The sparkly stuff has had a reboot — perfect for Christmas and beyond, says **Jane McFarland***



As far as style resolutions go, leave normcore behind in 2018 — it's time to start prepping for the revival of all things glitter, sequins and downright attention-seeking. Designers including Vetements, Dior and Saint Laurent have been making the case for top-to-toe sequins for the past couple of seasons — proof that the sparkly stuff has a shelf life long after the Christmas period.

I've always had a weak spot for sequins. Occasionally, one can have fun while making an effort to dress up (even now I'm in my thirties, getting ready is still the best part of a night out) and wearing some sparkle indicates you're ready to take a spin on the dancefloor. Alongside their priceless powers of reinvention (for no one actually wants to go out out any more, do they?), light-reflecting sequins also provide endless Insta-worthy opportunities. Teamed with the fashion crowd's social-media app du jour, Kirakira, which has seven filters to add a sprinkling of glitter to your images, "sequins" already has more than 1m hashtags on Instagram.

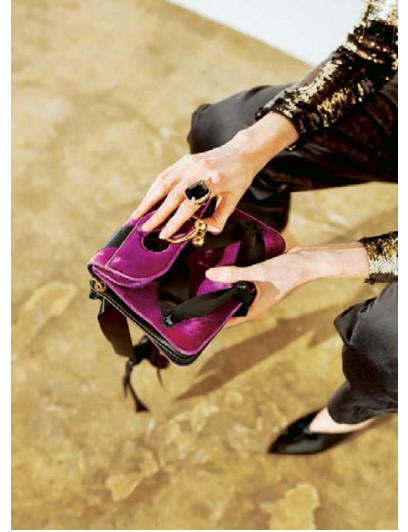
How to achieve a degree of sophistication with so much bling? I've taken high-wattage separates down a notch or two, pairing a sequined rollneck with high-waisted velvet trousers. Black cigarette pants would work, or denim for the ultimate high-low mix. A knee-length skirt can feel frumpy, but when rendered in slinky sequins, it feels modern and party-appropriate. Outré jewellery, plus a feathered Marques'Almeida shoulder bag, could be considered unnecessary accoutrements, but sometimes more really is more.

Tweet or Instagram me your fashion questions
@JANE_MCFARLAND





Sequined top, £320; wtrlondon.com. Velvet trousers, £119, and patent mules, £99; finerylondon.com. Velvet minibag, £1,250; j-w-anderson.com. Ritratto rose-gold quartz and diamond ring, £7,050; pomellato.com



HOW TO ACHIEVE A DEGREE OF SOPHISTICATION WITH SO MUCH BLING?



White top, £335, Rejina Pyo; brownsfashion.com. Sequined skirt, £85; whistles.com. Ostrich-feather bag, £480, Marques'Almeida. Suede boots, £45; topshop.com. Gold earrings, £194; mishodesigns.com

STYLEPLAY > Jane picks out her favourite fashion trends of all time at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay

PHOTOGRAPHS: TRISHA WARD. HAIR AND MAKE-UP: FIONA MOORE AT TERRI MANDUCA AGENCY FOR DANIEL GALVIN

Style Jewellery



1



2

1 Vintage 1940s charm bracelet, POA, Tiffany & Co.
2 Gold charm bracelet, £23,796, Annoushka x the Vampire's Wife



Gold-tone charm bracelet, £460, Chloe; net-a-porter.com. Silk shirt, £240, Lemaire; matchesfashion.com



3

BE CHARMED

Go bold with a statement charm bracelet

Edit **Alice Edwards**
 Photographs **Pelle Crepin**
 Styling **Sophie Van Der Welle**

3 Heritage bracelet 1955, £55,100, Van Cleef & Arpels.
4 Lucky Charms gold-plated bracelet, POA, Schiaparelli.
5 Gold-plated bracelet, £505, Emilia Wickstead; matchesfashion.com



4

5



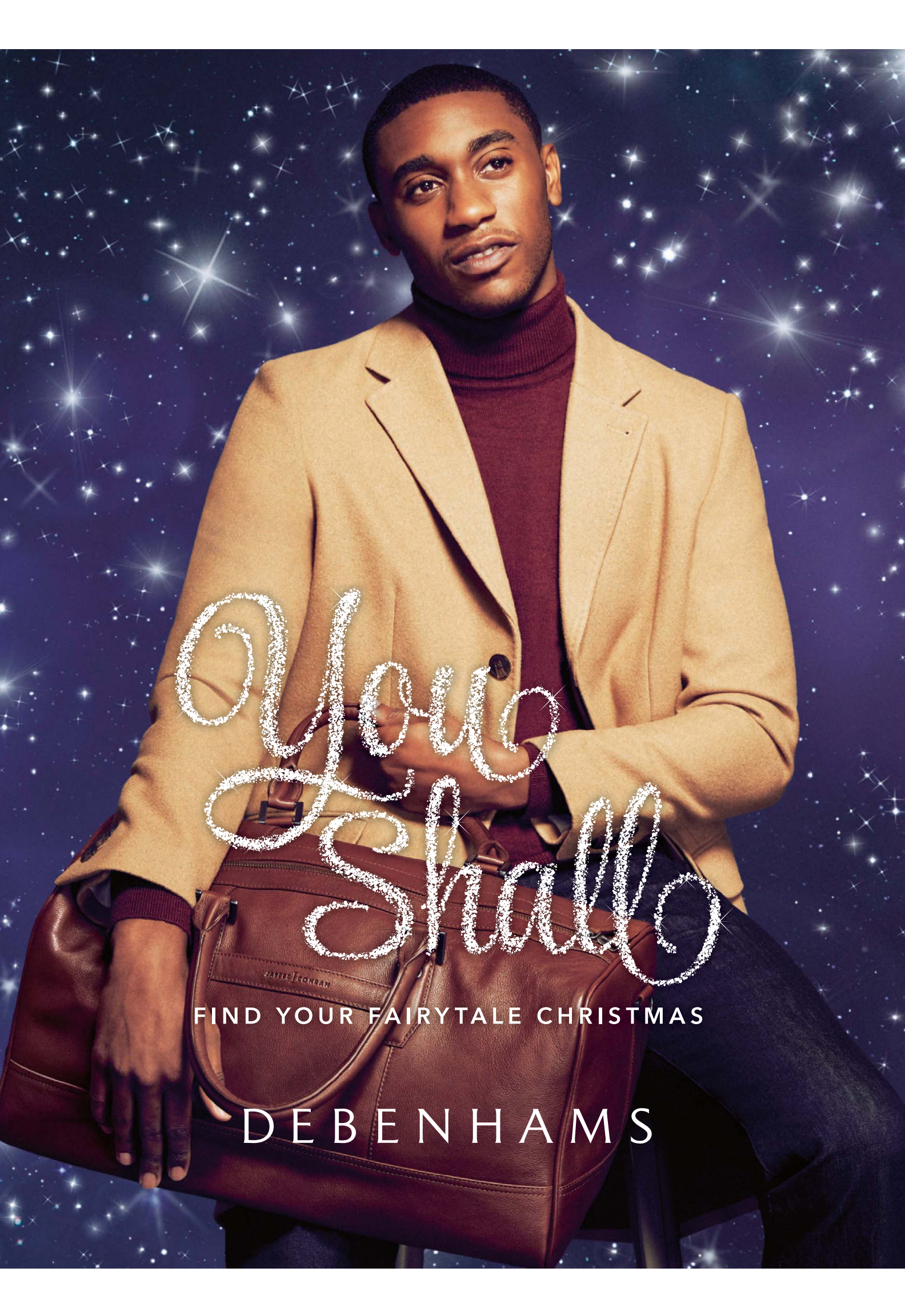
6

6 Rose gold-plated bracelet, from £52, and charms, from £30 each; thomassabo.com.

7 Multi-stone and gold bracelet, £4,482, With Love Darling; modaoperandi.com



7



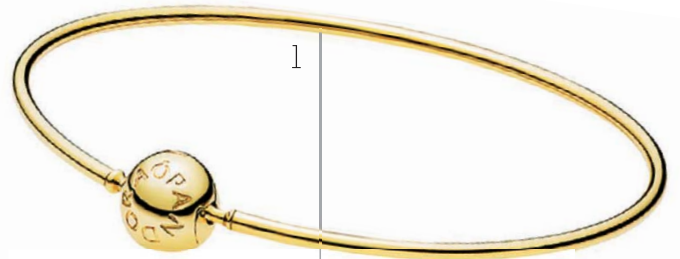
Oh You Shall

FIND YOUR FAIRYTALE CHRISTMAS

DEBENHAMS



From top Violetta bangle, £3,000; mappinandwebb.com. Love gold bangle, £3,600; cartier.co.uk. Jeux de Liens bangle, £4,020, Chaumet. Bois de Rose bracelet, £2,700; dior.com. Sabbia brown diamond bangle, £2,380; pomellato.com. City Hardware Ball Wire bangle, £1,225; tiffany.co.uk. Perlée Pearls of Gold bangle, £3,850; vancleefarpels.com. Slip dress, £777, Céline



1



2



3

1 Gold Essence bangle, £700; pandora.net.
2 Lock It pink gold bracelet, £4,450, Louis Vuitton.
3 Closed One bangle in recycled rose gold, £1,070; lilianvontrapp.com



