



JAKE JENSEN

STUDIO CONVERSATIONS VOLUME I

FOREWORD

In the often shallow world of fashion and beauty, it isn't often I meet a model/actor as grounded as Jake Jensen. It's a rarity, but I believe it's that very quality that makes him a unique and formidable standout in a business filled with cutthroat competition. I first met Jake in 2013, while looking for a model to collaborate on a project I was working on for Levis. At that time, the brand was releasing the "140 Years" coffee table book and actively courting photographers to participate in the 501 Interpretations campaign. I had been invited to participate in the submission process by one of the editors who was familiar with my work.

It was a last minute invite. I had a deadline of about two weeks to find a model, shoot and edit the images, and get them submitted. Although I had never worked with Jake before, I had seen images of him online. I knew his look would be perfect for what I had in mind. As luck would have it, we were able to connect quickly and we did create a stunning set of images that my contact at Levis loved, but we missed the deadline for consideration by a day. Nevertheless, those first images became part of the American Classic social media series circulated by Levis on their official feeds and on various online forums. Looking back, I still consider those images to be among my best work and certainly among my personal favorites. I can't explain what makes Jake special, but I do think those photographs capture the essence of his magic.

Jake's professional body of work is an impressive one. Over the years I have watched him soar, reaching lofty heights in the fashion world a lot of models can only dream of. In addition to appearing in commercials for world-class brands such as Hennessy and Fiat, Jake has appeared in numerous fashion editorials, working with such fashion luminaries as photographer Bruce Weber, Carine Roitfeld (Editor-in-Chief of CR Fashion Book, Former Editor-in-Chief of French Vogue and the visionary muse of Tom Ford) and supermodel Gigi Hadid.

But beyond all of this is an intriguing man of complex but revelatory contradistinction. If you think all models are alike, you obviously never met this one. Model, actor, Professor of Sports Studies at California State University—and a Mormon who speaks fluent French? This was a story waiting to be shared.

I came up with 7 questions and the answers might surprise you!

Sophia Renee

Jake, will you tell us about your family and where you grew up?

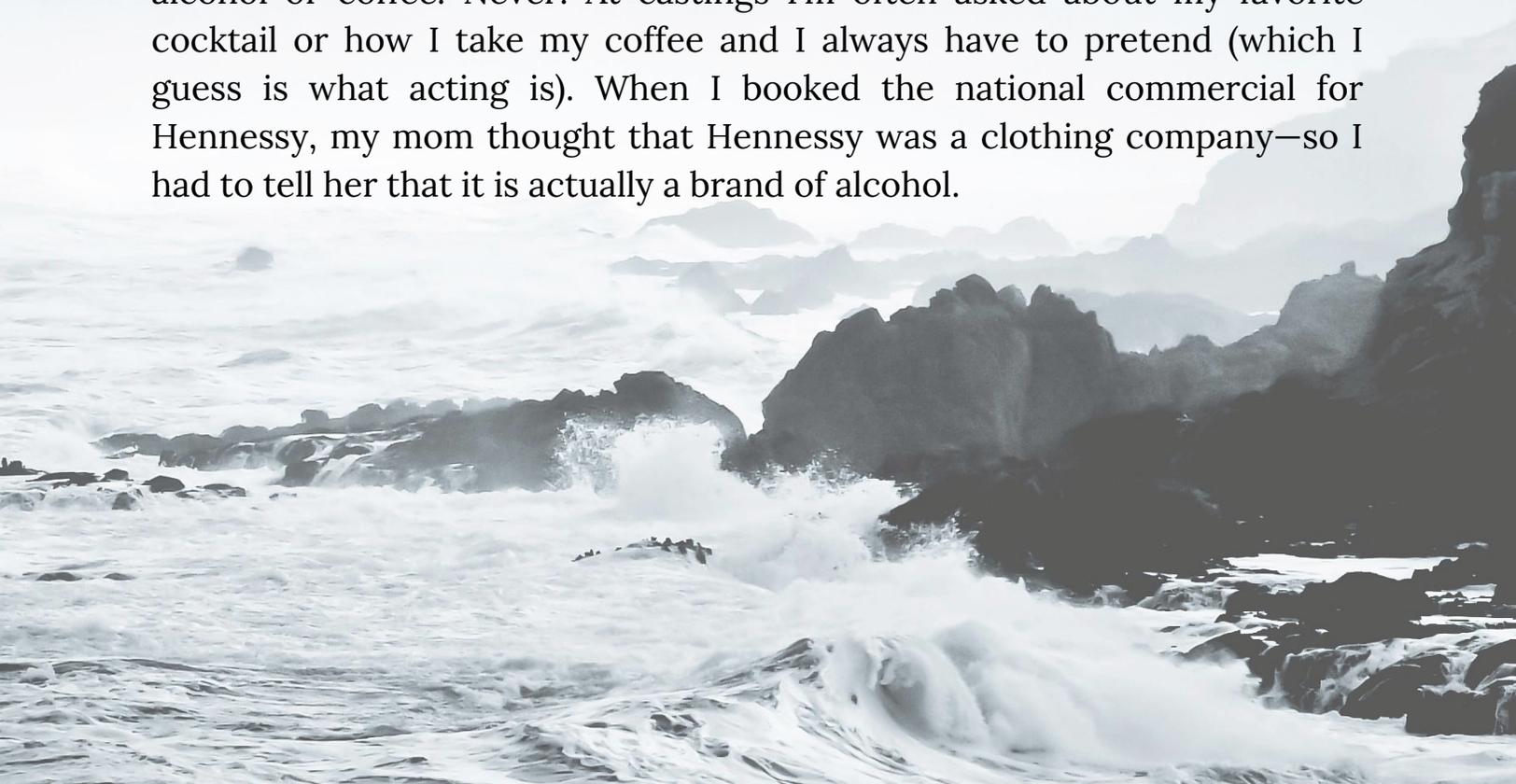
I grew up in the foothills of Salt Lake City, Utah about 15 minutes from the ski town of Park City. It was a very beautiful place to grow up. I loved and still love being in the mountains, hiking, cross country skiing, and enjoying outdoor activities. I come from a close-knit family. I have a twin sister. I played tennis competitively and still enjoy it.

