



Abi's happily single wife Paul is holding out for a Piscean born in 1972

Before I came into the public eye, about ten years ago, I did three years of acting classes while I was working part-time as a nurse. I then realised I was in the wrong job so I didn't suddenly decide I'd be an actress. I take acting very seriously, and have a huge amount of respect for it.

You did take up the modelling, though – was that a mistake?

No, not at all, it's just that my life had gone so far away from where I wanted to be. I was very grateful for everything that happened, and I was able to make a bit of money, but I knew I had to make some sacrifices in order to follow my dream. You can't model for ever, and I didn't really want to either. I knew I had to get back to what I really wanted to do – and four years ago I stepped back from the spotlight and I started from the bottom with acting.

What sort of acting jobs did you do?

I went to theatre pubs, I worked for free, I trod the boards in some very little venues. My manager didn't want me to do that, but I said to him: 'Have some faith in me!' The first play I did was an Arthur Miller play, a two-hander called *Two-Way Mirror*, and I won an award for Best West End Debut!

So should we stop calling you a model and call you an actress now?

I was modelling for three years, and I've been acting for four years, so I think that says it all. I'm really trying to show my versatility as an actress. I'm not just picking sexy roles. Last year I played a pole dancer, a nun, a fitness instructor, a drunk woman, a rugby player and Lady Macbeth!

Was Lady Macbeth your biggest acting challenge?

It was a huge challenge, but technically I think playing a pole dancer in a play I did called *The Naked Truth* was my biggest challenge. I'd never been anywhere near a pole before so I threw myself into it and trained for three months before rehearsals started. I still go to classes – it's great exercise!

Are the lads' mags definitely part of your past now?

I think so. I do have a calendar out this year but that was shot a year and a half ago – just a fun, bikini-shots calendar. That was then, this is now. I'm not promoting it! I would do a sexy shoot again if a really cool magazine offered it to me. I want to be attractive, and I like that, but I don't want to earn my living doing any more lads' mags now.

Would you describe glamour modelling as a worthwhile career for a young girl, or would you recommend them not to go down that route?

I would say get an education before anything else, and experience life, then make decisions about what you want to do. I do feel it has changed slightly since I was doing the modelling. My work was mainly pretty shots in bikinis, but it seems to be getting raunchier and more sexual now. But men will always like looking at photos of pretty women, and I genuinely don't think there's anything wrong with that.

Paul, tell us about your work as an astrologer, and your speciality, which is matching people via their star signs...

I'm the only astrologist who studies and practises a blend of Western and Chinese astrology, which generates 1,440 different characters, instead of just the usual 12 signs of the zodiac. So if you were to tell me your date of birth, I'd be able to say, for example, that your perfect match is a Taurean Wood Dragon. I've now set up SomebodyToLove.com which works like a dating site, except that I'd say it's absolutely foolproof for people looking for their perfect match.

Tell us some good celeb love matches...

Well, Cheryl Cole and Derek Hough, her dancer friend – they are incredibly compatible, so I think Derek could be a good match. Then there's Harrison Ford and Calista Flockhart, who may be 22 years apart, but they've been together for many years; they're more than 90 per cent compatible. I can see them being together forever.

Are there any really bad love matches we might like to hear about?

There are some shockers – like Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston, who were about 10 per cent, but Brad and Angelina are very good match and a strong partnership, they're about 84 per cent. Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes are utterly mediocre. He's a Cancerian Water Tiger, she's a Sagittarian Earth Horse and it's not a good match, about 32 per cent. I can't see them lasting.

When you first meet someone, are you dying to know their star sign?

I'm dreadful, I do tend to be curious, I hold off for about two minutes! As soon as I know someone's date of birth, I feel like I know a lot about them – but of course I can't know everything!

So what kind of personality do you see in our Abi today?

Abi is an Aquarian Fire Dragon, and she's an interesting character. An Aquarian is extremely humanitarian, and cares about the welfare of others, so that part of Abi's personality was drawn to the nursing industry. She's also a Fire Dragon, and they have huge egos, they love people and they're very confident, so when Abi hit the modelling phase, the fire dragon kicked in. Now she's an actress, so again the fire dragon. So you can split Abi right down the middle – you've got this gentle, very humanitarian side, and this little firebrand!

Paul, you must know who your ideal match is – so do you have a girlfriend?

I'm single, mainly because I know my perfect partner! My perfect match is a Piscean born in 1972 – and I've never met one! I'm kind of holding out. There's also a Sagittarius born in '75 who would do!

What about the spontaneity of romance, or love at first sight?

It often ends in trauma, tears and divorce! Normally, when you meet someone and you fancy them you think, I hope we're compatible! With my system, I'll tell you who's compatible, so that if you meet someone who's a perfect match, with that date of birth and star sign, and then if you fancy them – well, it's a home run! That'll last forever.

Abi, are you seeing anyone at the moment?

No, I've been single for about six months, but that's okay, I'm a very busy lady. It's my longest time for years without a boyfriend, but I'm really enjoying it for the first time. I've got my puppy Danny, who is the man of my life. I rescued him, from the Dogs Trust, which is a fantastic charity that I support strongly. Any man who comes into my life will have to put up with Danny jumping all over him!

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FEATURE BY ROB DRISCOLL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ED WAITS MAKE-UP BY EVELYNNE STOKOU @ MINX ABI'S HAIR BY CONNECT



PISTACHIO PARFAIT

Making this delicious dessert is easier than you'd think!

SERVES 4-6

- 8 egg yolks ● 250g brown sugar ● 1 litre double cream
- 100g pistachio paste ● 100g pistachio nuts, finely chopped

1 Whisk the egg yolks until light and frothy. Add a little water to the sugar and heat until it reaches 110°C. Add the boiled sugar to the yolks and whisk some more.

2 Whisk the double cream until firm. Add to the yolks/sugar mixture in a large bowl, then add the pistachio paste and the grounded nuts and mix it all by hand. Place into a mould with cling film on the bottom, and place it in the freezer for 2/3 hours. Cut into squares (or desired shapes) and re-freeze if desired, or serve.



Abi and Paul raise a glass to Abi's next acting role, in John Godber's *Up'n'Under*. We're doing nearly a month during the Edinburgh Festival, and a few other places around the UK. She says...



GRILLED HALIBUT

This recipe works just as well with other fish, but fresh halibut has a delicious 'clean' taste that requires very little seasoning.

SERVES 2

- 2 x 200g halibut fillets ● 100g green beans ● 100g mange tout
- 100g sugar-snaps ● 100g sweet potatoes ● 750ml fish stock
- 750ml double cream ● Handful of chives, chopped ● Salt and pepper
- 750ml fish stock ● 750ml double cream ● Vegetable oil

- 1 Reduce the fish stock, add double cream and season with salt and pepper. Add the chives and mix well.
- 2 Wash the beans, mange tout and sugar snaps and stir fry on a high heat with a little oil for 2-3
- 3 Place all the vegetables on the serving plates, place the grilled halibut on top, add the cream and

for 2 minutes until lightly golden. Grill the halibut with a little oil and seasoning for 2-3 minutes on each side.