

'The Cape': Summer Glau sheds some light on Orwell

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After playing a psychologically unstable girl in "Firefly" and "Serenity" and a cyborg in "Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles," Summer Glau is happy to be playing a TV character who has normal human emotions.

"I love it. I love it," Glau says with a laugh. But even so, her character on NBC's new series "The Cape," the corruption-fighting blogger Orwell, isn't exactly an open book.

"She's emoting in a complicated way because she doesn't want anyone to understand her," Glau tells Zap2it. "If anyone found out who she was, it could mean death for her. So I feel like I'm emoting quite a bit, but it's in a very blurry way."

We chatted with Glau earlier this week about Orwell's backstory, her relationship with The Cape/Vince Faraday (David Lyons) and the physical aspects of working on the show. Some highlights are below.

Zap2it: What have you learned about Orwell's background so far?

Summer: Well, there are things I know and things I've made up in my own mind to play the role. What I know is she's a blogger; she created her own site as a vehicle to speak the truth to the people in Palm City because she knows what's causing the corruption. ... She's been on her own since she was 12 years old, and from my own perspective, something had to happen to this girl to make her give up her identity and go out on her own, to have no one in her life. ... So I know that -- but anything else from there is my own invention. What we're shooting right now is episodes 7 and 8, and there's a huge clue into her backstory, but they won't tell me what it is. So I've been playing it from my own perspective.

Zap2it: It sounds like her story isn't that different from Vince's -- she's just been at it longer.

Summer: What's really cool about their dynamic is they met up and joined forces because they want the same thing, but the way they go about getting it is different. She's connected to him in a way -- she hasn't let anyone else in, and it's very hard for her to relinquish control. It's like the dynamic between a man and a woman: She feels like he's not listening, and he feels like she's bossing him. So there's a back-and-forth between them. It's a power struggle between a man and a woman, but not like in a traditional relationship.

Zap2it: Do they see that they can help each other can help accomplish their goals?

Summer: They need each other. They don't like to say it -- I can't speak for David and his portrayal of Vince, but my portrayal of Orwell is that she finally feels like she's not alone. She's been doing this for so many years by herself, and to finally meet someone who's standing up for what she believes in changes her life.

Zap2it: It almost sounds like you're describing the start of a romance.

Summer: [Smiles] Again, from my perspective, it would be impossible for Orwell to be in this situation with him every day and not have dangerous feelings and thoughts. His motive is to get home to his family and be with his wife and son, but for her, I think it's a little bit more complicated.

Zap2it: Orwell must have a pretty strong tie to Palm City to be this dedicated, right?

Summer: I believe everything is personal. People are motivated by personal issues. I don't know what those are, because they won't tell me [smiles], so I'm having to make it up for myself.

Zap2it: Does that get frustrating, or do you enjoy filling in your character's story on your own?

Summer: It's both. There's part of me that would love to be able to create a structure and just follow the rules, and there's part of me that's like a little girl that gets giddy when I get a new script: "What am I going to do now?" I think it does add a certain energy to our work, because we don't know what's going to happen. I think we're using it.

Zap2it: Lastly, how much physical work are you getting to do on the show?

Summer: As much as possible. The physicality for all of us is important, because it really gets us into it. We're in a fantastical world, so when you start to get physical, your heart starts to beat and it feels like it's real. For me it's a really important part of the character, and I am getting out into the field quite a bit now. It's not just me and the computer. It's me going undercover, getting into some places where I shouldn't be and having to get out of them.

Taken from zap2it's website:

<http://blog.zap2it.com/frominsidethebox/2011/01/the-cape-summer-glau-sheds-some-light-on-orwell.html>