

**CELEBRITY-HUNTERS**  
Jessica Callan (far left)  
and Eva Simpson  
at a party thrown by  
Jude Law. Inset,  
the girls get what they  
came for: a photo  
with the host.

**T**he 3 A.M. girls called Jude Law “Jude Bore” in print, and that, they say, is when the courtship started.

The calls from the P.R., the apologies, an exclusive invitation to see the new lingerie from Law’s wife, actress-designer Sadie Frost, at the St. Martin’s Lane hotel.

The 3 A.M. girls are the hottest gossip columnists in London, and Law had refused to pose with them for a picture. “We were going to bring you a picture of us with Jude Law, but he wouldn’t oblige,” the 3 A.M. girls wrote in their column in *The Mirror*, leaving a white space in place of his photo.

Tonight, a rainy London evening, the 3 A.M. girls have come for a makeup session—a party hosted by Law and Frost at an aromatic Aveda spa in Covent Garden. The guests drink Quiet Storms, a cocktail of vodka, guava juice, and litchi nuts, while watching a compelling video of desperate little animals trying to break out of cages. It’s a 50-second commercial Law and Frost have made in support of the anti-fur movement, starring Paul McCartney, Stella McCartney, Helena Christensen, Moby...

“Uch. I should have worn my pony boots,” says Jessica Callan.

Jessica and her colleague, Eva Simpson—the 3 A.M. girls—are wearing identical witchy shoes and bobbing gold hoop earrings. Jessica, 26, is a willow-haired brunette in an off-the-



## SIRENS FOR SCANDAL

Eva Simpson and Jessica Callan, the brash young team behind *The Mirror*’s “3 A.M.,” gossip column, have become London’s must-read tabloid stars. Their nightly mission? Close encounters with the likes of Tom Cruise, Russell Crowe, and Jude Law—and woe to those celebrities who don’t play ball

BY NANCY JO SALES



shoulder leopard-print blouse, showing a lot of shoulder. Eva, 27, is hard-bodied, black, wearing a shiny tank top and shiny tight pants. The 3 A.M. girls have a look about them that says they will have things to say about you, later, in the ladies' room.

Despite what Noel Gallagher of Oasis called them in front of 80,000 people at Wembley Stadium—"mingers" (British slang for rather unattractive people)—the 3 A.M. girls are at least as attractive as the Spice Girls, whom they write about often, with particular glee. It was their column, "3 A.M.," that broke the news that Sporty Spice had gone on antidepressants. "I cried and cried when they called me Beefy Spice," she told the 3 A.M. girls, in a bathroom.

"Mummy, when's the party going to start?" asks a restless little boy with glasses. (He is Finlay, 11, Frost's son with Gary Kemp, formerly of Spandau Ballet.)

"Em..." Frost, dark-haired, sharp, nervously touches her cashmere scarf. "We're just here to have a really mellow event," she tells the 3 A.M. girls. "We're just here to talk about fur."

"Right," the 3 A.M. girls say. "Brilliant."

"Now, you tell us, love," Jessica says as Frost darts away. "Let's sit and have a video. Save the whales. This is not what we do."

"3 A.M."s item on Jude Law had said: "When we asked if we could pose for a picture with the somewhat small actor, Jude spat, 'Absolutely no way. I'm not going to be pictured with them.'"

The 3 A.M. girls are now waiting for their picture.

Law—who has grown out his whiskers for a stage play (*Doctor Faustus*)—is standing in the middle of the room, dutifully talking fur. He says, "It's an issue that needs to be raised." A small boy (his son with Frost, Rafferty, five), in a funky, pin-striped suit, is eyeing the animal video while pounding on his father's legs.

Now Law seems to be trying to escape; he's about to go. But his P.R. dashes after him, urging him to pose with the girls.

A camera flashes. The 3 A.M. girls beam. Law seems to find it hard to.

I ask him what he thinks of their column.

He blinks.

"I don't read *The Mirror*," he says.

