

Many thanks to Bridget Petrella for the transcript for *KatherineFugate.com*



Writer **Katherine Fugate**— Eloquently Provocative

by **Bridget Petrella** with additional editing by John Mundazio



Renowned analyst Eric Fromm once said, "In love, the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two." Where else in the world will you find love that lasts forever, truth, integrity, honor and courage? Why do we yearn for them when there's so little evidence of their existence around us? It's indeed a reasonable question, if rhetorical. In full flight, writer Katherine Fugate defines the metaphoric much like a verbal whirlwind, her message universal and enduring, her reflective inspiration beyond comparison... There's a fundamental sense of awareness enveloped within the core of this woman's soul. The most unexpected thing about her is her sincere modesty. Philosopher/physician Deepak Chopra tells a fascinating story about two very different people who ride a roller coaster. For the first, this is a terrifying experience and it fills his body with an unhealthy dose of adrenaline. The second loves the thrill and in turn, his body creates healthy endorphins. "It's not the ride," he says, "it's the rider." That we create our own realities is a concept often borrowed from Eastern religions— how we see the world is how the world is. We control the ride, not the other way around. Fugate captures this element as only she can... with riveting parables of love, tenderness, the catharsis of life and the mysteries that bind— each accomplished and absorbing.

'**When Fates Collide**', a script that Fugate composed, is one of those infamous 'Xena Warrior Princess' episodes that literally blind-sides you with its stunning intensity. It starts out seeming a bit contrived by nature and your expectations sink for a brief instant (perhaps the exact period of time it takes to actually blink). But once you realize the noble implications of all that it entails... you are instantly captivated. Fugate's vision is so breathtaking, so beautiful, so bold in its imagination, that it soars to heights yet to be reached by mainstream network television. In this altered universe, Xena has finally become an averse participant to the twisted power-hungry views of Julius Ceasar. The sheer breadth of Fugate's revelation is positively awe-inspiring.

To quote the great philosopher Plato, "At the touch of love everyone becomes a poet." And Gabrielle, in all of her abundantly poetic wisdom effectively prompts Xena to recall the love... their unconditional love. That being affirmed, as an engaging love story, 'When Fates Collide' is remarkably compelling. Xena's inherent willingness to "accept" her fate, that life happens, "precisely as it should" becomes, in essence, the premise by which this endless love will continually endure... Xena's "redemption" of course, will always be Gabrielle. Fugate's affectionate reworking of 'The Ides Of March' at the climax is more than just emotionally powerful... it's an innovative achievement rich in literary and mythical allusions. There are moments of dialogue and imagery which are so visually immersive that you won't even be able to exhale, let

alone look away from the television screen. She effortlessly taps into the very foundation of romantic yearning... which has frequently been the principal focus of bards, philosophers, and theologians for centuries. As a society we constantly speculate about life... We speculate as well about love in all its foreseeable outcomes. Katherine Fugate cleverly penned a Xena script so luminously original that it not only answers some of those questions, it revels in them. I doubt that 'When Fates Collide' could ever be ignored or forgotten by anyone who watches it. It's a spectacular story that latches onto its themes and pursuits with admirable dignity and sheer persistence.

I recently had the chance to speak with Katherine Fugate... it was enlightening, to say the very least. I felt as though I had known her my entire life. Here are some excerpts from that fascinating conversation...

UPBEAT As a writer, how do you feel about deadlines?

Katherine Fugate "I love them. If I don't have deadlines I don't work as well. I like when someone says to me., 'This is due on such and such a day...' Suddenly a different energy kicks in for me and I get it done. I need that. I was a good student and I think that's why I appreciate deadlines so much. I think once I get into a rhythm, it flows better for me. I love to run off of that sort of creative energy. That's who I am, that's how I work."

UPBEAT Were you always a fan of the 'Xena Warrior Princess'?

Katherine Fugate "Oh yes. There were facets of the show Xena that have always appealed to me, things I thought could be pushed further. One thing I found particularly interesting about this show was— I'm basically a Los Angeles native, where it's 'cool' to not like Xena or anything Trekkie or cultish, yet every single person I know watches Xena, people that you would never associate with a show like Xena. I was at the gym the other day and my trainer was talking to me about the whole Eli storyline and the spirituality of it and then we delved into my episode and what fate and destiny mean, it was astounding. I actually met a very well known director on the set of one of my films who said to me, 'Oh I watch Xena all the time.' The fan base for this show is so richly diverse in that it's not just the people who attend the conventions, it's so much more wide spread than that. I really don't think they get credit for having such a varied audience. I think it's because so many people have found what they needed in one source, and that's so unusual."

UPBEAT The Xena episode that you wrote, 'When Fates Collide', has received such accolades from both fans and critics alike. Personally, I don't think I have ever been that moved by an episode of Xena since 'The Ides Of March', which was essentially connected to your episode.

