

Autumn Reeser: An Ari/Lizzie smackdown is coming!

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Breathing life into a slowly staling series should be listed under "special skills" on Autumn Reeser's resumes. She reinvigorated a Mischa-free "O.C" and has juiced up Ari Gold's storyline on "Entourage" by giving him a formidable foe to direct all that bile at.

Last week Ari fired young upstart Lizzie Grant, who vowed revenge as she exited the MGA building -- this week, we'll find out exactly what she meant. And while her time in HBO's boys club might be coming to an end, the small screen will be getting another injection of Autumn this fall as she brings that unique blend of sparkle and sass to a brand new show: ABC's new "No Ordinary Family."

I chatted with Autumn about the comic book geek she plays on that superhero show as well as discovering where her "O.C." creation, Taylor Townsend, is today before getting sidetracked talking about reality television.

PopWrap: Did you know coming into this season that Lizzie would turn out to be Ari Gold's big nemesis?

Autumn Reeser: I got very little info before the season started -- a lot of it I discovered when I read each week's script. I got hints here and there, but it's so much better than I expected it to be.

PW: She actually seems like a worthy adversary for Ari though.

Autumn: [laughs] She does! I think in a way she is a female Ari. Which is why she makes a worthy adversary for him

PW: So Ari will regret his choice to fire her?

Autumn: Yea, I think he will. She's a girl who's known what she wanted from a very early age and she is kinda willing to do whatever it takes to get there.

PW: I get some Taylor Townsend vibes from her -- am I crazy?

Autumn: No. I've been realizing recently that there's a through-line with all the characters I like to play -- I like women of strong conviction. To me, people who have a strong sense of who they are and where they're going in their life are so fun to play. And



Taylor was obviously that way -- so there are a lot of parallels between her and, probably, a lot of the women I'll play in my life.

PW: Would Lizzie and Taylor be friends?

Autumn: No! Not at all – I think Lizzy would eat her alive. I don't think Lizzy has many girl friends. She doesn't need them. I think she likes women, but she's independent, her own person and feels that she doesn't need anyone else. But I have my theories about what Taylor is doing right now.

PW: Do tell!

Autumn: [laughs] I always thought she went into politics. Public policy or being an ambassador. She's a girl who could succeed on a grand scale.

PW: The next Obama?

Autumn: Oh god, Taylor Townsend as president .. god help us!

PW: Lizzie is going after Mike Tyson, Jessica Simpson and Ari's other clients -- did you film with any of them?

Autumn: Nope! It's so funny, there's all these famous people talking about me, but I don't work with any of them. I was like, I would have liked to meet Jessica Simpson.

PW: So she's just like this looming presence?

Autumn: That's a bit of it – she's set the wheels in motion and now the machine runs with less input from her. But I've got three more episodes. And the last two are so good. The writers really trusted me with some great material



PW: I think fans are really hoping for that forehead-to-forehead screaming match between Ari and Lizzie.

Autumn: Oh, you're gonna get a showdown!

PW: Then this fall, you'll be back on TV with ABC's "No Ordinary Family," which I'm excited about.

Autumn: You should be, it's really good [laughs]. I think one of the things that all of us actors keep saying is how nice it is to work with people who've been in the business for a very long time. Who know what make a show work on screen and off.

PW: The show is kind of "Incredibles"-esque, but you're not part of the superpowered family, right?

Autumn: Right. Julie Benz, who plays Stephanie Powell, is a nationally renowned scientist and I am her lab assistant.

PW: Do you have a lot of wordy technical terms to learn?