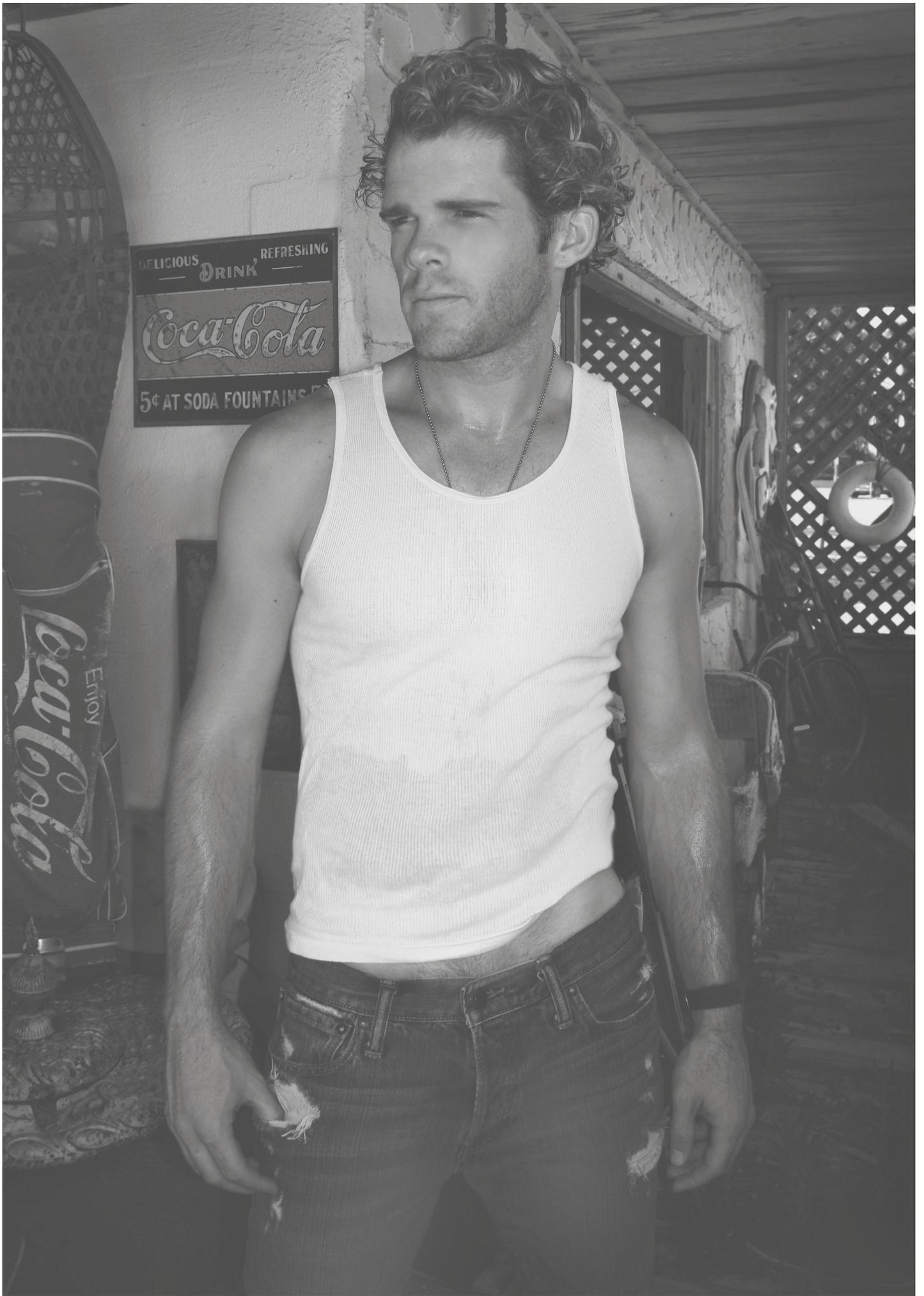
How has being a twin shaped your life choices?

