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By Bruce Handy

Esquire
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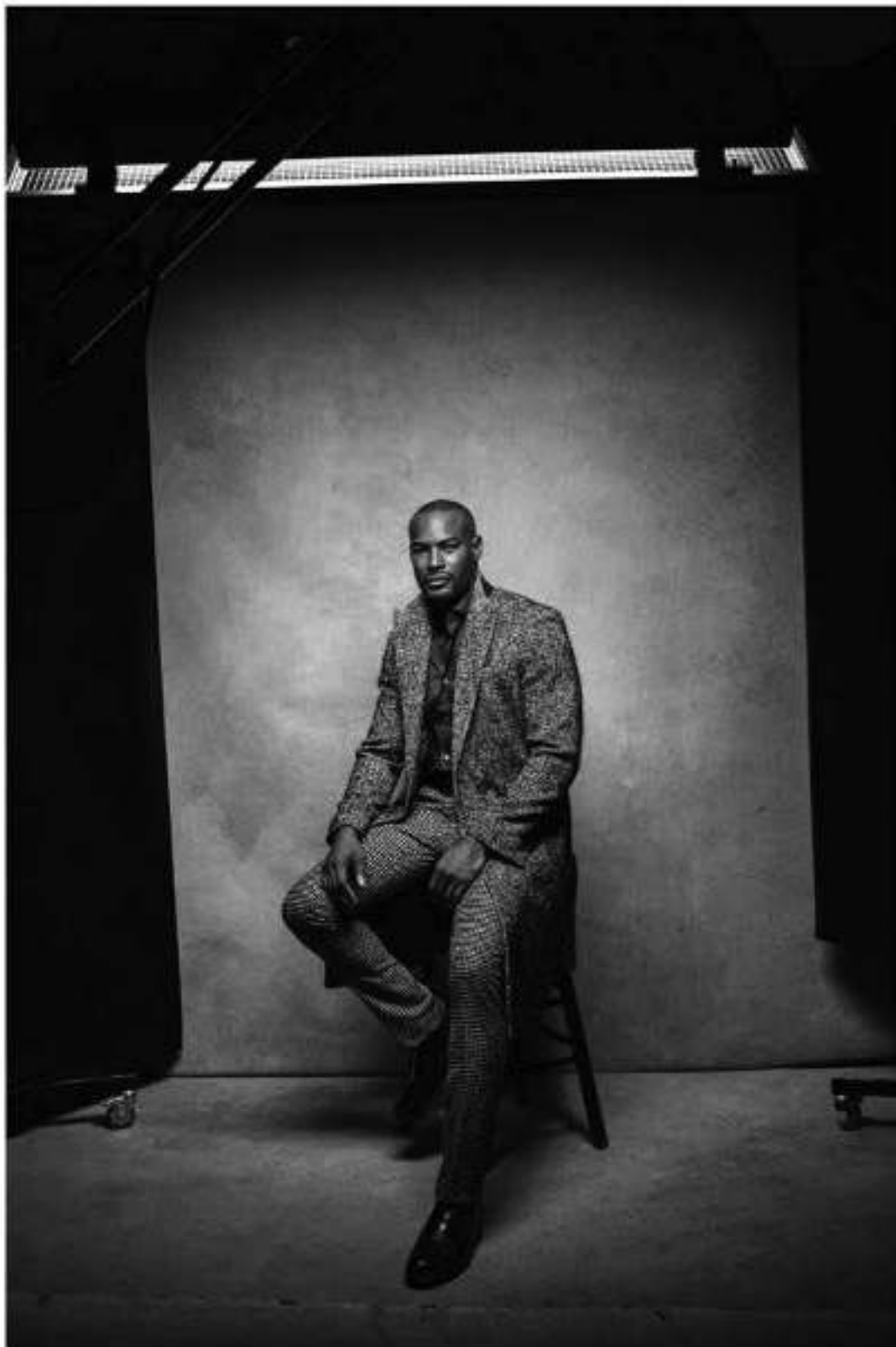
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this Way In:

LET'S GET BACK TO THE BASICS

➔ Nostalgia for the '80s and '90s has swallowed most of our movies and TV shows, so why not fashion, too? The best styles from the days of MJ and mixtapes are back—think fewer mullets and less neon everything and more bold, timeless clothes, such as striped suits and turtlenecks. To show off the outfits, we photographed models of that era, like legendary supermodel Tyson Beckford (below). You might not even have to go shopping—just check the back of your closet (but leave the shoulder pads at home). —*Brady Langmann*



photograph: **Victor Demarchelier**

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Keep It Classy, Keep It Easy

Autumn is here. Invite your friends over for a drink—trust us, doing this will feel good. Now, let us show you how to entertain them.

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By Charlie Hankin

Time flies, doesn't it? Here's what remains of our cartoonist's elite university degree.

Left: Coat (\$2,195) and shirt (\$395) by **Dolce & Gabbana**; trousers (\$228) by **Michael Kors**; loafers (\$525) by **Tod's**; socks by **Falke**. Above: GMWB 5000 watch (\$600) by **G-Shock**; gshock.com.

Esquippedia

A BRIEF MONTHLY EXPANSION ON
A TOPIC EXPLORED IN THE ISSUE

The neutrality of this information is disputed. And rightfully so. By Drew Dernavich



The original
"Massholes"

Thanksgiving is the annual national holiday in which we celebrate the few parts of the harvest that we can actually eat because of our many food allergies and dietary restrictions.

The holiday was created by the Pilgrims, many of whom were religious Puritans who left England to avoid persecution for their ridiculous **buckle fetish**. They settled in Massachusetts, where they were the first people known to live in America except for the many people who were already here.



The first gravy boat was a canoe, which was brought over from the buffet at Foxwoods casino.

Records show that in the 1600s, the first Thanksgiving celebrations were loosely scheduled for the period just after Witch Burning Man but before Shame on You for Even Thinking About a Valentine's Day. Today, Thanksgiving always occurs on the fourth Thursday after the start of Christmas music in shopping malls. It is now a federal holiday, which mandates that mattresses be sold for 50 percent off nationwide.

Contrary to legend, the Pilgrims did not celebrate the holiday with turkey, which would have made them sleepy and therefore tools of the devil. Records show they preferred to roast a grouse that had been stuffed with shredded copies of the Magna Carta. They also would not have eaten cranberry, because the tin can wasn't invented until the 1800s. In fact, historians note that, because the New England Patriots did not yet exist, there was nothing to really talk about, and so written firsthand accounts of early Thanksgivings are rare.

However, the Puritans did **share the meal** with members of the local Wampanoag tribe, which is why the tradition of inviting people whom you secretly want to murder is still celebrated today.

PRESIDENTIAL QUOTES ABOUT THANKSGIVING

"A turkey in every pot and an uncle passed out on every couch."
—HERBERT HOOVER

"We should thank the Almighty for His many blessings, including the terrific entertainment here at Ford's Theatre."
—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"I'll only pardon the white turkeys."
—DONALD TRUMP



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Season after season, Giorgio Armani reminds us why he's a men's-wear legend. Here are four of our favorite looks from this fall's collection.

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Rep. Devin Nunes is one of President Trump's biggest defenders, for years spinning himself as a no-BS straight talker. But he has a secret.

- 98 Dream Weaver**
Ralph Lauren is living proof that selling the dream is the dream. We're lucky we bought in.

- 104 A Return to Form**
The style of the '80s and '90s is looking stronger than ever. Who better to show it off than the guys who made their names modeling it back then?

ON THE COVER

STEVE CARELL
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARC HOM FOR ESQUIRE



Coat, shirt, and trousers by the Row; shoes by Brunello Cucinelli; bags by Thom Browne; sunglasses by Tom Ford. Production by Liz Lang Productions. Casting by Emily Poenisch. Styling by Matthew Marden. Prop styling by Wooden Ladder. Grooming by Lucy Halperin at the Wall Group.

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BRONZE



TUDOR

MENSCH AT WORK

is **STEVE CARELL**

THE NICEST GUY IN SHOWBIZ?

PAGE 76



Shirt and trousers by Gucci; vintage sweater vest and tie from Early Halloween, Vintage Clothing, N. Y. C.; watch by Rolex.



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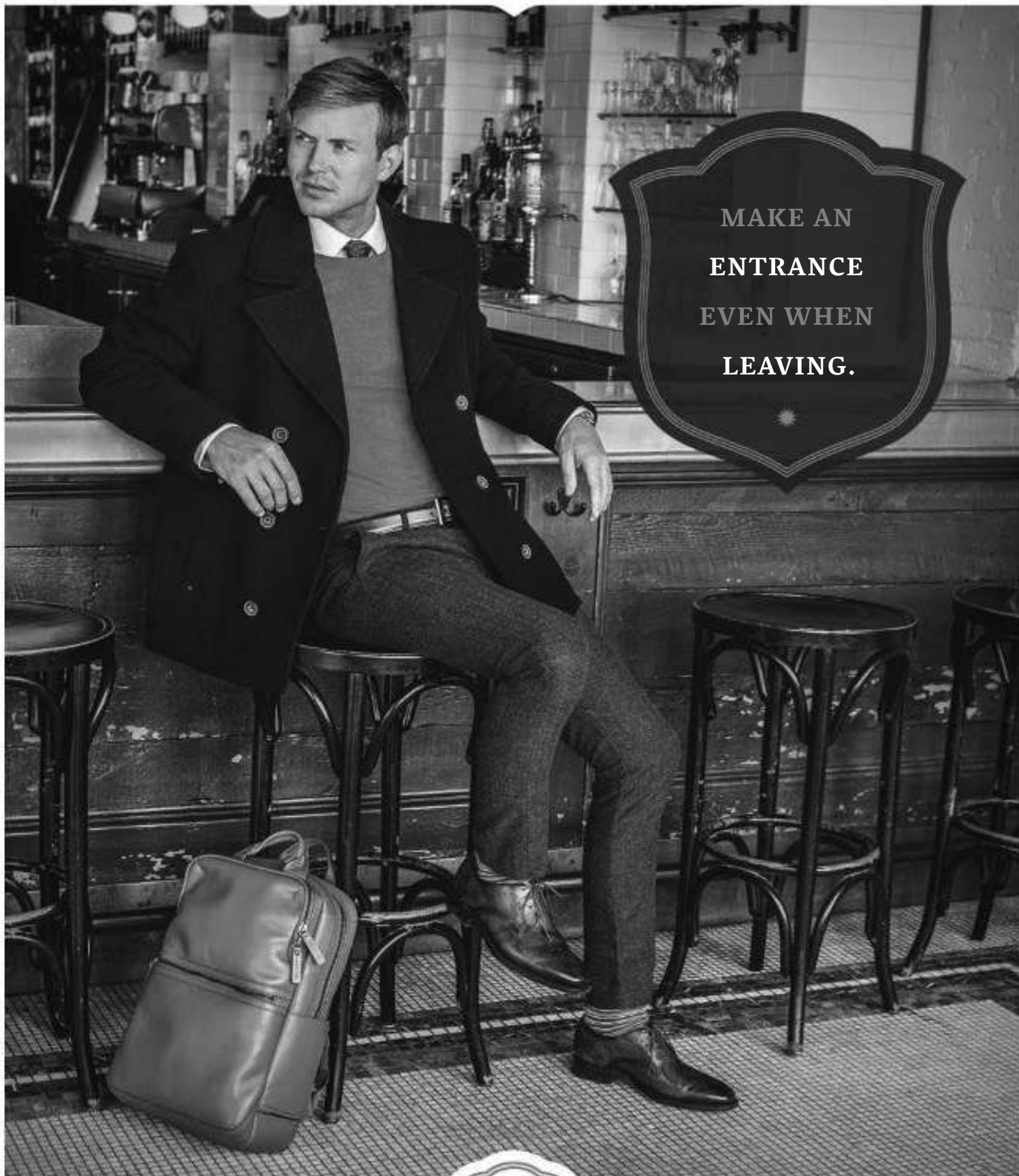
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Spot On: Football

By Seth Fleishman



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SCENE MACHINE

How a necktie changed my life

In 1967, two years before I was born, a twenty-eight-year-old from the Bronx had a dream that began with a line of ties. By 1985, the year I turned sixteen and started to notice such things, that vision had become an empire, with outposts as far-flung as San Antonio, my hometown, and it was in a Polo Shop—one of the first stand-alone stores in the country—that I encountered the drunk rush of Ralph Lauren’s all-embracing sense of style, from cologne to key fobs, socks to sunglasses, wool flannels to wallpaper. I had been spending Sunday afternoons poring over the lavish ten-page Polo advertising spreads in *The New York Times Magazine* and had finally convinced my mother to drive me across town to see the store. It was, as I expected, an extraordinary thing to behold, and I was desperate to get a piece of it. But what? Everything was expensive. I went from room to room, searching for my first entry-level Polo score.

Standing before a wall of chalk-stripe suits was an antique table upon which ties were fanned out like a hand of playing cards. A man with a keen eye for detail had created this world, and everything in it beckoned to be examined carefully, so I took a closer look. It was then that I discovered that ties, these things fathers wore, were cool, really cool—at least ones like these—and that this is what I wanted. I settled on one of a deep tobacco tint with a red tartan border and an autumnal tableau printed on it: two mounted foxhunters flying over a hedgerow. A scene tie, you say, and you’re right, except this was the outset, the dawn, the origin point of that now-familiar thing. The phrase didn’t exist yet.

I looked at it, dumbstruck. Somewhere deep in the emotional cosmos of my solar plexus I sensed something flower into existence. It was the beginning of the empty-handed agony I would soon be acutely feeling if I didn’t cajole my mother into putting some plastic down. But how much was it? I didn’t

have the guts to ask. The price tag had to be here somewhere. A suave salesperson tried not to watch.

I held the weighty folds of silk in my hand and studied the miniature action—two hounds yapped their way through a regal Yorkshire idyll. Outside the store, a late-summer Texas sun beat down. But I was somewhere else. I heard the hounds barking. And they barked for me.

Then a tiny white tag, sewn into the inside tail, peeked out at me. Fifty-five dollars! This would take some work. My mother had been born on a ranch during the Great Depression. She knew how to rough it. But she had become a ballet teacher. The visual drama and seduction of the mirrored walls, palm fronds, glinting silver, and oils of the hoity-toity weren’t lost on her. Still, she couldn’t just say yes. My dad was a dentist, not a duke. “Jay, honey, you don’t even wear ties” was her first attempt to dissuade me. “But I will now!” I said. I knew next there’d be a wisdom-getting hurdle to jump. She suggested I ask if the tie might go on sale.

I swallowed. “Um, what?” I would have rather died. She knew that. But what did pride matter when a statement of style was at stake? This was to become a defining moment, a valuable lesson that has lasted me as long as the tie: Good clothes are more important than your ego. I did what she suggested. There was no hope, the man said. By sale season, the tie would be long gone. Mercifully, my mother buckled, and the tie has been with me ever since.

But that was just the beginning of things. A few years later, when I was a senior in high school, I snagged a job in that very shop as a lowly stock boy. Then, when I went to college in Boston, I worked at another Polo Shop, this time as a men’s-wear salesman. In New England, the weather and landscape finally synced up with all the wool stuff I’d collected with my 30 percent employee discount. What? Doesn’t everyone wear a three-piece Donegal-tweed suit to an archaeology lecture?

Working at those two Polo Shops taught me a lot. I studied the clothes that came in and out of the store all those seasons. But I was also exposed to Ralph’s wider world, which mingled old-Hollywood glamour with aristocratic nonchalance, heartland pragmatism with Ivy League classics. There were a lot of movies to watch, photographs to look at, history to read. It educated my eye, refined my taste, and, I think, started to exercise my mind on both the visual and storytelling levels you simultaneously need to operate as a magazine editor. Above all, however, it was Ralph himself, now a friend, who by example taught me a most important trick. Who better to instruct you how to talk to men about fashion than the man who has done it best for half a century?

That tie, it turns out, was actually quite a bargain.

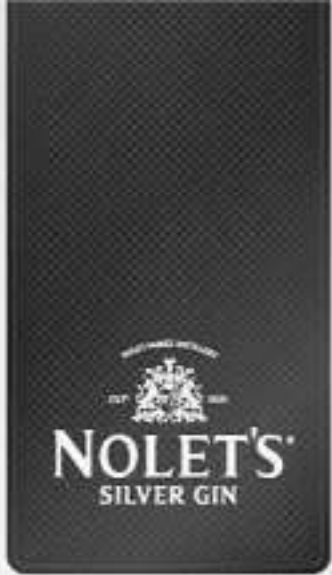
—Jay FIELDEN



Tied Up *The first Ralph Lauren tie I ever bought (left), circa 1985, and two others that became mine shortly after.*

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MOVIES

MO' GUTS, MO' GLORY

The Esquire guide to the **NEW HORROR**. It's bigger, scarier, and artsier than ever—and it's Marvel's worst nightmare. *By Brady Langmann*

● Until recently, most years' horror-movie slates belonged in the cringiest corner of a Blockbuster. (Another *Saw*?) These days, the things that keep us up at night are much different—there's less anxiety over a *Final Destination*-esque death by tanning bed and more concern over a government order legalizing mass murder for a night.

But our fears have always been cerebral enough for awards season. The original *Nosferatu* was an allegory of xenophobia, *The Mummy* of colonialism—not to mention classics like *The Silence of the Lambs*. It took *Get Out*—a Trump-era masterpiece ready-made for thinkpieces and Twitter theses—to remind us why horror is the perfect genre for our increasingly terrifying reality. For the superhero-level volume of scary movies out there, we present this guide to help you distinguish a Babadook from a Slender Man. *continued* ►

PRESTIGE HORROR

TYPICAL PLOT: Often no discernible narrative until the third act, which is a 30-minute-long séance set to blaring *Inception*-style strings. Clothing optional.

ESSENTIAL VIEWING: *Get Out*, *A Quiet Place*, *The Babadook*, *Hereditary*, *It Follows*, *Raw*, *The Neon Demon*, *Unsane*.

STARRING: At least one person you wouldn't expect to be in one of these things. (See: Claire Foy, the Krasinskis, Allison Williams.)

UNDER THE BED: White people, your mother, STDs.

NO-CONTEXT QUOTE THAT COULD'VE FIT INTO ANY OF THESE MOVIES:

"Don't you swear at me, you little shit! Don't you ever raise your voice at me! I am your mother! Do you understand?"

MILLENNIAL HORROR

TYPICAL PLOT: A token squad of lit 20-somethings gets into some deep shit, usually within the sphere of a popular '80s subgenre.

ESSENTIAL VIEWING: *Slice*, *Happy Death Day*, *The Babysitter*, *Slender Man*, *Unfriended*.

STARRING: A lead with a better record on Instagram than at the box office. (See: Bella Thorne, Chance the Rapper, Joey King.)

UNDER THE BED: Something without a face, whether literally (the Slender Man) or figuratively (your MacBook).

NO-CONTEXT QUOTE THAT COULD'VE FIT INTO ANY OF THESE MOVIES:

"Guys, can you just fucking trust me, okay? Install this program and I'll find out who it is."



SUNKEN PLACES

Filmgoers dug *Get Out* (2017), above—lobotomies and all—but Nicolas Winding Refn's *The Neon Demon* (2016), below, might have been too artsy for most.



DOOK...DOOK...

The Babadook (2014) showed us that screaming children are scarier than any monster.



A QUEASY COMING OF AGE

Raw (2017), above, and *Hereditary* (2018), below, introduced us to young 'uns with very messed-up hobbies.



FRANCHISE HORROR

TYPICAL PLOT: Creepy things keep getting creepier until something—ranging from a house to an entire city—blows up. Expect a sequel tease.

ESSENTIAL VIEWING:

Universal's Dark Universe, the *Conjuring* universe, the *Purge* franchise.

STARRING: A late-career star cashing a check between serious roles. (See: Tom Cruise, Marisa Tomei, Patrick Wilson.)

UNDER THE BED: A gruesome CGI creation, likely more horrifying due to its poor rendering than to a genuinely frightening appearance, à la Dwayne Johnson's Scorpion King. You might also see other frightful franchise fodder, like the presidency, Christianity, or a D-lister fighting for cultural relevance.

NO-CONTEXT QUOTE THAT COULD'VE FIT INTO ANY OF THESE MOVIES:

"We will torture you and violate your flesh. Remove your skin and share in your blood. This is the American way."

HORROR REMAKES

TYPICAL PLOT: Your favorite pre-streaming memories are Harry Potter-ized into a dutiful adaptation, but with more jump scares and blood, plus a really good trailer this time around.

ESSENTIAL VIEWING: *Halloween*, *Suspiria*, *It* (Chapters One and Two), *Carrie*, *Grudge* (2019), *Child's Play* (upcoming).

STARRING: Newly toned original cast members and/or child stars pre-rehab.

UNDER THE BED: Whatever terrified cold-war-era moviegoers—getting slashed in your cul-de-sac, feminism, Europeans, modern dance.

NO-CONTEXT QUOTE THAT COULD'VE FIT INTO ANY OF THESE MOVIES:

"Are you gonna get him a boutonniere, or are you just gonna pin a bloody tampon to his lapel?"

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– A Continuous Lean



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KEEP CALM AND KICK ARSE

Cracking good advice from bloody British legend **MICHAEL CAINE** *By Mark Rozzo*



● This past March, Sir Michael Caine was puttering about in the garden at his country house, a 200-year-old converted tithe barn in the English countryside west of London, when he slipped on a patch of ice, breaking an ankle. A photo from his 85th-birthday celebration a couple weeks later shows him being gamely pushed around in a wheelchair by an impromptu aide who happens to be another Sir: Paul McCartney. A long recovery ensued, from wheelchair to walker to walking stick (which he finally cast aside in September). For many of us, extended convalescence might mean finally tackling the collected works of Karl Ove Knausgaard or binge-watching *House of Cards*. But Caine put this inconvenient time-out to good use: He cranked out a book, his fourth, called *Blowing the Bloody Doors Off: And Other Lessons in Life* (out this month from Hachette).

“It’s sort of a motto of my life,” Caine says in his jovial way over the phone from his barn. “No matter how bad things are, use the difficulty. I taught my grandchildren and my children that. And the book is using the difficulty of a broken ankle—not being able to get up and go anywhere. It’s a supreme example.” It’s a breezy compendium of life lessons, tricks of the trade, and nuggets of wisdom, served up with cockney common sense and, for a guy who’s been a global phenomenon for more than 50 years and knighted in the process, uncommon humility. The man who has earned two Oscars—and has played special agents, schlubby professors, Ebenezer Scrooge, Alfred the butler, and, in the recent *King of Thieves*, a geriatric gangster—is, no surprise, a world-champion raconteur, on the phone or on the

page. But instead of celebrity gab, what you get here is laser-cut detail; the approach is more bullet points than blather. If it’s self-help you’re after, put down Tony Robbins and take up Michael Caine.

After all, Caine has gathered some thoroughbred-level horse sense along the way. “Some might say I’m not far off the knackers’ yard,” he writes, employing the British equivalent of the glue factory. “But I do still know my way around the racetrack.” Broad themes: Don’t believe your own hype; don’t chase fame or riches; be aware that you’re always auditioning; and, whatever you do, don’t wear suede shoes. Caine picked up that last bit from John Wayne. It has to do with standing at a urinal next to, well, a gushing fan.

Blowing the Bloody Doors Off (the title echoes Caine’s memorable line from 1969’s *The Italian Job*) is also the saga of a poor South London jack-the-lad propelled by luck, circumstance, and drive from earning two quid a week in regional theater to achieving lasting stardom. In 1967, Caine cheekily told a writer, “Am I rich? Yes, I suppose so.” By 1968, he was musing about retiring at 45. But retire now, 50 years later? Hell, no, mate. “You’ve got to carry on,” he says by way of parting. “I’ve got a whole new life”—grandkids, the garden, the new book, and another (a thriller) in manuscript. “And I’m still doing movies at 85!” he adds with a hearty laugh. “But I don’t get the girl anymore.”

Eskpertise



If you choose the donkey, don’t be surprised if it turns out to be an ass.



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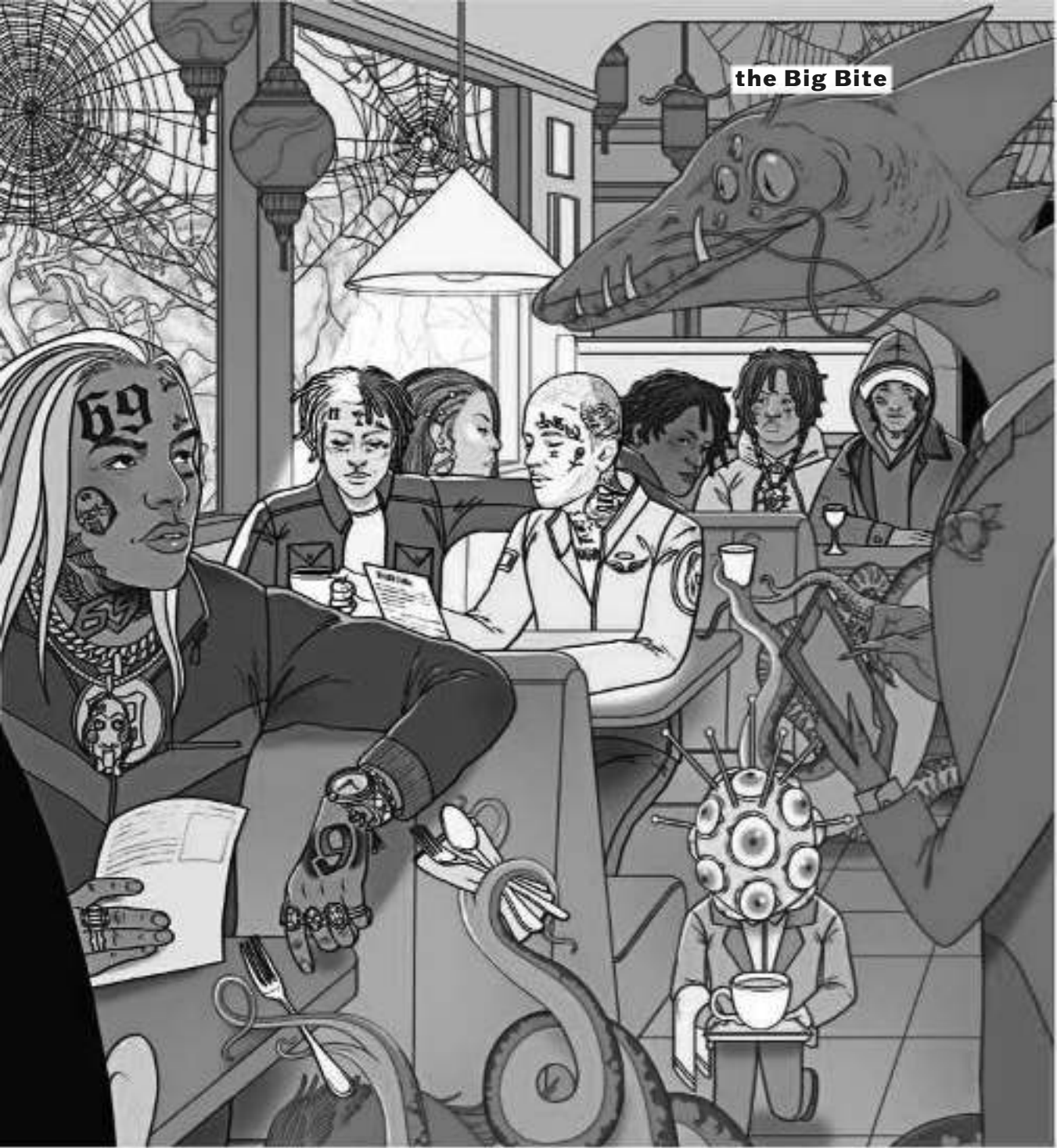
The LS 500 redefines what a luxury sedan can be. With intense styling like the F SPORT bolstered 28-way power front seats featuring leather trim with an exclusive perforated L-motif design. The LS 500 is also powered by exhilarating twin turbochargers, delivering 416 horsepower¹ with a thrilling 4.6-second 0-60 time.^{1,2} And the Lexus Multistage Hybrid system in the LS 500h delivers seamless acceleration and torque, without requiring a charge. This level of craftsmanship isn't just rare. It's simply beyond measure.



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LS 500 F SPORT shown with options. 1. Ratings achieved using the required premium unleaded gasoline with an octane rating of 91 or higher. If premium fuel is not used, performance will decrease. 2. Performance figures are for comparison only and were obtained with prototype vehicles by professional drivers using special safety equipment and procedures. Do not attempt. ©2018 Lexus



the Big Bite

takes over the *Billboard* charts. RapCaviar, the Spotify playlist that helped bring this sound to the mainstream, has more than 10 million followers. “XO Tour Llif3” has been streamed more than a billion times across all platforms. At this point, record execs should send their best A&R scouts to America’s least reputable tattoo parlors.

It’s clear that this music, which delves into matters of depression and addiction, appeals to kids in a way that the algorithmized-to-death pop of late capitalism does not. If you grew up with, say, Fiona Apple, couplets like XXXTentacion’s “Suicide, if you ever try to let me go / I’m sad and low” might sound painfully childish. But a generation of young people has been desperate for some kind of music that speaks directly and ruthlessly about feeling alienated, overmedicated, and over-marketed-to. (I will refrain from weighing in on the debate about whether it’s okay to listen to music made by amoral people, an argument that has been going on since the beginning of popular music.)

If you’re on the wrong side of 30, as I am, you will probably like very little of it. Therein lies the appeal. Were I to actually enjoy Trippie Redd’s “Dark Knight Dummo,” he would likely consider it a major artistic failure. I once turned to such disreputable nü-metal pummelers as Korn, Slipknot, and even, yes, Limp Bizkit to soothe my angst,

so I know what it’s like to dig in your heels and love music that confounds even the recently young.

It’s tough for the generation that made hip-hop a global phenomenon to watch those pesky teenagers transform it beyond recognition. Uzi cites Marilyn Manson as his main influence. But in this way he is part of a lineage that stretches from the Clash, who once declared “no Beatles or the Rolling Stones in 1977,” to Eddie Vedder, who warned against boomer nostalgia in “Against the 70’s.” Most of these artists will eventually have to get square jobs in which face tattoos gel with the office culture. But the tools of distribution and the DIY ethos are here to stay, and inevitably a few of these artists—my money is on Rico Nasty—will one day make music so undeniable that even the cranky olds will have to respect it. —*Michael Tedder*

MUSIC

MUMBLE ON

OR: HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE SOUNDCLOUD RAP

● Kanye West once said, “Listen to the kids, bro.”
● And until recently, I listened to Kanye West. So it was with great anticipation that I sat down to stream “XO Tour Llif3,” by Lil Uzi Vert, a rising star of “SoundCloud rap”—a genre that, depending on whom you ask, represents either the future of hip-hop or the downfall of Western civilization.

