

Interesting, interested, articulate, funny... Kristen Stewart might have a reputation for bolshiness, but she is, in fact, excellent company. Leather blazer, £3,296, Just Cavalli, at Harrods. Jacquard vest, £1,085, Balenciaga by Nicolas Ghesquière, at Balenciaga, Harvey Nichols, Matches and Selfridges. Tulle bra, £110, Fifi Chachnil. Leather miniskirt, £970, Isabel Marant, at Harvey Nichols. Vintage earrings, from a selection, Hirst Antiques. Cord and diamond bracelet, £7,650, Shamballa Jewels, at Harrods. Silver bracelet, £170. Silver skull ring, £110. Silver skeleton ring, £120. All Crazy Pig Designs. Silver horn ring, £115, Shaun Leane. White-gold star ring, £235, Jordan Askill, at Harvey Nichols and Liberty. Other rings, Kristen's own. Hair: Christiaan. Make-up: James Kaliardos. Nails: Emi Kudo. Set design: Bill Doig. Production: GE Projects. Digital artwork: R&D. Fashion editor: Lucinda Chambers



# Untamed HEART

Kristen Stewart seduced the world as the teenage idol Bella Swan. But her emergence into adulthood has been far from fairytale. *Christa D'Souza* meets a young woman caught in the middle of a very public scandal. Photographs by *Mario Testino*

**I**t started straightforwardly enough. I was going to LA to interview one of the biggest stars in the world about her upcoming film. At 21, Kristen Stewart had just been listed by *Forbes* magazine as the highest-paid actress in Hollywood, a wealth largely due to *Twilight*, the vampire franchise in which she plays virgin idol Bella Swan. The quintessential emo, famed for her baity persona, Stewart was second only to Kate Middleton in terms of public interest, an interest nurtured by our fascination with her off-screen courtship with co-star Robert Pattinson, which had tantalised the world with its are-they, aren't-they narrative for years.

In this instance, however, Stewart was promoting a smaller, indie project: Walter Salles's film adaptation of Jack Kerouac's mostly autobiographical hipster classic *On the Road*. The book had been a passion of hers for years – of course it had! – and she'd lobbied and lobbied for the part of 16-year-old Marylou (the free spirit based on Neal Cassady's wife LuAnne, who also enjoyed a love affair with Kerouac). Marylou was a million miles away from Stewart's neurotic and clumsy-to-the-point-of-dyspraxic Swan; the perfect breakaway role. Like I said, it all seemed pretty straightforward.

And so we met, on a lovely sunny day at Casita del Campo, a gloomy, near-empty Mexican restaurant, not far from the Los

Feliz mansion she shared with Pattinson. A tiny, intense presence, dressed in faded grey skinnies, she looked like a little doll as she slid into the booth. She had personally picked the venue, a) because there were sure to be no "cockroaches" (her word for the paparazzi) lurking in the bushes; and b) because, being a cool Silver Lake chick, she loves Mexican food. "I don't even know why I'm looking at the menu," she sighed, as she half-heartedly swiped a chip in the salsa. "I already made myself lunch."

With her reputation for bolshiness (all that gurning and insistent wearing of trainers on the red carpet and so forth), I'd half-expected the meeting to be one of those classic journalistic struggles, but, in fact, she turned out to be excellent company: interesting, interested, articulate, funny, easy. She spoke carefully, with precision; a Valley Girl, sure, with all the "dudes" and the "likes", but an articulate, measured one. She was especially droll and affectionate about her upbringing in the San Fernando Valley: how her mother, Jules, a scriptwriter/artist/"doer to the point of OCDness", has a proper tattoo sleeve, hair extensions and a dog that's part wolf; how she has decorated almost every ceiling in the house with one of her crazy *Alice in Wonderland* murals; and how Kristen and her brother Cameron would come home from school and there Jules might be "ripping out a bathroom" because she was bored. She joked about how her dad, Bill, a stage manager with waist-length hair, had suddenly developed a thing for fashion and was "beginning to

look like Karl Lagerfeld. He keeps asking me to get him a Balenciaga man-bag and I keep saying, 'Dad? Absolutely not!'"

