

IT TAKES TALENT

to master the nuances of playing the ultimate onscreen asshole. Especially when you're as nice a guy as actor Bradley Cooper, who made a name for himself in TV's *Alias*, starring Jennifer Garner, then dropped the good-guy act and paraded in all his cocky glory as Sack Lodge in 2005's *Wedding Crashers*.

"When I was in *Alias*, I played a character who was the nicest guy, and people assumed that I was exactly like him—that I was such a nice guy I couldn't play an asshole. But then [*Wedding Crashers* director] David Dobkin gave me a shot at the role of Sack Lodge, and all of a sudden everything switched. Everyone thought, 'Wow he plays a great asshole!'"

With his recent success as Jim Carrey's best friend in *Zer Man* and a variety of projects on the horizon (including the rom-com *He's Just Not That Into You* and the New York-based anthology film *New York, I Love You*), Cooper has been keeping busy—and making sure audiences don't write him off as a creep. "In *He's Just Not That Into You* I play an adulterer who could have been just another asshole character, but I didn't want people to feel that way. He's human and so interesting to play because there's so much going on with him. My goal was to portray him as a flawed guy, not just another jerk."

When asked about his time on the set of this month's fashion feature, Cooper admits he was pleasantly surprised by the whole experience. "I've only done a few fashion features. I'd really sworn them off," he says, "but I had a great time doing this. It might have something to do with the fact that I've been in this routine lately of waking up at, like, 5:30 to run and bike to the point of exhaustion... I'm buzzing from the exhaustion. I tried to be as loose as possible and just have fun. Physical exhaustion in the morning can lead to Zen in the afternoon."

And, it's safe to say, Zen looks good on Bradley Cooper.—LAURIE MIPOLIS



Blazer: *peach-fool blazer* by John Varvatos (52-60), 4400 Varvatos, Malibu Country Mart, 3525 Cross Creek Road, Suite 94, Malibu, 310-378-8427. Suit: *American Apparel* (34), American Apparel, 104 South Robertson Boulevard, Beverly Hills, 310-274-6232. Jeans by Levi's (178): *The Levi's Store*, 3118 North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, 310-246-9044. Scarf by *Banana Republic* (175), Banana Republic Beverly Center, 8500 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, 310-652-0758. Watch by *Nixon* (200) on request. Visit nixon.com. Shoes: Cooper's own.