

David Lyons and Summer Glau Interview THE CAPE

January 17, 2011 by Christina Radish

The new NBC drama The Cape stars David Lyons as Vince Faraday, an honest cop on the corrupt police force of Palm City, who finds himself framed for a series of murders and presumed dead. He is forced into hiding, leaving behind his wife and son, and becomes so fueled by the desire to reunite with his family and battle the criminal forces responsible that he decides to become his son's favorite comic book superhero, The Cape, and take the law into his own hands. One of the many individuals willing to help The Cape is the mysterious Orwell (Summer Glau), an investigative blogger who wages war on crime and corruption in Palm City.

During the NBC portion of the Television Critics Association Winter Press Tour, co-stars David Lyons and Summer Glau talked about what drew them to these intriguing new roles, the dependence these two characters have on each other, and enjoying the physicality of this show. Check out what they had to say after the jump:

Christina Radish: What interested you in playing this character?

Summer: What I loved about Orwell is that she's fighting for what she believes in and she's fearless. She's not letting anything stop her from doing what she thinks is right. I'm having to use my imagination, in some aspects of the role, because Orwell's very sophisticated. She comes from a very elegant, well-educated background. She has a lot of resources. She's very slick and she's very tech-savvy which I'm not, so that's where the acting comes in. I'm loving it because I feel like I've played a lot of really physical roles in the past and I always feel like I've played empowered girls, but I feel like Orwell's going from being a girl to being a woman, and she's a little bit more sophisticated and complicated. So, I feel like it's challenging me, as an actress.

David: I think, for me, Vince Faraday is the everyman. What was really interesting is playing a man that has such an unwavering moral and ethical core, which is not vastly, but somewhat dissimilar from me. He's very much human and, being human, you're in a grey zone. He lives in a world of black and white, and is forced to see grey. I think that that was what made it interesting. He goes from being the one good cop on the force – and that sounds like a cliché, but he truly was – to being this one good guy in a world which is upside down. He's trying, desperately, to keep his feet on the ground and stand upright when everything else is spinning and turning around it.

Christina Radish: David, what do you love about playing a superhero?

David: It's good to play something that's black and white, and a guy that sees right and wrong. I've never played a character like that. They've always been very grey characters. He tries to be a hero, all the time. The problem is, when you're surrounded by Max Malini (Keith David) and the Carnival, he's bled into the world of grey. It's a compromise. He doesn't think he's a hero. That's the weird thing.

Christina Radish: Is it difficult to live in a realm of hyper-reality, which this is?

David: Yeah. The first hour of the initial pilot, we see his real world. From then, we're delved into this incredibly rich, dark world. It's almost weirdly blood-like and wound-like. It is a weird environment to be in. It's all about showmanship. It's all about the color, the vitriol and the movement of the circus. This is a man that wears blue. He doesn't wear red. He doesn't wear black. So, as a character, it is a weird world to work in, and his answer to it is to become The Cape, which is as weird as anything else in that world.

Christina Radish: Does Vince really need Orwell, since she has all the tools and toys?

David: She's got all the toys. That's what's amazing. What I really enjoy about the two characters is that they're both so vitriolic and they're both so determined, in their own ways. Vince desperately needs her, but he's not going to admit it. And she desperately needs him, and won't admit it. It has that push and pull.

Summer: The unstoppable force meets the immovable object.

David: And she's one on the other, and it works.

Christina Radish: Do you think there is something in every man that makes them wish they could become The Cape, so that they can right the wrongs and be the champion for justice?

David: I think that, when you talk about justice – and not to get too philosophical about it – there is something that every man and every woman holds true and dear, and when they see that aspect of themselves, or the environment or the society that is getting trampled on, they wish that they could do that. It's what makes Vince in a very privileged position. His family is the center of his universe, and that is being destroyed. And so, yeah, I think everyone wishes that they could put on a cape and make it all better, certainly into today's world. Look at what's going on.

Christina Radish: What kind of training and physical preparation have you had to do for this?

David : A lot of fight choreography and various martial arts, over several months.

Christina Radish: Did it take some time to figure out how to use the cape itself?

David: Yeah, there was some time. We worked pretty hard. It took a lot of days, in a darkened room with the windows closed. I still don't have a handle on it, but neither does the character, so it works. We've been working a lot with fight choreographers that did the Bourne movies, and they try to take the inanimate and make them into animate objects that can start to be used as weapons, and can move and shift. We've worked with the cape quite a lot, and we've come up with our own fighting style. Capoeira was designed to look like a dance, and it's actually an incredibly effective means of fighting. Fighting is dancing. Look at a great boxing match, and it's a dancing. That's what's great about the choreography that goes on here. It's a delicate ballet with a fist in the face.

Christina Radish: Summer, Orwell spent a lot of time behind the desk in the first couple of episodes. Will she start to get out into the field more?

Summer: Absolutely! Trust me when I say that I don't spend much time at the desk anymore. But, there's a balance. She's a blogger, so she has to be true to how she's gotten to this place. welcoming whenever we had guest actors on our show. I've been on other shows where nobody really talks to you when you're a guest, and you don't ever really feel like you get to know anyone, and I remember watching Nathan really reach out and try to make the experience fun for any guest actor who came on our set. That made a big impression on me.

Christina Radish: Are you as tech-savvy as she is?

Summer: Absolutely not

Christina Radish: (Executive producer/writer) Tom Wheeler said that Orwell has the most shocking backstory of all these characters. What can you say about who she is?

Summer: What I can say now is that there's something in her past that has caused her to give up her identity and go out on her own and be in hiding, to fight for what she believes in. I just finished shooting Episode 107 and 108, where there is a reveal about her backstory that is very important.

Christina Radish: How does this compare to doing Terminator?

Summer: It is similar, in that I like playing empowered women, but she's a little bit more sophisticated and slick. There's a darkness there that comes with maturity, and she's a little bit more mature and more sophisticated.

Christina Radish: David, what's it been like for you to move here from Australia? How has that transition been?

David: I've been here for two and a half years now. When I first came, I was blessed with the opportunity to work on E.R., and that gave me a great little foothold into the industry, but also I've managed to find my niche now, down in Venice. There's a surf break nearby and some great coffee shops, and whatnot. For a foreigner, L.A. is such a big, wonderful and weird place that, until you find your niche, you feel a little bit discombobulated.

Christina Radish: Have you found your niche with the show, too?

David: I'm finding it as I go, absolutely. The beautiful thing about this character is that he's not comfortable in his environment, and that's a blessing. When you get to comfortable with a character, that's when you start slacking off.

Christina Radish: Summer, you've had an interesting career so far. Did you imagine as a little kid that this was the road you would walk down?

Summer: I imagined it a little different. There was a little part of me that always felt like I was going to be an actress, but I never acted when I was growing up. I was a dancer. That's all I did, all day, all my life. Maybe this was just where I was meant to be, and somehow I ended up here, but it just felt right. As soon as I started acting, it just felt like it was meant to be. I feel like I have a really great imagination, but I couldn't have imagined the roles that I've played so far. It goes beyond what I've pictured for myself.

Taken from Collider's website:

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