

ENTERTAINMENT

Denise counts her blessings for avoiding Grandpa Crosby

by DAMIAN INWOOD
Vancouver Province

She's kissed Mick Jagger and did an embarrassing nude scene with Burt Reynolds.

She plays Dr. Gretchen Kelly, Lex Luther's fatal attraction in the TV show Lois and Clark.

As Tasha Yar, she was killed by a celestial oil slick after 24 episodes on Star Trek: The Next Generation.

She's Denise Crosby, actress and former model, and the granddaughter of Bing Crosby.

"I was raised by my mom," she says. "My father was Dennis Crosby he abandoned us."

Her dad committed suicide in 1991, the second of Bing's sons to do so. Lindsay killed himself in 1990.

Crosby says she was saved from the painful fallout.

"I grew up never knowing my father or my grandfather," she says.

It was strange, when she was a young girl, especially at Christmas time, when Bing Crosby's music and films were everywhere.

"As a kid, you have trouble sorting this out," she says. "This is my

grandfather but where is he? He was just a voice on the radio."

Later, she realized how lucky she'd been.

"I don't think it's a coincidence that two out of four sons committed suicide," she says. "It wasn't a healthy nurturing environment to grow up in."

Crosby is in Vancouver promoting her latest film, Max, shot mostly in the Cariboo.

She plays Jayne, the mother of a boy suffering from a rare disease whose family moves to a remote town in a bid to beat the illness.

Crosby was brought up as an only child in Hollywood by her mother and stepfather.

She was tagged as rebellious, because she was interested in "strange literature, punk rock and the avant-garde."

"I went through the Let's buy a beat up VW van and drive to South America" thing," she says. "We made it to Guatemala, turned around and came back."

Crosby worked as a model and a casting director saw her in a magazine.

She read for a part in a movie of the week but was too tall she's 5' 9"

but was advised to study acting.

not too thrilled

"I was studying classical music at the time. I wanted to be a wild, classically trained avant-garde composer . . . which my parents weren't especially thrilled about," she laughs.

She was 25 and engaged to Blake Edwards' son when she got a part in the 1983 Burt Reynolds movie, The Man Who Loved Women.

"It was one of the most difficult projects I have ever worked on," she says. "Blake and Burt were surrounded by these beautiful women and they were, kind of, in hog heaven."

On the first day of shooting, Crosby had a love scene with Reynolds in which she was supposed to wear slinky lingerie.

"Blake says, Take this off, we've decided it's going to be nude," she says. "As a young actress, you don't know what to do in this situation. I thought it would be the end of my career if I spoke out to the God Almighty Burt Reynolds."

She did the scene lying on her stomach and then Edwards asked her to come to the top of the stairs

naked.

"I said, I can't do that," she says. "Blake got angry but I won and I had a big king-sized pillow in front of me. I went home crying every day."

"It's unfair. Actresses are so taken advantage of, in a certain way, and then you wonder why some become absolute monsters when they get any kind of power. It's like a psychologically twisted payback time."

As to kissing Jagger, Crosby says the opportunity came when she was asked to make a video for his Primitive Cool album.

Director Mary Lambert, whom Crosby worked with in Pet Sematary, called her.

"She said, Can you do me a favor? I need your help. Would you want to kiss Mick Jagger?" she laughs.

And how were those lips?

"It was lovely, girls. It's all you thought it would be. I did as many takes as they needed."

Distributed By SouthamStar Network.

ALL ABOUT THAT CHRISTMAS GRINCH

by BOB BLAKEY
Calgary Herald

We've all seen it, maybe dozens of times.

We love it. That annual half-hour cartoon feature about the Grinch, Whoville, Max the Dog and Cindy Lou Who.

It wouldn't be Christmas without watching Whos carve the roast beast.

But after 28 years, there are still things people don't know about How the Grinch Stole Christmas.

Here are 10 facts you probably didn't know about one of television's seasonal masterpieces.

Author Dr. Seuss (real name Theodore Geisel) didn't want to see his popular 1957 Grinch book turned into a cartoon, but animator/producer Chuck Jones talked him into it. When Geisel heard the music composed for the project, he was delighted he'd changed his mind.

Jones, known for drawing Bugs Bunny, the Road Runner and other hits, insisted the Grinch be voiced by Boris Karloff and no-one else. Monster-film actor Karloff had the perfect, menacing Grinch voice, Jones believed, especially suited for Seuss's poetic cadence.

The book takes only about 12 minutes to read, so Jones had to craft "padding" for the 24-minute animated film. Most of it's in the

middle, such as the scenes in which Max tumbles down the mountain-side while struggling to pull the enormous sleigh. "We knew we could do some good comic business there," Jones says.

Although Karloff got total credit for narration and voices, some of the most memorable moments come with the singing by deep-voiced Thurl Ravenscroft ("You're a mean one, Mr. Grinch"). Ravenscroft's other performances include Frosted Flakes mascot Tony the Tiger ("They're ggrrrrreat!"). When Dr. Seuss learned Ravenscroft had been inadvertently left off the credits, he personally wrote to columnists across the United States and asked them to spread the word.

The author's widow, Audrey Geisel, says nobody connected with the special, which first aired in 1966, imagined it would become an annual classic of this magnitude. But Jones suspected it would at least strike a chord with a lot of people because "everybody hates Christmas a little bit."

More than 17,000 cels had to be hand-drawn and colored.

Albert Hogue composed the three songs, the most unusual being Trim Up the Tree. Christmas music is rarely written to a polka beat. Hogue later did some acting, including the part of Prof.

Shorofsky in Fame, the movie and TV show.

The sound of Max crunching through the snow on Whoville roofs was achieved in the studio by having somebody chew an apple.

The Grinch is actually a facial caricature of two real people. At the start, he's based on Karloff. But by the film's end, after "his heart grew three sizes that day," he resembles

animator Jones. "He begins to look more like me because he's kindly," says Jones.

Dr. Seuss was known for many books and weird creatures, some of which were adapted for TV, but his widow's Cadillac Seville bears the vanity licence plate GRINCH.

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