

= Whitney Russell =

Whitney Russell is a fictional character in the American television soap opera *Passions*, which aired on NBC from 1999 to 2007 and on DirecTV in 2007 ? 08 . *Passions* followed the romantic and supernatural adventures in the fictional , coastal , New England town of Harmony . The role of Whitney was created by the soap 's creator and head writer James E. Reilly ; the character was portrayed by Brook Kerr from the series ' debut on July 5 , 1999 , to September 7 , 2007 . In 2005 , Sidne Siobhan Phillips portrayed the character in flashbacks .

Whitney is a member of *Passions* ' Russell family ; she is introduced as the eldest daughter of Eve Russell and T.C. Russell , and the sister of Simone Russell . The character is primarily shown as a confidant to Theresa Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald Crane but her later storylines focus on her romance with Chad Harris @-@ Crane and the possibility they may be engaging in an incestuous relationship . Following Chad 's death , she leaves Harmony to raise her children Miles Harris @-@ Crane and his unnamed sibling in New Orleans with the support of her father and sister .

Kerr 's performance was praised by critics ; she was nominated for the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Daytime Drama Series at the 39th NAACP Image Awards . She was also nominated for the 2005 Soap Opera Digest Awards ' Outstanding Younger Lead Actress , and with co @-@ stars Lindsay Hartley and Justin Hartley for the Favorite Triangle award .

= = Development = =

= = = Background = = =

Whitney Russell is one of the 25 original contract cast members created by the program 's co @-@ creator James E. Reilly . In the series , the residents of the fictional , coastal , New England town of Harmony struggle with romantic and familial issues while also contending with supernatural threats . Sheraton Kalouria , senior vice president of NBC 's daytime programming , said Whitney and the Russell family were created and casted in an attempt to build characters " as diverse as the U.S. " and to set the show apart from other soap operas . He added the show 's racially diverse ensemble represented by " the African American Russells and the Hispanic Lopez @-@ Fitzgeralds " reflects " its truly color @-@ blind storytelling " . Each member of the Russell family was designed to be " an integral part of the show " in an attempt to avoid creating token characters . Rodney Van Johnson , who plays the family 's patriarch T.C. Russell , later said in an interview with *Jet* :

We are the only daytime drama with a full African @-@ American family . The Russells have a key role in the community . There aren 't just a flash in the pan . The storylines are heavy . The show has received a huge response from the African @-@ American community for that reason .

= = = Casting and characterization = = =

*Passions* ' casting director Jacklynn Briskey originally rejected 29 @-@ year @-@ old Brook Kerr for the role of Whitney Russell , believing she would look too mature to play a teenager . Despite the rejection , Kerr 's husband Christopher Warren sent in his wife 's head shots into the network and she was hired to play the character . Kerr later described the week of auditioning and two screen tests to be formally cast in the role as " very fast for me " .

Kerr described Whitney as initially being " so goal @-@ oriented " and without a sense of balance . Dana Block from *Tulsa World* described Whitney as " the good girl daughter ... who didn 't concern herself with much else " . While discussing her portrayal of the character , Kerr said , " I was always the sensible one , the friend everyone could count on , always doing what I should " . She said her scenes with love interest Chad Harris @-@ Crane allowed her to explore more of Whitney 's independence and described her portrayal of Whitney 's guilt and confusion at the possibility of Chad being her half @-@ brother and giving birth to his child as allowing her to act the character in new and different ways .

Whitney 's storylines with Chad received mixed responses from other Passions cast members . Charles Divins , who was one of the two actors portraying Chad , said the characters ' tumultuous romance met viewers ' expectations for a soap opera and added , " People watch soaps as an escape . People need drama . Whether you love it or hate it , people will talk about it . ? Near the end of the show , Tracey Ross , who portrayed Russell family matriach Eve Russell , stated " I was never crazy about the incest storyline with Whitney and Chad " .

= = Storylines = =

Whitney Russell 's early appearances focus on helping her childhood friend Theresa Lopez @-@ Fitzgerald with her relationship with attorney Ethan Winthrop and her rivalry with Gwen Winthrop . Whitney is initially portrayed as constantly looking up to her parents Eve and T.C. Russell for guidance , and devoting her life to tennis and school at their insistence . She is unaware of her mother 's past drug abuse , and relationship and child with Julian Crane . Whitney briefly dates private detective Frank Lomax , but their relationship rapidly deteriorates when she discovers he was hired to report Theresa for stalking Ethan . Shortly after the break @-@ up , Whitney meets and falls in love with Chad Harris but he becomes involved in a relationship with her sister Simone . Eve discourages Whitney from pursuing a relationship with Chad , fearing he will be a bad influence on her daughter in the same way Julian was on her teenage self . T.C. disapproves of Whitney having relationships that will distract her from tennis . Whitney 's relationship with Chad is complicated by Simone 's crush on him . Whitney and Chad keep their romantic and sexual encounters secret for years while he pretends to be in love with Simone . The love triangle continues until Simone catches Whitney kissing Chad . Simone publicly breaks up with Chad and tells everyone in Harmony about his relationship with Whitney . During 2003 , Whitney 's connection with Chad steadily unravels after the discovery of his marriage to Latoya Harris and her attempt to murder Whitney .

