



SERENE AND GORGEOUS DESCRIBES EMMY-NOMINATED ACTRESS MORENA BACCARIN PERFECTLY. NOW TOSS IN TALENTED RISING LATINA STAR, NEW MOMMY AND ADORING WIFE, AND YOU'LL GET THE FULL PICTURE.



Yama Yia!

By JESÚS TRIVIÑO ALARCÓN Photographs by WARWICK SAINT

PREVIOUS SPREAD,
FROM LEFT: Dress,
Elisabetta Franchi.
Bracelet, **Jacque**
Aiche. Ring, **EF**
Collection. Shoes,
Giuseppe Zanotti.
Jumpsuit, **Lorena**
Sarbu Couture. Belt,
stylist's own.
THIS PAGE: Dress,
Bibhu Mohapatra.
Earrings, **EF**
Collection.



it is hot!


THE KIND OF STEAMY,
MUGGY WEATHER
THAT CAN TURN AN
ALFRESCO LUNCH
DATE WITH A
GLAMOROUS ACTRESS
INTO A FLOP-SWEAT-
SOAKED NIGHTMARE.

I'm wilting in the heat at a table outside the Clementine Bakery Café in Beverly Hills, wishing I'd asked her to meet me indoors in the air-conditioning. Suddenly, she's making her way toward me. *Stay calm, stay cool, no matter what*, I tell myself. She holds up a cold drink and a brown bag.

"I got you a mini prosciutto biscuit sandwich," she says, placing the snack in front of me. "I hope you don't mind me touching it with my hands." As I bite down and the biscuit crumbles on my chin (suave move), it dawns on me: *Morena Baccarin just touched my sandwich*. The same Morena Baccarin who portrayed anguished military wife Jessica Brody for three heart-wrenching seasons on Showtime's megahit *Homeland*. The same Morena Baccarin fans idolize for her roles in the sci-fi cult classics *Firefly* and *V*.

Once I emerge from the grip of Baccarin's stunning beauty—her dark, shiny locks perfectly layered around her porcelain face—I stop chomping on my prosciutto like a basset hound and am finally able to make out her words. She's not dwelling on her Emmy-nominated work in *Homeland* or her role in *The Red Tent*, the upcoming Lifetime miniseries in which she plays the biblical matriarch Rachel. Instead, she's talking about true love. The kind she feels for her infant son, Julius, whose first birthday is coming up. She's a romantic at heart, and I'm taken by surprise.

"You don't know what love is until you meet your child," says Baccarin, 35, who's teaching him her native language, Portuguese. "Every day is a different thing that he's able to conquer. He's even part of the reason I took on *The Red Tent*,



THIS PAGE: Dress,
Elisabetta Franchi.
Shoes, **Sebastian**.
OPPOSITE PAGE:
Dress, **Aiisha**.
Earrings and bracelet,
Jacque Aiche. Ring,
EF Collection. Shoes,
Giuseppe Zanotti.



WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? WHY HAVEN'T YOU ASKED ME TO MARRY YOU? BACCARIN WONDERED.

because it's about giving birth, family and all that comes with it. So I really gravitated towards it and thought it would be an interesting piece to do right now."

Whenever Baccarin mentions baby Julius, her eyes widen, her voice softens and she appears more angelic than any Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel. "It's so much fun to see the world through his eyes," she gushes.

What Julius sees differs from the usual baby scenery of Play-Doh and Legos, because Baccarin brings him to work. He spends his days surrounded by actors, directors, teamsters and the like, which was similar to Baccarin's upbringing.

She was born in Rio de Janeiro to Fernando Baccarin, a TV news editor for *El Globo*, and Vera Setta, an actress. When Baccarin was 7, the trio moved to the Forest Hills section of Queens, N.Y., although Setta soon deemed it too dull and moved the family back to Brazil. Three years later, they gave New York a second chance, this time in Manhattan's Greenwich Village. Baccarin attended New York City's Lab School for Collaborative Studies, where she was a classmate of her future *Homeland* costar Claire Danes. When she wasn't in school, Baccarin accompanied her mom on glamorous sets—the visits were so frequent that a young Baccarin believed all adults were actors.

"I was painfully shy as a kid and I didn't think [acting] was something that would fit me very well, but once I tried it, I just completely fell in love," she says. She followed in her family's footsteps and honed her craft at two prestigious institutions—Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts and the Juilliard School, both in Manhattan.

The background is cool, but I want to talk about Baccarin's love life, which she graciously agrees to discuss. When she first met Austin Chick, her hus-

band of three years, they were both dating other people. Though they always stayed in touch, it would take a decade to get them to the altar.

"He was just my friend. Then one day I was single, but he didn't want to be the rebound guy, so he waited," remembers Baccarin, who's wearing a distracting white silk blouse and navy-blue shorts. "He was smart. He got some major points for that." When the friendship turned romantic, they became inseparable. "We were living together from the moment we started officially dating."

If I were single, listening to Baccarin go on about her husband would bore me. Yet I'm a man who's incredibly devoted to his own fiery wife—so I can relate to the way she's expressing her love. From the way she speaks about him, I can tell her marriage is great because she's with her best friend.

"I did the whole thing where I didn't want to get married. And I said that I didn't need a piece of paper to tell me that I love somebody," she says. "Sure enough, though, a couple years later, I was like, *What's the problem? Why haven't you asked me to marry you yet?* All that Latin stuff comes firing back, all those traditions. You like to think that you're bigger than your traditions and customs, but they form who you are."

Wife, mother, sci-fi icon—Baccarin acknowledges that she is different things to different people. To sci-fi fans worldwide, she'll always be the futuristic escort Inara, from her first role in *Firefly*, or the supernatural queen from *V*. Even though the short-lived series have both been off the air for years, Comic-Con attendees still fawn over their memories.

"People just get really into it," she says. "At Comic-Con they pose for photos on their knees proposing to me, or they're dressed in an outfit from one of the shows. We have such a good

time recreating it and doing role-play games, and there are things they do that make the show live on in their lives. I find that so amazing."

Making nerds happy isn't Baccarin's only surprising talent. She's excited to be trying her hand at comedy with Hollywood's hottest funnywoman, Melissa McCarthy, in next year's *Spy*, directed by *Bridesmaids*'s Paul Feig.

"It was really fun and there was a lot of improvisation," she says. "Those guys are just amazing. They're so precise, and they come up with the best shit on the fly. I did the movie right in the middle of the *Red Tent* shoot. It was really nice because I could break up a serious epic Bible movie with the goofing around."

"She's immensely talented and takes her work very seriously," says Chick, her husband. "She's done the heavily dramatic stuff, but she's really funny in real life. She had a great time doing *Spy*, so I hope she can do more comedies."

Back at the café, an hour has passed. Baccarin switches the focus to me. We discuss growing up in New York City, our shared love of outdoor concerts and funny married-life moments (hello, game night!). When I tell her I'm convinced the woman chooses the man, she agrees and shifts the conversation back to her husband.

"I have such admiration and appreciation for who he is," she says lovingly. "I strive to be better at what I do for a living and who I am as a mother because of him. He inspires me."

Sadly, our time together comes to an end. By now my fedora is drenched in sweat. After we say our good-byes, I set out to look for a free taxi during rush hour. Suddenly, Baccarin taps me and says, "Let's go through the air-conditioned building. You can wait for your cab inside instead of in this heat." In this small act of kindness, I see my wife in Baccarin's eyes. At least for this moment.

Top, Tadashi Shoji.
Earrings, Jacquie
Aiche.