And she was most forthcoming about *On the Road*, a copy of which decorated the dashboard of her first car when she was 16. We talked about how the part was a big departure from anything she had done previously. For one thing, there was nudity aplenty. In one scene, she, Sam Riley and Garrett Hedlund (who play Kerouac and Cassady respectively) attempt a threesome. In another, she gives them hand jobs simultaneously. But Stewart was up for it all. "Walter made us confident," she said animatedly, but awkward in her desire to make herself clear. "He totally primed us to be in a position to do those things. We'd thought about it all *so* much that by the time we got to the set the story kind of worked its way through us. Like, we were vessels or something. In a way, I can't take credit for any of it."

Said Walter Salles, via email: "I met Kristen in Los Angeles. She knew *On the Road* inside out, and understood the character better than anyone I had met up to that point. LuAnne was decades ahead of her time. She was a free-spirited, non-judgemental young woman... but it was probably very difficult to be in her position in the late Forties, early Fifties, a constant challenge. Kristen understood this duality, the fact that the exhilarating moments had a painful counterpart."

For someone whose reputation is *so je m'en fous*, Stewart was keen to declare > 324

"I love being on the periphery with a group of people who have the same values that I do. People who don't get off on fame, who just like the process of making movies."

Leopard-print bomber jacket, £2,650, Balenciaga by Nicolas Ghesquière, at Balenciaga, Harvey Nichols, Matches and Selfridges. Cotton body, £325, Rosamosario. Cotton and lace leggings, £381, Just Cavalli, at Harrods. Vintage belt, from £12, Beyond Retro. Vintage earrings, from a selection, Hirst Antiques. Silver pendant necklace, £355. Silver horn ring, £115. Both Shaun Leane. Silver "Love Me Tender" necklace, from £130, Tom Binns. Silver skull ring, £110. Silver skeleton ring, £120. Silver bracelet, £170. All Crazy Pig Designs. Other rings, Kristen's own. Cord and diamond bracelet, £7,650, Shamballa Jewels, at Harrods





how she had never thought of herself as a rebel *at all*. She described herself as the kind of kid who got panic attacks about her marks in school, and an adult who “always overthinks the thought... Like how *do* you think of nothing?” It was, she conjectured, probably why she found the Beat Generation era so seductive. “What the fuck do I know, but I think that’s why the book will always be relevant. There is always going to be that seam of people who want things differently to the standardised version. It’s not necessarily a rebellious thing, it’s just who they are. That world back then, it just seems freer to me than anything I could ever touch and I’m fully nostalgic for it, even though I wasn’t even alive then...”

“It’s the loyalty aspect of it all,” she went on in her low, earnest way. “I love being on the periphery with a group of people who have the same values that I do. People who don’t get off on fame, who just like the process of making movies and thrive on that, and *fuck* anybody who doesn’t.”

When I mentioned her upcoming nuptials with Pattinson (as had been reported that week in the tabloids, along with designs for the cake, the dress and details that Katy Perry was to be a bridesmaid), she merely shrugged her little dolly shoulders with the resignation of one long, long used to fantastical speculation and sighed. “Hey, they’re all fucking nuts. It changes every day. This whole, am I fashionable, am I not? Am I going out with my boyfriend, am I not? There’s never one constant. Of course it’s seductive and important, what people think about you, but you can’t pay attention. They can say what they want...”

They do say what they want. And sometimes you do have to pay attention. A month later, the same magazines that had described her “wedding” in such detail published pictures of her embracing not Pattinson but another man, Rupert Sanders, the British director of *Snow White and the Huntsman*, in which Stewart starred. Sanders is married to the model Liberty Ross, who played Stewart’s birth mother in the same film, and he is 21 years her senior.

A billion *Tw*i-hard hearts convulsed with grief. The “Rob-sten” fantasy? Shattered? Overnight, she was receiving death threats, pilloried as the most hated homewrecker in Hollywood. Debate roiled and raged about how long the relationship had been going on. Then came Stewart’s almost implausibly contrite apology: “I’m deeply sorry for the hurt and embarrassment I’ve caused to those close to me and everyone this has

affected. This momentary indiscretion has jeopardised the most important thing in my life, the person I love and respect the most: Rob. I love him, I love him, I’m so sorry.” Sanders’s even more contrite apology followed soon after.