Uzi and his peers are mostly very young men with monikers like Ski Mask the Slump God and Wifisfuneral, multiple face tattoos, and haircuts rarely seen outside of anime. They rap, chant, mumble, and whine. Hooks are repeated ad nauseam. The bass is so distorted you’ll wonder if your laptop is broken. An acoustic guitar is sometimes thrown in to denote sensitivity. A surprising amount of it sounds like emo that has been “chopped ’n’ screwed.”

These artists got their start posting their music to the free streaming service SoundCloud, which lets literally anyone, even teenagers whose skills haven’t yet caught up with their ambition, upload their stuff online. Ironically, the German-based company has struggled to remain solvent while the subgenre named in its honor

Eskpertise



If you choose the elephant, prepare to get trampled.

EAR TO THE STREAMS

SoundCloud rappers are getting called up by the mainstream



Drake x BlocBoy JB, “Look Alive” Easy intro for a SoundCloud student—it sounds like a Drake song.



Kanye West x Lil Pump, “I Love It” Known for its memeable, Roblox-outfitted music video.



Migos x Lil Uzi Vert, “Bad and Boujee” You’ve definitely heard this one before. Lil Uzi at his finest.

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FOOD

HOW HUMMUS GOT HOT

Welcome to MIDDLE EASTERN cuisine's new golden age *By Jeff Gordinier*

**PUT AN EGG
ON IT**

*The Za'atar and Cheese
Manoushe at
Philadelphia's Suraya.*



“I actually started to lose my mind,” Ori Menashe tells me. Menashe, the chef at Bavel in downtown Los Angeles, is talking about hummus—and how his quest to replicate the velvety ideal of his childhood in Israel nearly turned him into the chickpea equivalent of Jack Nicholson in *The Shining*.

He went gonzo with garbanzos, nibbling on varieties from all over the world and finally settling on small, creamy ones from Andalusia. He went loony with tahini, fixating on finding a version that didn't carry the residual bitterness of sesame hulls. When he located the right one for the broadly Middle Eastern menu at Bavel, he Norma Desmond-ishly proclaimed, “I can't open this restaurant without this tahini!” Except that it wasn't available in the

United States. So he badgered a friend's company to start importing it. Was Menashe becoming... unhinged? "Tasting hummus is not easy," he says now. "It's like tasting peanut butter all day."

But here's the thing: If you go to Bavel around 5:00 P.M., you will see a line of customers jockeying for free seats. Menashe and his wife and business partner, dessert virtuoso Genevieve Gergis, have tapped into the culinary vogue—particularly in southern California, where next-wave Middle Eastern restaurants like Kismet, Mh Zh, and Hasiba are the talk of the town these days. Hummus has always felt at home in Los Angeles, with its sizable immigrant communities, its health consciousness, and its climate ("It kind of feels like the Mediterranean," Menashe says), but lately the desire for the dip has been verging on mania.

Over the past decade in the United States, Middle Eastern food has gone from playing the piccolo at the back of the culinary orchestra—forced to wait patiently while Korean, French, Italian, Mexican, Chinese, Peruvian, Thai, Japanese, Spanish, and Scandinavian soloists hogged the spotlight—to winning a spot as first violin. Many of the most talked-about restaurants happen to specialize in serving Middle Eastern cuisine from different regions and perspectives: Suraya in Philadelphia, Dyafa in Oakland, Kish-Kash and Sofreh in New York City, Maydān in Washington, D.C.

"I didn't think it would be like this," says Philadelphia chef Michael Solomonov, whose Zahav opened during the financial crisis of 2008 and became the switch-flipping *Nevermind* of the genre. He remembers meeting investors 11 years ago and getting blank stares when he talked about an Israeli restaurant. "Nobody knew what that meant," he says. "The food was unreal, but it wasn't sexy, it wasn't cool. It didn't get transmitted into 'cool food' until relatively recently." It's worth noting that 2008 was also the year when *Ottolenghi: The Cookbook* was first published in Britain. That volume, by London chefs Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi, would become ubiquitous in home kitchens.

Chefs such as Solomonov and Ottolenghi had plenty of deft predecessors, to be sure—Rawia Bishara of Tanoreen in Brooklyn, Ana Sortun of Oleana in the Boston area, and the entire city of Dearborn, Michigan—but the one-two punch of 2008 was enough of a breakthrough that we're now living in a golden age of fattoush and baba ghanoush. The cuisine of a tumultuous region has become the de rigueur feast for tumultuous times.

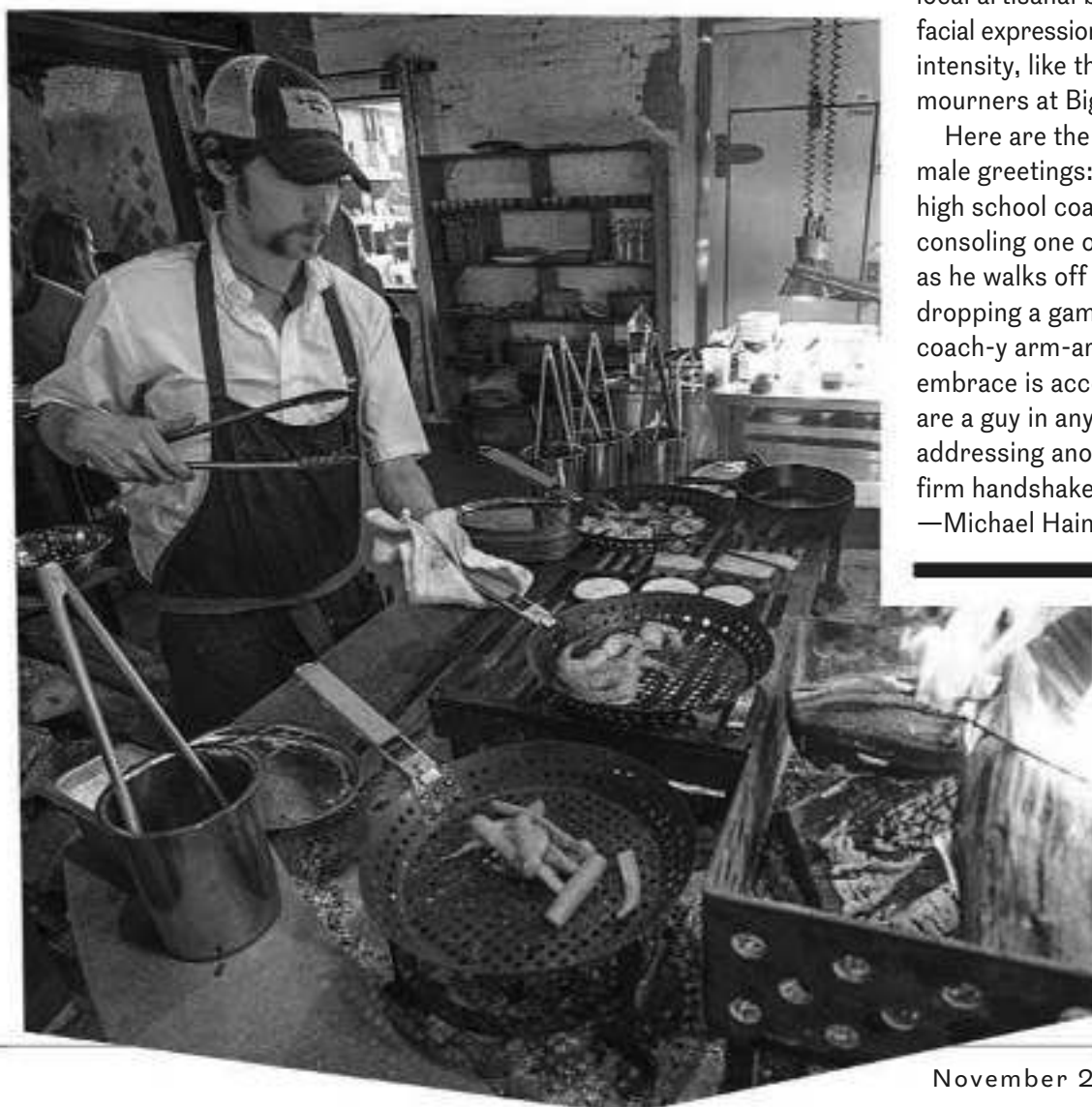
What makes me want to keep going back to restaurants like Suraya and Hasiba is a palpable sense of passion.

Whether Palestinian or Lebanese or Israeli or Persian, these chefs and restaurateurs are hungry to tell their stories through food, and push us past facile binaries, clichés, and misconceptions in the process. Alex Phaneuf was so obsessed with avoiding "bastardized" renditions of hummus and pita at Hasiba that he and his business partners, Or Amsalam and Ben Amsalam, visited almost 40 spots during an R&D trip to Israel and invested \$10,000 in a special oven so that each puffy cloud of bread could be made by hand. Siblings Nathalie Richan and Roland Kassis were so determined to pay tribute to the cooking of the mothers and grandmothers of Lebanon that they installed their own matriarch, Maude, in the kitchen with New Jersey-born chef Nick Kennedy so that he would absorb the nuance of spices at her elbow. And at Bavel, Menashe is quick to point out that his wife has an Egyptian background and his own heritage is Moroccan, Georgian, and Turkish. "I don't want this to be considered an Israeli restaurant," he says. "It's our life on a plate."

Who knows—maybe part of the appeal of Middle Eastern restaurants at this weird point in American history is the subconscious realization that acrid rhetoric will always be trumped by the peaceful ritual of people breaking bread together. As Solomonov puts it to me, "Here we have the luxury of having no boundaries." ■

HOT SPOT

The open-fire kitchen of Maydan in Washington, D.C.



RANTS

RAGE Against the BRO-HUG



••• Can we just return to the days when two men greeted each other with a handshake and did not feel the need to exchange some kind of awkward and ultimately false intimate moment? Ronald Reagan greeting Mikhail Gorbachev? No bro-hug.

I ask you, What the hell does the bro-hug mean in a world where you see creepy, bad-date mash-ups of it on every NFL draft day, at every Group of Twenty summit, at every country-music awards show? It's like a 1970s grandfather, eager to seem "with it," saying, "Slap me five, soul brother!"—stiff, white palm extended like a tollbooth attendant. The bros of 2018, even when they are bro-hugging hellos in their Venmo-friendly local artisanal brew pub, deploy facial expressions of faux-grave intensity, like they are greeting mourners at Biggie's funeral.

Here are the new rules of male greetings: If you are a high school coach and you are consoling one of your players as he walks off the field after dropping a game winner, a coach-y arm-around-shoulder embrace is acceptable. If you are a guy in any other situation addressing another guy, a firm handshake will suffice.

—Michael Hailey

BOOKS

THE LOOK OF LOUD

A stack of stunning **NEW PHOTO BOOKS** captures the multiplying music scenes of the '70S AND '80S at their freakiest *By Jeff Slate*

Soul, R&B, Funk. A remarkable panorama of the exuberant 1970s heyday of those genres through the lens of photographer Bruce W. Talamon.

Point of View: Me, New York City, and the Punk Scene Blondie guitarist Chris Stein, who was apparently never without a camera, caught David Bowie, Iggy Pop, and the fledgling CBGB set.

Hip Hop at the End of the World Photographer "Brother" Ernie Paniccioli chronicled hip-hop's earliest days in N.Y.C., with appearances by a young Nas and LL Cool J.

Led Zeppelin by Led Zeppelin Chock-full of personal photographs, reproductions of posters, backstage passes, and handwritten lyrics. All it's missing are the band members' recollections.

Imagine John Yoko A fresh look at the making of John Lennon's 1971 album, *Imagine*, with new interviews from key participants. Sadly, Lennon's plea for peace and harmony feels as timely as ever.

Beastie Boys Book Part oral history, part photo book—plus recipes, a graphic novel, a map of the Beasties' New York, a mixtape playlist, and contributions from the likes of Spike Jonze, Amy Poehler, and Wes Anderson.

photographs: Richard Majchrzak

A black and white photograph of a shirtless man with a well-defined physique, shown in profile from the waist up. He is looking towards the right. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his muscles. He is wearing dark shorts with a light-colored drawstring. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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MOVIES

STRANGE DAYS

YORGOS LANTHIMOS EXPLODES THE PERIOD DRAMA WITH *THE FAVOURITE*

● Greek auteur Yorgos Lanthimos has thrilled and confounded audiences with his fantastical, dystopian tales, including *The Lobster* and *Dogtooth*. But the two-time Oscar nominee's latest work, *The Favourite* (November 23), finds him on somewhat unexpected terrain: the 18th-century court of Queen Anne. The film, based on her brief and troubled reign, won the Grand Jury Prize at this year's Venice Film Festival, as well as Best Actress for Olivia Colman, who stars as the long-suffering English queen opposite Emma Stone and Rachel Weisz. True to form, Lanthimos turns the dusty conventions of the period drama on their head, delivering a wickedly funny, ribald tale, complete with all seven sins—plus duck racing. —*Emily Poenisch*

When audiences hear “period film,” they think rustling skirts and clutched handkerchiefs, but this is a spectacular feast of conniving and vulgarity. How did you conjure the bawdy tone?

I wanted to see if I could make a period film that felt different and fresh and original. We decided early on that we didn't want to try to mimic how people spoke. With costumes, we tried to maintain the silhouettes, but we worked with a lot of contemporary materials—vintage denim, plastic, leather. Sometimes the music is loyal to the period; sometimes it's contemporary. So there were all these added layers.

This is also a captivating study of power: how it isolates, how it infantilizes, how it amplifies one's fears. Can you talk about capturing those dynamics?

Personal relationships, mood, chance, or anything like that can actually affect people's decisions, and when they're in a position of power, their capriciousness can affect the fate of a nation. And that's quite scary to think about, and quite relevant.

The manipulation of a leader with a toddler's temperament resonates rather strongly in America right now. You do realize reading about this that the main elements, how people operate and think—they haven't changed that much.

We find ourselves both repulsed and deeply touched by Queen Anne. How did you relate to this character?

A lot of what is written about her is all about how sick she was and how tormented she was by all of her miscarriages and the children who died. That she wasn't a very strong monarch, how she was probably manipulated by others. In the end, we wanted to make her as she probably was: a complex character.

You worked with a trio of brilliant women here: Weisz, Stone, and Colman. Did they keep you on your toes?

It was incredible. A dream come true. I tried to just give them space and enable them to infuse those characters with their personalities and their presence, and add much more than what I could ever have imagined.



BURNING AMBITION
Emma Stone in “*The Favourite*”;
director Yorgos Lanthimos.

Esxpertise



Whichever side you choose, just remember they have one thing in common...

It must have been a hell of a fun set. True?

For me, it never is. But I think the actors had a lot of fun. A key ingredient was that we had weeks of rehearsals beforehand, so they got to fool around and be comfortable making fools of themselves in front of each other. They felt quite comfortable by the time we ended up on set.

The gender relations in this historical tale feel very modern. Indeed, the men, with all their peacocking, seem entirely outmatched by the women in this world.

If you look at the period, especially in paintings, you can see that men used to be much more made up, with their wigs, their stockings, their breeches, their high heels, and all that. And women appear to have been much more natural: simple hair; not much makeup; nice, minimal dresses. Though we did push it to be more extreme.

You have used animals before in profound and fascinating ways. Were Queen Anne's bunnies in the historical record? Or your own special touch?

This was one of the elements that we took the liberty of adding in. We felt that we needed some kind of visualization of this woman's loss, but that it shouldn't be too dark—that it should have more of a light feel. So that's how the bunnies came about.

This is the first film you've directed for which you didn't cowrite the script, but your influence on it feels very strong and clear.

That's because I spent even longer developing this script than I have with any of my other scripts, and I took a lot of time to find the right person to work with, with the right voice, and it took us almost nine years to get there. Not that we were working nonstop for nine years; of course there were gaps in between. But it was a project that took many years to mature. ■

For a longer version of this interview, go to Esquire.com.

THIS GUY

You don't have to be perfect, but you can probably do better than this

By Drew Dernavich



Dd

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Tudor's newest **BLACK BAY WATCH**—which melds **18-KARAT GOLD** with stainless steel—marks the triumphant return of the **CONSPICUOUSLY COOL** two-tone timepiece



watch, which combines sporty steel and upscale gold. Tudor launched its first steel-and-gold model last year with a more sedate jet-black dial. This time it's gone all-in with a champagne-colored anodized-steel dial designed to complement the central gold links. What makes it work to our minds is that the brand embraced the mixed-metals combo in the manliest of its manly watches, namely the Black Bay, balancing the refined implications of gold with the tough, no-nonsense details (riveted links, an oversize crown) of its most iconic offering. It's got flash, all right—with the steel hardware to back it up. —Nick Sullivan

••• Like many stylistic hallmarks of the brasher-is-better '80s (pleats, anyone?), yellow-gold watches have made a comeback in recent years, proving guys are once again warming up to a timepiece with some flash. Now something with even more chutzpah is swaggering onto the scene: the two-tone

Black Bay S&G watch (\$4,975) by **Tudor**.

HOW I GOT MY STYLE

DANIEL ARSHAM

38, Brooklyn

The ARTIST, ARCHITECT, and SNEAKER DESIGNER on who he's wearing, what he shoots with, and the blurry line between ART and COMMODITY

● Put it in neutral:
● I don't wear a lot of color. It's generally just black and white or gray, because it blends. And I wear a lot of things that my friends have made. So Ronnie Fieg from Kith, who I think is really redefining American style. Or Teddy Santis, who has a brand



to look back and look forward. So first I did a '70s runner, which at the time was the height of technology. The second shoe was based on their Boost technology. And the third is a 3-D-printed midsole—that's the concept they're coming out with now.

Art vs. commerce: I have a new book out with Rizzoli and I've tried to really mix the disciplines in it. I did an interview with



called Aimé Leon Dore, which for me is a mixture of '90s hip-hop and, like, a Greek fisherman. **Leica new:** Six years ago, I bought a Leica M6. Cameras have been an obsession of mine since junior high school, but Leica is a different level. It was always this coveted, unattainable thing. It feels like a luxury object, but it's so functional and so well designed that there's a practical nature and purpose behind it.

Futuristic footwear: Adidas allowed me to really dig through their archive and find the things that were relevant to me. I wanted



Clockwise from top left: The Arsham x Adidas Future Runner 4D; a Leica M6; the interior of Kith's L. A. location—designed by Arsham's firm, Snarkitecture; a Jeanneret chair from Chandigarh (Arsham owns a similar one); a piece from Arsham's recent gallery show "3018."



[curator] Hans-Ulrich Obrist, but the introduction is by Virgil Abloh. So it's a broad mix. It doesn't distinguish between shoes, watches, cinema, architecture, sculpture—they're all treated the same. Warhol, if he was alive today, would definitely be making sneakers, 1,000 percent. —As told to **Jon Roth**



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Tommy Bahama

#LongLiveTheIslandLife

PACIFIC TIME

The year's COOLEST COLLABORATION has us in a CHILLED-OUT, mystic mind-set



● It's a funny trick
● of aspirational geography. Somehow, the northwestern grit of Pendleton and the tropical chill of Tommy Bahama (a Seattle outfit that's psychically centered closer to Key West) have conspired to create some very covetable, distinctly SoCal clothes.

We know, we know. Pendleton, the heritage company that struck gold during our last lumbersexual awakening. And Tommy Bahama, patron saint of yacht owners everywhere. (Never mind that every streetwear mannequin wore a Tommy-adjacent tropical print this past summer.) Fact is, brands evolve, sometimes through the alchemical power of collaboration. And these two happen to play off each other

like a beach bonfire and a six-pack. The pieces channel a blissed-out vibe that's bohemian but grounded. They are easy, lazy Sunday clothes you pull on without thinking. There are shawl-collared cardigans with Pendleton's famous Harding cross print. There are work shirts and ponchos in colorful serape stripes with a ghostly overlay of palm fronds. There are lightweight hoodies and quilted vests so that you can layer it all together.

It's almost enough to transport you to Malibu in the 1970s, or Topanga Canyon, or some other laid-back enclave where there's plenty of sun and time seems to slow down. And now that the days are getting shorter, that's exactly where we'd like to be. —J. R.

Top: Poncho (\$250) and shirt (\$350) by Tommy Bahama & Pendleton; hat (\$1,375) by Nick Fouquet.

Clockwise from far left: Jack Nicholson mugs while his daughter and Anjelica Huston scope out the vinyl collection; Tommy Bahama and Pendleton get in the SoCal spirit; Kris Kristofferson and Barbra Streisand in '76's *A Star Is Born*—showing us how bohemian style is done; Venice, California's ace hatter Nick Fouquet channels the mood.

photograph (top): **Doug English**

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MASTER THE REMIX

● Pulling off a killer look isn't just about the clothes: It's about how you put them together. If you're seeking a master class, look to Sacai. This season, designer Chitose Abe turned out a collection that remixed far-flung elements like Nordic knits, English checks, Hawaiian prints, and Buffalo plaid.

That's a lot to process, but Abe had no trouble fusing those components into richly layered mash-ups. "It has always been important for me to create something new while being true to my identity," she says. "This season, I was exploring new takes on hybridization, focusing on unraveling and



deconstructing shapes." It's that hybrid element that makes this stuff so sexy: the clash of fringe against camo, or a technical poncho over an old-school tweed. Remember that next time you're standing in front of your closet: **Sometimes it's better to clash than match.**
—Adrienne Westenfeld

ON MY WRIST ONE TO WATCH

••• Unimatic has already generated plenty of buzz for its pared-down—and beautifully executed—versions of classic tool watches. But it's the relative scarcity of the drops (only a few hundred of each model, so blink and you miss it) and the very attractive prices (most run between \$500 and \$750) that have caused some preowned versions online to double in value. The latest addition, the U3-AN, is the first chronograph for the brand—we love its simple, geometric design. —N. S.



THE GOODS TICKETS TO RYDER

••• Good news for guys who can't work out how to dress for the golf course: The cashmere kings at Loro Piana are here to help. The label outfitted the European Ryder Cup team this past September with ensembles for travel, for the links, and for lounging around afterward, in shades of navy, royal blue, and burnt ochre. We can't say as of press time how the team fared, but we can promise they looked good. And you can, too: Everything Europe's best golfers wore to the Cup is now available to us mortals at loropiana.com.



SURVIVING THE DEEP FREEZE

You're worried about a POLAR VORTEX? Thundersnow? Get real. It's time to talk about the real COLD-WEATHER THREAT: the damage it can do to your SKIN.

● You know how people say, "It's not the heat; it's the humidity"? Well, it's not the cold that gets you this time of year. It's the bone-dry air, indoors and out. Since most guys are better-equipped to winterize their cars than themselves, we've assembled a head-to-heels guide for surviving the big chill. The key concept here? Hydration.

HAIR Your scalp is bound to get itchy in the colder months. (Blame it on all those hats.) Scale back your shampoo regimen to two or three times a week so you don't strip away hydrating natural oils, and seal in nutrients with a conditioner (or a doubly nourishing leave-in conditioner).

FACE Unless you're wearing a ski mask (in which case we salute you, you risk-taker), your face is in for a lot of windburn. Find a heavier, cream-based moisturizer to build up your defense against the elements. Apply an overnight serum before bed to help skin recover while you sleep.

BEARD Essential oils will make your beard shinier and better smelling, but they also combat beardruff—dandruff's chin-dwelling

cousin. The oil treats the dry skin *beneath* your beard, which needs hydration, even if you can't see it.

BODY A long, steamy shower is all you want when you've come in from the cold, but resist the temptation. Hot water leaves skin parched and prone to rashes, so stop the tap at lukewarm, and get out before you start pruning up.

HANDS & FEET These always take the worst beating in winter. Go nuclear and coat both with DIY solutions like coconut oil, shea butter, aloe, and even yogurt. (Lactic acid can work wonders.) Just make sure you won't have to run to answer the door. This is me time. —A.W.



WIN THE COLD WAR
YOU PILE ON THE LAYERS WHEN TEMPERATURES DROP, RIGHT? DO THE SAME FOR YOUR SKIN WITH CREAMS, OILS, AND CONDITIONERS.



HERMÈS TERRES IT UP

••• In 2006, Hermès cooked up Terre d'Hermès—a fragrance that married wood and mineral notes so expertly it's become a classic. This fall, it's tweaking the formula with a vetiver-infused version. That new, grassy element adds fresh and earthy undertones to the mix, transforming Terre's nature from mineral to vegetal. —Michael Stefanov

Terre d'Hermès Eau Intense Vétiver (\$132) by Hermès.



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SNEAK ATTACK

SOLE by SOLE, shoes like these are taking over the STREETS

3

4



5

6

*** Are these shoes cool or crazy? Your answer says everything about where you stand in the age of the "ugly" sneaker, when soles are chunkier, colors are brighter, and embellishments are increasingly baroque. Driven by street-wear-savvy designers like Demna Gvasalia at Balenciaga and Virgil Abloh at Off-White, the new breed is a steroidal retread of the clunky sneakers of the '90s. (Just when you finally tossed yours out!) Some are called "dad shoes": big, bulky, too hip for most dads to pull off. Some are collaborations with rappers (like 2 Chainz) or another label (like Yeezy). Some are conceptual kicks from high-fashion houses such as Calvin Klein. In every case, they are winning over the sneakerati—a bigger-than-you'd-think legion of upscale-footwear collectors—and you could be next. —J. R.

1. Chain Reaction (\$995) by **Versace**. 2. Adidas YEEZY Boost 350 V2 (\$220) by **Yeezy**. 3. Carlos 10 (\$595) by **CALVIN KLEIN 205W39NYC**. 4. React Element 87 (\$180) by **Nike x UNDERCOVER**. 5. RS Ozweego (\$400), Adidas by **Raf Simons**. 6. Track (\$850) by **Balenciaga**. 7. Nike Air Presto x Off-White (\$160) by **Nike x Virgil Abloh: The Ten**.



7

THE GODFATHER OF PERFORMANCE GEAR

Forty years ago, MASSIMO OSTI sparked a revolution in technical wear. Today, thanks to guys like TRAVIS SCOTT, his legacy is stronger—and hotter—than ever.

There's one designer you can thank for the popularity of everything from fishtail parkas to tricked-out athleisure. And you've probably never heard his name.

In the late '70s, graphic-artist-turned-clothing-manufacturer Massimo Osti created a fashion subgenre still rippling through the design world. While high-end Italian labels pushed luxury on the catwalk, Osti's brands—C.P. Company and Stone Island—ignored the runway and focused instead on experimentation. Inspired by a vast personal archive of vintage military and civilian clothing, Osti approached fashion as if it were industrial science. It was imperative that his clothes “worked,” functioned, did stuff. Sometimes they just did something



BACK IN ACTION
THIS SEAM-SEALED PARKA FROM RAG & BONE AND AGATA OSTI REVIVES THE WORK OF HER FATHER, MASSIMO, WHO BELIEVED THAT CLOTHES SHOULD BE BOTH GOOD-LOOKING AND FUNCTIONAL.



Above: Jacket (\$1,695), trousers (\$395), and sneakers (\$325) by Rag & Bone.



Far left: Osti in his studio in Bologna, Italy, in 2002. Above left: To tweak a design, Osti would affix photocopied images of adjustments to the garment.



photograph (model): Aaron Richter

PROMOTION

Esquire

GROOMING

GROOMING TOOLS | HAIR CARE | BEARD CARE | STYLING AIDS | KITS



[ULTA.COM/BRAND/ESQUIRE-GROOMING](https://www.ulta.com/brand/esquire-grooming)



clever, like change color with your body temperature or provide wired-in central heating. Sometimes the materials were dyed, coated, weathered, or generally futzed with in a hundred different ways. The resulting garments gained the cachet of collectible prototypes.

Osti's clothes had a machismo that endeared them to a generation for whom the street superseded the runway. In the '80s and '90s, soccer culture did much to propagate the genre in the UK and the rest of Europe. The sport doesn't have the same stature in the U.S., so the Osti wave has only recently hit the States—



CLOAK & SWAGGER
 IN 1982, OSTI MANAGED TO PRODUCE A CAPE THAT LOOKED DOWNRIGHT PRACTICAL. THESE DAYS, GUYS LIKE DRAKE OPT FOR A SIMPLER APPROACH.



Draft Picks Osti sketched his clothes with the detail of a blueprint. Below: Dennis Hopper wearing C. P. Company in a 1989 photo shoot.



CAN YOU FEEL THE HEAT?

••• Massimo Osti's approach to technical clothing has become so much a part of the vernacular that it reaches across the style strata, from performance lines (see the next page) to high fashion's heaviest hitters. In the past six months, we've seen inside-out seam-sealed parkas at Vuitton, coated nylon topcoats at Hermès, and this far-out take on a fireman's coat from Calvin Klein. Now, we're not saying Osti invented the fireman's coat. But we are saying his work with reflective fabrics, heavy-duty closures, and functional details (like all... those... pockets...) brought these practical touches to the mainstream—giving today's designers license to mix more function into their fashion. —J. R.

Jacket (\$3,500) by **CALVIN KLEIN 205W39NYC.**

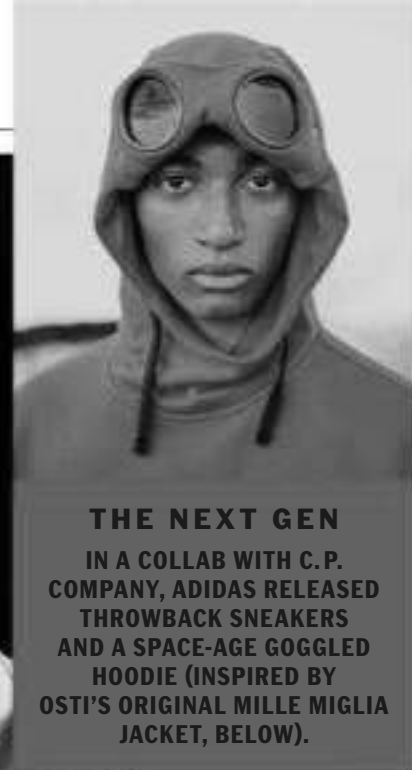
but it's hitting hard. For years, Drake has upped Stone Island's visibility, repping the brand constantly in concert and in Instagram posts. Lately, Travis Scott has become a convert, too, wearing Stone Island's reflective jackets court-side at Rockets games. This season, Adidas has a collaboration with C.P. Company that will revive Osti's legendary Mille Miglia jacket, a coat with goggles built into the hood (yes, really). And last year on La Brea, Los Angeles's streetwear strip, Stone Island opened a new 5,300-square-foot flagship.

