



David Carradine Could Kick My Ass

45 minutes with Bill, and living to tell the tale

Words: Ty Garfield

Tape recorders click on as journalists shift on their feet and nod greetings. David Carradine, star of "Kill Bill Vol. 2" relaxes in a chair, one knee resting on the cushion, the other propped up against the arm...

David Carradine: Well, I'd introduce myself, but you probably know who I am. You'll have to forgive me because I'll never remember your names. So, please, have a seat.

The question seemed inevitable. After brewing for a couple of days, it just burped out.

Who would you take out first if you had to fight your way out of this room? Well, you've got to go for the biggest guy first.

Nervous laughter from the guy from "The Stranger." At well over six feet, if things go sour, he is so dead.

Your scenes with Perla-Hadley Jardin had a natural paternal flow to them. What tools did you use as an actor to balance Bill's gentle fatherliness with his "murderous-bastardness"?

You know, I can't even answer that. I just show up for work and do it. I get along well with kids. If you think about it, in my

career, I've always worked with kids. I've always been a mentor. In the series "Shane" you've got that little kid. I always dealt with kids in "Kung Fu," Jodie Foster at ten years old, that all comes pretty naturally to me. I live in a household with four kids; five-year-old twins that remind me a lot of Perla.

Carradine's hands make slow thoughtful gestures. He uses his cigarette to punctuate his thoughts.

With Uma, I was itching to work with her for a long time. By the time we actually did a scene, we knew each other pretty well, long before that scene in the chapel and that stuff in Beijing. That scene in the chapel is not in the original script. It replaced [a] poker scene as the introduction of Bill; the introduction is what those scenes were made for. You can't introduce Bill twice, and that's why [a fight scene with Michael Jai White] went out. Now what were we talking about? It was just all so natural and Quentin makes it natural. He took his time, like when he said, "What I want you to do is make a sandwich, then tell me the story." So, we went in and sat down at the wet bar and got all the stuff there and Quentin said, "Okay, make me a sandwich."

Carradine stubs out his cigarette. His toes wiggle inside his black Campers. That's how we started working the scene. Quentin would drop in: "Oh wait, I don't like

mayonnaise! I don't want the mustard in the squeeze bottle, I want you to be able to stick a knife in the jar." We had to go pick the knife and find the mustard. Perla likes the crusts cut off, so I made that part of the thing, and I noticed a couple ladies who were mothers got a real kick out of it. That hit their heart that I would do it special for the kid and not for Uma and myself.

Another cigarette, gently pulled from the case on the coffee table, lights up. They look filterless.

Everything evolves moment-to-moment, and Quentin is a very moment-to-moment guy. I got more from that scene that any other director I've ever worked with. Most of the time a director has a preconceived idea of what he's going to do and he'll do that hell or high water. Even to the point where it isn't a great idea anymore—even if the location isn't right, or the actors don't turn out. Quentin is so open to changing with the wind, he did it all the time. He was writing up until the very end. He was writing changes to the last scene of the picture. The last time he changed it was the day I came in to do it. I've got it all committed to memory and he just threw it out the window and we started over.

A quick flick into the ashtray and the thought is completed. That's all he had to say about that. Very "Cole Younger."