The truth of it all? In the time since, I’ve scrolled back through my tapes and notes to glean clues as to what might have happened and have found few lightbulb absolutes.

“You know when your blood pressure goes up and you are excited and you literally reach for your heart,” Stewart had said at one point over lunch that day, while describing life in general. “That’s the reason I wanted to make *Snow White*. It physically felt like the right thing to do.” And to work with the first-time Brit director Sanders? “Omigod,” she had said, eyes fluttering skyward, “just, I mean, to die.”

Sanders was similarly effusive about her, taking time out to speak to me from his holiday in Hawaii. “She’d burnt her lower pelvis area, quite low down,” he had said of his first impression of the actress. “She was bandaging a bad burn there, in her very

*“It changes every day. This whole, am I going out with my boyfriend, am I not?”*

tight jeans, with a Camel clamped between her teeth. That was my very first image of her. She’s got this masculine edge. She’s like this beautiful tomboy or something. What surprised me most when I met Kristen was how unlike the character of Bella Swan she was in real life,” he added. “She was so tough, so grown up. She was exactly the modern badass version of Snow White that I was looking for. I wanted that young, spirited, rebellious warrior, and she epitomised all of that.”

“She and Liberty didn’t have very many scenes together,” he said, when I asked whether she and his wife were friends, “so they didn’t get to know each other that well. But they definitely have similarities. There’s a look they share. Kristen is almost like royalty the way she understands what she has to do, in the way that she has learnt to compartmentalise... Well, Lib’s quite ‘regal’ or something as well.”

Royalty, regal, spirited warrior. Stewart is a warrior, of sorts. Albeit a warrior, as Sanders once put it, with the weight of the world on her shoulders. She’s got that rock’n’roll edge, too, as played to perfection in her role as Joan Jett in *The Runaways*. I still have an image in my mind of her

turning up on the *Vogue* shoot, requesting vodka and then downsizing to white wine “because it’s still only morning”.

But here’s the thing. To be 22 and to have assumed that unbelievably heavy mantle of fame and all that it entails... Might we not allow her some human error? Might she not be entitled to make some mistakes as she negotiates her way round a post-*Twilight* world, a block of time in her life she has likened to being away at school (both she and her brother were mostly home-educated).

“I *can’t* be a free spirit,” she had said, almost imploringly, at one point when we first met. “Not in a normal, relatable way anyway. I can’t even do my own groceries or walk through a mall. How could I be? But, at the same time, there are always different ways I can explore my freedom. My country is definitely a smaller place to the way it was in *On the Road*, but that doesn’t mean the spirit will ever go away.”

The second and last time we met, Stewart and I were taking a cigarette break on the steps of the Hôtel Particulier in Montmartre, where a dinner was being thrown in honour of her and Nicolas Ghesquière. It was about a week after our first meeting and she was as disarmingly friendly and chatty as ever. As the face of the new Balenciaga fragrance, Flora Botanica, Stewart was very much on show, in a baby-blue silk corset dress from the latest collection and high, patent ankle boots. Earlier, Ghesquière had told me how he adored her ability to subvert the red-carpet tradition; he loved the way she was such a symbol of “tetchy youthfulness” and what fun she was to collaborate with on different looks.

Stewart had just returned from Sydney with Sanders and her *Snow White* co-star Chris Hemsworth on the last leg of the film’s promotional tour. She seemed a little tired (those slight bags under her eyes were a bit more pronounced, and she seemed almost a little constrained by all her finery), but – with that cigarette placed behind her back, like she was behind a bike shed, and a drink in hand – she was in full swing. In retrospect, perhaps dangerously so.

“My God, I’m so in love with my boyfriend,” she suddenly confided, squeezing her fists and stiffening that little body with anticipation. “I wish he were here now. I think I want to have his babies.”