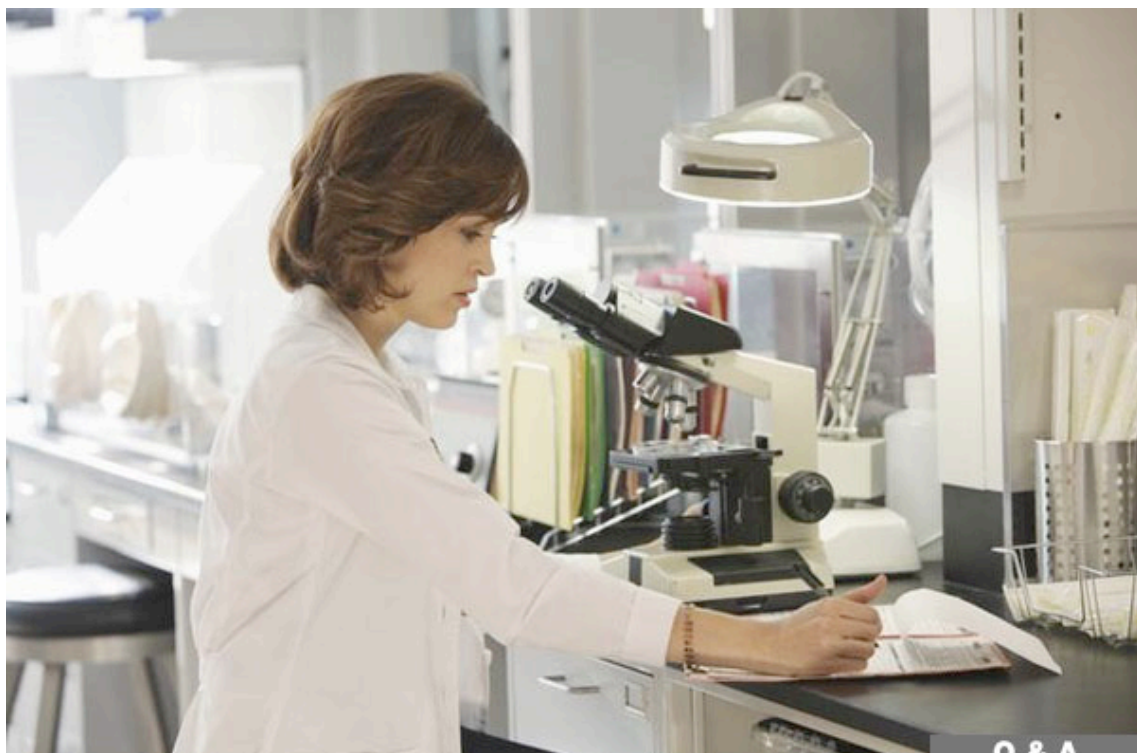
Autumn: Yep! It's going well actually, I had good training on "Raising the Bar" last year with learning legal terms – and I did a movie earlier this year called "The Big Bang" where I played a physics groupie. It was pretty insane, she was just turned on by Nobel Prize [laughs]. So I had a lot of experience earlier this year with studying scientific terms and understanding them, because I can't say a line if I don't understand it.

PW: Makes sense to have intent and knowledge behind the line.

Autumn: I always think the audience can tell when someone doesn't understand what they're saying.

PW: Right, it's like when you can see an actor isn't really smoking.

Autumn: [laughs] Right! That is something I have to learn how to do, I haven't mastered on-screen smoking. I don't smoke on this show, but sometimes a character will come up and you think, "oh, maybe she should smoke" and then your friend calls you out for not looking like you smoke.



PW: So does Katie remain ignorant of her bosses new power?

Autumn: No, Katie is a comic book aficionado/super geek. This is the most exciting thing that's ever happened in her life and she's not about to be left out, so she sort of inserts herself in the world.

PW: Now, we follow you on Twitter and our tastes in reality TV run very closely with yours.

Autumn: "So You Think You Can Dance?"

PW: Yep!

Autumn: My two favorites are out because they got injured – Alex and Ashley.

PW: I'm a Lauren fan -- who do you think is going to win?

Autumn: I feel like the whole winning side of it is secondary, I wish the show was on year-round and they just rotated new dancers in all the time and that no one ever won or lost.

PW: Fair enough, what about "Work of Art?"

Autumn: Obsessed

PW: I think Miles is amazing.

Autumn: Me too! And Nicole. I think she's amazing. I love that it's bringing art into people's living rooms once a week because I feel like that's something we're not commonly involved with here. And I actually am a lazy painter, and I feel like it's kicking my ass.

PW: What kind of painting do you do?

Autumn: I'm an oil painter, I do a lot of portraits. I feel like that's what interests me about acting as well. Depicting different people and that's what I tend to be attracted to as an artist.

PW: I always like to ask reality TV fans what show they would be successful on.

Autumn: Oh god, successful? [laughs] None of them. That's why I watch them. But here's what I want for my birthday: a "Project Runway" party. Wouldn't that be fun, pretend you're on "Project Runway?" I'd probably make something hideous, but that's besides the point – I could pretend for like a minute that I knew what I was doing. We'd have to have a Tim and Heidi.

PW: You should film it for your followers -- they'd love it.

Autumn: [laughs] Watch Autumn Reeser make ugly, ugly clothing. I'm sure.

"Entourage" airs Sundays at 10pm on HBO and "No Ordinary Family" premieres September 28 at 8pm on ABC.

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