





# When *Lost* found Maggie

With her lustrous blonde locks, endless legs and twinkling hazel eyes, actress Maggie Grace blends perfectly into the LA scene. However, there's more to this Hollywood movie starlet than meets the eye.

**T**here is definitely something of the all-American girl about Ohio-born actress Maggie Grace, tinged with a certain savvy. A relative newcomer to the Hollywood scene, her professional acting career began just a few years ago although it has been her lifelong passion.

'I started doing plays when I was five or so, just through school and church, wherever I could find them. As I got older I started working with small Shakespearean troupes, community theatre, that sort of thing.'

At 16, Maggie opted out of high school to head for the Hollywood hills, a decision backed by her mother. She first made it to our screens in 2002, starring as murder victim Martha Moxley in the 'true crime' TV film *Murder in Greenwich* and in the independent film *Shop Club*. The following year Maggie starred in *Twelve Mile Road*, playing the somewhat troubled and capricious

daughter of Tom Selleck, whom she cheerily eulogises.

'Tom is very sweet. It was the first time that my height wasn't a problem when auditioning to play someone's daughter. I tend to be taller than my would-be father! But Tom is a really tall guy, of course. And my mother had a huge crush on him, so the day she came to visit the set was pretty funny. He kept kissing her on the cheek to make fun of me.'

## The *Lost* phenomenon

Stardom rapped firmly at Maggie's door in the form of the major hit TV series *Lost*, where she played the highly calculating, poor little rich girl Shannon Rutherford. *Lost* has proven to be a resounding success both in the US and UK, with six million viewers tuning in to watch the first episode aired on Channel 4 last year. The cast was initially oblivious to the potential of what has come to be a phenomenon.

Words – Dawn Mellowship Images – Mark Anderson



'We were just hoping they would pick us up for the first 13 episodes. Very rarely are you in a situation where the show must be all or nothing – the pilot was so record-breakingly expensive to make that the network had to believe it would be especially successful to pick it up at all. It can't get normally acceptable ratings and still go on.'

'We found out about the pick-up late, so we were all rather depressed, thinking it was finished. We hoped it would do well, but I don't think any of us thought any show could do that well internationally so quickly. The advent of DVD has really changed everything.'

Far removed from the self-centred, avaricious Shannon, Maggie seems more shy and docile but there is the odd similarity. Maggie admits: 'I suppose I am also fairly self-protective. It takes me a while to trust people. I just hope I don't ever act this out in the same ways Shannon does!'

## One of the boys

Maggie has formed great friendships with her *Lost* co-stars and being on a mostly male set, she soon learned how to keep up with the boys.

'They taught me how to deep-sea fish, surf-kayak, drink, swear and play more effective practical jokes. I was a perfectly polite person until I met Josh Holloway!'

Josh plays the Tennessee rebel, James Sawyer, a wise guy with a southern drawl and a certain kind of beguiling charm that leaves many a female viewer hot under the collar. So what about the rumour that Maggie had indulged in a bit of flesh baring in the form of night-time skinny dipping with Josh and her other co-star, Matthew Fox?

'Erm. Hmm. Hawaii is very warm? Communing with nature? Alcohol? These little cast field-trips don't involve just the guys, but wives too. Foxy's wife is quite the bathing beauty in her 1920s swimming cap. Good, clean, all-American fun, right?'

Despite Maggie's character having come to an untimely end in the series, she is not bitter about the departure and has grown personally from her experiences on the show.

'Obviously it's changed things for me immeasurably in a professional sense. The friends I've kept from it are priceless, they are so continually

supportive and amazing. I'd say the experience came at a time when I was changing a lot. Well, I still am – I was 20 when I started and 22 when I left, so a lot of your perception of the world and how people really are changes in that time. I learned a lot about the business side of all this as well.'

## The chemistry of kissing

The on-screen kiss is always a fascinating topic for discussion. After all, in *Lost* Maggie got to share saliva with the rather becoming Ian Somerhalder (Boone), also a successful male model, and the devilishly handsome Naveen Andrews (Sayid).

'I consider it a nice little perk of the job. Sure, sometimes there is chemistry. Then again, sometimes there's most decidedly absolutely none and you must strive to make up the difference.'

Physically attractive qualities have so little to do with it in the end after you've been working with someone for a while. It's a mysterious and illusive thing.

'I've been very lucky with my on-screen love interests so far, especially on *Lost*. But once, on another job about six years ago, I remember having to kiss someone in a scene who had such stage fright that he'd been vomiting before the scene. He brushed his teeth, thank goodness, but the knowledge that he was that badly off was not appealing.'

Despite regularly working with the Hollywood 'hotties' that thousands of women dream about, Maggie claims that she is past all the casual crushes. Although, Colin Firth playing Mr Darcy still makes her heart flutter.

