

Jamie

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT

HOW DO YOU MOVE ON FROM BEING CHRISTIAN GREY? BY STARRING IN THE MOST HOTLY ANTICIPATED BIOPIC OF THE YEAR, OF COURSE. JAMIE DORNAN TELLS **SCARLETT RUSSELL** HOW HE FINALLY MADE IT IN HOLLYWOOD – BUT WHY HE'S HAPPIEST AT HOME IN THE COTSWOLDS WITH HIS FAMILY

Photographs **Dham Srfuengfung** Styling **Jason Hughes**

You know you've reached a peak fashion-magazine moment when you're looking at a mood board of Jamie Dornan's beards. Prior to our cover shoot, extensive discussions took place about the actor's trademark facial hair. Would a smidge of stubble or a wild and full beard best suit the chunky autumn Hugo Boss knits and tailored Hermès wool? Such is the attention to detail that comes with today's photoshoots — and the fascination over a universally desired movie star such as Dornan. The idea of a “beard board”, however, makes the 36-year-old actor drop his head into his hands in disbelief. “No, please. That's so embarrassing,” he says. “And it makes me look like a mega-prick.”

During his twenties, Dornan was a successful male model, dubbed the “golden torso” by The New York Times. Google will throw up dozens of images of his oiled abs posing alongside Eva Mendes (“The best, so funny”) and Kate Moss (“Very shy, or maybe she just didn't want to talk to me”) for Calvin Klein, or Gisele draped across his lap for Aquascutum. A decade on, he has played the serial killer everyone secretly fancied in The Fall on BBC2, the billionaire bondage fetishist everyone openly fancied in the Fifty Shades trilogy, a Czech soldier in Anthropoid and an Irish soldier in The Siege of Jadotville. Today he is promoting three films, including A Private War, the gut-wrenching biopic of Marie Colvin, the late Sunday Times war correspondent. Dornan plays Paul Conroy, the photographer and friend who worked by her side, and calls the film “the most emotional job I will ever do”. The golden torso is now box-office gold. And, as is evident within seconds of meeting him, he is as far from being a “mega-prick” as can be.

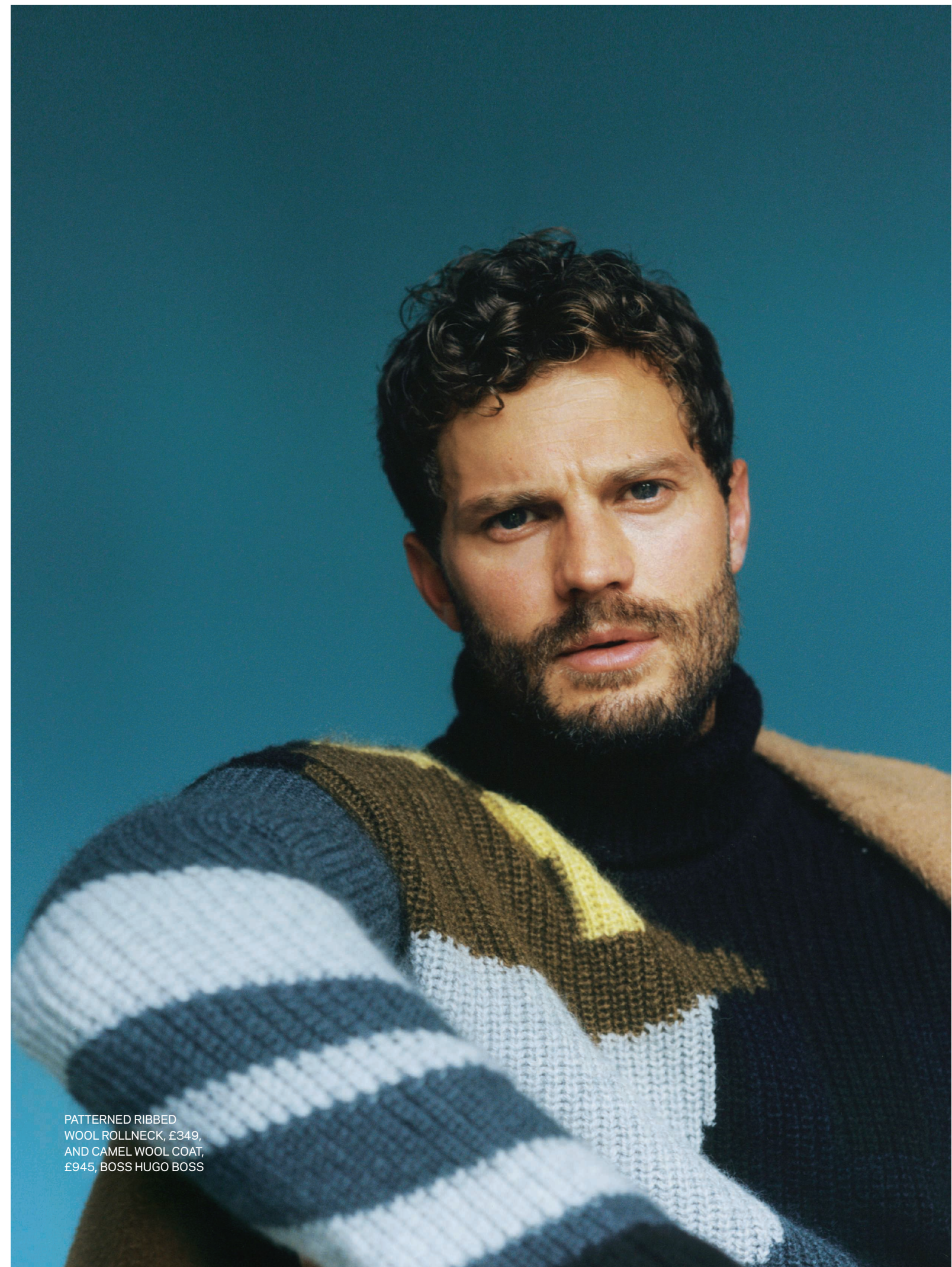
Dornan, who was born and raised in Northern Ireland (the accent is still strong), is a keen golfer and suggested our interview

