

## My Weekend With Cameron Mathison

Written by Kathryn Anderson  
Friday, 30 June 2000 16:00

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How lucky can one fan get?

On Saturday, June 10 and Sunday, June 11, 2000, All My Children fans in Chicago got a special treat. A whole weekend with Cameron Mathison (Ryan Lavery). Cameron appeared at Zanies Comedy Club in Vernon Hills for a personal appearance on June 10th, and on June 11th, both Cameron and his on-screen love interest, Esta Terblanche (Gillian Andrassy), hosted a Ryan and Gillian fan luncheon. The luncheon was held at 11:00 am at the Holiday Inn O'Hare Hotel.

For the first event on Saturday, I arrived at Zanies an hour before showtime to ensure I had good seats. Surprisingly, about 20 fans were already there, but I got a good seat anyway! By the time the show began, the audience filled to about 60 and we were all cheering Cameron on.

This was the first opportunity for me to see Cameron in person, but I had heard many wonderful things about him from others who had seen him at similar events. All those comments were positive. I never heard one negative thing about him from people who had seen him in the past. However, nothing that I had heard about him, no matter how positive, prepared me for how warm and supportive he was to the fans.

The first question out of his mouth was if we were happy that Ryan and Gillian were back together. Everyone in the audience cheered and applauded. Cameron got serious for a minute and said that it was only due to us fans that Ryan and Gillian were reunited, and he was thankful for all the hard work the fans did in supporting them as a couple last year.

Cameron then talked about All My Children for about 20 minutes. I was impressed that he asked the audience for feedback on all the storylines, and not just his. He admitted that he was initially excited about the incredible dreams.com storyline, but when it started, he was disappointed that it was about nothing more than the Cynthia scam. He also stated that Jake is indeed returning, but that he believes that Ryan and Gillian will overcome this obstacle eventually.

Next was a Question & Answer session, and the questions he was asked were not only about himself and his life, but also questions Cameron is always asked, like when is Maria coming back? (Unfortunately, he said she is not.) He was kind and gracious to all who asked him questions, even those that clearly ruffled him, like questions about his personal life. Unfortunately, some members of the audience could not respect his request for privacy. He was

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still very accommodating, however, and answered them as much as he could.

My wonderful Saturday afternoon with Cameron ended with a meet and greet session with everyone who was there. I told Cameron how happy I was that Ryan and Gillian are back together again. The man is even more gorgeous up close and personal than he is from 25 feet away.

For the fan luncheon on Sunday, I arrived early, and am I glad I did. I had time to purchase some raffle tickets. The prize was something any AMC fan would cherish, a chance to sit next to Cameron and Esta during lunch. I was thrilled when my friend Amanda, who runs the website, "Ryan & Gillian: Love Conquers All," won the raffle to sit next to Esta during lunch.

Immediately following the lunch, Cameron and Esta had an auction of various items. It was very exciting to see all the fans outbid each other. In fact, Esta herself got into the action when she bid on Cameron's Canadian flag boxer shorts!

Items that Cameron and Esta brought for the auction included a pair of Gillian's shoes which she wore to bail Ryan out of jail, various scripts, Cameron's Canadian boxer shorts, and 8 X 10 glossy pictures of Ryan and Gillian during their recent reunion scenes. The highest bid was \$300.00, which was a script of the 30th Anniversary show signed by all cast members.

However, the most exciting item that was offered for bid was a dance with Cameron! Two women got into a bidding war, and Cameron himself finally stopped it at \$250.00. For that price, both women got a dance with Cameron, along with a video tape of the dance. I bid on, and won, an 8 X 10 glossy of Ryan and Gillian, and had both Cameron and Esta sign it. The thrill of the bidding aside, it was all for a good cause. The proceeds of the auction went to the favorite charities of Cameron and Esta.

Seeing Cameron and Esta interact together was even a better treat than my experience with Cameron the day before at Zanies Comedy Club. The chemistry these two share on-screen no doubt comes from the wonderful rapport and mutual respect that they share off-screen. It was clear that they have a unique friendship. They are a great team. They even complimented each other during the luncheon. There was no competition and no egos between these two. Neither one tried to outshine the other or steal the spotlight. For example, while Cameron was finishing

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up signing autographs, Esta held a Question & Answer session. When asked what it is like kissing Cameron, she responded that she doesn't know because they are fake kissing, but the fake kissings are good!

When asked what sort of story she would like for Gillian, Esta stated how she would like something that doesn't involve a man! (Esta is clearly not an AMC writer). She also gave the audience an inspiring pep talk. She said never give up on your dreams. She used herself as an example and said how she never gave up on her dreams, and it did pay off. Then, she treated the audience to a sample of her native tongue, Afrikanaas.

Thoroughly impressed with both Cameron and Esta during the entire afternoon, I am considering traveling to Arkansas to see them together again at another appearance next month.

For more on the romance of AMC's Ryan Lavery and Princess Gillian Andrassy, visit [Ryan and Gillian Love Conquers All](#)