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The Secret Life of

is

robb

A high-schooler and a movie star? The Race to Witch Mountain

BY AMANDA FORR • PHOTOGRAPHED BY GABRIELLE REVERE

Fifteen-year-old AnnaSophia Robb could be your BFF. Well, one with a really awesome after-school job. A Hollywood star who goes to high school like a—gasp!—normal teen? It's true, and it's just one of the things that's kept her grounded throughout a career that's had her working with the likes of Johnny Depp (*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*), Hilary Swank (*The Reaping*) and Charlize Theron (*Sleepwalking*). To see what this sweetheart's been up to lately, we snagged her on the cell for a little chat—once she got home from school, that is.

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Although AnnaSophia has starred in 10 major films, most notably as bratty Violet in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and Leslie in *Bridge to Terabithia*, she's not your typical Hollywood starlet. While other up-and-comers chill by hip hotel pools by day and hang out at all of the hot clubs at night, AnnaSophia has chosen to live a decidedly less glam life. She goes to a regular high school in her hometown of Denver, Colo., where she has a 6 a.m. wake-up call and wears comfy clothes to class. (Favorite item in her closet? "A super-fuzzy North Face

jacket. That coat is just like a teddy bear. It is softer than my dog.") And despite her mega-success on the big screen, she's managed to fly under the radar in Denver. In fact, after she started her freshman year at a new school last fall, many of her schoolmates were oblivious to her celebrity status until a trailer for her movie ran on national TV.

"The *Race to Witch Mountain* ad came on during the Super Bowl and, of course, the whole school watched it," says AnnaSophia. She plays Sara in the action-packed movie—one of two sibs with paranormal powers trying to outrun evildoers, all the while being protected by a heroic cabbie played by Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson. "By Monday, everyone had seen it. They didn't act any different. It wasn't like, 'You are in a movie!' It was just kind of like, 'You worked with Dwayne Johnson—that is so cool! He is so hot!'"

THE STARTING LINE

AnnaSophia has had the opportunity to share the screen with many a hottie during her six-year-long career. Like Hayden Christensen, Nick Stahl and Josh Hutcherson, just to name a few. But

star is living a double life.



it's not the celebrity company that keeps AnnaSophia on the acting scene—rather, it's her pure passion for the work.

"I just love to perform. That's all I can ever remember wanting to do," AnnaSophia explains. "When I was about 8, I begged my mom for an agent because that's how I heard actors got started. After taking an acting class, I was invited to come out to L.A. It just all kind of started from there."

Her first real gig? A McDonald's commercial. Says AnnaSophia, "I don't think I've ever been so excited in my life. I mean, I get excited when I hear that I [got] a movie and it's really going to happen—I'm always jumping up and down and screaming. But this McDonald's commercial was just the biggest deal ever. We ate cold french fries and old Chicken McNuggets for a really long time. But I thought it was just the best job ever. I loved meeting all of the people and all of the food."

Though AnnaSophia booked that commercial almost instantly, she didn't land every job she was up for—far from it. (She had over 40 auditions on that first trip!) But she didn't let the tough times and disappointment get her down.

"There are a bunch of different actors, and there are a bunch of different stories," she says. "I always look at it like flavors of ice cream or kinds of candy. They might be looking for one kind of candy and you're a different kind, you know?"

More often than not, though, it seems AnnaSophia is doing something right. Her second trip to L.A., she auditioned for and was offered the lead role of Opal in *Because of Winn-Dixie*. And her career has just taken off from there. It's no exaggeration to say that lately her successes have been big—literally. "I remember seeing this huge billboard for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. It was on the side of a building and I couldn't believe how enormous it was," she says. "Then, the first time I saw the *Race to Witch Mountain* one, we were driving up some highway and all of a sudden we saw it. I was like, 'Look,



AnnaSophia glams it up for the red carpet.

Mom! Look! Those moments make it feel like the real thing."

GET REAL

But far away from the larger-than-life billboards and busy film sets, AnnaSophia does the same stuff you do. Like talking on the phone, listening to music (she counts Coldplay, U2, the Beatles and Frank Sinatra among her faves), playing on her computer (iMing, e-mailing and, yeah, schoolwork too) and, of course, spending time with her besties who are almost just as short on free time as she is.

"I'm pretty busy. I haven't had a day off, like not doing anything, in a long time. But even if you were to walk in [my friends'] shoes for a day, they are just as busy with school and homework and extra-curricular activities," she says.

But her crew does manage to find time to spend together. Going to see a movie. The occasional sleepover ("We'll hang out at a friend's house and eat junk food and just talk."). And...kickboxing? Yup, AnnaSophia and one of her best buds are learning to kick some serious butt. "[*Race to Witch Mountain* co-star] Alexander Ludwig actually got me into it. I needed to do some sort of activity when we were on set because we would be sitting in the cab for days and days. [My friend and I] laugh at ourselves and have a good time with it."

BALANCING ACT

Between friends, work and school, it's easy to assume that AnnaSophia is the ultimate multitasker, juggling all of her responsibilities with the skill of a circus performer. But just like a typical teen, AnnaSophia struggles with how to manage time and get it all done.