take place in the City at an interactive golf bar where you drive into gigantic screens. But a last-minute audition cropped up, so instead we meet at the Bafta members' bar in central London. Dornan and his full beard arrive early. He's wearing glasses and headphones and has a ruck-sack strapped over each arm like a happy hipster tourist. He can't decide between coffee or water, so orders a bloody mary. He's not sure how successful his audition was. “It was with a very cool director whose whole thing is improv,” he says. “I'm terrible at auditions. Without sounding like a c***, I haven't done it for a while, but some directors demand it and I respect that. It was fun to make a fool of myself, and I'm sure I'll never hear from him again.”

Dornan is the most self-deprecating and cheerful movie star you could meet. He laughs constantly and loves poking fun at the absurdity of fashion and celebrity, such as the time several years ago when he and some friends tried to get into a party he was supposed to be on the list for, but were turned away at the door and so ended up “drinking tins of beer in an alley. Finally, someone called me and got us in,” he says. “Vivienne Westwood was there and a lot of people wearing weird shit. Then we left.” His core group of male friends have been in his life for decades, from playing rugby at school in Belfast to raising kids in the Cotswolds.

Dornan lives in Gloucestershire with his wife, Amelia “Millie” Warner — a musician and composer whom Dornan met at a party in 2010 and married in 2013 — and their two daughters, Dulcie, 4, and Elva, 2. A third baby is on the way. He insists his life is decidedly unglamorous: a juggle of filming, reading scripts, school drop-offs and village fetes. “Leonard won best in show twice,” he says proudly, showing me pictures on his phone of the black Labrador they got in 2016, in the week Leonard Cohen died. “That's about as eventy as the Cotswolds gets.”

There's still a smattering of showbiz surrounding Dornan, however. Rafe Spall is a



PATTERNED RIBBED
WOOL ROLLNECK, £349,
AND CAMEL WOOL COAT,
£945, BOSS HUGO BOSS



THIS PAGE WOOL
CREWNECK JUMPER,
£600, BRIONI. WOOL
DOUBLE-BREASTED
COAT, £1,275,
PAUL SMITH. TWILL
TROUSERS, £700, GUCCI
OPPOSITE WOOL AND
MOHAIR BUTTON-
NECK JUMPER, £1,110,
AND WOOL AND MOHAIR
DOUBLE-BREASTED
COAT, £4,150, HERMES.
TROUSERS, £405,
LORO PIANA



THIS PAGE CASHMERE
CREWNECK, £850, AND
WOOL TROUSERS,
£788, SANTONI. CAMEL
WOOL AND CASHMERE
DOUBLE-BREASTED
COAT, £2,400, DIOR
HOMME. HOUNDSTOOTH
COAT, £1,070, DRIES VAN
NOTEN; MRPORTER.COM.
STRIPY MOHAIR SCARF,
£250, MARNI
OPPOSITE CHECK WOOL
COAT, £2,595, PRADA;
BROWNSFASHION.COM

neighbour — he, Dornan and their wives are godparents to each other's children — and he's great friends with Sam Taylor-Johnson, who directed him in *Fifty Shades of Grey*, and her husband, Aaron. The three of them hung out at the Toronto Film Festival last month, where Dornan also ran into Keira Knightley, whom he dated for two years from 2003. "We're great when we see each other," he says. "It's all hugs and mates and chatting about kids now." Eddie Redmayne is another close friend. "I spoke to Eddie yesterday," he says. They met in the mid-Noughties and, along with Tom Sturridge, formed a Brit pack of model/actors. Redmayne and Dornan even lived together in LA for a few months. "Whoring ourselves out to try to get work," he laughs. "It was a very unsuccessful but socially very fun time."

