

Canning
and co-star
Matt Davis in
*The Vampire
Diaries*



GOTHIC GIRL

Sara Canning's
dark side.

Hanging out in haunted mansions and foggy cemeteries is all in a day's work for Sara Canning, one of the stars of The CW's *The Vampire Diaries*. From the time the 22-year-old actress was a teen, she admits to being smitten with dark and romantic Dracula figures. On the hit series, she plays Jenna Sommers, a college student who is tasked with raising her suddenly orphaned teenaged niece and nephew. Just before she landed that dream role, she was wrapping up production on *Black Field*, a Gothic drama set in 1870s rural Manitoba that opens this month. "The movie is about a pair of sisters who are the sole survivors of a typhoid outbreak that killed their entire family," explains Canning. "They have to look after this farm on their own until a mysterious stranger appears and the sisters get drawn into a love triangle." Canning mastered a Scottish brogue, learned turn-of-the-century farming techniques and donned a punishing costume for the role. "Even though my character had to do hard, physical labour, she still had to wear a corset!" says Canning, laughing. Body-hugging bodices couldn't be further from Canning's personal style. This "jeans kind of girl" sticks to the basics in order to support her active lifestyle. "I'm busy all the time, running around from audition to audition and squeezing other interests—life, in general—into my schedule, so I don't let clothes or anything else slow me down." Canning's can-do attitude has been a major force in her recent success in the industry. "It has never been an option for me to fail," she says earnestly. "I think that goes for anyone with a passion: Don't ever be satisfied—always be curious, always crave more." ALANNAH O'NEILL

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