

The Winchester Family Business Exclusive Interview With Actor Dylan Kingwell (Young Sam)



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Supernatural fans have always had a special connection to the “Weechester” back stories, aka the episodes that feature Sam and Dean as children. Season eleven’s “Just My Imagination” was no exception. In that episode, we learned a bit about how young Sam Winchester coped with being left alone while his Dad and brother were away on hunts. The answer: An imaginary friend.

Historically the role of Young Sam has gone to Colin Ford (mostly), but now that Colin is too old for the role, a new actor had to be cast this season. Enter Dylan Kingwell, a child actor from the Vancouver area who had just the right look, skills, and charisma to tackle this important character. Through the experience, Dylan learned a lot from a first time director himself, Richard Speight Jr., and found out just how passionate and welcoming the *Supernatural* fan base can be, even though he was on a show that is about as old as him.

Dylan has been quite busy in his time as an actor, juggling school, acting, and playing hockey all at the same time. He’s been in numerous commercials, movies such as *Big Eyes* and aside from roles on *Supernatural* and *The Tomorrow People*, he had a series regular role on the recently cancelled *The Returned*. He loves being on sets and getting to know people, as well as learning from each experience so he can grow as an actor.

Nightsky and I had the honor of spending some time with Dylan this past weekend. We talked about his role on *Supernatural* and about his acting career in general and we were very impressed. I’ve personally interviewed a lot of TV actors over the years and very few were as professional, articulate and outgoing as this young man. He’s a seasoned pro at the ripe age of eleven!

Alice: How did you get the part for Young Sam? How did that come to be?

Dylan: It was a great show filming in Vancouver and I got an audition with the director - it was a director’s session - it was the only one I had and I guess they liked me because we got the email later saying that I booked it. Probably the thing that helped the most is that I do look a lot like Jared.

Alice: Were you familiar with *Supernatural*, how big it was? Is it safe to say it was on before you were born or shortly after you were born?

Dylan: Probably the same year. I’m 11 years old. A show that goes on for 11 seasons most people know about it whether they watch it or not. I definitely knew about it. I knew it had a big fanbase but I didn’t know how big it was until I was actually on the show. On the day that “Just My Imagination” aired, I must have gotten 200 or 300 twitter followers. It was great to be a part of that.

Nightsky: Had you wanted to get on *Supernatural* or was it a call out of the blue?

Dylan: I knew about it but it wasn't like, "Oh, it's my dream to be on *Supernatural*". I was aware that it was a show but I never got caught up in it. When I got the opportunity it was great.

Nightsky: Were there a lot of other actors auditioning for the Sam part when you went in for that audition?

Dylan: No, there weren't too many. There were a few kids there but I don't know if it's the time that I went or if they only auditioned a few people.



Alice: What was it like working on the set, especially compared to other sets that you've been on in Vancouver?

Dylan: It's awesome. I always love working on sets, it's the most fun thing you can do as an actor. It was really cool and as always I learned a lot. Even in one day, 8 hours, I learned so much. That's the thing that I like most besides meeting new people.

Alice: And you got to work with Richard Speight Jr. Most of the *Supernatural* fandom know this guy. He's very popular among the fans especially at the conventions - he's the master of ceremonies at all the conventions. This was his TV directorial debut so what was it like working with him in that regards?

Dylan: He gave all the advice that I needed. He was to the point but he had a good sense of humor. He made me feel very welcome, and he made me feel like I had been on the show for 11 years. He's really nice to everyone. Having a sense of humor and being very professional is the best mix, and I love directors like that. He was awesome.

Nightsky: Did you get your three scenes done in just one day of filming?

Dylan: Yeah, we did. It was pretty good. They're good with time management.

(Nightsky and I both laughed in agreement based on the stories we've heard about the crew up in Vancouver.)

Nightsky: They have it down to a science. What was it like working with Nate Torrence?

Dylan: Nate's a hoot. The thing that I remember about him most, obviously he's a great actor and he was the perfect person for Sully, but the thing I remember the most is right around when I worked on *Supernatural*, the horror movie *The Visit* came out. Did you hear about it?

Alice and Nightsky: (shaking our heads no)

Dylan: They go visit their grandma and grandpa and they're evil.

