



# “I’D LIKE TO SEE PILAR TOTALLY LOSE IT”

**Marem Hernandez, 26, alias *Dream Team*'s Pilar Hernandez, is in the thick of things as usual when the current series reaches its dramatic cliffhanger climax this month on Sky One. She explains how playing Harchester United's hard-nosed Chief Exec has had a surprising effect on her own personality...**

**YOU FEATURED IN ADS FOR THE FORD FOCUS AND GOSSARD WONDERBRAS. WAS THAT HOW YOU GOT INTO SHOWBIZ?**

I went to drama school, and was then lucky enough to get work in commercials. The Ford Focus ad [in which she uses the car to spell out 'no' to an arrogant suitor's marriage proposal] was all very short notice because the girl they originally cast couldn't drive! When I got the Gossard ad, my mum said, 'finally you're going to look glamorous.' Little did she know that the storyline involved me getting hit by a bus!

**IS DREAM TEAM YOUR FIRST TV SERIES?**

No. From the commercials I got more bits and pieces. I featured in a couple of episodes of the quirky science-fiction series *Lexx*; had a small role as an air hostess in the Sky One series *Mile High*; and was briefly seen – again as a trolley dolly – in the movie *Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life*. Then came the role of Pilar in *Dream Team*, which is my biggest so far. It's a huge opportunity for me to sharpen my skills and really get into a role.

**HOW DID YOU PREPARE TO PLAY PILAR?**

As she has quite a male approach, I studied how businessmen move and talk. I imagined her as a girl – perhaps her dad had always wanted a son who was into football, so she had to fill that gap. I also looked at old episodes of *Dynasty* and checked out what Alexis Carrington got up to!

**WHAT'S IT LIKE PLAYING A BITCHY ROLE?**

I love it. Sometimes Pilar shows her vulnerable side, which proves she could be a nicer person, but generally she won't. From an actor's point of view, I'd like to see Pilar totally lose it because she's slightly obsessive and very focused – to the point where she doesn't see anything else.

**HAS PLAYING PILAR CHANGED YOUR OWN PERSONALITY?**

Absolutely. My mum keeps saying 'you're more assertive', which is her way of saying 'you're more

bossy'. I agree with her – I can just feel myself click into it. My wardrobe has changed too. I've left behind my grunge style for more high heels.

**YOU'RE IN A BAND CALLED VERTIGO. WHAT'S YOUR MUSIC LIKE?**

Sort of White Stripes meets Kate Bush! I can play the guitar and cello, but I mainly just sing. We've just finished our first album and have played some live gigs.

**DO YOU SUPPORT A FOOTBALL TEAM?**

Not really. In fact, the only football games I've been to are the charity matches with the cast. We take it very seriously. Our first match was against the Page Three Girls, which we won, but two minutes into the game I twisted my knee and was carried off. I was gutted because I wasn't even tackled – I just fell over!

**DO YOU TALK MUCH FOOTBALL ON SET?**

The boys do and they're very passionate about it! All the characters that play football have to pass a skills test as it's impossible to make somebody look good who can't play. The girls know enough to understand what's going on. So if you ask me the offside rule, I can explain it!

**WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR FAVOURITE DREAM TEAM STORYLINES?**

The one around Christmas was nice – when Pilar leaves and Stuart goes to Spain to get her back. I liked that one as it's the only time you see a private moment. The ones that are running at the moment with Karl Fletcher coming back and this whole thing with the quadrangle between Abi, Marcel, Pilar and Stuart – that's good fun.

**ANY TRUTH IN RUMOURS THAT SVEN GORAN ERIKSSON MIGHT MAKE A GUEST APPEARANCE IN THE NEXT SERIES?**

I don't know. Things tend to happen last minute, but if I could choose a

guest star it would be Dr Ruth. She could give the characters some great advice! Sometimes we think we should have an episode called 'Dream Team in Therapy' because, let's face it, all the characters could do with some!

**YOU HAVE A VERY MULTICULTURAL BACKGROUND. HOW MANY LANGUAGES CAN YOU SPEAK?**

My mum is originally from Trinidad and speaks Spanish and my dad is from Switzerland, where I grew up. So I speak five languages, fluently – French, Spanish, English, German and Swiss German. My husband Fredrik is Swedish (he makes videos and commercials) so I'm learning that, too. But we speak English at home.

**AT WHAT POINT DID YOU REALISE YOU WERE FAMOUS?**

Oh I don't know if I really am famous! Some people recognise me but don't know where from. I'm one of the few members of the cast who still takes the tube everywhere because it gives me time to read a book or learn my lines.

**CAN YOU REVEAL WHAT'S COMING UP FOR THE END OF THIS SEASON?**

It's going to sizzle and burn! Pilar is going to be involved in a plot about Harchester struggling financially but as always she finds a way out. I'm never quite sure what came first. Were there problems before Pilar or did they start with Pilar?

**PILAR'S CONSIDERED A BIT OF A SEX SYMBOL. WHAT DO YOU THINK MAKES A WOMAN SEXY?**

Humour. I think that if a woman is funny, she's sexy. And when it comes to feeling sexy, compliments have an emotional effect that make women very flirty. Even wearing lip gloss can help – I do this whole pouting thing in front of the mirror and then I'm like, 'bring it on!'

**DREAM TEAM**  
SUNDAYS,  
8PM, SKY ONE

LAST EPISODE OF  
CURRENT SERIES,  
SUN 16, 8PM,  
SKY ONE

Suzie Dalton

PHOTO: RICHARD LEGGIE MAKE-UP: CLAUDIA MACPHERSON