

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATTHIAS VRIENS-MCGRATH

FASHION DIRECTOR: AYA KANA

Dress, Valentino. Shoes, Christian Louboutin. Hat, Benoit Missolin Paris, \$500. Bag, Yazbukey, \$215. (On left hand) Ring, Sophie Bille Brahe. (On right hand) Ring, Holly Dyment.



AT 25, PRETTY LITTLE LIARS STAR LUCY HALE
IS ROLLING THE DICE ON A NEW CAREER AS
A COUNTRY SINGER, LEAVING ALL THE DRAMA BEHIND
AND TALKING CANDIDLY ABOUT THE MIXED
MESSAGES TV SENDS TO YOUNG WOMEN. LUCY,
WILL YOU BE OUR LIFE COACH?

BY KYLE BUCHANAN

Dress, Dsquared². Shoes, Rupert Sanderson, Headpiece, Erickson Beamon. Earrings, Necklace, Zales Jewelers, \$339. Bangles, David Yurman. Ring, Jason of Beverly Hills



Instead, the 25-year-old star of ABC Family's Pretty Little Liars—a Memphis native who won the singing competition American Juniors at age 14—is taking on a new challenge with the release of her new country album. Road Between. "The main difference is, now I get to be myself," she says over coffee at a cute café in Los Angeles's Studio City, where she's the epitome of California boho-chic with her wavy brown hair, big sunglasses. and simple black-and-gold blouse with jeans. So who is Lucy Hale when she's just being herself? Let her tell you. in her own words.

cosmo Were people skeptical when you told them you wanted to record an album?

LUCY Totally! So many people didn't want to touch the project with a 10-foot pole. Literally, I had people laughing and saying, "You're making an album? Good luck." They didn't want to give it a chance, purely because of a preconceived notion about me. But if you sit down and talk music with me for 10 minutes, you know that's my passion. It's been interesting to try to get people to open their eyes and ears. I'm stubborn, so I'm not going to go away!

Do you feel more vulnerable singing than you do acting?

LUCY It's as vulnerable as you can get besides being naked running down a hallway! My heart is on my sleeve when I'm singing my songs—there have been moments I've cried onstage because it just felt right. Making this album will, hands down, be the scariest thing I will ever do in my life.

Your music goes to a very personal place too.

LUCY It's cool to get to talk about issues in my songs because it seems like it's not okay for young girls to talk about how they're flawed. I had a moment. when I realized. Wow. I've been bottling emotions for a long time. and I wasn't allowing myself to go to those places. It's like, Lucy's having a bad day, but Lucy can't have a bad day, so she has to paint a smile on. It's okay to be human! It's okay to be upset! During my songwriting sessions, all that spilled out of me. Who needs a therapist?

You're in your mid-20s now. How have things changed?

LUCY I finally feel like a grown-up and so comfortable with who I am. I've done some stupid stuff in my life, and I wouldn't trade it for the world. At the same time. there was a time when I was probably around things I shouldn't have been around. There are a lot of shady people out there. Last year, I was like, I need to cut out anything and everyone that's not bettering me. Why am I hanging out with people who make me feel like I have this weighed-down feeling? I want to hang out with people who are happy about life.

What did you think when Pretty Little Liars was renewed for two more seasons?

we're all on the same page. On the one hand, it's like, Great, cool!

I have a job for another two-and-a-half years. But then it's kind of weird to have your life planned out. I always try to remember how blessed I am and stay grateful.

Are you able to give thought to your big-screen career?

LUCY I would love to do something artsy, stripped down, and raw. I've been doing this character for almost five years, so it'll be fun to do something a little left of center.

You auditioned to play Anastasia Steele in *Fifty Shades* of *Grey*. That's left of center!

LUCY That audition was so uncomfortable! It's exactly what you thought it would be: a big monologue but very. very sexual. My mom and my grandma would be horrified! There were some things that I was so embarrassed to be reading out loud, but it's one of those things where you have to commit wholeheartedly or you're going to make a fool of yourself. I didn't get it, obviously, but I'm so glad I did that because it took me out of my comfort zone.

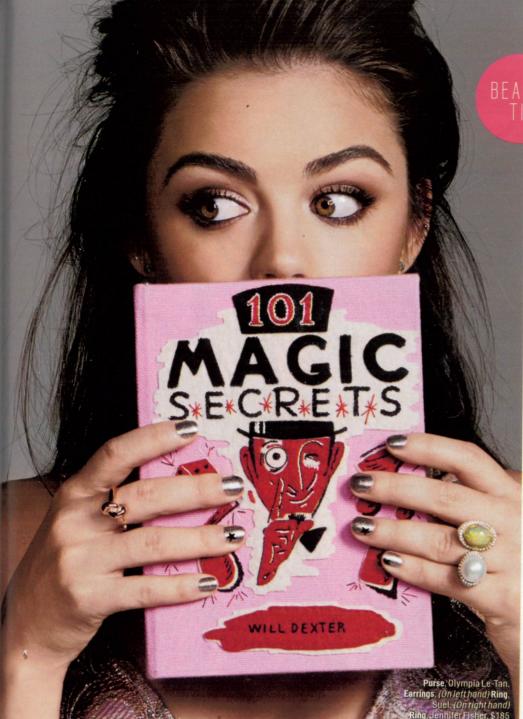
Speaking of film, you've raved about *The Fault in Our Stars*.

LUCY There needs to be more positive messages like that for our genera-



Snap for the INSTAVID





tion, especially for young women. The girls and I have talked about it at work: I'm scared to have children because kids grow up so quickly now, with the things that people post on social media. And what our industry preaches to young people is not okay! You see so many girls disrespecting themselves...and I've been one of those people.

What is it about social media that freaks you out?

LUCY The cyberbullyingit's tragic. I got bullied by a follower who is probably a 13-year-old who is insecure about herself, so she takes it out on other people. I've always been understanding of bullies because they are the most damaged of anyone. I have a song about it, "Nervous Girls"-it

shows we all struggle with something.

How can girls break that cycle of bullying and insecurity?

LUCY Women blame guys for not respecting us, but there aren't enough women in support of other women. I've never had a problem saying, "Wow, she's a beautiful woman" or "What a great album she made!" I've always rooted for other girls.

GUNMETAL NAILS CAST SERIOUS SHINE, TRY **DIOR** VERNIS IN METAL MONTAIGNE, \$25.

Yet there are rumors you are feuding with your costars.

LUCYI love those three girls with my whole heart. If you're going to spread rumors, at least say one of us is pregnant. Don't say that we hate one another. That's insane.

In your last Cosmo cover story. you spoke about recovering from an eating disorder. What reaction did you get?

LUCY After the interview, I was like, Why did I say that? But when I saw how it affected other people. it was totally worth it. To know that anything I say has an effect on someone is mind-blowing.

You and your costars have been vocal about the superficial image Hollywood can sell.

LUCY The show is about how we look too. That's terrifying sometimes because you're breaking out or you feel gross and you still have to be in front of the camera. We'll post pictures on Instagram and people will be like. "Y'all are so flawless." Little do they know it's fake hair, fake eyelashes, and a good filter. Little girls see that and think they have to be like that.

They see you on the red carpet and it seems glamorous, but...

LUCY...Inside, I'm having a panic attack! I look at people like Beyoncé and Blake Lively striking these perfect poses, and I could never do that. I don't do what I do to be on the cover of magazines—although I'm very grateful obviously. I do what I do because I love it. That's my passion.