In the London tabloid wars, *The Mirror* ranks third in circulation—behind *The Sun* and the *Daily Mail*, ahead of the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Star*—but given the British appetite for football news,



**"THEY'VE GOT A LICENSE TO KILL," SAYS THEIR EDITOR, PIERS MORGAN. "THEY'RE MY LITTLE JAMES BONDS."**



photographs of barely clad women, and what one editor calls "I-got-my-dick-stuck-in-a-washing-machine stories," that still means 2.3 million readers, 6 million on weekends.

In just a year and a half, "3 A.M." has become *The Mirror*'s star column, and the 3 A.M. girls, stars. They're pictured daily, posing with the celebrities who find it prudent not to deny them.

Their antics have made their column the sort of thing people turn to first thing in the morning, although they might not like to admit it. The 3 A.M. girls were voted "the most popular role models in print" in a recent survey of Britain's media-studies students. *Maxim* magazine deemed them the 270th most desirable women in the world—ahead of Monica Seles, behind Popeye's Olive Oyl.

"3 A.M." is really about the 3 A.M. girls. It's the chronicle of a fantasy, of being a girl-about-town and getting into mischief in the presence of celebrities—preferably involving

sex. There was the time, for example, when Eva was ejected from Leonardo DiCaprio's hotel room for, she says, refusing to "snog his ugly mate." And then there was the time Jessica says she was invited to have a threesome with Dwight Yorke, a famous footballer, and his girlfriend, Jordan, a British model known for having enormous breast implants. *The Mirror* ran it on the front page:

**THE 3 A.M. LIFE**

From top: the original "3 A.M." lineup of Simpson, Polly Graham, and Callan; Callan with Victoria Beckham (Posh Spice); "3 A.M." does Tom Cruise; ditto George Clooney; Cher poses with Callan.

"Constantly asking me if her nipples were showing and berating me when one popped out of her tight, low-cut suede top, Jordan giggled while Dwight made outrageous inquiries about my love life.

"Do you like black men?" he asked me at 4 A.M. as the millionaires were wrapping up their evening at this, the most exclusive club in Monte Carlo."

Their readers seem to love the 3 A.M. girls all the more for acting less like journalists than like bewitched, or simply outraged, fans. When a star is "nice"—poses for a picture, gives them a "chat"—especially if he is an attractive male, the 3 A.M. girls retract their nails. They wrote giddily of nursing hangovers with George Clooney, whom they had brought a bottle of Stolichnaya vodka: "The three of us joined Mark

BY RICHARD YOUNG (BECKHAM, CLOONEY, CRUISE, GRAHAM)



[Wahlberg] in turning green." They gushed over Tom Cruise, who gave them an uncharacteristically flirtatious answer when asked what Nicole Kidman had given him for his 38th birthday: "That naughty smirk returned and he laughed: 'Something filthy.'"

Cruise was the 3 A.M. girls' first assignment. To gain access to him, they relied on stealth. "We opted," they wrote, "for a traditional pincer movement, gliding effortlessly past the phalanx of bodyguards, P.R.'s and starry-eyed flunkies. . . ."

"He looked scared, and had every reason to be."

**O**h my God, it's the 3 A.M. girls!" squeals a dancer at Spearmint Rhino, an upscale strip joint on Tottenham Court Road.

The 3 A.M. girls take the seats of honored guests at the front. A pole dancer in an American-flag corset swings a leg over their heads.

Their stripper friend, Georgina Law—often seen posing in *News of the World*—comes over and sits down. "I resign from lap-dancing today," she tells the girls. "I 'ad enoof! I'm becoming a wine taster. Hey, I could be the new 3 A.M."

"3 A.M." is currently missing its third girl reporter. Once there was Polly Graham, who left after a year to write her own column at the *Sunday Mirror*. Then there was Bryony Gordon, 21, who resigned in February after two months on the job.

"It's tough being a 3 A.M. girl," Gordon wrote in her farewell column. "Jessica and Eva swan up to these famous people as if it were nothing. I suppose I simply can't get used to that being a normal part of my life."

