

Will Jennifer Beat Jessica?

She bragged "I beat Meryl!" at the Golden Globes and dissed her rivals on *SNL*. Glib quips aside, Jennifer Lawrence, 22, remains the favorite to nab best actress for her *Silver Linings Playbook* widow. "She's likable and campaigned hugely," says *Awards Daily*'s Sasha Stone. Chief challenger: Jessica Chastain, 35, whose CIA agent tracks Osama bin Laden in *Zero Dark Thirty*. Still, adds Stone, "the torture bits cast a pall over the film."



Chastain got a best supporting actress nod in 2012 for *The Help*.

Lawrence would be the second-youngest best actress winner.

Oscar Night's Burning Questions

Yes, **Daniel Day-Lewis** will win. But the evening still holds many mysteries. *Us* offers a preview

BY BRADLEY JACOBS

TUNE IN!

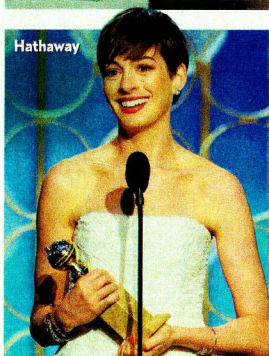
The Oscars air on ABC Sunday, Feb. 24, at 7 P.M.



How Did Argo Become the Front-runner?

The Academy is about to apologize to Ben Affleck. Big time. *Lincoln* was an early front-runner for best pic, but the race decidedly shifted when Affleck, 40, missed out on a best

director nod. "Everyone's rallied to his side in outrage," GoldDerby.com founder Tom O'Neil tells *Us*. "When Ben finally has that [best picture] Oscar in hand, he'll take a swing with it!"



Is Anne Unstoppable?

Anne Hathaway and James Franco crashed as cohosts in 2011. But thanks to her searing "I Dreamed a Dream" in *Les Misérables*, the star, 30, now only hears applause. Will she win best supporting actress? Yep. Will her speech ramble again? "No excuses," says *Us* film critic Mara Reinstein. "She has had months to rehearse."

Will Seth Go Too Far?

He's the un-PC Oscar host who dared to joke about Adolf Hitler during the nominations telecast. Just imagine what Seth MacFarlane, 39, has up his tuxedo sleeve for the big night! "He's a genius," fan Jane Lynch tells *Us* of the *Family Guy* and *Ted* creator. "Hiring him was brilliant." Will he push buttons? "I hope so!"

MacFarlane also cocreated *American Dad!*

WHAT IS YOUR BEST PICTURE PICK?

Readers weighed in on *Us*' Facebook page (facebook.com/usweekly)

29%
ARGO

19%
SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK

16%
LINCOLN

15%
LES MISÉRABLES

12%
DJANGO UNCHAINED

4%
ZERO DARK THIRTY

3%
LIFE OF PI

2%
BEASTS OF THE SOUTHERN WILD

0%
AMOUR