

Livia and KICKING

“The scripts are always far more racy than what actually appears on television, because the writers pretty much put what they want in them.”

Enjoying a well-deserved break from shooting season six of *Xena: Warrior Princess*, **ADRIENNE WILKINSON** takes advantage of her downtime from playing Eve/Livia by filling *Xena Magazine* in on the latest adventures of Xena’s guilt-ridden daughter. Interview by **PAUL SIMPSON** and **RUTH THOMAS**.

Adrienne Wilkinson had no intention of becoming an actress. Brought up in the American mid-West town of Brandon, Missouri, renowned for its arts community, her career was mapped out for her: she was majoring in international business. So it came as a surprise to her friends and family when she suddenly got the acting bug.

“It was the summer before senior year,” recalls the LA-based actress, “and I needed to get my senior portraits done. The photographer was casting a movie in the area. He got me interested in acting and convinced me to take a couple of classes for fun, and I just fell in love

with it. I ended up taking classes six days a week. I was lucky, because I only had to go to school for half of every day during my senior year. So I soon became obsessed.

“About two weeks later, they had a workshop with Hollywood professionals,” she continues. “I’m sure I made a fool of myself. I didn’t know what I was doing! But the head of casting for [US television network] ABC gave my information to the guy who did soaps for them, and they asked me to go to New York for screen tests. My parents freaked out. They had no idea how much I was into acting. This completely circumvented everything that I had planned, and I’m sure that terrified them – not to mention the fact that New York and Los Angeles were incredibly far apart.”

But Wilkinson’s parents stood by their daughter’s decision, and it wasn’t long before more members of the family were following in her footsteps. “They’ve been unbelievably supportive,” she acknowledges. “It obviously helped, because my sister is a director, and she’s at college right now. My younger sister is in drama classes and is very interested in acting. It had never even crossed my mind as a career move at all, but for my siblings it represents a definite opportunity.”

Before joining *Xena*, Wilkinson’s career looked as if it might be taking another turn, this time into music. “One of my very dearest friends moved to LA

last year. We were both actors and dancers, and we could both sing, so we decided it would be a great idea for us to do this music group,” she explains. “We were unbelievably successful. We had offers from numerous record companies to represent us. We waited until we finally found this woman we trusted, and it turned out really well.

“Unfortunately, I couldn’t be in the band this year because of working in New Zealand. If *Xena* had been filmed in LA, it wouldn’t have been a big deal to do it, but with me being gone so much, it wasn’t fair on the band. At first we were able to juggle it, but it got to the point where we couldn’t anymore. They’ve done very well – it’s now turned into a five girl group. I think they’re going to be incredibly successful.”

So how did Wilkinson come to be involved in *Xena*? “I was asked to come in and read for the role twice, and I couldn’t,” she recalls. “Normally you only have one shot at a guest part on a series. Over the course of about three weeks, because I had other commitments, I was unable to go to the meeting, but they called me a third time and I was able to go in that time.

“It was great: Beth Hyams was casting, and she’s an angel. I wasn’t familiar with the show. I didn’t know anything about the role except that it was a warrior part. I felt very small and not fierce enough. I walked in, and Beth said, ‘Please let you