This month, however, marks the most meaningful collaboration connected to Osti's work. His daughter Agata is launching a capsule collection under her own name with Rag & Bone, reimagining three unisex garments from her father's files (the designer

died in 2005). Working with his fabric specialist, Adriano Caccia, Agata plowed through the archive to get at the essence of Osti's craft, reworking technical fabrics and early designs for a contemporary edge. Looking at the clothes—including seam-sealed and reversible parkas and a thermal-padded liner—it's clear she's inherited her father's technical prowess, and his eye for clean, economical design, too. "My father transformed the way men's fashion is understood," Agata says. Here's to the next evolution. —N.S.



Sneakers (\$110) and sweatshirt (\$220), **Adidas Originals by C.P. Company.**



THE NEXT GEN
IN A COLLAB WITH C.P. COMPANY, ADIDAS RELEASED THROWBACK SNEAKERS AND A SPACE-AGE GOGGLED HOODIE (INSPIRED BY OSTI'S ORIGINAL MILLE MIGLIA JACKET, BELOW).



1. Ski mask (\$49). 2. Backpack (\$149). 3. Duffel bag (\$249). 4. Fleece pullover (\$129). 5. Fishing socks (\$45). 6. Hat (\$29). 7. Jacket (\$399).

THE LABEL FOR HIKEBEASTS

... Patagonia was established by a badass outdoorsman named Yvon Chouinard, who so frequently found himself in danger of losing his life—he spent his days rock climbing, training hawks, and hopping freight trains—that he started building better gear and selling it from the back of his car. Sixty years later, Shia LaBeouf uses a Patagonia jacket to shield himself from paparazzi, and Kanye mixes the brand's sweats with his favorite Yeezy pieces.

So, yes, Patagonia has gone from base-camp basics to street-style staple, but that

doesn't mean you can't wear it somewhere in the middle. Like Massimo Osti's best work (and his technical influence is readily apparent here), Patagonia's clothing operates at the intersection of aesthetics and performance. Its puffer jackets are both cool-looking and warmth-retaining. Its quarter-zip fleeces offer a smart, stylish way to layer. And its Black Hole line—a collection of duffels and backpacks made of super-resilient ripstop polyester—has become de rigueur for cool guys in airports everywhere. It's enough to make you wonder whether Ye and Shia are just dodging paps on their way to the nearest mountain range. —Brady Langmann



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#SQUADONAMISSION

What's the VIBE?

Our writer goes for a **PSYCHIC READING**, wondering just **HOW DARK** is his **SOUL**

By Dwight Garner



CHARMING NEIGHBORS

*Welcome to
Cassadaga, Florida, the
Bilbao of bullshit.*

On a late August evening in Cassadaga, Florida, which is often billed as the psychic capital of the world, I went to see Raven Star, a psychic witch. It was thundering when I knocked on the door of her low-slung house. Raven opened up and took me inside. Her walls were painted dive-bar black. The floors were dirty. There were dragon statuettes and half cans of off-brand soda on the dinner table. There was an electric guitar on the floor. It was as if a Danzig tribute band had been rehearsing there.

I'd made the pilgrimage to Cassadaga, which is between Orlando and Daytona Beach, because I had pressing questions. I'd been feeling off, and I'd begun to wonder: Is there a new flaw in my alloy, or some weird sore suppurating within me? Is some obstruction blocking my flow? Is my heart, like a gull fouled with oil, too gooey to fly? Has a spanner been thrown into my works? Is there a dead spot in my sea? Has my zone of woe, in the era of Trump, grown too large? Might Raven be able

to throw some dark light on these matters?

I'm joking. As the judge says to the court typist, please strike the previous paragraph from the record. The only question I had when I drove into Cassadaga was this one: Can I like crackpots more than I already do? I find them more honest, and certainly more entertaining, than most people—at least when they're not making Supreme Court nominations. When I am around them, I feel in touch with an older, stranger, ganglier America, an America of medicine shows and fire-eaters. And when it comes to crackpots, Cassadaga (pop. 100) reigns nearly supreme. It is the Bangkok, the Buenos Aires, the Bilbao of bullshit. It is fantastic.

There is no gas station or hardware store here, but there are many places to buy crystals, dowsing rods, chakra chimes, healing oils, “evil eye” protectors, animal totems, incense-ash catchers, prayer flags, and lucky jackpot soap. America has many New Age tourist spots—Sedona, Arizona, and Joshua Tree, California, among them. But none feel as concentrated as Cassadaga. This is where you come if you need a séance, a numerology report, a past-life regression, or twenty minutes on a “crystal bed.” It is filled with people with honorifics like “Rev.” and “Dr.” in front of their name who will tell you how to choose the best scratch-off lottery card. If there weren't so many credulous and weary and gravely ill visitors to this place, people spending money they don't have on help they will not get, it would be a merry sort of United Nations, rich with ambassadors from the sage-burning kingdoms of cuckoo notions. I often felt like doing what the actor Malcolm McDowell did while visiting Lourdes. He ran down a hill yelling, “I can walk! I can walk!”

Raven is a large woman in late-ish middle age in a black dress and black lipstick. She had me sit at her table. She held a sheaf of wet papers, filled with her handwriting. She'd been meditating on me while in a hot bath, she said—a line, I realized, I've been waiting my entire life to hear from a woman. This is probably the place to say: I utterly lack the spiritual gene, but I am scareable. After I saw *The Blair Witch Project*, I couldn't smoke alone at night on my back deck in the country for two weeks. I knew Raven was putting on a show, but it was raining and thundering outside. I was in a dirty room painted black. No one knew where I was. My cellular service had been spotty. I did sort of lean in to what she had to say.

She held her wet pages and, like a poet in a dark club, began to speak. I was going to live in a bunker and become a doomsday prepper, she told me. I nodded gravely. I was going to be the world's most famous podcaster, with Cherry Pepsi as my sponsor. More nodding. I will find

riches if I become a “hard money lender” and master the Tel Aviv stock market. I should seek the financial help of Nate Trombetti (what a name), a local businessman. I need to own a skyscraper. There was a pause. She offered me a little can of Great Value—brand cream soda and I took it. She opened one, too. We sipped. “Do you want an antacid?” she asked.

There were more personal things. I have OCD and play with toys like a two-year-old, she says. (False.) I am miserable about love. (Rarely.) I am a bit of a hermit. (Maybe.) I like to observe but dislike being observed. (Bingo.) She says my wife and I have a “Juicy Couture kind of relationship.” I don't know what that means, but I like it a lot. As she's talking, she tells me that she has slept with a Ouija board in her bed since she was eight. She says she gets high-technology dreams from God. She tells me that aliens created society. She said she saves the last bites of her food for God, so she has little rolled-up pieces of

● ●

SHE SAYS MY WIFE AND I HAVE A “JUICY COUTURE KIND OF RELATIONSHIP.” I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS, BUT I LIKE IT A LOT.

● ●

food everywhere, in her bed and in her car. I plan to step carefully when I get up to leave.

Our two hours are over. Her fee is a hundred dollars, and I add forty dollars because I am a congenital overtipper and because I find Raven endearing. I walk back to the Mission-style Cassadaga Hotel, less than a block away, where I am staying. The hotel's two floors have mediums with whom one can book sessions, and the entire place is said to be haunted by an Irish tenor named Arthur, who leaves the smell of gin and cigars in his wake. I could have done with some gin and cigars, but the hotel restaurant closes too early for me.

This is probably the place to say that Raven is an outlier in Cassadaga, which was founded in 1875 by a New York State medium named George Colby as a winter retreat for his followers. It is still home to the largest spiritualist camp in the South. Everywhere you walk, someone has a shingle out. In a few places, neon signs reading OPEN burn all night long. Nearly all of the mediums in Cassadaga practice what I would call white magic. They see themselves as gentle

healers, as caring souls, as shoulders to lean on, as people into aromatherapy and Reiki and hugs. They are Stevie Nicks; Raven is Joan Jett. Raven has some hoodoo energy.

The next morning, I was up early and walked around the local cemetery in the mist. There's a well-known “devil's chair” there, really a mourning seat for visitors but one about which it is said if you sit on it at midnight, Satan will come talk to you as if you were Robert Johnson. Walking here, I was reminded of Denis Johnson's observation, in his posthumous book of short stories, that “old southern graveyards harbor an unwholesome power comparable to that of nuclear disaster sites.”

I had an aura photograph taken while holding a white crystal. I sat on the crystal bed, which was actually a massage table with Christmas-tree lights pointed down at my testicles and other places. I saw an angry fat man in the street, waving as if there were a bee caught in his double chin. I made appointments with two mediums, both gentle middle-aged women. One gave me a tarot-card reading and foresaw nothing too terrible in my future. The other offered to help me reach my beloved grandfather, Archie. I am seeing birdhouses, she said—did he keep birdhouses? (No.) She told me he wants me to own a small SUV. (I live in Manhattan and don't need a car.) She told me she sees him eating spaghetti. (I don't recall Archie ever eating spaghetti, but surely he must have at least once.) She told me he is leaving small rocks in my path for me to pick up. She told me he is showing me a scratch-off lottery ticket, a lucky one. All I need to do is let my eyes go lazy and it will stand out.

This was so banal that later that afternoon, I texted Raven. Can you do some black magic for me? I asked. Because my favorite toast while drinking is not “L'chaim” but “To the confusion of our enemies,” I asked her if she could bring confusion to my enemies. Of course! she replied. I walked back over. Pungent sage burned in a smudge pot. We cracked open cream sodas. Raven wanted to know my enemies' names. I don't maintain a list, so I had none to give her. I simply wanted my enemies, whoever they might be, to be confused. On the spot, Raven came up with a plan. She would go to Walmart and buy little army men to stand in for them. She would bind them and cover their mouths and then, after a month, she would burn them on her front lawn. Whoa, Raven, I said. I want to confuse my enemies, not burn them alive. Can't you just blow a little smoke in their eyes?

Okay, Raven replied. I will blow a little smoke. ■



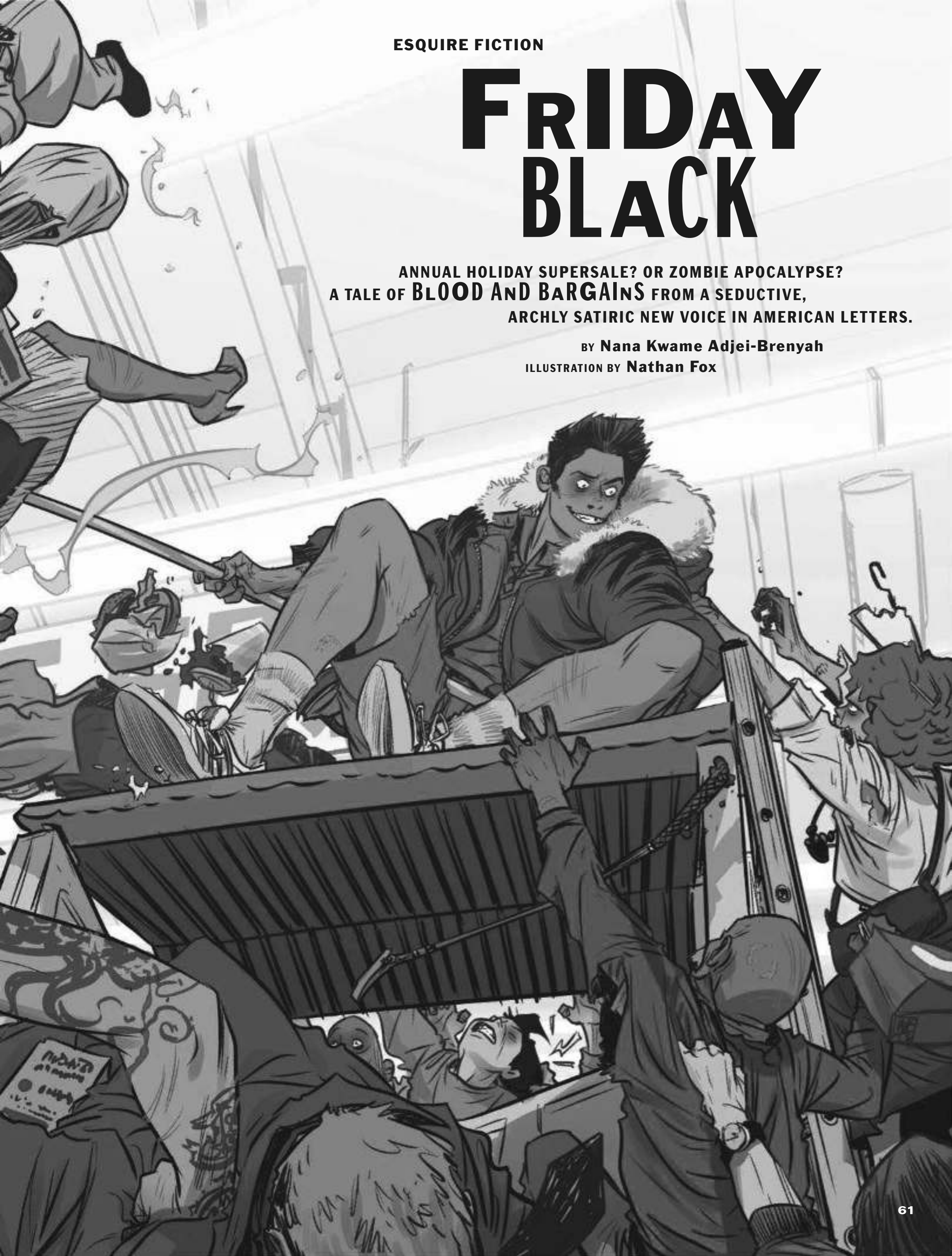
ESQUIRE FICTION

FRIDAY BLACK

ANNUAL HOLIDAY SUPERSALE? OR ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE?
A TALE OF **BLOOD AND BARGAINS** FROM A SEDUCTIVE,
ARCHLY SATIRIC NEW VOICE IN AMERICAN LETTERS.

BY **Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah**

ILLUSTRATION BY **Nathan Fox**



“GET

to your sections!” Angela screams.

Ravenous humans howl. Our gate whines and rattles as they shake and pull, their grubby fingers like worms through the grating. I sit atop a tiny cabin roof made of hard plastic. My legs hang near the windows, and fleeces hang inside of it. I hold my reach, an eight-foot-long metal pole with a small plastic mouth at the end for grabbing hangers off the highest racks. I also use my reach to smack down Friday heads. It’s my fourth Black Friday. On my first, a man from Connecticut bit a hole into my tricep. His slobber hot. I left the sales floor for ten minutes so they could patch me up. Now I have a jagged smile on my left arm. A sickle, half circle, my lucky Friday scar. I hear Richard’s shoes flopping toward me.

“You ready, big guy?” he asks. I open one eye and look at him. I’ve never not been ready, so I don’t say anything and close my eyes again. “I get it; I get it. Eye of the tiger! I like it,” Richard says. I nod slowly. He’s nervous. He’s a district manager, and this is the Prominent Mall. We’re the biggest store in his territory. We’re supposed to do a million over the next thirty days. Most of it’s on me.

The main gate creaks and groans.

“I saw the SuperShell in the back. What’s she wear, medium or large?”

“Large,” I say, opening both eyes.

There’s a contest: Whoever has the most sales gets to take home any coat in the store. When Richard asked me what I was going to do if I won, I told him that when I won I was going to give one of the SuperShell parkas to my mother. Richard frowned but said that was honorable. I said that yeah, it was. The SuperShells are the most expensive coats we have this season: down-filled lofted exterior with a water-repellent finish, zip vents to keep the thing breathable, elastic hem plus faux fur on the hood for a luxurious touch. I know Richard would have me choose literally anything else. That’s half of why I chose it. I set it aside in the back. It’s the only large we’ve got

due to a shipment glitch. Nobody will touch it because I’m me.

Most of the Friday heads are here for the PoleFace™ stuff. And whose name is lined up with the PoleFace™ section on the daily breakdown each day this weekend? It’s not Lance or Michel, that’s for sure. It’s not the new kid, Duo, either. I look across to denim where Duo is pacing back and forth making sure his piles are neat and folded. He’s a pretty good kid. Sometimes he’ll actually ask to help with shipments. He wears a T-shirt and skinny jeans like most of our customers his age. Angela tells him to watch me, to learn from me. She says he’s my heir apparent. I like him, but he’s not like me. He can sound honest, he knows how to see what people want, but he can’t do what I can do. Not on Black Friday. But he’ll survive denim.

Michel and Lance cover shoes and graphic tees. Michel and Lance might as well be anybody else. Lance is working the broom.

There’s a grind and a metallic rumble. Angela is in the front. She’s pushed the button and turned the key. The main gate eats itself up as it rolls into the ceiling.

“Get out of here!” I yell to Richard. He runs to the register where he’ll be backup to the backup safe.

Maybe eighty people rush through the gate, clawing and stampeding. Pushing racks and bodies aside. Have you ever seen people run from a fire or gunshots? It’s like that, with less fear and more hunger. From my cabin, I see a child, a girl maybe six years old, disappear as the wave of consumer fervor swallows her up. She is sprawled facedown with dirty shoe prints on her pink coat. Lance walks up to the small pink body. He’s pulling a pallet jack and holding a huge push broom. He thrusts the broom head into her side and tries to sweep her onto the pallet jack so he can roll her to the section we’ve designated for bodies. As he touches her, a woman wearing a gray scarf pushes him away and yanks the girl to her feet. I imagine the mother explaining that her tiny daughter isn’t dead yet. She pulls the little girl toward me. The girl limps and tries to keep up, and then I have to forget about them.

“Blue! Son! SleekPack!” a man with wild eyes and a bubble vest screams as he grabs my left ankle. White foam drips from his mouth. I use my right foot to stomp his hand, and I feel his fingers crush beneath my boots. He howls, “SleekPack. Son!” while licking his in-

jured hand. I look him in his eyes, deep red around his lids, redder at the corners. I understand him perfectly. What he’s saying is this: My son. Loves me most on Christmas. I have him holidays. Me and him. Wants the one thing. Only thing. His mother won’t. On me. Need to feel like Father!

Ever since that first time, since the bite, I can speak Black Friday. Or I can understand it, at least. Not fluently, but well enough. I have some of them in me. I hear the people, the sizes, the model, the make, and the reason. Even if all they’re doing is foaming at the mouth. I use my reach and pull a medium-size blue SleekPack PoleFace™ from a face-out rack way up on the wall. “Thanks,” he growls when I throw the jacket in his face.

I jump down from the cabin and swing the reach around so none of them can get too close. The long rod whistles in the air. Most of the customers can’t speak in real words; the Friday Black has already taken most of their minds. Still, so many of them are the same. I grab two medium fleeces without anyone asking for them because I know somebody wants one. They howl and scream: daughter, son, girlfriend, husband, friend, ME, daughter, son. I throw one of the fleeces toward the registers and one toward the back wall. The crowd splits. Near the registers, a woman in her thirties takes off her heel and smashes a child in the jaw with it just before he can grab the fleece. She inspects the tag, sees it’s a medium, then throws it down on top of the boy with a heel-size hole in his cheek. I toss two large fleeces and two medium fleeces into the crowds. Then I deal with the customers who can still speak, who are nudging and pushing around me.

“C-C-COAL BUBBLE. SMALL, ME! COAL!” a man says while beating his chest. I’m the only one at work who doesn’t have a Coalmeister! How can I be a senior advisor without? The only one!

I press the end of my reach against his neck to keep his hungry mouth from me. Then, without taking my eyes off him, I grab one of the Coalmeister bubble coats from the rack behind me. And then it’s in his hands. He hugs the coat and runs to the register.

“Us? US!” the woman with the gray scarf says. She has large gold earrings hanging off the sides of her head. The pink-coat child is at her shins. The child’s face is bruised, but she isn’t crying at all.

“Can’t. The Stuy!” Gray scarf’s husband

THE FIRST WAVE OF SHOPPERS IS HOME, OR SLEEPING,
OR DEAD IN VARIOUS CORNERS OF THE MALL.

says. Family time needs forty-two-inch high-def. The BuyStuy deal is only while supplies last! Can't afford any other day.

Black Friday takes everybody differently. It's rough on families. They can't always hear what I hear.

"Asshole!" the wife seethes. Then she stares back at me.

"PoleFace™. Pink," she says, pointing to her child. "Coal SleekPack," she continues, pointing to her own face. A new kiddie PoleFace™, a new coal SleekPack, a Coalmeister. A family set.

The woman has both the coats she needs in a second, then storms off, dragging her child behind her.

It isn't always like this. This is the Black Weekend. Other times, if somebody dies, at least a cleanup crew comes with a tarp. Last year, the Friday Black took 129 people. "Black Friday is a special case; we are still a hub of customer care and interpersonal cohesiveness," mall management said in a mall-wide memo. As if caring about people is something you can turn on and off.

In the first five hours, I do seven thousand plus. No one has ever sold like that before. Soon I'll have a \$500 jacket as proof to my mother that I'll love her forever. When I imagine how her face will look as I give it to her, my heart beats faster.

At five in the morning, the lull comes. The first wave of shoppers is home, or sleeping, or dead in various corners of the mall.

Our store has three bodies in the bodies section. The first came an hour in. A woman climbed the denim wall looking for a second pair her size. She was screaming and rocking the wooden cubby wall so hard that the whole thing almost fell on Duo and everybody in his section. Duo poked her off the wall with his reach. She fell on her neck. Another woman snatched the SkinnyStretches from her dead hands. Lance came with the pallet jack, his broom, and some paper towels.

My first break is at 5:30 A.M. On my way to clock out, I walk through denim.

"Looks like you've had it pretty crazy," I say to Duo. There are jeans everywhere. None of them folded. Bloodstains all over the floor.

"Yeah," he says. A young man in a white T-shirt staggers toward us. "Grrrrr," he says. He's gnawing on something. I move to sling him one of the SlimStraights in his size—he thinks it'll make him popular at school—but stop because of how quickly Duo tosses the right kind of jeans to the customer, who takes them and limps to the register.

"You understand them?" I ask.

"Now I do," Duo says. He kicks at a tooth that's lying on the ground. Then he shows me a small bloody mark in the space between his thumb and forefinger.

"That's Black Friday."

"This is my first."

"Well, the worst part is done," I say, kind of smiling, trying to see where he's at.

"I don't know," he says.

"Yeah," I say, and continue on toward the register.

"My break is after yours," Duo says. That's retail for Hurry up, I'm hungry.

I punch my username and password into the computer, and Richard bows down to me like I'm to be worshipped. Angela nods at me like a proud mama. While I'm gone, Angela will take my spot in the PoleFace™ section. It's the lull, so she can handle it.

Outside the store, the Prominent is bloody and broken, so I can tell it's been a great Black Friday. There are people strung out over benches and feet poking out of trash bins. Christmas music you can't escape plays from speakers you cannot see.



Adjei-Brenyah's debut has earned rave reviews from George Saunders and Roxane Gay.

Christmas is God here.

I'm hungry. My family didn't really do the Thanksgiving thing this year—which felt like a relief except I missed my chance for stuffing. I'd offered to help with some of the shopping. My mom had lost her job. I make \$8.50 an hour, but I saved. Mom, Dad, sister, me. But then we skipped the whole thing because we don't really like one another anymore. That was one of the side effects of lean living. We used to play games together. Now my parents yell about money, and when they aren't doing that, we are quiet. I walk, wondering if there's stuffing anywhere in the mall.

My second Black Friday, our store was doing pretty well, so there was a commission. You got something like 2.5 percent of all of your sales. It was a big deal for us on the floor. That was when Wendy was sales lead. Which meant she had the highest sales goals. That year she'd brought in a pie for everybody. I made sure not to eat any of it because I don't eat anything anybody tries to shove down my throat, and she couldn't stop talking about the pie. "We can have Thanksgiving in the store! It's homemade." Everybody was saying how nice she was, how thoughtful. Then

Wendy and I were the only ones who didn't have the shits all day.

Who knows what she put in the pie. I made it my mission to beat her. And I did. I squashed her. Maybe it was because, thanks to her biological warfare, I had shoes, graphic tees, hats, plus denim to cover while she was stuck in PoleFace™.

Maybe it was because winter was warm that year. Maybe it was that I'm the greatest goddamn salesman this store has ever seen and ever will see. But I squashed her. I've been lead ever since. Wendy was gone by New Year's. I put the extra commission money toward some controllers for my GameBox.

I make it to the food court, where the smell of food wafts over the stench of the freshly deceased like a muzzle on a rabid dog. There are survivors, champions of the first wave, pulling bags stretched to their capacity. Using the last of their energy to haul their newly purchased happiness home. And there are the dead, everywhere. I get two dollar-menu burgers, a small fry, and a drink from BurgerLand. The man at the cash register has seen so much and had so much caffeine that I have to remind him to take money from me. Even as he takes it, he stares forward, past me, looking at nothing. I sit in the food court at one of the white tables that doesn't have a corpse on it.

I bite into my burger and chew slowly. If I hold a bite in my mouth long enough, it softens into something that feels almost like stuffing. While I eat, a woman drags a television in a box to the table in front of me. She pushes a woman who is lying facedown in a small puddle of red blood out of the chair. Then she sits down. I recognize her from the store. One of her ears looks like it's been mangled by teeth; the other still has a large gold earring. Her gray scarf is gone. But she's wearing her new coat. When I look at her, she hisses and shows her pointy white teeth.

"It's okay," I say. "I helped you." She looks at me, confused. "Um, SleekPack, coal," I say in Black Friday, pointing to myself, then back to her. The creases on her face smooth. She relaxes into her seat and rubs her cheek into the faux fur of the hood.

"Good haul?" I ask. She nods hard and pets the face of the television box. "Family still shopping?" I ask.

The woman dips her pointer finger into the blood puddle in front of her.

"Forty-two inches, high-def," she says. This is the only time they can afford it. With a red finger she makes a small circle, then paints two small eyes onto the cardboard box and drags a smile beneath the eyes. The blood dries out before she gets all the way across the face.

"What?" I ask.

"Dead," she says. "BuyStuy. Trample."

"Oh," I say. "Right."

"She was weak. He was weak. I am strong," the woman says as (continued on page 114)

PHOTOGRAPHS
by
Bobby Doherty

KEEP IT
CLASSY

ILLUSTRATIONS
by
LÆMEUR

KEEP IT

EASY

“Elegance is refusal,” someone said. (Probably Coco Chanel. Possibly Diana Vreeland. Maybe both.) But that doesn’t mean you live like a shut-in. Autumn is here. The air is brisk. Call your friends and **invite them over for a drink**—trust us, doing this will feel good. **Entertain them.** And do so elegantly—this is where the “refusal” part comes in. Stay chill. Decline to work yourself into a frenzy. Have things on hand—premade cocktails in the freezer, tins of caviar in the fridge, Italian honey in the pantry, beautiful kitchen tools arrayed on the counter—that will make your hosting appear **effortless** and, yes, elegant. All you have to do is pour a glass and pop open a top. Leisure time, after all, should feel leisurely. —*Jeff Gordinier*

THE KITCHEN

**Gear Up with
TOOLS
You Love**

BECAUSE THEY’RE MORE
THAN TOOLS

...

➔ **The saying goes:** The most important tool in the kitchen is a sharp knife. True. But it doesn’t hurt if that knife is also a beautiful one. Because when it comes to home kitchens, the pots, the pans, even the lowly measuring cups should bring you pleasure even when you’re not using them. They won’t necessarily make you a better cook,

but they will get you to cook more—it’s hard to resist anything that feels like an extension of your hand. Retail therapy is a dangerous thing, but if the purchase of a new copper pot causes you to skip Seamless for the night and finally invite over those friends you’ve been meaning to invite over forever, you’re really paying for an experience, and, well, that makes it okay. (It does. It really does.) Even if you end up cooking nothing, even if you don’t get past the Champagne and cheese and crackers, your guests will surely wind up in the kitchen—everyone winds up in the kitchen—where they will admire your end-grain cutting board, the fancy trivets, the Japanese culinary scissors. They will say, “You must like to entertain!” To which you will reply, “Yes, I do.” —*Kevin Sintumuang*

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Aura One knife (\$745; aurachef.com): The gorgeous handle is made from redwood and onyx. **Japanese scissors** (\$70; garrettwade.com): Use them to cut everything from herbs to meat. **Gotham juicer** (\$70; cocktailkingdom.com): A heavy-duty juicer based on a design from the fifties. **Color Lab espresso cups** (\$60 for set of four; store.moma.org): Good for the morning joe or for setting up ingredients. **Alessi Edo pot** (\$127; alessi.com): New cookware by Spanish designer Patricia Urquiola that blends Basque and Japanese influences. **Le Creuset trivet** (\$75): No one will mistake this for anything but a very serious trivet. **Kikkerland magnetic kitchen timer** (\$15; kikkerland.com): Keeps you from spilling sauce on your phone. **Walnut bread board** (\$80; williams-sonoma.com): Works for fish (or cheese or charcuterie), too. **Shun Hikari five-inch santoku knife** (\$265; williams-sonoma.com): Featuring a birch handle and a lightweight blade with a shimmering pattern meant to resemble a hornet’s nest. **Brooklyn Copper Works two-quart saucepan** (\$330, \$160 for cover; brooklyncoppercookware.com): A pot that is also a handmade heirloom. **Crate & Barrel acacia-and-gold measuring cups** (\$25 for set of four; crateandbarrel.com): An upgrade from the mismatched plastic things.



Decorate. With a CAPITAL D.

BECAUSE THIS IS
A PARTY WITH A CAPITAL P

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➔ **We are,** all of us, trying entirely too hard to be “chill” these days. I can tell from the party invitations—sorry, not parties, “hangs.” Gatherings that, at a minimum, warranted a Facebook page with a cleverly photoshopped banner image have devolved into group texts. “Drinks at mine Saturday? Brng

beer,” they say and consider their obligation met. Suddenly you’re standing around a bowl of pretzels and a couple half-empty growlers, so chill you’re almost iced over.

If you want to have a real party, you need to really mean it. That means planning far enough in advance to give reasonable warning. That means buying enough beer for everyone. And that means tricking out your place like you give a damn. With mood lighting. With candles. With flowers, or fruit, or greens, or some other living thing that says you too maintain enough of a pulse to make a modicum of effort. Maybe you want streamers, some puffy tissue-paper globes, any of that other colorful stuff they sell at Party City. Maybe you bring out

the nice whiskey glasses, or you rearrange the furniture for better flow, or you dust off the record player you never use. Maybe you just try dusting.