4



5

7



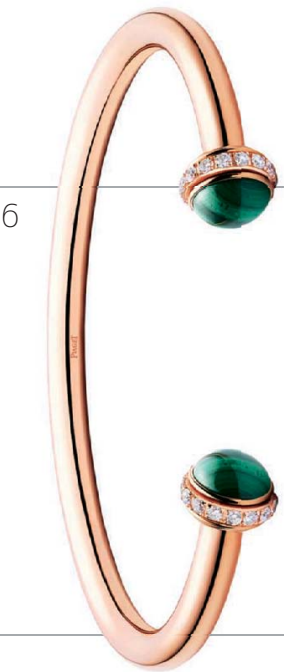
4 Rose gold and diamond bangle, £2,365, Diane Kordas; net-a-porter.com. **5** Rose gold and ceramic bangle, £2,920, Rihanna Loves Chopard; chopard.com. **6** Pink gold bangle with diamonds and malachite, £5,600, Piaget. **7** Rose gold and diamond bangle, £3,560, Suzanne Kalan; net-a-porter.com



8



9



6

8 OMG! gold and diamond bracelet, £5,980, Raphaelle Canot; doverstreetmarket.com. **9** Meridian rose gold and diamond bangle, £1,500; georginabooyce.com. **10** Gold and diamond bangle, £1,895, Monique Péan; matchesfashion.com



10

MORE IS MORE

These elegant gold and diamond bangles are made for stacking

HAIR: ANTONIO DE LUCA USING BUMBLE AND BUMBLE. MAKE-UP: ISAK HEIGASON AT FRANK AGENCY USING YSL BEAUTY. NAILS: LAUREN MICHELLE. PIERES USING CHANEL LE VERNIS IN ORGANDI AND LA CREME MAIN. MODEL: JULITA FORMELLA AT VIVA LONDON. SET DESIGN: JESS MURPHY



You Shall

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DEBENHAMS

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Previous page model wears J by Jasper Conran coat & bag

Do it
like the



D EUTSCHE

*Forget helicopter parenting. Move over, tiger mums. A new book claims that the German approach to bringing up children is the way to go now. Style's half-German **Clara Strunck** agrees*

"I'm going to bring bikini tops," said my boyfriend nervously, "because I know you and your sister won't have packed any." Of course we hadn't: neither of us had really worn a proper bikini in years, particularly if we weren't on a public beach. As children, if we were on holiday with English friends, all hell would break loose at the idea of being forced into a swimsuit. This was pretty normal to us, as was smoking with our parents when we were teenagers, having a glass of wine if we wanted one and generally doing what we liked. My German father worked abroad for much of my childhood, but when he was around he treated my sister and

me like adults: he'd tell us all about his job as we went out for dinner together or took long walks in the park, first in my pram and then hand in hand. Cigar smoke is still one of my favourite smells as I remember those walks when he would puff and chat away.

If this sounds unusual to you, welcome to the German way. I never thought my upbringing was particularly unique and, having lived in London all my life, I have always considered myself predominantly English. But after reading *Achtung Baby: The German Art of Raising Self-Reliant Children*, I've come to realise that my childhood was far more German than I originally thought. The

KRISTIN VICARI

author, Sara Zaske, an American writer who lived in Berlin for seven years, found parents there were far from the strict, overbearing rule-makers she had expected. China is famous for its tiger mothers, and Norway for its institutionalised approach (children go to nursery from the age of one), but German childhoods are like mine: mostly free, open and unstructured. “Ironically, the land once known for authoritarianism provides a compelling example of how we might do things differently,” Zaske says.

She found that the friends she made in Berlin pretty much left their children to it. “German parents believe that independence is good for children,” she writes. “They treat them as capable beings worthy of trust.” Germans place huge cultural value on the quality of *selbständigkeit*, or self-reliance, believing it produces more successful individuals. A German family friend of mine was horrified by the British idea of sending her daughter to school at four. “In a grey uniform? It would feel like I was sending her to prison or something,” she said. When I was young, I flatly refused to learn to read, despite my school’s instruction. My mother maintained that I would learn when I was ready and that forcing me would be a losing battle. (I learnt about a month later.)

Scientists believe this freewheeling parenting style fosters more than just academic confidence. “Many people think having the closest, tightest possible physical relationship to parents builds psychological wellbeing,” Remo Largo, a Swiss paediatrician once called the “god of parenting” by the German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, says, “but self-confidence is born not only of security, but of independence as well”. It’s true: my sister, who is two years older than me, and I were left to play for hours on end, often without much stimulus. I remember, at the age of about 10, turning the bathroom into a makeshift “tent” for a whole day. We locked ourselves in and played at having picnics and snuggling in sleeping bags.

WHAT’S YOUR PARENTING STYLE?

IT’S POURING WITH RAIN.

WHERE ARE YOUR CHILDREN?

- Outside, obviously — there’s no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing.
- Watching Peppa Pig while you have a glass of wine in the bath.
- Finishing their Kumon maths homework before piano practice, then advanced Mandarin.

ON YOUR SUMMER HOLIDAY, WHAT ARE THE KIDS WEARING?

- Nothing. What’s the problem?
- Literally whatever’s to hand (sometimes out of the dirty laundry — shhh).
- SPF80, plus a rashie, jelly sandals, sunhat and a custom-made sports belt stocked with insect repellent. I’m taking no chances.

PEOPLE USUALLY DESCRIBE YOUR PARENTING AS:

- Relaxed but in control.
- All over the place. But they smile when they say it, so they’re definitely joking.
- Incessant. Which is as it should be.

YOU HAVE A MEETING AND CAN’T PICK THE CHILDREN UP FROM SCHOOL. YOU:

- Don’t do anything. They’ll walk home, as they do every day — and have done since they were seven.
- Ask them to get the bus. I often forget pick-up so they’re used to it.
- Call an Uber and track the car on your phone. Then call to check they’ve got home safely and found their organic snackpots.

YOUR TEENAGE DAUGHTER IS BEGGING TO GO TO A HOUSE PARTY, BUT IT’S FAR FROM HOME AND THERE WON’T BE ADULTS THERE. WHAT DO YOU TELL HER?

- She can go, as long as she keeps her phone on and comes home before 2am.
- That’s where she’s gone? She never asked.
- Absolutely not. She needs to be up at 6am for family yoga, anyway.

Our parents didn’t bother us, nor did they try to get involved — that would have ruined the game for two imaginative young girls. We also both bear the literal scars of our many disagreements: our relationship wasn’t without its share of fist-cuffs. Today, we couldn’t be closer. We have a shared history of working things out together.

German parents stand back. At 11, I was allowed to choose my own secondary school (I liked the uniform and the teachers seemed friendly). Consequently, I loved it and spent a very happy seven years there, unlike many of my friends, who struggled after being pushed into the “best” schools by their parents. The year before, I had my first piano lesson. I didn’t like it much, mostly because my teacher came round every week just when Blue Peter was on. I told my mother I’d rather watch Blue Peter than play piano. So she let me give it up — she felt there was no point cajoling me into hobbies I wasn’t interested in.

This abundance of freedom doesn’t appear to be leading children astray: in Germany, the age of consent is 14 and the legal age to buy your own alcohol is 16, yet the binge-drinking and teenage-pregnancy statistics are more modest than those in the US and the UK. Friends at school were always jealous of my parents’ live-and-let-live attitude to drinking, smoking and other misbehaviour — their policy was that as long as I was safe, I’d grow out of any bad habits, and banning them would cause rebellion. As such, I never had much to rebel against. Now

24, I can’t recall a time when I drastically disobeyed my parents, bar a few ill-advised ear piercings. I’m grateful to them for raising me in what I now understand to be the “German way” — despite my friends’ reluctance to go on bikini-free holidays with me. ■

Achtung Baby: The German Art of Raising Self-Reliant Children (Piatkus £14.99) is published on January 2

MOSTLY ● – TERRIFICALLY TEUTONIC ARE YOU SURE YOU’RE NOT ACTUALLY GERMAN?

MOSTLY ● – MUDDLED MUTTI YOU’RE CERTAINLY FREE-WHEELING, BUT IT’S NOT ALWAYS BY CHOICE. YOU’RE HALFWAY THERE, THOUGH.

MOSTLY ● – HELICOPTER HAUSFRAU YOU NEED TO CHILL OUT IF YOU WANT TO MASTER THE GERMAN WAY. MAYBE TRY A BIT LESS BABY EINSTEIN



JUST PUTTING IT

*The penis selfie – yes, the pelfie – has become ubiquitous in the world of online dating. But in a year when consent has come under scrutiny, is it past its sell-by date, asks **Dolly Alderton***

The last “dick pic” I received landed in my inbox about a year ago. It was at the tail end of my tenure as this magazine’s dating columnist and, over the course of a few months, the owner of said appendage had been sending me polite but incessant emails asking me out to lunch. When that didn’t work, he offered to buy me a designer handbag, an offer I also declined. Finally, in his last and most intrepid bid for my attention, he sent me a photo of his penis.

This was not the first dick pic I had seen. During my years on Tinder, the occasional man would have a phallus as his main profile photo, sitting upright, bold as brass, simply looking for love. Men on dating apps who I matched with would sometimes send them to me, without my requesting them, which would earn them an instant blocking. And past boyfriends have occasionally sent them, too. I, like many women I know, have always been largely indifferent to them. I subscribe to that rather hackneyed school of thought that the male libido is more visually charged than its female counterpart, and most of the time the photos have left me feeling as aroused as when scrolling for Storslagen curtain rods on the Ikea website.