Had I heard her right? Wasn’t her “boyfriend” the one thing she never talked about? To anyone? And yet here > 378



“Kristen was so tough, so grown up. She was exactly the modern badass version of Snow White that I was looking for,” said director Rupert Sanders. Leopard-print coat, £3,450. Studded-leather trousers, £1,250. Both Joseph. Cotton T-shirt, £185. Leather and ostrich-skin boots, £1,215. Both Balenciaga by Nicolas Ghesquière, at Balenciaga, Harvey Nichols and Selfridges. Sunglasses, £237. Agent Provocateur by Linda Farrow, at Lindafarrow.co.uk. Resin drop earrings, £203, Marni. Cord and diamond bracelet, £7,650, Shamballa Jewels, at Harrods. Silver bracelet, £170. Silver skull ring, £110. Silver skeleton ring, £120. All Crazy Pig Designs. Silver horn ring, £115, Shaun Leane. White-gold star ring, £235, Jordan Askill, at Harvey Nichols and Liberty. Other rings, Kristen’s own





“Of course it’s seductive and important, what people think about you, but you can’t pay attention. They can say what they want...”

Printed satin sweatshirt, £1,795, Balenciaga by Nicolas Ghesquière, at Balenciaga, Harvey Nichols and Selfridges. Satin corset knickers, £17, What Katie Did. Vintage belt, from £12, Beyond Retro. Patent-leather shoes, £395, Jimmy Choo. Lace socks, £8, Jonathan Aston, at Mytights.com. Vintage earrings, from a selection, Hirst Antiques. Cord and diamond bracelet, £7,650, Shamballa Jewels, at Harrods. Silver bracelet, £170. Silver skull ring, £110. Silver skeleton ring, £120. All Crazy Pig Designs. Silver horn ring, £115, Shaun Leane. White-gold star ring, £235, Jordan Askill, at Harvey Nichols and Liberty. White-gold ring, £190, Dominic Jones, at Net-a-Porter.com. Other rings, Kristen’s own. Leopard-print coat, *on bed*, £3,450, Joseph. Leopard-print shoes, *on floor*, £667, D Squared, at Harvey Nichols

we were. “*God*, I miss him,” she said, raking her hair back and exhaling a plume of smoke. “I love the way he smells. And him me. Like, he loves to lick under my armpits. I don’t get this obsession with washing the smell off. That smell of someone you love. Don’t you think it’s the whole point?”

Looking back, the exchange still feels surreal. It took place just three weeks before those incriminating pictures were allegedly taken. Was she even talking about Pattinson? Was she having me on? Who knows?

I think back to something she said before in that crazy restaurant about wanting to be her own person, and not having to conform to expectations.

“Um, how do I put this perfectly?” she said, so concentrating on getting it out right that her knee started to jiggle. “Look. I know if you haven’t thought about how you want to present a very packaged idea of yourself then it can seem like you lack ambition. But, dude, honestly? I can’t. People expect it to be easy because there you are, out there, doing the thing that you want and making lots of money out of it. But, you know, I’m not that smooth. I can get clumsy around certain people. Like if I were to sit down and think, ‘OK, I’m really famous, how am I going to conduct myself in public?’ I wouldn’t know who that person would be! It would be a lot easier if I could, but I *can’t*.”

As we go to press, the story keeps changing, and people’s expectations are shifting daily. The premiere of *Breaking Dawn* (the final *Twilight* instalment) and its attendant red-carpet rounds are yet to go ahead. Pattinson is said to have moved out of the Los Feliz house amid fabulous gossip concerning custody of the couple’s dog, Bear. Sanders, slated to make a further *Snow White* with Stewart, is yet to confirm his plans. He has not removed his wedding ring.

Work wise, Stewart won the plum role of Peyton Loftis – in the film of William Styron’s 1951 novel *Lie Down in Darkness* – the one she was supposed, mistakenly, to be feuding over with Jennifer Lawrence. Then there is *Cali*, on which she has her first producing credit. Professionally speaking, a cynic might wonder, could the current brouhaha work in her favour?

