

30th Anniversary Special Interview

Linda Campanelli
Script writer

1) What was your first impression of the series production?

Hmmm, it's been a long time now. I have general memories and impressions of the production, the people, and the experience, most of which are wonderful and exciting. I imagine quite a few of you also remember some of the more frustrating experiences Shelly and I had. We weren't too quiet about it at the time. (hehe) Virginia was there on staff for a short time during our first season, but once she left, we were the only two women writers on the show. Let's just say our idea of romance and sexual tension sometimes conflicted with that of the sea of men with whom we were working. But looking back after all this time, I have truly fond memories of everyone we worked with and am very proud of having been part of such a wonderful show.

I'd say my best memories are of time spent on the set. Every time we had some "down time" at the office, I'd head over there. Unfortunately, the set was a bit of a trek... as in across town. WAY across town. We were in Hollywood and the set was in a warehouse district in Vernon -- just east of Downtown L.A. They actually had a guard to make sure people got from the parking lot into the stage, which was literally RIGHT across the street. Not the greatest of neighborhoods, but once inside, it was magical! As excited as anyone reading this would be to have had free reign of that amazing set -- that's exactly how I felt too. I couldn't get enough of it.

2) Was there anything you wished you had known before you walked on the set?

Not really -- not that I can think of now. It was all a learning process and writing for B&B was a dream come true. I loved the show before we got the job, so walking into those offices, knowing I was going to be a part of it, was incredibly exciting.

3) What surprised you most about your role in the production?

Every day. Every single day that I passed through those studio gates was exciting to me. Even when we were having tense spell -- which we certainly had -- it was still a thrill. I even

loved the buildings. I mean the actual studio buildings. We were on a classic "Old Hollywood" 1920's - 30's studio lot. I love old architecture. I love Old Hollywood. I absolutely loved thinking about the history of the place ... (Confession, I have a small, original mission style side table that I took from our office. I replaced it with a new table, the same size, so it was never missed. To this day, I look at that table and wonder how many movie sets it was part of, or how many of those old offices it lived in... I mean, maybe Bette Davis set her coffee on it! Who knows?) I guess that doesn't really answer your questions, but I the thrill never wore off. That surprised me.

4) After 30 years, what is your fondest memory of the production?

My MOST favorite memories are of visiting the set. I've always loved being on sets. Growing up in LA, the opportunity would present itself once in a while... a friend's dad would work on a show and bring us along, we could get tickets to this and that, or some company would be filming in the neighborhood and we'd get to stand around and watch.

My fondest memory is probably of the night Shelly and I drove out to the location in the hills about an hour north of L.A. to watch some of "The Watcher" being filmed. It was the scene where the car goes into the lake. It was cold and everyone was bundled up drinking coffee and hot chocolate. We got there around mid-night, if I recall, and ended up watching the sun come up as they struck the set. I wish I'd been in the habit of bringing my camera along with me everywhere those days, as I do now. We had one photo that someone took of Shelly and I sitting in director's chairs that night. I have no idea where that is now, but I'd love to have it.

I'm in touch with David (Schwartz) and Jay (Acovone) on a once-in-a-while FaceBook check-in basis. My friendships with Linda (Hamilton) and George (RR Martin) have weathered the years. (Oh man, to think of how young we all were when we were working together! Kind-of scary!) While my contact with Linda is less frequent now that she doesn't live in L.A., when we do manage to touch base, it's always fun, and the time between conversations disappears in an instant. I'd love to show my wife New Orleans, which will mean a REAL visit with Linda. We'll get there one of these days.

And then there's George. (Can you sense my smile?) I cannot say enough nice things about that man. Clearly the most talented, and one of the kindest, most honorable, and downright lovable guys I've ever known. I am so proud to call him my friend. He's a busy man, but always takes time for a quick "Hello" and "How are you doing?" text, or manages a latenight pizza when he's in town. Absolutely the best.