Dick pics, or the slightly more sophisticated “pelfie” have been on the rise (you will excuse this pun, it’s been unavoidable in the writing of this piece) since the dawn of the smartphone with its built-in camera. They’ve since become synonymous with millennial dating culture — shorthand for a generation of young men and women whose sense of intimacy has been ruined by online pornography, who don’t know how to meet or interact with each other in the flesh, and whose lives and identities are more meaningful on screen than off. Older generations are often baffled by the concept, raising questions about privacy as well as the intended purpose. Yet for us, whether we send and receive them or not, the dick pic has become worryingly commonplace in courtship — verging on the prosaic rather than a perversion or kink.

However, in the past two months, as women have shared their stories of historic sexual harassment and abuse with a world finally ready to listen, the proliferation of the pelfie has to be questioned.

Women have told stories of men in positions of authority who have committed rape, as well as stories of abuse that reside in a supposedly greyer area. Some men have cited this as the end of a golden age of harmless flirting. They’ve wrung their sweaty little hands in outrage while bemoaning the loss of being able to tell Sally the secretary she’s got a nice arse. I was particularly amused by the tweet of an incredulous gentleman who managed to make the uprising of oppressed and abused women all about him by stating: “Any woman wanting me under the mistletoe this year, forget it. I will walk away. Don’t want to be accused of wrongdoing.” But, on the whole, men have realised this is a time to question the way they use their power, force and persistence when it comes to sex. And, of course, that extends to the virtual world, which leaves us with the question: what happens to dick pics in a post-Weinstein world?

Dr Justin Lehmiller, a social psychologist, sex researcher and author, says that the boundaries of permission need to be as clear when it comes to sending graphic photos as they should be in the flesh. “Sexting is a form of sexual behaviour. As such, we need to be talking about issues of consent when it comes to sexting, just as we would when it comes to physical acts.” Lehmiller is currently researching why so many straight men send unsolicited photos of their genitals to women and believes there will not be one clear reason or personality type who sends them. “I expect to find a typology of men who do this, with some doing it because they think women actually want to receive these pictures, others doing it because they find shocking or offending others sexually arousing, others doing it because they have hostile attitudes toward women, and yet others doing it because they have low social skills.”

I wanted to speak to some pelfie takers and senders myself, which was a slightly awkward journalistic task, but with the promise of anonymity I found a few obliging

men willing to answer my questions. Chris, 32, has sent four dick pics in his life, to past girlfriends and sexual partners, and has never asked specifically if the recipient would like one, but he feels he sensed when the moment was appropriate: “Every one I’ve sent has been after flirting or dirty talk by text. I would mention my dick during this to try and sense how much she’d be into seeing a picture of it.” He says the range of reactions has been “broad”, from “very welcoming” to “mild, disinterested amusement”. He says the act of sending it is not a turn-on, but the anticipation of her reaction and the “gamble” is exciting. “It shows a woman who I am sleeping with that I’m someone confident enough to send an unsolicited picture of my dick. Confidence is something I really admire in others, so maybe this is one of my ways of implying I have it,” he says.

John, 40, has also sent “about four” dick pics, mainly to women he was speaking to online. However, not only does he not send them without permission, he says he’s only ever sent them “on request”, which he admits has been “pretty rare”, but the responses have been “universally positive”. He also claims that he doesn’t find taking the picture particularly exciting: “I don’t find it intrinsically arousing. In fact, it’s slightly intimidating. So I wouldn’t do it unless we’d been talking for a while and built up some trust.”

Emy, 27, has sent dick pics to six girlfriends and sexual partners and has also had consistently positive responses, with one woman replying with a series of heart-eye emojis. “It’s mostly a gesture of reciprocation while sexting,” he says. “To make the woman feel wanted and admired and also to make her feel at ease as it evokes an element of vulnerability.” He has never asked permission to send one, but also doesn’t send them “out of the blue” and, like Chris and John, says he usually sends them during sexting.

Another argument for the growing trend for pelfies is the widespread availability of free porn. The majority of pornography is seen through a distinctly male gaze, with a lot of focus and time spent on the penis itself, enshrining it as a sort of world-renowned headline act, as sought-after and mesmerising as a live Beyoncé show. The three men I spoke to admit to having a preferred style in which the anatomical detail of the

appendage takes centre stage. John favours a photo taken from slightly underneath and to one side.

“I don’t include my face, because the framing challenge is too much for a cameraphone.” Emy likes to send a “two-in-one sitting”, one of which will include “a suggestive shot of the bulge while wearing my boxers. That’s for, like, foreplay.”

Tragically, there haven’t been any exhaustive studies of dick-pic correspondence, but in my own unofficial survey on Twitter of nearly 800 women, 59% claimed they had been sent a dick pic. Of those, 11% had only received ones they had asked for; 49% hadn’t requested them and 40% had experienced both. The overwhelming impression is, therefore, that the majority of dick pics being sent are unsolicited. But what happens when an unwilling recipient takes action?

Jenna, 26, was sitting on the Tube when an AirDrop request was sent to her for more than 100 obscene images — she screenshotted and declined it. “It felt like a violation. I was furious and embarrassed that other people on the Tube might see and think they were my pictures on my phone,” she says. She reported it after posting about her experience on Twitter, only to have lots of other women message her with similar stories — she was “angry on their behalf”. The police, she says, took her report seriously from the word go and have managed to trace the perpetrator. She hopes that by reporting the incident, she has given the police a more accurate view of how often this is happening. “People need to be made more aware that this is a criminal offence and can be prosecuted as such,” she says. “It isn’t a tax that women should have to pay just because they use public transport.”

The best way, it seems, to address the question of consent when it comes to dick pics is to simply ask if you would like to receive one. Some argue that this sort of overt permission-seeking is a mood killer, but perhaps we are finally at a point where some things are more important than “the mood” — such as a woman’s sense of comfort and safety.

If there’s one thing we can be grateful for in the wake of #metoo and its hundreds of thousands of monstrous allegations, it is that the question of consent is being properly discussed and analysed. These are useful conversations to be having and they are part of the growing pains of the internet and smartphones, still a relatively new phenomenon, only as old as millennials themselves.

Dick pics won’t die just yet, although I imagine some of you wish they would. But discussion, caution and sensitivity around them will certainly increase. And that can only be a good thing. ■

OUT THERE



THIS PAGE WOOL ROLLNECK, £630, VICTORIA BECKHAM. DOUBLE-BREASTED JACKET, £1,110, AND MATCHING BELTED TROUSERS, £810, ELLERY; MATCHESFASHION.COM. SLINGBACKS, £238, YUUL YIE. GOLD HOOPS, £95; GEORGIANASCOTT.CO.UK
OPPOSITE GREY T-SHIRT, £65; SUNSPEL.COM. WHITE DOUBLE-BREASTED SUIT, £1,400, CONNOLLY; MATCHESFASHION.COM. GREEN WOOL COAT, £795, RAEY; MATCHESFASHION.COM. BROWN MULES, £375, REJINA PYO

JOB DONE

REWORK YOUR OFFICE
WARDROBE WITH
RELAXED TAILORING AND
A POP OF COLOUR



Photographs **Mattias Bjorklund** Styling **Flossie Saunders**



THIS PAGE SILK SHIRT, £315; VICTORIA VICTORIA BECKHAM. PINK BLAZER, £1,295, AND MATCHING TROUSERS, £895, ROKSANDA. GREY MULES, £310, ERIKA CAVALLINI. WAVE SILVER EARRINGS, £190, DINNY HALL

OPPOSITE WHITE COTTON T-SHIRT, £300, THE ROW; NET-A-PORTER.COM. PINK SILK JACKET, £1,745, AND MATCHING SKIRT, £1,200; FENDI.COM







THIS PAGE POLKA-DOT SHIRT, £250; BURBERRY. COM. YELLOW BLAZER, £484, AND ORANGE COTTON TROUSERS, £154, DONDUP. PATENT MULES, £210, AYEDE. GOLD HOOP EARRINGS, £69; GEORGIANASCOTT.CO.UK
OPPOSITE SILK SHIRT, £335, PORTS 1961. JACKET, £443, AND SKIRT, £335, ERIKA CAVALLINI. MULES, £470, REJINA PYO. HOOP EARRINGS, £115; JANEKOENIG.CO.UK





THIS PAGE BURGUNDY ROLLNECK, £234, DIANE VON FURSTENBERG; MATCHESFASHION.COM. POPLIN SHIRT, £245, LINEN BLAZER, £495, AND MATCHING TROUSERS, £325, JOSEPH. BURGUNDY PATENT FLATS, £210, AEYDE. GOLD MINI-HOOP EARRINGS, £145, DINNY HALL

OPPOSITE TEAL ROLLNECK, £39; KETTLEWELLCOLOURS.CO.UK. CHECK JACKET, £790, AND MATCHING KICK-FLARE TROUSERS, £370, MARQUES'ALMEIDA; HARVEYNICHOLS.COM. EMBELLISHED SHOES, £690, HERMES. SILVER EARRINGS, £140; NIZAHUANG.COM

HAIR MIRKA MYSICKA AT SAINT LUKE USING SACHAJUAN **MAKE-UP** ISAK HELGASON AT FRANK AGENCY USING SENSAI BEAUTY **NAILS** EMMA WELSH AT FRANK AGENCY USING NAILS INC

MODEL DANIELLE LASHLEY AT NEXT MODEL MANAGEMENT

Edit **Flossie Saunders**

INJECT YOUR
WARDROBE
WITH POPS OF
COLOUR AND
STRONG PIECES

1



EUDON CHOI

2



3



4

COLOUR



5



6



GETTY

7



- 1 Asymmetric skirt, £390, JW Anderson; matchesfashion.com.
- 2 Yellow blazer, £50, and trousers, £26; zara.com.
- 3 Mustard coat, £380; uterque.com.
- 4 Pink court shoes, £175; russellandbromley.co.uk.
- 5 Green midlength dress, £260; cefinn.com.
- 6 Eloise tote, £310, Elizabeth and James; net-a-porter.com.
- 7 Blue blouse, £79; arket.com



