

## Eliza Scanlen: Hollywood's Bright Future Draped in Darkness



It seems that Gillian Flynn is never out of female characters that make us both swoon over and terrified of; after Amy Elliott-Dunne and her elaborate story slash murder, now we get to watch another of her scary woman (or women) on screen. Flynn's first novel *Sharp Objects* is now realized as a miniseries on HBO. Following the life of Camille Preaker, a then-small-town-princess now a big city journalist, *Sharp Objects* has

several female characters that are totally alluring and mysterious. Camille, portrayed by Amy Adams' graceful presence, is a disturbed woman trying to figure out stuff from her traumatic childhood. Playing Amy Adams' character's mother Adora, is Patricia Clark, who is as bewitching as she is dangerous. However, the real catch is not the previously mentioned already well-known actress. Eliza Scanlen (20), an up-and-coming actress, stuns viewers with her performance as Amma Crellin, Camille's half sister who is only 13 years old but with the charm, intelligence, and beauty of a much older and developed woman. In order not to spoil the series' story, let it be said that Amma Crellin, like her mother Adora, is as captivating as she is alarming. The complexities of her character- her innocent princess-self, her queen bee role at school, and also the reality of being a victim of her mother's sweet torture, are exhibited

beautifully with Scanlen's acting. It gives us even more reason to be in awe when knowing this is her first 'real' acting gig. Immensely talented, she even makes her famous co-star Amy Adams impressed with her performance and stage presence.

In the book, the characters in *Sharp Objects* are multidimensional, complex, and real. Many fans have wondered what the screen adaptation will look like, and it seems that almost nobody is disappointed. Amma Crellin's lines "I 'm Persephone," quote also fits quite well with Eliza Scanlen; while Amma references Persephone, goddess of the underworld but also a figure of innocence, this quote represents the versatility of Scanlen's acting. She *is* both her mother's sweet innocent daughter *and* the popular mean girl who likes violence and brutality.

Usually, a story would have one singular female character that seems to be tokenized, even sexualized and objectified at some points. In HBO's *Sharp Objects*, the three main female characters; played respectively by Amy Adams, Patricia Clarkson, and our beloved Eliza Scanlen give us a glimpse of stories that consist of real women with real experiences. It is saying something when Eliza Scanlen's performance is not outshadowed by Adams' or Clarke's performance. Her energy and aura makes us viewers so immersed by her character; at some point even make us develop sympathy, even when her character is doing something bad, or being the mean girl that she is.

Eliza Scanlen's adventure will not end as this show wraps itself, of course. Scanlen has been cast alongside big names such as Saoirse Ronan, Emma Watson, Timothée Chalamet, Meryl Streep and Laura Dern in the upcoming film, Greta Gerwig's adaptation of Louisa May Alcott's novel *Little Women*. It can be hoped that we will be able to see more of Scanlen's brilliant performance, her versatility, and her charm in this film. Some may say Hollywood is losing its touch, but with someone like Scanlen, perhaps we still have hope yet.

