

millie

“Any Marriage Goes Through Ups & Downs”

Slamming her critics, opening up about sex and why Professor Green is more house proud than hard as nails. Millie Mackintosh gets frank with *Look*...

Slipping a bottle of green juice at London's Soho House, Millie Mackintosh is trying to settle on the coolest fashion name in her mobile phone contacts list. We're not waiting for long. Christopher Kane, announces Millie, is an 'amazing designer', who she befriended at a party recently, fortunately just before the start of London Fashion Week. Christopher later invited Millie to one of his stores and she was given 'loads of outfits'. A few days later, the same thing happened at Brit designer Giles Deacon's London HQ.

'Ahead of his London Fashion Week show, I went to his showroom and met him,' explains Millie. 'I got an amazing outfit and another for the Brit Awards.

I felt really lucky to be doing that. If designers lend to me, I'm so grateful.'

Millie means it. After all, this is a woman who bared her heart and soul in the name of entertainment on Channel 4's *Made In Chelsea*, the show that made her famous. And while some reality stars like Olivia Palermo sashay effortlessly into style-icon territory, high fashion is a notoriously tough nut to crack.

'Some designers aren't willing to lend to me because of the reality TV tag,' admits Millie. 'And I'm cool with that – [it's] becoming a bit less and less now.'

Millie proves her point every time she sits front row at a catwalk show – and more and more celebs sidle up closer to her on it. At Julien Macdonald last week, she was shoulder to shoulder with Whitney Port and Ella Eyre. Two days later at Giles Deacon, Amber Le Bon became her new best friend.

'When my mum saw me on the front row of the Julien Macdonald show, she screen-grabbed the picture and sent it to me, saying: "You look The Dream". She and Dad are so proud, especially of my clothing line.'

Millie's eponymously named collection launched last October – to such high demand that the site crashed – and the first instalment of her SS15 range goes on sale this month. 'Today, there's further exciting news to share.

'You're the first I can tell that I've got ASOS on board,' says Millie. 'They don't stock other celeb lines, so it was hard to get on there. It's a strong place for the collection to be.'

Boom! But, of course, none of this success is a surprise. Millie has been career strategic since removing herself from BAFTA-winning



With hubby Professor Green on their wedding day in 2013

Jacket, £250; dress, £85, both Millie-mackintosh.com
Hat, stylist's own

“Some designers aren't willing to lend to me because of the reality TV tag, but that's cool”



Rochelle Humes

Millie Mackintosh

Whitney Port

Ella Eyre

Michelle Keegan

On the Julien Macdonald FROW at London Fashion Week

Made In Chelsea in June 2013. She signed up for *Celebrity Masterchef*, because she 'loves cooking', but avoided fast-buck options like *I'm A Celebrity...* or *Celebrity Big Brother*.

'I didn't just want to be famous for doing a reality show or do the predictable things that certain reality stars have done,' says Millie, who instead endorsed brands including Nip+Fab, Claire's and St Tropez.

'I had opportunities to do clothing collaborations, but I waited because I wanted to do it my way. I own part of my business; it's my own brand.'

Millie admits that in business she's been 'a bit naive' in the past, something her husband Stephen Manderson, aka rapper Professor Green, 30, has been eager to iron out. 'Stephen helps me think about what people might actually want from me,' she says. 'He thinks I can be too optimistic. He's more of a realist, but sometimes can be too much of a pessimist.'

Singing from her own happy hymn sheet, Millie deflects when we ask what the biggest relationship test has been since their wedding in 2013. 'I don't really want to talk about [the] negative,' says Millie. 'Any relationship [goes] through ups and downs, and things are difficult for the other one – you just support each other through them.'

There's no doubt that Millie and Pro Green are a strong team. They've spent the past 18 months renovating their £850,000 marital home in south-east London, which they moved into last June. By all accounts, Stephen was as hands on as it comes.

'He was so involved in every detail,

down to where the plug sockets were going to be,' says Millie. 'He picked all the light fittings and was so excited when we chose all our paint colours.'

