

Louie Spence

“DOES CHERYL HAVE HER OWN SHOW? LIKE F**K SHE DOES!”

It's official: Louie Spence is the latest UK celeb defecting to America. *Jo Usmar* pinned him down to find out just why he's leaving us...

Photograph by Alex James

“lookshit as a woman,” Louie Spence announces, examining the wig we've brought along for him to wear at our Cheryl Cole-inspired photoshoot.

“No, seriously, I actually have really manly features. It's only my personality that's camp. I'm going to look like a butch lesbian Cheryl. A very *glam* butch lesbian Cheryl.”

We don't know about that, but he certainly does look unsettling. With the wig jammed onto his head and a cowboy shirt ripped open to display his massive chest, the man famous for pirouetting his way round Pineapple Dance Studios looks alarmingly like Jon Bon Jovi's pervy truck-driving uncle. (No offence to

Jon Bon Jovi's real uncle. If he has one.) *heat* is confused. We can't ask *this* guy if he fancies Simon Cowell. Luckily, he quickly whips off the hair (“It's not big enough yet, babes – it needs to be *massive*”) and is immediately transformed into excitable Louie again. Phew.

We first met the star of Sky1's *Pineapple Dance Studios* last April when he was new to the whole fame game and couldn't believe Kate Moss might know his name. Now, not only does she know his name, but “I have her actual phone number!” [It's true – he showed us.] We caught up with the 42-year-old star to get the truth behind the disturbing rumours that he's leaving us to work for America's answer to royalty – Oprah Winfrey.

So, you and Oprah – are the rumours true? Are you leaving us?

Yes! I'm going to America, too! It's going to be me, Cheryl and Steve [Jones] all out there



GOOD MORNING AMERICA! Cheryl, yesterday

together. Except I've got my own show: *Louie Spence's Dance Experience*. Take that, Cheryl! Does she have her own show? Like f**k she does! I'm going out to New York at the beginning of June with my husband for about three months to start filming the series for Oprah Winfrey's network OWN. Some producers passed around a taster tape, they loved it and off I go! I can't believe it.

Ooh, did you meet Oprah?

No. I spoke to her number two, though – a really cool, no-bullshit American lady. I said, "This is great, thanks very much, but am I going to be on *Oprah*?" Not meet Oprah, be on *Oprah*. She said, "Maybe." I was more excited about maybe going on *Oprah* than having my own show. I kept imagining me on *Oprah*! I used to watch her show as a kid. How surreal would that have been? My new boss is the richest woman in the world! I think. Is that true? [*heat* doesn't know, but nods confidently.] We're going to be bezzie mates.

Will you, Cheryl and Steve all be meeting up out there?

I'll be based in New York and they're in LA, and it's not like I have their personal numbers or anything... but hey, why not? Steve and Cheryl are both really nice – I've met them before. I saw Cheryl at the National Television Awards this year. She has skin like porcelain – she's never had to squeeze a blackhead. And Steve is seriously gorgeous. Whenever I see him, I always have a good grope. The Americans are bleeding lucky to have him.

You seem to have met everyone – what about Simon Cowell? Have you groped him?

Yes! I met him at some awards do. He winked at me and said hello. Don't get excited: he winks at everyone. He said he loved *Pineapple* and had the DVDs flown out to him in the States. He's quite sexy. He has these amazing dark brown eyes and definitely dyes his eyelashes, like I do. That *wasn't* mascara. Someone came up and asked for our autographs. As I was signing under his name, I said, "Oooh, look, I'm under Simon Cowell," and he said, "I'll always be on top, Louie."

You lot could all meet up with Posh and Becks and have one big party, right? Please say that's actually going to happen...

There's gonna be so many of us out there. Victoria's great – she's got such a dry, quick sense of humour. And she's so rude. She says the most shocking stuff.

Like what? Go on, tell us. We can't imagine Victoria cracking a smile, let alone a joke...

