

WINNING!!!!

A YEAR TO REMEMBER VIOLA DAVIS

ON MAKING HISTORY AS THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN TO WIN 'BEST ACTRESS IN A DRAMA SERIES'...

"In my mind, I see a line. And over that line I see green fields and lovely flowers and beautiful white women with their arms stretched out to me over that line, but I can't seem to get there no-how. I can't seem to get over that line," she said quoting Harriet Tubman in her acceptance speech. "Let me tell you something: the only thing that separates women of color from anyone else is opportunity. You cannot win an Emmy for roles that are simply not there."



Viola On...

Acting and the pressure of living in the limelight: I'm in the business of creating human beings. The work of acting is fantastic, but being a celebrity sometimes makes me tense and anxious. Expectations, not meeting expectations, criticism — it hurts.

Feelings about playing Annalise's promiscuous and unlikeable side: Women who are promiscuous are that way for a reason, and I wanted to delve into that. I've played warm and fuzzy to the point it's made me nauseous. We're not always likable. Sometimes we are mean, and mean to the people we love. I reserve the right to be a mess and completely unlikable.

Remembering the day she was caught shoplifting: I was nine. The store owner screamed at me to get out, looking at me like I was nothing, and the shame of that forced me to stop.

Growing up poor and hatred people projected towards her because of it: [at home] When food soon ran out, that was it. Most of the time, the school lunch was the only meal I had. I would befriend kids whose mothers cooked three meals a

day, and go to their homes when I could. People would throw things out of cars and call us the N-word. It was constant.

Things she has that she thought she'd never have: Having a house! When you grow up poor, you dream of just having a home, and a bed that's clean... that's a sanctuary. As kids, we often didn't have bus fare, so to have a car... it's unbelievable to me. Having a really great husband, a child who's healthy and happy and brings me joy — all of that has been my dream.

Being asked to be spokesperson for the "Hunger Is" campaign (hungeris.org): I've been so focused on my child, my husband and my career that I never thought of the last step, which is giving back.

Her reaction to turning 50, and thoughts on the life she used to live: Turning 50 is making me reflect on my life in a way that's more compassionate and forgiving. I'm able to almost accept the old me.

Watch Davis in her award-winning role as Annalise Keating in, *How To Get Away With Murder*, Sunday nights, ABC. See more of Davis on the Front Cover of AARP.