'Our home life is really normal,' she adds. 'I went to the *NME Awards* [two weeks ago] and left at about 10pm. I picked up some Vietnamese food, then went home to Stephen. We watch a lot of Netflix and are really into *Fortitude* on Sky.' We picture a homely scene featuring The Mandersons on the sofa in matching onesies.

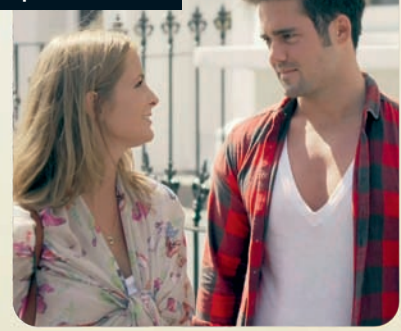
'No onesies, but we both have pjs,' says Millie. 'I have silk ones and he has stripy ones. I got him some Ugg slippers for Christmas. He was like: "What. Are. They?" but he does wear them.'

Christian Grey, eat your heart out. Perhaps, unsurprisingly, the *Fifty Shades Of Grey* phenomenon has been lost on Stephen who, reveals Millie, is 'refusing to see' the film.

'Do you know what? I don't want to see it, either. I didn't find [the book] that sexy. I'm sure the film will up the sales for all kinds of kinky sh*t, but I think women should just talk about sex more anyway. We're so British and prudish. I talk about it with my girlfriends. That's normal, right?'

Absolutely. And if sex is on the menu of conversation, surely that means baby

“ Women should talk about sex more. We're so British and prudish ”

In *Made In Chelsea* with former co-star Spencer Matthews

talk will follow? Frustration washes over Millie's face.

'The only pressure I'm getting about when I'm going to have a baby is from the press. My family aren't pushing me; everyone else is saying: "Wait a bit, just enjoy being married."'

'Absolutely love kids and Stephen is always telling me that I'll be a great mum. I like nurturing and cooking for people, but I'm not rushing it. I'm really enjoying just being married.'

While many women her age are navigating their way around Tinder, Millie insists that marrying at the tender age of 23 was a no-brainer.

'I knew it was the right decision, because I was with my best friend, my partner in crime. Yes I was young, but I knew I could grow with him.'

Once Fashion Week is done, Millie returns to her delicatessen-owning parents' house for a week of 'normality'. Because however much fun it is, life in the spotlight, plus managing her business projects – including a forthcoming lifestyle book – brings tension.

'I do get really stressed and call my mum crying and say: "I just can't cope with it." Sometimes it all just gets a bit much.'

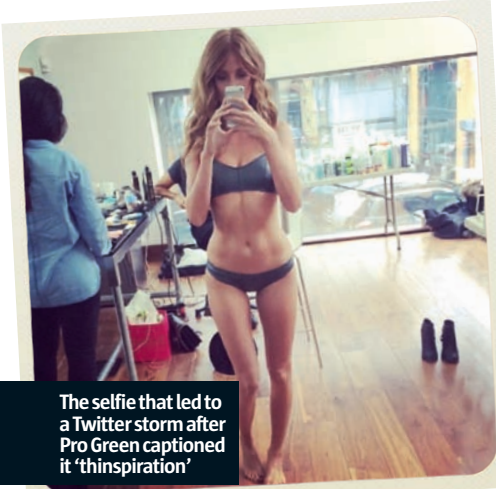
If she was so inclined, Millie could live off Stephen's millions. Some might even assume that with a great grandfather who invented Quality Street that Millie is financially made for life.

'I'm not an heiress,' she clarifies. 'My family don't own Quality Street. If people think I've had everything handed to me on a plate, or don't think I work hard, I can assure them I do. I could never not work and I'm not going to let Stephen be the breadwinner. I need to earn my own money.'

