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**LEO:**

**I WANT TO GET  
MARRIED, HAVE  
KIDS...THE WORKS**



**HOT STYLE INJECTION AT KILKENNY DESIGN...  
ELEANOR McEVOY'S INSPIRING UGANDAN TRIP**



**S**canning the plush interviewing room in the Dorchester hotel in London, I notice that all of the female journalists are seamlessly made up and polished.

It's only 10 o'clock in the morning but, with full war paint and a cloud of perfume engulfing them, they look like they're ready to step onto a red carpet at a premier.

Their extra grooming is for a very good cause though – we are waiting to interview A-list actor and Hollywood's hottest, Leonardo DiCaprio.

I admit, I wore my favourite red pencil skirt and took extra care applying my make-up on the flight over – just in case he decided that he was tired of dating stunning supermodels and thought that five foot short, pale Irish girls were just his thing.

Leo is THE original heart-throb. No matter how many dark and edgy films the 34-year-old makes, he will never be able to shake this tag, which he won after melting hearts in the 1997 smash *Titanic*.

It must be frustrating for the three-times Oscar-nominated actor, who started his career with a number of artsy, indie films and won his first nomination at just 19 for his sensitive portrayal as a retarded boy in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*.

Four years later and he was no longer seen as a serious actor but a teenage pin-up, and ever since he has been doing his best to dismantle his *Titanic* image.

In recent years, Leo has gone for edgier roles – a man seeking to avenge the death of his father in *Gangs of New York*, examining the corruption and murder involved in the gems

I REMEMBER I WAS  
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THE RAINFOREST  
IN BRAZIL WHEN  
A NAKED LOCAL  
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ME FROM THE  
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**BIZARRE,**



**HARD HITTING:** Leo and Russell Crowe in new hit flick *Body of Lies*

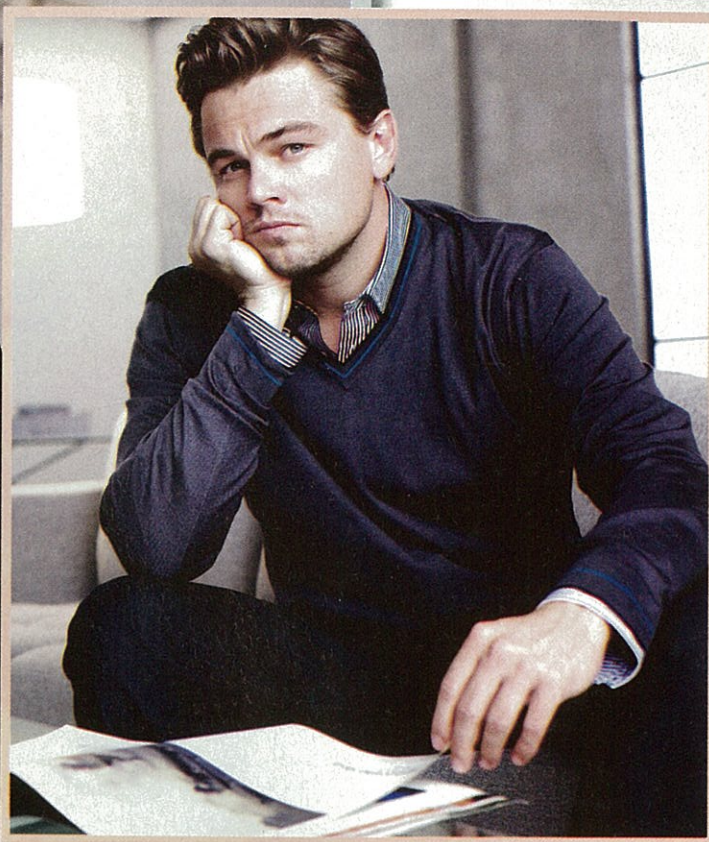


trade in *Blood Diamond* and now a CIA agent hunting down a terrorist in the Middle East in *Body of Lies*.

Dressed casually in a t-shirt and jeans, but with his hair perfectly quaffed and skin looking like he's just had a facial, the actor explains how he is a more settled, serious individual these days, and is finally making the films he wants to do.

