



jacket and shirt
by emporio armani,
earring worn throughout
by dior, ear cuff
by louis vuitton.

THE GOOD FIGHT

WHETHER SHE'S BATTLING ERUDITE ANTAGONISTS OR A STOMACH BUG, SHAILENE WOODLEY DOES SO WITH QUIET STRENGTH, A LOT OF HEART, AND A MASSIVE POT OF BONE BROTH. BY MARGARET WAPPLER. PHOTOGRAPHED BY HILARY WALSH. STYLED BY J. ERRICO

A MYSTERIOUS CREATURE IS EATING AT
SHAILENE WOODLEY. THIS IS NOT A METAPHOR
BUT AN ACTUAL MEDICAL CONDITION. HUNCHED
OVER A TABLE AT VENICE'S HIPPIE-CHIC CAFÉ
GRATITUDE, GROUND ZERO FOR ANGELENOS
ON FASTS, CLEANSSES, OR RAW DIETS,
WOODLEY TELLS ME SHE HAS SOME KIND
OF BACTERIA ATTACKING HER SMALL INTESTINE.

"Hi, it's so nice to meet you," she continues with a laugh. "I'm so glad I'm telling you all this three minutes after you sit down."

Her illness, she explains, is why she canceled our plans a week ago to visit Vital Zuman, an organic Malibu farm. Due to her fatigue, she wasn't feeling up to picking lemons and harvesting honey, but now we're in the right vegan restaurant, where the waiters seem like they might take our order in crow yoga position, for subduing toxic forces of the gut. Café Gratitude's menu is packed with elixirs and healing tonics with optimistic names like Beaming (carrot, orange, and the Chinese medicinal root astragalus) and Enlivened (live blue-green algae and rosemary oil). During the course of our nearly three-hour talk on a rainy Saturday, Woodley and I collectively consume five brews for the soul (Golden, Luscious, Enriched, and a double order of Calm) until we're practically levitating.

Disappointingly, there's no Dauntless to be found on the menu. But like the vulnerable yet courageous Tris, the Dauntless faction heroine Woodley portrays in the *Divergent* series, Woodley isn't about to surrender to her enemy without a fight. In a rare turn to conventional medicine, she's agreed to take antibiotics, but because she's studied herbalism and nutrition on her own, like many a California girl, she's also lined up an arsenal of homeopathic weapons to combat the little buggers. In addition to the turmeric-and-almond milk blend she nurses for the first hour of our chat, Woodley, right on trend with nutrient-obsessed foodies everywhere, has been on a bone broth kick.

Behold the glamour, Hollywood star-trackers: Woodley spent her Friday night hunkering over a pot for hours in her Venice rental, waiting for the marrow bones she'd bought at the butcher's to boil down. She finished up the last of it for breakfast this morning.

"I was laughing on the way here because I was worried I had beef broth breath," admits Woodley. She doesn't, but the soup must be doing her some good. In flowy linen overalls and a loose cream-colored T-shirt that slips off her shoulders, Woodley appears relaxed and engaged, if a little tired in the occasional moment when her thoughtful responses peter out into silence. She easily springs back to life when the topic turns to her favorite preoccupations, few of which have anything to do with movies. She's just as fascinated by the powers of galangal (Thai ginger), cramp bark (for PMS), or meditation—she kicks off every morning with a little zazen—as she is with whatever legendary director she happens to be working with (at the moment, it's the famously intense Oliver Stone on the upcoming Edward Snowden biopic) or what projects she'd like to do next (a "big, stylish musical"—who knew?).

As Ansel Elgort, her co-star in *The Fault in Our Stars*, explains it, "Shailene appreciates the simplest things: farmers' markets, hikes, hanging out with friends. I don't think that's ever going to change. She couldn't care less about the spotlight, or going to the Hollywood party and being cool. She's very real that way."

If there's one standby that gets trotted out about actors as proof that they're not raging narcissists, it's the classic "she's grounded" or "she's real" comment, coming from co-stars or parents or, even more biased than a mother, an agent. But the truth

is that Woodley does seem to be the rare actress who, according to Elgort, "is different in this great way but totally normal." What he's tapping into is exactly what's made Woodley the go-to performer for some of the strongest coming-of-age films in the last five years, including *The Spectacular Now*, *The Fault in Our Stars*, and the *Divergent* series, which sealed her as an unlikely action hero, especially to the young women who clamored around the best-selling dystopian books by author Veronica Roth. In March, the second installment, *Insurgent*, hit theaters, reinforcing Tris's paradoxical ability to kick Erudite ass all while seeming like the kind of girl who, if she lived in our world, might lull herself to sleep watching Taylor Swift videos on her cell phone.

