



A girl next door kind of look, an insane passion for acting in horror films and an authentic mania for cooking. But, be warned: never leave Elizabeth on her own

ELIZABETH

TEXT ROBERTO CROCI  
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# ELIZABETH OLSEN

**ELIZABETH OLSEN WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKED BY HOMER, ULYSSES AND ... EVEN POLYPHEME (DESPITE HIS BLINDNESS).** At first, you are attracted by her eyes – large, honest, very green – then, suddenly, you are enchanted by her smile and her sensuality – affable and engaging – and, finally, totally inebriated and captured by her calmness and her correctness of speech, truly rare in an actress with only two movies under her belt: Martha Marcy May Marlene, (award winning at Sundance and Cannes) and the brand new Silent House (where we meet her in Beverly Hills), remake of the Uruguayan horror film La Casa Muda, where Elizabeth shows what all had predicted for her: a star role.

**FOLLOWING THE SUCCESS OF MARTHA MARCY MAY MARLENE, EVERYBODY'S BEEN WONDERING... WHO IS THIS GIRL? EVEN THOUGH YOUR SURNAME IS A WELL KNOWN ONE..**

“I’ve always been afraid of using my surname, I didn’t want people to think I used it to get parts without merit. Besides my famous twin sisters, Mary-Kate and Ashley, I have an older brother, Trent, writer and screenwriter, and two younger brothers, Taylor and Jake. I have a solid family behind me, that believes in real values. My parents - David Olsen, broker, and Jarnette Jones, dancer, editor’s note – have always taught me that in order to be free, you need to have an economic freedom achieved only through talent and intelligence”.

**HOW DID YOU REALISE THAT YOUR SISTERS WERE FAMOUS?**

“Straight from childhood, after finishing school, I used to spend entire days on set. Sometimes my sisters asked me if I wanted to play a part, but for me it was just a way to play with them, nothing serious. Then, growing up, I realised that Mary-Kate and Ashley have sacrificed a ‘normal’ life and that our holidays had always something to do with their working schedule, I never realised that in reality while I was having fun, they were working. Fame is a weird, dangerous animal, not everybody is able to tame. I’m happy to have always understood the difference between public and private life: when I go to a party, I know it’s work, it’s not part of my reality, made up of family and friends”.

**IS THIS THE REASON WHY YOU CHOSE TO DO THEATRE INSTEAD OF CINEMA?**

“Yes, because I didn’t want to live on my own skin my sisters’ career. I’ve always been scared of cinema, it was simply a ruthless world, the camera used to intimidate me. At college, I decided I would become a theatre actress, best suited for my personality and my literary tastes. At 17, I enrolled to New York’s Lee Strasberg where I spent the summer with people like me, passionate about the stage. Passion that’s grown at the Atlantic Theater Company of New York University. Thanks to them, I studied in Moscow



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for six months, where I fell in love for the very first time, even though the relationship ended because of the distance. Then came Broadway, where I spent three years behind the scenes as an understudy, the actress ready to substitute the star at any point: even though I never made it to the stage, I learnt that my presence and my reliability were important”.

## **THEN ONE DAY YOU DECIDED TO VENTURE INTO CINEMA.**

“Well, cinema has always fascinated me. I adore horrors: Tremors Arachnophobia, Jaws, and how the French film them – just like Moreau & Palud, a masterpiece. I waited the end of my studies before auditioning for the first time for Spy Kids by Robert Rodriguez. I have chose to do Martha Marcy May Marlene because it was a part where, instead of acting, I had to interpret a real girl that lives in a real world. My idol, however, is a comic, Catherine O’Hara, Tim Burton’s favourite, as seen in his Beetlejuice & the next Frankenweenie. I’m happy to have continued to study and discovered what I wanted to do in life”.

## **WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU WORKING ON AT THE MOMENT?**

“I feel like a patient that’s just woken up from a coma, I want to do



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everything, live everything, interpret everything. I am working at a small part in *Kill Your Darlings*, the story of a homicide that unites Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs. Then there's a film in costume with Glenn Close, one of my myths. I want to take on parts that not only challenge my imagination, but also make me live a much fuller life. And then, not having a family or a mortgage to pay, I can afford to take on parts that might not be very important on a financial side but are interesting for my professional development. I get very excited when I'm working and get down when at home, but I'm happy to be able to choose only parts that I really want to interpret!"

## **FASHIONISTA BY CHOICE OR FOR WORK?**

"Since I've started working in cinema, my sisters have advised me to seek professional help when it comes to clothes, because apparently whatever you wear becomes a world declaration! I have a good relationship with my wardrobe, but it's not an obsession. I've always enjoyed going through Mary-Kate's one, the family's fashion-addict. Then when I was at college I suddenly became taller and I couldn't wear anything. All my friends could wear her designer clothes, whereas I started to spend time in vintage shops, particularly *Wasteland*, the second hand shop on Melrose Ave in Los Angeles. I am not a fashion slave, I prefer to buy kitchen utensils and go to Williams-Sonoma and *Sur la Table*. I'm a foodie".

## **A FOODIE?**

"Cooking is my passion, being a foodie a vocation, an illness if you like. Restaurants, chefs, food 24/7. During my holidays I always cook, I'm obsessed by Brussels' sprouts! I admire chef Wylie Dufresne and molecular cuisine. When I filmed *Red Lights* in Barcelona, the capital of molecular gastronomy, I spent entire days in front of the strangest combinations, with side of foam, particles and bubbles of the most incredible flavours. And I adore another genial chef, Michael Voltaggio, that enjoys to nourish eyes as much as the brain: simply go to his *INK* restaurant in L.A. to understand what I mean. And then Tom Colicchio, from the TV show *Top Chef*, Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo, chef and owners of *Animal* and *Son Of A Gun*, both kings of comfort food, rich food full of good fat, experimentalists and innovative types in West Hollywood".

## **YOUR BIGGEST FEAR?**

"Loneliness, as in the type by choice. I am an incredibly extrovert person, I love travelling – my favourite destinations, Greece and Italy – and always being in contact with people from different cultures, races and different ideas from mine. The idea of deciding to move away from the world terrifies me, losing a connection with human beings scares me to death.●