Again, who knows? One thing, though, is that Stewart did not strike me as a bad person. Not at all. Just a young, attractive, intelligent woman trying to navigate her way through the bullshit. So cut her some slack, OK? ■

“*On the Road*” opens on October 12

and I still get along as well as we did before,” observes Kirke. “We fight a little bit more because we’re around each other so much, and we sometimes butt heads in our work relationship, but I’d say we’re even closer now.”

There is a strong sense of familial loyalty among the *Girls* crew, something undoubtedly fostered by Dunham, who is intensely involved with her family. “My parents and I are a little cult,” she says matter-of-factly; she also has a younger sister (whom she adores). “It’s not unhealthy but it’s definitely enmeshed.”

She still talks to her parents – Carroll Dunham, a painter, and Laurie Simmons, a photographer and designer – several times a day, sometimes several times an hour. And ’twas ever thus. “I would say I was precocious,” she says of her childhood, “but I was not mature. I was not independent at all.” In fact, she moved out of her parents’ house only two weeks ago. “I tried to do it before and it went horribly,” she admits. “But I think this time it’s for real.”

Immature or no, Dunham has become a fiercely independent player negotiating an incredibly tough industry entirely on her own terms. “She’s spectacular,” says Apatow, who made his name as a television producer at around the same age. “Making a show like this is like walking into a buzzsaw, and when you’re young and ridiculously talented, people instinctively want to attack you because it seems so unfair to the rest of us. But Lena is a fully formed voice.”

Dunham is currently directing the second series of *Girls*, a project whose storylines have been guarded like “state secrets”, even though she maintains there’s actually not all that much to reveal. That said, she’s has big plans for her *Girls*. “Unless you have them develop at a rapid rate, you start to feel like you’re writing a parody of your own characters,” she says, perhaps mindful of the terrible stereotypes that came to dictate those *Sex and the City* antecedents. “You know. My artistic life is shifting rapidly, and I want to feel I can try new things and test my boundaries. And that’s really exciting because I feel like I’m allowed to do that.”

And with that she has to leave, to have her make-up done for *Vogue*, and finish tweaking the script for tomorrow’s location shoot, and take a couple of calls from LA, and arrange a quick casting, and write another scene, and direct her *Girls*. And call her parents. ■

“*Girls*” starts on October 15 on Sky Atlantic

pass, monitoring food leaving the kitchen, introducing diners to each other (she seems as comfortable on the restaurant floor as she is in the kitchen), it’s hard not to see her as the matriarch of this large establishment.

The familial feel is further emphasised in the absence of a top table: all guests – young or old, famous or not – are treated in the same way, which is very well indeed. (Rogers is reticent when it comes to talking about celebrity customers, except in general terms, so I only find out that Gwyneth Paltrow has spent a day cooking in the kitchen because one of the chefs tells me in passing, and that Brad Pitt had dinner here not long ago because a friend of mine was at the next table.)

“Ruthie may not be Italian herself,” says Jeremy King – who, with his partner Chris Corbin, runs some of the best restaurants in London, including the Wolseley and the Delaunay – “but she is the consummate Italian mother and host.” Certainly, during the time I am with her, Rogers introduces me to everyone she knows who is eating in the restaurant, as well as to all her staff. She is, without trying, instinctively intimate and generous, presumably a born nourisher. So it is no surprise to learn that she is incredibly close to her three stepsons and their wives and children. Likewise, children of all ages have always been entirely welcome at the River Café (the restaurant is also generous and flexible in terms of maternity leave, and to staff members who want to work part-time so that they can spend more time with their kids).

The River Café does have a Michelin star. And, yes, it is housed in a lovely room, bright and full of light, on a river bank with its own garden, but what else is it that makes the River Café so special?

Perhaps King puts it best when I ask him the same question. “When anybody asks me, and people ask me a lot, where I most like to eat, it’s an easy answer: the River Café. The reason being that there they put into action everything I want from a restaurant – which is great food, simply prepared, not expecting attention but capable of withstanding any scrutiny, in an environment that isn’t overbearing but is a wonderful catalyst for a diverse mix of people. The River Café reigns supreme because what Rose and Ruthie have taught their staff permeates the whole place, and that is to make everyone who comes through their door feel loved and welcomed.” Happy, happy birthday, River Café. ■