Insurgent also finds Tris facing even deeper challenges (and more frightening sims) as she and Theo are chased by brutal militias throughout the ravaged streets of Chicago. "When fear comes knocking on her door, she doesn't run away—she stands up to it," says Woodley. "There's no way to be fearless, but there is a way to stand up to your fear. And I thought that was a really beautiful message to be sending out to young women."

Woodley's calling card—extraordinary but normal—requires a tricky balancing act. In person, she doesn't emanate star wattage; at the bustling Café Gratitude, she's just another girl in skater-cute short hair drinking a smoothie, born and raised in Simi Valley, an affluent but not showy land of subdivisions and strip-mall sushi joints. She doesn't possess the smoldering gaze of Angelina Jolie, the intellectual elegance of Cate Blanchett, or Jennifer Lawrence's fiery gusto. Instead, Woodley channels a natural vulnerability that, when pushed, translates into quiet strength, which is why she's so

coat and shorts
by dior, shirt by
dsquared², shoes by
rag & bone, necklace
by david yurman.





jacket, scarf, and shoes by saint laurent. shirt by equipment, shorts by denim & supply ralph lauren, bracelets by giles & brother.

convincing on-screen as the girl next door who gets her mettle tested. Look closely or it's easy to miss the determined, almost steely focus that underpins Woodley's understated performances.

As the most visible helm of a franchise that's taken in nearly \$300 million worldwide so far, Woodley undeniably is a celebrity, but perhaps what keeps her in touch with the most authentic parts of herself is her reluctance to buy into fame, even after a recent instance in Bali where some fellow tourists excitedly crowded around her to take pictures. "I feel like I've always had a very weird distance with quote-unquote 'fans' and myself," says Woodley, pausing over her words. "When I played Hazel Grace, I wasn't Shailene," she says, of the teen cancer-patient character she portrayed in *The Fault in Our Stars*. "I was Hazel for those months. And that movie to me is not like, 'Oh wow, look at me doing something.' It was breathing life into another young woman and her entire story. And so the whole realm of people being fans of me, individually, just always feels so very odd."

Recent experiences, good and bad, have left Woodley more mindful of how much of herself she puts out there, not only for fans but for other watching eyes as well. Not active on Twitter (her abandoned account hasn't been updated since 2013) or Instagram (she quit after she noticed her fingers "trembling" from overuse), Woodley is about to step into the role of Lindsay Mills, Edward Snowden's girlfriend, in the upcoming Oliver Stone biopic about the NSA whistle-blower (played by Joseph Gordon-Levitt). Playing Mills marks a turn in Woodley's evolution as an actress. No longer is she inhabiting a character who's navigating her teens but a woman in her late 20s whose personal life is thrown

into turmoil by one of the biggest global security blowups of the decade.

The material suits Woodley's current frame of mind. "Two years ago it was very easy for me to understand and also emotionally tell the story of a 16-year-old, and now I feel like I could not tell that story as truthfully because I just can't empathize with it. I'm not there on an emotional level anymore." Excited to play someone closer to her age, Woodley is also intrigued that the story of Snowden and Mills, who are now living together in Moscow, could "wildly change in six months."

Mills is the first character Woodley has played who's an actual living person—and ironically enough, the actress found herself combing for information about Mills on social media.

Confirming the veracity of Snowden's warnings, Woodley is troubled that "there is still so much access to information on anyone and everyone." Woodley's smartphone, her first and only, was given to her by Lionsgate for *Divergent's* press tour last year. Otherwise, she's offline as much as possible.

In our age of 'gramming, tweeting, and pinning, this behavior seems out of step for a 23-year-old, but according to Woodley's friends, it's what they hope never gets stamped out of her. Raised by parents who are perfectly comfortable with seeing their young daughter in a sex scene—she's lost her virginity three times on-screen—Woodley is committed to living in the mess (or splendor) of the present moment. Brie Larson, her co-star in *The Spectacular Now*, in which Woodley plays the sweet anchor to Miles Teller's self-loathing jokester during the confusing transition from high school to college, says that Woodley's honesty stood out immediately. "She is completely and unapologetically her beautiful self," says

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suit by
dsquared²,
shirt by private
archives.



shirt by saint laurent,
jeans by paige denim,
ring by sydney evan.

Larson. While filming, “we hiked a lot. We would meet at a co-op, grab some figs, and then hit the trail.... She walks slowly and with care so that not even a spider web is destroyed in her path. There is so much love and gratitude in her.”

