



INTERVIEW

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID SLIJSER

# She dreams a dream

Anne Hathaway can afford to feel just a little self-satisfied about 2012, having married the love of her life and landed an Oscar-tipped role in *Les Misérables*. So what next? Motherhood? She talks to  
**ELAINE LIPWORTH**

Anne Hathaway was seven when she first saw *Les Misérables*. Her mother, the stage actress Kate McCauley Hathaway, was playing Fantine, the tragic heroine of Victor Hugo's sprawling classic, in a touring production of the musical. 'It was 1990 at the Forrest Theatre in Philadelphia,' says Hathaway, who vividly recalls getting dressed up in her 'best outfit – fuchsia paisley culottes, with my electric-blue baseball cap' for the occasion.

'My mum was the understudy but that night she was doing Fantine. She was brilliant.' Hathaway's eyes light up. 'I remember watching her singing to her daughter, Cosette, feeling like she was singing to me and then watching her die. I was devastated. It was so emotional and I was crying so hard that the woman next to me gave me a pack of tissues.' The performance made an indelible impression. 'Looking back, my soul was catching fire and it was that night I decided I was going to be an actress.'

Kate McCauley Hathaway must be proud. Twenty-two years on, her daughter, who recently married her boyfriend of four years, the actor and jewellery designer Adam Shulman, is mesmerising as Fantine in the screen adaptation of *Les Misérables*, from the Oscar-winning director Tom Hooper (*The King's Speech*).



Against a backdrop of turbulence in 19th-century France, Hugh Jackman gives a towering performance as Jean Valjean, an ex-convict who breaks parole and turns his life around but is forced to live as a fugitive. Looking emaciated, with brutally shorn hair, Hathaway infuses her character with raw emotion, powering her way through *I Dream a Dream* and the other anthems popularised by Cameron Mackintosh's stage version. (He also produced the film.) 'The film captures what it's like to be young and idealistic and angry and wanting to start a revolution,' says Hathaway. 'You think about all the images you see in the news of the Middle East. It's very relevant.'

Hathaway's career-defining turn, as the factory worker who is fired from her job and driven to prostitution, has just won a Golden Globe nomination. 'We'll see what happens,' she says over afternoon tea in a Claridge's suite. 'It does feel like destiny... I hesitate to say that because I believe we make our own destiny, but it's crazy the way it all turned out.'

I have met Hathaway half a dozen times over the past decade but I've never seen her in such high spirits. Her enthusiasm for the film, which follows her success in summer's Batman blockbuster *The Dark Knight Rises*, is matched by that for life in general. 'I can honestly say with absolute assurance that 2012 has been the best year. It has just been spectacular, wonderful,' she says. 'I got to star in two wonderful films, I turned 30 and I married the love of my life.'

She certainly looks luminous, Audrey Hepburn-gamine, in a patterned Band of Outsiders top and black blazer over grey Gucci trousers and Stella McCartney heels. Her hair is still short, cropped into a pixie cut with a spiky fringe, accentuating those famously large eyes. For the scene where Fantine sells her hair, Hathaway's long locks were hacked off on camera. 'I was very stoic until the actual day and then I was trembling,' she says. 'I really didn't want to do it. But I love being divorced from my vanity and having my identity challenged.' She runs her fingers through her inch-long crop. 'When you've had a late night, with long hair you can hide the next day until you feel better. There's nothing to hide behind anymore.'

Not that Hathaway has anything to hide. She holds out her hand to show me her six-carat emerald-cut engagement ring. 'He [Shulman] spent six months designing it and it was beyond my wildest dreams when he opened the box. I didn't need anything. I was so happy he wanted to marry me. He's the greatest person I know. You'd

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Clockwise from above: Hathaway as Catwoman in *The Dark Knight Rises*; in *The Princess Diaries*; as Fantine in the new film of *Les Misérables*

have to meet him, then you'd get it. He is one of those people who wants good for everyone.'

The couple's wedding in California was 'a beautiful fairytale'. Hathaway wore a pale-pink Valentino gown. 'I'm really resistant to the princess thing, because I felt so pegged in by the association early on in my career,' she says, referring to *The Princess Diaries*, the 2001 hit that made her name, 'but I felt like I was living in an enchanted fairytale that day. My mum sang *Sea of Love*, I was dancing with friends I've grown up with who I adore deeply... I can't deny I'm a deeply loved person, not just by Adam.'

Hollywood is also enamoured of Hathaway. One of the industry's highest-paid actresses, she gained critical respect as Jake Gyllenhaal's wife in *Brokeback Mountain* (2005), the downtrodden assistant in *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006) and a recovering drug addict in *Rachel Getting Married* (2008). And her leather-clad Catwoman, in *The Dark Knight Rises*, impressed Barack Obama so much he described her as 'spectacular... the best thing in it'. 'It's the most powerful review I've ever got,' she says. 'President Obama knows my name.'



She doesn't need to prove herself. But she did have to fight for her part in *Les Mis*, as she was considered too young for Fantine and too old for Cosette (that role went to Amanda Seyfried). Hathaway's manager warned her, 'Honey, I'm not sure it's going to work out.' 'I said, "Tell them I'll play the factory girl. I don't care - I just want an audition. I *am* going to be a part of this movie. Now please translate that into non-offensive, non-egotistical language for the producers."'

