

The family that slays together stays together—if they don't kill each other first.



All Other Photos: Geoffrey Short

for, and being that Rob [Tapert] was there at the casting, he was probably looking for things that reminded him of Lucy [Lawless], which I was completely unaware of. So you know, good surprises.”

Playing two completely different characters in one body, Wilkinson has equally contrasting opinions. “You can see shades of Eve and Livia in each—obviously—being that they’re the same person. It’s interesting what brings them out. Eve has now had these experiences and they have changed her whole perception, her whole persona. It has been invigorating.

“Livia definitely is more fun to play,” Wilkinson admits. “Livia is so self-satisfied, she’s just *yummy*. I love doing voiceover for Livia, it’s my favorite thing in the world. She’s always self-absorbed, kinda catty—every time she’s around Kevin [Smith, who plays Ares], she just purrs. So I love to do it.

“I have to say, above and beyond, Eve is a larger challenge. It’s harder for me to relate. Being that I was introduced to Livia first, it’s occasionally hard for me to justify the choices they have Eve making. So I have

to sit down and figure out how I can make her OK with this. The most obvious example is that Livia was smarter than everyone; she could read everyone like a book and manipulate them. Eve is so honorable, she’s certainly no less intelligent, but she’s just so driven and focused that she doesn’t notice all the stuff Livia would have. A good example is in ‘Heart of Darkness’ when Eve doesn’t get the game her Mom is playing. I think Livia would know in a second. Livia would be helping Xena seduce Lucifer, whereas Eve is so focused on doing good and working for the right reasons that she never considers that there’s another option. Eve’s an interesting character to figure out as she goes along.

“Eve is also far more of a challenge emotionally. Livia was just so in love with herself that she was slightly predictable in how she would react, because she was so confident,” Wilkinson says, “where Eve is maybe not as charismatic but has many more degrees of interest in her, layers that you don’t necessarily see immediately.”

Sword Play

As Xena’s daughter, Wilkinson of course must handle a blade. “The fighting has been crazy. I remember in the audition,” she says, laughing at the memory of what Tapert expected of her, “Rob said, ‘Can you wield a sword?’ And I looked at him like, ‘Are you crazy, are you *really* asking me that?’ I remember telling them, ‘Well, I have no idea. I’ll handle the acting.’ Rob said, ‘OK, we have stunt doubles if it turns out all bad.’ They had enough confidence for me to try, and it turns out I *love* fighting. I just miss it so much now that Eve doesn’t fight.

“I had no idea what I was doing and the first few days, I’m sure I was horrible. It was just getting the confidence up to actually hit somebody. Obviously, the swords aren’t real, but it’s still possible to get hurt and I’m so afraid of hurting somebody, but I got over that quick enough.”

The actress was never a tomboy, so all the play fighting, swords and even the aggression was new to her. “I was very girly,” Wilkinson admits. “I was never into little boy toys and all that stuff. I certainly never