Millie first moved to Chelsea at 18 to follow her dream of being a make-up artist, landing a job as an £8-an-hour beauty advisor at Space NK, before *Made In Chelsea* called. And although the show portrayed her as a want-for-nothing girl with millions in the bank, it was, suggests Millie, somewhat exaggerated.

'I'd get the bus down the King's Road to do the show, be filmed in a Bentley, then get the bus home again,' she says.

Leaving *Made In Chelsea* coincided with her engagement, plus speculation that Stephen was instrumental in her decision to jack in her TV career, something she denies. So what of his tendency to leap to her defence on Twitter, like the time he launched a tirade against her former co-star Spencer Matthews, saying: 'You're vile, don't utter a f***ing word



The selfie that led to a Twitter storm after Pro Green captioned it 'thinspiration'

about our engagement – it's none of your f***ing business.' Does she cringe when he lets rip?

'Not at all. He stands up for me on Twitter and that's really sweet, because he's just being supportive. Sometimes I say: "Oh babe, it's going to be an even bigger story if you say something." Sometimes I think it's better to leave it because people want a rise out of you.'

Millie was forced to spring into action last July when Stephen retweeted a snap of her in her bra and pants to her 813,000 followers with the comment 'thinspiration' – a term favoured by pro-anorexia websites.

'It was just unfortunate wording, he didn't mean it to be offensive,' she says, playing down the fuss. 'He loves how much I work out and look after myself.'

Size eight Millie exercises five times a week, has two personal trainers – Richard Tidmarsh and Russell Bateman, who runs the Skinny Bitch Collective – and regularly posts video clips of gruelling gym sessions. She says she's 'always on the hunt for the exercise that's going to change my body' and seems excited by a new workout called One Rebel, a treadmill and resistance training combo. She's also toying with a Beyoncé dance class, although her dyspraxia – a disorder that affects coordination – may hinder its success.

Millie acknowledges she's 'a bit of an exhibitionist' – case in point her recent naked shoot for a women's fitness magazine, but furiously objects being targeted by body bullies who deem her 'too thin' to be a role model.

'It's just ridiculous,' sighs Millie. 'I'm never going to be a really fat person, that's not my build. There's such an obesity problem in this country and I'm literally saying look after your body. I'm not saying diet or starve yourself. But people think that because I'm thin

There's such an obesity problem in this country. Literally all I'm saying is look after your body

and I work out, that's putting an unhealthy image out there.

'Exercise balances out my lifestyle. During Fashion Week, I went for lunch with Stephen and had a massive bowl of truffle spaghetti. But because I had to get into a super-tight dress a couple of days later, I then balanced it out with lots of salads and trips to the gym.'

Glance through Millie's Instagram and you'll see pictures of those salads – plus much else of what she eats. At last count, a plate of courgette twists in pesto had 8,960 likes.

'It's scary how addictive social media can be. I have to tell myself off when I'm photographing my food before I've eaten it.'

Does she feel addicted now? 'There are times when I think: "OK, I'm using it too much." Sometimes it feels like I'm seeing my life through my phone.'

But we'll cut Millie some slack. With the house, the husband, the hot bod, the ever-expanding career and a wardrobe of clothes to die for, it's a life we wouldn't be able to resist showing off, either.

■ Millie Mackintosh's SS15 collection is available from 10 March at Millie-mackintosh.com.

'How I'll Style My New Collection'



£65 available in May

'This dress looks hot with a tan, so it's the perfect option to pack for your holiday evenings out.'

'Wear this suede mini with ankle boots for a more daytime look. Pair it with strappy sandals for a night out, and you could add some subtle gold-toned jewellery, too.'



£149 available 10 March

Ooh, laser-cut suede!

'I love this so much. Wear it with a big floppy hat and arm bangles – it's ideal for a festival with sandals, or a summer wedding with heels.'



£85 available in May



£65 available 10 March

'Try this ditsy smock with boots and a fedora for an easy, boho look.'



£49 available in April

'These are great dressed up or down. You can add a blouse and heels or take them to the beach with a bikini top.'