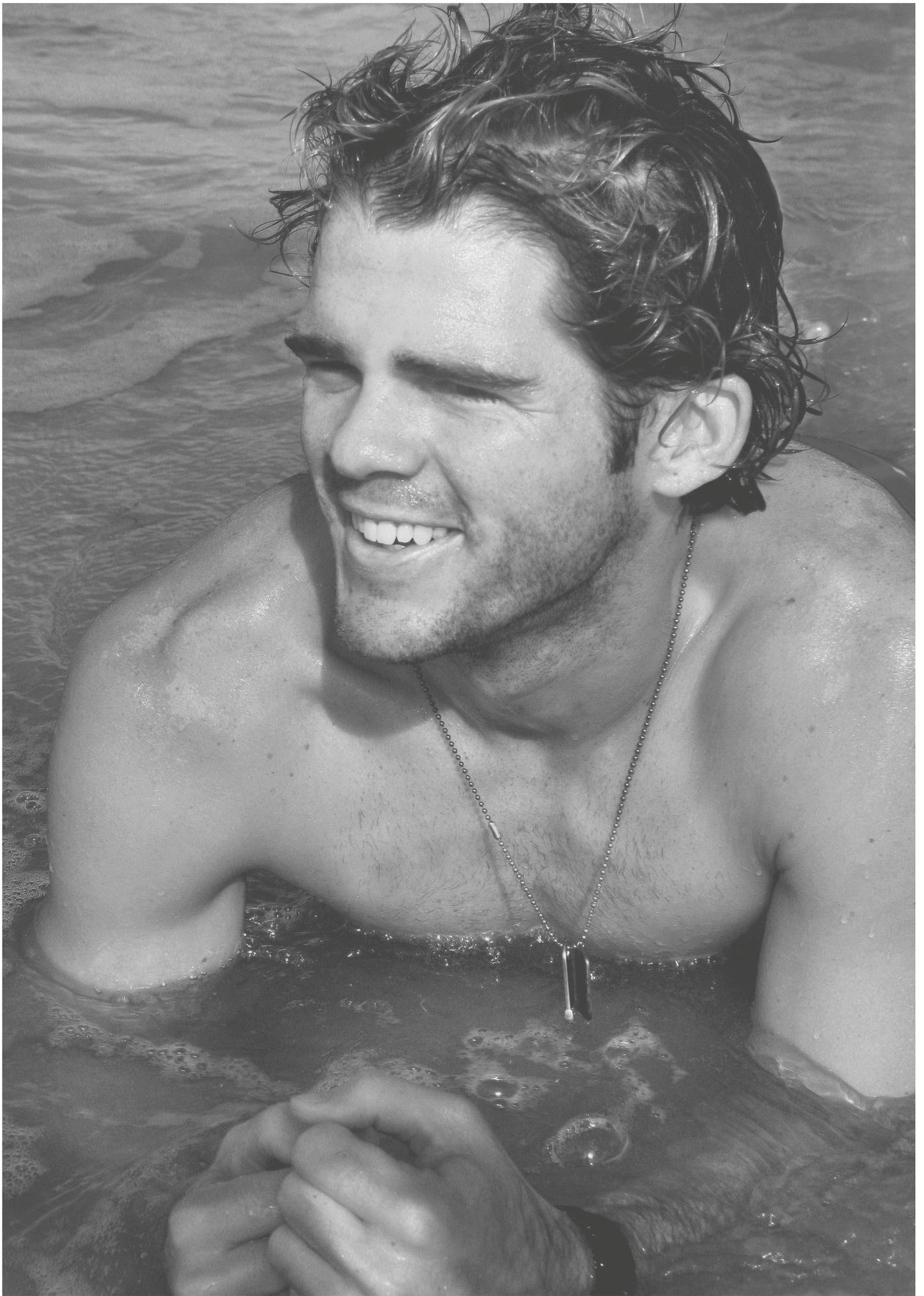
I think that the greatest thing about being a twin is that I have always had someone to share absolutely everything with. We have always been incredibly supportive of each other. We push each other and always try to make a positive impact on each other's lives. We are Mormons so there is a real sense of family and a sense of moral pulchritude that has been instilled in us from childhood.

