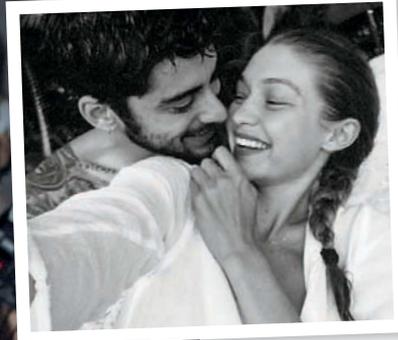


Zayn Malik: FRACTURED BY FAME

HE PULLED OUT OF HIS DUBAI GIG CITING ANXIETY, YET HE SEEMS TO COURT THE ATTENTION HIS HIGH-PROFILE RELATIONSHIP WITH GIGI HADID BRINGS. OK! DELVES INTO THE FORMER 1D STAR'S **LOVE/HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH FAME**



'I GOT BORED OF BEING NORMAL'

Fast forward five years and a reported Dhs176 million fortune, and Zayn once again put the brakes on his runaway success when he quit One Direction. Walking

It's no secret that former One Direction star Zayn Malik has always had a tumultuous relationship with fame. When the now-23-year-old first appeared on the UK's X-Factor, he point-blank refused to join in a choreographed dance routine during the audition stages and eventually had to be coaxed on stage by Simon Cowell. Looking back, the words of his mentor were bizarrely prophetic when Cowell told the shy young wannabe, "You are ruining this for yourself."

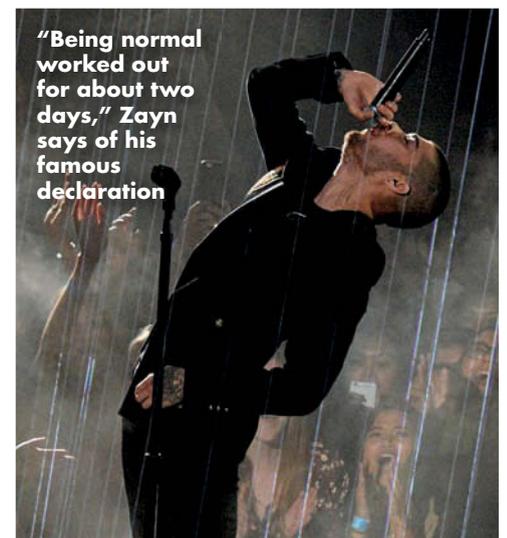
away from the world's biggest boy band at the height of their success in March 2015, Zayn told fans that he was turning his back on fame because he wanted the chance to be a "normal 22-year-old". Months later, he appeared to follow through when he also called time on his high-profile engagement to fellow singer, Little Mix's Perrie Edwards.

It was strange then, that just over a year on, Zayn's life is a far cry from that of a "normal" 20-something. He's not only launched a solo career – with his debut single *Pillow Talk* topping the charts on both sides of the Atlantic – but the Bradford native is also one half of one of the most talked-about couples on the planet. His girlfriend, model-of-the-moment Gigi Hadid, also happens to appear in his steamy debut video.

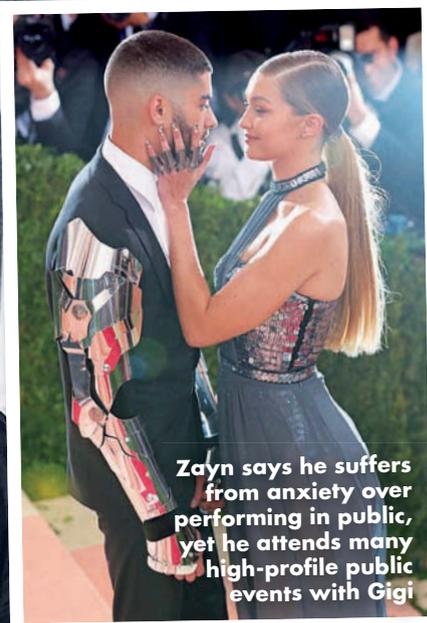
"[Being normal] worked out for about two weeks and I got bored of it," Zayn explained to the UK's Capital FM. "I don't think I could ever go back to being completely normal. I guess that's something I accepted, that this is as normal as it gets for me."

STAR ACCUSED OVER CANCELLED DUBAI GIG

In reality, a 'normal' day for Zayn these days involves sitting with his A-list girlfriend on the front row at Paris Fashion Week; partying with Taylor Swift around New York's paparazzi haunts, and hobnobbing with TV execs on a rumoured new project, *Boys* – a drama based on the One Direction story. Not exactly the actions of someone nervously retreating from the industry.



"Being normal worked out for about two days," Zayn says of his famous declaration



Zayn says he suffers from anxiety over performing in public, yet he attends many high-profile public events with Gigi

with fame, saying, "I hate the word 'celebrity'. Some people just want to hang around you because they know your name, so they think that means they know you, and I can see through that bull**** a mile off."

And, far from the shy teen hiding backstage at the *X Factor* auditions, Zayn told the mag that he has a very clear plan for his solo career – one that doesn't involve jumping through other people's hoops. "You have to not give a **** what people think about you. You have to guide your own career and not follow other people's expectations of what kind of artist

they want you to be," he declared.

Lashing out against the One Direction management who made him a millionaire in his teens, Zayn also hinted at why he walked away from the 1D juggernaut. "We were literally meant to ask permission before we changed our hair or like, grew a beard," he sniped. "It was ridiculous."

SOCIAL MEDIA DARLING

The reluctant star has also touched on the online hate he received for quitting the band saying, "It was great seeing the support I was getting from a lot of people, but there was also a lot of negativity and criticism and people talking **** about situations they knew nothing about. Everyone has an opinion on social media, even though they don't know you, and it gets exhausting."

Fans might forgive Zayn, then, for giving social media a wide berth, but, contrarily, he'll happily pose for a couple's selfie on Gigi's Instagram for her 24 million plus followers.

However, it appears that Zayn himself is aware that he's a walking contradiction, admitting, "One of the defining things about this whole experience is that there have been a lot of emotions, sometimes conflicting emotions, that I'm having to figure out." **OK!**

BY AOIFE STUART-MADGE

However, it seems Zayn's demons are once again knocking at his door: he recently pulled out of his planned October 7 Dubai gig, citing anxiety. In a message to fans, the Brit singer wrote, "I feel I am making progress but I have today acknowledged that I do not feel sufficiently confident to move forward with the planned show." But, given Zayn's chequered history of falling in and out of love with fame, many fans are calling foul on his UAE no-show. "Then just retire from music, man, you don't like to work, that's all, dude," tweeted one angry fan; while another claimed that poor ticket sales were the real reason for scrapping the appearance – "Zayn cancelled his Dubai show because it was flopping," one Twitter user sniped.

'BEING IN ONE DIRECTION WAS RIDICULOUS'

In a recent interview with *Highsnobiety*, Zayn attempted to explain his dichotomous relationship



Zayn snipes of being in 1D, 'We had to ask permission if we wanted to change our hair or grow a beard'

PICTURES: GETTY IMAGES, INSTAGRAM