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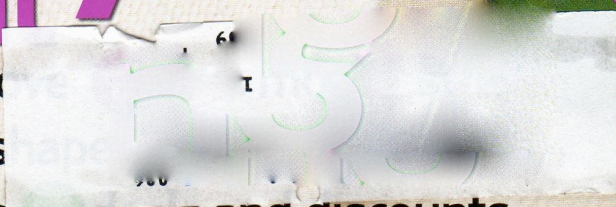
Diane Lane tells us who she really is

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DIANE

tells us who she *really* is

LANE

She loves her easy marriage to Josh Brolin. She hates when her daughter procrastinates. She finds the guilt of being a working mother almost unbearable. Here, the actress who's best known for playing restrained, hesitant women opens up and lets us into her life.

Diane Lane's cheerful smile belies the painful truth: Yesterday, she spent 17 excruciating hours bound in a waist cincher for her latest movie role. Clearly, the corset wasn't tight enough to squeeze the joy out of this veteran actress, wife, and mom. "I'm learning a lot about undergarments," she reasons. "Like, don't try to sing in a waist cincher. You won't be hitting a high C!"

Maybe it's Toronto's long-awaited spring weather—or perhaps it's the yoga class she took this morning. But when Diane introduces herself, she looks like she actually had 17 hours of spa treatments yesterday. And from the moment she sits down to talk, she's positively buoyant, smiling big and talking fast.

Her extroverted energy is a bit unexpected. Diane's had many roles in her three-decade acting career, but lately she's mostly played *reserved* women. There's the restrained housewife, Connie, in *Unfaithful* (who gets loosened up by a charming Frenchman). There's the hesitant divorcée, Frances, in *Under the Tuscan Sun* (who gets loosened up by the charming Italian countryside). And this month, she plays a tentative divorcée who's coerced into online dating in *Must Love Dogs*, her new romantic comedy with John Cusack. (Look for a charming canine to do the loosening here.)

Currently, the 40-year-old is squishing herself into period costumes for *Truth, Justice, and the American Way*, a biopic about George Reeves, TV's original Superman, starring Ben Affleck. It will be her 45th film in a movie career that began at age 13, when

by Jennifer Graham Kizer
photographed by Mark Liddell

a role opposite Laurence Olivier put her in the spotlight. But only a handful of her many movies—1983's *The Outsiders*, 1984's *The Cotton Club*, and 2000's *The Perfect Storm*—got much attention. "I always worked," she says. "A lot of people don't know that because they didn't see the work. But I was glad because I could get a little better at practicing my craft, and eventually I got better opportunities in movies that people want to see."

Another benefit to those years of quiet work: "Telephoto lenses and I haven't had a long relationship," she says. "That's the difference between being an actress and being a celebrity." Of course, all that changed in 2002, when she received a Best Actress Oscar nod for *Unfaithful*. There's a reason she's seated in the restaurant's most private alcove today. People are interested in Diane Lane.

Her personal life has made a few headlines lately. In 2002, she got reacquainted with an old friend, actor Josh Brolin. She and Brolin were both divorced (she from actor Christopher Lambert; he from former actress Alice Adair). She had a daughter in third grade; he had two grade-school kids of his own.

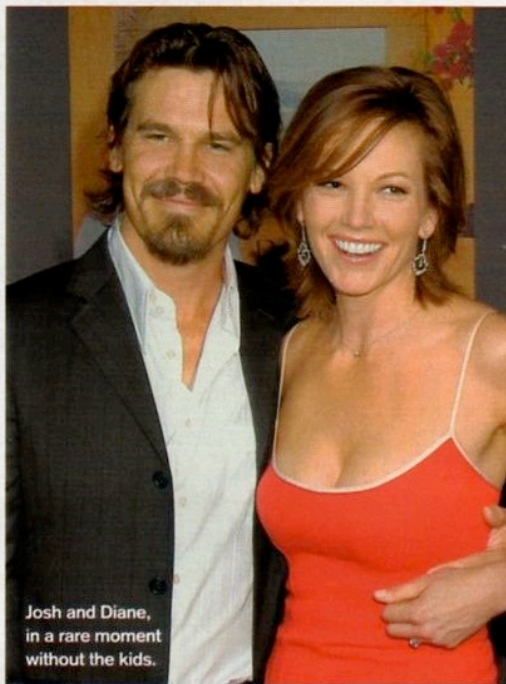
"Josh is such a great parent," Diane says. "And that was a very large part of his appeal to me, and what makes him a good person." In August of 2004, they married and blended their families—her daughter, who's now 11; his daughter, also 11, and his son, 16. Diane prefers not to mention her children by name in this interview. "They think it's fun," she says. "They see their names. But something else comes with it that they don't need to deal with."

