

## Why Harley Quinn Smith Convinced Her Dad, Indie Auteur Kevin Smith, to Go Vegan



**B**etween acting full time, performing with her punk band, writing her first feature-length film, and advocating for animal rights, Harley Quinn Smith, the 18 year-old daughter of indie film auteur extraordinaire Kevin Smith, is on her way to becoming an indie darling on her own.

In Melissa Miller Costanzo's *All These Small Moments*, which premiered at the **Tribeca Film Festival**, Smith plays Lindsay, an asthmatic outsider with an unrequited crush on the film's main character Howie (played by Brendan Meyer), who happens to have an unrequited crush of his own on the much older Odessa (played by **Jemima Kirke**). Rounding out the cast, are **Molly Ringwald** and Brian d'Arcy James, who play Howie's parents.

"Being attached to the same project as Molly Ringwald is a dream come true, and she's been like a mentor," Smith told *W*. "She's actually said quite a few times, and she said it last night at the premiere, that I remind her of herself when she was my age," the actress went on. "She said she feels like she would have played my character, Lindsay, when she was young, and that she feels as though I'm the Molly Ringwald of this generation, and I'm like, 'What?! What the f--k?' I left the premiere and cried after that sunk in! I mean, I'm so happy that people are responding well to the film, but coming from Molly, that means everything to me."

The 18-year-old scion only recently took an interest in acting—up until about three years ago, all Smith wanted to do was play bass guitar in a punk band. After a few cameo roles in her dad's films, most notably *Tusk* and *Clerks II*, she was cast in the lead role in his irreverent horror-comedy film *Yoga Hosers*, with her best friend **Lily-Rose Depp**. It was after her role in *Tusk*, which only required a day of filming for Smith, that she found herself "consumed" by the acting bug. "It felt like it was what I was meant to be doing," she explained.

Smith also explained that her role in *All These Small Moments* attracted her as a performer because she aims to lend a voice to those who exist on the fringes. "To be able to see someone that you can relate to on the screen is really important," the actress said. "Sometimes you feel like you're alone and it really sucks to be by yourself, but when you see someone like yourself on the big screen or on a TV show, it's a reminder that there are other people going through the same things as you, and you're not alone. We're all in it together," she explained.



"In high school, I didn't really want to go to parties, I wasn't into what everyone else was into," Smith said. "When I was like 12 I was totally emo. I had black hair and would wear super dark makeup and Misfits shirts. It was not cute!" she laughed. "I was super hardcore emo for like two or three years. I spray-painted Sex Pistols lyrics on my walls, and wrote on them with Sharpie, and my parents were like, 'Please let this phase pass.'"

Her next project, a role in Hulu's *All Night*, will involve a return to her emo roots. "I pop up looking real goth a few times!" Smith squealed excitedly. "I feel like once you're emo, it never leaves. You're still super emo at heart! Any time a My Chemical Romance song comes on I know every single word. Or some Fall Out Boy? Always down for that!"

Smith also plans to release an EP with her band—tentatively named The 10th of February, with a tentative release date for February 10, 2019, because they formed the band on, you guessed it, February 10 of last year—and write a feature-length film, which she still has yet to show to her filmmaking father. "I wrote a pilot that I showed [my dad]. I was really scared, I don't know why! I was really nervous to show him but then he loved it, so no fear necessary! It is kind of scary showing people your writing," Smith admitted.





After it was announced that her father suffered a massive heart attack in February, Smith told *W* that he is now "the healthiest he's ever been," —and doing much better with her help. "I've been trying to get him to go vegan for a while, and now he is. It only took a heart attack."

"It was the worst thing that had ever happened to us," Smith said of the incident. "But it kind of turned out to be a blessing, because it so easily could have gone the other way; he could've not made it. But he did and it was a wakeup call and he's had a total lifestyle change."

Her emo style may have been part of a bygone stage of her life, but Smith's somewhat recent decision to go vegan is not a phase for the actress. "I've felt really connected to animals my entire life. I always felt like I could understand them and relate to them and feel what they were feeling," she said. "Abuse to animals always upset me incredibly, and as I got older I realized, I am hurting animals by eating meat and eating animal products."



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Looking forward to her future, Smith will remain adamantly dedicated to using her platform to protect animals, in the form of starting her own organization or sanctuary. "I love acting, but advocacy is equally as important to me as my acting career. I intend to be vegan for the rest of my life, and continue to speak out for animals until the day I die. It means everything for me, and my heart is split between acting and animals," the actress declared. "All I want in this world is to help others realize that they themselves want to be more compassionate toward animals, because that's what I needed from someone for me to go vegan. I just needed to listen to what people were saying. I'm beyond thrilled if I can get anyone to listen to me about it!"