



Frisky Q&A: Autumn Reeser, Aspiring Blogger And Star Of “No Ordinary Family”

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Chances are, if you’ve had a functioning television over the last few years, you already recognize Autumn Reeser from her roles on “The OC” and this past season of “Entourage.” But her new show, “No Ordinary Family” (which debuts tomorrow night at 8 p.m. on ABC), is one of the most talked about shows this season, setting Reeser up to become one of the actresses you should keep your eye on. Reeser plays Katie Andrews, a woman who becomes closely involved with a family that discovers they all suddenly possess some, uh, supernatural abilities. I got a chance to talk to Autumn about her exciting new role, whether she’ll be back on “Entourage” next season, and got the scoop on her pet project—a female-focused blogging venture that could give The Frisky a little competition. Check out the interview, after the jump!

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What was so special about “No Ordinary Family” that you were eager to be involved?

I think it mixes a lot of elements together in one project. It’s funny, it’s dramatic, it’s action, it’s family, and I think that’s always a fun challenge. Particularly, playing a character like I’m playing who’s a comedic character, and fitting that character into this world where serious things happen.

So, you’re kind of the comic relief on the show?

Yeah, exactly. Making that character fit in with the other characters has been a great challenge as an actor. I always enjoy characters like that actually.

Who is your character exactly?

Katie is the lab assistant to the mother, played by Julie Benz, who’s a world-renowned scientist, and I’m her, I guess you could say “protege,” lab assistant and confidante. She spends most of her time at the lab so my character is the closest person to her outside of her family. She starts to confide in me and luckily I happen to also be a major comic book aficionado, so to me all this mysterious stuff that’s happening to her is the most exciting thing that has ever happened in my life.

How did you manage to master all the geeky lingo required for the role?

Before every episode they give us a list of all the difficult words, how to pronounce them, and what they mean—thank goodness! It comes in very handy. But I’ve actually played a lot of characters over the last year that required a lot of studying and more difficult language ... less ordinary words. I played a character who was a physics groupie and I played a lawyer and now a scientist so I’ve become fairly adept at working in the lingo in a natural way.

You’ve done a lot of TV over the years, starting with “The OC”—do you prefer TV to movies?

I do like doing TV a lot, but there are benefits to each of them. Like most actors, we just want to work and we want to work on good projects. If those projects are on TV, then we’ll go there.

It seems like this season there’s a lot of really amazing new shows making their debut—

I know! The last three years have been difficult in this industry because we had the writer’s strike and the de facto actor’s strike, and then we had the recession. I think this was the first real pilot season we’ve really had in a while. It’s exciting and the competition was fierce out there. People were hungry—they wanted to work!

I checked the Tuesday night lineup and was relieved to see “No Ordinary Family” wasn’t against anything I wanted to watch—

You don’t watch “Glee”? (laughs)

Oh man, no! I don’t! It’s the one show I don’t watch!

Oh, well that’s good for us then!

Now that you mention it, are you nervous about being across from such a popular show that apparently everyone but me watches?

Actually, no, it’s two totally different audiences, it really is.

Plus with DVR ...

Oh yes, it’s almost irrelevant when a show is on in some ways for a lot of people. There’s a lot of shows I watch where I don’t even know when they’re on; I just know when they show up on my TiVO.

I’m a big fan of “Entourage,” so I hope you’ll tolerate me asking you a few questions about your time on that show [playing Lizzie Grant] this past season.

Go for it!

Are you going to be on the next season?

I don’t know yet—but I absolutely would love to go back. I love my character on that show.

Initially, Lizzie was brought in as not necessarily the most likable character—she works for the agency and an affair with Ari Gold’s mentor. How did you feel about playing a character that was going to have an affair with a married man?

You know, I don’t involve my morals in the characters I play. I think part of the reason why I became an actor is that I like to step into other people’s shoes. I found acting through reading initially and when I discovered that you could step into a character that you read on the page, I thought, *That’s the job for me, that’s amazing*. And I still love that aspect of it. I do leave my own moral judgments at the door, especially because, in the case of Lizzie, I don’t think she ever had any qualms about it—whether he was married or not was irrelevant to her. She’s strong.

Do you think she was an accurate portrayal of what it’s like to be a woman at a Hollywood agency?

The fact is that there aren’t a lot of women who work in this industry comparatively There just aren’t that many. So to be a woman in this industry, you have to be a badass. You really do. Every woman I’ve ever met who works at an agency is really good at her job—because

she has to be. There's no room for mediocrity. I've had so many female agents come up to me and say, "That's me. That character that you play, that's me." They identify with her and that's the best compliment I could get. It's fantastic.

So many of your scenes involved you going toe-to-toe with Jeremy Piven's character—

So fun!

What was it like working with him, with him really going after your character with such ferocity?

Well, Lizzie isn't intimidated by him. Lizzie can dish it right back. So I wasn't intimidated because I'm playing Lizzie; I'm in her shoes. This was an opportunity to work with an award-winning actor and I had a great, great time. He knows how to play tennis. I really learned a lot and he's very fun to act with. He doesn't shrink.

You've been featured in a number of different men's magazines—including *Maxim*, when I was a staff member there. Have you enjoyed some of those sexier photo shoots?

I think of it as playing another character. So many of those shoots, if you look at them literally, they're so silly. But it's fun to come up with a concept for why this girl would be standing in a jungle, you know, under a waterfall in a bikini. That's very obvious, but coming up with a story for why you are where you're at and who you are and why you're wearing what you're wearing—that's fun.

There are so many photo shoots nowadays where there's some element that is just utterly ridiculous—like, why is this celebrity walking down the street with a hat and shirt on, but no pants?

Earlier this year I saw this Michael Kors ad where there was a girl walking down a busy city street in a white bikini with silver hardware, and like, thigh-high heels and a purse. And I was like, OK, in what situation would this happen? It's hilarious.

So I hear you're starting to blog?

I am! I started a group of L.A.-based female bloggers and I'm launching mine at the end of next month. Every woman will have a different blog—we have nine girls involved. There's one girl who's a stylist so she'll have a styling blog, we have a girl who's into interior decorating, we have a dessert blog, a food blog, we have a female entrepreneur's blog. It's all women who feel strongly about some subject and are blogging about it.

How did you kick-start this project?

I got started in the blogging community through planning my wedding actually. I found it a little too late, unfortunately, after I had already done all the planning using magazines. You just

don't need to do that anymore. Especially with the vendors—I found all that a little too late and I realized what an amazing source of inspiration and support blogs can be to people. So I have a series of blogs I go to almost every day to check in with the people or to get inspiration—whatever I'm in the mood for. My blog is going to be a lifestyle blog—for busy urban girls who are also a little domestic and like to entertain. I throw a lot of parties and I have a lot of girlfriends who are very aesthetic and a little domestic and traditional too. But they're also all women who are in big careers and who are busy—my blog will be about balancing those two things.

Sounds like you'll be giving The Frisky some competition, but we'll wish you good luck anyway!

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