TIBI



CLASSIC



8 Slingbacks, £50; mango.com. **9** Navy knitted dress, £99; hobbs.co.uk. **10** Pinstripe skirt, £175; solacelondon.com. **11** Tan bag, £495, Sophie Hulme; ssense.com

12 Navy blazer, £585, and trousers, £465, Frame; net-a-porter.com. **13** Taupe boots, £298; lkbennett.com. **14** Cashmere jumper, £325, Raey; matchesfashion.com. **15** Camel coat, £375; jaeger.co.uk

A LOVE LETTER TO LONDON

by
Domenico Dolce and
Stefano Gabbana



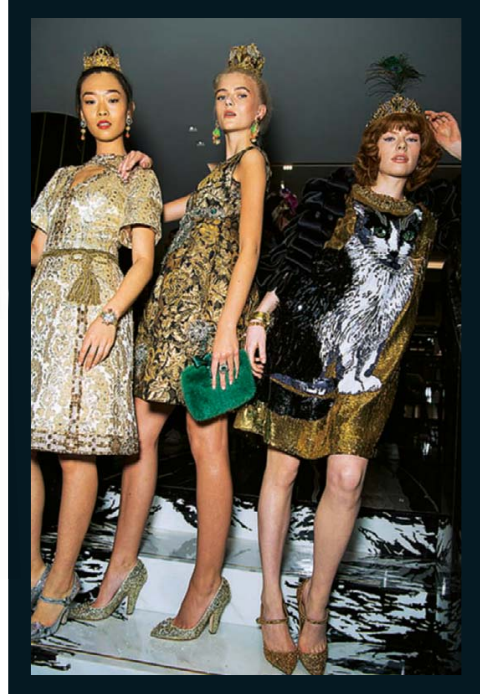
Dear London,

This isn't the first letter we've ever written to a city, but it is the first time that the city isn't Italian. When we wrote to Milan, it was a letter of love and thanks to the city that had provided us with the opportunity to realise our dream and establish ourselves creatively and commercially. We're grateful to London for another reason: for having stimulated and inspired us over the years, fueling our creativity and our vision.

For us, writing to London is like opening a photo album full of memories of a city that has played a fundamental role in our evolution and our knowledge of the fashion world. London is the city of dreams, of new horizons; the city every young Italian goes to on his or her first trip abroad. It was the same for us, rucksacks full of dreams, curiosity and the desire to learn.

I, Stefano, wanted to come to London to see the punks. I'd seen them on television and in magazines, and I was intrigued. When I arrived in the city in the 1970s, a friend of mine, older and more experienced, brought me to the King's Road. I saw the mohawks and check shirts, the studded black leather jackets and make-up. They totally fascinated me. I wanted to get to know these people, I wanted to see them up close. But my friend said they were dangerous and tried to stop me. I came all the way from Milan, and they were like nothing I'd ever seen, so I was extremely curious. Stubborn as always, I paid her no heed and did it anyway...

I, Domenico, remember the trips we took together right after we founded Dolce & Gabbana in 1984, almost always for work. We'd go to Notting Hill and Portobello Road to browse the vintage stalls and shops. Back then, we got so much inspiration from the streets of London — especially for the D&G line, born in 1994 and targeted at





NONE OF THE
GIRLS WORE
TIGHTS IN
LONDON —
THEY SEEMED
IMMUNE TO
THE COLD

young people, because it came from them, from the streets. We'd sit on the pavement and watch the kids pass by. We thought: "None of the girls wear tights! The market for tights here must be disastrous." The girls seemed immune to the cold — short skirts and leather jackets — whereas the boys always had a fabulous combination of vintage and jeans where you couldn't ever really tell what was old or new.

Today, London is the centre of the world, a truly unique city with an unrivalled mix of cultures. But it retains its human dimension, because despite its enormity, you can still get around easily, you can walk the streets and visit a museum without having to be a superhero.

These days, we are mostly in Milan, but we try to come to London as often as possible. Primrose Hill is fantastic. It's like being at home, with its little shops, and the hill itself, where the kids go to watch the sunset. It takes your breath away, it's so romantic, especially in autumn when the colours explode. We brought Domenico's nieces and nephews there last month and had a lot of fun.

When we stroll around London on a weekend, we like to go down to the canals of Little Venice and to Camden Town, areas full of memories for us, and always fun because there are all kinds of markets selling the most varied and peculiar things. We also really like the Columbia Road flower market — it's no secret that flowers are essential to our identity. But what we love most about

these places in London is getting lost among Londoners, strolling around among you, blending in with normal people, exactly like you, like us.

Last month we were here working on two pet projects that made us very proud, because they allowed us to bring Italy — "our" Italy — to London. First, we held an Alta Moda and Alta Sartoria show in our new boutique on Old Bond Street, dedicated to the vision of England conveyed to us through the symbols we grew up loving: Mary Poppins, My Fair Lady, the ladies' hats at Ascot, and of course, the Union Jack and punkified tartan. We have never hidden our admiration for Vivienne Westwood and Paul Smith, two great British designers who represent your country as we hope to represent our own. And, of course, we're true fans of the royal family, of the fabulous fashions of the Queen and Duchess Kate. When Kate wore one of our dresses for the first time, it was a delightful surprise. We were especially pleased when she chose one of our most iconic dresses in black lace.

Then there is our current big project for Harrods, creating the Christmas displays in the windows. During the festive season, the city becomes even more wonderful and magical, a place where it feels easier to dream, with all the lights and colours. The honour of creating these displays this year has been a source of great pride for us, and even makes us feel a bit English ourselves.

Thank you, London, for being truly one of a kind!

We love you, Domenico & Stefano



The Dolce & Gabbana Brit-inspired Alta Moda and Alta Sartoria show in London last month

COURTESY DOLCE & GABBANA, STEFANO BABIC

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TOBY WISEMAN



Style **COUNSEL**



Is there such a thing as a Christmas present that makes up for months of lacklustre boyfriending? If so, what/where/how, etc?

Dean, Swindon

Regular readers of Style will recall an issue dedicated to Christmas gifts about a month ago. This was primarily for the benefit of well-organised, generous-hearted women for whom the exchange of presents between loved ones is something worthy of time and consideration. You, Dean, clearly do not meet this description. This is because you are a man. And while I am loath to reinforce the stereotype that all men are thoughtless, mean-spirited procrastinators — though, admittedly, the blithe nature of your question does little to refute such a suggestion — in this case the presence of a Y chromosome is material. For when it comes to presents, men are notoriously found wanting. And I should know, because I am one, too.

With just seven shopping days to go until C-Day, your hope of mitigating weeks of relationship negligence with a quick trawl through Amazon is as arrogant as it is unrealistic. But buying a gift that will win you a beatific glow right through to New Year is attainable if you follow the right advice. At least, this is what I have been told. Had I been so informed before I elected to buy my wife an expensive pot of cellulite-removing moisturiser, then Christmas 2013 may have been more joyous. Such is life.

Fortunately for you, one doesn't reach my career heights without having contacts. Since I began writing this column, the most positive feedback I've received was in response to a query about birthday presents, for which I consulted a wise and unrepentantly forthright PR friend. Her frank analysis of men's shortcomings in the gift department clearly struck a chord. So, for your express benefit, I have called upon her once more. Swallow your pride and take heed.



Baies candle, £45, Diptyque



The Dolce Vita Luxury Palette, £39, Charlotte Tilbury



Trio bag, £690, Céline

IT'S NOT THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS

Whoever coined such a pitiful phrase was undoubtedly a man, not least because a crap present suggests the very absence of thought. Forget thinking, just listen. My friend once tactically showed her husband a picture of a vintage drinks trolley and said something obvious such as "Isn't this amazing?" swiftly followed by "Don't you think this is amazing?" The answer, it would appear, was no. She ended up with a boring, standard, "This is all I think of you" purse. Apparently, she needed a new one. Here's some advice: don't buy the purse.

DON'T BUY UNDERWEAR, EITHER

No woman in her right mind wants a partner buying her lingerie. It won't fit properly, it'll itch, and they'll only stress out picturing you shopping for it like some kind of rain-mac perv. Remember that friends will ask her what you bought her for Christmas and the answer will reflect both the state of your relationship and your worthiness as a partner. Underwear simply means you're not having enough sex.

NOTHING USEFUL, NOTHING FUNNY

A present must be personal, not practical — if it plugs in, forget it. A friend of mine refused to speak to her boyfriend for two days after he gave her a set of electric weighing scales for Christmas. To add insult to injury, he threw in a pint-sized wine glass, just for the lolz. He is no longer with us.

