

Dress, £100, Star by Julien Macdonald at Debenhams; earrings, £8, Freedom at Topshop; hairband, £5, Mood at Debenhams; bikini bottoms worn underneath, £13 for set, Debenhams



and staying grounded. I wouldn't allow myself to get carried away. And because I've been through bad times, I don't take anything for granted.'

And now it's full-steam ahead on the solo career, with Alesha about to sign a new recording contract. 'I feel like I've been given a second chance. I thought, "I knew God would look after me, I am a good person, I knew I deserved better than that". It's very frustrating I made an album that never saw the light of day, it was heartbreaking. But I've moved on.'

Does she worry she won't be taken seriously after a popular (but not exactly achingly hip) show like *Strictly*, what with the music industry being a tad snobby? 'That's why I nearly said no. Because making a record is my priority, that's what I see as my job,' she says. 'But I know why I did it – because I wanted to learn to dance, and I don't have to justify that. If anything, it's created more of a buzz within the industry. I was already halfway through making a record and all I've done is picked up where I left off and I've come back in a stronger position.'

And she had certainly had inspiration aplenty for writing her album...

'My single is a feel-good song, but there are dark, moody songs on there, so it reflects both sides of my personality. I like writing depressing songs, and things from my childhood and what I went through with Harvey, I can put those feelings out there. Let's just say you should never scorn a songwriter...' It's not just her songwriting it's coming out in – Alesha's penning a tell-all autobiography. 'I'm coming to 30, and a lot's happened. I'll be honest, but putting my heart on paper is scary.'



Dress, £30, New Look; hairband, £5, Mood at Debenhams; wedges, £25, New Look

Words: Lara Kilner. Fashion: Charlotte Adsett assisted by Carly Stevens. Photography: Vincent Doiman. Hair: Michelle Sultan at Style Concierge using Fredrick Feckkai and Babyliss Pro. Make-up: Lurella using MAC Pro. With thanks to 365-productions.com

● For where to buy, see p70





Dress, £79, Autograph at Marks & Spencer; hairband, £5, Mood at Debenhams; bangles, £4 for two, all New Look

*** exclusive**

So, Harvey and Javine, be very afraid, eh? 'I'm not vindictive, so I'm not going to go out of my way to make them feel bad, but I have to be true to myself. It might rub certain people up the wrong way, but that won't be my intention.'

Now everything else has come good, Alesha is looking for the one thing in her life that hasn't come together – meeting that perfect man. 'I'm getting annoyed about being single now. I'm trying not to look for someone because I don't think I'll find them, but I'd love to be swept off my feet,' she says (and, incidentally, admits she fancies our photographer, lucky boy). And if rumours are to be believed, she's been swept of her feet more times than during the *Strictly* salsa lately. 'I said hello to Rob Kazinsky from *EastEnders* once at a party, but apparently I was dating him. It annoys me, especially if you don't even fancy someone,' she says. 'I was actually dating Aston Villa's John Carew for a while, I'll give you that. When I met him I didn't know he was a footballer and I made a rule I would never go out with a footballer as I don't want to be stereotyped as a WAG. But he was a nice person, even if it didn't work.'

Clearly, she's not lacking in offers, but Alesha's learned to be fussy. 'I get chatted up but, because of what I went through, I'm choosy. For me to go on a date with John was a big deal. It took me a long time to get to the point where I was ready,

'IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO BE READY TO DATE. BUT I AM NOW'

but I am now. I'd like to meet someone in the industry, so they understand my job, but who isn't in the limelight. I'm not against going out with someone famous, but the attention is intense.'

But, for once, Alesha's limelight is for all the right reasons. And who knows what the heck is next?

'I feel like there's nothing I couldn't do if I put my mind to it, and I've never felt like that before. When I was growing up, my best was never good enough. My Dad thought he was helping but if I came second in a race, it was, "Why didn't you come first?" But that weird way of bringing me up has helped because I'm always striving for something better.' Our dance floor starlet believes rather strongly in karma. 'I put out good energy in the hope I'll get it back, and it's worked. I've had days when I couldn't see light at the end of the tunnel, but I've always had faith. I'm a fighter.' And while Alesha has had to fight harder than most, no one can argue she doesn't deserve for it to have paid off in such sparkling fashion...

● Alesha stayed at the Ocean Drive hotel in Ibiza Town. Rooms start from 180 Euros per night: www.designhotels.com/oceandrive

● International Villas offer the most desirable villas in Ibiza together with a complimentary concierge service: www.internationalvillas.net/00441799516971/info@internationalvillas.net

● Icon Ibiza is a luxury VIP service that offers solutions to your holiday needs, from luxury apartments, chauffeur-driven Hummers, to yachts, and VIP tables at Ibiza's clubs and restaurants: www.iconibiza.com