How has your Mormon faith impacted your career as a model/actor... or has it?

It's funny because I have probably been to more castings as a model/actor for alcohol and coffee than for anything else, and both of these are against the health code (word of wisdom) for the Mormon faith. I have never tried alcohol or coffee. Never! At castings I'm often asked about my favorite cocktail or how I take my coffee and I always have to pretend (which I guess is what acting is). When I booked the national commercial for Hennessy, my mom thought that Hennessy was a clothing company—so I had to tell her that it is actually a brand of alcohol.





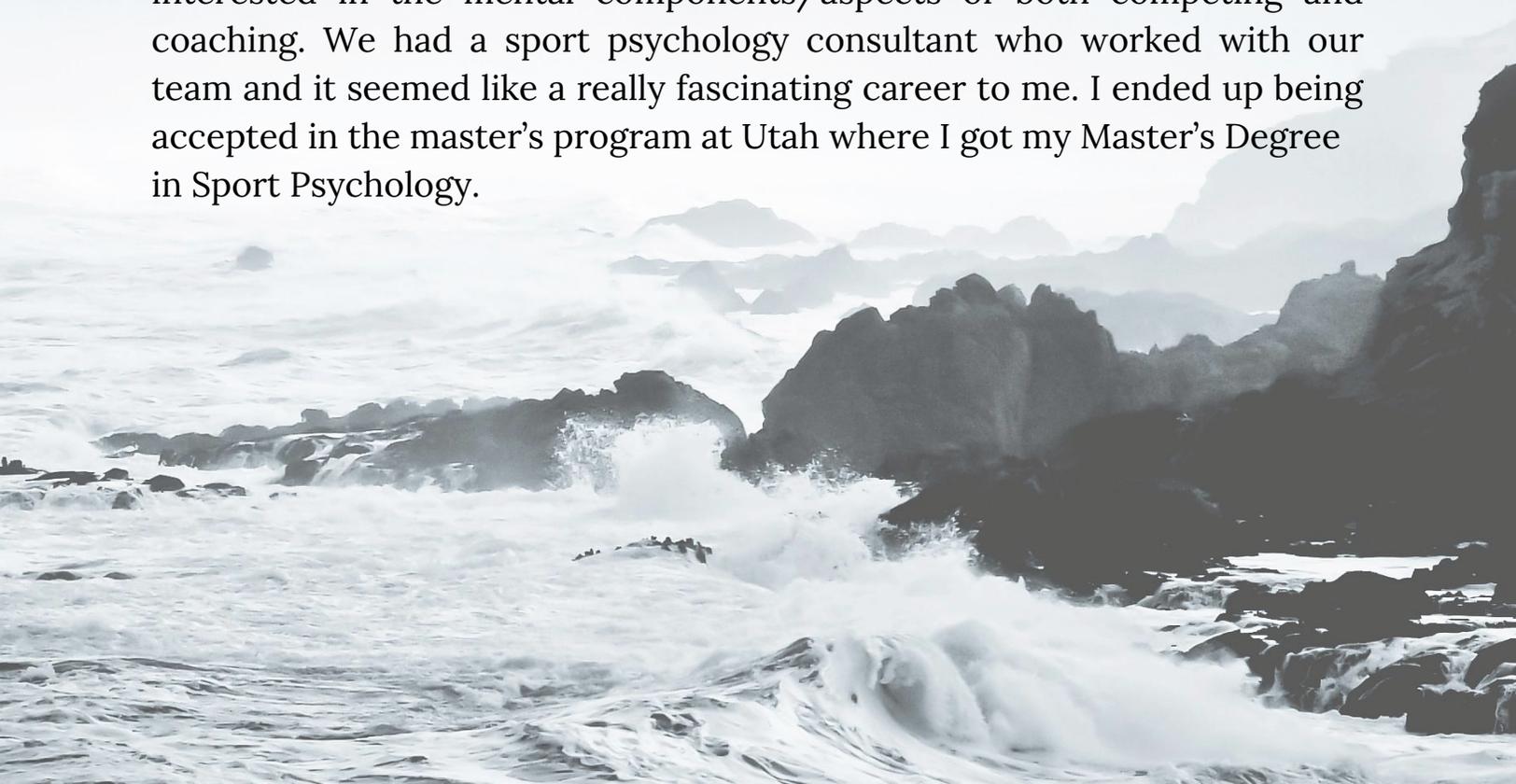


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Fortunately, my family has a good sense of humor about all of it. They tease me about what beer or coffee brand I'm going to be working for next. I certainly don't meet a lot of other Mormon models/actors, but it is interesting to be the "token" Mormon when I book a shoot. In this industry, people tend to be surprised by that side of me. Although I don't always understand or agree with all of the church's positions on political and social issues, my faith still plays a very important role in my life. Prayer, faith, and spirituality continue to give me an anchor in life, which can sometimes be a crazy roller coaster ride of emotions, experiences, and adventures. Although not related to my Mormon Faith, I also meditate twice a day. Meditation has been a really important part of my spiritual and emotional journey. I have this whole other career (aside from modeling and acting). It is important I stay focused and grounded.

Can you elaborate on your "other" career?

After my collegiate tennis career ended, I took a job as the Assistant Women's Tennis Coach at the University of Utah. It was such a great experience. While working in that position, I became more and more interested in the mental components/aspects of both competing and coaching. We had a sport psychology consultant who worked with our team and it seemed like a really fascinating career to me. I ended up being accepted in the master's program at Utah where I got my Master's Degree in Sport Psychology.