Among other things, she's referring to the paparazzi's treatment of A-list celebrities. Her life now is about carpooling and homework and trips to the family ranch north of Los Angeles, she says, not night after night dressed to the nines on the red carpet. "We're all leaky vessels," she says, laughing. "I try not to put myself on a pedestal, because they're just going to look for those moments when you leak!"

In fact, last December the tabloids reported on a particularly egregious "leak" in Diane's personal life. She'd called the police after Brolin allegedly pushed her during an argument. When the cops arrived, she asked them not to arrest him. "But the police have to arrest first [for domestic battery] and ask questions later," her publicist said in a statement after the incident. "[The couple] are embarrassed the matter went this far."

Although Brolin was quickly released, the news of his arrest garnered national attention. Diane doesn't speak publicly about it; according to the publicist, it was all a misunderstanding. Today Diane speaks often—and glowingly—about her husband: his "amazing" parenting skills, his sense of humor, and his emotional depth. She's clearly in love, and isn't about to let the tabloids have the final word on her marriage—or her life.

"We're all leaky vessels. I try not to put myself on a pedestal, because they're just going to look for those moments when you leak!"



Josh and Diane, in a rare moment without the kids.

{ family matters }

Your new movie is called *Must Love Dogs*, so we have to ask...

Yes, I have a dog! Just got one so that I'd have an answer to that question in interviews! No, I'm teasing completely. It's a Chihuahua-Shih Tzu mix. Short hair, hallelujah!

Is it yours, or is it the family dog?

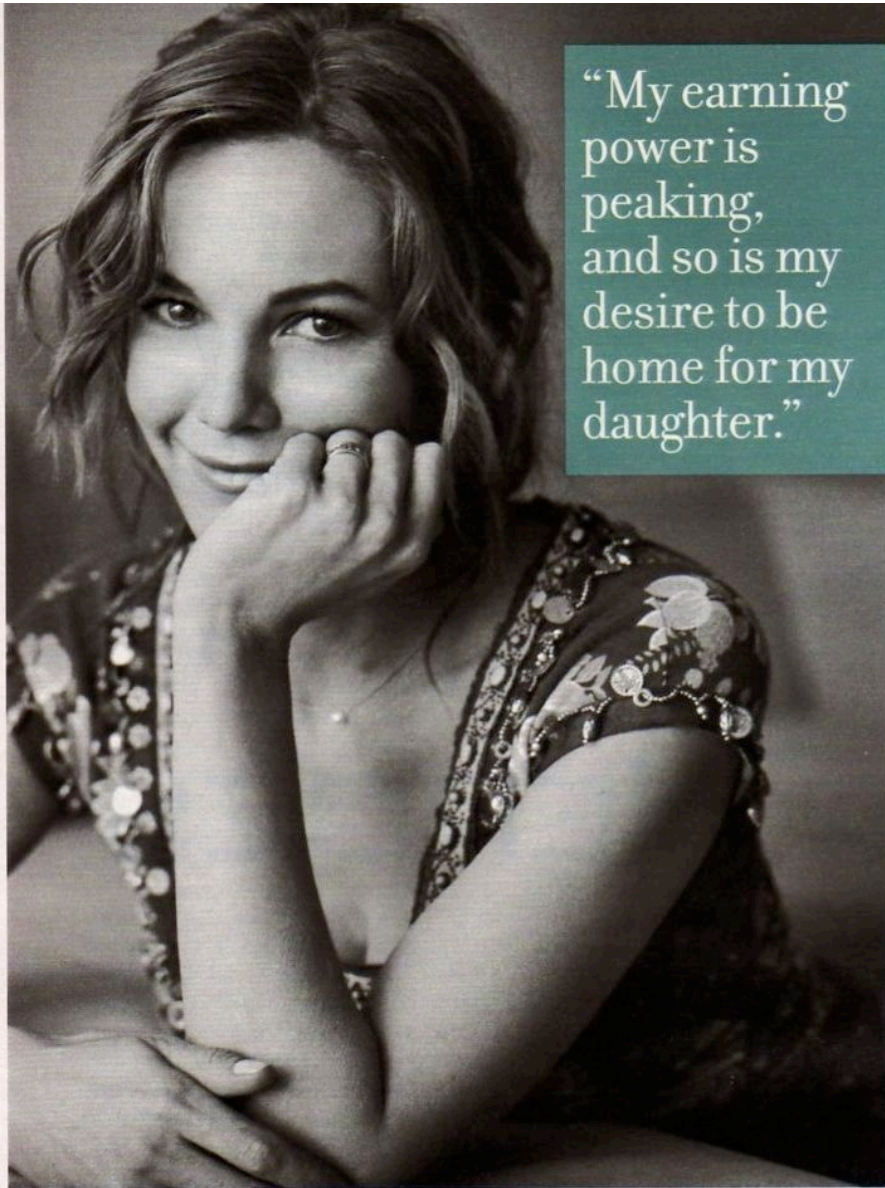
My daughter will kill me if I say it's my dog. It's *so* her dog. In the movie *My Dog Skip* I played the mom, but she knew the truth: I wasn't that wonderful mother who said, "You must have a dog." I'm that not-so-wonderful mother who always said, "I don't think you can handle a dog, honey." But she's 11 now. She's old enough.