Woodley grew up acting, checking in every now and again with her ladder, a sketch that she made as a kid of her acting goals organized rung by rung. Though it’s been a staple of her life since her first big gig in the 1999 TV movie *Replacing Dad*, she is far from single-minded. In the past, she’s referred to acting as a hobby, saying she’d leave the moment it became a career, but that was before she signed on to a five-year commitment to play Tris in *Divergent*, *Insurgent*, and the upcoming *Allegiant*, parts 1 and 2 (due in 2016 and 2017, respectively). Would it be so easy to walk away now?

She cocks her head, takes a sip of Calm (a.k.a. rooibos tea), and offers a perplexing answer: “It does take up 10 to 11 months of my entire year, so it is my career now,” but at the same time, “it’s still just a hobby, just something that I live and breathe to do.” More than anything, it seems like Woodley wants the freedom to follow other pursuits. “In a few years, I’ll probably take some years off to explore the other things that I’d love to do while I’m still in my 20s.”

On the short list: traveling, starting a farm, indulging her athletic side (lately, she’s into the Israeli self-defense technique krav maga), and spending time with her impressively proactive friends—Woodley’s inner circle consists of a yoga teacher, a jujitsu black belt, and a female empowerment blogger.

Despite having myriad interests, there’s no denying that movies are Woodley’s one true love. “Being on a movie set to me is one of the greatest things,” she says. “I could sleep on set. It’s like 200 people, and everyone has their own story. Everyone comes from somewhere different, and yet they’re all there together collaborating.... It’s sort of like a living, breathing amoeba, how it’s constantly moving and shape-shifting. And without all of its parts, it wouldn’t be able to flourish.”

The *Divergent* series author picks up on Woodley’s enthusiasm for the filmmaking process, exhaustive retakes and all, whenever she visits the set. “One thing that really struck me, watching her on set, is how hard she

works,” says Roth. “She brings energy to every single take, even when she’s not the focus, even when she’s been there since sunrise. And I’ve never heard her complain. It’s pretty remarkable.”

Although Woodley thrives on-screen, she has struggled at times to find balance in all the hoopla around it. Last year, the forthcoming actress found herself in the middle of a media kerfuffle when she told a *Time* magazine reporter she didn’t consider herself a feminist. Today she still feels hesitant about the issue. “The reason why I don’t like to say that I am a feminist or I am not a feminist is because to me it’s still a label,” she explains. “I do not want to be defined by one thing.” A moment later, she adds: “Why do we have to have that label

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to divide us? We should all be able to embrace one another regardless of our belief system and regardless of the labels that we have put upon ourselves.”

She was taken off guard by the level of scrutiny, and disappointed that her overall message—Woodley speaks often about sisterhood and empowerment—was lost to what may ultimately boil down to a preference for one term over another. “I mean, if we spent as much energy focusing on the genocide that’s going on right

now in parts of Africa as we spent on that one article, think about what we could accomplish,” she says. “Change is not going to come from focusing on the small things that actors say.”

Citing *Divergent* co-star Kate Winslet as “sort of a big sister” who’s helped her navigate the thickets of burgeoning celebrity, Woodley recalls a helpful piece of advice from the actress when they crossed paths on the film’s international press tour. “She could see how tired I was,” says Woodley, “and she wrote me the most beautiful email I’ve ever received, saying, ‘Sometimes the waves are going to be so big you’re going to feel like you’re drowning. And someone, that reporter, is going to publish something and make you seem like someone you’re not. And it’s going to feel really shitty, and you’re not going to be able to find air, and you’re by yourself and there’s sharks everywhere. The important thing to remember is, it’s all waves... [and eventually] it’s going to go away and you’ll be floating on your own!’”

Coming of age in real life, especially when fame’s involved, can be pretty rough. If Woodley has been put through her paces, her characters have been right there with her. They’ve grappled with their own mortality, lost the ones they love, doubted their every decision. Woodley calls acting the ability to listen—not only to the other actors in any given scene, but to her own experiences and how they overlap with her characters.

In a few days, she’ll fly off to Munich to begin shooting *Snowden*, but for now she’s waiting on her last smoothie to go before ducking back out into the rain.

“Tris was not born a superhero, but what I love about her is that you can watch her progression into a strong young woman,” says Woodley. “Whenever I go back to playing Tris, I feel like, yes, I’m going back to Tris, but I am also going back to Shai and who Shai was in 2012, and who she was in 2014. If I hadn’t changed, it would be easier...but the last two years have been very powerful for me. I’m starting to empower myself.”

vests and pants by ann
demeulemeester, shirt
by calvin klein, bra by
dolce & gabbana.

hair: sascha breuer at
starworks artists using
wella professionals. makeup:
gloria noto at atelier
management using chanel
rouge coco. manicurist:
nettie davis at the wall
group. graffiti photographed
by akiko higuchi.