Leo is willing to go to great lengths to shake off his Hollywood hunk image. In his





NIAMH BYRNE meets one of the world's sexiest actors, who turns up perfectly groomed with facial-fresh skin...and bags of charm



# SURREAL

latest flick, spy thriller *Body of Lies*, he spent six months filming in the Moroccan desert and had to endure a physically exhausting torture scene.

"It was three days in a tomb in Morocco strapped to a wooden table for hours and hours. I actually got sick after the scene for three days, I physically collapsed because there was so much intensity put into that," he says with his piercing blue eyes (unfortunately) fixed to the table.

"For me, unless it's stimulating

and invigorating, unless it's a compelling story – not necessarily a movie that will make tons of money – then it's a waste of time," he says.

Working away from home for so long meant a break from his beautiful on-off girlfriend, Israeli supermodel Bar Rafaeli – with whom the actor is rumoured to be finally settling down, although he is reluctant to talk about it the relationship.

"In this business, a lot of your life is put on hold when you go

make these movies. You have to put relationships on ice when you go off on location for five or six months," says Leo.

"I do feel a need to make my life about more than just my career. I want to get married and have children, I absolutely believe in marriage but I have no plans for anything. Of course, if it happens, it happens."

Although he still looks like a fresh face 20-something, the actor recently turned 34, but has no plans for a wild celebrity

party with lavish gifts when he returns home to the US.

Gone are the days of the former bad-boy filling the gossip pages with stories of all-night partying with hoards of scantily clad models, and tales of on-set childish pranks that won him the name DiBratio from his peers. No, Leo has certainly mellowed in his 30s.

"I'm probably going to do something really boring like have dinner with family and friends," he says. "It's nothing compared to what I'd have done 10 years ago – I'd have had a giant party or something."

"I've already received my gift – a new president in the administration office. I got to watch the election in Rome where I also watched the 2000 elections...if you can call them that."

In his next film, *Revolutionary Road*, which is due for release later this year, Leo reunites on screen with his former shipmate, Kate Winslet, for the first time in 11 years.

They play a married couple in the mid-1950s whose relationship has gone sour.

"It was like doing a 1950s play or something, where we were talking about our feelings for months at a time," explains Leo. ➔



**from page 9** The film was directed by Kate's husband, Sam Mendes, while her kids Mia (8) and five-year-old Joe waited in the wings.

Kate admitted in an interview recently that it was a bit weird shooting love scenes with the sexy actor in front of her husband. Ladies' man Leo, however, was not one bit phased by the one-on-one action with the English Rose.

"For me, their was no weirdness. I didn't find it strange at all. I found it like a family atmosphere. Sam was conscious to let us form our own little click on set," he says.

"Kate and I basically knew that we could push each other's buttons, performance-wise, and knew that we could pull stuff out of each other. It was something I felt I wanted the opportunity to do.

"It was like a reunion of two people who are a little bit older, a tiny bit wiser, but ultimately are the same as they were when they were 21.

"We've consistently been friends since Titanic, we've seen each other a lot and kept in touch by phone and email.

"Kate's always the consummate professional on set, she's like a detective the way she researches

**I'm a total eco-geek - but I did fly my chef to Morocco so that I wouldn't have to eat vats of snails'**

her character. She's committed, professional, and probably the most talented actress in the business right now.

"She also happens to be one of my closest friends, who I goof off with like crazy."

Teaming up with Kate will definitely conjure up questions about the box-office hit that Leo hopes would just stay sunk at the bottom of the ocean.

After playing dreamboat Jack Dawson in Titanic, the young star suffered a sort of post-Titanic stress syndrome, turning down every big-box-office offer that came his way, including Anakin



*'Kate is the most talented actress in the business right now. She's also one of my closest friends, who I goof off with like crazy'*

Skywalker in Star Wars and the lead role in Spiderman.

"It was never my intention to have my image shown around the world," says modest Leo.

But his face was splashed on every teenage girl's wall around the world and he became the number one most searched celebrity on the internet. Even tribesmen in the South American jungle knew his name.

"I remember taking a breath of fresh air in the middle of the rainforest in Brazil when a naked local Indian man recognised me from the film Titanic. That was bizarre because there were no televisions there. It was a real surreal moment," laughs Leo.

These days, the actor is happier keeping a low profile and avoiding blockbuster romances.

"The movies that I'm doing now are the movies that I've always wanted to do," he says.

