

Summer Glau Teases Layered 'Arrow' Arc

October 30, 2013 by Jarett Wieselmann

From River Tam to Cameron Phillips, Summer Glau has spent the last decade creating some of the genre world's most adored ass-kickers, which is one of the wonderful reasons why her latest gig -- as businesswoman Isabel Rochev on Arrow -- is, simultaneously, playing against her type and playing perfectly into her wheelhouse.

As die-hard comic book fans know, there's a lot more to Isabel Rochev than power suits, so will we eventually see this incarnation slip on her iconic costume? That was one of the questions I posed to Glau when we chatted earlier this week about her Arrow arc, the appeal of verbally confident characters and the upcoming reveal that will blow fan minds!

ETonline: Coming in, what did you know about your character?

Summer: I didn't know much. When they originally invited me to come recur, it was more about her being a powerful business woman and I thought it was interesting they asked me to play this role because the powerful women I've previously played have been more action-oriented. So when I came to set I knew this would be something different and then on my first day Andrew [Kreisberg, executive producer] asked if I'd looked her up or if I knew what she becomes. I had no idea! I looked Isabel up online and came back the next day asking for my veil and goggles [laughs]! He said we'd warm up to that, but she has to start out slow.

ETonline: How similar would you say this Isabel is to the comic version?

Summer: I think the writers are inspired by the comics but I love how they've adapted the show for TV; I think they're very fluid and flexible about how they tell the story and intertwine the characters. As much as I beg them to tell me what's coming up, they're so good at keeping everything under wraps. But I think it'll be a mixture of both.

ETonline: Suffice it to say, the costume department hasn't fitted you for goggles yet.

Summer: Not yet -- except for the pair I've fashioned at home [laughs].

ETonline: Speaking of costumes, what was it like showing up to set in such a form-fitting skirt given your penchant for playing characters who tussle?. Did you say, "I'm never gonna be able to kick someone in this?"

Summer: [laughs] I did! I did! But it's been a great challenge for me to show power and authority through dialogue as opposed to climbing across the boardroom table and getting physical, which is what I've done in the past. It was an adjustment though; my first day on set I was nervous because it's different for me to the one wearing heels and diamonds. She's powerful and dangerous but in a more subtle, sophisticated way. Which is good for me.

ETonline: How would you describe what Isabel is after with Queen Consolidated?

Summer: It's very mysterious in the first few appearances Isabel makes, but it's going to get really cool. In episode six and eight more and more of her backstory comes out; she has deep-seated reasons for what she's doing. They're revealing it slowly, but she has a specific reason for why she's there and why she's so wrapped up in Queen Consolidated. This is a woman who is passionate about running this business with integrity; she discusses that with Oliver and there are hints she's a villainess, but I also think she's worked very hard for what she has and she's displaying some complex feelings about how she wants the company run. It'll be interesting to see the balance between her and Oliver and how the company should be run. In the next few episodes, she's going to get more and more curious about this man -- why he's not showing up for meetings, why he's disappearing at strange times and what's going on with him.

ETonline: How do you describe her role in tonight's episode, Crucible?

Summer: She's integrated herself more into the company and Oliver's realizing he won't be able to get rid of Isabel any time soon. She's trying to rein him in and it's not working. One of the other fun things I love about this episode is Isabel's relationship with Felicity. They're opposite kinds of women and seeing them in these awkward situations where Felicity is trying to cover for Oliver and Isabel is on to her is just so funny. And Emily [Bett Rickards] is just a doll.

ETonline: Looking ahead, what are you excited for the fans to see?

Summer: A mutual respect is going to grow between Oliver and Isabel; they're testing boundaries and in a power struggle, but there are a few twists along the way that might bring them closer. Eventually it's going to come out that Isabel might have a deeper connection with Queen Consolidated than what you've seen so far.

ETonline: Might that have something to do with Isabel's name appearing on Robert Queen's list last season?

Summer: Yes, I think so! They will not tell me exactly what's going to happen, but there's a big clue in episode 8 about what's to come in future episodes -- it's really cool and I'm very excited for fans to see that!

Taken from ETOnline's website:

http://www.etonline.com/tv/140156_Summer_Glau_Arrow_Interview/index.html