

# Applause, Applause

Eva La Rue

Maria, *All My Children*

Outstanding performer for the week of July 8

■ THERE IS A TERRIFYING KIND OF EMOTIONAL torment that leaves its victim so out of control, so hysterical, that no sound comes out of her mouth when she cries. Such was the **chilling intensity** of Eva La Rue's (Maria) performance on *All My Children* during the scenes at the Pine Valley Airport when Edmund took Sam out of her arms and returned the baby to Kelsey. I will never forget the image of La Rue, crumpled both emotionally and physically, holding Sam's baby bootie in her hand as if that small piece of fabric was the only thing that would keep her alive.

La Rue has been **extraordinary** during the entire custody storyline. She has **risen to the challenge** provided by the writers and should be very proud of her work, her best to date. Even if you've never had a child, seeing her take Maria to the brink of insanity was **mesmerizing**.

For Maria, who had wanted a child so badly, losing Sam pushed her **over the edge**. When she later told Dimitri that she wanted to die, she meant it. She probably would have taken her own life had she not run into her brother-in-law at the hunting lodge.

Though Maria didn't die, the character, according to La Rue, will never be the same. "I think it's left an indelible mark — even if Edmund and Maria get back together," she says. "I don't think that emotionally she'll ever really be able to forgive him for those moments, even when Maria comes to terms with the fact that Edmund was right. She didn't give Sam to him, he took him, but she would never have given in to him taking the baby if she didn't know somewhere deep down that he was right. Unfortunately, he was the messenger, and part of her had to kill him."

By the end of the storyline, La Rue was about as **emotionally exhausted** as Maria was. "John (Callahan, who plays Edmund) and I both concur — that's the hardest we've ever worked for such a long stretch," La Rue says. ✱

— GABRIELLE WINKEL

