



Daniel Ings.
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On the cover

Credits.

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DI.





Daniel Ings.

He's charmed us with his comedic timing in shows like "Lovesick" and "I Hate Suzie," but now Daniel Ings is gearing up for a different kind of role. In Guy Ritchie's action-packed crime comedy "The Gentlemen," he sheds his usual lighthearted persona to embody Freddy, a man caught in the shadow of his successful younger brother.

But don't worry, Ings fans - his signature wit isn't completely gone. In this exclusive interview, we delve into his transformation for "The Gentlemen," exploring the challenges and humor he found in bringing Freddy to life. We also chat about his career trajectory, from the defining moments that shaped his approach to acting to the lessons he's learned along the way.



V: Daniel, you've shown us your brilliance as a performer and your passion as an artist. Can you tell us about the unique qualities you bring to your roles and how they reflect your personal identity? How have you nurtured these qualities over time?

DI: Well, firstly thank you for the lovely compliment. I respond fairly instinctively when it comes to characters and scripts that I feel I can bring something to. If it doesn't feel like I'm the right person for the job, then I won't put myself forward for it. I'm attracted to writing that feels inventive and offers me an opportunity to get weird. Complete and utter sincerity is something I've only really learned how to do fairly recently in life, since I'm almost always looking for the laugh, and that probably extends to my work too. Personally, I feel like sincerity is best earned by winning people over with humour.

V: Throughout your career, have there been moments where you felt particularly vulnerable? How have these moments influenced your approach to acting and the roles you choose?

DI: I mostly enjoy the feeling of vulnerability that comes with playing a role I'm not sure I can pull off. For me, the vulnerability I'm less comfortable with is the feeling that my colleagues or peers might not be happy with what I'm doing. I remember butting heads with a very prominent theatre director once, who seemed to hate pretty much everything I was doing (and wasn't afraid to let it show)! I was much younger and didn't cope with it well. Nowadays I like to think I'd be able to laugh about it and shrug it off. You have to stick to your guns - none of it should ever feel personal, and if it does then it's probably a 'them' problem not a 'you' problem. As long as you work hard and try to be an awesome colleague then no one should be giving you any shit. So don't take it that way!

V: You've recently been a part of 'The Marvels'. How was your experience working on a superhero film compared to other genres?

DI: It was fun! I had a lovely time working with Nia and Zawe. I've known Zawe for a long time and Nia is hugely impressive - cool as a cucumber. I got the script about two days before shooting so decided the only way forward was take a deep breath and make my character confused and overwhelmed! What you see of me in the final movie is only about 20% of what I shot, and it's funny because it's all the moments where I did lean into sincerity (that word again). The rest of what I did was pretty goofy. It was a wonderful atmosphere on set and I got to work with some great people. We just watched it with the kids and they absolutely loved it.

V: In the upcoming Netflix series adaptation of 'The Gentlemen', what aspects of your character do you find most intriguing and why?

DI: I was interested in the idea of someone who's suffered complete arrested development from knowing he's the less favoured child. Fathers and sons can be a complicated relationship, and I felt most people could relate to that idea of wanting to impress your hero but always falling short. Everything Freddy does is driven by a desire to be taken as seriously as his younger brother, who can effortlessly shoot from the hip. Part of Freddy's journey is coming to realise that it's now his younger brother, Eddie (Theo James), whose approval he craves. He so desperately wants to exert 'older brother status' that he ends up looking like a petulant little boy. Freddy does some pretty despicable things, so I always felt like if the audience could see the vulnerable child in him, they would understand and remain on his side.

V: How did you prepare for the role? Could you walk us through your process of getting into character?

DI: This was a tough one to prepare for because Guy Ritchie is notorious for making huge script changes on the day. I was advised by several crew members who'd worked with him before not to bother learning my lines, which I just couldn't do to begin with. Again, I'd hate that feeling of turning up without knowing my shit - like you're going to be 'found out'. But in the end I realised that it was good advice. I knew how the character fitted into the broader story, and in particular his role in his brother Eddie's journey, so I would just turn up with an open mind and be ready to work. It was nerve-wracking but we just had to give ourselves over to Guy's vision. Then of course there would inevitably be the odd day where he wouldn't change a word and we'd all be furiously cramming lines in our trailers!

V: How did you balance staying true to your artistic vision and meeting the audience's expectations with what was written on the paper?

DI: Well, this experience was really unlike any other. Guy directed the first two episodes, and after such a collaborative process there were elements we had discovered with these characters that had to be carried over to the rest of the series, so I felt quite possessive of Freddy by that point, and if certain things didn't feel right, I saw it as important to try and maintain consistency. In the past I haven't been too involved when it comes to scripts, but on this one I did fight for certain changes when I felt they were needed - whether it be line changes or story beats for Freddy that weren't quite working. I learned a huge amount from it and feel ver-

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y proud of what everybody achieved with this show. I think everybody did great work.

