

= Rachel Nichols (actress) =

Rachel Emily Nichols (born January 8 , 1980) is an American actress and model . Nichols began modeling while attending Columbia University in New York City in the late 1990s . She transitioned into television and film acting in the early 2000s ; she had a part in the romantic drama film Autumn in New York (2000) and a one @-@ episode role in Season 4 of the show Sex and the City (2002) .

Her first major role was in the comedy film Dumb and Dumberer : When Harry Met Lloyd (2003) . She had the main role in the crime drama television series The Inside (2005) , though it was cancelled after one season . Nichols gained recognition playing Rachel Gibson in the final season of the serial action television series Alias (2005 ? 06) and for her role in the horror film The Amityville Horror (2005) .

Nichols ' first starring film role was in the horror @-@ thriller P2 (2007) . She had a supporting role in the coming @-@ of @-@ age film The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2 (2008) and appeared in Star Trek (2009) . She starred in the action film G.I. Joe : The Rise of Cobra (2009) and also in the sword and sorcery film Conan the Barbarian (2011) . She played lead roles in the television series Criminal Minds (2010 ? 11) and Continuum (2012 ? 15) .

= = Early life and modeling = =

Rachel Nichols was born January 8 , 1980 in Augusta , Maine , to Jim , a schoolteacher , and Alison Nichols . She attended Cony High School , where she competed in the high jump . Nichols said in an interview that she was not the hot chick in high school and her mother would euphemistically refer to her as ' a late bloomer ' , " which meant that I had uncontrollable arms and legs , I had very long appendages . I took several years of very highly structured dance classes for me to be able to control myself . "

Upon graduating in 1998 , she enrolled at Columbia University in New York City , aiming for a career as a Wall Street analyst . She was noticed by a modeling agent during lunch one day and was invited to work in Paris ; she eventually paid her tuition with the proceeds from her modeling work . She worked on advertising campaigns for Abercrombie & Fitch , Guess , and L 'Oréal ; she also hosted several MTV specials . Nichols studied economics and psychology , as well as drama , graduating from Columbia in 2003 with a double major in math and economics . Nichols said in September 2008 that " the modeling shoes have been hung up . "

= = Acting career = =

= = = 2000 ? 04 : Early acting credits = = =

Nichols had done commercial work and had a bit part as a model in the romantic drama film Autumn in New York (2000) when her modeling agent helped her get a one @-@ episode role in the fourth season of Sex and the City (2002) . She later said she had " never really done a proper audition before " , and added that " I had such fun [filming on set] , that day actually made me want to pursue [acting] more seriously . " Later that year she was cast in her first major film role as Jessica , a dogged student newspaper reporter , in Dumb and Dumberer : When Harry Met Lloyd (2003) . Although the film was panned by critics , making it was a learning experience for Nichols . She said , " I was a sponge for the entire time I was in Atlanta [during filming] and freely admitted that I had no idea what was going on . I had never done a big film before , I had never been the lead in a film before and any advice anyone wanted to give me , I was more than willing to take . " The following year , Nichols played a member of a high school debate team in the independent film Debating Robert Lee (2004) and had a two @-@ episode role in the crime drama television series Line of Fire (2004) , which was cancelled after 11 of 13 produced episodes were broadcast . By August 2004 , she was cast in supporting roles in the horror films The Amityville Horror (2005) and

The Woods (2006) .

In late February 2004 , Nichols was cast in a starring role in a then @-@ untitled drama pilot for the Fox Broadcasting Company (Fox) . According to Variety , her character was to be " a DEA agent who goes undercover at a high school " . Todd and Glenn Kessler were developing the series , ultimately titled The Inside . The pilot they produced did not satisfy studio executives , however , and Tim Minear was brought in to create a new pilot for the series in late September 2004 , replacing the Kesslers as executive producer and showrunner . The Inside was originally supposed to air midseason , but the new pilot itself was reshot and the series was pushed back . The new concept made Nichols ' character a rookie FBI agent assigned to the FBI 's Los Angeles Violent Crimes Unit . The series premiered in June 2005 and critical reception was mixed ; it had been scheduled opposite the popular Dancing with the Stars on ABC , and due to low ratings six of the 13 produced episodes were aired . It was not picked up for further episodes .

