

# SAT SIST FACT TION

SHE'S GONE FROM  
SMALLTOWN UTAH  
GIRL TO JET-SETTING  
FASHION QUEEN. OH,  
AND SHE GOES OUT  
WITH MICK JAGGER.  
L'WREN SCOTT TELLS

**EDWINA INGS-CHAMBERS**

SHE'S DOING JUST FINE



**I** blame L'Wren Scott's height. All 6ft 3in of it. I can be sure of the accuracy of that measurement because she makes a (totally charming) point of telling me. For it seems there is often much exaggeration in the reporting of her stature, and it's not unusual for her to gain inches in print. "Sometimes they make me a little taller. It sounds better for a story," she explains, laughing hard.

No doubt that's because many like to comment on the height difference between her and her famous romantic interest, the rocker Mick Jagger — and likely it's a way to flesh out reports on their relationship, as the pair are notoriously private. (They won't even confirm that they're engaged, despite a decidedly fiancée-fit diamond ring on Scott's appropriate finger.) Certainly, any questions today relating to the Rolling Stone are off limits — which, frankly, seems fair enough, because the 43-year-old Scott is way more than just The Girlfriend.

As a model-cum-stylist-cum-fashion designer, Scott has been an arbiter of what is cool in the fashion world for years. Now she is moving into beauty, with a boutique make-up line for Lancôme launching in time for Christmas. Her career began in the unlikely place of her home town, Roy, in Utah, where she was spotted by Bruce Weber when he came to do a Calvin Klein photo shoot. She joined the shoot, got her first pay cheque and took Weber's advice to fly to Paris and model. She was a hit, although she says she did more shoots than catwalk (she was the legs for a Pretty Polly ad). Next, she moved to LA and worked as a film and celebrity stylist. (She'll never name her clients: "I always felt honoured to be asked, that somebody trusted you to help them with their personal style.") Costume design, the next logical step, wasn't quite what she wanted. "It wasn't really the fashion focus I wanted. So I kept shifting my focus closer and closer to my objective of being a designer." Now she has achieved that, with her own line of elegant cocktail dresses and luxury separates.

When I told people that I was set to meet Scott, everybody bar one grimaced and wished me luck. So the laughter — particularly the ease with which it flows throughout our meeting — comes as a surprise. Turns out there's barely a sign of any toughness. Which is not to say that she's fluffy or lightweight. On the contrary, she's poised, articulate, self-possessed and has a clear yet determined passion for life. In fact, she's so easy to talk to, so languorously cool, that I can only imagine it's her height, perhaps coupled with that raven-black hair and pale skin, that makes her seem otherworldly and promotes the idea that she's austere.

"I think that I have always had composure. I don't think that you can be 6ft 3in and care if people talk about you. So I think, just from sheer stature, I developed a kind of shield early on." And no, it's never been something men have had an issue with: "I wouldn't be dating them if they did."

What she also had from early on was parents who clearly instilled in her both confidence and a strong work ethic — she was adopted by a Mormon couple. "It was like a Steven Spielberg backdrop, like in *ET* — flat streets, little houses, perfectly manicured gardens. Then behind are mountains. It's a beautiful place to grow up."

As for the Mormon influence, she says: "I think it probably enhanced my perception of morality, standards and overall achievement. My upbringing was about family, less about religion. I think people have lots of misconceptions about religion, and I think very much so about Mormons. But my experience of that was only positive, and it's filled me with values I may not have had the luxury of being given had I not been raised that way."

Perhaps it's one of her values, but Scott seems careful to speak well, or never badly, of anyone or anything. Asked if the notion that Mormons eschew frivolity or splashing out on things like fashion ever affected her, she says: "I couldn't generalise for that religion. In my family, no. Certainly, if there were things that you wanted or needed, you could have them. But it was instilled

in me that if there was something I wanted in life, it wasn't going to come and knock on the front door. I would probably have to work hard to find it."

It's only when I ask why she changed her name (from Luann Bambrugh) when she took her one-way trip to Paris that I get a hint of a Parkinson/Meg Ryan moment. "I think it's, like, 'next question' — it's a personal thing. I obviously have two names for a reason, and they're not invented."

Back, then, to the safe waters of beauty. Scott says she's low-maintenance when it comes to make-up, often adding foundation to her moisturiser and rubbing it in, and rarely finding the time for a manicure, so it doesn't seem an obvious move. "My last fashion collection was inspired by Turner's paintings of the Loire Valley, so I had a meeting with Lancôme, and they created this amazing grey nail varnish for my show. I loved it so much that the beauty line grew from there."

Things seem to come easily to her. What advice would she give anyone wanting to get into fashion? "Just jump. Start. Whatever job you can get where you're gonna learn something, that's the best way." So what of Scott the woman, rather than the businesswoman — has entering her forties changed anything for her? "I don't feel a lot different from being in my thirties. I feel more advanced in my career and am happy with my personal life, but I don't think it's changed that much. In your twenties, you're more frivolous. In my thirties, I think I was still frivolous" — more laughter — "and I'm still frivolous today."

Women have so many options these days, I say, we're freer to not marry; to not have kids, to, well, not do anything we don't want to do. She assumes I'm asking her about impending motherhood plans. "Let me see if I can articulate this in a way that makes sense. I have seven wonderful sort of children in my life, by default. I have four fabulous grandchildren. I feel that being the product of adoption is a wonderful thing, and at the moment my life is saturated with children. My family life is a high priority."

How about getting what you want in life? "For me, the secret to happiness is inside yourself. You're in charge of your own destiny."

Then the most unexpected side of Scott pops up, as we realise that the



On a roll L'Wren with Jade Jagger

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din coming from an adjoining room is down to the screening of the France v South Africa World Cup game. "I'm a little sports-obsessed," she giggles, confessing that she has Sky in Paris so she can watch the cricket. She's supporting England, in case you were wondering. "I had no idea the USA could actually play, but they were really good."

Later, as I'm leaving the building, she's ahead of me getting into her car. I see her pointing at someone, but, because of that height of hers, I think she's gesturing to someone behind me. I finally realise it's me she's after. "Two-one to South Africa," she shouts. "I have it on in the car!" There's nothing scary about Scott. It's just those incongruously long legs of hers that make people misconstrue things. But you can be pretty sure she's not that bothered. She is happy in her own skin. ●

*The Holiday 2010 Colour Collection by L'Wren Scott for Lancôme will be on counters from November 1*

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