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REVIEWS

Dec. 09, 2005

Painkiller Jane

By Ray Richmond
9-11 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10
Sci Fi Channel

Bottom line: Slick, intelligent, reasonably entertaining -- and blessed with an alluring lead.

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"The Bionic Woman" lives on with "Painkiller Jane," a two-hour backdoor pilot for a Sci Fi Channel original series that proves to be slick, intelligent, reasonably entertaining -- and blessed with an alluring lead.

Based on the Event Comics series of the same name, it stars Emmanuelle Vaugier ("Saw II") as Capt. Jane Browning, an Army Special Forces type who gets exposed to a powerful biochemical weapon during an anti-narcotics mission gone terribly awry. She's killed along with the rest of her unit, except that five days later she miraculously awakens fully healed from her fatal gunshot wounds and in possession of all sorts of inexplicable physical and mental powers. She runs like the wind, has superhuman strength, can plot chess moves like nobody's business and, well, you know the drill. Think of her as Lindsay Wagner without the Ford campaign.

Anyway, poor Captain Jane is plenty freaked, confused and uncertain about where or to whom to turn. Her commanding officer and mentor Col. Watts (Richard Roundtree) keeps her locked up like a lab rat in a top-secret medical installation. Bio expert Dr. Lucas Knight (Tate Donovan) has motives that appear sketchy at best. So she turns to a crook specializing in hot merchandise (Eric Dane) as her confidant. It's all a little bit twisted, yet it works niftily in the well-constructed "Painkiller Jane," which sets up our heroine as a covert crime-fighting agent who doubles as the next link in mankind's (and womankind's) evolutionary chain. Not the most secure lifestyle, but hey, it beats being in the ground.

From The Director of "CHOCOLAT"



Painkiller Jane

Hollywood Reporter December 9, 2005

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