

suite dreams

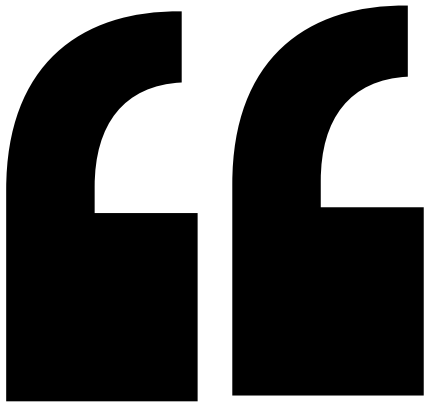
Lydia Hearst-Shaw may be an heiress, but she's no heirhead. Here, the model and aspiring actress bares all about bad manners, Darfur, and the 24 useful hours in every day.

STORY MIKE RUFFINO

PHOTOGRAPHY RANDALL SLAVIN

STYLING HEIDI MEEK

LOCATION HOLLYWOOD ROOSEVELT HOTEL



I can't think of anything less fun than running a newspaper,”

says Lydia Hearst-Shaw, referencing *Citizen Kane* while entertaining the possibility of a chilled tomato soup in the sunlit cupola of a NoHo restaurant. “I get my news off the internet.” Arguably a measure of sanity in these times, but then, running a newspaper isn't what it used to be.

When Hearst-Shaw's great-grandfather, William Randolph Hearst, did it, he was nipple-twisting the United States Navy into fancy wars and had Mark Twain writing for him. Fun, however liable.

“I always wanted to be a model,” she says, as a waiter refills her mineral water with automatic humility. It was iconic model Twiggy's influence on the fashion world that first motivated the heiress to begin posing professionally, which is fitting given that they share a birthday and notable semblance. “She changed the face of fashion, and she was five foot six—the same as me,” notes Hearst-Shaw, who now aspires to be an actress. Further, it was fashion photographer Stephen Meisel—inspired to pick up a camera in part by his pre-teen Twiggy obsession—who eventually shot the twee socialite for Italian *Vogue*, launching her beyond “Top 10 Hottest Billionaire Heiress” into the supermodel cosmos. Life is, of course, a relative thing, and only a matter of degrees—of Twiggy.

Of her family's incomparable domain at San Simeon, California—the one her great-grandfather called his “ranch,” Charles Foster Kane called “Xanadu,” and Winston Churchill called frequently—her only distinct memory is of drinking goat milk from a bucket when she was four.

After a lunch conversation with the polite, smiling, affable Hearst-Shaw, a vision of her as toddling maiden with goat and bucket does seem generally more congruous than Hot Billionaire Heiress or “celebutante,” though she is technically both of those. If the latter entitlements do indeed carry some kind

of license to not know anything at all, and to tote zoological curiosities around in handbags demanding unmitigated status for them, Hearst-Shaw has not invoked it. She is ultimately a bit more Emily Post than *New York Post*.

In fact, she has no patience for the ill-comported, among them, “people who talk with their mouth full. It's like they've been raised by wolves. Bad table manners are just something that I find inexcusable. In fact, bad manners, period. What ever happened to people saying, ‘Please,’ ‘Thank you,’ and ‘Excuse me?’” Later, she offers to pay for lunch. Twice.

Hearst-Shaw has a hereditary work ethic, in evidence beyond getting up at ungodly hours to be primed and photographed for Heatherette, Louis Vuitton, Clinique, and the like. A quick recitation of her schedule on this day hints that maybe she does not share the nighttime disposition of some of her more notorious compeers. “I am a firm believer that there are 24 useful hours in every day,” she pronounces, very much like someone who has not been up all night dancing on tables with a martini glass on her head. Her vice, if you can call it that (and you can't) is coffee. “I don't think it is possible to do all that I do without it.”

Of late she dedicates many of her hours and cups of coffee to Designers for Darfur, a fashion-week charity auction tied to the Save Darfur Coalition, which she co-chairs and for which she has helped attract “coverage beyond compare” from every outlet imaginable. She is further drumming up for a related event in Dubai involving the Royal Family and solvency's polo. “Sometimes my passion for this crisis gets the better of me,” Hearst-Shaw concedes. Whether or not the pillaging Janjaweed militias can be forestalled—either directly or indirectly by the famously unarmed garment industry—remains to be seen. But if not, it won't be from apathy on her part.



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