



From Victim to Vixen

Femme Fatales
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When last we encountered the unnervingly beautiful Emmanuelle Vaugier, one of the stars of the chilling sequel *Saw 2*, she was feeling a little vulnerable. And why not? In movies like *The Fear*, *Sculptress*, *Mindstorm*, *Ripper* and *Wishmaster 3*, Vaugier's characters had a tendency to suffer violent fates at the hands of various monsters, madness and demons. It's a common grind for young actresses in Hollywood, where horror and suspense movies require a constant stream of attractive young victims to scream bloody murder. Thankfully for Vaugier, things have changed. After years of playing the victim, nowadays it's Emmanuelle Vaugier that doin' 'the killen'!

"It's what every actress strives for!" the actress laughs as she acknowledges her recent good fortune. "Even if I get killed in the end I at least do my fair share of killing before that happens. I'm not an innocent victim any more."

When did Vaugier begin to take back the night? Here at *Femme Fatales* we traced the actress's revolt back to the 2003 thriller *Water's Edge*, in which she played the beautiful, troubled and dangerous Rae Baines, who encounters a vacationing couple at a cabin in the Canadian woods and proceeds to wreak havoc on them. One of the best ways to start wreaking havoc is by teasing a married man with an erotic skinny dipping scene, and Vaugier was only too happy to comply in this area. Well... maybe she wasn't all that happy. "It was freezing," she says of her midnight jump in the lake. "I had a body suit on, a wet suit for the lower half of my body but it was so cold, and it was June or July when we shot it in the summer but we were up in the mountains so it wasn't like tropical heat."

Things got slightly hotter when Rae decides to take out the unsuspecting wife (played by Chandra West) by confronting her in a small shack where the two engage in a furious fight scene. "I wasn't very happy about that in the end because I got pretty banged up," Vaugier admits. "At one point something on one of the shelves fell off and hit me and chipped one of the bones in my fingers. The next day I felt like I'd worked out at the gym for 20 hours straight. I had a lot of bruises on my body."

Since she was mysteriously sent packing on an uncontrolled Learjet by husband Lex Luthor on *Smallville*, Vaugier has made her mark in a number of TV series, where she freely admits she's most often cast as the bad girl. "Nice is boring though; it's really easy and boring after a while," she says. That's why she gets into roles like her recurrent portrayal of Nikki on *One Tree Hill*. "I played Brian Greenberg's character's, the mother of his baby," Vaugier says "and I take off very young and leave him to take care of the baby and then come back a few months later and say I want my baby back. So it's a big struggle between him and I. We have a catfight in that between my characters, Sophia Bush and Hilary Burton – we spent 11 hours doing that scene and that was another one of those days where I left and the next day I felt like I'd been hit by a truck. But we had a blast."

All these fighting skills are sure to come in handy in her upcoming Sci Fi Channel TV pilot *Painkiller Jane*. "She is a military agent that is at the top of her game and leads her team into a bioweapons lab in "Eastern Europe and gets exposed to biochemical weaponry," Vaugier says of the character. "Her generic makeup's been changed so she has the ability to heal herself. If I get shot the bullet gets expelled and the wounds heal very quickly. You sort of go through the torture part of dying and then you heal and you go through it again."

If that all sounds a little depressing don't worry – this ain't *Six Feet Under*. "They could have gone darker with it but because it's TV most people watching a superhero show don't want it to be too dark," she notes. "She's more of a normal girl and she doesn't know how to handle these powers either so people can relate to it, and you journey with her learning more about how to handle what she's been faced with."

When asked whether *Painkiller Jane* turns might shade of green, bulges all over and rips off her clothing to demonstrate her powers. Vaugier pauses briefly while considering whether or not to call the police, then realizes it's just an interview and we're very stupid. So she helpfully explains exactly what does happen on the show. "My pupils dilate and my eyes become like these black orbs when I go into *Painkiller Jane* mode, when her senses are heightened," she says. "We went through this whole thing of trying on different contact lenses. At one point they had these ice blue ones that were really cool that I loved, but they were little too weird and too like 'Oh my god, you're wearing contacts!' They did it in a way that when I saw the finished cut of the pilot, it's subtle but you can still see what's going on. It's a digital effect but they still had me wear these black contact lenses where there was a tiny hole for the pupil. I had to do these running through the woods scenes where I was running at full speed with a camera on an ATV in front of me with a steadicam, and I couldn't see a thing."

