



the **mila** touch

HER NAME TRANSLATES TO BOX-OFFICE GOLD, SHE'S BEEN VOTED THE 'HOTTEST WOMAN ALIVE,' AND HAS AN A-LIST MAN TO PROVE IT, BUT MILA KUNIS ISN'T LETTING ANY OF IT GO TO HER HEAD...

WRITTEN BY AOIFE STUART-MADGE

There's something about Mila Kunis that makes you fall in love with her on sight. And it's not just her ethereal looks (her Ukrainian gene pool has gifted her with feline-green eyes, high cheekbones and a perfect button nose). It's more to do with her gravelly voice, her dirty laugh, her every-girl attitude, her razor-sharp wit — and the fact that she can land a high-fashion Dior contract (she was previously the face of the Miss Dior handbag line) and star in crude frat-boy comedy *Ted*.

Yep, Kunis is that rare breed of Hollywood actress who is adored by women and men in equal measure — an enviable combination of beauty and brains, coupled with a down-to-earth attitude.

After her career-defining role in *Black Swan* (2010), the 29-year-old has emerged as one of Hollywood's most bankable young stars, with no less than seven box office releases scheduled for the next two years. Next up, she's playing a witch in Disney project *Oz: The Great And Powerful*, opposite James Franco.

WRITING HER OWN RULES

But this is no overnight success story. Kunis started acting at nine — after her family moved to California from the Ukraine when she was seven. She landed her first big role on *That '70s Show* when she was just 15.

"After *That '70s Show* ended, I solely wanted to do films that inspire me, and to work with people who make me better," she said about carving out her career on her own terms. "I wanted to just surround myself with people who I think are better than I am, whether they're actors or directors or producers, so that I could learn from them. And I think that's pretty much what I've done."

Though her star is soaring, her feet are staying firmly on the ground; she's got a steely resolution not to get carried away with her own hype. "What I do and who I am are two different things. They always will be," she explained. "So much of who you are in this industry is based on what that critic says, what that director says, what that actor says. People start believing all that, and they become what everybody else wants them to be. I've consciously separated my two lives."

PROTECTING HER PRIVACY

Kunis steadfastly separates her public and private personas. Cannily observant of the fickleness of show business, she's determined not to be fodder for the tabloids; you won't see her stumbling out of a nightclub, leaking risqué pictures on the internet or being busted for DUI like other young Hollywood stars.

"There will always be a double standard between males and females, so I think that an actress is more likely to protect her public persona," she said. "An actor goes crazy in a hotel room, gets trashed, breaks a window,

and he's considered a rock star. An actress does that and she's sent to rehab and can't get a job."

The beauty is willing to risk her career to protect her reputation. When a studio boss tried to force her to pose for a provocative shoot to promote the 2008 film *Max Payne*, she refused. She recalled: "My career was threatened over me not wanting to do the cover of a magazine by an executive... It was like, 'If you don't do this magazine, you'll never work in this company.' I said, 'I'm sorry, what did you say?' It wasn't *Playboy*, but it was a magazine I didn't want to do. And this person couldn't accept no. That was the turning point of my career."

A 'JEANS AND T-SHIRT' GIRL

There are other facets of Hollywood life that Kunis shies away from: she refuses to subscribe to the size zero LA ideal. After losing a staggering 25lbs to play a ballerina in *Black Swan*, she delighted in getting her curves back. She said: "This is my normal body. It's not 98lbs. I'm probably 25lbs heavier in muscle mass and weight at this point. What was crazy was, when I was shooting *Black Swan*, everyone was like, 'Gosh, you're really too skinny.' Then my weight started bouncing back and they're like, 'She looked better when she was anorexic-looking.' You can't please anyone! It was just for work."

Body image aside, she continually tops the best dressed lists — but don't let her super-sleek red carpet look fool you. A self-confessed "jeans and T-shirt" girl, she's more at home hanging at home on the sofa than schmoozing on the red carpet. "I'm honestly just learning about fashion," she said. "In my daily life, I don't wear the most feminine pieces. But I love to feel feminine when I'm on the red carpet."

FAMILY GIRL

True to form, Kunis — who dated Macaulay Culkin for eight years before their 2011 split — was recently photographed in New York with her new boyfriend of five months, Ashton Kutcher (former co-star and friend for 15 years), wearing matching football T-shirts and jeans, going for ice-cream.

"Listen, in five years I do hope to have a family. I think in this industry people have such a short shelf life... I don't know what I'm going to be in five years in regards to acting," she said about domesticity, adding: "I'd rather be in love and have a baby than have a movie."

That's not to say she's ready to retire just yet — she's still got career ambitions to fulfil. She said: "I'd love to produce... I would love to explore other facets of this industry, for sure... I've always been a big proponent of not working for the sake of working, because I don't want to work for the rest of my life — I want to live. So I'd rather work to live than live to work." Well, she certainly has her priorities right.