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‘Born dissenter’ Rose McGowan bided her time in Hollywood.

The American activist, former actress, model, singer and author Rose McGowan views Hollywood as “a dirty town up to some dirty tricks” and she insists that her new book, *Brave*, is “not a tell-all”, it’s “a tell-it-as-it-is.” Speaking with the author Afua Hirsch as part of the Edinburgh International Book Festival’s “Identity Parades” strand, McGowan accepted that she made some people, including other women, uncomfortable.

“You have to know that when you speak out and when you go hard, it is going to make people uncomfortable,” she said, “but their discomfort isn’t your issue. It’s not your problem; it’s your Truth. I think previous to this last year, for women overall - I’m generalising - it wasn’t going so well. For a lot of victims and survivors, it wasn’t going so well. Being well-behaved wasn’t working out in our favour.”

McGowan views the Hollywood film industry and its wider influence on our culture very much in terms of the cult - the Children of God - in which she spent her early years. From a very early age, however, she was a dissenter, however. “My sister was asked recently where I got it from and she said: ‘I have *no* idea.’ I don’t know [either]; I think it’s just a logic-based thing. I saw what people were doing and it wasn’t squaring with what they were saying.

“Another sister said: ‘Why don’t you just go along with it? It would be easier for you.’ I paid a price, in terms of physical pain, but I think the price - had I gone along with it - would have been a lot higher.”

Her rebellious nature was not without cost, in terms of her subsequent career, but she bided her time. “Hollywood, for me, was like a bunch of people in a cafeteria that would look at me and say, ‘We don’t want you to sit at our table,’ and I would just say: ‘Your table doesn’t exist in my reality. No problem.’ It was never a place of acceptance. It made it a very lonely road, but at the same time, at the end of the day, if all you have is yourself, that’s what you fight to keep.”

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Her book is not just about women's experiences, however. "I also talk about men in here; about how my heart breaks for the trap that's set for them, what they're stuck in, and that they get robbed so early of experience and emotion and the ability to relate to each other as humans.

"My thing is, actually - hopefully - getting us to see that we're all human before anything else, because I think that's the only way to solve this mess."

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