Vaugier also gets the full benefit of expensive Sci Fi Channel special effects. "There's an effect where I put my hand through a tree branch – I'm sort of testing to see what happens and it's painful and then I watch it heal," she points out. "There's an effect where I'm looking at a page of a magazine and the letters start lifting up and rearranging themselves."

After reading the original "*Painkiller Jane*" comic book, Vaugier is happy to say that the TV show isn't 100% faithful to the source. "The comic's a lot racier. She's wearing spandex and bandages and pieces of her body are exposed and it's very costumey, which is great for the animated version of it but for a TV show keeping it real is the key." Mainly Vaugier is glad she doesn't have to spend two hours a day working out to show off her stuff in the original *Painkiller Jane* costume, no matter how heartbroken we are about it. "When you are working 17 hours a day on a show those two hours in the gym kind of disappear from the schedule and they never happen."

So by now you're wondering why Emmanuelle hasn't yet discussed her brand new movie, *Saw 2*? Well, we're going to hit that brick wall right now. "I'm not allowed to say anything about the movie," Vaugier says firmly. "I can say that I'm in it and that there's a puppet involved." Yes, but the important question is, will she be chained



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to anything in the movie? "Wouldn't the readers of Femme Fatales magazine like to know!" Vaugier laughs. After we whined really loudly she let slip a few more nuggets: "There are a lot of little contraptions like the jaw thing in the original, I can tell you that. Just more intricate and more disturbing versions of things that happened to people. Jigsaw resumes his role as Jigsaw in the second one."

Sigh. Okay, how about discussing non-secret information related to the subject, like how she felt about the original Saw? "It was a little difficult watching the first one; I had to look away quite a bit," Vaugier unburdens herself. "It's not a horror movie, really, it's a psychological thriller and it's more about making you squirm and making you uncomfortable than scaring you. I'm not a big horror movie, gore kind of person. For me I like stuff like The Amityville Horror. The super natural stuff scares the living daylights out of me; the monster and serial killer stuff, it has its place and it scares me and bothers me to a certain extent but it's not something I'm drawn to. A lot of my guy friends love the horror movies and zombies and monsters and Freddy Kruger and Friday the 13th, all that stuff is very popular amongst the boys."

And Emmanuelle isn't done with horror films yet, but this time she'll be the one pumping the lead. In House of the Dead 2, which will be released by Lions Gate Films next year, she plays Nightingale, a member of the AMS, the super secret government organization charged with suppressing the zombie menace in the "House of the Dead" games from Sega. Emmanuelle joins a cast that includes Ed Quinn (Starship Troopers: Hero of the Federation), Victoria Pratt (Mutant X) and Sid Haig (The Devil's Rejects). (Look for more FF coverage – and more Emmanuelle when the film is released in 2006).

Speaking of stuff that's popular with the boys, our automatic segue machine indicates that this world be a great time to talk about the art of photography, specifically the art of photographing sexy Emmanuelle Vaugier. It turns out she's an old hand at this sort of thing. "I started modeling when I was fourteen and I did the whole Japan circuit, and it was one of the best experiences I've ever had," she recalls. "I love Japan and I was speaking to the producers of Saw yesterday and I said 'Look, if you're doing a press tour, I don't care where you go but if you're going to Japan I'm coming. Even if you don't invite me I'll just show up in Tokyo so you might as well send me the invite."

In fact, Vaugier's so used to modeling that we suspect she doesn't get quite the same kick out of posing for photos that we get looking at them. "I was used to doing lingerie catalogs, and when I say lingerie catalogs in Japan I mean like department store stuff, not racy stuff. Modeling's modeling and it's knowing how you photograph best and you sort of learn that as you go along. It has to do with the photographer and hair and makeup and if the lighting's not good then you won't look that good – there's a lot of pieces that go into it. But it's something I'm comfortable with because I've been doing it for so long." We're comfortable with it too, Emmanuelle!

*Written by Jeff Bond
Photography by Peter Svenson*



SCENES FROM A SAW (2): Bad things happen to Emmanuelle... just what we're not really sure...



...the studio has her sworn to secrecy... ...so we guess you're going to have to see Saw too...



"I can't say
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