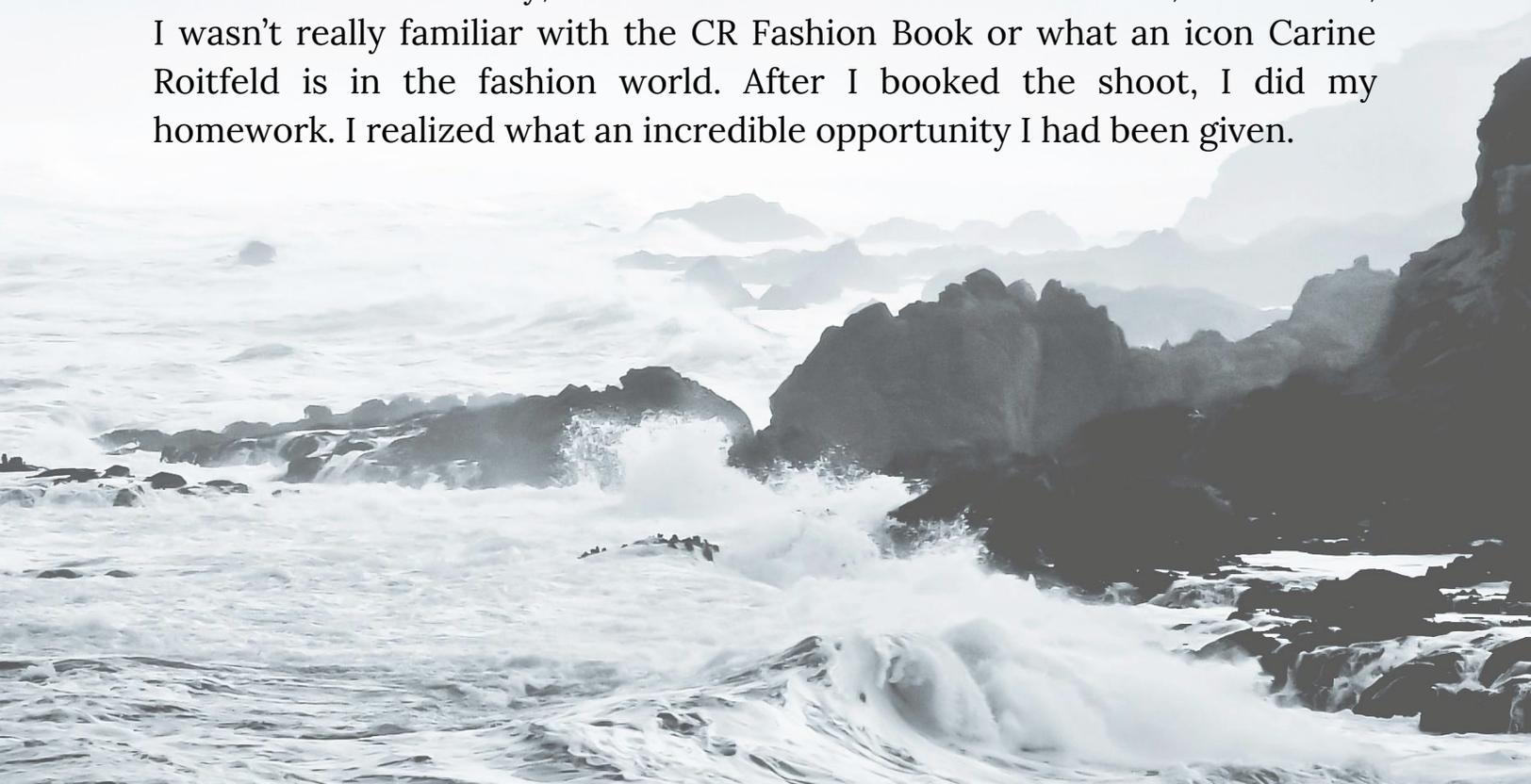


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Eventually I obtained my Ph.D. in Sport Psychology from the University of Tennessee. I now work as a Professor of Sport Studies at California State University, Northridge where I will also be providing Sport Psychology consulting to the athletic department (athletes and teams). In Sport Psychology, we work with athletes on mental training which can include a wide variety of components; imagery/visualization, relaxation techniques, anxiety reduction techniques, goal setting, communication, team cohesion/dynamics, leadership training, mindfulness practices, etc. I find that there are a lot of parallels here that would be helpful for actors too. Someday, I would love to consult with actors as well as athletes.

Can talk about your appearance in CR Fashion Book for a moment. What was it like working with the legendary Bruce Weber and the iconic Carine Roitfeld? Did you realize then that you were literally working with two of the fashion world's most celebrated talents or did the realization come later?

When I got invited to Bruce Weber's home for the casting, I suddenly realized that I had come a long way from my early shoots and acting classes in Salt Lake City, Utah. I am embarrassed to admit that, at the time, I wasn't really familiar with the CR Fashion Book or what an icon Carine Roitfeld is in the fashion world. After I booked the shoot, I did my homework. I realized what an incredible opportunity I had been given.