Even if you are not a “decor” kind of guy—if the string lights end up in a tangle and you forget to trim the stems off the flowers and the candles drip wax everywhere—these are the things that make a party. There are certain visual cues we’ve been trained to seek out since childhood birthdays that tell us we are not just partaking in a playdate, or a hang, or some lackadaisical pregame to a bigger, better-art-directed climax. It’s simple: When you put in the effort to make things look special, people feel special. They warm up. —*Jon Roth*

PARTY TRICKS

Consider the Most Decadent Dish Ever

Filet mignon + foie gras + buttered toast = !!!



Tournedos Rossini is a tower of power. Traditionally—in a recipe that dates back to the nineteenth century and was (according to legend) devised to satiate the kingly appetite of the composer of the opera *The Barber of Seville*—it involves a lionhearted stacking of flavor: seared foie gras on top of filet mignon on top of buttered toast, all of it coated with a rich, sticky reduction of veal stock, Madeira, and truffles. The chef Angie Mar, famous for her bold recalibrations of Gallic warhorses at the Beatrice Inn in Manhattan, doubles down on the luxe factor by tossing

in black trumpet mushrooms and swapping in the assertive flavor of lamb tenderloin for the neutrality of a beef filet. The result is a dish that comes across as both elegant and obscene—the gastronomic equivalent of one of Prince’s salacious propositions from his *Dirty Mind* phase. There’s no way to deliver a “lighter” version and there’s no way to prevent your kitchen from looking like an oil spill after you’ve cooked it. So commit to the richness and try to keep the delectable mess out of view. Your guests will reward you with suggestive moans of delight. —J. G.

THE POUR

GO NATURAL

With your wine, that is

Natural wines—those made from grapes grown organically and with minimal manipulation—are on the rise because they taste so alive. We asked Jorge Riera, who has assembled an incredible list of the natural stuff as wine director at New York’s Frenchette, for three of his new favorites to uncork this fall.

WHITE

**Domaine Mosse,
Marie Bonnes-Fer,
Vin de France 2016**

● “Expressive fruit and acidity, the result of a harsh vintage, with frost and hail, so they blended the three vineyards to create this electrical beauty.”

MACERATED WHITE (ORANGE)

**Alessandro Viola,
Sinfonia di Grillo,
Terre Siciliane IGT 2016**

● “Macerated Grillo is volcanic juice that drinks like the best stone-fruit elixir [and] stands up to pizza, poultry, fish, veal—very versatile!”

RED

**Christian Tschida,
Red Sonja, Neusiedlersee,
Austria 2016**

● “A gulpable fruit-forward cabernet franc that drinks like a gamay. I highly suggest it out of a mag with that iconic label by Erró, featuring Red Sonja.”





ART OF HOSTING

REMEMBER TO TREAT N/A'S LIKE VIP'S

Everyone deserves a drink that feels like a drink

Great hosts put the same kind of thought into their spirit-free offerings as they do the boozy side of the menu. Hunt and gather a lineup of shrubs and dry sodas. Don't call anything a mocktail. And remember: The lighter the ABV, the handsomer the glassware. Whether someone's in recovery or the first trimester, temporary nontippers and hardcore teetotalers alike deserve the same vibe, not Solo cups. —Jason Tesauro

FROM TOP LEFT:
Heath Ceramics Muir flatware (\$72 for five-piece setting). **Block Shop Moonphase napkin** (\$14). **Versace teapot** (\$895). **Ikea FÖREMÅL dog candlestick** (\$10). **Tom Dixon Tank wine glass** (\$95 for two). **Alessi brass Colombina flatware** (\$450 for twenty-four pieces). **Versace creamer** (\$475). **Tom Dixon Rock tea lights** (\$110 for set of three). **Heath Ceramics Coupe Line dinnerware set** (from \$85). **Roman and Williams Guild café au lait bowl** (\$88). **Blackberry Farm pepper mill** (\$95). **Canoe Design teak trivet** (\$36). **Jayson Home origami bowl** (\$78). **Versace cup and saucer** (\$300). **Ralph Lauren Home Wyatt small nut bowl** (\$45). **Best Made white-star tenugui** (\$32). **Ikea TILLAGD flatware** (\$60 for twenty pieces). **Hermès Rallye 24 round plate** (\$190), **H Deco rouge plate** (\$100), and **H Deco rouge presentation plate** (\$170).

Do the BARTENDING Ahead of Time

NO ONE WILL MISS YOUR MIX-MASTER THEATRICALS

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➔ **You're a party host, not a bartender.** This is an important distinction. When friends swing by for sipping and snacking, a part of you (the part commonly referred to as your ego) may long to show off to them the deft way you crack ice with the back of a spoon and rub an orange peel around the rim of a glass. Squelch that impulse. It will bring you nothing but angst, because it will lock you into pinching drops of bitters when you ought to be putting your guests at ease. Let your superego take charge and do what a lot of professional bartenders do to avoid bottlenecks: make the cocktails in advance. Maximize the measurements for whatever drink feels right—a martini, a negroni, a Rob Roy—and let the ingredients merge and go all viscous in a pitcher in the freezer. There is no shame in this. In fact, some enthusiasts will argue that a few hours in the icebox can amplify the pleasure of that first sip. Best of all, you've whittled your labor down to a wisp. All you have to do is pour—and focus on being your charming self. —*J. G.*

The Technique PRE-BATCHED COCKTAILS

It's easy: Just take your favorite stirred-drink recipe, add 1.5 oz of water for each drink, and scale it up. The addition of water may seem odd at first, but remember, dilution is the unspoken ingredient in practically every cocktail, and you're not stirring these over ice. They're ready to serve straight from the bottle after cooling in the freezer for at least one hour. We've done the math for you on three classics to fill a 750ml bottle. (A funnel will come in handy.) Each has around five servings. —*K. S.*



- **Manhattan** This is a 2.25-oz-rye-to-1-oz-vermouth Manhattan, just because we like the extra bite that 0.25 oz of rye imparts. Garnish with cherries and lemon twists. **11.25 oz rye • 5 oz vermouth • 0.5 oz Angostura bitters • 7.5 oz water.**
- **Martini** This is a 3.5-oz-gin-to-0.5-oz-vermouth martini. Dry, but not too dry. Garnish with lemon twists. Optional: olives or pickled onions. **15.75 oz gin • 2.25 oz dry vermouth • 6.75 oz water.**
- **Negroni** Swap out gin for mezcal if you're feeling daring. Garnish with orange wedges. **5.5 oz gin • 5.5 oz sweet vermouth • 5.5 oz Campari • 8.25 oz water.**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

RH Laval ice bucket (\$175). **RH Laval tongs** (\$19). **Ikea KORKEN bottle** (\$3). **Crate & Barrel Oregon martini glass** (\$7). **Tom Dixon Tank jug platinum** (\$325 for a set). **Roman and Williams Guild Keiko Lee On-the-Rocks glass** (\$128). **Cocktail Kingdom Nick and Nora glass** (\$42 for six). **Cocktail Kingdom Leopold coupe** (\$43 for six). **Ikea SMAKMASSIG glass** (\$8 for six). **Calvin Klein bowl** (\$145). **Roman and Williams Guild Caton Champagne saucer** (\$150). **Ikea INDUSTRIELL glass** (\$2). **Cocktail Kingdom Danuta rocks glass** (\$32 for six). **Ikea LYSKRAFT glass** (\$1). **Design Within Reach Skultuna Karui trays** (from \$275).

WE DIDN'T INVENT THE SMALL BATCH

When you handcraft the world's finest tequila, there's an art to every step. That's why we double-distill our 100% Weber Blue Agave in small-capacity, custom copper stills to give our tequila its signature smooth finish. We didn't invent the small batch,

WE JUST PERFECTED IT.



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The IMPROMPTU PARTY

Doesn't Have to Feel Impromptu

IT'S TIME TO STOCK THE FRIDGE AND PANTRY TO IMPRESS

• • •

➔ **Parties are a lot** like the coming apocalypse: Your chances of surviving depend on what you've got stocked in the bunker. The finest blowouts happen on the fly, when friends wander in and genial minutes turn into feverish hours and the spirit of impromptu celebration gradually disrobes and dismantles the home that you worked so hard to make tidy. Ideally, as a social being, you should always be prepared for just such an insta-bash. And if you happen to have on hand all of the items we list here, the sudden arrival of revelers shouldn't faze you in the slightest.

When you're serving food at a party, your mission is simple: Get the best. Welcome remarks along the lines of "Wow, where did you get these olives?" and "This is the best chorizo I've ever tasted!" do not happen by accident. Snacks don't have to be glamorous, but going the extra mile for quality is worth the effort. Stocking your pantry, your fridge, and your freezer with premium items—Calvisius caviar from Italy, bars of Compartés chocolate and tubs of McConnell's ice cream and loaves of Manresa bread from California, charcuterie from Pittsburgh pork savant Justin Severino's new Salty Pork Bits, olives and almonds from La Tien-da, etc.—will make you look like the smart and generous host you strive to be. (These items can all be shipped to you.) In a moment you have a meal, and in a matter of minutes everyone's partying like it's the end of the world. Here are some of our favorites. —J. G.





PARTY TRICKS

Make Caviar Your New Butter



In the restaurant world, 2018 has been a noteworthy year in part for the way chefs have been tweaking and turbocharging something that, in this age of food trucks and noodle shops, had appeared to be teetering toward obsolescence: French cuisine. Bullion in Dallas, Bar Crenn in San Francisco, Grand Cafe in Minneapolis, La Mercerie and Frenchette in New York, and Canard in Portland, Oregon, suggest there's an ongoing longing for cream, grandeur, pâté en croûte, and Paris-Brest pastries. And where there is French food, there will be caviar, crowning dishes with

the briny pearls whose very presence connotes luxury. This past spring, Bay Area star Dominique Crenn served caviar with leeks, watercress, and brioche toast at Bar Crenn, and you'll find caviar in a dish from Jamie Malone at Grand Cafe, bringing delicate oceanic bursts to crumpets (think of a cross between an English muffin and a pancake) thickly smeared with butter. Having caviar on hand in the fridge is never a mistake. Hell, if inclement weather keeps your guests from arriving, grab a mother-of-pearl spoon and slowly eat a tin on your own. —J. G.

ART OF HOSTING

READ POETRY AT DINNER

Yes, poetry. Hear us out.

Earlier this year, during a gathering at Tourists, a chicly renovated motel in the Berkshires, I learned that when you're with the right group of people, you can get away with something that I used to assume was unbearably pretentious: You can recite poems around the dinner table. You should do that, in fact—you should risk the initial inward groan of anxiety and derision—because a short, lambent poem is better than a toast. A poem shared out loud can be an incantation, an invitation—it has a way of opening up channels of communication between people. If you want to keep things light without tumbling into limerick territory, consider beginning a meal with a contemporary food poem, of which there is a bounty: "Butter" by Elizabeth Alexander, "Onions" by William Matthews, "Ode to Pepper Vinegar" by Kevin Young, "Pumpernickel" by Philip Schultz. (And if you really want to loosen everybody up, "The Love Cook" by Ron Padgett.) Stand up first. Breathe. Enunciate. Warn your friends that you're about to try something kind of ridiculous. Then deliver the poem with authority and (if you can manage it) actual delight. Oh, and print out a few extra copies of the poem in advance, because we predict that your friends are probably going to want to take it home. —J. G.

CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT:

Peregrino anchovy-stuffed olives (four tins for \$19; latienda.com): Think of them as umami firecrackers. **Salty Pork Bits charcuterie** (three months' salami, \$135; saltyporkbits.com): It's a real gift to gnaw on these cured meats without traveling to chef Justin Severino's Morcilla in Pittsburgh. **Ramón Peña sardines** (\$16; themaidentlane.com); **La Brújula octopus** (\$14; shop.wixtermarket.com): Spanish canned seafood will make you rethink canned seafood. **McConnell's ice cream** (\$12; mcconnells.com): Straight outta Santa Barbara, quite possibly the best ice cream in America. And they deliver. **Dip ice cream scoop + stainless-steel ice cream bowls** (\$28 + \$60 for two; store.moma.org). **Manresa bread + jam** (four loaves, from \$40; manresabread.com): The goods from the northern California bakery led by Avery Ruzicka, a spin-off of the three-Michelin-star restaurant, often sell out, and it's easy to see why. Luckily, you just have to check your mail. **Misen Essentials knife set** (\$130): A quality bargain. **Spanish cocktail snack mix** (\$22; latienda.com): It's like sitting at a local Madrid bar. **Colombina soup bowl** (\$36; alessi.com). **Saxelby cheeses: Harbison** (\$22) from Jasper Hill Farm, Vermont; **Red Rock** (the orange one, \$16) from Roelli Cheese Haus, Wisconsin: You can't go wrong with any of Saxelby's curated selections. **Marcona almonds** (\$14; latienda.com): The Spanish Armada of snacks. **Planetarium nesting bowls** (\$315 for set of eight; store.moma.org). **Compartés chocolate** (from \$10; compartes.com): From salted pistachio to avocado toast, these are the most weirdly wonderful bars around. **Calvisius caviar: Sevruga** (50g, \$310); **Tradition** (white sturgeon, 50g, \$200); **Lingotto** (\$100; calvisius.com): The Lingotto is pressed caviar that you cut into thin slices like truffles. **Maida small artichokes** (\$18; gustiamo.com): Eat with your negronis.

PARTY TRICKS

Embrace the Costume Change

Cue the dressing-room montage!



are beginning—the cocktails are chilling, the hors d'oeuvres heating, the doorbell ringing nonstop—you want clothes that are cool but comfortable enough for you to move around in. Dark jeans and a nice sweater work fine. Later on, when the music gets louder and all your guests have arrived, their coats deposited, their hands full with a second or a third drink, it's your chance to slip away and turn it up a notch. Try out that shirt with the loud print. Put on a velvet blazer. Do you have a weird hat? Wear it. No one can rag on you too hard—they're at your place, drinking your liquor.

Inevitably, a few people will linger longer

than you'd like. (It's a blameless crime—who doesn't want to prolong a good time?) If they are blind to your yawning, it's time for the coup de grâce. What I like to call the "get outfit." This will vary depending on what's at your disposal. Slippers or a robe should do the trick, but if you have a pair, I suggest changing into matching pajamas. Any stragglers will stammeringly compare you to Cary Grant as they trip over themselves getting the hell out of your house. —J. R.

It's easy to forget when you're being pulled in a hundred directions by guests while pouring drinks and fanning the smoke detector, but a host has a number of assets at hand. He controls the temperature, the playlist, the stiffness of a drink. One ace a lot of guys overlook? The fact that the whole damn closet is full of clothes at your disposal.

I am not suggesting you pull a Joey and wear it all at once. I am simply saying there's a time and place for a judicious costume change. When things

THE LOO

Design the JOHN

JUST ONE MORE WAY TO IMPRESS YOUR GUESTS

• • •

➔ **You cleaned.** Stocked up on toilet paper. Great. Now you have a clear palate for an overlooked decor opportunity: the bathroom counter. Put out Tylenol, mints, and other things your guests may need, but stow them in rad apothecary bottles or any cool containers you can get your hands on. Get a sculptural diffuser like those we've gathered here. Plus fancy soap. Then display something off-kilter so people say, "You've got to see that crazy vase in the bathroom." The idea is to turn a visit to the loo into another cool, unexpected moment in the night. —K. S.

FROM TOP LEFT:
RH Laval tissue cover (\$165).
RH pharmacy glass bottle (\$29). **Ikea SAMMANHANG glass box** (\$5). **Alessi leaf fragrance diffuser Grrr** (\$99).
Ikea FÖREMÅL vase, mushroom (\$13). **Ikea FÖREMÅL box** (\$5). **Armani/Casa Doro tea towel** (\$40). **Marianella orange-and-teakwood soap** (\$16).
Kartell soap dish (\$35). **Best Made solid-brass cap box** (\$28). **Jayson Home Anchor box** (\$28).
Alessi lava-stone fragrance diffuser Shhh (\$139). **Alder & Co. brass match scratcher** (\$130).
Aesop brass oil burner (\$220).

WANT A DANCE PARTY? COMMIT.

You're going to need more than Spotify

A dance party is a cross between a sun shower and a seven-layer pousse-café. This phenomenon requires specific conditions and a little legerdemain, but it elicits pure joy. Start with a smaller, darker space. No one genuinely abhors dancing; people just hate looking/feeling stupid. Get a disco ball: It's as much a telltale sign of what's to come as a striped pole outside a barber shop. Nix the mini Bluetooth speaker and blast it. Plants (not the leafy kind): Cue up those pals with enough chutzpah and MJ literacy to moonwalk on demand and kick things off. Plants (the leafy kind): Whether via edibles, smokables, or vape, sativa is the surefire cut-a-rug shortcut. Secret sauce: For an ironclad dance party, invest a few hundred bucks in a silent-disco rental. Perks include multiple channels (half your tribe hip-hops while the other trips on EDM) and noise control (remove the headset and you can chat in a quiet apartment). —J. T.





HOST-HELPING INTERNET- CONNECTED THINGS

Many are not worth it. These are the ones we use and love.

Philips Hue Smart Lightbulbs, \$50

● Sorry, black leather couch, the bachelor-pad aesthetic is out. One element worth saving? Magically dimming lights. Imagine sitting down to dinner and channeling candlelit ambience with a swipe of your phone screen. All you need is a couple of smart bulbs like the Philips Hue, which work in any standard light fixture and quickly sync to an app on your phone. With them, you can manually adjust the brightness and warmth of a room, set timers, and program gradual adjustments. You know how every restaurant suddenly shifts to “sexy” lighting at 7:00 P.M.? Your party will be like that, but a whole lot smoother. —J. R.

ChefSteps Joule Sous Vide, \$199

● There's the hard way to impress your guests with perfectly tender pork loins and salmon that's as soft as butter. You could be a real cook. For everyone else, there is the sous vide machine, something that cooks foods sealed in bags and immersed in water at precise temperatures while you play host like you're supposed to. Proteins usually require some browning in a pan, but no more than a few minutes. I like the Joule because it works from your phone and it has clear, step-by-step recipes to make a foolproof cooking method even more foolproof. —K. S.

June Oven, \$599

● You don't think you need a smart toaster oven. But then you live with one for a while and realize that you may never go back. The June's big feature is its internal camera, which recognizes most things you pop inside and recommends the best ways to cook them. It's smart enough to produce a decent steak. Seriously. But when it comes to entertaining, you can actually watch your food being cooked on your phone to make sure your hors d'oeuvres aren't burning while you're mingling. It's also a super-nerdy icebreaker. —K. S.

How to Handle Party Disasters Like a Pro

Among those who value genuine warmth and wit over shallow social-media posturing, writer and bon vivant Sadie Stein has developed a reputation as a dinner-party savant. Her apartment on Manhattan's Upper West Side is the site of gatherings both impromptu and intentional, all of them marked by a graciousness that feels effortless. But what happens when hosting goes haywire? Stein shared some advice on the art of managing dinner-party train wrecks. —Adrienne Westenfeld

What if uninvited guests show up?

That one you just roll with. You just hope there's enough wine.

What if people are arguing over politics?

I think a little arguing is healthy. The goal at any party should be to put people at ease, so I think there's a real difference between fun, spirited debate and something that makes people uncomfortable. But if it gets really heated, bring out more booze.

What if the electricity goes out?

Ideally, you'll have most of the food cooked anyway, so I think a power outage would be kind of fun. That would be a bonding thing. That little disaster would be the best thing that could happen to a party.

What if the AC goes out?

I give people ice cubes to put against the back of their necks. Plus, the good thing is that when they're really hot, no one gets that drunk because they're sweating everything out.

What if people get too drunk?

Sometimes if I'm over it, I'll just go to bed. Ideally, this is when you have a partner who can take over, or at least a trusted friend. I think it's a compliment to everybody when you feel like you can go to bed, so if people are drinking too much, I often take French leave. I go to my room, and I don't make a big thing about it. If people are drunk, so much the better.

What if two of your guests have an ugly romantic history, or if exes run into each other?

That's kind of on them. People are welcome to ask if someone else is going to be there. You can warn them if you want, but in my experience, people are pretty civil. Those who aren't enjoy the drama, and those who are are always the ones who will have asked you if



the other person will be there.

What if you've ruined the meal?

It depends how bad the disaster is. If it looks bad but tastes good, I'll serve it. If it tastes disgusting, order out. That's a pretty good rule of thumb, I think. People can forgive textural problems or things falling apart if it tastes fine. Plus, you can do a lot with sprigs of watercress. With most cakes, however badly they get messed up, you can hide it with some powdered sugar on top.

What if you have no-shows?

What you have to do is swiftly and subtly, in the manner of restaurants, whip away the extra place settings.

What if the party just won't get started?

There are a few tricks that really help things go. Getting a drink

into someone's hand as soon as they walk through the door, even if it's just a glass of water. If someone's shy, deputize them to refill people's drinks. Have a trusted friend come on the early side so that there's no awkward hanging around at the beginning.

What are your best hosting tips?

My big tips are don't get hammered yourself. Plan as much as you can in advance, and then it's out of your hands. When I think about the really bad parties I've been to at other people's houses, what sticks with me is not introducing people. Not providing enough drinks and not offering them soon enough. Making people wait until midnight to eat. I want people to feel like they're in good hands from the minute they walk in.

8 NEW BOTTLES TO GIFT THE HOST

Wine's cool, but spirits keep on giving—maybe even until the next party

CRAFTY

Few Spirits American Whiskey \$50, 46.5% ABV

● A new grain-to-glass offering from a newish Illinois distillery—a wonderful blend of bourbon, rye, and malt whiskey that's been smoked.

Breaking & Entering American Whiskey \$40, 43% ABV

● This is a mix of malt whiskey from the brilliant, California-based St. George Spirits, plus rye and bourbon from Kentucky and Tennessee. Jammy, spicy, all-American goodness.

Stranahan's Sherry Cask Single Malt Whiskey \$80, 47% ABV

● A four-year-old whiskey finished in forty-year-old Oloroso sherry casks. Lively yet refined. A prime example of what a U.S. single malt can be.

CLASSIC

Knob Creek Cask Strength Rye Whiskey \$80, 59.8% ABV

● A big, bold, limited-release rye that's easy to drink despite the big proof.

The Macallan Edition No. 4 \$100, 48.4% ABV

● Think a classic Macallan 12, but more special. Like drinking a fond memory of your favorite Macallan.

CURVEBALLS

Fords Gin Officers' Reserve \$35, 54.5% ABV

● Overproof gin that's aged in Amontillado sherry casks. It will give your G+T or gimlet a big hit of boldness.

Mr. Black Coffee Liqueur \$40, 25% ABV

● This is the coffee liqueur for coffee geeks. It will turn you on to espresso martinis.

Hennessy Master Blender's Selection No. 3 \$110, 43% ABV

● Like the praline section of a French bakery, bottled. A cognac with a sweet tooth. —K. S.

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WHEAT
SO WHAT?
WORK

AFTER *THE OFFICE*, *THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN*, AND *FOXCATCHER*, IS **STEVE CARELL** ONLY NOW SHOWING US WHAT HE'S REALLY CAPABLE OF? THE NICEST GUY IN SHOWBIZ TALKS ABOUT HIS THREE NEW OSCAR-BUZZWORTHY MOVIES—PLUS WHY *THE OFFICE* WOULDN'T FLY IN THE #TIMESUP ERA. BY **BRUCE HANDY** PHOTOGRAPHS BY **MARC HOM**



Jacket and shirt by
Belvest; glasses,
Carell's own.



will tell you up front (at the risk of making you turn the page, but honesty and humility are in part the subject matter here): This may be the least sexy movie-star profile you will ever read. Because you know that thing where you meet a movie star and right off you bond over taking your high-school-aged kids on college tours? No, I don't know that thing, either. But it's what happened when I met Steve Carell this past summer. He had spent much of the year with his seventeen-year-old daughter, visiting prospective schools around the country. I recently went through that process with my own two children. So, as is often the case with middle-aged parents in coastal enclaves, we began lamenting the professionalization of the admissions process, the way so many families now hire test-prep tutors and essay coaches and interview consultants, and the awful stress that puts on kids who, being teenagers, already have

enough to worry about without having to deal with the drudgery and anxiety of applying to twenty colleges. (No joke: That's practically a norm in the 2010s.)

"It's a science now," Carell, who is fifty-six, marveled. "It's very different than when I went to high school. I had a list of, like, four colleges, and I applied and I went to one. I didn't put that much thought into it." Me neither, with my three-school lottery back in the mid-1970s. We agreed it was a parent's job to keep the kids from coming unglued or turning into monstrous, Ivy-seeking missiles, to reassure them that they'll get in *somewhere* and that, more likely than not, they'll have a great time at that somewhere—and if not, they can always transfer.

Sound parental counsel. As I said, this may be the least sexy movie-star profile you will ever read.

To some degree, that is because Carell himself may be the nicest guy in Hollywood, as attested to by two decades' worth of costars, colleagues, and interlocutors. He has certainly played some of the nicest characters in recent movie history, ranging from the open-hearted title character of *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, to the more experienced but still lovelorn single men of a certain age in *Dan in Real Life* and *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, to the grief-stricken fathers in last year's *Last Flag Flying* and the just-released *Beautiful Boy*. Even his more "problematic" characters—say, Michael Scott, the doltish boss he portrayed for seven seasons on *The Office*, or emblematic male chauvinist pig Bobby Riggs in last year's *Battle of the Sexes*—offer glimpses of vulnerability that make them likable in a weird-but-he's-my-cousin way. Add to this roster Gru, the supervillain he's voiced in the animated *Despicable Me* movies—a decent chap and an attentive dad. The outlier in this filmography would be John du Pont, the jealous, murderous wrestling patron in 2014's *Foxcatcher*, Carell's first outright drama. The role, for which he wore a startling prosthetic beak, changed many people's perceptions of what Carell could do and earned him



Shirt and trousers by **Gucci**; vintage sweater vest and tie from **Early Halloween, Vintage Clothing, N. Y. C.**; watch by **Rolex**.

a well-deserved best-actor Oscar nomination. But even du Pont, while grotesque, possessed a recognizable, even tragic humanity; in Carell's interpretation, you sensed sickness more than evil.

Carell was just getting back to work when we met. He had spent most of 2017 shooting three movies more or less back to back to back, wrapping the last one right before Christmas. He then took off most of 2018—he "just wanted to hang around" with his family—before preparing to dive into this fall's festival and awards circuit, during which all three of those films, very different from one another but equally ambitious and all based on true stories, will possibly be in contention for various statuettes. In rapid succession you will have the oppor-



tunity to see Carell as a father struggling to understand and help his drug-addicted son in *Beautiful Boy*; as a brain-damaged trauma victim who copes with his emotional wounds by recreating World War II battles with Barbie-like dolls in Robert Zemeckis's *Welcome to Marwen* (December 21); and as former secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld in Adam McKay's Dick Cheney biopic, *VICE* (December 10).

Rumsfeld may seem an unlikely role for Carell, but one thing the two men seem to share is an indifference to the spotlight—an odd trait in actors and politicians alike. Carell might be the least needy performer I've ever met. With glasses and a thick but neat beard, and dressed in a navy-blue crewneck sweater over a crisp white

shirt, he looked like one of the admissions directors he could have encountered on a college tour; a thoughtful, soft-spoken demeanor added to this impression. "I don't think I'm a very scintillating conversationalist," he told me, which is untrue but telling.

Comedians are notoriously—or perhaps stereotypically—driven by childhood scar tissue. But Carell is famous among his peers for keeping that scar tissue, if there is any, deeply hidden. As Jon Stewart, his friend and former boss, told *The New Yorker* several years ago, "Maybe Steve's lack of wound is his wound." Or maybe, decades' worth of biopics of artists and musicians notwithstanding, being well-adjusted is an asset rather than a hindrance to creativity. (See: Meryl Streep, Paul McCartney.)

At Carell's suggestion, we met at the Smoke House, a red-banquette restaurant in Burbank that has sat across the street from the Warner Bros. lot for more than seven decades, a sign outside still promising "Fine Food at a Fair Price." The menu is full of classics such as shrimp Louie and a French-dip sandwich (there's a prime-rib special on Mondays), and the waiting area is adorned with pictures of now-dead patrons, including Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, Steve McQueen, Lee Marvin, and Danny Kaye. Aside from Carell, this noontime's clientele was decidedly less starry—a pleasant middle-class lunch crowd, mostly locals, a few tourists. The Smoke House is also, coincidentally, where my two sets of grandparents met for the first time, in 1951, following my parents' engagement. I mentioned this to Carell as we settled into a booth. "I guarantee you, it hasn't changed at all," he said. He's probably right. The restaurant had a slightly dusty, yeasty, beefy aroma reminiscent of 1951, or so I'd imagine. "We come here from time to time," Carell said. "I kind of like that it hasn't moved an inch."

"We" is Carell; his wife, Nancy Carell; their daughter; and their fourteen-year-old son. The restaurant is only a short drive from the family's home in Toluca Lake, one of the quieter neighborhoods in Los Angeles, a tony but unflashy corner of the San Fernando Valley. "There's not a lot going on," Carell said, almost apologetically. "You can go for bike rides with your kids and stuff, so it feels pretty suburban given that we're in a city." He added that he and Nancy—who, like him, grew up outside of Boston—naturally gravitated to the Valley when they first moved to L.A., in 1996, and rented a house in Sherman Oaks. "It just felt very neighborhoody, and there wasn't a lot of pretense, so it was nice."

Nice place. Nice guy. Fine food. Speaking of which, if Jimmy Stewart hangs on the wall at the Smoke House, I missed him, but he might serve as an old-Hollywood antecedent for Carell: a star who could do both light comedy and drama, and who also projected regular-Joe decency. Isn't *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* just a black-and-white precursor, with a filibuster, to *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*? And if you are a contemporary studio executive who is reading this and thinking of remaking *Harvey* or *It's a Wonderful Life* or *Vertigo*—well, don't. If you remain dead set on the idea, though, don't just assume you're going to cast Tom Hanks. Am I crazy to think a *Rear Window* with Carell opposite Amy Adams or Tiffany Haddish might even be kind of good?

