



## INTERVIEW: Hugh Grant interviewed by Jenelle Riley

This interview was conducted as part of a SAG-AFTRA Foundation event. SAG-AFTRA is the American association for registered actors (SAG-AFTRA stands for Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists). Grant is being interviewed about his career and the 2016 film “Florence Forster Jenkins”. The full interview can be found here: [Full Interview](#)

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**Jenelle:** Thank you for being here. It’s such a **thrill**<sup>1</sup>.

I have been warned that you don’t really like people **fawning over you**<sup>2</sup>.

**Hugh:** On the contrary!

**Jenelle:** I don’t know if that’s a polite British thing, but you’re okay with that?

**Hugh:** Yes, absolutely.

**Jenelle:** Because (cause) there will probably be a lot of it tonight.

But I do want to (wanna) start at the beginning. Obviously...or maybe not obviously, but you were raised in England with some pretty impressive ancestry, like...people from like the military and aristocratic descendants.

**Hugh:** It says that on Wikipedia.

**Jenelle:** Yes.

**Hugh:** The military bit is right, the aristocratic bit is, I think, **rubbish**<sup>3</sup>, but I’m delighted it’s there. Why not!

**Jenelle:** I think Americans think that anyone with an accent has aristocracy in their background. Ehm...but when did you develop an interest in performing?

**Hugh:** Ehm...it’s the same old story. I’m sure everyone in the room, assuming pretty much that most people here are actors, it would have been the same old thing, just **showing off**<sup>4</sup> as a child, doing silly voices, liking the **limelight**<sup>5</sup>, you know.

**Jenelle:** And at what point did you realize that this could be a career?

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<sup>1</sup> Thrill: (noun) something very exciting and pleasant

<sup>2</sup> Fawn over someone: (phrasal verb) to praise or flatter someone with lots of attention

<sup>3</sup> Rubbish: (noun) nonsense

<sup>4</sup> Show off: (phrasal verb) to behave in a particular way to attract attention

<sup>5</sup> Limelight: (noun) public attention

**Hugh:** Well, ehm...that happened in a strange way, because I had done **messing around**<sup>6</sup> acting, school acting, university acting, though that wasn't my subject, and then when I left university, because I had decided to go and do another degree at another university, a sort of postgraduate degree. And during that summer, as I was **revving up for**<sup>7</sup> that, I went to a screening of this strange student film that I'd shot while I was at Oxford just **for a laugh**<sup>8</sup>, and these agents said "do you want to be an actor?" And I said, well no, because I'm **going off**<sup>9</sup> to do this MPhil, and then suddenly I thought - actually, maybe just for a year, instead of writing essays, I'll act, because I'd always liked it. So I said yes. And immediately I was cast in a film, actually – *Mutiny on the Bounty*, with Mel Gibson.

**Jenelle:** You were in that one?

**Hugh:** Well, no (because)...I wish I had been. It was a nice part, very exciting, you know, at that age. Suddenly it was going to be twenty weeks in Tahiti, and what seemed like a fortune in terms of money. And ah...and then in those days in England if you weren't already a member of the union, Equity, you couldn't do a film, you had to go and earn your Equity card doing regional theatre. So they wouldn't let me do the film in the end, and so I thought, well - okay I'll go and get a **bloody**<sup>10</sup> Equity card. So I went off to Nottingham Playhouse and played "tree in wind" and "third shouting peasant".

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<sup>6</sup> Mess around: (phrasal verb) to do something without a serious plan or purpose

<sup>7</sup> Rev up for something: (phrasal verb) to be active in getting oneself ready

<sup>8</sup> For a laugh: (idiomatic phrase) to do something for a laugh is to do it just for fun

<sup>9</sup> Go off somewhere: (phrasal verb) to leave a place and go somewhere else

<sup>10</sup> Bloody: (adjective) used to express anger or annoyance (damn)