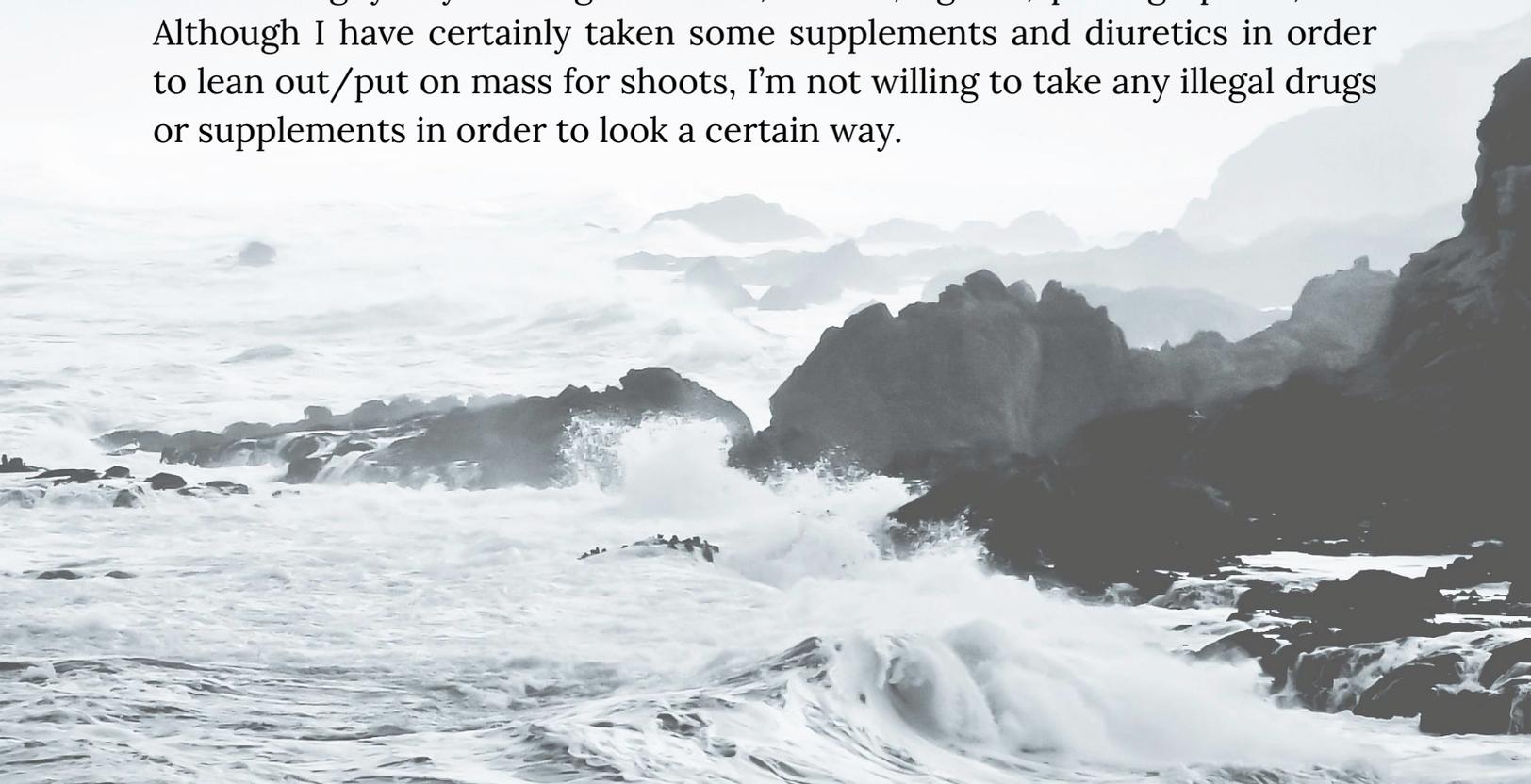


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It was an extraordinary experience to be on the set of a huge fashion editorial, to see Bruce Weber in action, and to eat lunch with Carine Roitfeld and speak with her in French. Interestingly enough, I learned French as a Mormon missionary in Lyon, France and Geneva, Switzerland, so my French skills definitely came in handy that day. It was a very surreal experience as a model. It was a shoot that I will never forget.

Male models are stripping down more than ever, even for test shoots. The men are required to be billboard ready at a moment's notice. Do you feel pressured to conform to whatever look is trending or are you perfectly comfortable and confident with being healthy and fit and just taking care of the body you have been given?

I absolutely feel pressure to look more like some of the models that I work with. I have kept myself consistently in good shape over the past 10 years, but I definitely have moments where I want to be more muscular, more ripped, and more defined. When I work in certain markets, such as Miami, I have to take my shirt off at almost every casting. Its hard not to compare myself to other models, as I know that I'm constantly being compared to the other guys by casting directors, clients, agents, photographers, etc. Although I have certainly taken some supplements and diuretics in order to lean out/put on mass for shoots, I'm not willing to take any illegal drugs or supplements in order to look a certain way.



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What are your hopes for the future?

In terms of modeling and acting, I feel like there is still so much more that I would like to accomplish. When I first started modeling, my dream was to one day open up my monthly issue of GQ and see myself either in a fashion editorial or advertisement. I still hope that I will have that experience and I certainly believe that it's possible. I plan to keep working with my LA based acting coach, Richard Seyd. I want to continue to grow as an actor. I hope to one day book a recurring role on a TV series or a feature film, as well as continue working in national commercials. I also look forward to continuing my career as Sport Psychology Consultant. I feel very fortunate. I am lucky enough to have two careers I am truly passionate about. It's an exciting time in my life. I am enjoying it.

The End





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