



So to Speak

Actress Emmanuelle Vaugier on her latest horror films, love on the back lots and life in the Hollywood Hills.
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She may have made you gasp for breath—from either fright or seductive appeal—in *Saw II* and *40 Days and 40 Nights*. Then she explored her comedic and dramatic sides on television shows including *Two and a Half Men*, *Smallville* and *CSI: NY*. Now, French-Canadian belle Emmanuelle Vaugier hopes that the horror flicks she stars in this year, *Hysteria* and *Far Cry*, will again leave you breathless. Vaugier talks about going from the big screen to the small screen and back—and about life in the canyons and love in L.A.

GB: When were you bitten by the acting bug?

EV: When I was in second grade, I was understudy to the lead in an original holiday pageant production, and she got sick. I remember being on stage and thinking that this is what I want to do. I started modeling and doing TV commercials in Canada and then I booked the lead part in a TV movie. One of my costars set me up with her manager in Los Angeles.... I was very lucky.

So it was rags to riches?

Yes, though it didn't seem like that at first. I drove down to the Highland Gardens Hotel on Franklin Avenue, where all the actors stay during the pilot season [when they audition for new TV shows.] The day I arrived, I received a fax from my agent, a 23-page script for an audition. The hotel charged \$1 per page! I thought I'd go bankrupt before the week was over. By some miracle, I found a \$900-per-month one-bedroom sublet in Beverly Hills that same day. I stayed there for six years.

Now you've got a house in the canyons.

It's amazing. I go hiking with my two dogs and have my boyfriend [actor Josh Cooke] over for dinners. Before I moved here I had such a guy's fridge: There was just beer and wine—and popsicles! Now I stay at home and cook. I stock up my fridge at Bristol Farms and Trader Joe's.

Where do you go to eat out?

I love The Little Door on Third Street. I like Pace on Laurel Canyon. For a glass of wine and a great cheese plate, I go to Monsieur Marcel at Farmers Market. I'm a cheese fanatic! Alcove Café in Los Feliz has a cheese and wine store attached to it—if you are in the area, you shouldn't miss it. On the weekends, I have brunch at the Langham, Huntington in Pasadena.

Your wardrobe is phenomenal. Where do you shop?

I've started going to the Valley—there are all these great little boutiques I never knew about. I especially like Lisa Rinna's store, Belle Gray, on Ventura Boulevard in Sherman Oaks. On this side of the hill, I like Leona Edmiston at Sunset Plaza. I always wear her clothes to my events! They're great to travel with; you pull the dresses out of your suitcase and you could step straight onto a red carpet. And I always find something exciting and colorful at Petro Zillia on Third Street.

Dating actors is such a cliché, but it seems to be working out. (Cue in Cooke filling Vaugier's wineglass.)

When people say that, I always ask, well, who else am I going to meet? You meet people through friends or work; in Los Angeles the people I meet are actors, writers, directors or producers. Actors understand that if you come home after an 18-hour day, you just want to go to sleep and not talk to anyone! We can also visit each other on the set, really be there for each other during that time.

Did you get a lot more male attention following your Maxim cover?

I definitely attracted a larger male audience. I was put on a lot of those hot women lists. But one year you are on the top, and the next year you don't even make the list. It's not about your body and beauty— it's all about your publicist!

Do you prefer film or TV work?

It's a toss-up. But acting in a TV show with a live audience can be really scary. The first time I was shooting Two and a Half Men, I was terrified. What if I'm not funny? Charlie Sheen was very supportive; he said that the audience is there because they love the show—to support you, not to judge you.

You star in two new horror films.

Far Cry is based on a video game— I play a reporter sent to find out about a terrifying chain of events on a faraway island. Hysteria is about friends who get together in this house for their 10-year high-school reunion and one girl gets possessed.... Do you go to see horror films? No! It's the music cues and the editing that make them so terrifying. It's not as frightening on the set, though I did have nightmares after making Hysteria. I'll go see action films at the ArcLight at Sunset and Vine. Horror films? I get way too scared.