

‘I JUST DID EVERYTHING WRONG FOR SO LONG’

*Anne Hathaway has been famous since she was 18; now 36, the Oscar winner has spent half her life in the public eye. In a candid interview with **Scarlett Russell**, she talks about raising her young son, taking parenting tips from the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge – and the personal choices she regrets*

Photographs **Sebastian Kim** Styling **Verity Parker**

I am having breakfast with Anne — “Everyone calls me Annie” — Hathaway at 8am in a rooftop restaurant in Beverly Hills. She arrives, only slightly late, in boot-cut jeans and a huge black fedora. “I’m sorry,” she says, after greeting me with a hug. “My son was so adorable this morning, I couldn’t leave.”

You know Hathaway. Now 36, she has been enormously famous since she was 18, playing everyone from a Disney princess and a sartorially challenged assistant in *The Devil Wears Prada* to one of literature’s best-known tragic characters in *Les Misérables*. Her films have grossed £5.1bn, helping her become one of the highest-paid actresses in the world.

No wonder, then, that she radiates Hollywood film star. She says “You darling girl” when I pass her the honey, uses phrases like “deeper sacredness”, and carries around eco-friendly bamboo cutlery. Yet she is also frank, funny and self-aware, one of the industry’s good guys. She was one of the 300 founders of Time’s Up, is a UN goodwill ambassador and has donated money to,

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and spoken in support of, dozens more causes and charities. Hathaway rarely gives interviews, but when she does, she doesn't hold back.

Another thing: she loves being a mother. Jonathan, almost three, is the only child of Hathaway and her husband, Adam Shulman, 37, a jewellery designer. She chuckles when I praise her for giving their son a sensible name. She seldom discusses Jonathan with journalists, but, once her smoked salmon, scrambled eggs and avocado with tomato ketchup arrive, she needs little prompting. "He's so beautiful," she says. "I'm not perfect, but if I'm frustrated or distracted, I'm good at making sure he's safe and walking away, calming down and then coming back to him." One of the hardest things about motherhood, she says, is "telling that harsh voice to be quiet. I fall short every day, but I'm not going to beat myself up about it, I'm going to learn from it."

Recently, the couple took Jonathan to a play area in Los Angeles. When Hathaway told him that he couldn't play in an off-limits area and "he got mad, I said, 'Of course you're mad. This is really frustrating. You wanna do this thing, your friends are doing it and I'm saying no? Gosh, that makes sense. The answer is still no, but everything you're feeling right now is totally legit.' I want there to always be room for his emotions."

She read a story about the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's parenting style: "They get down on the child's level and speak to them eye to eye to make their child feel empowered. I thought that was really cool. I started doing that with Jonathan."

Royal parenting tips aside, one challenge of being both an actress and a mother is filming in far-flung locations. "Leaving him is hard," she nods. "I don't want to complain. I love what I do and I'm not ready to stop doing it. I was told that once I had kids, I wouldn't care about my career any more. I was, like, 'Nah.' But I love something so much *more* now."

Hathaway's latest film, *Serenity*, was shot mainly on location in Mauritius. It's a violent, sexy, uncomfortable and exhilarating thriller, in which Matthew McConaughey plays a lone fisherman with a troubled past. She stars as his ex-wife, who begs him — for the sake of their son and her sanity — to kill her current, abusive husband. "I love it, but I don't think everybody's going to," she says. "There's a pretty toxic cocktail going on and, without running the risk of spoilers, the ending doesn't sit well with a lot of people."

Bride Wars this isn't. Her character is both a *femme fatale* and a broken woman-on-the-edge. "I wanted to

show a woman who had her identity crushed and handed a new one that was entirely the making of a man consumed by the male gaze," she says. "At the beginning of my career, an actor told me, 'We basically play ourselves.' No, I do this because I want to leave myself behind." There's a pause while she rearranges, then discards, the fedora. "You'll have to excuse me, it's an aggressive hat."

Anne Hathaway — yep, named after Shakespeare's wife — grew up in New Jersey. She was the middle child, with two brothers, "which aligned my fashion sense", she says, laughing. "I wore my brother's hand-me-downs till I was about 14 years old. I didn't find my group of girls to start exploring make-up, fashion and femininity with until I was in college. I'm, like, 10 years behind everyone."

Her father, Gerry, has had a long career as a lawyer, and her actress mother, Kate, toured in a production of *Les Misérables*, as Fantine (the

character Hathaway would later play), for six months when the kids were young. It gave Hathaway the bug: she began acting in theatre programmes and, at 13, she understudied at the local theatre. "A couple of the girls [there] had agents and I wrote to each of them saying, 'I'm going into a show with your client, here's my headshot, I'd like to meet you.' That's how I got my first agent."

Later, she spent a few semesters at the elite Vassar College, studying English and political science. She says she is still close to her college girlfriends, despite quitting to pursue acting in 2001 when *The Princess Diaries* came along. The film was a commercial triumph, Hathaway's breakthrough and led to a sequel (a third is in the works).

