

# Best I Ever Had

## TEYONAH PARRIS

With dynamic roles in *Mad Men*, *Survivor's Remorse* and *Dear White People*, the actress with the best hair in the biz is grateful to be in demand.

BY PAULA T. RENFROE

### **Best Part About Playing Don Draper's Secretary Dawn On *Mad Men***

Getting to work with John Hamm. I thought he was really awesome. The beauty of that show is that it's all about the story and character. So seeing how they would handle her story being the first African American to integrate that workspace was exciting to me and we got to see more of that the first part of this last season with her getting the promotion, but that promotion didn't come easy. It was never because they really truly recognized her hard work and "yes you deserved this."

### **Best Advice From Jeffrey Wright After Working On *A Free Man Of Color***

I wanted to move to L.A. and he said, "Don't go. Absolutely do not go. Why? You're working here. You're doing theater. Why would you move out there and get your soul sucked out?" [Laughs] He was like, "Just go when you have work." I was hardheaded and went to L.A. anyway. He was right for about the first year.

### **Best Attribute Of Your Character Missy On *Survivor's Remorse***

She's a smart woman. She's Ivy-League schooled, involved in charity. She's *that* woman. She's holding [her husband] Reggie down while he's trying to hold the family down. Their relationship is so beautiful. It's not perfect, but they love each other and they're both fully in that marriage to make it work.

### **Best Commonality Between You And Coco In *Dear White People***

What we want in life is very different, but our desire to be better and to make something of ourselves—we share that. Her unfaltering ability to go, I share that.

### **Best Advice You Were Given As An Aspiring Actress**

Don't put your life on hold for this industry. You have to keep living. Let the industry complement whatever it is you're doing in your life. You still have to live.

