

DYLAN PENN BY ROBERTO CROCI

According to legend, Molokai, the god of the sea, literally rose from the waves of the Pacific. An Hawaiian divinity with shark-like head and the body of a turtle, he is thought to have revealed himself to a bunch of fishermen after springing out of the sea. The same happens to me, in a urban way, as I cross the threshold of the art deco photo studio in Venice Beach, California. «Is she here?» «Not yet... She is coming» is the answer. Almost 10 minutes have gone by with unnerving slowness, when, turning to the palms and the cactus in the doorway, I get blinded by the inebriating beauty of a woman figure in jeans and a studded black leather jacket, standing out against the clear L.A. sky. I am finally face to face with Dylan Penn: young, fair-haired, with an oval-shaped face, crystal clear eyes and a charming smile on her lips, remarkably similar to Ornella Muti's. We retire to a separate place, far from everyone, so that we can have a little chat, and I can feel like I am the center of her attention, even if just for half an hour. 23-years-old, a model as a pastime, an actress when she feels like it, a writer out of passion, Dylan Frances Penn grew up away from Hollywood, as disposed by her star-parents, Sean Penn and Robin Wright. «I spent my childhood in Marin County, North California, my parents wanted me to have a normal life, in a place where people don't consider the film industry as glamorous and toxic. I grew up in Ross, a town in the middle of nowhere, where people live outdoors, you walk to school and go out with your friends during the week-ends, and no one is worried that someone might kidnap or rob you, even if you are 10. It's something I could have never had in New York or Los Angeles». As our conversation goes on, I start to get the intrinsic meaning of Barry Lindon, and experience in first person that feeling of beauty and virginity that Kubrick allots to the freshness of youth and light-heartedness. After the high-school, Dylan left for Europe. «As a reward for my degree, my parents bought me a plane ticket to London. They had just divorced: leaving was of fundamental importance for me to get over that kind of pain. My BFF Lena and I travelled for 2 months: Madrid, Barcelona, Paris, Rome, Capri. It was a one of a kind experience. I was 18, and didn't want to go back home. That's why, upon my return, I decided I wanted to move to L.A., to study at the USC Film School, but never thought I would become an actress or a model. I always loved writing scripts, my mother says I am quite good at it, I would love to direct a movie I wrote at some time in the future». The girl's got attitude. She surely got that from her parent, which helped shape her personality. «It wasn't easy growing with parents like mine, two "alpha"-personality types. The frankness and spontaneity which characterized their relationship made me become what I am today. I value them much more now than I used to do back then. Thanks to them I learned not to take anything for granted and to always challenge the status quo, to ask myself questions, to inquire about life and people. The fact that my parents are actors has nothing to do with what I learned from them. My dad has taught me resolution. He always took me with him when he went running. We would take laps around the nearby lake. I didn't want to let him beat me, so I learned how to be competitive. It has been a great lesson for me, and it is owing to that

I still run today. My relation with him hasn't been an easy one. I always thought he was responsible for the divorce, but growing up I realized it isn't anyone's fault, and that everyone is responsible for their own choices. We are very much alike. Everything I used to hate about him was because we were too similar. In the past three years I changed a lot. Even though we don't see each other much, we are still very close». «My mother, on the contrary, was always there in my life. I don't need to do anything fancy when I'm with her. We talk for hours, we have fun, she always gives me useful advice, especially on social themes, on how people actually live and what we can do for them. Speaking of fashion, I am all about jeans and t-shirts, I like to dress up, but going shopping bores me, I rather listen to music or watch a movie. I grew up with rap music: 50 Cent, Nelly, Missy Eliot and Aaliyah. Lately I have been listening to Taylor Swift a lot». Her absolute lack of interest for social media separates her from the rest of her generation of Millennials: «I don't understand the obsessive culture of selfies, putting your private life on Twitter or Facebook. I am on Instagram, but I use it as a tool to discover new things, not to talk about myself». Her naturalness reflects in her beauty-routine. «I drink a lot of water, especially when I party. I have two essential practices. The first one comes from my mother: never go to sleep with your make-up still on. The second one is my dad's: put on cold cream at least twice a day, in the morning and in the evening. He loves visage beauty products». One Project: «Condemned, my first film. A horror. A director I love. 3 weeks full-charge in N.Y.». One Passion: «I love food! I am passionate about bacon & eggs, but my favorite are Mexican huevos rancheros, with super-spicy sauce. N.Y. really spoils you, I have spent entire wages on dream restaurants like Craft, The Spotted Pig, Justin Timberlake's Southern Hospitality». One Unforgettable encounter: «Nelson Mandela. I had heard about him in school and actually met him when I was 13. It has been an incredible experience. The true meaning of courage». One Secret you haven't told anyone: «I hate secrets... Here's one. I lie a lot about cinch. I even believe my lies! I am a liar».