V: Can you share a memorable experience or a significant challenge you faced during the filming of 'The Gentlemen'?

DI: There's a scene in Episode 1 where Theo and I are in a wine cellar and my character tells Eddie about all his debts. It was the first big scene I shot where the whole thing was completely rewritten, and I had all the old dialogue in my head. Not only did we both find it hard to let go of the old lines, but the new dialogue was so specific in its rhythm. I kept wanting to add words or change the order, and Guy was very clear about what he wanted. He was super patient, really good natured, but very clear about where the stresses and pauses needed to be to make the speeches work. We were both tripping over all our lines and at the end of that I think it's fair to say we were both a bit like - "What the hell did we just do?!" The next day, Guy showed us a cut of the scene...and it was great! For me, that was the moment I realised I needed to just relax and enjoy the ride.

V: Who are some artists or individuals that inspire you in your work and why?

DI: I watched a lot of Jack Nicholson growing up and always loved that sense of spontaneity and danger with him, like you never know what he'll do next. Robin Williams was a north star. I watched a documentary about him a few years ago and found it so inspiring, I just wanted to run on to a comedy set and start leaping about. Shirley MacLaine in 'The Apartment' had a big impact on me too. Something about the cadence in the way she speaks, it feels so modern, even today. I love discovering performances from before my time and realising how much they influenced the stuff I grew up with. I feel that way about the movie 'Annie Hall' too; all Americans in that list, interestingly. I love the Brits too, but I guess I'm just a child of 90s Hollywood cinema. I got the chance to work with Sam Rockwell recently, and boy, was that ever a case of 'sometimes do actually meet your heroes.' He was just awesome - so hard working and always on the hunt for more; "What else can we do? How can we make it better?" I remember we were just about to shoot my coverage on a fairly daunting scene one day, and he just turned to me and said "Leave it all on the pitch, man!" It was like it lit a fire in me - this guy I have admired all these years just spurring me on to go big or go home. I'll never forget it. Truly inspirational.

V: Looking back on your career so far, how do you feel your experiences and roles have contributed to your growth and development as an actor? Can you share some pivotal moments or projects that have signifi-

cantly influenced your evolution as an artist?

DI: Lovesick will always have a very special place in my heart. I think we all miss it dearly, and maybe we didn't know just how special it was at the time. I still think so fondly of that experience and everyone who worked on it. It was the first time I played a role which was right in the bullseye of my own taste. We shot a pilot with a different actor in the lead role, and I remember sitting in the screening just cringing at everything I was doing. It all seemed so false and contrived. Then the lead actor decided to move on and Johnny Flynn came on board, so we got the chance to shoot it again. I made a decision there and then that I wasn't going to hold back this time. I binge-watched comedies that felt like the right tone - a lot of Vince Vaughan, a LOT of 'Always Sunny In Philadelphia'. It's just a lovely show, top to bottom. Incredible writing. 'I Hate Suzie' was very much a gear shift for me. Again - extraordinary writing. That was probably the first time I sat down and really worked out my character's backstory -that hadn't ever really felt necessary before. I remember Georgi our director made us "go to therapy," where I would sit there and she would ask questions as a therapist and I would answer in character. It was an intense shoot but again, I'm really proud to have been a part of it.

V: As we conclude our conversation, could you share your thoughts on achieving success and respect in this ever-evolving industry? How do you ensure that your artistic journey not only flourishes but also receives the respect it deserves?

DI: Great question. I wish I had a substantial answer. Firstly, I think everybody deserves respect, from the top of the power structures on down. Fortunately, I haven't seen it very often, but I hate when I see someone being berated or spoken down to - there's just no place for it. Besides that it's entirely destructive. At the end of the day, making tv or films is an expensive venture, and when there is money like that at stake, then people can become stressed. But I've been lucky enough to work with plenty of folks who wear that responsibility with grace and treat everybody with respect. So there's no excuse for lack of respect. These days I'm more outspoken when it comes to that sort of thing, but it's still easy to get flustered in the moment and ignore something being said to you or someone else that wasn't cool. But in general, I'd rather regret calling out shitty behaviour than regret saying nothing. I feel so lucky and proud to be able to do what I do and make a living from it. But that being said, we're not saving lives. No one can guarantee what's going to work and what isn't, what's going to be a hit or what isn't. Take the work seriously but try not to take yourself too seriously, and other that... just leave it all on the pitch, man.



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