



**FIFTY SHADES  
OF GREY**  
HITS THEATRES  
FEBRUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>

# SKARSTEN TALKS 50 SHADES... AND HOCKEY

“Mr. Grey will see you now,” announces Rachel Skarsten as she leads our doe-eyed protagonist into Christian Grey’s office in next month’s *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

Skarsten plays Andrea, Grey’s personal assistant, in the movie based on the salacious, best-selling novel about submission, domination and kinky sex.

With perfect posture, a grey power suit and a platinum-blond bun Andrea looks pretty sexy to us, but Skarsten — who was born and bred in Toronto and now lives in L.A. — says she’s anything but.

“She’s an interesting role in the book and movie because she’s completely unsexualized,” says Skarsten. “That provided me with a unique opportunity in Hollywood to play a woman in such a sexual film who derives absolutely none of her character or power from her sexuality.”

Skarsten, who’s had roles on TV’s *Lost Girl*, *Flashpoint* and *Birds of Prey*, has a very Canadian way of dealing with the pressures of being a woman in the film and television industry. Since she was a teen she’s played hockey, and is a goalie no less — a position she held with the 2002 Toronto City Champion Leaside Wildcats.

“I always have a million thoughts in my mind. Hockey provided me with the opportunity to have a singular focus, to be completely in the moment when I was playing.

“Hockey also saved me,” she adds. “Coming from an industry that promotes being skinny and pits women against each other, hockey was the opposite. It’s about being strong and working towards winning together. I’m so grateful to the game, to my coaches, to my teammates.”

She still plays, although the opportunities are easier to find when she’s back home in Canada.

“In Toronto, where my shows *Transporter* and *Lost Girl* filmed, all the crews of different shows play each other. For the first season I was the only girl who played. It’s difficult to convince men you can play with them, but after the first few saves they were good.”

She says most people are surprised when she tells them she’s a goalie, but that’s okay, she likes surprising people.

And while the lead characters in *Fifty Shades* are finding all sorts of dangerous and titillating ways to derive pleasure, for Skarsten pleasure’s a lot easier to find — though sometimes no less dangerous.

“I still have yet to find many feelings sweeter than making a glove save,” she says. —MARNI WEISZ