FIVE EASY WINS

Candles: you can't go wrong with Diptyque or Byredo. Consider a Charlotte Tilbury Makeup Look gift set (the Dolce Vita or Rock Chick will tell her you think she's hot and cool). Shoes are always good. Designer ones. Keep it simple — classic, sexy, black leather pumps are spot-on. A cute gold necklace from Bam-B, inscribed with her initial, is intimate and beautiful. But if money is no object, my PR friend tells me that a Céline Trio bag is the dream. Of course, you could argue that the way you spend Christmas is more important than how much. I'd say the latter begets the former, cheapskate. Whatever you do, don't scrimp. ■

Toby Wiseman is editor of Men's Health

CLARINS

Your Beauty GIFT

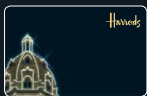
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Harrods
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BEAUTY

Fire it up *If in doubt, make it orange this winter*



SHOPPING: CHARLOTTE BITMEAD

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT & OTHER STORIES BLUSHER IN PECHE TROUPE, £17. LAURA MERCIER VELOUR EXTREME MATTE IN STYLIN, £22; SPACENK.COM, FROM JANUARY 1. 3INA THE FLUORO CREAM EYESHADOW IN 401, £11. BARRY M GELLY HI SHINE NAIL PAINT IN SATSUMA, £4. KAT VON D STUDD KISS LIPSTICK IN A GO GO, £17; DEBENHAMS.COM. CHANEL JOUES CONTRASTE POWDER BLUSH IN SO CLOSE, £34. MAKE UP FOR EVER ARTIST ROUGE CREME LIPSTICK IN C304, £18; DEBENHAMS.COM

Photograph **Luke Kirwan**

STYLEPLAY > Sarah Jossel and Eyeko founder Nina Leykind on the perfect mascara at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay



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INDIA KNIGHT



Let your **HAIR DOWN**

If you have no time and no hairdryer, this fix-all hair treatment will see you through the party season

OK, so Christmas hair or party hair or New Year hair. This is a busy time of year: places to go, people to see, and a limited amount of time on your hands to “fouff” your hair. I have two tips and, frankly, they are both excellent. One: put a can of Sam McKnight Cool Girl Texture Mist (£25) in your office (or kitchen) drawer. It will correct most styling disasters, and if your hair looks good to start with, it will make it look amazing.

Two: minimise effort by prepping hair with Redken One United All-In-One Multi-Benefit Treatment (£12; lookfantastic.com). It does 25 different things. Yes, really. Well, sort of really — 25 different things is a lot, but I don't suppose they wanted to say 18¾. Anyway: brilliant product.

Before I start listing the ways in which I love it, like a grotesquely weird version of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Sonnet 43, I must tell you about a good, non-party, unglamorous use for it: namely, if you have nightmare hair, no time, no hairdryer, no skill, no nothing, then wash your hair, spritz this all over and leave it. It's not going to make you look like you've spent the afternoon at the salon — let's be realistic — but it is going to make your hair look a million times better.

Frizz will be smoothed. Spindly hairs that stick out will be welcomed back into the fold. Your hair will feel richly conditioned, but not conditioner-heavy. You will catch sight of yourself in the mirror and think “Oh!” and be quite surprised, because, after all, you haven't really done anything. And if you have curly hair that never falls into nice fat curls

YOU WILL
CATCH SIGHT
OF YOURSELF
AND BE QUITE
SURPRISED,
BECAUSE YOU
HAVEN'T
REALLY DONE
ANYTHING



BUY IT NOW

but rather fluffs out everywhere, buy two. We're in new-best-friend territory.

Now, if you have time to sit down and style your hair properly, you will see the full amaz- ingness of this product. (One of the things it does is protect against heat damage, so we're winning from the off.) I hate blow-drying my hair, though my beloved Dyson Supersonic hairdryer helps a lot — and so does this prod- uct. It makes my hair behave better, and the conditioning element means it's perfectly detangled and unknotty.

It is also great on porous, buggered-up hair that's been over-processed and over-coloured. This is important. I can name you loads of good hair products that work brilliantly on hair that is brilliant to start off with, but to me that's hardly the point. You want hair products that work on challenged hair, or skin products that work on not-great skin, or an eyeliner you can use even if you have oven gloves for hands, otherwise what's the point?

Another thing I love about it is that I am allergic to products you can feel in your hair. This is undetectable. It just sits there, quietly working its 25 miracles. Oh, and you can use it between washes to zhuzh things up in an emergency. ■

REDKEN ONE UNITED ALL-IN-ONE MULTI-BENEFIT TREATMENT, £12; LOOKFANTASTIC.COM

VICTORIA ADAMSON

STYLEPLAY > India has already made her new year's resolution. Watch #TeamSTYLE's promises to themselves at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay

The queen of BROWS

*Anastasia Soare, aka Anastasia Beverly Hills, is the woman behind the brows of everyone from Kim Kardashian to Victoria Beckham – and now she’s expanding her beauty empire in the UK. **Sarah Jossel** finds out the secrets of her success*

The first thing I notice when I walk into Anastasia Soare’s office in Los Angeles is the pictures on the wall in which she is variously hugging Barack Obama, David Beckham and Oprah. You wouldn’t expect these people to hang out with a lady who does brows, but Soare is far more than just an eyebrow lady. She is responsible for putting the brow category on the beauty map in the late 1990s, “when everyone was overplucking”, she says. “No one believed brows were important.”

Fast-forward 20 years and the UK brow market is worth £20m, according to NPD market research. And, good news for us, Soare has launched her full range on the beauty retailer FeelUnique, with rumours of a counter in Selfridges next year. “So, you do Obama’s brows?” I ask, pointing to his picture. “No, Michelle’s, darling,” she says. “And David is there because I do Victoria’s brows. I love her. Isn’t she amazing?”

I am in LA to spend two days with Soare (“Pronounce it like ‘soirée’ – the party”). My first meeting with the 5ft 4in beauty tycoon – who never wears flats unless it’s a Sunday and she’s at home alone – is in her office: a large, modern space filled with oversized crystals, fluffy cushions and artwork. (Side note: I am not talking any old art – there is an original 1935 Picasso casually propped up in the middle of the room.)

Soare’s journey is unique. Unlike the new-gen beauty brands celebrating overnight success thanks to social media, she has had to work solidly on her namesake brand, Anastasia Beverly Hills. Born in Romania, she left the then communist country in her thirties and came to live in LA. She’s now 60, but looks decades younger. She became an aesthetician, she says, because “it didn’t require me to have perfect English skills” – her accent is part eastern European, part valley girl.

It was while working in a beauty salon that she noticed no one was doing brows: “My boss at the time wasn’t a fan of the idea, but I could see the gap.” In 1997 she opened her own salon, Anastasia Beverly Hills, and six months later, Cindy Crawford’s agent came in. “Next thing, Cindy walked in, and from that moment I was doing all the supermodels – Naomi, Claudia, all of

them.” Today, Soare’s regular clients include Oprah, who describes her service as better than sliced bread. “When Oprah says that, people listen,” she says. And then, of course, there are the Kardashians. She does all the sisters and, thanks to her, the Kardashibrow is the most requested shape in brow bars across the globe. “I’ve been on the show, the works,” she says.

Now, there are 300 people working for the company, including Soare’s daughter, Claudia. This is not the usual mother-daughter duo, where daughter lives the good life because it’s mummy’s company. “Honey, I fired her at the beginning,” Soare says bluntly. “She was late all the time. When she asked me for one more chance I gave it to her, but I said, ‘Remember I’m not your mother, I’m your boss.’”

It was Claudia who persuaded Soare to get onto Instagram, and their account @AnastasiaBeverlyHills has an insane 15.1m followers and counting, which, to put it in context, is more than Nars, Maybelline and Stila put together. The secret of their viral success is regramming. Instead of coming up with their own content, the brand uploads more than six pictures a day showcasing its products from other people’s accounts. “We are constantly promoting and engaging with everyone, whether they have hundreds or millions of followers. They are our PR people as they are showing their sisters, co-workers, everyone, that they love a product,” Soare says.

Today, the line includes a host of brow fillers and tools including the famous Dipbrow (£19), an easy to blend, creamy pomade; Brow Wiz (£22), an ultra-thin pencil that mimics the look of natural hair; and the renowned stencils (£21), ideal for creating the perfect shape if you’ve overplucked or are a beginner. But

Below Anastasia Soare and her most famous client, Kim Kardashian



BROW TIPS **1 Shape** Brows should start directly above the middle of the nostrils and the end should match up with the outer corner of your eyes. **2 Colour** Use two shades: a lighter one for a base and to create the shape, and a darker shade to build depth and definition.



From back Matte Lipsticks in Resin, Cobalt and Brandy, £18 each, Blush Trio in Pink Passion, £30, Brow Wiz Crayon in Auburn, £22, Subculture Palette, £43, Tinted Brow Gel in Blonde, £23, Brow Powder Duo in Ebony, £24, Eyeshadow Singles in Burnt Orange, Dragonfly and Electro, £12 each, and Dipbrow Pomade in Dark Brown, £19. All Anastasia Beverly Hills; feelunique.com

it's her eyebrow technique that is her USP. "Growing up I studied architecture, engineering, drawing and mathematics. I was fascinated by Leonardo da Vinci's drawings of the golden ratio, which is the key to finding balance and symmetry," she says.

Soare's brow theory is based on maths and proportions, and she applies the same principles to her make-up techniques. In 2014, she launched a full colour cosmetics line that has been wildly successful. Its coveted eye-shadow palette Subculture is top of most gen-Z Christmas lists this year. "It's less about how you apply make-up and more about where," she says. While I'm with her, she does my make-up: my cheekbones somehow look better than ever before, and my nose seems straighter, too. But it is the magic she applies to my brows that is most impressive: it lifts my whole face and makes me look far more awake. Think facelift

without the, er, facelift. You can watch Anastasia at work on StylePLAY.

So what's next for the queen of brows? Is she planning to follow in the footsteps of other modern make-up brands such as Too Faced and Becca, which, in autumn 2016, both sold part of their businesses to the beauty conglomerate Estée Lauder? "No, no. I mean, you never know, but not right now. First, I want to get to a point where I stock my products in every single country."