Nightsky: Oh yes, that really creepy, scary thing! I saw commercials and went, "Eww".

Dylan: Did you see the one where the grandma's laughing against the wall?

Nightsky: Yes.

Dylan: He can do that laugh perfectly and he cracked me up for like 20 minutes. He just kept doing the laugh. It was so funny.

Nightsky: I did see the previews for that movie. It scared me too much!

Dylan: I heard it was kind of cheesy, but really psychotic I guess.

Nightsky: When you were doing one of the scenes with Sully, you had to deliver the lines with your head upside down laying off of a bed. Was it hard to talk? Then you got up and immediately started lines again. I would be so dizzy! How was it to do that scene?

Dylan: Well, I did do it 27 times... I was good the first 15 and then I started feeling light-headed but I thought, "Okay, can I have some water please," and then I couldn't do it anymore. I had to tell the director and he's like, "Are you crazy for not telling me earlier?" He said, "We will never be mad at you if you are dizzy or anything or feel like you're going to be sick, you tell us right away. You should have told us earlier." I took a 20 minute break and I did it two more times and I was fine. It got harder at the end when they were doing closeups and it was just me upside down the whole time. I didn't have time to get up and have a drink of water, I had to stay down there. That's when I started to feel a little dizzy. It was okay, it was pretty good.



Nightsky: I can't imagine Nate being upside down for 27 takes!

Dylan: When we were doing the master shot, we both had to do it at the same time but when we did closeups, I did mine first so he got a break. I'm sure it was just as hard for him as it was for me.

Alice: I read on your bio that you have been acting for five years. How did you get into acting and what was it like starting so young?

Dylan: I've been acting for seven years actually. When I was about three years old my mom knew I was very personable and social. We would go to Starbucks everyday and I would go around and introduce myself to everyone, have a conversation with them. There was one guy who went there every day so I would always talk to him first. My mom sent a request of representation to Lissa Lloyd of Lloyd Talent and by the time I was four I was acting under Lissa.

Alice: How are you balancing acting with other activities like school?

Dylan: It's not that hard. We've gotten used to it. We try to make an even balance with everything because I play hockey, and I do acting and school obviously. I miss school the odd time but I'm pretty good with catching up if I miss a day or two. But if my grades go down the acting stops. So yeah, I know that, but I have no trouble. The most I missed is four days and I was caught up within two. Playing hockey, I started (acting and hockey) at the same time and they're the same commitments for me but if there's a lead role then I'll pick that over a hockey practice or maybe even a hockey game. It just depends on the situation.

(Our conversation casually carried on for a few minutes about hockey and hockey teams, including the fact that I'm a Red Wings fan and Nightsky is in Blackhawks country. We did mention Robbie Thompson's love for the Red Wings as well. I don't think we impressed this Canucks fan.)

Alice: You were recently on *The Returned*. What was that show like?

I played the role of Victor, and I was very creepy, just a kid that was lost. He gets taken in by Julie, who's played by Sandrine Holt. It really pushed my acting limits because I like to say, and I hope people agree, that I'm polar opposite of Victor. There were scenes where I had to be really evil, like get out of the way or you're done. There's something driving him to be really sad, like that lonely boy. He's lost and he doesn't know what to do so when Julie takes him in he really likes it. There's a lot of emotion involved in it.



Nightsky: I read reviews online that said you did a really great job of playing creepy. Your stares would scare people.

Dylan: On my hockey team there's a mom that doesn't call me Dylan anymore. She just calls me Victor.

Nightsky: Was it different playing Young Sam after you played a creepy character for so long? Because Young Sam is so sweet and innocent.

Dylan: I hadn't filmed it for a while so it wasn't too hard. Young Sam was a different character altogether. That was the first time that I'd played a role where I'm actually, not the first time I've been mad, but where I shouted at someone. With Victor I rarely had any lines so I had to make those emotions without speaking, which was also hard. But I've never actually shouted at someone like I shouted at Sully. That was different. But other than that, Richard gave me all the advice that I needed and it was good.

Nightsky: Did you do anything to prepare for the role, like watch Jared's or Colin Ford's performances?