But let's talk about actual Carell movies. *Beautiful Boy* is adapted from parallel memoirs by father and son David and Nic Sheff—the former a magazine journalist (*Rolling Stone*, *Playboy*), the latter a recovering addict turned writer. I admire the film immensely for offering no easy solutions to addiction, and for being brave enough to give the fleeting pleasures of drug abuse their due; it's a tough watch at times but couldn't be more germane, with the opioid crisis gutting communities across America. Costarring as Nic, who was hooked on methamphetamines, is Timothée Chalamet, the floppy-haired twenty-two-year-old who broke through last year as a kind of thinking teenager's heartthrob, playing Saoirse Ronan's poseur boyfriend in *Lady Bird* and the lead in the coming-of-age love story *Call Me by Your Name*, opposite older man Armie Hammer. Chalamet and Carell developed something of a father-son dynamic both off screen and on, as the director, Felix Van Groeningen, had calculated they might. "That Steve is a very devoted family man was

**"I DIDN'T ASPIRE
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Jacket and polo shirt by Ermenegildo Zegna; watch by Tom Ford.

very important” in casting him, said Van Groeningen, a Belgian making his first American picture. “Who people are in real life and who the character is obviously don’t have to match, but for this role I wanted the actor who was going to play it to keep it very close, for it to come from a very honest place.” One example: To depict Nic Sheff in the deepest, most strung-out throes of addiction, Chalamet, slender to begin with, went on a controlled diet after the cast had finished a long rehearsal process. According to the actress Maura Tierney—who plays David Sheff’s second wife and Nic’s stepmother—when Chalamet first showed up on set several weeks later, “I remember Steve going, ‘Oh my God, he’s losing weight!’ in a very dadlike way. Their relationship was really like that.” Carell told me that his unfeigned dismay at Chalamet’s appearance that day—“He just looked terrible with the added makeup, like really shockingly bad”—kickstarted one of the film’s most wrenching scenes.

Carell also drew on childhood memories of his own father: “My dad, who is about to turn ninety-three, is a real rock. A real stoic. He didn’t cry a lot, but I could tell when something was tearing him up inside. He internalized it for the sake of the family. And that to me was more heartbreaking than someone who would just, you know, be really outward with his emotions. It’s kind of how I interpreted the David character: He’s trying to keep it together.” Wrestling with the limits of David’s love for his son, its impotence in the face of Nic’s addiction—the film has a distinctly un-Hollywood message, that love sometimes *isn’t* all you need—Carell does some of the best, most controlled acting of his career, often without words. You can see the resignation in his body as he takes down a picture of Nic from a wall in his study; and the tentativeness, in the final scene, with which he puts an arm around Chalamet’s shoulder—a broken bond beginning to mend. If you are like me, at that moment you may get teary, and you may even forgive the movie for scoring an earlier scene with “Sunrise, Sunset,” that schmaltzy *Fiddler on the Roof* bar and bat mitzvah perennial. (“Is this the little girl I carried...”)

W
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o much talk of fathers and children made me curious: Are Carell’s kids Carell fans? Do they watch his movies and binge seasons of *The Office*? Or does he try to keep them away from all that? “They keep *themselves* away,” he said, laughing. “I’m just a dad to them. They obviously know what I do, but we don’t put a lot of value on that. From time to time, they’ll check out my stuff, and they hear about it at school a little bit. But it’s just my job.” (I suppose I might have avoided *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*, too, if it had starred my dad.)

The stoic father Carell mentioned was a businessman and an electrical engineer; his mother was a psychiatric nurse. He grew up in Acton, Massachusetts, as the youngest of four brothers. He did some acting in high school and in college, at Denison, from which he graduated in 1984 with a double major in history and theater. But he never really thought of himself as a performer, or of acting as a possible career, until he was applying to law school like any other liberal-arts major unsure what to do with himself. Indeed, he evinced so little enthusiasm for *attending* law school—he got stuck on the question, on one of the applications, “Why do you want to be an attorney?”—that his parents suggested he “name something you’ve always enjoyed.” The answer, Carell realized, was acting. He eventually moved to Chicago, figuring it would be more hospitable for a raw young performer than cutthroat New York or Los Angeles. He was right, or at least Chicago was right for him, and he began getting small parts in shows and commercials. (On YouTube, you can catch him in a 1989 ad

for Brown's Chicken: "While we've always cooked our chicken in cholesterol-free cottonseed oil, we now have cholesterol-free batter, too!") In 1987, he joined the legendary improv institution Second City, at which he overlapped with Stephen Colbert (his understudy for a time), Tina Fey, and Adam McKay. He also met his future wife, then Nancy Walls, at Second City; she was a student in an improv class he taught who would outpace him early in their respective careers when she landed a slot as a cast member on *Saturday Night Live* in the 1995–96 season. (Today, Nancy works as a producer; she and Carell coproduce *Angie Tribeca*, a TBS comedy series starring his former *Office* castmate Rashida Jones.) Carell got his own break not long after Nancy's when he was cast, along with Colbert, on Dana Carvey's short-lived (but beloved by comedy geeks) prime-time ABC sketch show. In 1999, on Colbert's recommendation, he was hired on Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show*, where he served for six years as a goofily enthusiastic correspondent.

He won attention from critics and audiences for supporting roles in *Bruce Almighty* (2003) and *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy* (2004). On the set of the latter, Carell met Judd Apatow, a producer on the film, who invited him to get in touch if he had any good movie ideas. Carell thought he did. "So I went into Judd's office and I pitched him an idea. We talked for an hour and a half and, you know, he thought it was fine." *Fine*, Carell's tone suggests, as in only okay. "And just as I was getting up, I said, 'Oh, and there's this other secondary idea about a guy who's never had sex.' And Judd sparked to that immediately and said, 'I can sell that to Universal tomorrow.' And literally the next week he mentioned it in passing to an executive at Universal and they bought it on the spot."

With Carell and Apatow cowriting the script and Apatow directing—it was his first feature—*The 40-Year-Old Virgin* became a huge hit, buoyed by Carell's earnest, sweet-natured performance and his easy chemistry with costar Catherine Keener, which grounded the wilder jokes and relocated the unlikely premise somewhere near believability. Yet Universal, perhaps suffering from buyer's remorse, had shut down the production after its first week of shooting because the studio's executives were concerned that, as Carell put it, "the dailies of my character just looked too creepy. They said I looked like a serial killer."

He and Apatow assured the studio they just hadn't gotten to the scenes with heart. The thing would work—*promise!* But others had doubts, too. "I had a high school reunion just before the movie came out," Carell said. "I hadn't seen these people in several years. And they'd start talking about what they'd been involved in, and I would mention that I just did this movie called *40-Year-Old Virgin*, and as I reflect back, I realize how dumb it must have sounded to all of these people. It sounded like it might be the worst movie ever, just based on the title. I could feel my classmates feeling sorry for me. I could see the pity in their eyes."

Starring on an American remake of *The Office*, Ricky Gervais's mean-spirited, cult-favorite British TV series, was another career move that didn't necessarily look great on paper. Fans of the original rolled their eyes, and the first season debuted on NBC in March 2005 to mixed reviews and indifferent ratings. It was the prerelease buzz for *The 40-Year-Old Virgin* that helped persuade the network to renew the show for a second season. With Carell now something of a household name and the series finding its creative sea legs, *The Office* would double its ratings in season two and win the Emmy for outstanding comedy series, while its star would receive the first of six nominations—inexplicably, he never won—for lead actor in a comedy series.

In between seasons, Carell shot a number of broad movie comedies, including *Evan Almighty* (2007), *Get Smart* (2008), and *Date Night* (2010), which all did okay at the box office but weren't nearly as interesting as what he was doing on TV. He wasn't slumming, but he wasn't moving the needle on his career, either. To hear him tell it, however, that career was something of a left turn in the first place. Unlike a lot of comedians and comic actors, Carell insists he didn't grow up desperate to get laughs. He wasn't even a particular fan of the genre as a kid, though he did love listening to comedy albums. "Especially George Carlin and Steve Martin—over and over I'd listen to those routines. I think what I didn't realize at the time was that I was studying. I was trying to understand what made them funny, why I enjoyed it so much, what they were doing with the language, what they were doing with the misdirection. Steve Martin in particular, his brand of comedy was so different and so absurdist that I really took to that immediately. But I never thought of myself as particularly funny.

"When I moved to Chicago, I didn't aspire to be a comedic actor," he continued. "I just wanted to work, and those were just the jobs I tended to get more often, the comic parts. I kind of ended up doing it out of necessity."

I asked why he thought he got those roles. "I don't know." He paused, mulling it over. "I clearly did better at that than the straight stuff. I think there are generally more actors who audition for straight roles, so just by the odds, I think you have better odds going for a comedic role because some people are afraid to try it." He paused again. "I don't know. In Chicago, I just kind of fell into that community. I wanted to get experience. I wasn't too concerned about how I was going to be labeled. I was just interested in working."

I wondered whether there was something binary in his approaches to broad comedy and drama—if he was drawing on different sides of his brain, as it were—or whether there was more of a continuum in his approach, no matter the material. "That's an interesting question," he replied hesitantly, as if he hadn't considered it before (or kindly wanted me to believe he hadn't). "I think it's sort of the same. Whether a character's super-broad or incredibly internalized, the most important thing to me is that some sort of honesty registers, that you can tell that these are human beings." He put on a mock-serious voice: "That is my goal: to depict someone that falls within the realm of human being." He laughed, then turned genuine-serious again. "You know, you do your research. You think about backstory. Even the silliest characters or the darkest characters or even the most insidious characters, there's lots of different components to them that you don't necessarily have to say out loud or have register in a movie,

Jacket, shirt, and trousers by Louis Vuitton; vintage tie from Early Halloween, Vintage Clothing, N. Y. C.



but they should be present somewhere. I think about Peter Sellers and how he was able to do those incredibly broad characters, but at the same time you always knew that it was a person. Clouseau”—Sellers’s bumbling inspector from the *Pink Panther* movies—“was a real person. He was absurd, he was silly, but he was going through something. To me, that character was all about a man retaining his dignity, and that felt very honest and truthful to me. Hence all the stuff he did was that much funnier because you felt like you were watching an actual human being going through human emotions.”

He brought up Michael Scott and how he had worked to give the character a well-meaning if oblivious side to anchor the comedy of boorishness. “I know people like that who really, through no fault of their own, can be off-putting, but at the same time I know them to be good people. That’s what we were going for with Michael. I just thought, *He’s a pretty complicated guy—a lot of different facets to him.*” Similarly, he said, he had worked hard to locate

a “sad story” somewhere in John du Pont’s psychological makeup.

Well, then: What was the backstory for Brick Tamland, the earnest, deranged, possibly brain-damaged weatherman Carell played in the two *Anchorman* movies? He laughed. “The whole interview should be about what’s Brick’s story. Brick might be the anomaly. I think the less that’s revealed about Brick Tamland, the better. Brick can get away with doing anything because there’s no frame of reference to his life in any way. So he can appear at his own funeral, or he can just pull out a gun from the future or be holding a hand grenade for no good reason. Characters like that are really fun because they’re just such wild cards. On *Anchorman*, the first one, I had almost no lines. I was obviously a member of the news team, but Adam McKay”—the director of both—“would tell me to just make a comment at the end of the scene. And I’d say whatever came to mind. And generally it wasn’t related at all to what was going on. It was some sort of flight of fancy in this guy’s head.” But Carell

blurted those lines with such conviction that you believe Brick when he declares, “I ate a big red candle” or, in an outtake appended to the credits, “I pooped a hammer.” It’s funny because it *seems* true.

Brick aside, my own favorite Carell performance is Bobby Riggs in *Battle of the Sexes*, a film that deserved to be more widely seen. (Carell allowed that he agrees.) If Riggs’s greatest contribution to history was serving as a foil to Billie Jean King, his second greatest was providing a vehicle for the full breadth of Carell’s talent. He inhabited Riggs’s clownish but cunning public persona with a comic brio equal to the original’s, while shading his offstage moments with doubt, melancholy, and a more self-aware kind of cunning—a buffoon in full, and an unexpectedly moving one at that.

Welcome to Marwen is another film taking full advantage of Carell’s binary/not-binary skills. Based on the critically praised 2010 documentary *Marwencol*, the new movie tells the true-ish story (Hollywood true, let’s say) of Mark Hogancamp, an artist who lives in upstate New York and who once specialized in World War II illustrations. In 2000, however, he became the victim of a vicious hate crime when he was badly beaten up in a bar fight and left for dead in the parking lot by five men who singled him out because they had heard he was a cross-dresser. He survived after nine days in a coma but lost most of his memories along with his ability to draw. Needing a new creative outlet, Hogancamp created a 1:6 scale replica of a World War II-era Belgian town in his backyard that he populated with dolls representing women he knew, as well as an alter ego, Captain Hoagie; he added Nazi dolls to represent his attackers and arranged the whole cast in tableaux for photographs—not only a new medium but also a kind of ad hoc psychotherapy, an adult version of a kid reenacting trauma with dolls in a child psychiatrist’s office. Hogancamp’s artful pictures of what he called Marwencol eventually found their way to galleries. (I’d explain the discrepancy between Marwencol and Marwen, but that would be something of a spoiler.)

Welcome to Marwen bounces between a straightforward depiction of Hogancamp’s somewhat precarious day-to-day existence and fantasy sequences reflecting his interior life, in which the dolls (played by Carell and fellow live-action castmates, including Leslie Mann and Janelle Monáe) are animated through the motion-capture technology Zemeckis helped pioneer in films like *The Polar Express* and *Beowulf*. The fantasy sequences have a deliberately campy, comic edge, and the tonal shift is what led the director to cast Carell. “I needed someone who was a great actor, someone who could evoke emotion and pathos playing a damaged, broken character suffering from PTSD,” Zemeckis told me. But he also required a performer who could affect “all this World War II-

movie swagger” for the Barbies-at-war scenes. “I needed an actor who could do both,” he said, “and Steve fit the bill perfectly.”

I saw an unfinished version of the movie, and I think it will appeal in particular to fans of Zemeckis’s *Forrest Gump*—a very different movie, but one that’s tonally and thematically similar to *Welcome to Marwen*. As in *Beautiful Boy*, Carell does some subtle but affecting physical work. There are moments when you can see the accumulated emotional pain of Hogancamp’s trauma weighing down on Carell’s shoulders as he walks away from the camera, and the legacy of physical therapy in each deliberate step. “That’s the stuff of a great actor,” Zemeckis said. “He transforms his entire physicality.” Yet there’s nothing showy about Carell’s performance, in a role that other stars who started out in silly comedies might have gone “full *Patch Adams*” with, to misquote *Tropic Thunder*.

VICE follows Dick Cheney’s career over several decades. It will be Carell’s fourth movie with McKay, after the two *Anchorman* films and *The Big Short*. (I wish the filmmakers had stuck with the snarky working title, *Back Seat*—as in driver.) The cast includes Christian Bale as the former vice-president, Amy Adams as Lynne Cheney, Sam Rockwell as George W. Bush, and Tyler Perry as Colin Powell. Carell showed me a picture on his phone of himself in makeup as Rumsfeld, and the transformation was astonishing: If he didn’t look exactly like the former secretary of defense, he looked like Rumsfeld in an odd, slightly unrepresentative photograph, or maybe Rummy on a day when the air conditioners have broken at Madame Tussauds.

This role might be the greatest challenge yet to Carell’s ability to plumb character and find a little human something or other deep inside that actually bleeds—but as Rumsfeld himself once said, you go to war with the army you have. “I went into it thinking, *Here’s a man, a very smart man, who is clearly flawed, but he also believed what he was doing*,” Carell told me. He read as much as he could about Rumsfeld—biographies as well as Rumsfeld’s own books. (He’s written two memoirs and a book of “leadership lessons.”) “People have an idea about Rumsfeld, but it’s a very narrow idea. I felt like it was my job to expand that and paint a broader picture of who he was, what he feared, what was upsetting to him. It’s easy to just play a caricature or watch some film clip and then say, ‘I’ll just do that.’ It’s a little cavalier to say that I understand what makes Donald Rumsfeld tick, or John du Pont. But I’ve made an attempt. You do the best you can with the material you have, with the sources you have, and with your imagination.”

What would be the logical end point of that challenge? Could he, would he, play... Donald Trump? Could he find the humanity beneath the laughable hair, the revolting racism and sexism, and the predatory personality disorder? (That is my characterization; Carell doesn’t broadcast his political views, though he did make a campaign appearance for Hillary Clinton in 2016.) He thought it over for a moment. “You hope you can find the humanity in anybody that you play,” he finally said. “If I couldn’t, then I wouldn’t play that part. If you go into a part with complete disdain and find no nugget of humanity in a person—I just wouldn’t do it.” (I’ll note that Michael Scott had a copy of Trump’s book *Think Like a Billionaire: Everything You Need to Know About Success, Real Estate, and Life* on his bookshelf for several seasons of *The Office*.)

I pointed out it had been a while since Carell had made an out-and-out, big-laugh comedy. “I think it’s been about six years,” he said, counting back to early 2013, when he shot *Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues* (and not including a couple *Despicable Me* movies). This wasn’t a deliberate career choice, just that “the stuff that was interesting to me tended to be more dramatic.” He’d like to do a broad comedy again, he said, and was developing (continued on page 116)

CARELL WITH TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET IN *BEAUTIFUL BOY*.





On Carell:
Cardigan sweater
by Prada; shirt and
trousers by Mr P.
On Carell's
manager,
Steve Sauer:
Coat by Belvest;
suit, shirt, tie,
cuff links, and
glasses, his own.

DEEMED

THE AGE

As 2018 draws to a close, **TyRANNY IS ReSU**
the verge of a crack-up, and a **Hyperpolarized**
FRANCIS FUKUYAMA, the onetime neocon thinker who
just a temporary glitch, or the **DAWN OF A FR**

DRAMA

OF

TRAGEDY

URGENT around the globe, the postwar order is on
America is careening toward a constitutional crisis.
famously declared "The End of History," now asks, Is this
ALIGHTENING NEW ERA? By **WESLEY YANG**

A Momentous Juncture

Francis Fukuyama went to bed early on the night of November 8, 2016. The sixty-six-year-old social theorist had accepted a conditional assignment to write about the U. S. presidential election for the *Financial Times* if and only if the victor in that contest was the man widely assumed to be on his way to a historic defeat. “I didn’t think I would have to write the piece,” he told me. The following morning, he was forced to conclude that liberal democracy, whose triumph as “the final form of human government” he had risen to fame declaring three decades ago, was threatened from within as it had not been in his lifetime. “The risk of sliding into a world of competitive and equally angry nationalisms is huge,” he wrote on November 9, “and if this happens it would mark as momentous a juncture as the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.”

That year signaled not just a new stage of world history but also the emergence of Fukuyama, then thirty-seven, as its oracle. A young man of enormous intellectual energy, ambition, and brio, he published an article titled “The End of History?” in an obscure neo-conservative policy journal. Announcing “the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism,” the article set the intellectual world alight and led to profiles in *Time* and *The New York Times Magazine*.

A protégé of the philosophy professor Allan Bloom at Cornell, Fukuyama had distinguished himself as a foreign-policy advisor to George H. W. Bush by staking out an aggressive position with respect to the breakup of the Warsaw Pact and the reunification of Germany, among other inflection points on the way to the sudden collapse of the communist world. Fukuyama was not merely reacting to events but testing an explanatory framework, drawn from the nineteenth-century German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel (the same framework used by Karl Marx to explain the inevitability of worldwide communist revolution).

The claim was never that human conflict was a thing of the past but rather that history was a coherent and directional process. By “end,” Fukuyama referred to a “goal” of history rather than a terminus, meaning that the “basic principles of the liberal democratic state could not be improved upon” by the communist utopia, or by any other, because liberal democratic principles were the only ones capable of satisfying the craving, inherent in every individual, for recognition of one’s moral equality. Fukuyama called this craving *thymos*, borrowing a term from Socrates.

The essay went on to herald the “triumph of the West” and “the end point of mankind’s

ideological evolution.” Such ringing, peremptory formulations were unsurpassable evocations of the euphoria of that historic moment, permanently inscribing Fukuyama into the annals of intellectual history—whether as sage or fool, or something in between, only posterity would tell.

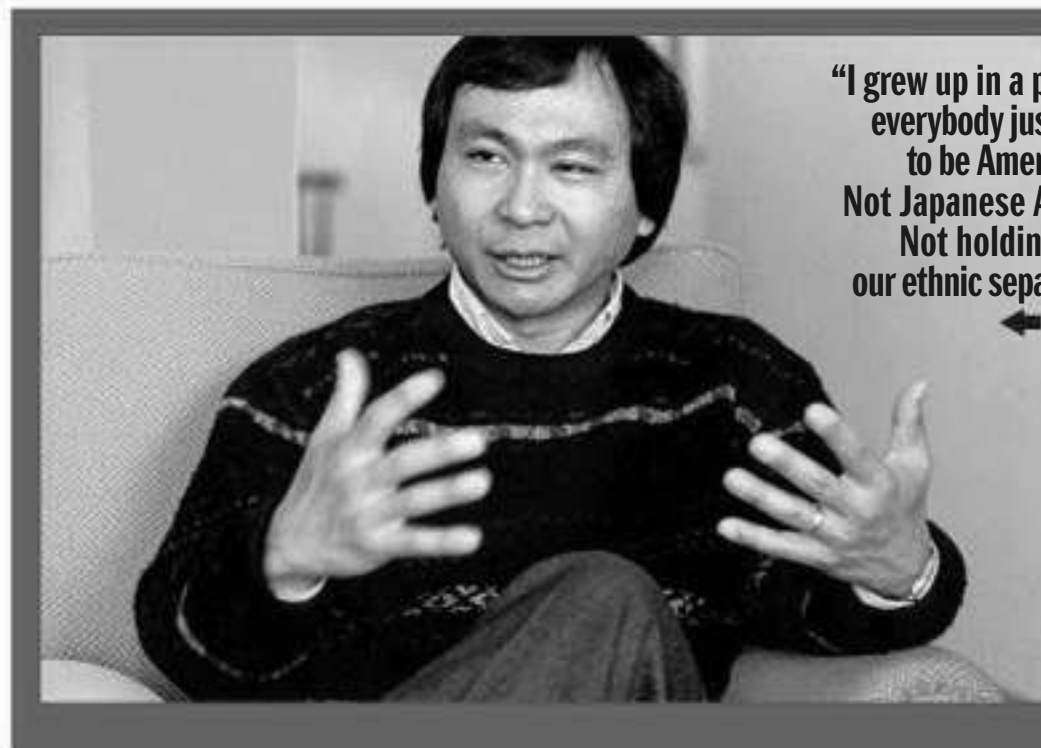
A minor aspect of every geopolitical crisis since then has been the ritualized use of Fukuyama’s name as a piñata in the prestige media, asserting some variant of “The End of the End of History.” But the underlying trend of the succeeding years was a continuous expansion of democracy. Between 1975 and 2005, the number of electoral democracies increased from around 35 to 110 and overall gross domestic product grew by a factor of four.

In the mid-2000s, however, that trend began to reverse itself and the world went into what Fukuyama calls a “democratic recession.” China and Russia have grown more authoritarian and assertive. Hungary, Turkey, Thailand, and Poland have regressed toward increasingly illiberal democracy. The Arab Spring descended into civil war throughout the Middle East. Anti-immigrant and anti-European Union parties gained strength in Germany, Austria, France, the Netherlands, even Sweden. And in 2016, Britain voted to leave the EU, and Donald Trump, running on an explicitly nativist platform, was elected president.

before the publication of his latest book, *Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment*. It is an airy, open space sparsely furnished with intricately carved woodworks of Fukuyama’s own hand. Carmel-by-the-Sea is a place apart from the country at large, a bubble of tranquility blessed with a microclimate several degrees cooler than its surrounding environs, overlooking perhaps the loveliest stretch of coastline anywhere in California. None of the houses in the one-square-mile town has a street number, to protect the privacy of its many well-known residents.

Fukuyama speaks rapidly but with such evenness of cadence that he always conveys an impression of leisurely contemplation. His whole being appears to incline toward a temperamental moderation that is instinctively dialectical, always seeking to reconcile apparently contrary truths. This habit of mind seems at once precisely what the country needs more of at the moment and precisely what is being ousted from the discourse as the doomsayers commandeer the airwaves and mob the mobile device.

“As a citizen, I am horrified,” Fukuyama said of Trump. “As a political scientist, I am delighted.” The rise of such a figure is “a kind of natural experiment where we get to see how theories like checks and balances work in practice and where we can gauge how strong



“I grew up in a period when everybody just wanted to be Americans. Not Japanese Americans. Not holding on to our ethnic separateness.”

“The world is not moving toward greater democracy or converging toward greater openness,” Fukuyama conceded. “But it’s still too early to tell whether this is just a glitch akin to a market correction or some kind of permanent state of affairs.... People still would rather live in a prosperous, well-governed country than in Guatemala or Nepal or Zimbabwe, and so long as that’s the case, there will continue to be a lot of grassroots pressure for the institutions that produce stable, rich countries.”

We were speaking in his vacation cottage in Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, several weeks

American institutions are. It’s all just theoretical until these concepts are challenged.”

It is perhaps this division into distinct roles of concerned citizen and disinterested analyst that allows Fukuyama to preserve his rhetorical equanimity. He has avoided what he calls the “overdrawn” comparisons to 1930s Germany that have issued from the mouths of some of his colleagues, and he holds himself at a remove from the “Resistance.” “I think in the end our democratic system is perfectly adequate to contain Trump.” Though ultimately, he noted, it’s not the rivalrous branches of government or the federal bu-

reaucracy or the courts upon whom the burden of holding Trump in check rests. “In a democracy, the ultimate check is always electoral,” he said. “If the Democrats manage to win back at least the House, they can start to undo some of the damage Trump has done.” And if not? “Then we’re in deep shit.”



A Master Concept

Politics was organized until recently “along a left-right spectrum defined by economic issues,” as Fukuyama puts it in *Identity*, which he wrote while shuttling between his vacation cottage and his house in Palo Alto, where he teaches at Stanford. But increasingly, the global political system has become a battleground for competing demands for recognition. *Identity* can be seen as an earnest attempt to keep the bloody passageway back into history shut.

In the book, Fukuyama probes beyond the immediate triggers of the populist nationalist upsurge to the deeper sources of the discord threatening to undo liberal democracy. He situates this discord in *thymos*, the universal craving for recognition, which he argues can serve as a master concept to explain “the dynamic new forces” currently shaping world events. It is *thymos*, Fukuyama argues, that is the seat of identity politics—a phrase typically associated with the Left but which he applies more broadly—and *thymos* that accounts for the increasingly bitter fragmentation of countries around the world into hostile camps. Indeed, almost anyone can construe themselves as in some manner oppressed, and such claims are inherently more difficult to satisfy than economic ones.

Fukuyama divides *thymos* into two different forms: “isothymia,” the desire to be seen as equal to everyone else, and “megalothymia,” the desire to be seen as superior. Liberal democracy can be “subverted internally” by either. In a remarkable passage, Fukuyama notes that “the passion for equal recognition... does not necessarily diminish with the achievement of greater de facto equality and material abundance, but may actually be stimulated by it. Tocqueville explained that when the differences between social classes or groups are great and supported by longstanding tradition, people become resigned or accepting of them. But when society is mobile and groups pull closer to one another, people become more acutely aware and resentful of the remaining differences.”

Back in 1992, Fukuyama was blithe about the “smallness of actually existing inequalities.” By the early 2010s, he had begun to sound the alarm about the rise of wealthy and powerful elites rigging the political system in their favor. This capture had led to “political decay,” in which special-interest groups were able to



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block the popular will, including on hot-button issues such as immigration, where polling indicated that a broad consensus existed. He began to call for a renewed left-wing movement to contest the growing consolidation of power.

Fukuyama is hardly a trusted figure among Democrats, though he has, in recent years, taken to railing against what conservatism has become. He is exasperated with the large faction of the electorate willing to be persuaded by the crude and dishonest appeals of a man he took to be “a total idiot completely unqualified to be president.” But while deploring the remedy to which these voters resorted, he acknowledges the grievances that fueled their resentments. “Both the financial crises in the U.S. and the Eurozone and the migrant crises in Europe were regarded as elite-leadership failures, and rightly so in both cases. They did screw up.”

Yet traditional parties of the Left have been hemorrhaging support throughout Europe despite a three-decade rise in economic inequality in countries all around the globe. Fukuyama noted that the left-wing Occupy Wall Street movement “marched and demonstrated, then fizzled out,” while the Tea Party “succeeded in taking over both the Republican Party and much of Congress.” Instead of articulating an overarching vision of economic justice, many on the Left seem intent on elaborating ever more fractionated identity categories demanding recognition—a move that is intrinsically at cross-purposes to one that seeks change through mass democratic means. “The Democrats have become the party of minorities, white professionals, and educated white women,” Fukuyama said, “while the Republicans are the white people’s party. It’s a moral disaster for American democracy.”



An Incidental Fact

Fukuyama’s grandfather was an immigrant from Japan. He came to the United States in 1905, when it was still a nation with mostly open borders, to evade the draft for the Russo-Japanese war. He built a successful

hardware store in downtown Los Angeles and became a community leader in Little Tokyo. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, he was rounded up and sent to an internment camp by the U.S. government for the duration of World War II. Given two weeks to sell off his business, he did so to a white competitor for virtually nothing. “He basically lost his lifetime’s work,” Fukuyama said. After his release, Fukuyama’s grandfather was never able to establish himself in business again. When he finally became a naturalized citizen, he cast his first vote in the U.S. presidential election of 1964. The vote he cast was for Barry Goldwater.

“A lot of immigrants become quite conservative,” Fukuyama noted, explaining why the seemingly perverse vote, which his liberal father regarded as an outrage, was in fact consistent with the experience of migration and loss his grandfather had endured. “They feel that they worked hard to earn their place in this country, that America was a land of opportunity, that they had done well, and what was theirs was theirs.” Fukuyama is skeptical of projections of a “permanent Democratic majority” based on a ruling coalition of white liberals and minorities, in part because of his grandfather’s story. He noted that certain polls show that a slight majority of Hispanics—51 percent, according to Harvard-Harris—support stricter enforcement of immigration laws.

I wanted to know about Fukuyama’s background because he has just written a book about identity in which he doesn’t mention his own. Fukuyama is one of a handful of enduring public intellectuals in America. He is also a person of Japanese ancestry. But he has always regarded the latter as an incidental rather than an essential fact about himself. “I grew up in a period when everybody just wanted to be Americans. Not Japanese Americans. Not holding on to our ethnic separateness.” The assertion seems a little quaint coming from an American academic in 2018. His consciousness of that fact imbues it with a touch of defiance.

