



the events leading to *Motherhood*, "I wasn't certain in my own mind as the character about whether or not I was actually Lucy's daughter; I didn't have that mother-daughter thing going on. That's been really nice in this last episode, just being able to cling to that fact and accept that. It's been a really nice change."

So how would Wilkinson sum up the feeling of being involved in such a dramatic *Xena* episode? "It's been overwhelming and amazing and wonderful. Knowing about all the different characters that are on the show, the fact that this is the role I've gotten to play is amazing. It's been very cool to play; a great character and a fabulous opportunity."

Motherhood is definitely a climactic way to conclude a season, marking the end of over five years of out-and-out action for both cast and crew. Although the sixth season isn't very far away, Lucy Lawless is certainly welcoming the

break in between. "Towards the end of the season," she admits, "it can be a hard ride, because your body winds down and you're anticipating a break coming up. Sometimes it's a real effort to find the energy to be 100 per cent."

There's also the fact that while Xena may be the ultimate working mother, Lawless is too, and like any mother, she needs quality time with her family. "I want to have more of a family time," she confirms. "There comes a day when you don't have a choice in the matter; I don't want to put that off any more. Julius will be 18 months old by the time season six is over, and he needs his mum around."

Having said that, there is no doubt that Lawless is primed and ready to throw herself right back into *Xena's* sixth season. Even so, she still pleads ignorance as to what viewers can expect.

"It keeps changing," she says simply. "I'm not sure what Rob [Tapert, Executive Producer] has up his sleeve. He's probably just nutting it out himself. I've just got to give 100 per cent of my mental energy to the script I'm currently working on."

From the sounds of it, Lawless will be giving her all to the upcoming season too. "I'm really looking forward to the sixth season. We've got a great new crew; we've been re-energised with a whole lot of new blood and with people who are really enthusiastic. We're totally committed and really loving every minute of it."

"Renee and I are very happy; we've never been in better shape in any way, since the show began. We're really pumped about it – the sixth season's just going to be a blast!" ■●



got out of this, that I've never dealt with before. I've had crash courses here in the choreography and special effects of fighting. I've been fighting, I've been riding horses, I've been dragged around on my back through the desert... All of the acrobatics that are involved in that. It's so fortunate for me to be involved in a project like this because it's so completely different from anything else that someone of my age and frame would ever get to do!"

Naturally, the Eve stunt doubles do some of the more tricky moves, but Wilkinson has loved the opportunity to do "as much as I can".

Wilkinson has a definite idea of why the show is such a phenomenal success. "It's such an action-

adventure tale," she says simply. "It's something that, even though there's action and adventure and a bit of gore and a bit of war and everything else in it, it's still something that everybody can watch. They don't have to be worried that their kids are going to be upset by it, or anything like that. I heard it described one time as 'family violence', where it's fun and it's not too graphic. It's just enough that it's a real adventure."

Wilkinson praises the dynamic portrayals of the characters too, and the fact that even in war, *Xena* can still find a way to maintain those tender moments. "Up until now," she says of

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Lucy Lawless

This page:

Xena and Gabrielle have stayed together through thick and thin, and Lucy Lawless looks forward to more adventures for the duo in season six.