



Bacic as *Andromeda's* Rhade

watch and I made sure to observe the Taelon's every movement. I was also able to practise beforehand with the actress who plays Zo'or. As soon as we began, though, I knew I was in trouble. She has perfect posture whereas I tend to slouch," laughs the actor. "At the end of each day I'd have a wicked sore neck and back. At one point my character was dressed in a tuxedo. It happened to have a very stiff collar so it forced me to stand up straight for those scenes.

Violent Beatings

"Certainly one of my more vivid memories from working on this episode was the scene in which the human survival instinct kicks in and Zo'or beats up a guy in the pool hall. Talk about intense. I'm sure that 'beating' lasted for a good minute. Not surprisingly, the scene ended up being heavily edited because of the violence. There's no way they could have aired the entire thing on tv. Boy, was that exhausting to do. At the same time, going to that place in my mind and letting myself freak out was a wonderful acting exercise. Again, it was a great part."

While on the *E:FC* set, Bacic met Seth Howard, an executive at Tribune Entertainment (production/distribution company for *E:FC* and *Andromeda*), and the two immediately hit it off. Howard was pleased with the actor's performance and promised to suggest his name for a part in a new Sci-Fi series, *Andromeda*. Before Bacic knew it, he was reading for the role of Gaheris Rhade, and, shortly after, had the part. He first appears in the show's pilot episode, *Under the Night*. In it, Rhade turns on his friend, Captain Dylan Hunt (Kevin Sorbo), after admitting he is part of a Nietzschean plot to overthrow the Systems Commonwealth.

"Starting on *Andromeda* I looked closely at the description of what a Nietzschean is in the broad sense of the show," explains Bacic. "A Nietzschean will do what's best for the survival and prosperity of him or herself and their race. Ironically, helping bring down the Commonwealth was, in actuality, a mistake on the part of Rhade and his people. The Commonwealth was the 'glue' if you will that held all the Nietzschean prides together and stopped them from destroying one another. With that

glue gone, the clans began fighting amongst themselves because it's in their very nature.

"All that said, I decided to approach my character of Rhade as if he was thinking, 'What do I really want to accomplish here?' I had to look at everything pragmatically. This is the situation - what's going to happen. Instead of trying to take in the big picture, I broke everything down scene-by-scene. I hope that makes sense. I looked at what was happening in the specific moment, and then, as an actor, put myself in the moment. Basically, I was following my instincts. Very Nietzschean of me, wouldn't you say?"

Loose Fit

"Initially, I was a bit nervous about playing the part because I'm a lot looser than Rhade," he continues. "I like to relax and have fun with a character and always try to incorporate some humour into my performance. There were a couple of times in this episode where, as Rhade, I was able to do this, all based, of course, on Dylan's reactions. It was easy, though, because I felt comfortable working with Kevin Sorbo. He's a very gracious star and one of the nicest people I've ever worked with. The rest of the cast and crew are great, too.

"What I liked most about the pilot was that although it was a Sci-Fi story it had its roots in a moral dilemma. Rhade was caught between his feeling for his best friend and what had been genetically built into his instincts. That's a tough spot to be in, and it made for a terrific acting challenge. I find that relationships or human issues as opposed to pure Sci-Fi are what drive many of *Andromeda's* stories. Yes, the Sci-Fi elements are there but they're just part of the plot, not the whole of it. I think that's a big reason why viewers keep tuning in every week."

Although his character died in *Under the Night*, Bacic has, thanks to the magic of tv, continued to appear on *Andromeda*. Of the two other Season One episodes he guest-starred in, *Double Helix* and *Forced Perspective*, the actor especially enjoyed the former. "I thought *Double Helix* was neat because Rhade got to explain all about Nietzscheans not only to Dylan but me as well," jokes the actor. "This episode showed a cheekier side of Rhade. In a way, he felt sorry for Dylan because he wasn't able to understand life from a Nietzschean perspective. Again, it's all about survival of the fittest, even if it means cheating. He thinks, 'Hey, even if you're my best friend, if I have to cheat to win, well, tough'. So we see a bit more about how Rhade's mind works."