There's one more thing on Soare's to-do list: "Kate Middleton's brows. She has incredible brows, but I would do them very differently — I would love to get my hands on them." After witnessing her determination over two days, I have no doubt she will find a way to draw, define and sculpt the royal brows. Watch this space. ■

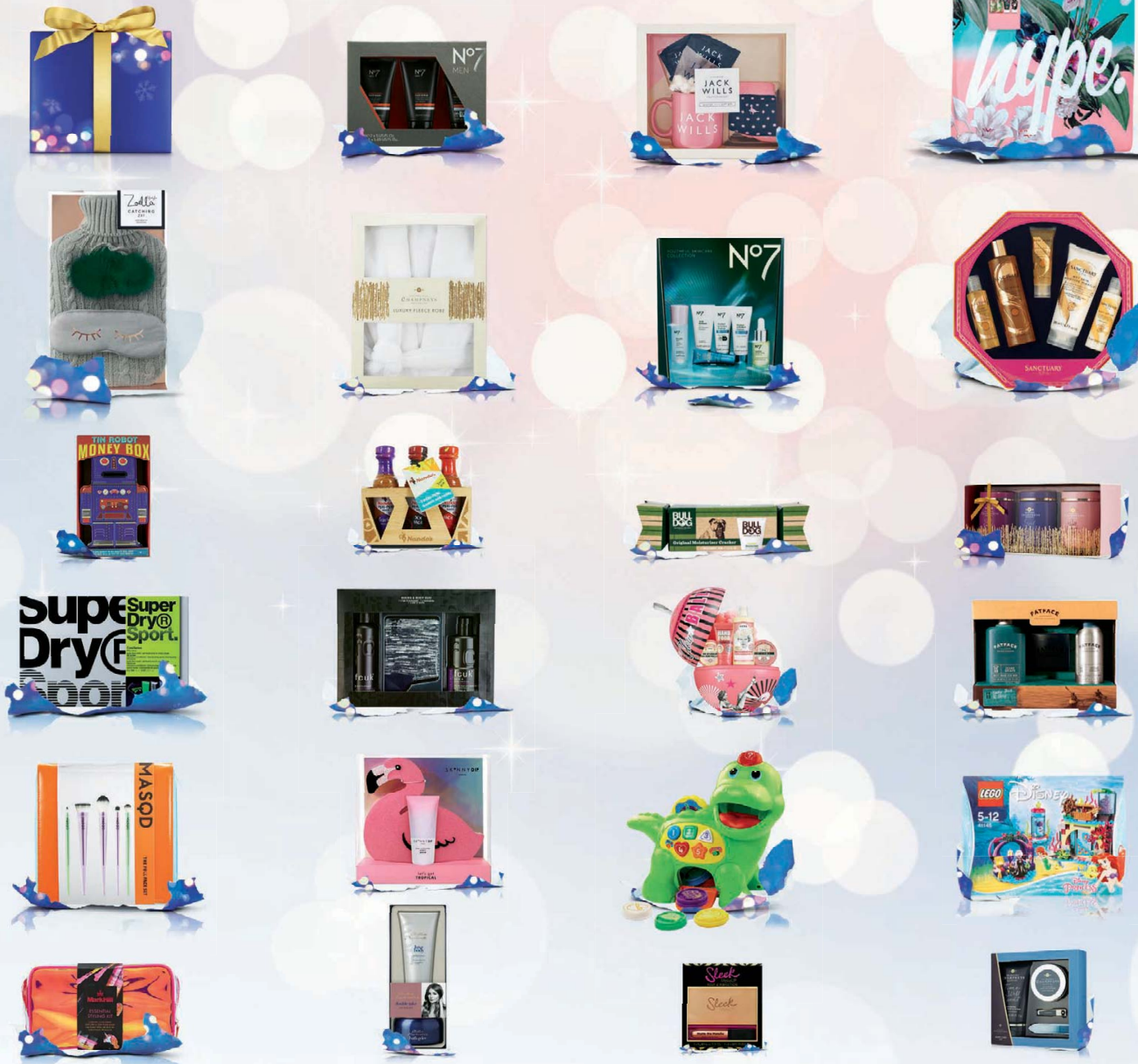
Anastasia Beverly Hills; feelunique.com

STYLEPLAY > Watch Anastasia Soare's brow tutorial at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay #BeautyBOSS

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BEAUTY

We review the latest treatments

Say YES to...

EIGHT-WEEK LASH EXTENSIONS



This week's beauty guinea pig, **Louisa McGillicuddy**, gives her recalcitrant lashes a boost with custom extensions

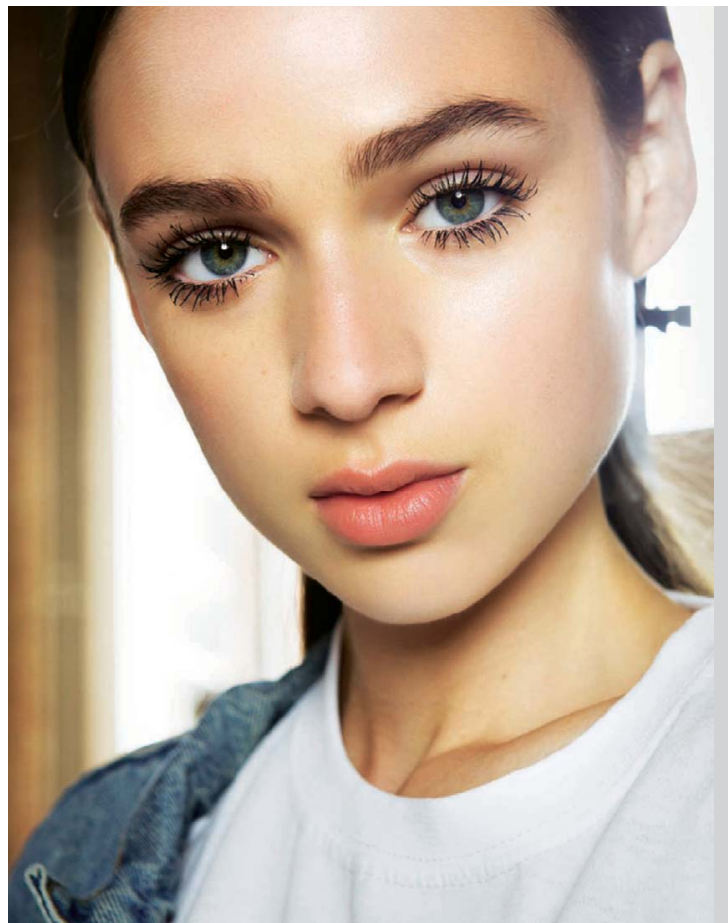
WHAT HAPPENED "You're going to get addicted," says my lash therapist Shareen, snapping on a pair of latex gloves. "I haven't worn mascara in five years." She has the most perfectly symmetrical eyelashes I have ever seen. Each one looks as if it has been hand-painted onto her sweet face by Walt Disney himself.

It has been a while since I wore fake eyelashes. Never successfully, of course — there is only so much quality one can expect from £7 multipacks named after various members of Girls Aloud. Inevitably you would wake up to find they had dropped off onto your pillow like a pair of drunken caterpillars. But lash tech has come a long way, and now everyone seems to be getting tints or perms or extensions. Lash extensions add volume and thickness to your natural eye plumage and are designed for everyday beautification. The lashes themselves can be made of synthetic materials or, preposterously, silk, cashmere or mink. These ones are synthetic and promise to last eight weeks, at which point they will, to use the correct lash parlance, "moult" naturally with your actual, human eyelashes, which have a similar life cycle.

HOW DOES IT WORK My lashes are naturally long, but very resistant to "styling". I've tried the gold standard Shu Uemura curlers, even heated lash brushes — nothing has ever worked. Fortunately, Shareen has a personalised easel with hundreds of neatly curled lashes, arranged by length. One by one she picks a lash, dips it into adhesive and applies it with a pair of tweezers on top of an existing lash in need of resuscitation.

WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE? She applies a sticky disc to cover my lower lids — no one gets the lower lashes done, apparently — as she begins filling out the upper lash line. The whole process takes two hours, during which I discover that Shareen is also a competitive lash therapist. Yes, there are championships in Russia.

Aftercare and maintenance is a bit finicky: you can't get them wet for 48 hours, and you can't rub your eyes in that satisfying just-woke-up way while they're in, either. I'm given a little eyelash brush to comb them each morning, like a prize pooch at Crufts. It is oddly therapeutic.



THE VERDICT MY LASH LINE IS 100% FULLER AND MORE CURLED, MAKING MY EYES LOOK JUST AS OPEN AND DEFINED AS THEY WOULD WITH EYELINER AND MASCARA. THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT IS A LITTLE DISNEY PRINCESS ON ACID, BUT AFTER A WEEK THEY CALM DOWN AND LOOK VERY PRETTY INDEED (COMMENTS DOWNGRADED FROM "YOU LOOK LIKE THE LAUGHING COW" TO "YES, FEMININE"). I'M ALREADY WORRYING ABOUT WHAT MY BORING, REGULAR-SIZED EYES WILL LOOK LIKE WHEN THE SUPERLASHES FALL OUT. **THE DAMAGE** NOUVEAU LASHES EXTEND, FROM £65.

