

The Twilight Lexicon interview with Sarah Clarke cast as Renee Dwyer in the film adaptation of Twilight by Stephenie Meyer. Interview conducted by Cocoa.

We would like to thank Sarah Clarke for taking a moment to share with us some of her experiences and thoughts.

Lexicon: What inspired you to become an actress?

Sarah: There were a few things...but an early impulse to perform was there when I was little. I remember loving to put on my records and sing to my stuffed animals. It was a long time however before I could get up the nerve to do it for people. I don't think the idea stuck until after my senior year in college when I spent a year abroad in Italy...taking on a new culture was like inhabiting a character. From there I saw how fulfilling the art could be.

Lexicon: You have had an impressive acting career, what was your favorite project? Why?

Sarah: Thank you...but I feel fairly new to the profession. It's hard to quantify your work in the way you ask because I get attached to everything I am involved with. It is, in a way, a reflection of you and of your life at that time...so I guess I don't have one. I love them all

Lexicon: Is there a role you have always wanted to have and not had the opportunity to have? What would that role be?

Sarah: Oh sure there have been roles you think "Oh God, I really want that...I need to do this or that role!" But when I reflect on my life as it is...I see I'm ok with not having done them.

Lexicon: When you choose a role, what do you look for? What draws you to a project?

Sarah: The story is always the first thing that draws me to a project.

Lexicon: Why did you choose to audition for Twilight?

Sarah: Catherine told me she was going to direct it and it sounded interesting. Then after I read the book I was hooked

Lexicon: What was your audition process for Twilight like? Was Renee the role you originally sought?

Sarah: Catherine thought that Kristen and I would be good together as Mother and Daughter...I didn't get much from the book about Renee...but once we started working and rehearsing I saw how interesting Renee was. Catherine helped bring a lot of back story for us to work with.

Lexicon: You were also in Thirteen, directed by Catherine Hardwicke. Can you tell us from an actor's perspective, what makes Catherine a good director?

Sarah: Catherine has an amazing mind that is always working and creating. I learn a lot from her just listening to her ideas...I feel she knows what she needs from each scene and is willing to let you find it with the other actors.

Lexicon: What other members of this cast have you worked with before?

Sarah: Well Billy Burke and I were on 24 together but never shared a scene...but Peter Facinelli and I did a movie 2 years ago called "The Lather Effect" that was a lot of fun. I was sorry we didn't have anything together on this

Lexicon: Renee's physical part in the books may be small but her influence is felt throughout all three novels, in particular on the subject of marriage. What do you feel drives Renee's perspective on marriage and subsequent influence on her daughter's perception?

Sarah: Wow...well that is something I would need to think about...I have only read the first book so far. I'll get back to you on that.

Lexicon: This isn't the first time you worked on a project with Billy Burke. When we asked him about you, he had this to say "She's a lovely person and a kick ass actor." What was it like working with Billy on 24?

Sarah: Oh he's so sweet...like I said we have yet to grace the screen together...maybe in the future...

Lexicon: Despite the fact that the two of you (Billy and yourself) never appear on camera together there is a deep history there between Renee and Charlie. How would you describe their relationship?

Sarah: Catherine, Billy and I discussed this and decided that Charlie and Renee met when they were young and impulsive...in Renee's case really young...and decided to go for love without really getting to know each other in the process. I think Charlie was shut down and Renee helped open him up and although his world was a comfortable place for Renee in the beginning of their marriage, Renee grew out of his small town mentality and needed to break free and experience life on her own.

Lexicon: Seeing a parent through a child's eyes can often distort the perception of that parent. Do you think Bella's description of Renee is accurate? Why or why not?

Sarah: Again I can only answer from what I read in the first book and from what I understand there is a lot more about their relationship in the next two books. But what I gather from Twilight is that Bella thought Renee worried too easily about her and needlessly. I know that the Renee we created for the movie had her reasons for worrying about Bella and had a hard time being separated from her. I think when a parent raises a child on her own there is an even greater feeling of responsibility and so letting go is even harder. But I'll have to get back to you on that one after I have read the other books.

Lexicon: Some fans perceive Renee being flighty or self centered, would you agree or disagree with that statement? Why?

Sarah: Mmm... Flighty, yeah a little but I think she had a lot on her mind...but self centered? No. I think that when Bella goes to live with her dad it's because she really wants to do something for her Mom...give her some freedom. I think Renee doesn't know what she's in for being away from her daughter because she had built her whole world around caring and raising her.

Lexicon: Do you feel Renee made the right decision in allowing Bella to go to Forks to live with Charlie? Why or why not?

Sarah: Yes because if she hadn't there never would have been Twilight, New Moon, or Eclipse!

Lexicon: What scene from the books is your favorite? Why?

Sarah: I love the scene when Edward kisses Bella for the first time. First kisses are always dramatic but theirs takes the cake and is incredibly romantic. .

Lexicon: Are you a Wolf or Vampire girl?

Sarah: Mmm... will have to get back to you on that after I read the next book.

Lexicon: The hype surrounding the movie is larger than most anticipated. Does the pressure to stay true to the book affect your performance? And have you had any fan encounters?

Sarah: I really tried to stay true to Catherine's vision of the movie. We did have some fans visit the set...they were very sweet.

Lexicon: Do you have any book/film recommendations for us?

Sarah: I just saw an amazing documentary called "Playing for Change". Be looking for it in theaters soon.

Lexicon: The Twilight fan community loves music. What are your favorite bands/songs?

Sarah: I have a wide range of music that I like...from Tom Waits to The White Stripes to Diana Washington. Lately I have been loving The Spoons.

Lexicon: On IMDB they reference that you are a member of Kappa Alpha Theta. For our many young readers who are entering college this fall, would you recommend pledging to a sorority? Why?

Sarah: I think that sororities can be a nice place to meet people but they are not for everyone and they can vary a lot from campus to campus. I enjoyed my time with KAT but only spent two years with them because I was overseas for my senior year.

Lexicon: Congratulations on your new baby girl. What advice would you give a young mother?

Sarah: Get sleep while you can because if you have a baby those days will all be over.

Lexicon: Do you have any upcoming projects we can look forward to seeing you in?

Sarah: I will be starring in a new TV show in the fall called "The Truth in Advertising" for TNT.

Lexicon: A Personal Message to the fans:

Sarah: I hope you like the movie!

Thank you again Sarah for your delightful answers and your dedication to your career and the parts you take on. May you have much success with both your blossoming family and your successful career.

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