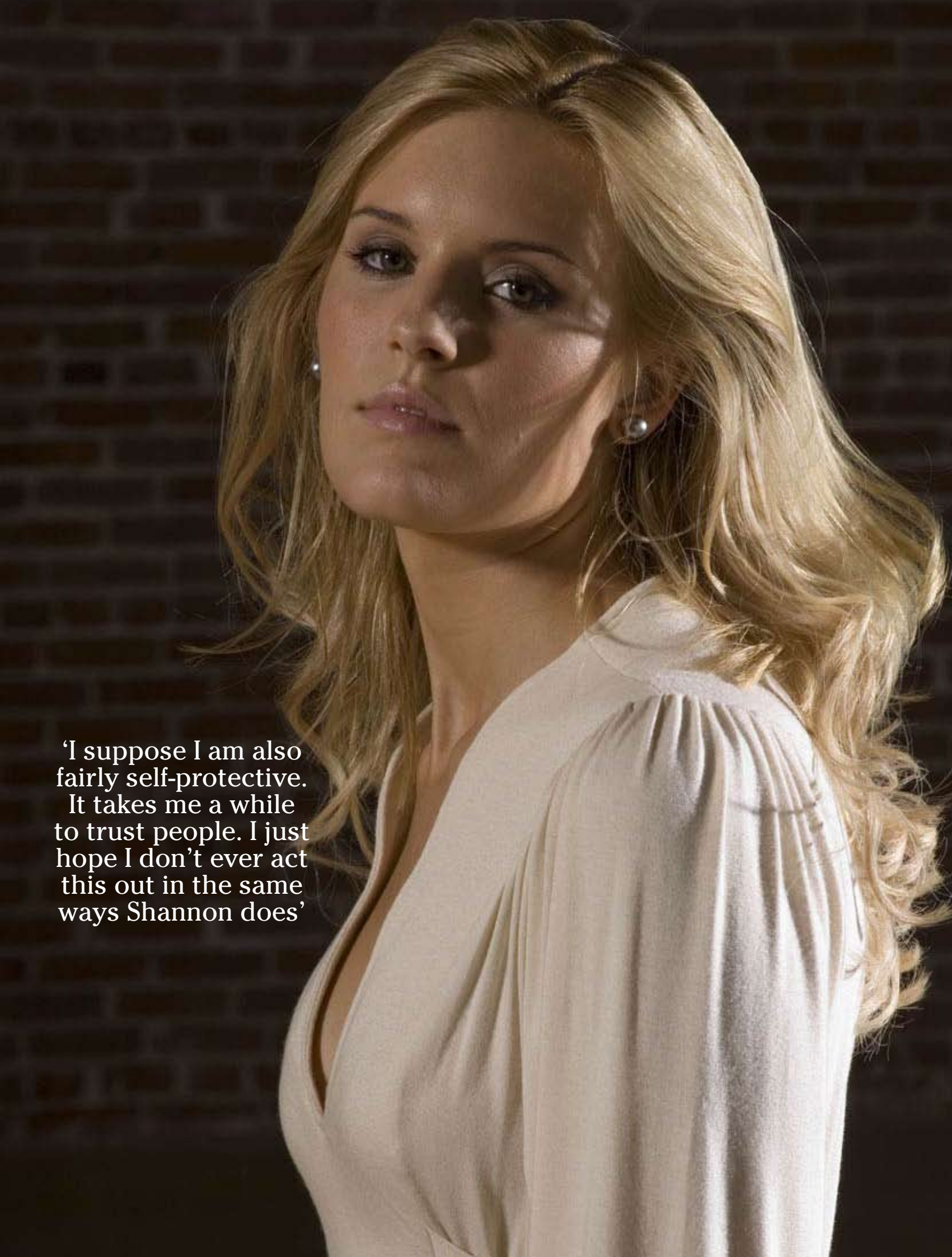
'Meeting everyone makes you realise how people are so often completely dissimilar from the professional image



Shannon and Sayid's relationship blossoms



Boone experiences a hallucination of cradling Shannon in his arms as she dies



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they propagate. I now tend to have crushes on people I actually know well.

'But, yeah, Darcy is in another category entirely. I think I was 13 when *Pride and Prejudice* came out, and an Austen fan to boot. I watched it SO many times. I only recently found out this was a crush I shared with the majority of young women in England, because no one my age in the States had seen it.

'At 13, my loyalty was divided between Colin Firth and Leonard Whiting in Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*. Except I was really disappointed when I realised that Romeo had probably aged a bit since the movie was made [in 1968].'

### Maggie's men

When it comes to her own personal relationships, Maggie keeps her cards a lot closer to her chest. Not one to lend her love to anybody, a prospective partner needs to earn her affection.

But would she describe herself as the dominant, bossy partner or the passive, calm bedfellow?

'What, it's a choice between those two? I'd say both, allowing for degree and the situation in question! But I do like it when the guy makes plans and has an opinion, especially one that's well thought out.'

Maggie's latest project, filmed in New York, is *The Girls' Guide to Hunting and Fishing*. 'It's based on a book of the same title by Melissa Banks that I really liked,' Maggie explains.

