

**IF LOOKS  
COULD KILL**  
**AUBREY PLAZA ENTERS HER  
POST-AWKWARD PHASE**

*Written by* **PAULA CARVAJAL**  
*Photographed by* **DAN MONICK**









**"I ALSO THINK THE STORY IS UNIVERSALLY RELATABLE IN THE SENSE THAT IT'S AWKWARD WHEN YOU'RE LEARNING TO GIVE A HAND JOB. IT'S JUST SO AWKWARD AND WEIRD. THERE AREN'T MOVIES THAT SHOW THE GIRL'S JOURNEY OF LEARNING HOW TO DO STUFF WITH GUYS. THAT SPOKE TO ME."**





PROENZA SCHOULER *blazer* CHRISTIAN LOUBOUVIN *skirt*  
ALLSAINTS *by J BRAND* *skirt*







If looks could kill, watch out for Aubrey Plaza's trademark deadpan stare. That "what are you talking about?" look coupled with her dry, comedic delivery could make you wish you were dead. Or maybe you get that feeling from her Twitter handle @evilhag, a moniker pre-famous, hag-obsessed Plaza came up with not realizing one day she would have to explain her younger self's decisions. Off-screen, this 20-something Delaware native is vulnerable, sweet and excitable — especially when talking about her pup. She still gets nervous about auditions even after landing parts in critically acclaimed movies like *Funny People* and *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, and Emmy-nominated *Parks and Recreation*. Plaza further proves her emotional range this summer in the coming-of-age comedy *The To Do List* as Brandy, a teenager exploring all the awkward "jobs" of sex. Past her own awkward stage, Plaza candidly shares her learning curve on fashion, desire for a femme fatale role and how she's mellowed out.

***Congratulations on the renewal of Parks and Recreation! What's going through your mind?***

Thank you! I'm so excited. Jesus Christ, it's so insane! It's weird because I never imagined myself on a TV show to begin with, so now that I'm on one that's gone six seasons, it's just that much weirder and so awesome.

***You've worked in television, movies and standup. Which medium are you most drawn to?***

I love TV. I could see myself doing another TV show in the future. It's a great opportunity to explore a character in a really deep way. When you do movies, you're in and you're out and it's over. With TV shows, you're stuck with the character for so long, it gives you opportunity to explore and evolve. The most fun part for me has been growing up with April and seeing her change. But I really want to do movies. I find in my off time, I just want to do movies and tackle different parts and flex different muscles to show people I can do more things and surprise them.

***Speaking of ... congrats on The To Do List. How was it reuniting with Maggie Carey?***

I met her years ago at a Upright Citizens Brigade class. We were classmates. She emailed me out of nowhere and said she was directing a Web series [*The Jannie Tate Show*] and asked me to play the part of a delinquent teenage stepdaughter because they needed someone that looked young and was funny. I was kinda like, "Well, why not?" That's how I got an agent. It was a pretty big deal for me, being in that Web series. The fact that we are coming out with a feature film years later is so special to me to be able to share that with her. I feel so lucky she took a chance on me when most people wouldn't. I had never read a script that was so from the female perspective on losing her virginity. It is so fresh and dirty and funny. It's cool how it all worked out. I owe her my career.

***Do you relate to your character Brandy?***

I definitely relate to her. And the fact that it was set in 1993 spoke to me, living through that awkward geek time. I think what is kinda surprising about me is that, in real life, I was more like this character than April during my high school years. I was definitely driven. I was always class president and this overachiever, so that made a lot of sense to me when I read the script. I also think the story is universally relatable in the sense that it's awkward when you're learning to give a hand job. It's just so awkward and weird. There aren't movies that show the girl's journey of learning how to do stuff with guys. That spoke to me.

***Do you ever feel typecast as the "deadpan" girl? Does it bother you?***

Um, yeah. I don't know. I take it more like a challenge to prove people wrong. I don't mind it because all the parts I've played, I've loved them all. Even if people think I keep playing the same character and doing the same thing, to me, I'm not. I know the differences between everything that I do. I try not to let what other people think affect me. There are a lot of things I want to do. I love playing April. I love doing comedy. I was trained at the Upright Citizens Brigade, and that is a big part of who I am. I also want to do more dramatic roles. That is something

I want to challenge myself to do. I would love to be in a straight-up romantic comedy. That would be really fun. I also want to do a really physical role where I can kick people's asses.

***If you could do an ass-kicking role, what would be your skill? Martial arts? Guns? Swords? A super power?***

Ooooooh! I don't know. I think it would be pretty badass to have a power like fire shooting out of my fingers or something. I don't know. I would love to do a spy movie where I'm a sexy killer and seduce people and then kill them.

***Are people surprised when they meet you in real life and find out you are much more engaged than your characters on screen?***

Yeah. I'm partially like those characters. There are definitely times I am more sarcastic, but I think a lot of times people are like, "Oh! You are not a total weirdo. You're normal." I'm a big disappointment to people who want me to say something mean to them. But sometimes people come up to me and ask me to say something April would say, and I say, "Leave me alone." They think it's hilarious, and I'm like, "Really, leave me alone."

***The characters you play tend to not be too fashion forward. On red carpets, though, you always wear such cute dresses and have great style. What's your personal style like?***

I'm kinda both. On a day-to-day basis, I am definitely a jeans-and-T-shirt kinda person. Throw on a hoodie and Converse shoes, and that is pretty much all I need. But the past couple years, I have gotten way more into fashion, and I love dressing up now. I kinda never cared about shoes growing up ever, and now I care about them. I definitely have a girly side even though growing up I was a tomboy. My dad kinda raised me like I was a boy. I was really into sports and never got into clothes or anything, so this is all new to me. I'm into it now. I'm slowly learning about the designers I like. I love Isabel Marant and Phillip Lim, stuff that you can wear every day that is comfortable and loose fitting. I am also really into blouses and business-casual looks.

***If you could escape, where would you go? Who would you take?***

I would go to the south of Spain and hide in some weird cave house on the coast and take my dog and my boyfriend and no one else and pretend I'm a fisherman.

***Between New York and L.A., where do you feel more at home now?***

L.A. has spoiled me completely with the weather and lifestyle. I feel much healthier out here. While there is a big part of my brain that is still East Coast, I am slowly turning into something else, which I never thought would happen. I have a dog now, and I love nature and being outside and being in the sun. I don't know if I could ever go back from that. There is something about New York and its energy that is kinda of my reality because it's how I grew up. I don't think I will ever completely turn into an L.A. girl because I'm too neurotic and have too much anxiety. But, so far, L.A. has been very good to me. It has mellowed me out a bit. I hope it doesn't mellow me out completely because I think it's good to be a little neurotic.

***What is your dog's name?***

Her name is Franky. She's right here. It's actually Frances. I named her after Judy Garland, whose real name was Frances Gumm, but I call her Franky. She's a chestnut-colored boarder collie-retriever mix. She's a rescue. She's really cute, but she has emotional problems and only likes me. I kinda like that.

*Stylist* **JESSICA PASTER** at Crosby Carter Management

*Photographer Assistant* **ROBIN LAANANEN**

*Hair* **DAVID GARDNER** at Solis Artists

*Makeup* **MAI QUYNH** at Starworks Artists

*Catering* **JENNIFER NAYLOR**