I'm not telling you. No way. But trust



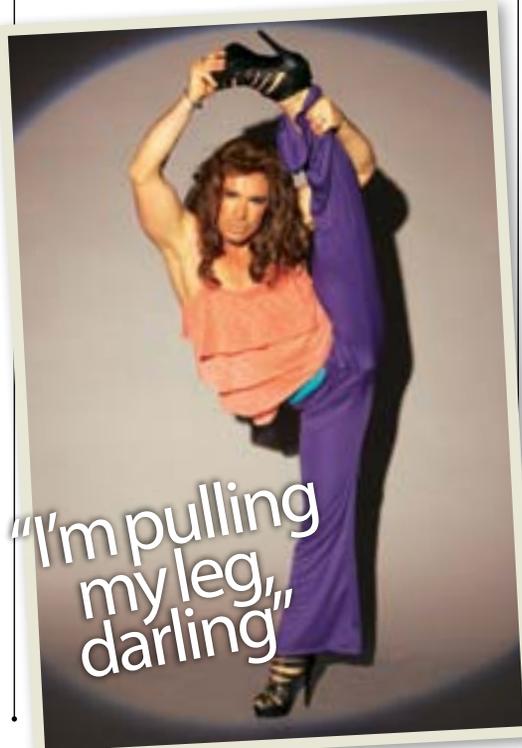
PANTOMIME DAMES
With The Hoffin
Peter Pan in
Wimbledon last year

“SIMON COWELL DEFINITELY DYES HIS EYELASHES”

me, she's hilariously rude. I did tweet her the other day, when I saw that picture of her wearing the toilet-paper dress at her baby shower. She didn't tweet me back, though. Hmm... what does that mean?

You're quite a tweeter, aren't you?

I only tweet if I have something to say. Some people write such shit. And I can't spell.



People have such a go at me about it, but I've never been able to. I have lots of followers, though. Let me show you... [Gets his iPhone out of his pocket.]

Er, Louie... do you have a picture of yourself as your screensaver?

Yes, I do, but not for any sycophantic, egotistical reason. It's a picture of the *Louie Spence's Showbusiness* opening sequence. I never in my whole life dreamt I'd have a telly show with my own name in the title. I'm so proud of it. That's not bad, is it? It was either that or a ten-inch cock.

OK, so show us your tweets then, please. And that's not a euphemism...

There, you see? I've got over 300,000 followers. Not bad, eh? I tweet Alan Carr all the time. We have proper gay banter. The other day, he tweeted that he wanted to rip Joey Essex's orange UGG boots off with his teeth, and I wrote, "With those teeth, baby, you'd go right down to the bone." Loads of people said I was being catty, but I knew he wouldn't be offended. It's a gay thing. I was going to tweet congrats to Gary Barlow on

being a judge on the UK *X Factor*. He's got a wicked sense of humour, too. Loads of people were saying he'll be a really boring judge, but he'll be brilliant. He bought me a blue sofa once. A pull-down bed. It's all in the book.

Hang on! What book? Where? What's going on?

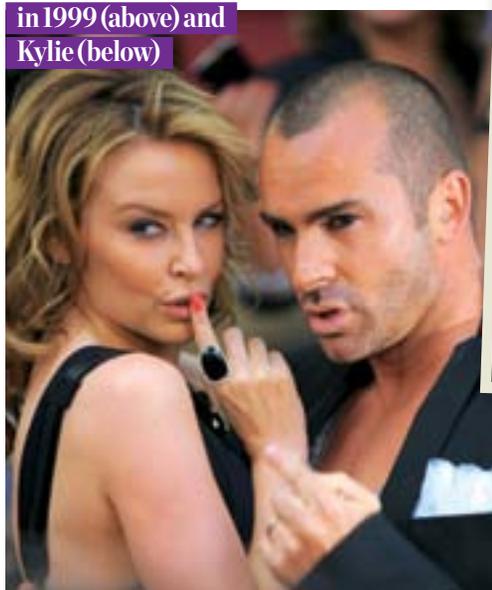
I found out today I've got a book deal! Me, with not one single GCSE to my name! I left school at 15, because my mum spent the next term's fees on a boob job. So I didn't pass any exams, but [my mum] Pat looks fabulous in a backless dress! Anyway, everyone kept banging on about how great it was that you could hear "my voice" in my *heat* column and that I should write a book. So I decided to write it without telling anyone, apart from my husband. It was full of spelling mistakes and awful grammar, but I handed it to my agent and nine days later I had a deal. I haven't signed anything yet, but it's so exciting!