Katherine Fugate "Thank you. At times it's been so overwhelming for me in so many ways. The fact that anyone responded to it at all is just astounding to me personally. I mean, to know that it touched so many people is completely fulfilling for me. When I was working on the script for 'When Fates Collide' my agent would call and ask me about some of the other projects I was working on... and I would say, 'You don't understand, I have to get the world back, because things are meant to be regardless of the loom, things that are above all of that.' (laughs)"

UPBEAT What was your reaction when you finally got to see 'When Fates Collide' in its entirety?

Katherine Fugate "It was kind of funny because I asked Rob [Tapert] for a copy of it ahead of time, but he kept telling me no. He told me how good he thought it was, and that he was very proud of the episode. He told me at the wrap party, 'It's so good that I don't want you to see it until it airs.' But then I explained to him that I would actually prefer to see it in advance. I have to say, Rob is the kindest man. He weighed my words and finally he said to me, 'Okay, I'll send it to you.' So I received it a few days before it aired and I was able to see it by myself. It was the most emotional moment for me. I felt like someone had created this just for me to watch on my TV only (laughs). To think that it actually aired everywhere, I couldn't quite connect with that at first. I called Rob afterward and thanked him."

UPBEAT So it was emotionally uplifting for you.

Katherine Fugate "There's this incredibly spiritual film that came out last year called 'Afterlife' and in the afterlife is this counselor, who informs you that when you continue on in your journey, you can only take one memory with you. It's a very profound moment. And after having watched 'When Fates Collide', I thought to myself, 'This is the one memory that I would want to take with me.' I mean to see it all come together, to see my name on the screen— When I got that tape and popped it into my VCR, I actually got this chill, because it was the culmination of everything I did to make my dream of writing a Xena episode happen.... from wanting to write to actually writing to going to New Zealand to Lucy and Renee and Rob and R.J. Stewart— speaking to them and telling them what 'Ides Of March' meant to me, just connecting with people that I felt such a connection with. I mean, they took a chance on me, they really did. It was such a pleasure to work with everyone involved."



UPBEAT I sincerely believe that 'When Fates Collide' will go down in television history as having been one of the most profound Xena episodes ever written.

Katherine Fugate "(laughs) I think the internet journalist is purposely trying to reduce me to tears, but thank you."

UPBEAT Okay, there was one element in 'When Fates Collide' that I must confess I've wondered about. How did Gabrielle know where the Temple Of The Fates was located and why didn't they have better security (laughs)?

Katherine Fugate "(laughs) She [Gabrielle] obviously had a copy of the Map to The Temples Homes, of course... (laughs) there's such a suspension of disbelief to extend with a show like Xena, and then somehow we expect logic within that suspension... (laughs) I am willing to believe on one hand, that this whole thing happened, that there is a loom of Fate and that there are these Fates who mind it and that the entire world is in their hands... but I also want to know why the Fates didn't have better security (laughs)."

UPBEAT What became of the Fates?

Katherine Fugate "Rob [Tapert], who has this incredible sense of humor, asked me, 'Did you kill the Fates?' And I told him, 'Well, that's all open to interpretation.' (laughs)"

UPBEAT Tell us about a film that you've seen which really moved you.

Katherine Fugate "Dancer In The Dark. I would say that all of my friends hated that movie but me. They didn't understand why I liked it so much and so I explained to them that it was authentic to me. There were things about it which stunned me, things I didn't see coming. It really moved me. It got to me on an emotional level."

UPBEAT If you could create a project, any project, what would it be?

Katherine Fugate "I'd want to create something that would somehow make a difference in people's lives. I mean, as a writer, I 'have' to do that. I can't write something that's pure entertainment. If there's no underlying message, it's not as interesting to me. I really have to connect with the theme of whatever it is I'm creating."

UPBEAT What is your philosophy on life?

Katherine Fugate "It can be found on my web page— Carpe Diem— seize the day, trusting as little as possible to tomorrow. Take only what you need and leave the rest. That's how I view life in general. You don't have to take the whole of anything, and I believe that so much. I mean, whether it's a book or a movie or someone who gives you advice, whatever. It doesn't matter where the message is coming from, take the part of the message that applies to your life and leave the rest. I also believe that we are each responsible for our own dreams." **UB**

For more information on Katherine Fugate visit her official web site at www.katherinefugate.com



Bridget Petrella is the Publisher and Editor in Chief of UPBEAT Entertainment News Online. At this point in her life, she's seriously contemplating a complete and unbridled abandonment of " typical" network television... opting instead for The Cartoon Network, Xena Warrior Princess, V.I.P., WWF Wrestling, Nick At Nite's TV Land, All HBO Original Programming and of course... TNN's Roller Jam.

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