= = = 2005 ? 09 : Breakthrough = = =

Following The Inside , Nichols found work on the fifth season of the serial action series Alias in 2005 , being cast that July . Nichols starred as Rachel Gibson , a computer expert who thought she was working for the CIA when in fact she was working for a dangerous terrorist organization ? a situation similar to that of the series ' main character Sydney Bristow (Jennifer Garner) the first season . Discovering the truth , Gibson joins the real CIA and becomes Bristow 's protégé . Of working on Alias , Nichols said that " to say it 's the nicest set on the planet is an understatement " . Her role involved multiple fight sequences , as did Garner 's . Nichols worked with Garner 's personal trainer ; she said she " already knew that [Garner 's] job was extremely hard . But I didn 't know how difficult it was until I started training for just one fight . " Nichols was being groomed to replace Garner as the main character due to the latter 's pregnancy , which had been written into the storyline . But Alias was cancelled in November 2005 , making its fifth season its final . " I think everybody knew that the show wouldn 't work without Jennifer " , Nichols said , " But still , they were grooming me , so it was heartbreaking when it happened . "

She had a small role in the 2005 romantic drama Shopgirl and played the babysitter of George and Kathy Lutz 's children in The Amityville Horror (2005) . For the latter role she was nominated for the Teen Choice Award for Choice Movie Scream Scene and the MTV Movie Award for Best Frightened Performance . She later revealed that she almost did not audition for the film due to her fear of dogs . " [Producer] Michael Bay has these gigantic [dogs] . [...] And , when I went to audition for The Amityville Horror , I went into his offices and literally these three huge dogs were there , and I almost turned around . I was like , ' No , I 'm not going to read for this film . ' I actually used the dogs in my audition to think of what would scare me the most . " The Amityville Horror received generally negative reception from critics , but was a commercial success .

The Woods , which had been shelved for some 18 months , was released directly @-@ to @-@ video in October 2006 . The film opened to favorable reviews and critics acclaimed the individual performances of the actors . Nichols had a small part in the drama film Resurrecting the Champ (2007) , in which she played the assistant to a sportswriter (Josh Hartnett) who believes he has found a former boxing legend (Samuel L. Jackson) living homeless on the streets . Also that year , Nichols had a bit part in the fact @-@ based political drama Charlie Wilson 's War (2007) and was cast in a new science fiction drama television series Them , which was ultimately not picked up by Fox .

Her first starring film role was in the 2007 horror ? thriller P2 , in which she played a businesswoman who becomes trapped inside a public parking garage with a deranged security guard . About the dress her character wears for much of the film , Nichols said , " When I read the script originally , it wasn 't a dress , it was a small nightgown with no bra or underwear . Then I read the first scene where she gets wet , and I went : ' OK , this has got to be altered ! ' " Nichols said in an interview that among the rules established in her contract were : " I will not get wet and show nipples " in addition to no nudity . A bra was sewn into the " Marilyn Monroe dress " she wore in the film . She said , " I wasn 't going to run around for two months without a bra , I thought that was

inappropriate . But in place of the nipples there 's clearly a lot of cleavage . So we made a compromise . " P2 was generally disliked by critics . Reviewer James Berardinelli said that her performance was " admirable , although one wonders whether she was cast more for her physical assets than her acting ability . " John Anderson of Variety wrote that " Nichols is in territory well trod over the years by everyone from Fay Wray and Grace Kelly to Heather Langenkamp , the terrified but gutsy heroine , who in this case has been chloroformed and put into a sheer white evening dress by her abductor ? who must have anticipated that his captive would try to escape in an elevator , which he could then fill with water . (Nichols ' considerable physical attributes , henceforth , seem to occupy most of the screen .) She 's sympathetic , hysterical when required and likeable . "

Nichols had a supporting role in The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2 (2008) , playing a jealous friend of America Ferrera 's character . Overall , the film was well received by critics . Roger Ebert commented that Nichols as her character Julia " proves a principle that should be in the Little Movie Glossary : If a short , curvy , sun @-@ kissed heroine [Ferrera] has a tall , thin blond as a roommate , that blond is destined to be a bitch . No way around it . " Stephen Holden , writing for The New York Times , similarly said , " It falls to Ms. Nichols to play the movie 's designated blond baddie , a cold , arrogant vixen who tries to undermine [Ferrera 's character 's] triumphs in romance and onstage . " Nichols was cast in Star Trek (2009) in November 2007 , but due to the project 's secrecy her role was initially unknown even to her ; she said that month she did not even know her character 's name . It was speculated that she would play Janice Rand , but she would actually play an Orion cadet at Starfleet Academy , as revealed by TrekMovie.com the following month .