“I never felt like I was different from other people,” Fukuyama said, a statement expressing a certain

(continued on page 114)

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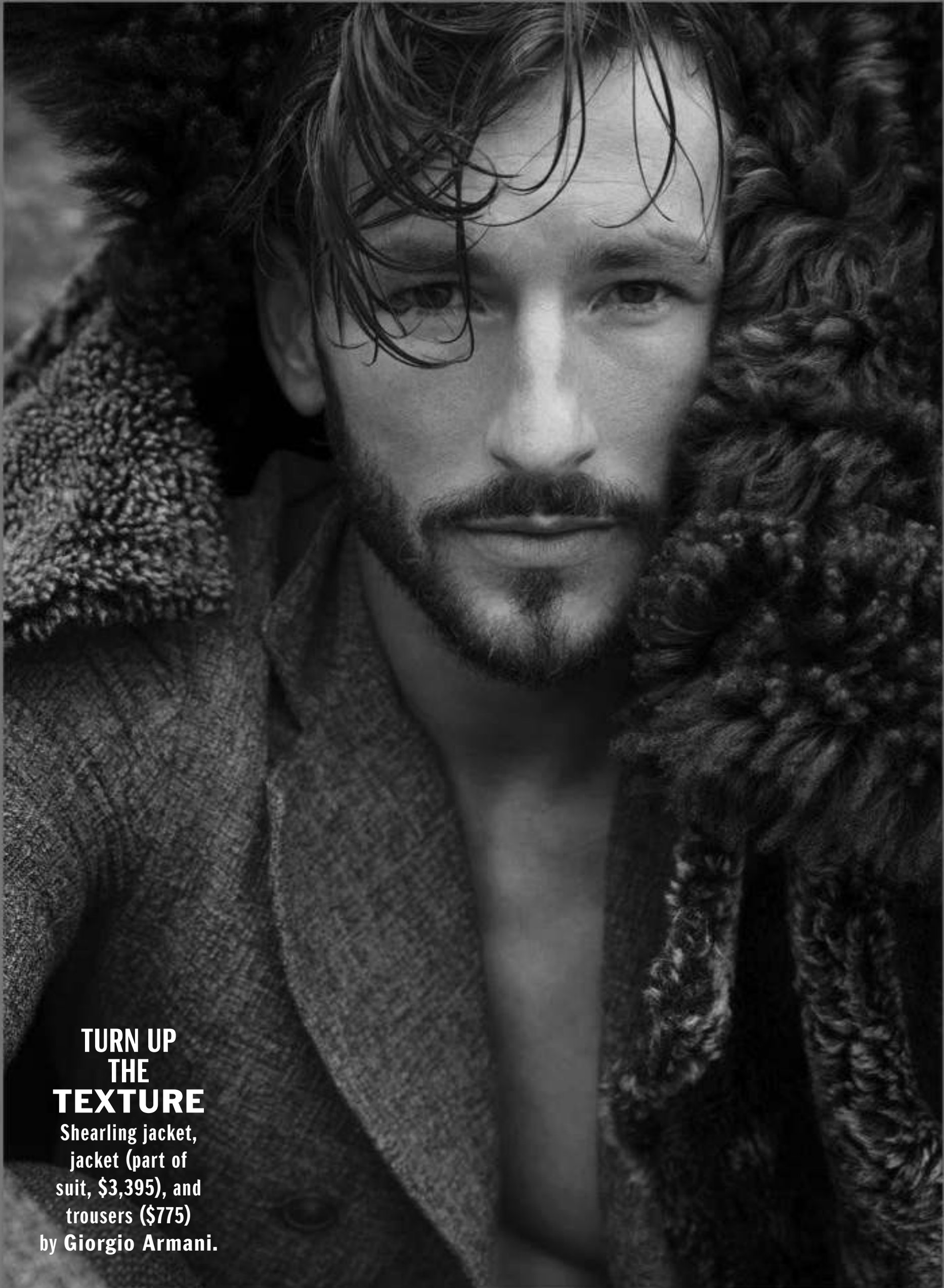
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TEXTURE**

Shearling jacket,
jacket (part of
suit, \$3,395), and
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by **Giorgio Armani.**

For store information see page 119. Production by Joe Daley at A+ Productions. Grooming by Mira Chai Hyde using Oribe and Chanel.



**STRIKE
THE RIGHT
TONE**

Sweater (\$1,395),
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shoes (\$775)

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MILKING THE SYSTEM

Rep. **DEVIN NUNES** is head of the House Intelligence Committee and one of President TRUMP'S biggest defenders. For years, he's spun himself as a straight talker whose no-BS values are rooted in his family's California dairy farm. So why did his parents and brother cover their tracks after quietly moving the farm to Iowa? Are they hiding something politically explosive? On the ground in Iowa, **RYAN LIZZA** searches for the truth—and discovers a lot of **PARANOIA AND HYPOCRISY**.

● Devin Nunes has a secret. Nunes is the California Republican and chairman of the House Intelligence Committee who has become famous in the Trump era for using his position as a battering ram to discredit the Russia investigation and protect Donald Trump at all costs, even if it means shredding his own reputation and the independence of the historically nonpartisan committee in the process.

First elected to Congress in 2002, Nunes wasn't always like this. At one time he was known for his independent streak. When a new class of radical House Republicans pushed its leadership to shut down the government in 2013, Nunes attacked them as "lemmings with suicide vests." In 2015, during another tumultuous period of House GOP infighting, I interviewed a broad cross section of the chamber's Republican leadership, and Nunes stood out for comments he made about how his colleagues and constituents were siloed in right-wing echo chambers and increasingly reliant on this or that "conspiracy theory" rather than "something that is mostly true." In hindsight, he was prescient about the direction of his party: A few years later, a bona fide conspiracy theorist, one who credited Alex Jones with his victory, was elected president.

Instead of continuing the fight, Nunes served on the president's transition team and became Trump's most important defender in Congress. He has used the Intelligence Committee to spin a baroque theory about alleged surveillance of the Trump campaign that began with a made-up Trump tweet about how "Obama had my 'wires tapped' in Trump Tower." Indeed, Nunes has worked closely with the White House to investigate the FBI rather than the FSB (the KGB's successor),

ILLUSTRATION BY ED STEED

most famously by attempting to undermine the Russia investigation by releasing a partisan report—the so-called “Nunes memo”—that cherry-picked evidence to accuse the FBI of bias in its effort to obtain a warrant to monitor the communications of Carter Page, a Trump foreign-policy advisor.

Nunes has always been reliably conservative, but on some issues, he has broken with his party. He has long supported moderate immigration reform, for instance, including amnesty for many undocumented people living and working in the U. S. But as Trump has instituted a draconian policy of zero tolerance for all undocumented people and argued that every undocumented individual should be deported, Nunes has been silent. More recently, as Trump and the House Republicans have celebrated Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the agency’s aggressive tactics, Nunes has followed suit. On CaRepublican.com—a Nunes-created news site, which mimics the Drudge Report—he now regularly highlights articles attacking Democrats for being insufficiently supportive of ICE’s raids and deportations.

Which brings us back to Nunes’s secret.

Nunes grew up in a family of dairy farmers in Tulare, California, and as long as he has been in politics, his family dairy has been central to his identity and a feature of every major political profile written about him. A March story in *National Review* is emblematic. It describes how Nunes’s family emigrated from the Azores in Portugal to California’s Central Valley, “a fertile, sunny Eden,” and how the family “worked and saved enough money to buy a 640-acre farm outside Tulare.” The soil of the Central Valley is depicted as almost sacred in these articles. *National Review* quotes a 1912 Portuguese immigrant farmer who wrote that when he grabs a clump of dirt, “I feel as if I had just shaken hands with all my ancestors.” As recently as July 27, the lead of a *Wall Street Journal* editorial-page piece about Nunes, which featured a Tulare dateline, emphasized the dairy: “It’s 105 degrees as I stand with Rep. Devin Nunes on his family’s dairy farm.” Last year, Nunes noted in an interview with the Daily Beast—headline: “The Dairy Farmer Overseeing U. S. Spies and the Russia Hack Investigation”—“I’m pretty simple. I like agriculture.” The Daily Beast noted, “The cows are not far from his mind. He keeps in regular contact with his brother and father about their dairy farm.”

So here’s the secret: The Nunes family dairy of political lore—the one where his brother and parents work—isn’t in California. It’s in Iowa. Devin; his brother, Anthony III; and his parents, Anthony Jr. and Toni Dian, sold their California farmland in 2006. Anthony Jr. and Toni Dian, who has also been the treasurer of every one of Devin’s campaigns since 2001, used their cash from the sale to buy a dairy

eighteen hundred miles away in Sibley, a small town in northwest Iowa where they—as well as Anthony III, Devin’s only sibling, and his wife, Lori—have lived since 2007. Devin’s uncle Gerald still owns a dairy back in Tulare, which is presumably where *The Wall Street Journal*’s reporter talked to Devin, and Devin is an investor in a Napa Valley winery, Alpha Omega, but his immediate family’s farm—as well as his family—is long gone.

There’s nothing particularly strange about a congressman’s family moving. But what is strange is that the family has apparently tried to conceal the move from the public—for more than a decade. As far as I could tell, as of late August, neither Nunes nor the local California press that covers him had ever publicly mentioned that his family dairy is no longer in Tulare.

For example, in 2010 Nunes traveled to northwest Iowa to campaign for Steve King, the most anti-immigrant member of Congress, who now represents Nunes’s parents, brother, and sister-in-law in Sibley. It was an unusual place to find Devin Nunes, given that at the time he wasn’t known to be hostile to immigrants in the way that has made King, who has called illegal immigration a “slow-motion terrorist attack,” so infamous.

King’s office posted a press release online announcing that the town-hall event would be in Le Mars, a town fifty miles southwest of Sibley, and included some biographical information about Nunes, including this fact: “Congressman Nunes’ family has operated a dairy farm in Tulare County, California for three generations.” There was no mention that the Nunes family actually lived up the road in Sibley, where they operated a dairy. Strange.

In June 2009, an obscure dairy trade publication, *Dairy Star*, ran a profile of the Nunes family dairy in Sibley. The article documents how the Nunes family, “recent transplants to the Midwest,” emigrated from Portugal to California to Iowa and started NuStar Farms, which Anthony Jr. manages with his son and wife. The article mentions numerous Nunes family members, including Uncle Gerald,

who was still back in California, and baby Maci, “the first Nunes to be born outside of California or Portugal,” but there is one person missing from the article: Devin Nunes.

Why would the Nuneses, Steve King, and an obscure dairy publication all conspire to hide the fact that the congressman’s family sold its farm and moved to Iowa? I went to Sibley to find out. Things got a little strange.

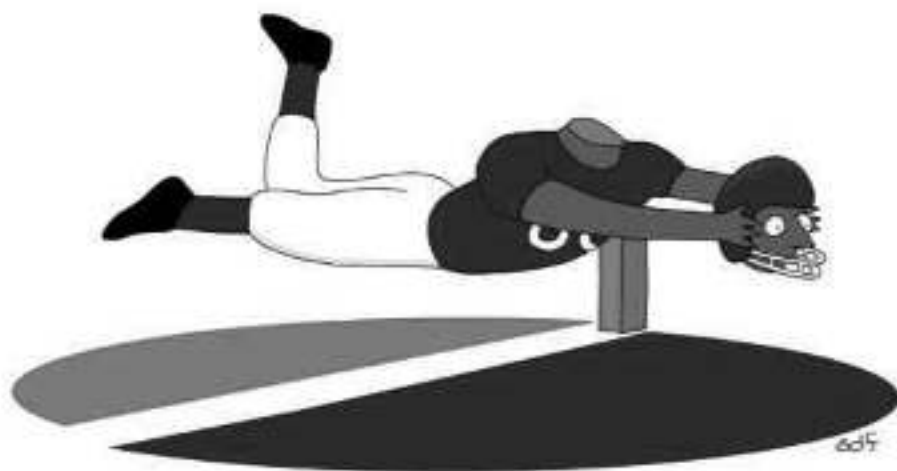
The first thing I did when I landed in Iowa, on August 27, was call Jerry Nelson, the author of the *Dairy Star* article. I’d read through Nelson’s other online articles. He’s funny and smart and could easily be a columnist at a major newspaper. When he was thirty, he almost died in a bizarre manure-pit accident, and he told me that since then he’s lived every day like it’s a blessing.

He was upfront and clear about why Representative Nunes wasn’t included in the *Dairy Star* profile of the Nunes family and the move to Iowa: The family asked him not to mention Devin. “They said, ‘Our brother’s involved in politics and we’re not going to talk about it and that’s that,’” Nelson told me. “And I said, ‘Okay, we’re here to talk about dairy farms.’”

Sibley, Iowa, is in the far north of the state, twenty minutes from the Minnesota border. It has twenty-six hundred people and feels smaller. The biggest attractions in town are a well-groomed golf course and a high-end coffee shop, the Lantern, which was named the best in Iowa by the Food Network. I stopped in at the Lantern, a big exposed-brick space with fancy espresso equipment, to meet with Joshua Harms, a web developer and local troublemaker who became a First Amendment cause célèbre this year after the town threatened to sue him if he didn’t take down his website, shouldyoumovetosibleyia.com, which documented a foul smell emanating from one of Sibley’s major businesses, a pig-blood processing plant. The ACLU championed Harms’s case and sued Sibley. The town quickly folded, wrote Harms an apology, and agreed to train its staff and lawyers in First Amendment law. The case made inter-

Spot On: Football

By Seth Fleishman



TRUTH OR DAIRY? Meet the Farm Team!



Rep. Devin Nunes

Former immigration moderate, current Trumpist true believer.



Rep. Steve King

Immigration hard-liner who represents the Nunes farm's district in Iowa.



A Jersey cow

Prized for a genial disposition and the high butterfat content of its milk.

seven-hundred-foot, white aluminum barns that are the most prominent feature of the farm. The western sides of the barns are outfitted with dozens of steel ventilation fans that look like rocket engines from a distance, almost as if a pair of space-shuttle boosters had dropped in the middle of a cornfield. I visited during silage season, when dairymen are out cutting corn to make winter feed for their cows. It had just rained, and the smell of fresh silage, like an intense version of freshly cut grass, filled my car as it rumbled down a dirt road to NuStar. As I approached the dairy, a white Yukon SUV exited from NuStar's muddy parking lot and passed me. I saw Anthony Nunes Jr. in the cab of a tanker truck. Instead of bothering him at work, I decided to take the mayor's advice and visit him at home the next day.

It didn't go well.

I found the Nunes home on the far north edge of town, where the leafy neighborhood bumps up against the surrounding farmland. In the driveway was another white Yukon—the fancier Denali version. Anthony Jr. was pulling out of the driveway in a farm truck. I waved at him, and he abruptly stopped the truck in the street and walked over to my car. He was wearing jeans and a work shirt. I told him my name and asked him if I could talk to him for an article about his dairy. "I'm taking your license plate down and reporting you to the sheriff," he said. "I don't want to be bothered." I asked him again if I could interview him and he repeated himself, but this time a lot louder. "I don't want to be bothered anymore." As he walked to his truck, he looked back and warned me: "If I see you again, I'm gonna get upset." Apparently Sibley's First Amendment training hadn't filtered down to all its residents.

Other dairy farmers in the area helped me understand why the Nunes family might be so secretive about the farm: Midwestern dairies tend to run on undocumented labor. The northwest-Iowa dairy community is small. Most of the farmers know one another, and most belong to a regional trade group called the Western Iowa Dairy Alliance (though WIDA told me NuStar is not a member). One dairy farmer said that the threat of raids from ICE is so acute that WIDA members have discussed forming a NATO-like pact that would treat a raid on one dairy as a raid on all of them. The other pact members would provide labor to the raided dairy until it got back on its feet.

In every conversation I had with dairy farmers and industry insiders in northwest Iowa, it was taken as a fact that the local dairies are wholly dependent on undocumented labor. The low unemployment rate (it's 2 percent in Osceola County), the low profit margins in the dairy business, (continued on page 116)

national headlines and embarrassed Sibley.

Harms is a Bernie Sanders supporter, which makes him an outlier in the town. Sibley is the seat of Osceola County, which voted 79 percent to 17 percent for Trump over Clinton, making it one of the most pro-Trump bastions in America. Steve King won the county in 2016 with a similar margin. The locals "tend to be very conservative, and of course they all are Trump backers," said Nelson. Art Cullen, a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist at the nearby *Storm Lake Times*, told me that much of the population is "Dutch Reform and very religious." So I was only a little surprised when the owner of the coffee shop, Brenda Hoyer, asked, "Are you a believer?" as she came over to take my order. I muttered something about growing up Catholic and ordered an iced tea.

Hoyer's extended family, including grandkids, were milling around the shop. The place had a welcoming family vibe and more diversity than you might expect. I noticed several Hispanic women eating pastries and speaking Spanish at a nearby table. Sibley is actually 8 percent Hispanic, and that growing population largely provides the labor for the area's meatpacking, poultry, and dairy industries. Immigrants are essential to Iowa, which has an estimated forty thousand undocumented residents, mostly Hispanics, according to a 2014 report from the Pew Research Center. I was visiting the state just days after police found the body of Mollie Tibbetts, who was allegedly killed by an undocumented worker from a dairy farm, and everyone was talking about immigration. In a speech, Trump had used Tibbetts's murder as a cudgel to bash "Democrat immigration policies" that he said were "spilling very innocent blood."

Hoyer and I talked about Trump. She admitted she wasn't crazy about the tweets and his messy personal life. She liked Mike Pence and noted "it would be a good deal" if Trump were impeached and replaced by Pence. When I told her I was working on a story about dairy

farms, her ears perked up. She and her husband, Gene, were dairy farmers and had recently sold their business. "You should talk to Gene," she said. When I mentioned Trump's immigration policy, she was quick to add, "Well, we don't agree with him on that!"

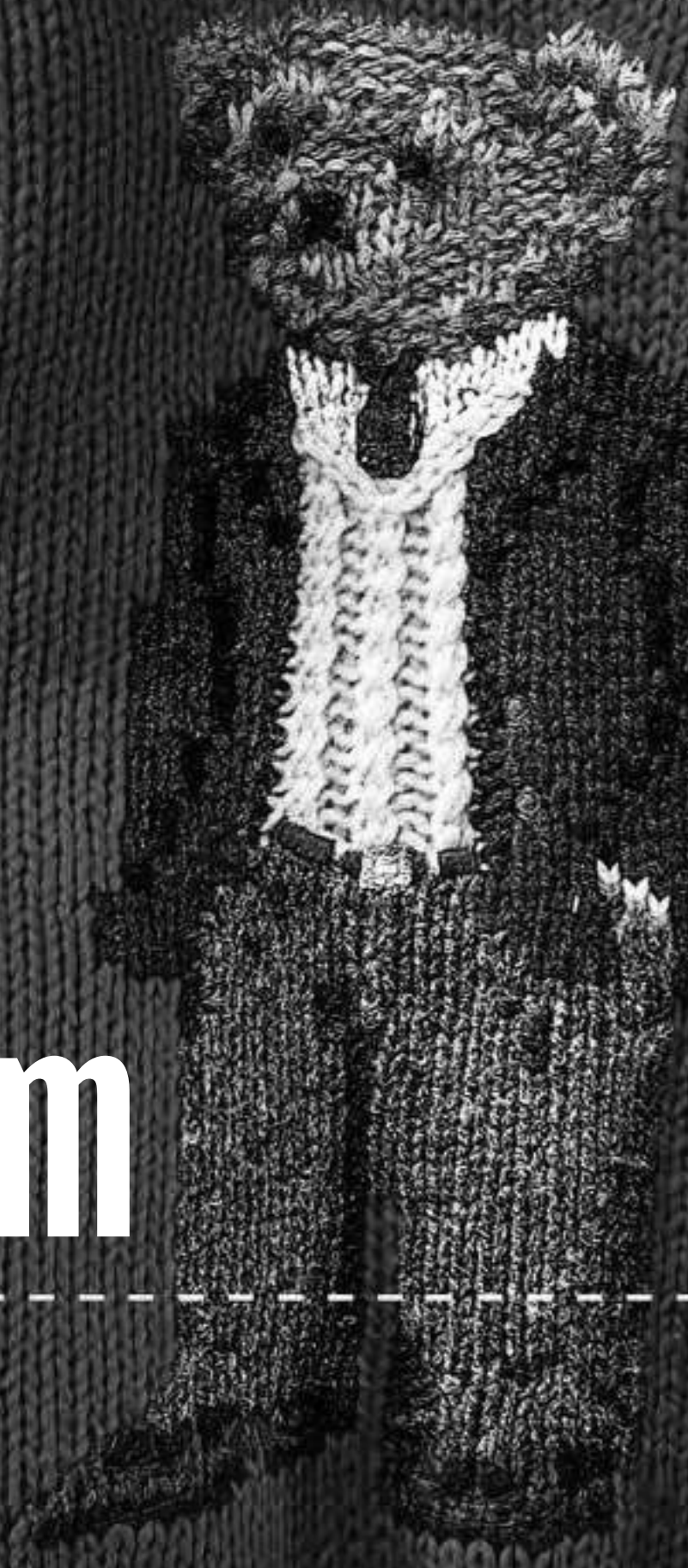
Then she told me something that knocked the wind out of me: "My son recently took his life." It came out of nowhere, and I barely knew how to respond. His name was Bailey. He was seventeen and he had died thirteen days ago. This was the first day the coffee shop had been open since his death. I noticed a Bible verse in chalk behind the counter: "Do not fear for I have redeemed you. I have summoned you by name. You are mine." The Lantern, I later learned, was actually a ministry that, according to its website, provides "a safe place where everyone is welcome." I liked it there and decided to make it my office while I was in Sibley.

Jerry Johnson, Sibley's mayor, walked in. He was wearing golf attire, and whatever ill will existed between him and Harms over what Harms called "the blood plant" seemed to have faded. Perhaps because of the town's troubles with First Amendment law, Johnson was especially gracious to me. I explained why I was in Sibley, and he immediately suggested that I stop by Anthony Nunes Jr.'s house to interview him. When the subject turned to Trump's zero-tolerance policy on immigration, the mayor replied with what was already becoming a familiar refrain: "I don't agree with him on that!"

The Nunes family dairy, NuStar Farms LLC, sits on forty-three acres surrounded by corn on the southern outskirts of Sibley, off Highway 60, a main route between Sioux City and Minneapolis. According to *Dairy Star*, they have about two thousand Jersey cows. A source told me that NuStar sells almost all of its milk to Wells, an ice cream company in Le Mars, which makes the Blue Bunny brand. The NuStar cows are housed in two

Polo
by Ralph Lauren

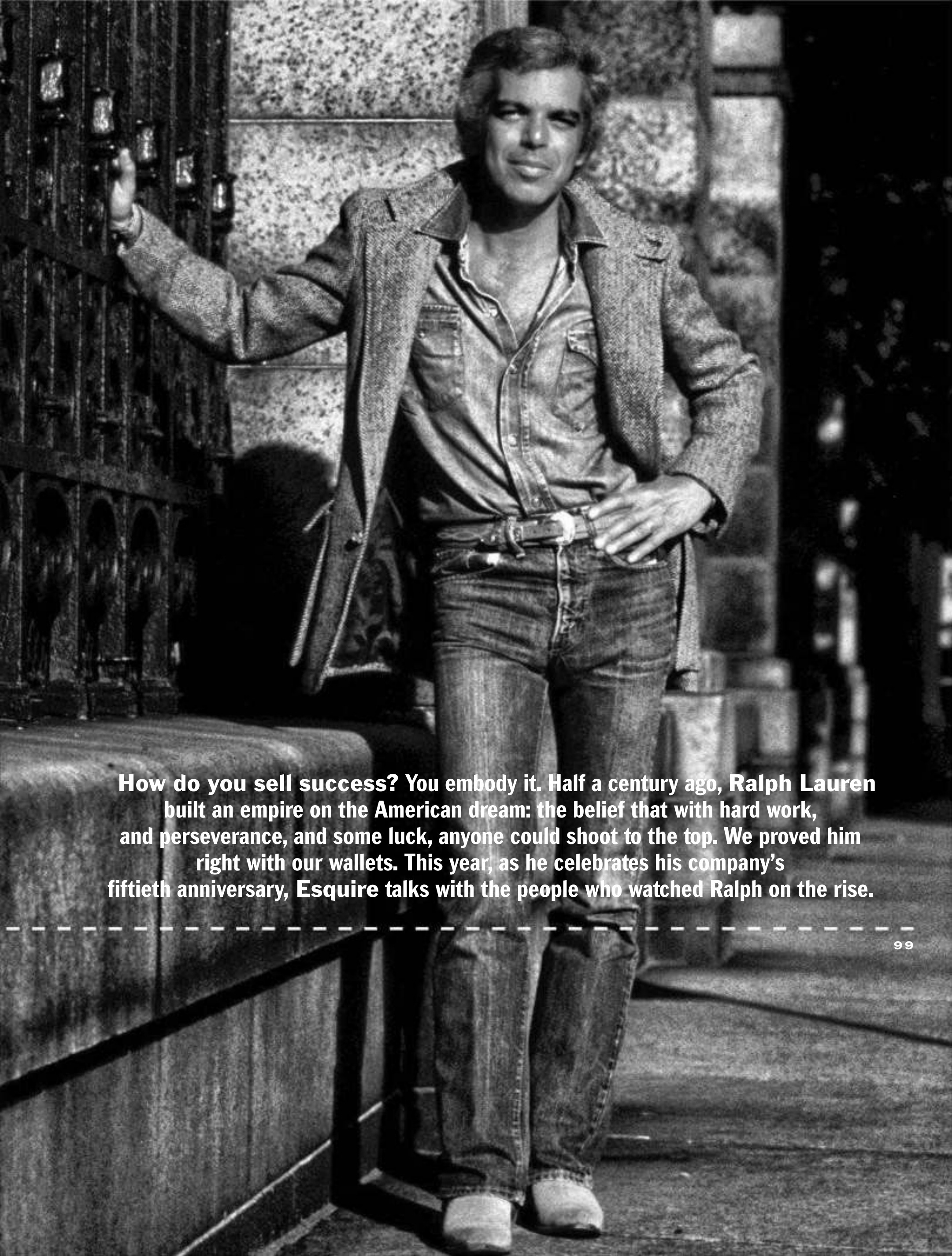
M



Dream

Weaver



A black and white photograph of a man standing outdoors. He is wearing a tweed jacket over a denim shirt and jeans, with a belt. He is leaning against a stone wall with a metal railing. The background shows a stone building and a blurred street scene.

How do you sell success? You embody it. Half a century ago, Ralph Lauren built an empire on the American dream: the belief that with hard work, and perseverance, and some luck, anyone could shoot to the top. We proved him right with our wallets. This year, as he celebrates his company's fiftieth anniversary, Esquire talks with the people who watched Ralph on the rise.

He

was a Bronx-born son of immigrants who grew up prizing a certain idea of America, then sold it right back to us. Eventually his name would be dropped in rap songs and sitcoms, becoming synonymous with a lifestyle of ease and plenty. But in 1967, all he had was a line of neckties, which he sold from a drawer in the Empire State Building.

Greg Lauren (fashion designer and nephew):

“He was growing up in the Bronx, and it was a time when heroes really meant something. Between movies and sports, those heroes drove his inspiration and his passion to create.”

David Lauren (executive vice-president, Ralph Lauren, and son): “Ralph Lauren started with a tie. My mom and my grandmother used to help sew the labels into them, and he would take these ties and go door-to-door to department stores, trying to get people to buy them.”

Tom Selleck (actor): “Back in the sixties, I worked at a clothing store on Wilshire as a salesman. Somewhere in that period, this guy used to come in the store; I don’t think I ever talked to him. But he had a line of ties and he was repping them. And that was Ralph.”

He conquered men’s wear, then women’s wear, while dressing movie stars like Robert Redford in *The Great Gatsby* and Diane Keaton in *Annie Hall*. He decided to embroider a pony on a shirt and it became a Hamptons staple, then a worldwide imprint. And just like Studio 54 became a second home to certain down-

town New York personalities of the late seventies, Lauren’s flagship “Mansion” store on Madison Avenue was a mecca for uptown denizens a decade later when it opened in 1986. Even to those who couldn’t quite afford what Lauren was selling.

Jerry Seinfeld (comedian): “I remember the jeans and the cologne. Everybody was wearing that. It was very aspirational for me at that time. I was completely broke for most of the seventies and eighties. So it was just, you know . . . it was, like, when you made it, that’s what you would buy. Something of style and quality like Ralph.”

Diane Keaton (actress): “Isn’t he the best tailor in the world? I remember those days when I didn’t have money to buy Ralph Lauren, and can you imagine how exciting it was to have a couple of his pieces?” *Interview with Vogue, 2017*

Paul Goldberger (architecture critic and friend of Lauren’s): “Everything is as much about setting as the thing itself. Which is of course the whole genius behind the [Madison Avenue] store. You go into that store and you feel good. And so you wanna buy things. Because you’re buying a piece of this life. That was his whole idea—you know, come into my movie, buy a piece of this life. As opposed to just a piece of clothing.”

Keaton: “I feel like I grew up with Ralph. His closet was kind of like my closet. He loved the way women looked in men’s big jackets and sweaters and lots of layers. But more than that, he has always loved women, particularly those with a strong sense of themselves. Annie Hall was very much that kind of woman, but he never took credit for her look. He always emphatically stated that she was me and her style was my style. Actually it was all Ralph.”

Oprah Winfrey (media executive and actress): “When I first moved to Chicago and was making enough money to pay my rent and still had something left over, my idea of celebrating that success wasn’t to get a fan-

cy car or jewelry. My idea of success was to get Ralph Lauren towels.” *From her toast at Lauren’s anniversary dinner*

John Varvatos (designer and former head of men’s-wear design, Ralph Lauren): “In the mid-to-late eighties, people basically wanted to sleep over at Ralph Lauren to make sure that they were able to get their orders in. It was a crazy thing. There were customers in the showroom at three o’clock in the morning. There were people waiting to see if they could get an appointment to buy Ralph Lauren.”





Clockwise from left: Lauren and wife Ricky warm up their East Hampton home in 1977; Lauren on the cover of our September 1987 issue; the designer on the night of his fiftieth-anniversary celebration; cycling in Amagansett, New York, 1977; Robert Redford in 1974's *The Great Gatsby* (Lauren made the costumes); a bottle of classic Polo cologne; Lauren tends to his wares on a Friday afternoon, 1970; frequent Ralph Lauren model Tim Easton in a 1986 campaign.



Selleck: "I used to fight with Michael Crichton when new stuff came in at the Polo store in Beverly Hills. We were the same size, and we're tall. And it was really great for tall guys, the way Ralph cut his stuff."

Marcus Wainwright (designer, Rag & Bone): "My initial reading of Ralph was that he was the pinnacle of fashion for a young seventeen-year-old in England. And hence the first thing that I ever bought that was even vaguely from a designer brand was something from Ralph, which was a classic red sweatshirt. I bought it in a little shop in Méribel in France, and I still have it."

Tom Hiddleston (actor): "I think it was a blue jumper I bought, and it lasted me a long time. I tend to wear things until they fall apart. It was a beautiful color, and it worked in winter and summer. I remember that."

Eventually a new generation of models and designers started changing the face of fashion. The common thread? They had all worked at the same place, under the same guy. People started calling it Ralph Lauren University.