Dornan grew up near Belfast, in Holywood, Co Down, with two older sisters, Jessica, now 39, and Liesa, 41. Their father, Jim, is an obstetrician and gynaecologist. "I had a very nice upbringing. Textbook middle-class," says Dornan. They were, and still are, a close family and hated confrontation. "We dealt with conflict by writing letters to each other. If we'd had a fight or there was something that needed saying, we'd write it down and slip the letter under their bedroom door. They'd respond with a letter, then we'd all go down and sit in the sitting room and everything would be fine." Odd? Perhaps. "But we never saw that as a unique thing," he says. "You can be way more expressive in a letter." How did he learn to talk about his feelings? "I don't think I have," he laughs.

His mother, Lorna, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer when Dornan was 14. She died shortly after his 16th birthday. He looks back on her death as a "blur", but recognises the immense impact it had on him. "It totally derails you and ends up having a huge bearing on who you become," he says. "I probably still feel like a kid. I don't think I really knew what the effects were at the time, but I do know I'm definitely a different man today as a result of losing my mother so young. I think about her every day. We were as close as a mother and son could be." He and his dad often talk about what she would think of Dornan's acting career. "My dad loves the industry I've ended up in and is tickled by it all," he says. "My mum would love the glitziness of it.

She was glamorous, she always looked stylish and immaculate, so getting dressed up for premieres — the necessary part of my job that isn't the most thrilling for me — would have been the thing she'd have got the most out of."

Dornan lights up when talking about his daughters. "Being a dad is the best," he says. "I feel a healthy and lovely duty to provide for my kids, and I really like it. It suits me. Making my kids happy is a good thing for my wife and me to be driven by." I read that he tells his wife he loves her 10 times a day. He laughs. "Did I say 10? That's a lot. Certainly there's never a day that I don't tell her I love her." The couple make a point of date nights and one holiday a year without the children: "A very important thing to do." He says they have had only one — one! — argument in nine years. "We get frustrated at times, usually when travelling with the kids, but we'd never let anything boil and become a thing," he says. "We know couples who are plate-throwers, but that's just not us. I'm glad it's not us — plates are expensive."

During Dornan's modelling years, big campaigns could be shot in four days, which meant he had "about 200" days off a year. "I was dissatisfied workwise," he says. "Not a lot of lads grow up wanting to be male models. I was rudderless until I met Millie, really." But it helped him to segue into acting. He went on hundreds of auditions over those early years. The Fall, co-starring Gillian Anderson, was his first big gig, running for three series from 2013, watched by millions and earning him a Bafta nomination. Also in 2013 he was cast as Christian Grey, and since the first release in 2015 the *Fifty Shades* film series has grossed \$1bn. The roles Dornan seeks now are far removed. Next month he plays Will Scarlet as a rebellious activist in a new version of *Robin Hood*, produced by Leonardo DiCaprio (released November 21), and a journalist in *My Dinner with Hervé* (Sky Atlantic, October 22), based on the life of the actor Hervé Villechaize (best known as Nick Nack from *James Bond*). Later this year he'll star alongside Matthew Rhys in a BBC2 period drama, an adaptation of the Irish novel *Death and Nightingales*. But it is *A Private War* that will get the most buzz. Rosamund Pike plays Colvin, who died in 2012 while working with Conroy covering the Syrian civil war. The war scenes were filmed in Jordan. "Paul was only meant to come for a week to advise, but stayed for the entirety of the filming," Dornan says. "He ended up being our stills photographer, we kept finding jobs for him to do." It was an emotionally charged shoot. "We had real Syrian refugees playing officers," he continues. "We'd finish a scene and these beautiful, burly Syrian men would start heaving. We all held each other and cried sometimes. I've never experienced anything like it." The first time Dornan and Conroy met was on the aeroplane out there, where they drank and talked for hours. In typical Dornan style, they remain great friends.

Our interview finishes in perfect time for him to head home and collect Dulcie from school (Jamie Dornan rocking up at the school gates, imagine). Heads turn in recognition as we walk through the busy bar. I assume a blacked-out SUV will be waiting to drive him home. In fact he's hopping on the Tube to collect his own car and drive himself. Surely he'll get hounded on the Piccadilly line? "Nah, I just stick my headphones in and no one bothers me," he shrugs as he hugs me goodbye. Somehow I find that hard to believe. ■

Jamie Dornan is the BOSS The Scent fragrance ambassador. A Private War premieres at the BFI London Film Festival on October 20



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