



**DAZED AND CONFUSED**

The 1993 cult classic, in which she played mean girl Darla, "was the high school we felt we belonged in," Posey says.

**HOLLYWOOD SURVIVOR**

# PARKER POSEY'S NEW CHAPTER

**How the onetime 'Queen of the Indies' made it through tough times and found new roles—and happiness at last**

By **GILLIAN TELLING**

Parker Posey isn't like most show-business vets. After 25 years in the public eye, she doesn't have a publicist and has never bothered to hire an assistant. (She'll just text you—with emojis—when she wants to meet up for an interview.) Raised in Louisiana and Mississippi, she's still a friendly Southerner who doesn't mind when fans come up to her on the streets of Manhattan to tell her how much they love her work—unless they want a selfie and she hasn't brushed her hair. Speaking of hair, not having to think about it partly explains Posey's quirky love of turbans. Also, it's a fun way to

## AMAZING GRACIE

The star's beloved 14-year-old poodle-mix Gracie, who has been diagnosed with dementia but still travels with her everywhere, "is a little lamb," Posey says (at home in New York City).



1



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**POSEY'S PAST**

1. With her twin brother, Christopher (right). 2. "You were born a nervous wreck," Parker says her mom (with her, Chris and their dad) once told her. 3. With boyfriend Ryan Adams in 2003.



3

"I had times when I'd think, 'I'm really right for this part! I can hear the voice in the writing!'" she says, near the farm in upstate New York where she spends as much time as she can when not working. "And then it would go to some A-list actor because the big stars guarantee the financing. So that changed things."

Posey had once jumped from one hipster film to the next with ease (*Party Girl*, *Best in Show*, *Dazed and Confused*), and the career slowdown left her riddled with anxiety—to the point where she had what she calls a nervous breakdown several years ago, spending part of the night in an ER and going home with plenty of Xanax. "I couldn't handle how financially motivated and conventional showbiz had become," she writes in her new memoir *You're on an Airplane*. But these days, she's made her peace with it. "It's a business, but I wasn't able to accept that," she tells *People*. "But you have to live your life. You can't just experience it as rejection, even if that's what it is."

Even at her lowest point, Posey carried on, bringing scene-stealing energy to even the bittiest part. Now she's winning raves on Netflix's *Lost in Space* reboot and for her book, which chronicles her career ups and downs, including her work with Louis C.K. and Woody Allen, though she steers clear of commenting on the #MeToo scandals that have embroiled them both. She's more forthcoming about her *Dazed and Confused* costar Matthew McConaughey, at the time a newcomer whom all the girls on-set were swooning over. Posey begged director Richard Linklater to put her in a scene with him, and he did.

She decided to write her memoir, she says, partly "to do something else, because I was at my limit of

send herself up as an eccentric aging actress: "I get to be this Norma Desmond type," she says. But if, at 49, she's got a sense of humor about aging in Hollywood, she knows what it's like to go from red hot to not. Back in the '90s, Posey was dubbed Queen of the Indies for offbeat turns in more than 30 independent films. But being an art-house darling got her pigeonholed. And then the phone stopped ringing.

**'I LIKE TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT OTHER PEOPLE CAN PARTICIPATE IN'**

—POSEY ON HER ACTING CAREER

**HER GREATEST HITS**



**PARTY GIRL**

The role of superstylish but bad-at-life Mary in *Party Girl* put Posey on the map. "It's all about the part," she says of her early career. "The parts I had were so good."



**WAITING FOR GUFFMAN**

"Those movies became a vernacular," Posey says of Christopher Guest's mockumentaries.

**BEST IN SHOW**

Cut from this film about the dog-show circuit: a sex scene in which Posey's husband (played by Michael Hitchcock) "talks to me in a doggy voice—"Who's a good girl?"—Posey says. Director Guest "said it was too dark!"



PREVIOUS SPREAD: (POSEY) ALLISON MICHAEL GREENSTEIN; (INSET) NBC UNIVERSAL; (CROWN) ALVARO CABRERA/THE NOUN PROJECT; THIS PAGE: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY PARKER POSEY (2); EVERETT; SUZANNE TENNER/COLUMBIA TRISTAR/KODAL/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK; EVERETT; KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE



**LOUIE**

Posey says she's not in touch with Louis C.K., who cast her as his girlfriend on several episodes of his series *Louie*.

**LOST IN SPACE**

"Reboots guarantee an audience who are nostalgic," says Posey of starring on Netflix's *Lost in Space*, a job she says she loves.

born actress. She studied drama at SUNY Purchase and at 23 landed the role of bad girl Tess Shelby on *As the World Turns*. A host of offbeat roles soon followed, as well as parts in blockbusters such as *You've Got Mail* and *Blade: Trinity*. But celebrity never appealed to Posey. "I wasn't a very good movie star," she writes. "It either seemed too boring or like too much work." Her profile grew, but her bank account never grew with it—most of her roles were more of a labor of love, and at one point, when



FROM LEFT: FX; NETFLIX; PETER ZAMBOURIS; ALLISON MICHAEL DRENGSTEIN



**'WRITING CAN BE SOLITARY AND MADDENING, BUT I GOT CONSUMED BY IT'**

filming *Mixed Nuts* in 1994, she found herself with only \$1.75 in the bank. The film's director, Nora Ephron, had to give her \$100 to buy food. Still, Posey remains nostalgic about those days. "I just felt connected back then," she says. "It was a real time in the culture. It was independent movies, and it was really vibrant. I think we were really free, the gen Xers. We didn't have the brand consciousness that all the 20-year-olds have now." These days Posey, who's single and dating (she famously dated musician Ryan Adams for two years in the mid-2000s), says she's at peace with her choices, both personal and professional. She has no children but notes that "I mother my friends and I mother my dog Gracie. I think all women are mothers." She's especially content at her farm upstate. "I love to cook and entertain. I just like to be chill," she says. "I have no regrets." ●



**PUPPY LOVE**

"She makes everyone smile," Posey says of Gracie. "Animals teach us how to be human."



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