Her resolve paid off. Hathaway, who is a trained soprano, won over Tom Hooper in a three-hour audition for Fantine. 'I sang *I Dreamed a Dream* for about an hour. You look for little clues as to how it's going. Are they looking at their watch? Are they awake? When I finished singing, Tom was crying and I thought, "That's a good sign," she says, wrapping her arms around her long legs and laughing. 'I had a good feeling. I thought, "Someone would have to do something pretty great to unseat me."'

On set, Hooper insisted his stars perform live, departing from the convention of lip-syncing to pre-recorded tracks. The difference: 'It makes you very vulnerable. You have to open yourself up, turn yourself into this raw, gaping wound and do it in tune,' says Hathaway. 'It works for me because I have a physical response to music... I audibly react. It's embarrassing to go to the symphony hall or the opera with me because I moan in my seat.'

After landing the role, she immersed herself in research, 'into the emotional lives of sex slaves and the suffering that they go through'. She became convinced that method-style weight loss would bring credibility to her consumptive character. Starting with a low-calorie regime combined with intense work-outs at the gym, she lost 15lb, then cut back her food intake a little each day, until the final week 'when I didn't think I would be able to keep going without collapsing', at which point she existed on baked porridge. In all, she lost 25lb.

Aware that young fans could copy her, she wants to make it clear that it was a temporary measure 'to play a part where I had to appear dead. I went into an alternate head space. It's not healthy but you can trick your brain, so I was imagining I was having four-course meals. It was very primitive. There was something animalistic about the state I was in but also something very spiritual about it.'

During this time her husband flew to Pinewood, but after a few days she sent him back. 'I was having way too much fun with him. I couldn't go to the place of isolation I needed to, to understand Fantine, so I said, "Honey, because I love you so much, I need to ask you to go." He went home and I crawled inside the misery of the character.'

Now back to her usual vegan diet, she still looks thin but healthy. Is she happy with her figure? Hathaway sighs. 'What's happy? I'm not as happy as when I was doing *Dark Knight* because I was so strong then; I don't feel strong now.'

Happiness in her private life is another matter. She recalls the early days of dating Shulman: 'There was that first burst of love when you are in ecstasy every single moment. But I knew he was the one about a year into the relationship. I was in a chronic bad mood. I think I was still healing from some stuff that had happened to me,' she says, perhaps referring to her relationship with the Italian businessman Raffaello Follieri, convicted of defrauding investors of millions of dollars. 'Adam was being so lovely and I realised all the negativity I was feeling was completely self-generated. I thought, "How would I feel living apart from him?" And my entire self shouted, "No, no, no."'

Both Hathaway's parents and her husband's are still together. 'Thirty-one years together on my

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Hathaway with her husband, Adam Shulman

side, 40 years on his side. I think that helped us because we didn't idealise marriage going into it. We'd witnessed long marriages and didn't have the pressure of every day having to be perfect.'

She had a stable childhood in New Jersey with her mother and father, a lawyer. But Hathaway says it was marked by 'crippling, all-encompassing insecurity in every area. When I was eight I took a commercial [acting] class and the instructor said, "If you want to do this you're going to have a really good career because you're not pretty, but you're quirky and there's always room for quirks," and I remember feeling, "Ow, that's painful." Frankly I have never thought of myself as pretty or beautiful. Until I did *The Devil Wears Prada* and played a glamorous role, I'd never got that kind of feedback.'

Is she more confident at 30? 'I feel less unconfident. When I was having an insecure moment it used to shut me down and lock me in; now I can just call a friend or talk to my husband and five minutes later I'm like, "Oh, that's off my chest, now I can get on with my day."'

Hathaway's forthcoming films include *The Low Self-Esteem of Lizzie Gillespie*, a romantic comedy by the comedian Mindy Kaling, and Steven Spielberg's *Robopocalypse*. After that she is thinking about taking time off. 'I've wanted to be a mom since I was 16. I'm 30 and I want to have a family of a certain size.' What size? 'Look, I'll start with one healthy kid but I'd like to have a few naturally and adopt. I gotta get on it, you know? I'd like to have as many as I can afford, not just financially but in terms of time, because you want to make sure each one feels special. I've had one goal in mind for the past 12 years, which is: get a movie, get a movie, get a movie. Now I might have to say: get a baby, get a baby, get a baby.'

The conversation turns to the royal pregnancy. We are meeting days after the announcement that the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge are expecting a baby. I am a *huge* fan,' she says. 'I'm obsessed with Kate and William... congratulations, mazeltov! Their love is really inspiring; they rewrote what a fairytale is. It used to be, "Oh, I have to find Prince Charming," but now, thanks to them, it is finding your best friend and getting to marry them. I am so excited.'

And with that she leaps from her chair and in a dramatic flourish flings one arm over her head, in the process spilling the contents of her cup all over the swirly carpet. 'Oh no, I thought it was empty!'

One of the most successful actresses of her generation, in person Anne Hathaway is one of the most endearing, too. ●

*Les Misérables* is out on 11 January