

EVE HEWSON



NOT EVERY YOUNG ACTRESS MAKES THEIR DEBUT PROPER ALONGSIDE SEAN PENN. BUT THEN NOT EVERY HOLLYWOOD HOPEFUL IS AS WEIRD AND WONDERFUL AS BONO'S DAUGHTER EVE HEWSON

Words Matt Mueller

Photographer Daniel King Fashion Editor Anthony Unwin

Having met and known music stars all her life, Eve Hewson had a reservoir of useful experience to bring to her role in *This Must Be the Place* as the best friend/mega fan of an ageing muso legend who embarks on a mission of vengeance. Even in whacked-out rock circles, however, it's unlikely she ever encountered anyone as bizarre as Cheyenne, the Robert Smith-styled goth-recluse with the simpering child's voice, brought vividly to life by Sean Penn in Paolo Sorrentino's visually luxurious, hypnotically peculiar drama.

"I was terrified when I first met Sean," recalls the second daughter of Paul Hewson, better known across the pop-culture moonscape as U2's globe-saving frontman Bono. "I remember he was sitting there playing the guitar and smoking a cigarette in his Cheyenne get-up and I just looked at him and thought, 'this is going to be so amazing.'"

Penn certainly is amazing, but Hewson more than holds her own opposite the Oscar-sanctified acting giant, establishing herself as a genuine discovery in only her second feature – although it's practically her debut, given that her first, a lo-fi music-biz drama called *The 27 Club*, was shot when she was 15 and barely troubled the festival circuit. Strolling the red carpet at last year's Cannes Film Festival for the world premiere of *This Must Be the Place*, this serious but unassuming young actress whipped up a who's that girl?-style stir amongst hard-bitten paparazzi.

Now 20, Hewson has been living in New York City for the past three

White shirt and skirt both by PAUL SMITH



years – as the Americanisms tainting her Celtic lilt attest – following an Irish upbringing that wasn't nearly as nomadic as you'd imagine. Yes, the Hewson clan occasionally packed up to follow U2 on tour but Hewson's overriding memories are of a normal childhood in Dublin, and her easygoing, disarming manner definitely suggests a young woman unaffected by her family's immense fame. Studying for a degree in theatre and child psychology at NYU, Hewson only has three semesters to go before unleashing herself full-time onto her chosen profession.

"I did the full 18 years in Dublin and then I had to get out of there," she affirms. "I miss my house, I miss the sea, I miss the Irish people but I knew I couldn't do what I wanted to do if I stayed there..."

When did the acting bug first bite? Music and acting have always been my thing. I got into acting professionally when I was 15 and just fell in love with it. I came home from shooting *The 27 Club* and said to my parents, 'Do you think I should go to LA and try to get an agent? [*Dreamily*] I really love it.' They were like, 'Hell no! You're not going anywhere near Hollywood.' So I

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quietly took acting classes and when that movie came out, my parents let me go with one agent that they trusted.

Paolo Sorrentino says about you: "She's a very mature young actress. I was amazed that such a young girl could have such an adult way of thinking." Do you feel like an old soul? People do say that to me. At a very young age, if my parents had friends over and they were sitting around the table chatting and having a glass of wine, I'd always grab a chair and listen to them talk. I've always been comfortable around adults so maybe that rubbed off on me. **You describe your *This Must Be the Place* character, Mary, as dark and full of pain. Did you find those emotions difficult to access?**

Fortunately, I can't really relate to her situation. She's lost her brother and her mum has lost her mind. But definitely there was some teen angst that was willing to come out when I played Mary. I identified with her in terms of being a teenager and feeling lost and misunderstood and angry and confused and all of those things that come along with hormones and life. **Did you ever dress full goth like her?** I did go through a phase where I painted my nails black and wore loads of eyeliner – and I was 12! I used to cut a thumbhole in socks and wear them. I used to get so bullied in school.

What did your parents think? My parents loved it! They loved that we were different... my sister and I, we were mad when we were younger. People used to call us 'Holly-wood' and 'Holly-weird' – I was 'Holly-weird' – and we were just bizarre children. I guess my parents' hippie ways rubbed off on us. I used to wear a crash helmet around my house, and then I fell in love with E.T. so I cut off all my hair and wore a red hoodie and made everyone in the house call me Elliott. If my parents said, "Honey, dinner's ready!" I would just sit there with my hood up, waiting for them to say, "Sorry, we meant Elliott – Elliott, dinner's ready!" **Would you call your childhood a stable one?** I'm so lucky to be in this situation with such normal parents, and I say "normal" in the sense of their relationship. My parents have been together since they were 15, they still live in Dublin, they live a very normal life and it was important to see that. Obviously we were able to go to amazing places and see incredible things and meet incredible people – but we never felt entitled to it. **Are you open about your father being Bono when you meet new people?** I never say anything. In school, whenever we had to write those letters where you say, "Hi, my name's Eve and my dad does this..." I always used to lie and say that my dad was a doctor. It just saves conversation. People always find out eventually. **So what's next for you?** It's tricky because when it comes down to it, should I take a semester off school to do an acting job? I am auditioning to keep all the doors open but mainly I'm focusing on getting college out of the way. I have this weird love-hate relationship with college because I know it's right that I'm here but I still hate it because I just wish I was out there working. I'm counting the days!

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE is out on April 6

Polka dot shirt by KAREN WALKER and trousers by MARGARET HOWELL Make-up MAUD LECEPPE at COMMUNITY NYC using M.A.C. COSMETICS Hair RONALANDO BEAUCHAMP at COMMUNITY NYC using BUMBLE & BUMBLE Photographic Assistance JEREMY SMITH Fashion Assistance MATILDA GOAD Retouching in-house at DANIEL KING