He has come a long way from the 13-year-old commercial star whose agent wanted him to change his name to Lenny Williams. Leo explains: "Yeah, when I first started out they thought my name was too ethnic and told me that I would not get as many jobs. But then I had a conversation with my dad and he was like 'Oh no, you don't. You are keeping your Italian name,





#### RESURFACED: Leo and Kate join forces again in Revolutionary Road

you are not changing it under any circumstances.' Besides, the name Lenny is not as attractive."

Along with making his dream films, Leo is devoted to taking care of the environment – he calls it his "second occupation".

Last year, he produced and narrated the eco-documentary *The 11th Hour*; he uses eco-devices throughout his home; he hopes to build an environmentally friendly hotel and he shuns flashy sports cars in favour of eco-friendly hybrids.

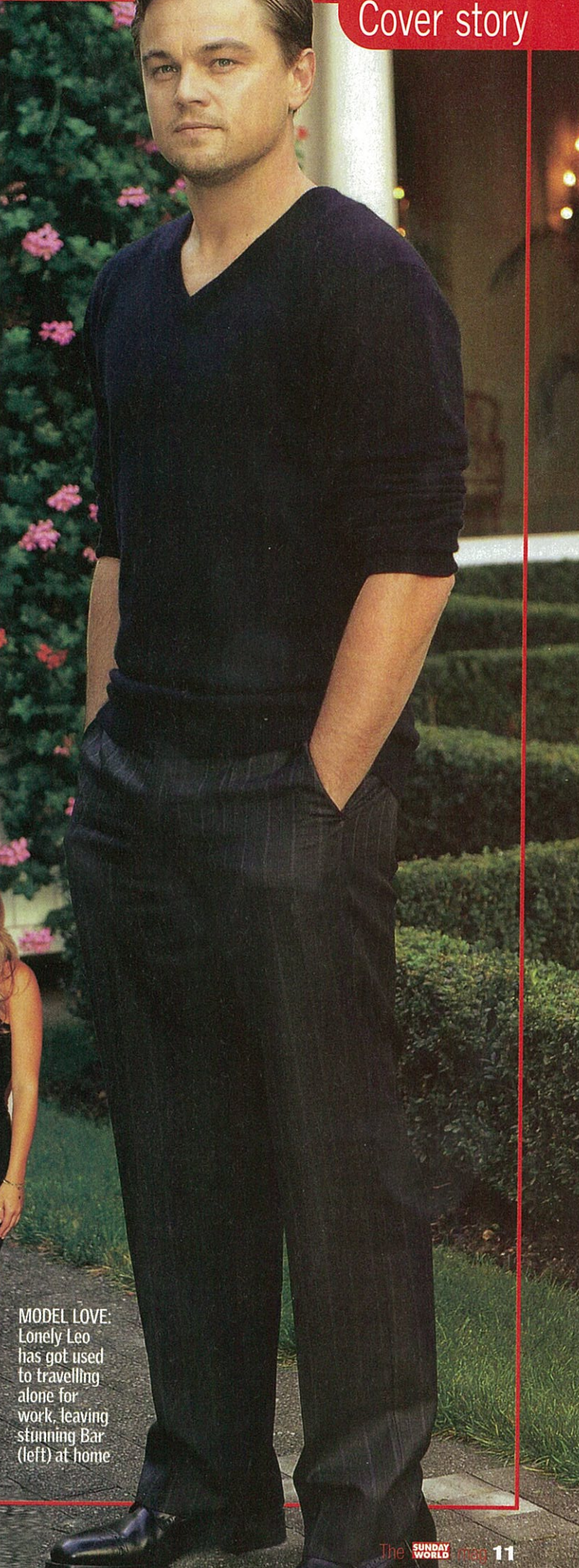
"When I was 16, I drove a 69 Mustang that broke down on the freeway three times and I nearly died. These days I prefer hybrid cars. I've been driving them for nine years now, I'm a total eco-geek," says the star, yet he doesn't think twice about raising his carbon footprint by flying his personal chef around the world to film sets with him.

"As much as I wanted to indulge in the vats of snails in

Morocco, I had the fortune of being able to bring along a chef with me," he admits.

You can take the boy out of Hollywood, but you can't take Hollywood out of the boy.

*Body of Lies* is in cinemas now. ●



**MODEL LOVE:** Lonely Leo has got used to travelling alone for work, leaving stunning Bar (left) at home