WHERE TO GO NOUVEAULASHES.COM

STYLEPLAY > Can stick-on patches get rid of wrinkles? Our testers try them out at thesundaytimes.co.uk/styleplay



DO YOU NEED A COMPASSION COACH?

The life coach has had a rebrand, and now there's one for everything (yes, even your gut).

Fleur Britten meets the new wellbeing specialists

Photograph **Lukasz Wierzbowski**

THERE WAS A TIME when having a personal trainer and a life coach was an impressive signal of being on top of things. But the millennial goal of “being your best self” takes more than that. Many believe it calls for a team of Yodas to provide guidance in long-lasting transformation — they’re not interested in old-school quick fixes and bad habits. (Anyone for gin? Thought not.) Such is the scale of specialist coaches and transformational retreats now on offer, people even talk of a “transformation economy”. But why the obsession with change? In a society that is steadily letting go of religion, the Californian idea of self-improvement is seen as the new path to enlightenment, and, indeed, is treated as a kind of church. Truly clean living means decluttering one’s personal baggage, taking control of one’s physical and emotional wellbeing, and facing oneself to check for blind spots and blemishes. It takes commitment, money and, of course, coaches. Here are the ones you never thought you needed in your life, but actually probably do.



LUCY SHERIDAN
COMPARISON COACH

Do your friends' Instagram posts of tanned toes digging into white sand make your blood boil? If so, you might want to consider an appointment with the comparison coach. "Social media can destroy our sense of identity," says Lucy Sheridan, holder of "the world's most niche job title". She continues: "It can trigger depression and anxiety; it can make people think their whole lives are broken." Rather than be happy for, say, our friend's engagement, she says, "it can make people think, 'I'm going to be single for ever.'" Sheridan, who is based in Brighton but also coaches by Skype, helps clients by first gaining insights into their reactions: "It's easy to be bitchy about others' holidays, but the lesson here is that you've been ignoring your own wellness." Future-self meditations guide clients through visualising the life they want to lead, which Sheridan helps them to plan and advises on moving forward. She also buys them gifts and experiences — journals, surprise dinners, tickets to workshops — to help them feel less alone and "get them into their own experience". Usually, the act of comparison is a "Trojan horse" that unlocks a bigger issue, but six sessions over three months for "committed" clients should be enough to stop others' suntans seeming so abhorrent. *£3,000 for six sessions; proofcoaching.com*



MANDY ADAMS MENSTRUAL MENTOR

If with every period, you pop a Nurofen so you can carry on as normal, you're missing "vast opportunities", says "menstruality educator" Mandy Adams. Specifically, you're missing the chance "to take charge of your energy levels and gain greater understanding of yourself as a woman", she says. Over four weekly sessions during one lunar cycle, Adams, who is based in Cornwall but also does online mentoring, guides clients through the emotions of their cycle. "I ask them to chart, 'When I'm experiencing pain, do I judge myself, do I try and carry on, or do I let myself be with it?'" Typically, she says, we judge ourselves during the "feminine arc" of our cycle (before and during menstruation), and irritation stems "from saying yes to things we don't have energy for". Cyclical awareness brings empowerment, says Adams. "When we have that level of self-care in place, we can look at what we really want in our lives." *£200 for four sessions; mandyadams.co.uk*



PROFESSOR PAUL GILBERT
COMPASSION COACH

Paul Gilbert is on a mission to get people to talk nicely to themselves. There are two types of self-criticism, he says: the healthy form leads to self-correction, the other makes us angry. "And if you're getting angry, you're pushing your stress system into overdrive." Gilbert's work in compassion began when he realised that some clients didn't improve after cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). To counter this, Gilbert, professor of clinical psychology at the University of Derby, devised compassion-focused therapy (CFT), which combines behavioural training with breathing and Buddhist teachings. Significant change can be achieved even with a minute-long deep-breathing exercise. Although the waiting list for coaching with Gilbert might trigger more anger, the good news is that, through his Compassionate Mind Foundation, many other therapists have been trained in CFT (expect a directory on the website in early 2018). He says that compassion is hugely important for society. "If we just become competitive and self-focused, we're going to end up with a Blade Runner world." *Prices vary; cfttherapist.com*



EVE KALINIK
GUT COACH

"Sometimes food is irrelevant to gut health," says Eve Kalinik. This might not be what you'd expect to hear from a nutritional therapist, but the author of *Be Good to Your Gut* argues that many issues compromise the gut. Stress, she states, is right up there. To counter it, she recommends meditation: "You can't digest and be in 'fight or flight' mode at the same time." But poor gut health causes a deficit in serotonin, which is mostly produced in the gut, and will leave you feeling anxious, she says. "If you then try to meditate, you're going to struggle." She believes we should take a holistic approach to gut health, and also advises taking more time to eat: "Even just chewing properly will reduce gas, help to control hunger hormones and calm the mind." And once our gut is back on track, most of us should be able to eat everything. Instead of focusing on "bad" foods — and, by the way, "dairy and bread are not bad" — we need to eat more prebiotics to feed our gut. That includes kefir, cheese, fermented fruit and vegetables, and sourdough bread. Kalinik believes we should treat our gut as we do our teeth and get it checked every six months (she practises in west London and by Skype) and says: "In 10 years' time, we'll be incredulous at how we neglected our guts." *£250 for an initial consultation; evekalinik.com*



NESSI GOMES VOICE COACH

Let's get this straight — Nessi Gomes is not going to transform you into Taylor Swift. In fact, if you were to stand outside one of her voice workshops, you'd hear more wailing than melody. Instead of telling people how to sing, Gomes, a trained voice therapist and musician, helps them to "tap into the essence of self through voice", promising your weird outbursts won't be judged. There are no song sheets — the singing is improvised, as attendees are eased, through meditation and breathwork, into "sounding" their true feelings (think 5Rhythms, the freestyle dance movement, for the voice). "Words can be quite limited," Gomes says. "Pure sound can transmit so much more." Participants get to let go of stuff that is "buried in their basement — trauma, pain or anger they never managed to release elsewhere". Gomes discovered the power of sounding as a teen, when she was on antidepressants from the age of 13. "Talking about stuff didn't move anything, but the moment I started to sing, I felt I was purging my demons." Better out than in, eh? *£150 for a two-day workshop; nessigomesmusic.com*



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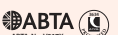
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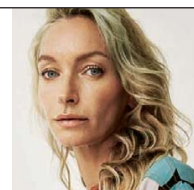


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@L.S.HILTON

For the love of luxury TRIED AND TRUE

Avid Jane Austen fan that I am, the ending of *Sense and Sensibility* has always seemed discouraging. Passionate, vital, sensuous Marianne Dashwood hitched to worthy old Colonel Brandon — a resolution that makes absolute sense in terms of the steely pragmatism of Austen’s take on the economics of matrimony, but which feels brutal in its refusal of romance. Austen uses clothes to make her point; in *Pride and Prejudice*, even Mr Darcy doesn’t stand a chance at first against Mr Wickham in his snappy regimentals, while Marianne, beguiled by the dashing Willoughby, must take her fusty comfort in the flannel of the colonel’s waistcoat. In fashion as in men, reliability may be safe, but it’s hard to believe it can be sexy. “Classic” can swiftly elide into “dull”. Yet this time of year, when we have all, I think, attained peak sequins, it’s a good moment to consider how luxurious dependable pieces can be. That soothing certainty that the shape, cut and fit will make it work 100%, every time.

Reliability in the wardrobe has a different timbre from the type that is desirable in husbands. It means clothes that do exactly what you want them to (a quality frustratingly lacking in any of the quondam Mr Hiltons). It doesn’t mean perfectly appropriate for every occasion, which only matters if you’re the Duchess of Cambridge. The worn tee that sits just so on your collarbone, the coat that will transform you from slobbiness to serenity in the fastening of a button: these are luxury items, and you probably own some. Fit is key, and it’s something we in Britain neglect. When I lived in Italy, all the women I knew had a friendly local tailor who would take up a hem or correct a waistband, and it’s possible, and not necessarily expensive, to imitate them. High-street pieces can be transformed this way, and as long as top-end designers (sorry, Chloé, I do mean you) continue to make pants for giants, it’s vital.

The London-based designer Anna Valentine has made comfort and fit into the most discreetly rigorous of arts. I was lucky enough to

THE DRESS
MADE ME FEEL
LIKE BOTH
HEPBURNS,
KATHARINE
AND AUDREY,
IN ONE



EVENING DRESS, POA,
ANNA VALENTINE

borrow one of her evening dresses for a book launch in Venice last spring. There was nothing safe or conservative about it — off the shoulder, archly fitted to the waist, so full-skirted and slouchily pocketed, it made me feel like both Hepburns, Katharine and Audrey, in one — yet it was as comfortable as my tattiest sweatpants. Valentine’s aesthetic embodies reliable luxury; the aim of all her collections is to provide her clients with “an effortlessness that makes them breathe a sigh of relief”. Her “anti-trouser” is a work of genius, a neat, slightly Japanesey fit with a high elasticated (yes, really) waist that is flattering on any figure. While utterly exquisite, these are some of the most stress-free garments I’ve ever encountered.

Reliability has to feel current without slavishly referencing the season’s trends. Vivienne Westwood is brilliant at this; the clothes feel fresh year after year because they maintain their integrity of line. The New Kung Fu trouser, with its paper-bag tie waist, is a revisited style, remaining polished and quirky. I’ve worn my grey wool version endlessly, with heels or sneakers, a silk blouse and a knit. This season’s take comes in subdued green and navy tartan, with a matching curvy jacket. And I’ve never met a woman who didn’t suit one of Westwood’s structured mididresses — the darts and gathering make them smart with the merest growl of raunch. A friend has owned one for 20 years and it’s still going strong.