Congrats! So, you've got the new American TV show and the book coming out – are you rich beyond your wildest dreams yet?

No! I still have my housing association flat, which I've been in for 16 years, and I still drive my Hyundai. I can't afford anything else. I've only been on the telly for 14 months, and I wasn't even paid for *Pineapple Dance Studios*. People are saying this Oprah show has made me a millionaire. Anyone who thinks they'll pay an unknown English bloke a million quid for a brand new show on a brand new channel is an idiot. Besides, I love my flat. It's my home. I've always suffered from anxiety attacks and going home calms me down.



GIRL POWER
With the Spice Girls
in 1999 (above) and
Kylie (below)



MODEL BEHAVIOUR
With Kate Moss.
Same tan



BOY IN BLUE
Getting his leg
over with Blue's
Duncan James

“POSH SAYS SHOCKING THINGS”



THREESOME
With pals Jason
Gardiner and Corrie's
Antony Cotton

Do you still have panic attacks?

Yes, but I've had them for so long I've learnt to control them. I was given the flat, though, because when I was younger I was really ill. I had claustrophobia, agoraphobia... everything-phobia. I didn't leave the flat for a month once. I remember being on Chris Moyles' quiz show with Jonathan Ross and realising I was about to have an attack. I was thinking, "I can't ask Jonathan Ross to hold my hand, can I?" I probably could have, to be honest – he's the nicest guy in the world.

Is he one of your new celeb mates?

Yes. I love him. He's so generous with his time. He gives the best advice. Emma Bunton's still my best friend, though, from our days together on the Spice Girls' tour [Louie was a backing dancer for the group]. In fact, she gave me this Cartier bracelet and my watch. [Flashes us a glimpse of an amazing Rolex.] I went to see her baby the other day. He's called Tate. The combo of her and [boyfriend] Jade Jones' genes is pretty amazing. I can tell you. I held him and got a photo, so when I'm old I can show him his younger Gay Uncle Louie.

Emma is a judge on *Dancing On Ice* – ever fancied being a telly judge yourself? Did you really want to be on *Britain's Got Talent*?

Yes, stage stuff is my genre. I've done everything – danced, acted, sung and I'm trained in gymnastics, so I think I'd make a pretty good judge. If people were shit, I'd tell them. In a nice way. This industry is full of knock-backs. People are far meaner away from the cameras, trust me. On camera, people are scared of being taken to court. You can get sued for a wayward fart nowadays.

Are you gutted you didn't get it?

No! I'm off to America and have a bleeding book deal! I have a show in my own name, darling! And the judges they have are great. I love David Hasselhoff. I worked with him last year in panto. He used to speak about himself in the third person and wear his *Baywatch* jacket. At Christmas, we all got a Hasselhoff bag, a Hasselhoff CD, a Hasselhoff calendar and a signed Hasselhoff picture. They're collectors' items, darling.

So, are you ready to “break” America, then?

Yep, but if it all goes tits up, I won't be too upset. I never planned for any of this. I still clean shit off the toilets at Pineapple. I haven't changed. I've only just finally admitted I'm famous. The other day, I screamed at this woman in the park, then I panicked that she might call the papers. She swore really aggressively at my friend's dog in Hyde Park, so I said, "Listen, bitch, you're the one who needs to be on a f**king leash. You need to start running with that f**king arse!" Then I thought, "Crap, she probably knows who I am!" Oops.

You won't become all Americanised and get a weird accent, like Joss Stone?

No way. I love being a Brit. I'm not gonna move there permanently. This is my home. As long as the Americans let me be me, I'll be happy. When I saw pictures of Cheryl looking like this [he points at himself in full Cheryl disguise], I thought, "Shit! I need to get some massive hair and a weave!" Christ. You know what? I think it was all Paula Abdul's fault. She said to Cheryl, "I've got this great stylist. You'll look amazing. Make your hair bigger and hide your feet. No one in America has feet." It's all Abdul's fault. Well, f**k you, Abdul – whatever happens, I'm keeping my feet. ■

Louie's book Still Got It, Never Lost It is out in September