"I have to have structure in my day. I need to focus on one thing or the other. I'm actually pretty bad at multitasking. I think my skill level has developed," she says. "Take yesterday, for example. After school, I did about five minutes of homework, got on the phone for a meeting about a project we are working on. Then I raced over to kickboxing, ate

AnnaSophia loves...

...Her precious maltipoo, Bella Roux.

"She was a Christmas present. I didn't know I was getting a dog and woke up to her nibbling on my toes—it was a good surprise. She was supposed to be little so we could travel with her, but she is not little."

...Movies (of course!). "*Juno* and *Superbad* are really good—Michael Cera is just so funny. I love *The Wizard of Oz*, the *Bourne* movies—and *Lord of the Rings* is just a classic."

...Snowboarding. "I've only been able to go once this season. I'm really awful at it, but I have such a good time."

...Pasta. "Especially with salads, meat sauce, or steamed vegetables."

...Travel. "New Zealand was absolutely amazing. I would go back there in a heartbeat. And also England. We lived in London. We also went to Ireland and Scotland, but the Cotswold were the best. It was just amazing there."

...Her bedroom. "My bedroom is blue and green. It is peaceful and calming. I have pictures on the wall. My bulletin board is huge and covered with pictures of friends and family and cards and all sorts of things. I have a collage of cross-country, and a big book shelf."

...Christmas lights. "I've strung them up in my room. I think they should be kept up all year long."

dinner and was up until 11:30 finishing my homework."

Not that she's complaining. Getting really good grades is super important to her—she hopes to study film in college and is especially into current events and history—so she keeps school at the top of her priority list. But she did join the cross-country team last fall.

"It's one of the hardest sports ever. Some people just think that it is a wussy sport, and it totally is not. The endurance level that you have to keep up! In football, you barely play for 20 seconds straight. There is no stopping [in cross-country]. You just have to run."

Still, there are times that she needs to fit her career into her busy school sched. That sometimes means missing big blocks of time from the school year. But fortunately, her teachers are willing to work with her. And technology is a big help, too. "With school, everything is online. I can e-mail my papers. I can

e-mail one of my teachers, and they will respond in that day. I bring my Mac laptop literally everywhere."

ON A ROLL

And there's no stopping AnnaSophia when it comes to acting, either. Next up? The lead role in *Dear Eleanor*, the story of two 14-year-old girls who travel across America in 1962 in search of Eleanor Roosevelt.

And the road's wide open after that. "I used to think, 'Oh, I'm not dead set on this,'" she says of her place among the Hollywood elite. "Now that I've seen more of the movie industry and different aspects of it, I realize that I really like it."

But first, there's all of that other, well, normal stuff to deal with. When we ask AnnaSophia her plans for the night, she laughs. "I have a lot of homework. They give us so much. I mean, how are we supposed to have fun?" We hear ya, girl. We hear ya. ✨



JUST CAUSE

Student, actress—activist? AnnaSophia shares her trip to India, where she saw the plagues of poverty first-hand.

There are more than 200 million people in complete poverty in India. They are treated awfully. They are not educated. The Dalit Freedom Network (a non-profit organization focused on bringing social justice and human rights to everyone in India) is trying to help educate them so they can make a living for themselves and won't be discriminated against.

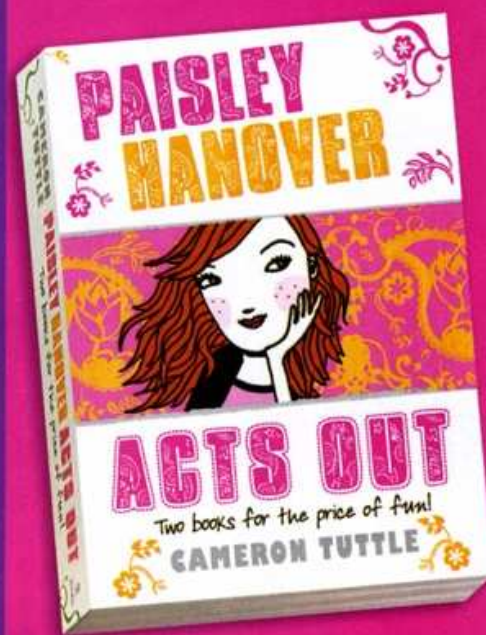
My parents and some friends and I went [to India] to visit some schools and saw all of the people and what was going on there. The kids at the schools have never been able to take home a pencil and paper. We also visited some of the pipe villages—water pipes would crack and the companies gave them to these people so they could brick them up with mud and live there.

Some of the stuff we saw was just so intense and heart-wrenching. I think it was really good that my friends were there. Just some simple comment that someone would say about *Family Guy* or something, so that we wouldn't be so emotionally overloaded. We needed to be able to have a good laugh.

Every little bit counts there. India really taught me to appreciate what we have and notice how much we take for granted and just how much we have to give.

Learn about AnnaSophia's humanitarian efforts at annasophiarobb.com/world.php.

DARE to be UNPOPULAR



OMG!

Did I really just do that? In front of everyone? How embarrassing. How totally humiliating. What was I thinking? In a spastic second, everything was over—the assignment, the vote, my love connection, my shot at being Yearbook editor, my seven-point master plan, my hopes of getting into the college of my dreams, and the best year of my life.

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