Dylan: No, I didn't. I hadn't really watched any of the show before. I just came in and I had to understand the audience. To be good and know how to play your character you need to know what's happening in the scene. Like I said with Victor, he could be really happy in one scene but in the next scene he needs to be angry. You need to understand the body and it's not just reading lines off the paper. You need to get into the moment and if you can do that, you can play the role perfectly.

Nightsky: Have you had any acting training or does it come naturally to you?

I've done a few classes, most of them in the last two or three years. If there's a real big role, like feature film/blockbuster, maybe I'll go in for coaching for the audition or callback but no, I don't do too much of it. I just go in and have fun and see what happens.

Nightsky: Well you did a fantastic job. Do you get nervous when you have to do auditions or callbacks?

Dylan: No. I've been doing it for so long now that it's just kind of second nature to me. Some of the big ones, it's not like I don't stress over it at all, (but) I say to myself, "You're gonna do fine, you're gonna do great, do your best." Sometimes it's not what you did. It's just the looks and what they want the character to look like. I always go with a positive attitude and if I don't book it I don't let it bug me.

Nightsky: What do your friends in school think of you acting? Do they see you on TV?

Dylan: Yes, sometimes for commercials. They used to get upset when I had to leave early but they're not too bugged by it anymore. It's good, they're used to it.

Alice: Nightsky and I, along with a few of the other Winchester Family Business writers, have actually been to Vancouver. There's a big *Supernatural* convention there every year. One of our writers is a big shooting location buff and we've been on location tours around Vancouver. Is there a particular area of Vancouver you like to film in or has it been mostly in the studio?

Dylan: I do studios a lot but I've filmed in Stanley Park twice. One of them (was) for *Big Eyes* that I did a year or two years ago. I also did a print job there when I was six or seven and I really loved it because it had a swing set and I got to run around and have fun.

Stanley Park is my favorite place that I filmed but also *The Returned* (filmed) just outside of Vancouver. A lot of scenes were filmed in Squamish. That was awesome. Not only was I filming but I got to stay in a hotel and they had a waterslide and a pool. That was a lot of fun.

(Yep, we're laughing now. It's so refreshing to hear an actor, young or old, tell us that they love a location or job because it had a swingset or the hotel had a waterslide. I think no one can top that reasoning or answer ever! More adults should be like that.)

Alice: Is there a particular show shooting in Vancouver right now that you see and go, "Oh, I want to be on that."

Dylan: Probably *Once Upon A Time*.

Alice: Steveston! Oh, I fell in love with that area (location where *Once Upon A Time* is filmed, as well as one of my favorite *Supernatural* episodes, "Mystery Spot").



(Photo from Alice Jester)

Dylan: I love the idea of that show. I love the magic of all the characters. It'd be definitely cool to meet them. One time I was filming a commercial and I was at the studio when they were filming *Once Upon A Time*. They were two away from us. It was pretty cool.

Nightsky: You were close.

Dylan: Yeah, pretty close.

Alice: You were recently in the pilot, *The Wilding*. That's supposed to air on the USA Network for us if picked up. Is there anything you can say about that role or that show?

Dylan: Since it hasn't aired yet I'm not allowed to say much about it. But I can say it was a ton of fun and I got to do my own mini stunts.

Alice: That's fantastic! There's no word though on whether that will be a long term thing or not?

Dylan: Not yet.

Alice: Do you have any future projects coming up?

Dylan: I recently started doing voiceover. I might have a bit of that but nothing set in stone. There's a series filming in Vancouver that I have a callback for on Monday, so we'll see about that. Nothing that I've booked yet but cross my fingers.

Alice: What can you tell us about interacting with the *Supernatural* fans online or what this role has done for your popularity?

Dylan: It was pretty amazing to see how many tweets I was getting saying, "Oh, you did a great job." It is really nice when people take the time to give you feedback. It was really cool. I've never seen anything much like it. I've never talked in person with any really big *Supernatural* fans but I know that all of those people that were giving me tweets are pretty big fans. It was really cool. I've never experienced something like it.



A huge thanks to Dylan Kingwell for taking time out of his schedule to talk to us and share his very mature perspective about the business. It was a real pleasure! We can only hope that he'll be back again to film more of the Young Sam role, because there's plenty of backstory to still share in our minds. In the meantime, *Once Upon A Time*, you're missing out on a really great actor here!

Interview arranged by Noodlehead Productions P.R.