

**IF LOOKS COULD KILL
SUMMER GLAU STARS AS 'TERMINATOR' MACHINE**

January 20, 2008 – Stephen Lynch

They say beauty is skin deep. They didn't say there was an indestructible titanium exoskeleton underneath.

We're used to our killer robots from the future having a certain mien, an unfussy, blank-stare psychosis. Like Arnold Schwarzenegger, the human Humvee from the first "Terminator" movie. Or Robert Patrick from the second, with his stiletto posture and preying mantis facial expressions. Even Kristanna Lokken, the female Terminator from "T3," was nearly six-foot, and walked like a late '70s Commodores song.

Not so Summer Glau, the pixie-sized protector from "Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles." Though she's traveled through time to protect young rebel leader John Connor from an army of murderous cyborgs, Glau's Noxzema skin and elfin, 5-foot-6 frame seem better suited to Abercrombie than the apocalypse.

"I think my edge [in casting] was that I looked so inappropriate," Glau says. "They had an idea what I'd done before, and knew I was used to a lot of physical work."

Indeed, this isn't Glau's first time playing an killing machine. She's well-known to sci-fi fans as River Tam, the brainwashed waif who turns into an assassin at the drop of a code word, from the television show "Firefly" and its spinoff movie "Serenity." A former ballet dancer, Glau impressed producers with her acrobatic cartwheels, flips - and the ability to kick as high as her head.

But Glau's character Cameron - named after "Terminator" creator James - isn't about physical abilities anyway. Though she can throw people through walls with the best of them, "Chronicles" takes the "Terminator" franchise in a more emotional direction, delving into Cameron's own Tin Man-esque programming.

"The last movie was about shapeshifting, special effects, really extreme in that direction," Glau says. "Mine is the most advanced Terminator model ever seen, but because of her ability to appear human."

The first two episodes of "Chronicles" have hinted at just how different Cameron is. Is her caress of John Connor's neck simply a way to gauge his emotional state, or something more? Could it be love? Glau says she doesn't know - but bets that a Spock-like exploration of emotions beyond logic will build slowly over time.

Which begs the question: How long a time? Since "Terminator 3" already showed a future where nuclear war wipes out most of humanity, Sarah Connor is dead of cancer and John Connor is building a rebellion, doesn't that kind of take multiple seasons off the table for "Chronicles"?

Glau doesn't think so. The fact that the characters jumped forward in time (to 2007, thus skipping over Sarah's death) changed things, she says. "There's a long-term vision for the show, it goes in really unexpected directions. It's possible to change things."

And even if "Chronicles" doesn't last, being a Terminator is never a bad career move. After all, the first one is governor of California.

Glau laughs. "Yeah, I think I'll stick to being an actress."

Taken from NYPost.com's website:

http://www.nypost.com/seven/01202008/tv/if_looks_could_kill_955659.htm