The film is about an ambitious New York book editor (played by Sarah Michelle Gellar) who defines herself by the sort of man she can acquire. She swaps her college boyfriend for a powerful, rich publishing lothario (Alec Baldwin), thinking all her problems will be resolved, but the reality is quite different.

Maggie plays plain-spoken Chloe, a swimsuit designer and best friend to Gellar's character, Brett.

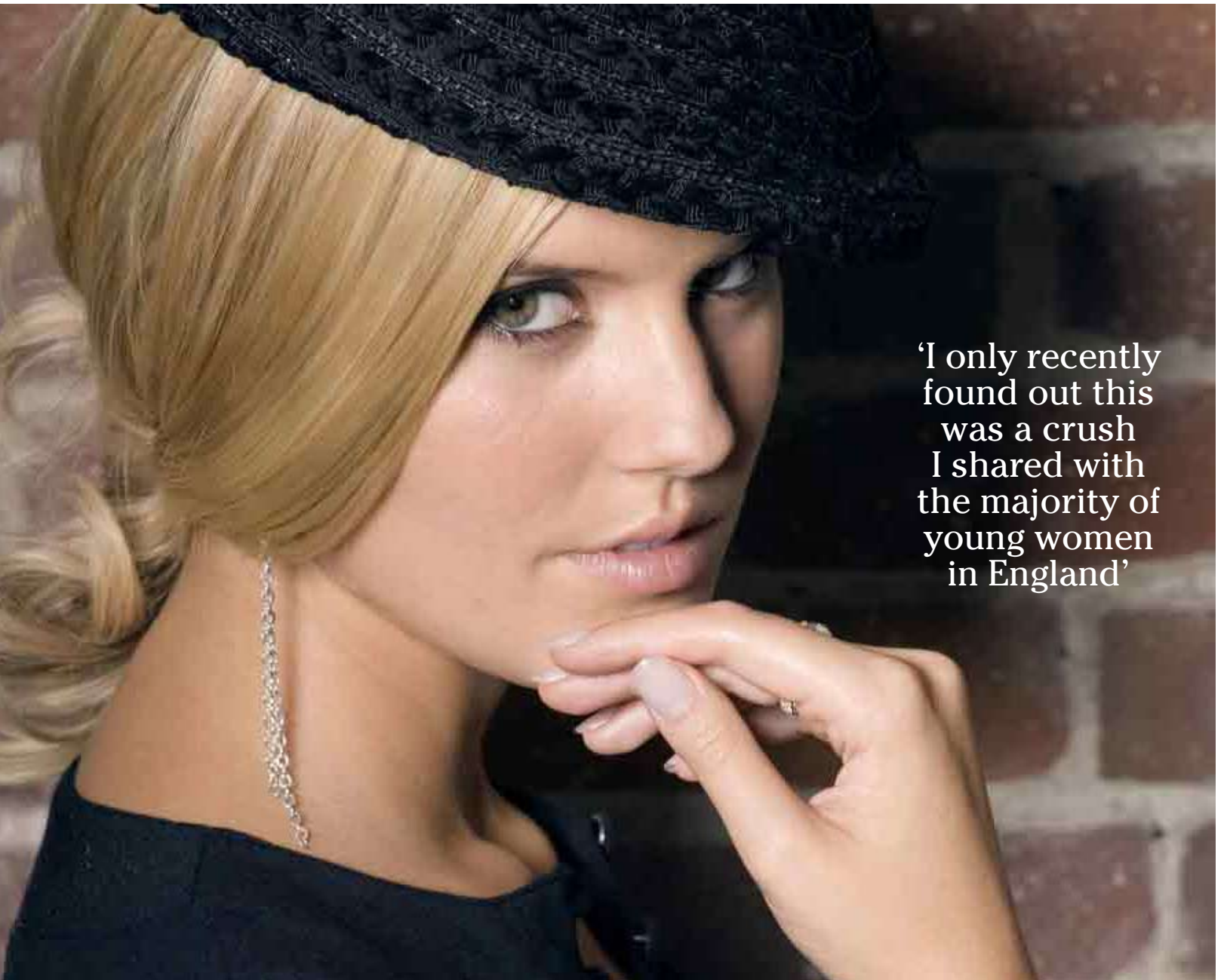
No doubt Maggie's career will continue to be a success. Her plans include 'more films!' and when not busy gracing our screens, she has plenty of ways to keep herself occupied.

'I read a lot, see movies and plays. I love to cook and to travel. There's something very humbling about being in a country where all the knowledge you've accumulated thus far in your life is more or less useless and completely inapplicable to your surroundings.'

Who knows, maybe one day we will be seeing a movie about Maggie's life.

'I hope not! Those sorts of biopics on non-political figures usually involve a decent amount of tragedy and/or a rollercoaster of addictions. I aspire to lead a more quietly fulfilling existence than that.'

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