She must be so excited.

Well, yeah, but there's also the shock of the amount of work that goes into a puppy. Our lives are being controlled by the peristalsis of a little creature that weighs three pounds. "When did he go last? Where did he go? Why is it still there? Well, pick it up."

In *Must Love Dogs*, your character gets into online dating. Have you ever done that?

No, but I have friends who do. It's nice because it gets the getting-to-know-you questions out of the way before you even meet. That's gotta be very tiring, it's like telling your résumé. But I don't know, I'm off and safely tucked away in married land. I'm very happy. ▶



“My earning power is peaking, and so is my desire to be home for my daughter.”

dad at 20, so he barely knows himself not being a dad. Ever since we met, our girls and his son were always part of our time together. There's not a kid-free zone. Plus, being in this field, we're at the receiving end of a lot of factors that are out of our control. We get our schedules from our employment, and then that affects everything down to the babysitter.

Your daughter and his are the same age. How have they reacted to becoming sisters?

You know, it's interesting. They love each other more than either of them realizes. And compared with other sisters that I've seen, they do great. Because sisters don't choose each other any more than stepsisters do. I love their relationship because they are so...almost opposite.

In what way?

Country mouse, city mouse. My stepdaughter had an idyllic childhood on California's central coast. So this one over here—my daughter—is like a lightning bolt, too fast for everyone else. And the other one over here—my stepdaughter—is into world religions and peace and meditation. They really kind of complete each other. I took my daughter out of her school so that she could begin at a new middle school at the same time as her stepsister.

How does Josh make you happy?

He really cares about everything—people's feelings, doing the right thing. It's something that I admire about him. I don't know how to say that in a more interesting, flowery way. But when it's in your life, it's the hugest thing. You can't put a value on it. And also, he's funny, which is very handy. It's wonderful to have somebody around who's funny.

You have a blended family. Do you all live together in L.A.?

Our oldest [Josh's son] goes to boarding school. But when Josh and I married last year, my stepdaughter came to live with us. And her mom—Josh's ex-wife—moved nearby. We are our own car pool.

You drive the kids to school?

Our favorite thing to do! The day they get their licenses we're going to be completely bereft. Josh likes to do the driving. He's an amazing stepdad. There has never been a morning since he came into our lives in a serious way that he did not drive them to school. One time I turned to him and said, "I'm tired. Would you do it without me today?" And he looked at me like I grew another head. Because he would *never* say that to me. So I was like, "I take it back, I'll never ask again."

Do you and Josh struggle to get alone-time together?

We appreciate it when we get it. It keeps it fun because you sort of go, "Hi, I remember you." But Josh was a

Do you help with homework?

Well, right after I met Josh, my daughter's homework was mold. We had to buy bread with some preservatives, bread with no preservatives, different grains. She had to watch mold form. Well, we had a bit of a crisis: The bread was not molding. It turned to *melba toast*. It takes a while to grow mold, and she didn't start early enough. So I said, "I'll tell you what. We'll put it in a Ziploc bag, add a little water, and you'll have fabulous mold when you go to school Thursday."

So you helped her cheat on her mold homework.