Tyson Beckford (model and actor): "He was like this image I'd already had in my head. But then when I met him, he was just this really sweet, well-dressed gentleman and you hung on every word he said. You have this whole staff of people standing around him like he was the president of the United States. And there he is engaging with you, just talking about regular stuff."

Naomi Campbell (model and actress): "Wow. They're going to use two black models in one ad in America. That's what I remember thinking when I learned that I was doing the Polo ad campaign with Tyson Beckford in 1995. People in fashion tell you things all the time, and when the time comes, things change. But I'd known Ralph since I was seventeen, and I knew he was a man of his word. To pair me with Tyson for that campaign—to have two black models in a single ad—was astounding." *Esquire*, 2007

Tim Easton (model): "He did these sort of casual shows where people from magazines would be in the office with him, and he'd talk about me—I was 'Tim, one of the guys we photograph a lot,' and he would just sort of introduce you. He was always very nice, very friendly. It felt like he knew me more than I knew him because he'd seen my picture for so many years."

Simon Spurr (designer and former design director, Ralph Lauren Purple Label and Black Label):



“He is such a quiet, humble, respectful man. And he was just a really excellent communicator. He doesn’t always communicate with words. Sometimes he wouldn’t say he didn’t like something, but he would come onto the floor and we’d be showing him the concept, and he’d just look around and drop his head. And we knew. But I also remember one night at 11:00 P.M., he just casually walked onto the floor to use the bathroom. And he stops and he chats with us. He’s very approachable, and it’s nice that he acknowledged not just the senior people but the team. He was very respectful of the amount of hours and time that we all dedicated to him.”

Beckford: “Ralph Lauren is a fashion institute as well as a brand. Because you went there wet behind the ears, and you left there a scholar.”

Wainwright: “We were talking about Rag & Bone, and we said [to Ralph], ‘If you had one bit of advice for us, what would it be?’ And he said, ‘Open a store. The only way people are going to understand your brand is if you open a store.’ So we left and rang a real estate agent and said that we needed a store.”

Varvatos: “When I told Ralph that I was going to leave and start my own collection, he had a big smile on his face, and he said, ‘Okay, here’s the thing: If you really feel that you have something new to say, you have my blessing.’ I said, ‘I really do feel that I do,’ and he said, ‘Then you have my blessing, and stay true to yourself.’ Every time I see him over the years, he says, ‘You’re really doing it. You’re doing your own thing. You’re staying true to yourself. Keep doing that.’”

Thom Browne (designer, formerly at Club Monaco, owned by Ralph Lauren): “Ralph has always been someone who sees talent in people before they even see it themselves. He truly supports and nurtures creative talent. Most important, he instills in creative people the power in staying true to

yourself. That’s his most lasting legacy.”

Fifty years since he filled that drawer full of ties, Lauren has become part of the culture. With a personal wealth estimated to be in the billions, he could spend his time and his money in almost limitless ways. It would be easy, at nearly eighty years old, to retire and recede from the spotlight. Instead, he’s staying as busy as ever. He spends time with his family—a tight-knit group that’s always been at the core of his vision. He goes for a spin in one of the cars from his world-class collection. And he keeps building his dream—with an impossible-to-book Manhattan restaurant, with fresh collections each season, and with a sense of humility that says, even after all this, he’s still not sure how he got here.

Goldberger: “I remember once when we were walking around his house in Montauk, and he showed me how he’d converted a garage into a screening room. And he said, ‘Well, I’ve always loved the movies.’ But then he paused and said, ‘But I really also did this so the kids would come more.’ I mean, whose father wouldn’t say that?”

Selleck: “I gave a speech [in 1989 at the American Academy of Achievement, where Lauren was also being honored], and I said, ‘You know, for all I’ve accomplished, I’ve never really felt that I was quite in the club.’ And Ralph called me up later and said, ‘You know, I get that feeling sometimes.’”

Mark Seliger (photographer; his portrait of Lauren hangs in the National Portrait Gallery): “I was doing some photographs at his house in Bedford [New York], and we got there around eight. He and his wife met us at the door. And he was very sweet, and I remember he had riding jodhpurs on. These beautiful riding boots. Thick turtleneck sweater on. He just





Clockwise from top left: Lauren in Pebble Beach, California, with his prize-winning 1938 Bugatti; the interior of the Polo Bar, Lauren's latest venture in fine dining; a Ralph Lauren Type A2 flight jacket; Lauren's 1964 Ferrari 250 LM on loan in Paris; Lauren's Bedford, New York, estate; the fiftieth-anniversary coffee-table book celebrating the brand; the rustic RRL Ranch in Ridgway, Colorado; Kanye West, Kirsten Corley, and Chance the Rapper at the designer's fiftieth-anniversary show; Lauren and his crew at their Seventh Avenue offices in 1977.



looked like a million bucks. He says, 'I'll be right back; I'm gonna go for a quick ride.' I said, 'Oh, wow. We should really do a picture like that, so be sure you don't get too much dirt on you.' He said, 'No, no, no, no, no.' He says, 'When I say I'm going for a ride, I'm going for a ride in my Lamborghini.'

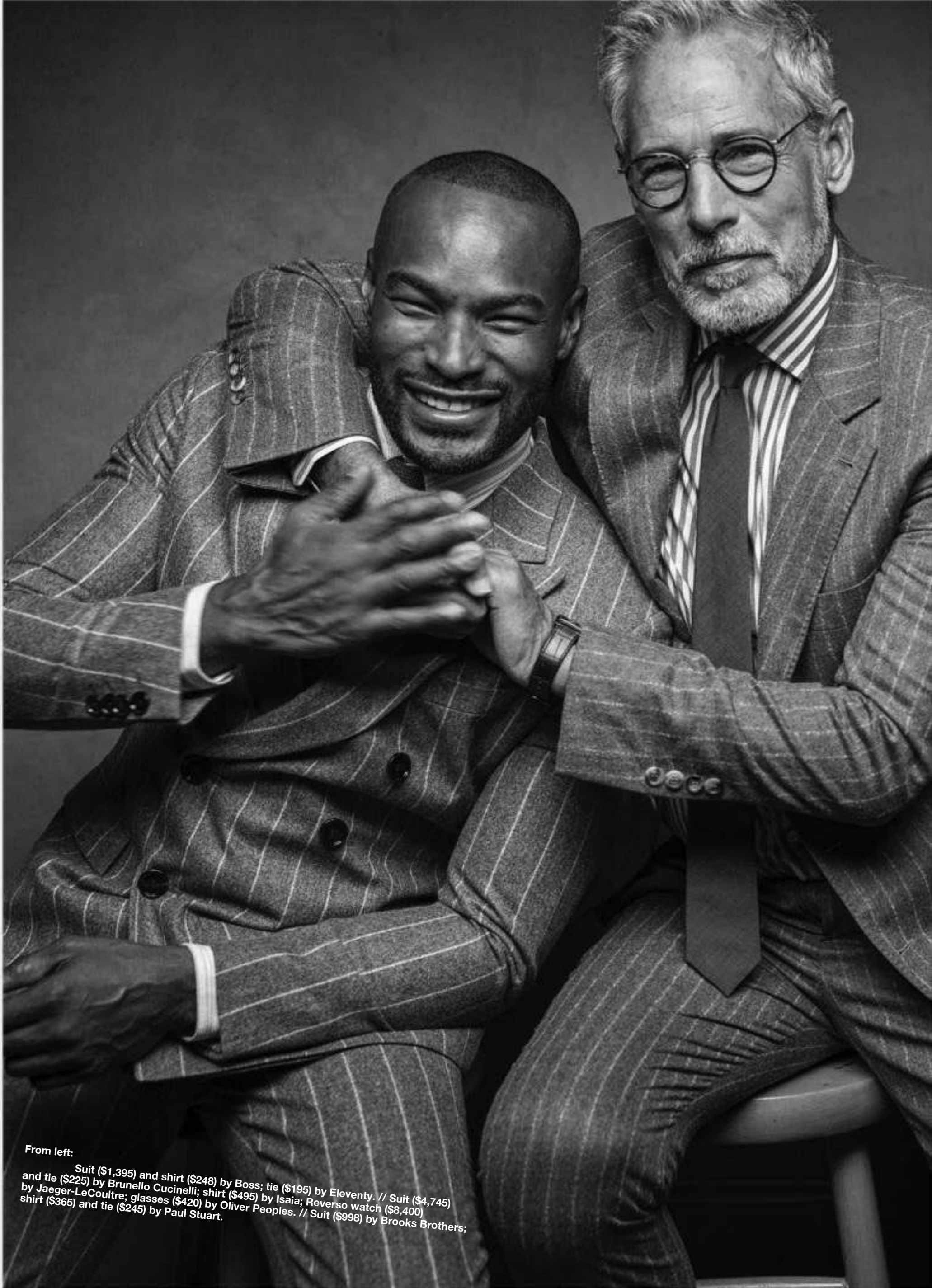
Seinfeld: "He is as crazy about cars as I am, and a lot of these accomplished men will collect cars, but they'll collect them as baubles and objects to impress other people. Ralph is not like that. He actually loves the car for what it is—loves to drive it, loves to talk about it. And he is fast. He thinks that speed limits are just suggestions. He claims that *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee* was his idea. And I suppose he deserves a certain amount of credit. We do a lot of that, and it does seem like it's just a great, simple way to get to know somebody. We're just in a car, we're having coffee. I'll give him some credit."

Geoffrey Zakarian (restaurateur): "When you get [to the Polo Bar], it's almost laughable. It's like, of course. Of course there are horse paintings. Of course there's wood. All the things that matter, he understands. A store is very hard to run. There's the staff, there's the customer relationship, there's inventory. A restaurant is ten times as hard. It involves ten times the staff, ten times the customer relations. Twenty times the inventory, and it's all perishable. That he's pulled it all together, and done it well, is saying something."

Varvatos: "I'll tell you the other thing that he said, which is: Never stop dreaming. Because he gave me the opportunity to dream when I was there, and he made me feel that I could dream when I started my own company as well."

Goldberger: "I think he possesses dignity, which is not a common thing in the fashion industry. I don't know [for] how many other people really that word would come quickly to mind. But it does with Ralph."

—Interviews by Paul L. Underwood



From left:

Suit (\$1,395) and shirt (\$248) by Boss; tie (\$195) by Eleventy. // Suit (\$4,745) and tie (\$225) by Brunello Cucinelli; shirt (\$495) by Isaia; Reverso watch (\$8,400) by Jaeger-LeCoultre; glasses (\$420) by Oliver Peoples. // Suit (\$998) by Brooks Brothers; shirt (\$365) and tie (\$245) by Paul Stuart.



The high
hallmarks
of '80s and
'90s style
are suddenly
looking
stronger than
ever. Think
chalk-stripe
suiting, camel
coats, contrast
collars—an
overall bolder-
is-better

approach to
dressing. Who
better to
show it all off
than the guys
who made
their names
modeling it
the first time
around?

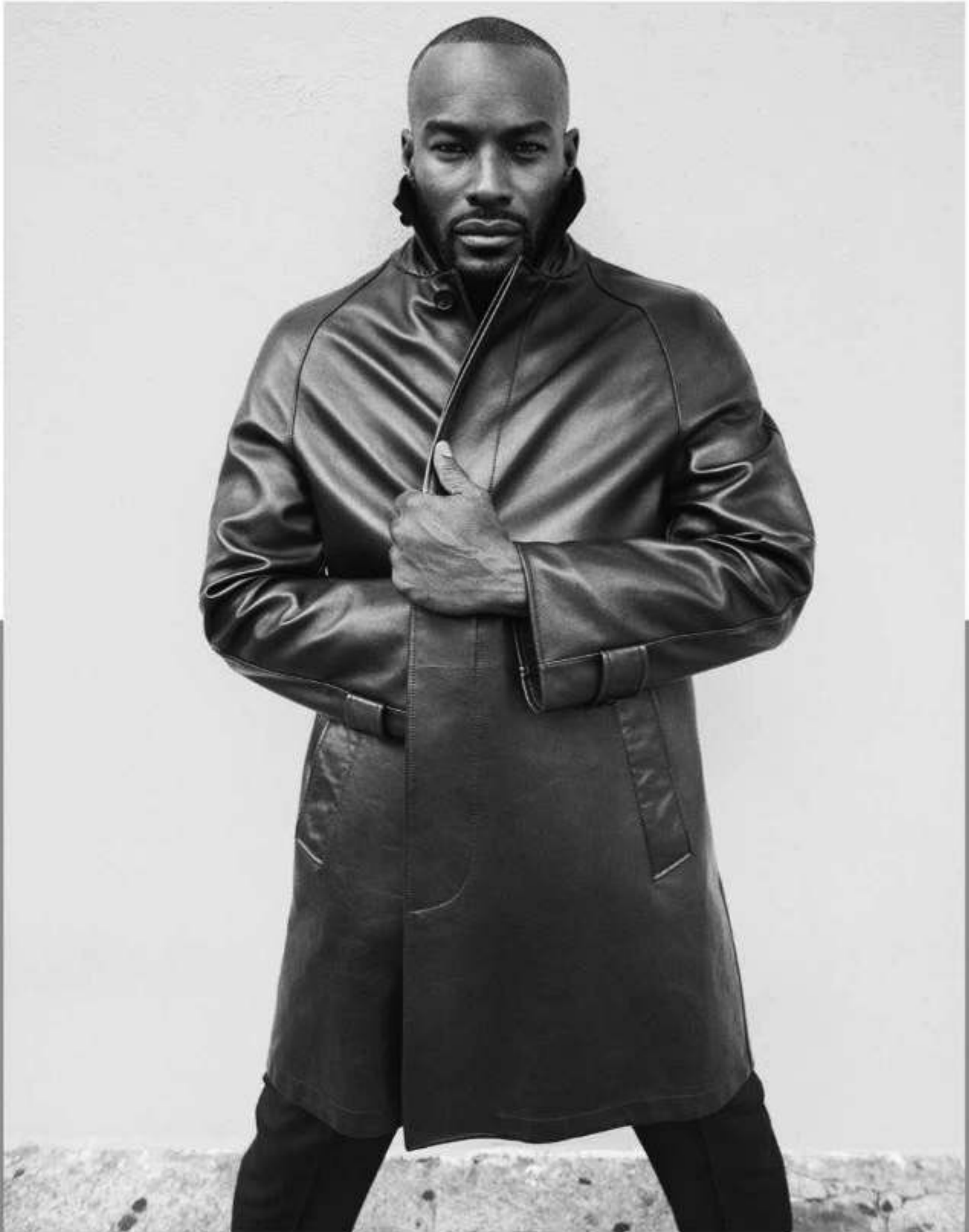
Photographs by
Victor Demarchelier

Styling by Nick Sullivan

Return A to Form

Tyson Beckford

Since hitting the scene in 1993, Beckford has become that rarest of things—a male supermodel—but don't confuse him with Zoolander. He advocates for victims of domestic violence and promotes diversity in the modeling industry. "Fashion is one of the most racial industries left," Beckford told *Esquire* in 2014. "You see a lot of diversity in TV shows, but not in fashion. You'd think there would be, because the consumer is of all colors."

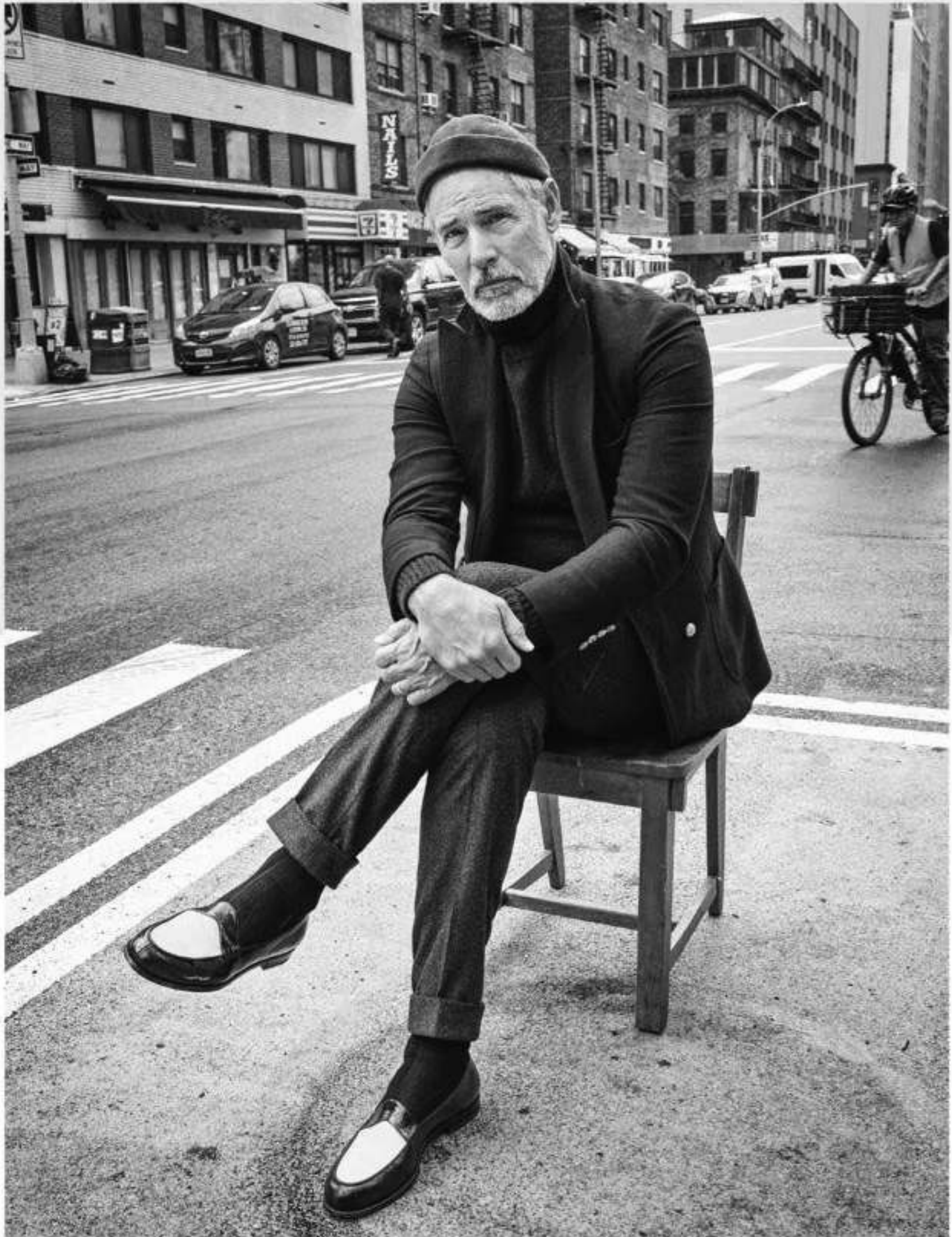


This page:
Coat (\$9,400) and trousers (\$900) by Brioni. Opposite: Shirt (\$365) and suspenders (\$149) by Paul Stuart; Rolex GMT Master Ref. 16753 "Root Beer" watch, courtesy of Analog/Shift; Panthère de Cartier cuff links (\$9,600) by Cartier; glasses (\$310) by Persol.



Hulse Bruce

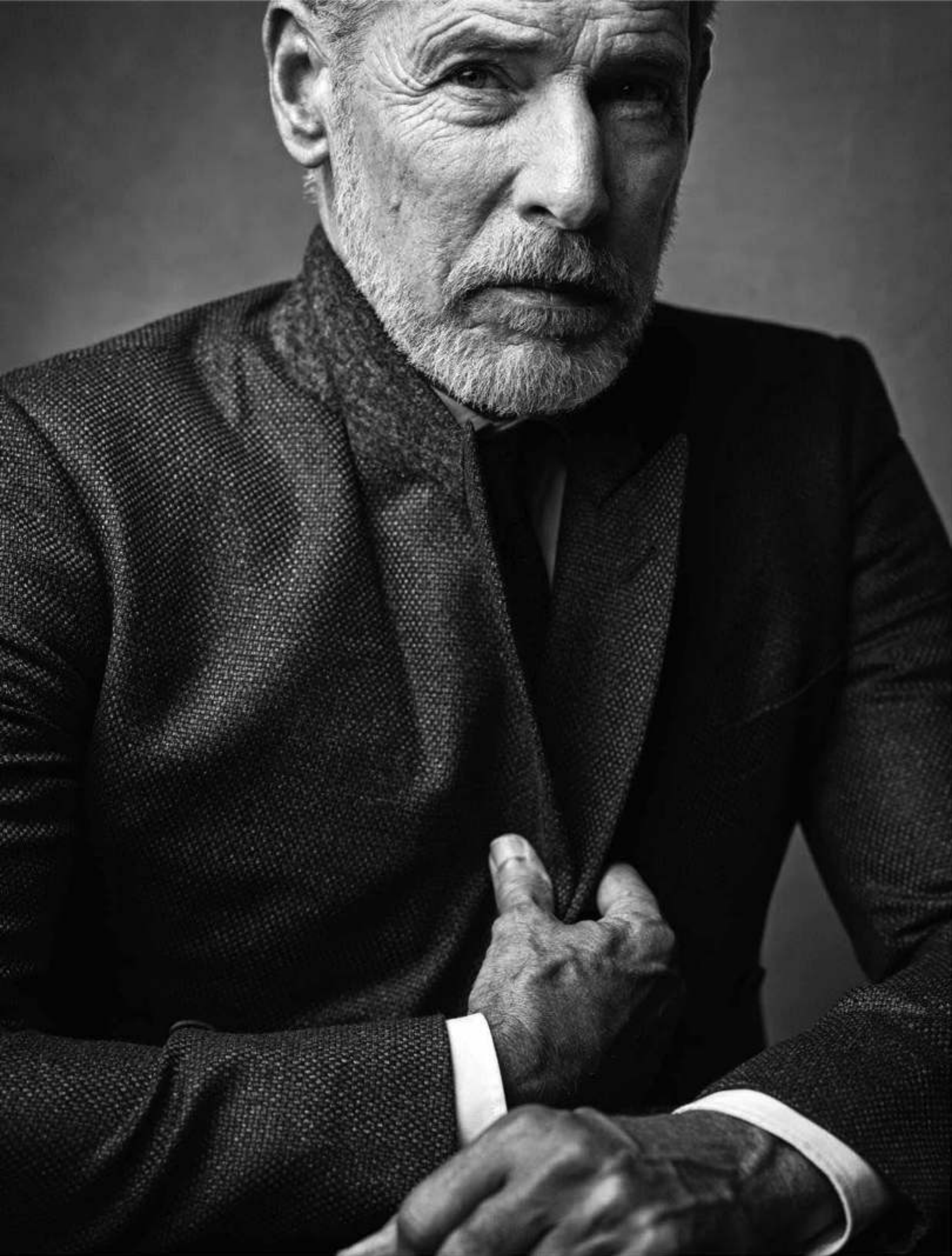
Hulse—who's worked with Paulina Porizkova and Cindy Crawford and fronted campaigns for Levi's and Calvin Klein—thinks guys need to suit up again. "Why don't more men dress like that? It's all there! It was there back in the '80s." He means pieces like a cashmere-wool Armani suit that he bought in 1982 but still wears today. "I'm always surprised at how many men have no idea of how to dress," he says. "And this is coming from a surfer."



This page:

Jacket (\$4,195) and turtleneck sweater (\$2,375) by Brunello Cucinelli; trousers (\$450) by Canali; loafers (\$895) by Christian Louboutin.
Opposite: Turtleneck sweater (\$698) and trousers (\$228) by Michael Kors; boots (\$815) by O'Keeffe; Navitimer 1 chronograph (\$6,040) by Breitling.





Tim Easton

No stranger to Esquire (he carried off a DB suit to perfection in our Hitchcock-inspired shoot “The Professionals” in April 2009), Easton’s also booked high-profile ads for labels like Canali and Ralph Lauren. The English model thinks most ’80s styles could hold up today, give or take a few tailoring tweaks. “I had some suits from back then that had shoulder pads,” he says. “Looking at those now . . . oh, dear.” —Brady Langmann



This page:

Jacket (\$2,495), vest (\$595), shirt (\$595), trousers (\$695), and tie by Ralph Lauren; loafers (\$820) by Fratelli Rossetti; Portofino automatic watch (\$11,400) by IWC. Opposite: Jacket (\$2,795), shirt (\$425), and tie (\$225) by Giorgio Armani.





This page,

from left: Coat (\$1,695) by Polo Ralph Lauren; jacket (\$2,495), trousers (\$695), and tie by Ralph Lauren; shirt (\$92) by Brooks Brothers; boots (\$815) by O'Keeffe; gloves (\$875) by Brunello Cucinelli. // Coat (\$4,195), suit (\$2,375), shirt (\$425), and tie (\$275) by Versace; shoes (\$525) by Tod's; gloves (\$475) by Hestra. // Coat (\$1,598) by Todd Snyder x Private White; suit (\$5,800) and shirt (\$750) by Stefano Ricci; tie (\$150) by Paul Stuart; shoes (\$160) by Kenneth Cole. Opposite: Coat (\$5,300), suit (\$4,700), and shirt (\$590) by Hermès; shoes (\$850) by Christian Louboutin; gloves (\$875) by Brunello Cucinelli; socks (\$20) by J. M. Dickens London.

FRIDAY BLACK

(continued from page 63)



she pets the face on the box. It hardly smears at all. “Weak,” she repeats.

“Got it,” I say.

I finish one burger, then I toss the second to the woman. She catches it, tears the paper away, and eats gleefully. My phone moves in my pocket and I grab it. I still have fifteen minutes, but it’s the store.

“We need you!” Richard screams.

“I just left,” I say, getting up and starting to walk.

“Duo just quit.”

“Oh.”

“He said he needed to go on break, and I said wait a few minutes, and then he just left. He’s gone.”

“I’m coming,” I say. I get up, walk toward

the escalator. I step to the conveyor and float down. Coming up on the opposite escalator is Duo. “Hungry?” I say.

“I couldn’t do it, man. That shit is sad,” Duo says.

I grunt something because I don’t have the words to tell him that it is sad but it’s all I have.

“It’s a nice coat,” he says. “But that’s it.”

“What?”

“The coat isn’t proof. She knows. You don’t need to, bro,” he says, turning around and rising up the escalator.

“Don’t do that,” I say. “Not to me.”

“Sorry.”

“Yeah,” I say, and then Duo flies away.

My third Black Friday, the company wasn’t doing great. There was no commission and no prize. I still outsold everybody.

Back in the store, there’s a new body in the body pile and in PoleFace™ a young woman is trying to kill Angela. She’s clawing and screaming, and even from the store entrance, I know what she wants. Angela is pinned against the wall where the SuperShells are. It looks like the girl is about to bite Angela’s nose off. Lance is rolling a teen toward the body pile, and Michel is helping a customer in the shoe section. Richard looks at me and points to Angela and the girl. I know what the girl wants.

“Help!” Angela yells, turning to look at me.

She has a reach between her and the girl, but she won’t last much longer. I turn and go to the back room. I look up at the only large Super-Shell parka hanging there. I pull it off the hanger. I go outside, and the girl can smell it. She looks in my direction and howls like a wolf.

I won’t be alone with this, she’s saying. They’ll like me now.

She rushes toward me. I dangle the coat out to the side like a matador. She runs toward it, and I let go and leap out of the way as she comes crashing through the parka. Then with the coat in her hands, she says, “Thank you,” in a raspy voice.

I watch her at the register. “Have a nice day,” Richard says, as he rings her up. She growls, then says, “You, too.” I punch back in at the computer. Angela puts a hand on my shoulder. “Thanks,” she says.

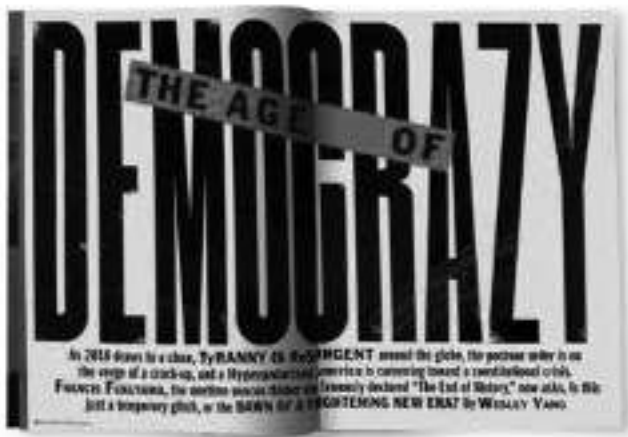
“Yup,” I say, and then I go back to my section.

A herd of shoppers stops in front of the store. They see the PoleFace™ we have left. I climb on top of my cabin. The people stampede. Some bodies fall and get up. Some bodies fall and stay down. They scream and hiss and claw and moan. I grab my reach and watch the blood-messed humans with money in their wallets and the Friday Black in their brains run toward me.

I smile out at the crowd. “How can I help you today?” They push and point in all directions. ■

THE AGE OF DEMOCRACY

(continued from page 89)



confident midcentury American consensus on the identity of the nation in which he was born—that the country has a single national identity expansive enough to encompass people of foreign descent like himself. Hearing him express it so bluntly in the context of today’s overheated discourse on identity reminds us just how rapidly the conceptual ground has shifted in a single lifetime.

Fukuyama went to a predominantly Jewish, strongly left-leaning private school in the Bronx, Riverdale Country Day. The progressivism of that time, the 1960s, insisted that America must be held to its own founding ideals. It was the next generation of academic rad-

icals that began to insist that those ideals were themselves part of the apparatus of oppression. Fukuyama’s father always told him that “being forced to speak only English in school was the best thing that ever happened to him,” because it placed him on an equal footing with his peers, and that being Japanese “never prevented me from doing anything I wanted to do.” The message was that his son too should approach the world with this expectation and not that he was psychically vulnerable to small, backhanded slights. One senses that Fukuyama has no regrets for embracing it.

After a short stint studying deconstruction with the postmodern thinkers Jacques Derrida and Roland Barthes in Paris and comparative literature with Paul de Man at Yale, Fukuyama switched to the government department at Harvard, where he worked with Samuel Huntington. While the peers he left behind in the humanities made the long march through the universities, promulgating the deconstructionist, feminist, postcolonial, multicultural, and queer theories that have unseated the Western canon within those institutions, Fukuyama and his friends, a group that included Paul Wolfowitz (another Bloom protégé) and Lewis “Scooter” Libby, went to Washington, D. C., to work in the Pentagon and the State Department.