Longevity can, however, become unreliable when applied to the inhabitant of one’s clothes. That is, one. What may have been a showstopper some years back may remain so, but can the same be said of the contents? Like the make-up that flattered a decade ago, the wardrobe stalwart can become a false friend. We are all for a bit of mutton, but like rudeness it should only ever be deliberate. Take a long, hard look at which bits are still working and which might be retired (cleavage, in my case). Adjust accordingly and you’ll be able to agree with the ever-reliable Miss Austen, that “woman is fine for her own satisfaction alone”. ■

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CAPRICORN

December 21 - January 18

Because your ruler, Saturn, is one of the most powerful planets, influencing everybody, and remains in a sign for about three years, its shift into a new position has a wide-ranging impact. What's more, it actually moves into Capricorn on Wednesday, raising numerous questions. First, however, there'll be a few farewells to say.

Call my starline 09066 500419*

AQUARIUS

January 19 - February 17

With the Sun, last week, and Venus, on Wednesday, both superbly aspecting your ruler, Uranus, you're receiving a range of thrilling, if unexpected, ideas and offers. Some are clearly the result of your past efforts, but others, while appealing, are perplexingly random. The solution? Explore them all. What you learn will surprise and reassure you.

Call my starline 09066 500420*

PISCES

February 18 - March 19

Although your tolerance for others' mistakes is high, mostly because you make plenty of your own, recent twists, turns and errors have been seriously aggravating. However, you're not alone. The confusion triggered by the retrograde Mercury is forcing everybody to rethink plans. Bizarrely, these changes are such an improvement, nobody will mind.

Call my starline 09066 500421*

ARIES

March 20 - April 18

While you're forthright about your objectives, you're no control freak. Or you weren't until recently, when your ruler, Mars, moved into the obsessive Scorpio. Add cautious Saturn's arrival to accent how you live, especially your goals or career, on Wednesday, and you'll soon be zeroing in on details you rarely consider.

And, bizarrely, you'll benefit from it.
Call my starline 09066 500410*

TAURUS

April 19 - May 19

Intriguing as certain ideas or offers may be, they're worryingly risky and you're short of facts. Yet judging by your ruler Venus's link with Uranus on Wednesday, which signifies breakthroughs, you're tempted. With this week's powerful planetary movements shaking up everybody's life, and the world around you, changes are inevitable, so give it a go.

Call my starline 09066 500411*

*What's happening in
your stars this week?
Don't make any
decisions until
you've read this*



SAGITTARIUS

November 22 - December 20

Ordinarily, Monday's Sagittarius New Moon would bring a fresh start. Yet with stern Saturn departing your sign on Wednesday, life's more complex and you're shedding elements of the past. These range from ancient dramas you're still bemoaning to goals you were determined to achieve. Let go of them all and you can then travel light and respond swiftly to unexpected offers.

Call my starline 09066 500418*

GEMINI

May 20 - June 20

With both the unsettling Gemini Full Moon and your ruler, Mercury, going retrograde on December 3, this month has been a rollercoaster. Finally you're recognising even unwelcome changes as breakthroughs. It's the same this week. Knowing that, explore everything, since what's least appealing initially could be a life-changing gift.

Call my starline 09066 500412*

CANCER

June 21 - July 21

Planning ahead lifts your spirits, especially when you've been struggling with "Cancerian anxiety". However, because early December's chaos influenced others, too, you've ridden out recent crises together. Now that's changing. In fact, Saturn's move, on Wednesday, to accent joint plans raises vital questions. Delve into these, knowing decisions can wait.

Call my starline 09066 500413*

LEO

July 22 - August 21

Over the past few months, there's been talk of changes in your way of living or working, but your efforts haven't achieved much. However, with both practical Saturn and your ruler, the Sun, moving to accent these matters, those ideas will gain traction. Be patient. Urgent as decisions seem, it's unlikely things will come together until the new year.

Call my starline 09066 500414*

VIRGO

August 22 - September 21

Recent errors and clashes may have devoured your time, but you were compensated by insights regarding undiscovered issues. Tackle these, remembering that with your ruler, Mercury, retrograde until Saturday, shake-ups will continue. Knowing that, resist the temptation to make a quick fix and instead deal with the matters in question thoroughly.

Call my starline 09066 500415*

LIBRA

September 22 - October 22

It's no secret that you often struggle with decisions. Yet judging by the practical Saturn's move to accent the structure of your life on Wednesday, you'll make a choice and stick with it. However, be aware that with the actual foundation of plans shifting, you'll be rethinking and refining those arrangements during the months to come.

Call my starline 09066 500416*

SCORPIO

October 23 - November 21

Knowing how your views about certain topics differ from others, for ages you've avoided even mentioning them. However, the errors triggered by the retrograde Mercury are forcing you to discuss these, and openly. The warm response you'll get won't just surprise you, it will make you wonder how many other situations, and individuals, you've misjudged.

Call my starline 09066 500417*

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THE HOOKUP

Style's **relationship columnists** report from the front line of sex, love and everything in between

@3MILYHILL

THE TRADITIONALIST

EMILY, 34, is straight, single — and looking for marriage, monogamy and kids



I met my last boyfriend at the Oldie of the Year awards. He was 48 and I was 27. So, trusting determinism, I was keen to attend the Literary Review's Bad Sex in Fiction awards. It's been so long that bad sex is better than no sex, right? (Seriously, tweet me or something.)

So I rang up and asked for an invitation, and just as I was putting the phone down, the most extraordinary thing happened. The American popped up on the Inner Circle dating app (the one thing I'd not thought to block him on), demanding to know why I was "ignoring" him, as, yes, he would like to meet me "for that drink" and nominating the night of the awards ceremony.

I was so thrown, I spent about half an hour at a loss as to what to do. Posting a screenshot on social media with the words "Are you effing kidding me?" is what I would have done if I'd had a clue how to, but I was late for my very important date with the CEO of the matchmaking agency Drawing Down the Moon, so I got on my bike and pedalled furiously to meet her at a swanky bar. I hoped she might have a lover all picked out for me, but as I drained a cocktail to pacify my nerves, she explained that's not how it works. Matchmaking is the antithesis of Tinder dating. I must be sized up by her expert team, so they can tailor the right man to me.

So we fixed on the American instead, and decided to nail down a date with him, once and for all. Her advice was stern: do not cancel your plans for him; make flirty statements, do not ask questions; make him come to you. Then she offered to read through our exchange and sort it all out, only to explode: "What the hell is this? It's like reading War and Peace. There is no train journey long enough... You gave him your number two months ago? And that last text reads like you're breaking up with him!" She tapped out a message, backtracking vigorously so as to secure a date. It worked like magic — bam, he responded. We were back on.

Only when I got home, it all went wrong. First, I nixed the Bad Sex awards for him. Then I quizzed him about a location. Finally, he refused to come anywhere near me, offering to meet "midway". (There is nothing I find sexier than establishing perfect equidistance.) So I suggested Vauxhall and went to sleep. But that was too much for him. In the morning, he started backing out, saying he was too busy. Which was actually my fault, because — days earlier — I'd said I was busy doing something else. He suggested we meet next week: "For a cup of tea."

And at that point, I'm afraid, I exploded.

THE MODERNIST

MEGAN, 27, is bisexual and in a new relationship after two years of swiping right



On Sunday, my pal Frank and I end up in the pub until closing, drinking cheap prosecco and playing the quiz machine with mounting frenzy and hysteria. I struggle through my hangover the next day until BB has finished work, then make him come round and order pizza and eat it in bed with me. Eating pizza in bed with a lover, pizza that

someone has brought to your door as a result of you pressing a few buttons on your phone, seems to me the peak of human endeavour.

Now it appears that food might not just be a nice thing to share once you've found a partner, it could actually be the way to land one in the first place. A study released last month by the online dating site Zoosk, of 3.7m users and more than 350m first messages, showed that talking about food on your profile increased your chances of getting a match, while talking about guacamole increased your chances by 144%. Lest we think this is simply a fetishisation of the well-to-do millennial brunch lifestyle, mention of the humble potato also boosted success rates.

Food and dating can be blissful bedfellows, but I've been on some dates where a bad meal has conclusively put an end to proceedings, usually because of people being unwilling to entertain my level of voluptuous greed. There was the time I went on a date with a really beautiful woman to a dim sum place in Soho — my first proper date with a woman, actually. She was a dancer and ordered exactly two dumplings, some steamed spinach and a green tea, and then gawked at me in appalled awe as I ate one of everything.

Then there was the guy who suggested we split a pizza.

"Oh, I've not had dinner," I explained, "so I'll need my own pizza." "A whole pizza?" he kept repeating. "A whole pizza?"

That was when I established my important dating and life rule: "Don't let anyone shame you about wanting a whole pizza."

Frank has a food story of his own. A few months ago, he was going to see a lady, a regular hookup, after a night out, steaming drunk. He thought, in his confused state, that a cute gesture would be to take her a banquet of 20 McNuggets. When he arrived — a cloud of Amber Leaf and ale fumes, with nuggets in tow — she informed him she was vegetarian. So they sat in her living room and she watched him eat all 20 of them on his own. That he was invited back repeatedly afterwards proves that the world favours men.

BB and I have a Christmas potluck to prepare, for his university pals who I don't know. I wonder what dish says, "I'm an adorable perfect match for your friend, and you should all like me immediately." ■

@MMEGANNNOLAN



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