"Bryony was too scared to talk to celebrities," Jessica says. "The celebrities are to fear us."

With the hunt for a new 3 A.M. girl on, *The Mirror* has been inundated with E-mails. "Ninety-nine percent of them are people who say, like, 'Oh, I like to get pissed and have champagne and hang out,'" complains Eva.

The 3 A.M. girls are tossing back glasses of Cristal.

"I know enough celebrities to dish the dirt," says Georgina. "Actually, I was out with one last night that doesn't think too much of yoo-oo."

Jessica and Eva think she means Max Beesley, a sort of actor, and they scoff. "The most nightmarish thing for me," says Eva, "was when I went to this party for *Top of the Pops*"—a British variety show—"and I ran into Mel B., Scary

Spice, and her boyfriend, Max Beesley.

"And we'd been not so nice about Max," she goes on. "We have a section called 'Wicked Whispers'—blind items—'where we can't really tell the story 'cause we'd get sued. We'd done one the week before about Max"—he believed—"and so he comes up to me and says, 'You wrote this story about me, I know you did.'"

"So in the middle of this awards ceremony, we're having this blazing row, and Mel B. is trying to drag me off and calm everything down. She was like, 'I'm really sorry about him—I don't know what his problem is. . . . He's really out of order.' This is a former Spice Girl apologizing. And I'm like, That's more like it.

"But Max is like, 'No, you don't talk to her.' He was just going mental. He was in *Glitter* with Mariah Carey, and so I said, 'Oh, your last film with Mariah got, like, *really* good reviews.' . . ."

**"THEY'RE NICE GIRLS," SAYS SUN COLUMNIST DOMINIC MOHAN, "BUT THEY'RE NOT PROPER JOURNALISTS."**

"And then out of nowhere this blonde friend of theirs just sort of attacks me. She grabbed my earring, practically ripped it out of my ear. The next thing I knew I was being dragged off by this bouncer. So I threw my drink at her—yeah, the girl.

"They tried to kick me out. . . . And I said, 'Look, I've just been attacked—I'm going nowhere.' And then the girl came up to me and said, 'The next time I see you, I'm gonna fuck you up!' And I said, 'Well, let's go now then—forget about next time.'"

The following day, "3 A.M." reported, "Our girl was forced to defend herself."

Jessica laughs. The next time they saw the Spice Girls, she says, "at their last album-release party, they look at us and go, 'Who let these fucking sluts in 'ere?'"

The 3 A.M. girls have a huge following in universities. There's something about their column that suggests a talk in the dorm room after a wild night out in London. Theirs may be the first gossip column in the voice of modern, been-there-done-it-all young women. (They've already spawned some excruciating imitations, such as the *Daily Star's* "Bitches.")

Eva majored in media studies at Westminster. After graduating, she became the chief reporter for the *New Nation*, a black newspaper. "I was completely like, I want

to go and write about wars and famines and serious things," she says, "try and make a difference. I've grown up a bit since then."

She worked as a showbiz reporter for the *Daily Star* until she was recruited by *The Mirror* for a new column it was trying—"3 A.M."

Jessica comes from a reporting family; she calls herself "a tabloid girl at heart." Her father, Paul Callan, is a former *Mirror* gossip columnist who now writes for the *Express*. Her mother, Steffi Field, is the news editor of NBC's London newsdesk, and her brother, James Callan, 24, works for CNN in New York.

She started reporting as a student at the Stowe boarding school, selling stories about her classmates to the tabloids. She says, "English tabloids love a story about English schoolkids up to no good." She attended the University of Buckingham—"half an hour from Oxford,"

she says—and, after graduating, landed at *The Daily Telegraph*, where she became, at age 22, the first-ever female deputy editor of its gossip column.

A plastic high heel thuds on the bar above our heads. A stripper is being athletic.

"We don't have to worry about pissing anyone off," says Eva. "If celebrities say we'll never do an interview with *The Mirror* again, we say, 'Fine, don't do it.'"