The “End of History” thesis, stripped of its internal texture and ambivalence and transformed into a meme, can be said to have played a role in the creation of the Bush Doctrine. But Fukuyama broke with Wolfowitz and Libby over their advocacy of preemptive war in Iraq. If “The End of History?” was “Marxist” in its framework, Fukuyama said, his neocon friends had become “Leninist” in believing the U. S. had the power to hasten the movement of history through military force. He believes they drew the wrong lessons from the Reagan years, specifically the belief that undemocratic societies would simply default toward democracy if we toppled their dictators. The Trump years have, however, brought Fukuyama back into contact with some of his old cohort. At a recent private meeting, he ran into Bill Kristol and Max Boot. “Boot told me, ‘You realized the bankruptcy of conservatism long before I did.’”

Fukuyama was never an exponent of the globalist, open-borders cosmopolitanism with which “The End of History?” came to be associated among those who had never read it. He has always believed, for instance, that the nation-state is the “largest political unit that is viable in terms of actually delivering... stability and security” and that some irrational patriotic attachment to the state is a necessary aspect of sustaining its unity. In the last chap-

WATCH BEYOND



Bell & Ross
TIME INSTRUMENTS



ter of *Identity*, Fukuyama proposes compulsory national service to force Americans to encounter and cooperate with one another across class and party lines. He calls for the assimilation of immigrants into a culture that isn't afraid to say what it values and what it rejects.

And finally, while calling for the redress of injustices brought to light by social movements such as Black Lives Matter and #MeToo, he urges the Left to abandon a conception of identity that undermines "the American national story by emphasizing victimization" in favor of "a progressive narrative" that "can also be told about the overcoming of barriers and the ever-broadening circles of people whose dignity the country has recognized, based on its founding principles." All of which sounds eminently sensible, as many reviewers have largely acknowledged, but will anyone be listening? "I really wrote this book for an audience that is unlikely to heed it," Fukuyama observed.

IV.

A Curious Paradox

In the last paragraph of "The End of History?" Fukuyama posited that history's finale would be a "very sad time," in which the heroic exertions made on the road to attaining liberal democracy would give way to "the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands."

The first four sections of his 1992 book, *The End of History and the Last Man*, describe how the thymotic drive, together with science and technology, leads history toward what Hegel called "the universal and homogenous state" of liberal democracy. The fifth, final, and most intriguing section of the book—which is among the most misunderstood and brilliant books of its time—shows why even a liberal democracy that has crossed over into a "post-historical" condition can be undone from within by the very same energy that brought it into existence.

He argued that even though liberal democracy does a better job than any conceivable system of government at satisfying desire, reason, and *thymos* at once, this does not mean that the problem of *thymos* is therefore solved. This is because *thymos* is a volatile aspect of human nature that can be channeled into benign pursuits, constrained by institutions, pacified by abundance, or directed toward great and useful works, but it can never be (nor should we want it to be) permanently quelled.

"Human life, then, involves a curious paradox: It seems to require injustice, for the struggle against injustice is what calls forth what is highest in man," Fukuyama wrote, before speculating about the emergence of men and women raised in the bosom of liberal democracy who grow bored with its very tranquility and come to "struggle against that peace and prosperity, and against democracy."

This is the view from the End of History. ■

MENSCH AT WORK

(continued from page 84)



some projects along those lines.

But the rules of comedy have changed quite a bit in the last half decade, even in the last year. Jokes and characters that once seemed harmless might now generate social-media outrage, if not boycotts and involuntary sabbaticals. Carell's thoughts returned to Michael Scott. "Because *The Office* is on Netflix and replaying, a lot more people have seen it recently," he said. "And I think because of that there's been a resurgence in interest in the show, and talk about bringing it back. But apart from the fact that I just don't think that's a good idea, it might be impossible to do that show today and have people accept it the way it was accepted ten years ago. The climate's different. I mean, the whole idea of that character, Michael Scott, so much of it was predicated on inappropriate behavior. I mean, he's certainly not a model boss. A lot of what is depicted on that show is completely wrong-minded. That's the point, you know? But I just don't know how that would fly now. There's a very high awareness of offensive things today—which is good, for sure. But at the same time, when you take a character like that too literally, it doesn't really work."

At this point, Carell and I had been talking for more than two and a half hours. The restaurant had settled into a midafternoon lull. I was flagging, too. (I had a bad summer cold, and thanks to overdoses of Claritin and Mucinex, I kept hallucinating that Carell's face had turned into Al Pacino's from that movie where Pacino played the devil opposite Keanu Reeves.) But Carell was happy to keep going. He was concerned he hadn't been interesting enough—not true, and again telling—and the conversation turned to actors he admires. Besides the aforementioned Peter Sellers, he named Tina Fey and Julia Louis-Dreyfus. Of the latter, he said, "She's royalty. She's another one who can play a comedic character, who can go super-broad in any direction but you always believe it. That center of humanity is always there."

And that's where we ended things, a little more college talk and a few parting pleasantries aside—with Carell turning a spotlight on someone else, fittingly enough. ■

MILKING THE SYSTEM

(continued from page 97)



and the global glut of milk that keeps prices low make hiring outside of the readily available pool of immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala unthinkable.

"Eighty percent of the Latino population out here in northwest Iowa is undocumented," estimated one dairy farmer in the area who knows the Nunes family and often sees them while buying hay in nearby Rock Valley. "It would be great if we had enough unemployed Americans in northwest Iowa to milk the cows. But there's just not. We have a very tight labor pool around here." This person said the system was broken, leaving dairy farmers no choice. "I would love it if all my guys could be legal."

The farmer explained that all the dairies require their workers to provide evidence of their legal status and pay the required state and federal taxes. But it's an open secret that the system is built on easily obtained fraudulent documents. "I just look at the document—Hey, this looks like a good driver's license, permanent resident card, whatever the case is—and that's what you go with," the farmer said. A second northwest-Iowa dairy farmer who knows the Nunes family told me, "They show you a Social Security card, we take out Social Security taxes. Where'd they get the card? I have no idea." I asked what the chances are that a farm the size of NuStar uses only fully legal dairy workers. "It's next to impossible," the first dairy farmer said. "There's no dang way." This was speculation, but here is the logic that informed it: Most workers start at fourteen or fifteen dollars an hour, the first farmer said. If dairies had to use legal labor, they would likely have to raise that to eighteen or twenty dollars, and many dairies wouldn't survive. "People are going to go broke," the farmer said. The story was similar in the poultry, meatpacking, and other agricultural industries in the area.

What this person was describing was hard to wrap my head around. In the heart of Steve King's district, a place that is more pro-Trump than almost any other patch of America, the economy is powered by workers that King and Trump have threatened to arrest and deport. I checked Anthony Nunes Jr.'s campaign-donor history. The only federal candidate he has ever donated to, besides his son, is Steve King (\$250 in 2012). He also gives to the local Republican party of Osceola County, which, re-

cords show, transforms money into King's congressional campaigns.

The absurdity of this situation—funding and voting for politicians whose core promise is to implement immigration policies that would destroy their livelihoods—has led some of the Republican-supporting dairymen to rethink their political priorities. “Everyone’s got this feeling that in agriculture, we, the employers, are going to be criminalized,” the first area dairy farmer I had spoken to said. “I’ve talked to Steve King face-to-face, and that guy doesn’t care one iota about us. He does not care. He believes that if you have one undocumented worker on your place, you should probably go to prison and we need to get as many undocumented people out of here as possible.” (A spokesman for King did not respond to multiple interview requests.) The second dairy farmer, speaking of Trump’s and King’s views on undocumented immigrants, added, “They want to send ’em all back to Mexico and have them start over. What a crock of malarkey. Who’s gonna milk the cows?”

After my encounter with Anthony Jr., I met Jerry Nelson, the *Dairy Star* reporter, down at the Lantern. He wasn’t surprised by the hostility. Think about the story from the family’s perspective, he told me: “They are immigrants and Devin is a very strong supporter of Mr. Trump, and Mr. Trump wants to shut down all of the immigration, and here is his family benefiting from immigrant labor,” documented or not.

Brenda Hoyer came by and said hello. I told her that I hoped it was okay to use her coffee shop for interviews. “Sure,” she said, “if you’re kind and truthful and honest.”

I asked Nelson what would happen, hypothetically, if ICE raided every dairy farm in the area tomorrow. “It would be a disaster for the dairies,” he said. “They would suddenly have nobody to milk or feed the cows. I don’t know what they would do.” The bell on the Lantern’s front door rang, and Hoyer huddled in the corner with a chubby man with dark, curly hair. After a few minutes, she came back over.

“You have a phone call,” she told Nelson.

“A phone call?” he asked. It made no sense. Anybody who knew where he was would call his cell. She asked him to come with her. A few minutes later, he returned in a panic and gathered his belongings. “We gotta go!” he told me.

On the way out I talked to Hoyer. Her demeanor had changed. I asked if I could still talk to Gene, her husband. She said it was no longer possible. I had to leave the coffee shop, she told me. “This article,” she said, “is going to destroy families.” As I walked out, I noticed the mysterious chubby man eyeing me.

Nelson was freaked out. There was no phone call, of course. The mysterious chubby man had asked Hoyer to have us ejected. According to Nelson, she had told him that an article about dairies and immigration would “destroy our lives out here.” It was an incredibly sensitive

subject. “It’s kind of a third rail among dairy farmers,” Nelson said. “Whenever I go to a dairy farm, I never ask about the immigrant-labor thing unless they bring it up themselves.”

Later Nelson left me a voice mail in which he tried to explain the reaction. “Dairy farmers are very deeply patriotic and American, and yet here they are hiring these people who are not American,” he said. “And maybe they feel a little shame over that or feel like they are exploiting [people] and they don’t want that to come to light.”

Mayor Johnson was concerned about the run-in with Anthony Jr. He had suggested that I knock on the man’s door, and now he felt like the awkward encounter was his fault. He said he’d once had his own strange experience. A few years ago, the mayor reported one of Anthony Jr.’s workers, who was Hispanic, to the sheriff’s office because Johnson believed the worker’s yard was so messy it constituted a violation of the city property code. According to Johnson, Anthony Jr. called the sheriff on the worker’s behalf and insisted that the only reason anyone had complained was that they were prejudiced. (Several people I talked to in Sibley assumed Anthony Jr. himself is Mexican, not Portuguese, and he has no doubt experienced discrimination himself.)

The mayor, though, was impressively enlightened when it came to Sibley’s immigrant population. Perhaps because of the Nunes debacle, he invited me to his office to talk to him and the city administrator, Glenn Anderson. “I told him to go see Nunes, and that didn’t go very good,” he told Anderson as we sat down.

Anderson voted for Trump, but he exploded every Trump myth about immigration. The rise in Sibley’s Hispanic population hasn’t been accompanied by a rise in crime. Most of the crime in Sibley is connected to drug-related traffic stops on Highway 60, he said. Kevin Wollmuth, a deputy in the county sheriff’s office, told me that the rise in immigration “doesn’t have any bearing on our crime rate at all.” Worried that the community is underrepresented in city government, Anderson has tried to get the Hispanic population to run for city council, though without much success yet. He had no interest in knowing what anyone’s immigration status was. “If I see something, I’m not going to report it to ICE,” he said. “It’s not my job.” He added, “That’s not to say that everybody in town that lives here is legal. We don’t go knocking door-to-door to say, ‘Are you, are you not?’” He had much the same view of the local immigrant population as Rob Tibbetts, Mollie’s father, who two days before had said at a memorial service for his daughter, “The Hispanic community are Iowans. They have the same values as Iowans. As far as I’m concerned, they’re Iowans with better food.”

Sibley is emblematic of a lot of small towns in Iowa that are dependent on an agricultural economy: They know they cannot survive

without immigrants, and they have worked hard to integrate the foreign-born population, despite the legal limbo faced by employers and employees alike. When I asked what would happen if ICE turned its attention to Sibley, the mayor shuddered. Anderson noted that he has never seen an ICE agent in the four years he’s been at his job. He didn’t seem eager to get to know any. “If they come in town, then we have to talk about it, find out what’s going on, why, whether to participate, and make sure our town’s not disrupted,” he said. I asked him what he thought of King’s view that all undocumented immigrants should be deported. He paused and said, diplomatically, “He has a right to his opinion.”

When I walked in the front door of the mayor’s office, I had noticed a mud-spattered white Yukon parked outside. As I was driving to my next interview, I looked in the rearview mirror and noticed the white Yukon again. I drove aimlessly, crisscrossing streets from one end of town to the other. Everywhere I turned, the white Yukon appeared. I was being followed. When I turned the tables and followed the car back, it raced off. We played cat and mouse like that for more than an hour until I finally got a good glimpse of the driver: It was a middle-aged woman with curly, red hair who had a cell phone stuck to her left ear. The cat-and-mouse game started to feel a little dangerous, so I left town for a couple hours. On my way back into Sibley, the same car passed me on the highway. This time, the chubby man from the Lantern was driving. He smiled and waved.

Or maybe I’d made a mistake. White SUVs are common. Could I really be sure that was the same guy and the same Yukon? A woman was driving the car earlier; now it was a man. It didn’t make sense. Maybe I was just being paranoid.

I had a particularly sensitive interview that afternoon with a source who I knew would be taking a risk by talking to me about immigration and labor at NuStar. When I arrived, we talked for a few minutes before the source’s cell phone suddenly rang. The conversation seemed strained. “*Sí, aquí está,*” the source said. I learned that on the other end of the phone was a man named Flavio, who worked at NuStar. Somehow Flavio knew exactly where I was and whom I was talking to. He warned my source to end the conversation. Not only was I being followed, but I was also being watched, and my sources were being contacted by NuStar.

I left and drove to the local grocery store, where I parked in the open, hoping to draw out whoever was tailing me. I suddenly noticed a man in jeans, a work shirt, and a baseball cap pulled down low. He was talking on his cell phone and walking suspiciously. Was he watching me? I held up a camera to take pictures and he darted away. I followed. His car was parked haphazardly on the side of the road half a block away. He got in and took off while I followed. It was a dark Chevrolet Colorado pickup truck—with California license plates. I ran the license-plate

number through a database. The car was registered in Tulare, California.

On December 13, 2011, ICE agents raided the home, business, and farms belonging to Mike Millenkamp, a dairy farmer in eastern Iowa. It was the beginning of a seven-year ordeal that would upend Millenkamp's life. At the time of the raid, he had just four employees. Three of them were undocumented. ICE hauled away his business records, arrested his employees, and launched an aggressive investigation. After sifting through his files, the government said that about three quarters of the thirty-eight workers he had employed over a four-year period were undocumented. Millenkamp pleaded guilty to "illegal alien harboring" and agreed to pay \$250,000 in fines and penalties. Despite a relatively clean record, he was sentenced to three months in federal prison and three years of supervised probation, which just ended this past summer.

Prosecutors used Millenkamp to send a warning to other Iowa dairy farmers. As part of his plea deal, they forced him to submit an op-ed to major Iowa newspapers describing his experience. His article, which was preapproved by the local U.S. attorney's office, appeared in *The Des Moines Register* on June 29, 2016. "If you employ someone you know is not legal, you are committing a federal crime," he wrote.

The Millenkamp prosecution seemed unjust—capricious. And it helped explain the reaction I received in Sibley. "That's why they are so concerned," Nelson told me when I mentioned that I was being followed and that my sources were being harassed. "They think you are going to mess with their lifestyle or take it away, interfere with it."

He and I discussed the ethics of reporting on immigration and politics. What if an article triggered an ICE raid? Was there even a story here, anyway? Devin Nunes was the public figure at the heart of this, and he had no financial interest in his parents' Iowa dairy operation. On the other hand, he and his parents seemed to have concealed basic facts about the family's move to Iowa. It was suspicious. And his mom, who co-owns the Sibley dairy, is also the treasurer of his campaign. In 2007, Devin and his wife, Elizabeth, used the NuStar dairy's Iowa post-office-box address on a filing with the SEC regarding a financial holding company the family co-owns, even though Devin and Elizabeth live in California.

And even without the connection to Devin, who is one of Trump's most important allies, there was a bigger story. The American dairy industry is at the center of an international trade war. Trump frequently attacks Canada for protecting its dairy farmers. "We love Canada," Trump said on September 18. "They cannot continue to charge us 300 percent for dairy products." At a hearing on the issue in March, Nunes attacked Canada for "getting away with murder in their dairy industry." Canadian officials have responded by noting that the Amer-

ican dairy industry is artificially protected by both federal subsidies—NuStar, according to figures based on USDA numbers, has received \$140,938 since it started—and its reliance on low-wage, undocumented labor. "The industry itself in the United States has admitted they wouldn't be viable if they couldn't use undocumented workers," a former Canadian trade minister, Ed Fast, recently complained to the country's *Financial Post*. The same could be said for much of the broader American agricultural industry—from poultry to meatpacking to grape-picking to cotton—which represents 6 percent of the U.S. economy.

There is massive political hypocrisy at the center of this: Trump's and King's rural-farm supporters embrace anti-immigrant politicians while employing undocumented immigrants. The greatest threat to Iowa dairy farmers, of course, is not the press. It's Donald Trump.

But that's not how the Nunes family apparently saw it. On my third day in Sibley, I became used to the cars tailing me. In the morning, I was followed by the redhead in the muddy white Yukon. In the afternoon, there was a shift change and I was followed by a different, later-model white Yukon. I stuck a GoPro on my dashboard and left it running whenever I parked my car. When I reviewed the videos, one of the two Yukons could always be seen slowly circling as I ate lunch or interviewed someone.

There was no doubt about why I was being followed. According to two sources with firsthand knowledge, NuStar did indeed rely, at least in part, on undocumented labor. One source, who was deeply connected in the local Hispanic community, had personally sent undocumented workers to Anthony Nunes Jr.'s farm for jobs. "I've been there and bring illegal people," the source said, asserting that the farm was aware of their status. "People come here and ask for work, so I send them over there." When I asked how many people working at dairies in the area are documented citizens, the source laughed. "To be honest? None. One percent, maybe."

The source added, "Who is going to go work in the dairy? Who? Tell me who? If people have papers, they are going to go to a good company where you can get benefits, you can get Social Security, you can get all the stuff. Who is going to go [work in the dairy] to make fourteen dollars an hour doing that thing without vacation time, without 401(k), without everything?"

A second source, who claimed to be an undocumented immigrant, also claimed to have worked at NuStar for several years, only recently leaving the dairy, which this source estimated employed about fifteen people. (As a rule of thumb, dairies need one employee for every eighty to one hundred cows, so fifteen workers would be a lean operation given the dairy's two-thousand-head herd.) The former NuStar employee, who is middle-aged, claimed to have arrived in the United States from Guatemala in 2011. This source was nervous to talk to me and

did not want to speculate about the immigration status of fellow employees. "I worked for Anthony for four years," the source said, speaking in Spanish through a translator. "First milking cows and after that feeding the baby calves." It was "very hard work," but the employee and others were "treated well."

A third source, who claimed to work at a nearby dairy, not NuStar, explained what the local dairy jobs are like. This source claimed to be eighteen years old and to have come from Guatemala two years ago, after paying smugglers \$10,000, raised by extended family, to provide transit through Mexico and across the U.S. border. The source said the pay at the dairy was fourteen dollars an hour for milking cows twelve hours a day, six days a week, which, after taxes—the source had provided the dairy with a fake Social Security number—worked out to about \$1,600 every two weeks. When I asked how many dairy workers in the area are undocumented, the source replied, "Todos"—everybody.

When I left the interview with the third source, I got in my car and reviewed the GoPro footage. The car had been circled by the newer white Yukon the entire time I was gone. I decided I needed to get out of Sibley for a while and get some advice about how to tell this story ethically. So I drove to Worthington, Minnesota, to meet a priest.

Worthington is just over the border, less than thirty minutes away. I found Father Jim Callahan at his kitchen table, wearing a Hawaiian shirt and chain-smoking Winstons. Worthington, which is five times the size of Sibley, is a hub for Hispanic immigrants in the Midwest. The influence is unmistakable as you drive down the main street, which is dominated by stores and restaurants that cater to the Hispanic population. More than 70 percent of the students in the local elementary school speak Spanish as their first language. Callahan, whose church, St. Mary's, conducts Mass in both English and Spanish, estimates that 90 percent of the Hispanic population in the city is undocumented.

Trump's election was a seismic event here. "Absolute fear" is how Callahan described the post-election atmosphere. "Some people were saying they're going back. Then we saw spikes in domestic abuse, alcoholism, drug addiction." In December 2016, he declared St. Mary's a sanctuary church, which means it shelters undocumented immigrants and protects them from arrest and deportation. "ICE has been active," he said. "They're in town two or three times a week." He added, "But they haven't targeted farms as such yet."

I laid out the facts I had uncovered in Sibley, including the intimidation of sources and the Devin Nunes angle, and asked him for advice. "I'd tell that story," he said. He paused and added, "We're a sanctuary church, if you need a place to stay. You're safe here!"

On the way back to Sibley, I stopped at Hawk-eye Point, the highest elevation (1,670 feet) in Iowa, and flipped through my GoPro videos

and pictures, zooming in on the drivers and cars. I clicked over to Facebook and searched for any Nuneses in Sibley, Iowa. I saw some familiar faces. It all started to click. There was the redheaded woman from the muddy white Yukon; she was Devin's sister-in-law, Lori Nunes. There was the chubby guy with curly hair from the Lantern who had also waved at me from the same Yukon; he was Devin's brother and Lori's husband, Anthony Nunes III. There was the woman from the newer Yukon. I zoomed in on a picture of the car's license plate: NUSTAR. Not very subtle. The driver was Devin's mother and campaign treasurer, Toni Dian Nunes. The guy in the pickup truck with California plates was, of course, Devin's dad, Anthony Jr.

I learned that Anthony Jr. was seemingly starting to panic. The next day, the 2009 *Dairy Star* article about NuStar, the one that made me think the Nuneses were hiding something and that had led me to Sibley in the first place, was removed from the *Dairy Star's* website. Anthony Jr., I was told, had called the newspaper and demanded that the editors take the nine-year-old story down. They relented. The article wasn't captured by the Internet Archive, which provides cached versions of billions of web pages, and it can no longer be found anywhere online. According to someone who talked to him that day, Anthony Jr. allegedly said that he was hiring a lawyer and that he was convinced that his dairy would soon be raided

by ICE. (Is it possible the Nuneses have nothing to be seriously concerned about? Of course, but I never got the chance to ask because Anthony Jr. and Representative Nunes did not respond to numerous requests for interviews.)

I hope ICE stays the hell away from Sibley. The immigration system that powers Iowa's dairies is undoubtedly broken. The dairy owners live with the ever-present fear of becoming the next Mike Millenkamp. The undocumented workers live in the shadows and, especially in the era of Trump and zero tolerance, constantly fear arrest and deportation. Meanwhile, Republicans in Congress, including Devin Nunes (per his CaRepublican website), have decided that unwavering support for ICE is crucial to their efforts to attack Democrats and help the GOP keep control of the House of Representatives after the midterm elections. Naturally, the prospect of passing legislation that would create a guest-worker program for dairy workers who are undocumented—an idea overwhelmingly supported by the industry—is a fantasy in the current environment; Trump, King, and their allies describe such policies as “amnesty.” The Washington debate is completely detached from what is actually going on in places like Sibley.

The relationship between the Iowa dairy farmers and their undocumented employees is indeed fraught. I cringed at the way some of the dairy farmers talked about their “help.” When I asked one dairy farmer, who admitted many of

the farm's workers are undocumented but who also inexplicably claimed to be “very supportive of Trump” and “kind of in favor of his immigration laws,” what a solution would be, this farmer suggested a guest-worker program but compared the workers to farm animals. “It's kind of like when you bought cattle out of South Dakota, or anyplace, you always had to have the brand inspected and you had to have the brand sheet when you hauled them across the state line,” the farmer said. “Well, what's the difference? Why don't they have to report to the city hall or county office and say we're here working and everybody knows where they're at?”

As bad as this paternalistic and exploitative system can be, Nelson and the dairy farmers insisted that most dairies are family-owned and -operated and that the workers, documented or not, often become part of the family. This somewhat clichéd view can be overblown and sometimes used to defend an unfair system, but the sentiment helped me understand Brenda Hoyer's chilling warning to me at the Lantern. During her son's wake, four Hispanic employees from their former dairy came to express their condolences. They had worked there so long that their children refer to her husband, Gene, as Grandpa.

According to someone he told the story to, Gene received them and thanked them. “I've lost a son,” he said to the four men, “but I still have four others.” ■

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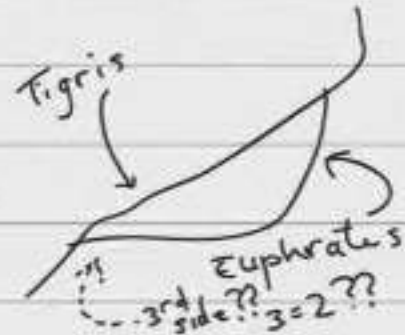
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WHAT I LEARNED IN COLLEGE

By Charlie Hankin

Wow. Time sure does fly, doesn't it? One full decade has passed since I graduated with highest honors from a prestigious university. But what remains of this elite education ten years later? To find out, I've written down every single fact I can remember from every single undergraduate class I took.

The Fertile Crescent is the location of mankind's emergence from the darkness of prehistory, and not, as I may have said in the past, a "good name" for a "sex-themed bar I'm opening on campus." The Fertile Crescent is bounded on two sides by the Tigris and the Euphrates. I think there was a third side, but now I'm not sure—that seems less like an Intro History thing and more like an Intro Geometry thing. (I failed Intro Geometry.)



Newton wrote down three famous laws. One: Objects in motion tend to stay in motion. Two: You mess with the bull, you get the horns. Three: I forget—so I guess "famous" was a bit of an overstatement, wasn't it, Newton? Fun fact: I owe my A in Physics to studying with my buddy Warren Trent '07, who taught me all about "soh cah toh," "the unit circle," and "drunk boxing in the Sigma House basement."

"Socrates is a man." I feel like there's more to his life story, but they hit that particular fact pretty hard in my Philosophy class for some reason. All men are...mortal? Immortal? One of the two, for sure. They also really hammered home that if P, then Q. On the other hand, if not P, then what? I guess just deal with it and stop obsessing over P already. I mean, come on. Get over it.



"The Communist Manifesto" was the brainchild of Marx and Engels. It teaches that the means of production means something, probably to the proletariat? Don't quote me on that—at this point I was pretty deep into drunk boxing.

Manifest Destiny was the belief that American expansion wouldn't be complete until the western frontier had been pushed all the way to the Pacific. I know it sounds like a great band name, but if the rest of the guys aren't down, you have to let it go, or risk getting voted out of your own band (despite being the only one with a key to the rehearsal space in the Sigma House basement).



Java is an "object-oriented language." This is useful for myriad tasks, such as "learning Java in Intro Comp Sci and never using it again." Also, the username "admin" and password "password" get you access to the dean's private network. This is useful for twedking your GPA so you graduate with highest honors, and for deleting all the records of that time you got in trouble for opening a sex-themed bar on campus.

Well, that's it. Every single fact I remember from every class I took in college, and, if you ask me, \$130,000 well spent. But am I missing anything very important? No.



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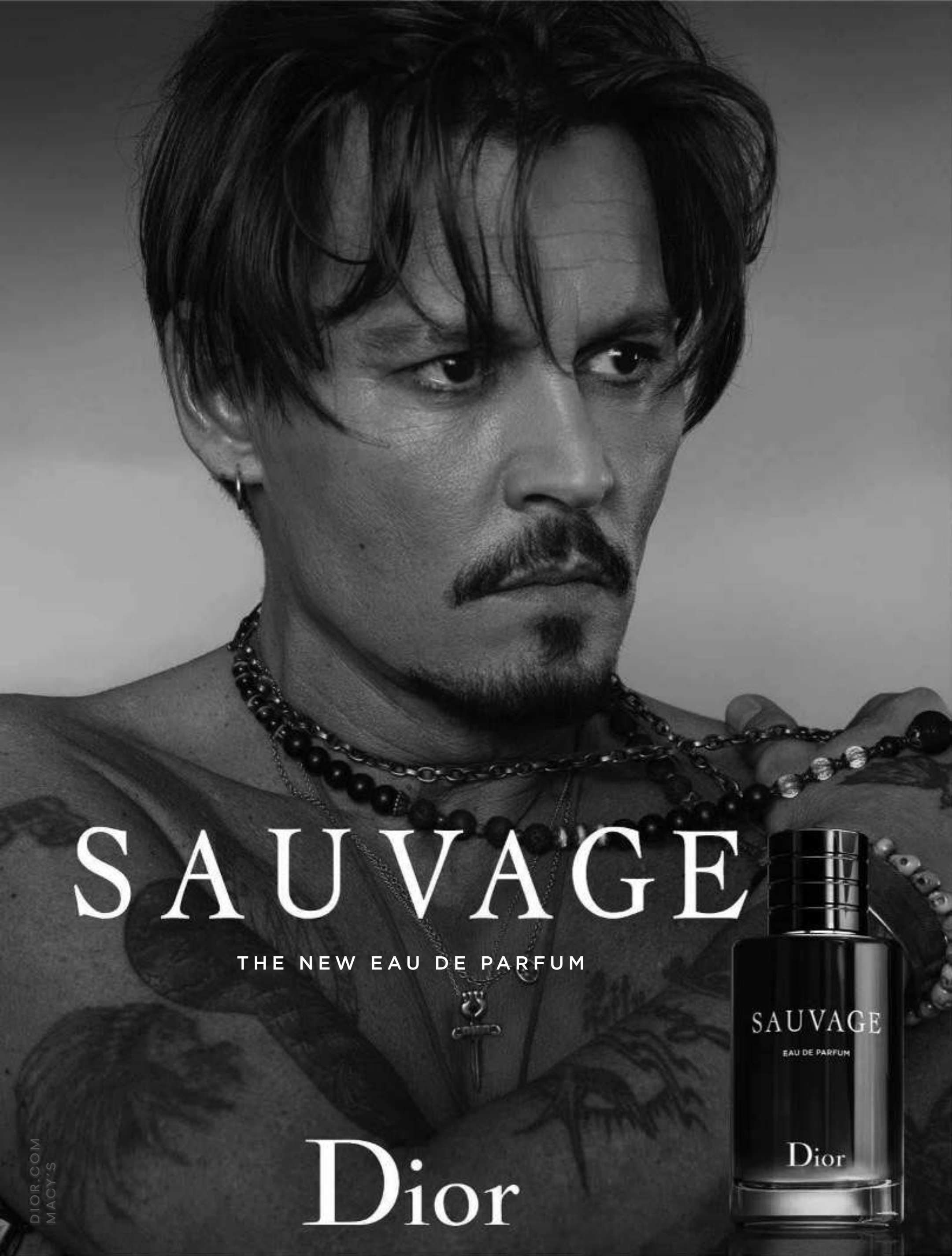
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