

Eve of the War

.....

Growing up as the daughter of *Xena: Warrior Princess* can be tough. Ian Spelling talks through Eve's history with Adrienne Wilkinson.

THE GIG lasted longer than she ever expected. She learned more and had more fun than she ever imagined. So, for Adrienne Wilkinson, the end of *Xena* – on which she plays Xena's (Lucy Lawless) daughter Eve, formerly known as vicious Roman general Livia – brings with it an array of emotions.

"It's a funny thing," the actress says. "I expected to have a little more of a melancholy feeling about the whole thing, but really I'm just kind of excited. It's been an interesting year. It's a bummer with all of the strike issues that are happening. It's sort of a bummer that *Xena* is ending and that it's ending now, when so much attention is on the strike. But it's also really exciting because everyone on *Xena* is so talented and you know that they are all going to move on to something brilliant. And I'm eager to look for new characters as well. So it's not quite as bad as I had expected it would be.

"When I first booked the job at the end of the fifth season I was told that they were seriously considering ending the show at the end of the fifth season. So when they said it would end this year instead, it wasn't quite as big a surprise for me. I had certain expectations about it coming to the end. I knew it was probably going to

happen and I had time to be ready for it. So I just made the most of each episode. When I originally got the job it was for three episodes. I was told that they weren't sure what they were doing with the character, so it might only be one episode, so every time I kept coming back, I was just eager and excited and interested in seeing what they were going to do with her. The character was just so incredibly empowering for an actress to play."

Audiences, like Wilkinson herself, were often surprised by what the writers had in store for Xena's little girl. Livia, of course, kicked ass. Eve was, well, wishy-washy to say the least. "Oh, don't I know it," Wilkinson says, laughing out loud. "It was such a blessing, more than I even realized. Emotionally, I got to play a lot more with Eve. She had more issues and just more stuff that needed to be dealt with. Unfortunately, we didn't get the chance to deal with all of it. But I have to say that I was shocked when – as I was getting ready to return for the sixth season, and I was so excited to see Xena, Gabrielle [Renee O'Connor] and Eve just kicking some butt together – I got the script and I thought, 'What's going on?' I had no idea that Eve was going to be so incredibly devout and so specific in her beliefs. It took a little while for me to wrap my brain

around the new Eve. When I first started to play Livia, the directors just kept telling me, 'Be bigger, be bigger. Give it everything.' I had to be so physical and so active. And with Eve they kept saying, 'Be smaller, be smaller.' So it was a challenge to find the happy medium between them.

"For me, the issue was that I loved Livia so much – once I got the handle on how to play her – and I just wasn't ready to let her go. I felt she had so much to do and so much fire. When it came to Eve, they didn't want to see that fire. They wanted a definite difference between the two of them. My favorite episode with Livia is *Eve*, which Mark Beesley directed. He also did the first episode of the new season, where I was purely Eve. Both of us were having such a hard time trying to

