

Falling From Grace

Brian Gaskill recently lost his lofty perch as PORT CHARLES's favorite angel, only to swiftly land as a hot new character on BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL. The actor also has experienced a lot of change in his outlook on life, too, which he shares with us here.

By Joanne Gallo

SOAP OPERA WEEKLY: Who or what inspired you when you were growing up?

BRIAN GASKILL: When I was a kid, I wanted to be an animator for Disney. I liked fairy tales and that's what I love about the whole Rafe and Alison thing -- I believed in fairy tales. I like the little story of it, something that makes you believe in magic. As an actor in the '80s I looked at people like **William Hurt**. I always thought that was the ideal career. You went to acting school and you did theater in your 20s and built your career slowly, and by the time you're 30 you have finally grown into yourself and can do movies. Then in the '90s the teen-agers took over the world. I was a little frustrated with my whole idea of the way this career was supposed to go because everybody wants you to be 14 years old.

Also, I have to say, when I was a kid sitting and watching movies with my mom it was always the older movies. Daytime television, where you get to play scenes of people dealing with other people, is a lot closer to what I thought acting was going to be like when I watched the older movies. Now you don't get that so much in movies, maybe in independent films.

WEEKLY: What are your ultimate goals for the future?

GASKILL: Businesswise I want to be able to continue to tell stories, touch peoples' lives in some way. But basically I want to continue to make a living. I want to find peace and be happy. I have spent most of my life not being happy and repressing whatever happy feelings I have had. From when I was 7 years old, to when my parents got divorced, I ran away from myself. I was not shy growing up and then somewhere along the line I began suppressing myself. For the first time in my life I feel like I'm finding the child within, and that is really one of my goals to work on. Also, I grew up an only child and I have a half sister. She wasn't born until I was 18, and she was with my father. That is another reason why I might be introverted, I spent a lot of time alone. I wasn't allowed to watch TV during the week.

WEEKLY: Do you still think of yourself as introverted?

GASKILL: Not in the same way that I was. But I guess I am and it can come off as being stuck-up sometimes. But really, I'm just terrified of people. Sometimes I am afraid of shaking a man's hand. There are some people who have helped me discover who I used to be. It's like the scene in *Swingers*: You realize there are souls out there, and you get to know more people. You start to take the risk in that new person you are becoming and that becomes exciting.

WEEKLY: So is it intimidating doing press for the show and meeting the fans?

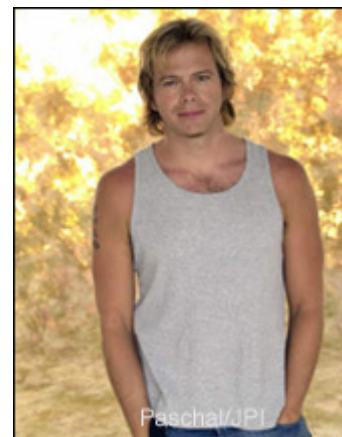
GASKILL: No, because I know most of the fans listen to what I have to say through the character and myself. We do reach out to people and I take that seriously. It's not that fear or overwhelming sensation. But I realize the only reason why I am here is to help people and inspire people.

WEEKLY: What makes you the most happy?

GASKILL: The moment where I can accept myself and breathe a huge sigh of relief. I also just discovered recently that I want a family. I want to be around family and I don't love living alone. I think I should know how to do it, but I don't necessarily like it. I want to be around other people and that makes me happy when I get close to that. In the past, I have been in relationships where that was work and that was that and you had to keep them separated. You hope you can find someone where you don't have to separate it, and it makes you a better artist.

WEEKLY: What qualities are most important to you in a friend?

GASKILL: Someone who is accepting and forgiving, and you like yourself when you're around that person.



Time ran out for Rafe and his angel buddies.

ABC