Yes! But hopefully she learned that there are some things you cannot do the night before. ▶

Who helps your daughter when you're on location?

Actually, she's really good at school. I'm very relieved, because she's out of my league already. The other day on set I was chatting with her, and I handed the phone to Ben Affleck. And she starts describing her homework to him. His eyes got really big, and he looked at me like, "Why did you hand me the phone? I'm in over my head!"

She wasn't starstruck talking to Ben Affleck?

No, she just wants to meet Jennifer Garner. My kids are always networking. If I can get the right autograph, I'm a VIP in my own house for, like, 10 minutes.

{ home life }

What do you and Josh do for fun with the kids?

We love to go to drive-ins. A friend has a fabulous 1950s truck. We tie in all of the sleeping bags and pillows with a bungee cord, and then we crawl in the back and lie out under the stars and watch the movie. It's really cool.

Do you have big dinners together?

Well, anything that is more than two people is a big dinner for me. Because that's how I grew up. I didn't have siblings. I was always with one parent or the other. And that's what I replicated with my daughter. And now, jeepers—to have five people. Which is the maximum you can get in the car, too. One more baby, and you gotta have a van.

Do you go on family trips?

We drive up to the ranch. It's great in the car! I've got the fish at my feet, in the bowl, sloshing all over my shoes. Then there's the cat and my stepdaughter's dog, who's big. So we have the fish, the cat, and the dog, and now we've got the new puppy. With the Christmas tree on the roof and all three kids!

Are you a strict parent?

Oh, my daughter would tell you I'm very strict. TV is not a right; it's a privilege. I'll say, "Listen, if you want to sit

Do you and Josh have different parenting styles?

"He's like a big kid, and they love him for it. I'm a little less fun. That's okay with me, because everybody can't be the one who throws the kids around. I'll be over here trying to get them to eat their vegetables."

there and chew your cud and stare at the screen, you have to earn that by having accomplished all of your responsibilities." And that's a long checklist: Make your bed and clear the table and do your homework. And did you think about a gift for Joey's birthday party? And did you walk your dog, and are the fish still alive?

Do you have strong opinions about their TV and music choices?

There's a lot to be concerned about. The singers are doing pole dances, and it's as if they're saying, "This is what it takes to be popular!" So it's a challenge. My hackles are definitely up, because I care very much about self-esteem.

So what do you do? Try to keep an open dialogue about it?

Open dialogue—more like an open mike, and I'm doing a monologue! "And this is what I think about that, and you know, she's a slut." Then I get the eye rolling. So I turn it into a stand-up act. I must say my piece, and if you find it a joke, then laugh all you want, but I still need to say my piece.

{ working it }

Is it hard to leave the kids when you travel for work?

When I was shooting *Tuscan Sun*, my daughter would cry on the phone and say, "Mommy, why do you have to film

this movie in Italy?" I suffered. Three months was too long. I could never handle another dose of the mother guilt that I had on that job.

How did you deal with it?

I just had to get through it. I'm glad the movie was a success, because if it weren't, it would have really added salt to the wounds. Fortunately, I loved her fourth-grade teacher so much. Mrs. Winn—she was the bomb. I was lucky, because she could have really hated me. I mean, I would have judged me. "Hi, nice to meet you. I'm the mother who's going away for three months."

Do you have regrets this time around, working in Toronto?

This trip isn't so long. Two weeks is my limit, and then I'll fly home for a visit. My stepdaughter's got a wonderful mom, and I kind of envy her, because she's a full-time mom. It's just the path not taken, and I definitely mourn it.


Ah, the age-old working-mom issue.


My earning power is peaking, and so is my desire to be home for my daughter. I feel like the flame is just getting higher and higher under me. But it's wonderful to be able to go home often.

Do you find it ironic that your earning power is peaking three decades after you started acting?

I have no regrets. I take comfort that I've earned my stripes. I think they're making actors just so much better than they were when I was 13 and starting out. If they'd asked me to do what Jena Malone did in *Bastard Out of Carolina*, I could never have conjured up that level of emotion on purpose!

Do you think you would have made it if you were starting out today?

It's still about luck. There are people who are more talented than I am, who are every bit as worthy, if not more so. I'm just trying to walk humbly, and keep walking! Maybe they'll let me work until I'm 50! Maybe they'll let me go all the way! Who knows? 

 For the behind-the-scenes scoop from Diane's REDBOOK cover shoot, log on to redbookmag.com.