She was 18 at the time, but there was no off-the-rails behaviour. "I didn't have a safety net, man!" she laughs. "I didn't graduate from college. I don't come from money. Film-making is a team sport. If you can't work well within that system, the system will stop inviting you."

They didn't stop inviting her. In 2006, with a lead role opposite Meryl Streep in *The Devil Wears Prada*, Hathaway's career took off. She sported a leather catsuit in Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Night Rises* and a spacesuit for his *Interstellar*, while topping the box office in romantic dramas (*Love & Other Drugs*, *One Day*) and fun comedies (*Bride Wars*, *The Intern*). She was nominated for an Oscar in 2009 for her fresh-out-of-rehab black sheep in *Rachel Getting Married* and won one four years

*I DIDN'T HAVE
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NET, MAN!
I DIDN'T
GRADUATE
FROM COLLEGE.
I DON'T
COME FROM
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later for her portrayal of Fantine in *Les Misérables*. It was a turning point for the actress. The musical was flooded with awards and praise for Hathaway, who sang for 12-hour filming days, lost 2st and shaved her head for the role. She did meticulous research into trafficking, slave labour and women's rights (in the story, Fantine is forced into prostitution and has to give up her daughter).

However, her 2013 Oscar achievement was unfairly overshadowed by an online smear campaign by #hathahaters. She also scooped a Bafta and Golden Globe that season; the spotlight was firmly on her until — out of nowhere — it somehow became fashionable to think of her as annoying. It was the beginning of online trolling and spawned subsequent think pieces (“Do we really hate Anne Hathaway?” asked *The New York Times*). The backlash only intensified after she made her Oscars acceptance speech. Teary, humble and softly spoken, she was accused by critics of being affected and insincere.

I wonder how she feels about that. “It’s more about their pain than my pain,” she says serenely. “I’m in a good place.” She doesn’t specify therapy, but she has clearly practised self-care. She describes herself as a “worrier. I did a talk show last night and I was in bed with my husband and my son this morning, worrying that a joke I made might be insensitive. I thought, ‘Can you calm down? Nope!’ I got out of bed and jumped up and down three times. Then I got back into bed, cuddled them and felt better. I need to do other things to help keep my anxiety at bay, but this morning it worked. I just f***** did everything wrong for so long.”

#Hathahate wasn’t the only time she was in the press for the wrong reasons. In 2008, her boyfriend of four years, the Italian real-estate developer Raffaello Follieri, was found guilty of defrauding investors of millions. Hathaway lived in New York with Follieri at the time. We don’t talk about it today, but she does allude to unfavourable choices. “There have been moments when I was in the press in a negative way and my family had to weather it,” she says. “People that I let into my life that turned out not to be a very good decision.”

Also in 2008, she met Shulman via her friend Emily Blunt. Blunt’s husband, John Krasinski, is friends with Shulman, and, as Hathaway puts it, their “orbits met”. They married in 2012 in Big Sur, California, with Hathaway wearing a wedding dress custom-designed by Valentino. “I never had a nice

boyfriend before him and then I crushed the husband game,” she says, beaming. “I don’t mean to brag, because it has nothing to do with me. He’s just a remarkable human being and a brilliant dad. I think he has plenty of pet peeves about me; I’m the clumsy, messy one in the relationship.”

Hathaway is firmly on the plastic-free bandwagon, though admits being so is often “a pain in the ass”. She carries a “zero-waste kit. A reusable coffee mug and water bottle, a cloth napkin and cloth bag, so I don’t need to use plastic bags. When I remember, I keep a bamboo utensil set with a metal straw in my purse. If you’re really on top of your game, you have a stainless-steel container to bring your compost back to your house. That’s next level.”

Clearly an actress with a conscience, she emails in the week after our interview to clarify her stance. “I am a person with an assistant, a nanny, disposable income, and the privilege of free time,” she writes.

“I tip my hat to all the people who don’t have all those privileges and are still going for it.”

She and Shulman live in New York, outside the city, and generally “opt out” of East Coast winters in favour of warmer climates. She keeps fit with yoga, when she has the time. Actresses and body image is a much-discussed topic, but for someone so much in the public eye, not to mention no stranger to nudity and sex scenes on camera, she has a take on it that’s interesting. “If you don’t know how to think for yourself, you will be hurt,” she says. “If you look at

pictures of what is called ‘normal’ and don’t question who decides what that means, you will feel terrible about yourself. Having my son connected me with a deeper sacredness that we all possess. His body is the most gorgeous thing in the world. He’s a baby with cellulite. Why on earth would I hate my own?”

Hathaway checks her phone and we both realise we’ve gone way over our 60-minute slot. She needs to pick up Jonathan, then get back to researching her upcoming role as a defence attorney taking on an environmental lawsuit; two days after we meet, it is announced she will play the Grand High Witch in the new film of *The Witches*. As we hug goodbye, I’m struck by how likeable she is; all the “orbits”, “sacredness” and zero-waste kits, frankly, make for a brilliant interview. I might not be part of Hollywood, but I want to be part of her gang. I might need to borrow a bamboo fork, though. ■

Serenity is in cinemas and on Sky Cinema from March 1

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