



Definitely not a diva

Award-winning actress Jennifer Lawrence is known for her unpretentious and grounded approach to both life and work. Here she talks to us about fame, family, and where exactly she keeps that Oscar.

1 When we first meet Jennifer Lawrence in London, we half expect her to fall through the doorway after her now infamous trip up
5 the steps on her way to collect her Academy Award for Best Actress in *Silver Linings Playbook*. But not only does she not stumble, she walks in so quietly that we don't realise she's
10 arrived. We jump when we see her standing there, and she bursts out laughing. Dressed in a simple skirt and top, she has no entourage in

tow: this is exactly why we love her.

15 Lawrence is definitely not a diva. She's endearing, funny, maybe a little awkward.

'I'm trying not to change; I don't want to behave differently just
20 because I'm famous,' she declares. 'I never want to get to the point where I put on an act to conform to some glamorous image of me. I don't see the point.'

25 Even at the tender age of 23, Lawrence is not to be underestimated.

Her role in the romantic comedy *Silver Linings Playbook* earned her a Golden Globe for Best Actress, and an Oscar in
30 the same category. For her supporting turn in comedy-drama *American Hustle*, she won a Golden Globe and a BAFTA, and received a third Oscar nomination.

35 Born in Kentucky, Lawrence was raised in a happy family with her father and mother and her two brothers. She wanted to act from an early age, but her parents were

40 determined that she should finish
school. 'They did everything in their
power to keep it from happening.
But it was going to happen, no
matter what. I was like, "Thanks for
45 raising me, but I'm going to take it
from here,"' she says. Such was her
determination and intelligence, she
studied hard and finished school
two years early. She had her first
50 audition at the age of 14, and started
working in TV before winning her
breakthrough part in *Winter's Bone*,
for which she received her first Best
Actress Oscar nomination – at the
55 time, the second youngest person to
do so.

'Acting has always been my destiny'

What's so refreshing about
Lawrence is that despite the speedy
rise to celebrity status, she's modest,
60 grounded, and real. She seems to be
riding her wave of success virtually
scandal-free.

Since seeing her in London, we've
caught up with her at the Toronto

65 Film Festival and in LA, promoting
everything from *American Hustle*
to the second *Hunger Games* film,
Catching Fire, and reprising her *herbst* 100
role as Raven/Mystique in the cult
70 *X-Men* series. Here, she gives us the
lowdown on the red carpet, destiny,
and how watching bad TV is like
meditation.

**Psychologies: At 23, you've
75 reached award-winning
heights already. Do you find it
overwhelming dealing with the
expectation that comes with
fame?**

80 I try to look at everything in a very
realistic, undramatic way. I think it's
easy to dramatise things, especially
in this industry where things are
made to seem glamorous when in
85 fact, they're really not. I haven't taken
my eyes off the ball and I haven't
taken my eyes off my job. In the
grand scheme of things, family comes
first, but yeah, there are a lot of
90 distractions in this industry although
none of them are very appealing
for me. I don't like staying out late,
so parties aren't that tempting to
me – I think I actually just like my
95 job, so I like to do whatever keeps me
working. That keeps me grounded.

**Was your success something
of a surprise for you?**

A surprise doesn't really cover it. It
feels more like an explosion. It's one
of those things where you can never
really prepare for it in your mind
before it happens. The possibility of it
happening seems kind of too big and
105 too overwhelming – too unbelievable.

**Is it true that you lost your
Oscar?**

I didn't lose it, my mum stole it! I put
all my awards in this little closet in
110 my house, only because it made me
feel a bit weird when I had people
visiting – I didn't want to be showing
off saying, 'Look what I did.' So I just
hid them away in this closet. But my
115 mum thought that was disrespectful,
so she took the Oscar and the rest of
the awards home to Kentucky.

**How do you deal with celebrity
and fame?**

120 Fame doesn't mean much to me, but
I do love being in a position where I
can help my family. It's a wonderful
feeling to know that after everything
my parents sacrificed to get me
125 to this place, I can now give them
some peace of mind and take care of
whatever they need. My family are
the most important people to me.
One of my brothers has a baby, and to
130 know that I can help him pay for my
nephew's education if he ever needs
it is great. My other brother really
enjoys travelling, and I love that I can
surprise him with a flight to Australia
135 or wherever he wants to go. Being
able to do those kinds of things for all
of them is the best thing that's ever
happened to me.

**It's lovely that you want to
140 look after your family, but do
you ever just spoil yourself?**

I don't have expensive tastes. I've
been driving the same car for years
now and I'm not about to go and buy
145 a Porsche or something. My family
always taught me to have good
sense when it comes to money, so
just because I have some money now
doesn't mean that I have to go and



150 spend it! I'm at my happiest doing simple things and hanging out with my friends and my family.

What have you found the most challenging aspect of your life now?

155 Being followed by the paparazzi can be a nuisance, but I usually switch cars with friends, which makes it a bit easier for me to get around
160 without being followed. But one thing that is kind of disappointing is the feeling that people are treating you differently because they know you're famous. You don't have that
165 natural kind of contact when you first meet someone any more. I don't like feeling different or having people relate to me as a celebrity. It gets in the way – although I always try to
170 just be myself. That's why it's good to be able to stay in touch with those friends who have known you before you started becoming successful. I really want to stay clear of all the
175 bullshit in the industry.

What about all the dressing up and the whole red carpet palaver – do you enjoy all of that?

180 Usually if I'm on my own, I don't wear any make-up and I prefer wearing regular clothes. I grew up with two brothers, and I was never a girly-girl who liked to fuss about my hair or
185 what I would wear to school. I'm still pretty nervous when it comes to going on the red carpet and figuring out what I'm going to wear to big events.

You were only 14 when you tackled acting in earnest. How did you know so young what you wanted?

I knew it was something I could excel at. And that's why I finished high
195 school early. Nobody wants to hire someone who's still in school, so I'd lock myself in my room and work for eight hours to finish all my courses and graduate early because my
200 parents insisted that I finish school. It was weird; I somehow knew what I was made for, what I was meant to

do with my life and I didn't want to let that go. Acting has always been
205 my destiny – and that's kind of made it easy for me in my life.

How do you choose roles? You seem to take a lot of risks in your career.

210 The film has to have a director that I want to work with, and directors are very important to me because those are the people that you learn from. Often you might have a great script,
215 but a director can either make it or break it. So the director is probably the most important thing to me. And also because the relationship between the actor and the director
220 is so important, especially being as young as I am and not having a lot of experience already. I want to learn

from people who I want to really learn from and be like.

How do you unwind? Where do you escape to? What recharges you?

225 Nothing. I do nothing other than watch bad TV. Honestly, bad TV is like
230 a form of meditation – it shuts off your brain for hours and hours at a time. I travel lots for work, so I don't want to travel when I go on vacation – I just want to stay put. I will go
235 home to Kentucky. I like to babysit my baby nephew for a few days. It's good, unwinding like that.

Do you get much time off?

I haven't lately. I think youth and
240 caffeine have been keeping me going! ☀