Nichols was cast as Shana " Scarlett " O 'Hara in the live @-@ action film adaptation of the G.I. Joe franchise G.I. Joe : The Rise of Cobra (2009) in late 2007 . She later said that she accepted director Stephen Sommers ' offer for the role without having read the actual script . " I 'd heard from other people that the script was quite good . And then when I finally got to read it myself ... I really , really liked it ... I liked that there were two kick @-@ ass female roles . And I liked the fact that it wasn 't just a big action movie ... And there was comedy in it . I was genuinely really happily surprised when I read the script . " She put on approximately 15 pounds (6 @.@ 8 kg) of muscle for the role and trained in mixed martial arts with co @-@ star Sienna Miller for some of the film 's action sequences . Nichols was burned by a flame during the filming of a fight scene with Miller . Like The Amityville Horror , G.I. Joe : The Rise of Cobra was not well received by most critics , but performed well at the box office . Richard Corliss of Time wrote that Nichols had " an appealing manner and comely biceps " as Scarlett O 'Hara and took notice of her " savory girl fight with Sienna Miller , as the mostly villainous Baroness . " After G.I. Joe , Nichols ' next project was the horror film For Sale by Owner , where she played Anna Farrier . Going straight @-@ to @-@ video on October 27 , 2009 , the movie went largely unnoticed by critics and audiences alike .

= = = 2010 ? present : Criminal Minds and Continuum = = =

She starred as Leslie Spencer in the indie crime @-@ drama Meskada , which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and had no domestic distributor as of April 2010 . However , the film received a limited release on December 3 , 2010 in the United States . Nichols was cast in the 3 @-@ D sword and sorcery movie Conan the Barbarian in March 2010 , as the character of Tamara , a master of martial arts , a priestess , and also the potential Conan 's love interest . The film , released on August 19 , 2011 , was a reimagining of the 1982 film of the same name which starred Arnold Schwarzenegger . It received mostly poor reviews , and was a box office bomb .

Nichols guest starred in three episodes of CBS 's Criminal Minds , and was then promoted as a series regular . Her role was Ashley Seaver , an FBI cadet assigned to the BAU . The casting choice came amid uproar from the series ' fanbase as she was bought in to replace exiting actresses A.J. Cook and Paget Brewster ; she told Parade magazine that the show ' fans at first " hated " her , with many sending her hate messages through Twitter , because " [...] they were very angry about [the Paget and A.J.] situation . " However , as the season went on , viewers eventually gave her character a warm reception . " It just kind of worked . It was a long process , " she said . It was later

informed that Nichols had been let go from the show . Nichols next starred in the indie drama @-@ romance feature *A Bird of the Air* (formerly known as *The Loop*) , where she played Fiona " a librarian who joins a highway patrolman to uncover the mysteries behind the cryptic sayings spoken by an ancient parrot . " She described the film as a " quirky , edgy love story " and felt that playing her role " was great for me , because [Fiona] is a departure from some of the roles I 've been offered " . It was released in selected theaters on September 23 , 2011 , to mixed reviews ; while *The New York Times* remarked that the actress " is consistently appealing in the kind of role Zooey Deschanel has pretty much cornered " , *Village Voice* felt her character was " a grating twit " in her hands .

On May 27 , 2012 , *Continuum* , a Canadian science fiction series starring Nichols , premiered on Showcase . The show centres on the conflict between a police officer and a group of rebels from the year 2077 who time @-@ travel to Vancouver , BC in the year 2012 . The pilot brought 900 @,@ 000 viewers , becoming the highest @-@ rated single episode ever on the network . A ratings success in its four seasons , *Continuum* also earned Nichols a Constellation Award and two Saturn Award nominations for Best Actress on Television . Also in 2012 , she appeared in the action film *Alex Cross* , which garnered negative reviews and premiered with a disappointing \$ 11 @.@ 4 million opening weekend gross .

Her next movie appearance was in the exploitation film *Raze* , where she played a character named Jamie . Directed by Josh C. Waller , the movie co @-@ starred Zoë Bell as a woman forced to fight against various other women for the twisted entertainment of the wealthy elite . It was released on April 21 , 2013 at the Tribeca Film Festival and then received a very limited release in New York City and Los Angeles in early 2014 . She was cast opposite Nicolas Cage in the action @-@ crime feature *Rage* , which focused on a reformed criminal seeking his own brand of justice after his daughter gets kidnapped . The film premiered through selected theaters and video @-@ on @-@ demand in the U.S. between June and July 2014 . The same year , she guest starred in one episode of the Lifetime series *Witches of East End* and debuted as a recurring character in the short @-@ lived USA Network show *Rush* .

= = Personal life = =

Nichols married film producer Scott Stuber on July 26 , 2008 , in Aspen , Colorado . Nichols allowed her hair to return to its natural blond color for the ceremony , as it had been dyed red for her consecutive roles in *Star Trek* and *G.I. Joe : The Rise of Cobra* . They were working on building a home in Cabo San Lucas shortly after their honeymoon . Seven months later , in February 2009 , Nichols and Stuber separated due to irreconcilable differences .

On December 30 , 2013 , Nichols confirmed her engagement to Michael Kershaw , a real estate developer . They married in September 2014 .

= = Filmography = =

= = Awards and nominations = =