"If they're rude to us," says Jessica, "fuck 'em."

**T**heir counterparts at rival tabloids take a rather dim view of the 3 A.M. girls' revolutionary claims. One writer, who asked not to be named, dismisses their column as "Arniesqueezed-my-bottom journalism."

"They're liggers," says Peter McKay, gossip columnist for the *Mail*. "They troll around these parties hoping to be thrown out [so] they can write something rude."

"They're a national joke," says Dominic Mohan, columnist for *The Sun*. "They're quite nice girls, but they're not proper journalists. I've interviewed Madonna and Sting and Elton John and Paul McCartney and numerous other big-name celebrities who will talk to *The Sun* even though it's a tabloid. . . . Why aren't you doing a story about me?"

"Those girls have gotten into a lot of trouble," he adds. "They've had legal cases against them."

Jessica admits that *The Mirror* had to pay "a rather large sum of money" to Daryl Hannah after "3 A.M." reported that the actress had taken a leave from the London



production of *The Seven Year Itch* in order to attend her “dog’s birthday” in California. “That bitch Daryl Hannah,” says Jessica. “I will make it my mission to fuck her up!”

And then there was the Irish singer Chris de Burgh—“he of the annoying bal-lads,” as they wrote in “3 A.M.”—who brought a legal complaint after the column reported he had had a long, flirtatious dinner with the Duchess of York. “[Fergie’s] so naughty, so she didn’t sue,” says Jessica. But “yeah, he got money.”

“It’s a new chauvinism,” says McKay, “whereby laddish editors like Piers Morgan”—the editor of *The Mirror*—“set up young women to see what they do in lavatories, these B- and C-list stars. . . . It’s a *Charlie’s Angels* fantasy, a man sitting behind his desk as his ‘angels’ go and avenge him against celebrities and publicists. In an odd way, the 3 A.M. girls are victims.”

“I think Piers is a bit of a pimp, really,” says Mohan.

**P**iers Morgan laughs at the pimp remark. “It’s very refreshing to see that *The Sun* newspaper is shedding its traditional sexist stance in this way,” he says.

At 36, Piers Morgan is the youngest editor in *The Mirror*’s history. (He was appointed at 29.) He started out as a gossip reporter himself, in the 80s; back then, he was known as “A Friend of the Stars.”

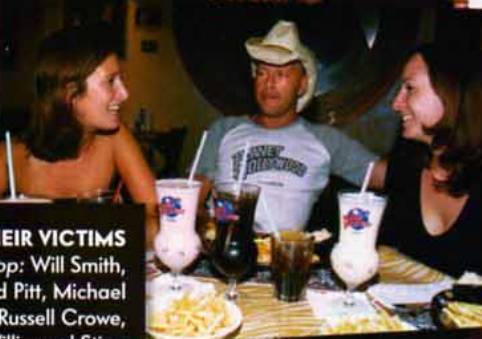
He’s considered a flamboyant figure even on Fleet Street. This February, defending *The Mirror* against Naomi Campbell’s claims that it had invaded her privacy by photographing her exiting a Narcotics Anonymous meeting, Morgan said, “If you are going to voluntarily enter Hannibal Lecter’s cage”—meaning celebrity—“you are eventually going to get nibbled on the back of the neck.” (Campbell’s court case against the paper is still pending.)

Sometime after September 11, as part of an overall campaign to make *The Mirror* a more serious publication, Morgan announced he was declaring war on celebrities. He says, “I just got fed up with P.R.’s and agents calling the shots. I just thought, The time has come—we’ve got to stand up to these people.” He made a blustering public declaration that *The Mirror* would no longer grant copy or picture approval as it had in the past; and he already had his celebrity hounds, the 3 A.M. girls.

“I’ve created the monsters, yes,” he says one day at his office on Canary Wharf, overlooking the Thames. “They’ve got a



**“THE CELEBRITIES ARE TO FEAR US,” SAYS ONE OF THE 3 A.M. GIRLS, JESSICA CALLAN.**



**WITH THEIR VICTIMS**  
From top: Will Smith, Brad Pitt, Michael Douglas, Russell Crowe, Bruce Willis, and Sting pose with the 3 A.M. girls.



license to kill. They’re my little James Bonds. [They] create mayhem and have fun and bring something really fresh to the whole showbiz reporting scene.” He adds that *Sex and the City* (“great telly”) and the British phenomenon of “laddettes”—trash-talking, hard-drinking young women—made the idea for a female gossip-reporting team seem inevitable.

And Jessica Callan and Eva Simpson “are inherently quite outgoing, quite charming, feisty young women,” Morgan says, “and it’s quite a potent force to the male celebrity element out there who find them quite intoxicating, who don’t realize they’re letting their guard down. I tell them to ooze their charm and use it.”

Morgan has said that his ultimate “3 A.M.” story would involve one of the girls having sex with a celebrity and then quitting the paper. “‘Why I Had to Leave,’ by Eva Simpson,” he mused to *The Observer Magazine*. “‘The charms of Robert De Niro simply overwhelmed me . . .’”

“I treat them,” the editor says, “as stars.”

A signed photograph of Monica Lewinsky peeks out from the wall behind his desk.

**O**n another soggy night in London, the 3 A.M. girls are marching, umbrellas bouncing, toward their target: the opening of an Emporio Armani store on New Bond Street.

They have not been invited.

But, perhaps because they’re looking so sharp tonight—outfitted in their usual *Sex and the City*-inspired gear—the security guards let them sail right in.

Inside, the bright space is crowded with models, fashion writers, nightlife habitués, and even a member of the royal family—the Lady Helen Windsor, in studded white leather jeans—all waiting for the appearance of a star. A big star. He’s late.

The 3 A.M. girls confer with their photographer. “Stay close,” one whispers. They grab champagne off trays.

Giorgio Armani himself waits opposite the door. The man who’s coming, he says, is “*mi amico*.”

Word buzzes around that Russell Crowe’s plane from Australia has been “delayed.” “Fat minger,” Jessica says with a frown. “It’ll be fucking hell getting him to talk to us.”

A wave of excitement passes through the crowd. A limousine is pulling up.

Crowe, squinting, enters the store. He is floppy-haired, with a scruffy beard, ashing a cigarette.

“Good to see you back in

BY RAY TANG (WILLIS), RICHARD YOUNG (CROWE, PITT, SMITH)



London, Russell!" a photographer shouts. "Yeah," Crowe snarls, sarcastic. "Good to see you too."

Crowe hugs Armani. Armani looks relieved. The star doesn't seem to know quite what's expected of him, so he does a grumpy walk through the store, a bear crashing through the woods. A curious train of people hustle behind him.

"Now, he doesn't want any of *that*," says one of Crowe's security guards, spotting the 3 A.M. girls.

"Go, go, go!" says Jessica. Crowe's just out of reach—he's getting away.

Near the front door, Jessica and Eva leap to either side of him, like Special Air Service agents. Their photographer snaps a picture of the trio.

"Good luck at the BAFTAs, Russell!" Jessica twitters.

Crowe looks bemused. "Yeah," he says, "thanks."

Later, at the after-party at Hakkasan, London's hot new sushi restaurant, Jessica says delightedly, "Now we'll just wait until he's good and drunk, then he'll start acting up."

The 3 A.M. girls look very pleased—they got into this party by saying they worked for a well-known American magazine.

They've planted themselves in the dark, just behind the wraparound couch where Crowe is sitting with Armani and an entourage of well-dressed Italian men and giraffish girls.

They can peek at the star through a large, carved Oriental screen. "He can't help himself," says Jessica. "He'll start snogging someone, have a fight."

*I break out in a cold sweat!*—the D.J. is playing James Brown.

Mick Hucknall, the redheaded singer from Simply Red, arrives.

Crowe stands up and gives him a hug. "Oh, Mick Hucknall, bless him," says Jessica. "He's so scared of us."

Armani and the Italians move off the couch.

"Once you have a celebrity in front of you without a P.R. or agent, they don't know how to act," Jessica said earlier. "When they're at parties and they're not surrounded by those people and they confront people like us . . . something clicks, and they're usually drunk or on drugs or whatever and they lose it, and it's *brilliant*."

But Crowe seems relaxed. He drinks cocktails and smokes cigarettes and laughs. A bosomy girl kneels down before him, murmuring something. Crowe nods to his bodyguards, who escort her away.

"Oh, there's his girlfriend!" says Jessica.

The Australian soap star Danielle Spencer arrives.

Spencer—small and blonde and dressed

like a teen—snuggles down next to Crowe on the couch.

"Oh, no, she'll have her eye on him. Australian women are *really* feisty," Jessica says.

Jessica's starting to look a bit worried. She has to file something in the morning.

She perks up. "Oh, look, Sting!"  
Sting and his wife, Trudie Styler, have arrived.

Crowe bolts up and gives Sting a bear hug.

"Can you imagine, that Tantric sex thing Sting and Trudie do?" Jessica muses, having more champagne. "I'd think that would get a bit boring." She mimes writing a shopping list: "Milk, orange juice . . ."

Now Eva is sitting, with half-closed eyes, on another couch. Her feet hurt, she says.

But the party has become increasingly animated. Girls are dancing sexily; British men are dancing awkwardly.

Everyone appears to be keeping an eye on Crowe.

But it doesn't look as if "3 A.M." will fulfill its mission tonight—"stars behaving badly."

Jessica sits down next to Eva, her eyes glazing over, too.

And then something odd does happen—Sting and Crowe, followed by Crowe's bodyguards, get up together and take a walk around the restaurant, leaving Styler and Spencer chatting on the couch. The two men wander around until they find the kitchen. They disappear through the doors, leaving a bodyguard posted outside.

And then two young women, party guests, both quite pretty, also glide into the kitchen.

They stay in there a good 20 minutes.

And when they all come out together, they are laughing and talking.

I ask Russell Crowe what was going on in there. He tells me they were having a conversation.

The 3 A.M. girls are nowhere around.

"Uch, he was really boring," says Jessica, happily, careening through London, on her way home in a cab. At the end of the night, she finally got her chat with Crowe.

"I was 'Great to see you, what are you doing in London—we know you like to party,' and he laughed with a pervy laugh. I said, 'How's the band?' and he said, 'It's like a delicacy—you don't play that often.' 'Oh, you don't want to spoil us with your music, do you, Russell?'" Jessica laughs. "He said, 'We sold out the Borderline in 15 minutes—there were 60 girls in the corner singing all the words.' 'Well, what do you expect, you're Russell Crowe . . .'"

Eva yawns.

It's after three A.M. □

## Refreshing Temptations.

### LIMÓN<sup>®</sup> & CRANBERRY

1 1/2 oz. BACARDI, LIMÓN<sup>®</sup>  
6 oz. cranberry juice  
Lemon twist for garnish

### LIMÓN<sup>®</sup> COSMOPOLITAN

1 1/2 oz. BACARDI, LIMÓN<sup>®</sup>  
1/2 oz. lime juice  
1 oz. triple sec  
Splash of cranberry juice

### LIMÓN<sup>®</sup> & TONIC

1 1/2 oz. BACARDI, LIMÓN<sup>®</sup>  
6 oz. tonic water  
Lime wedge for garnish

## BACARDI LIMÓN

ENJOY OUR GOOD TASTE WITH YOUR GOOD JUDGEMENT<sup>®</sup>.

[www.bacardi.com](http://www.bacardi.com) BACARDI AND THE BAT DEVICE ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS AND LIMÓN IS A TRADEMARK OF BACARDI & COMPANY LIMITED. © 2002 BACARDI U.S.A., INC., MIAMI, FL. RUM SPECIALTY — 35% ALC. BY VOL.