In 2004 , Eve 's vengeful adoptive sister Liz Sanbourne arranges for Eve 's past relationship with Julian to be exposed to the Russell family and the rest of Harmony , resulting in Chad being erroneously identified as their son . The possible incestuous implications of Whitney 's relationship with Chad serves as her primary storyline on the soap opera . Whitney initially rejects her mother for hiding her past with Julian , but they reconnect by singing at the Blue Note , a local jazz club . Whitney briefly considers pursuing a career in music and frequently sings at the Blue Note . Vocalist Jania Foxworth was selected as Whitney 's singing voice ; Kerr lip @-@ synchronized during her scenes . When the possibility Chad could be Eve 's son is revealed , Whitney discovers she is pregnant with Chad 's child ( would later be known as Miles Harris @-@ Crane ) and initially keeps her pregnancy secret . Whitney initiates a relationship with Fox Crane to insinuate he is the father of her unborn child and to protect herself and her child from the stigma of incest . She originally plans to drug and rape Fox to make the cover story believable , but could not complete her plans because they conflict with her moral and ethical beliefs . The couple eventually have consensual sex and Fox identifies himself as the father of her baby . While Fox helps search for Theresa 's missing daughter Jane Winthrop , Whitney persuades him to leave her with his power of attorney . On March 23 , 2005 , she gives birth to a son and immediately uses Fox 's power of attorney to put him up for adoption . Two couples ? Julian and Eve , and T.C. and Liz ? compete to adopt the boy but Chad is awarded custody of the child . He attempts to use the child to reconnect with Whitney . Whitney and Chad name their baby Miles Davis Harris after jazz musician Miles Davis .

The storyline escalates during the earthquake and tsunami in the show 's 2005 summertime extravaganza . Whitney has sex with Chad in the middle of the tsunami and admits to Chad he is Miles 's biological father . Fox overhears her confessions and ends his relationship with her . Whitney is overwhelmed by guilt and shame by the assumption of committing incest ; she joins a convent to become closer to God and prepares to take holy orders . At the convent , she is manipulated by Alistair Crane , who is disguised as a messenger of God as part of his scheme to steal a chalice from the Pope 's private chambers and take over the world . Identified as the Vendetta plot , the show 's 2006 summertime extravaganza centers on Alistair luring Whitney , Chad , and several other residents of Harmony to Rome . While in Rome , Chad is given his birth

certificate by tabloid editor JT Cornell and discovers he was conceived during Alistair 's rape of Liz . Following the revelation of his true paternity , Chad restarts his relationship with Whitney and they decide to raise their son together .

On December 26 , 2006 , Whitney marries Chad and takes his last name , becoming known as Whitney Russell Harris @-@ Crane . Unbeknown to Whitney , Chad previously began a sexual relationship with the tabloid reporter Vincent Clarkson and continues the affair after their reunion and wedding . Chad is unaware Vincent is actually his half @-@ brother because he is Eve and Julian 's child . Whitney becomes increasingly suspicious of Chad 's fidelity after discovering she is pregnant with their second child . Vincent arranges for Whitney to catch him having sex with Chad in a gay bar , causing her to file for divorce . The estranged couple start to reconcile as they try to help Theresa and Ethan reunite , but the possibility of a union is cut short when Alistair kills Chad on August 28 , 2007 ; Chad dies while professing his love for Whitney and their children . As a result of Alistair 's actions , Whitney chooses to delete Crane from her name and asks to be known as Mrs. Harris . After saying goodbye to Theresa and Eve , Whitney leaves Harmony and moves to New Orleans to live with her sister and son . T.C. is later said to have moved there to help her . On January 2 , 2008 , Whitney contacts police chief Sam Bennett to say she is willing to testify at Alistair 's murder trial . This proves unnecessary when Viki Chatsworth kills Alistair . On July 16 , 2008 , a letter from Simone to her friend Kay Bennett discloses that Whitney has given birth to her child ; the exact date of birth , and the child 's gender and name are never revealed .

Trever Kimball of TVSeriesFinale.com reported Kerr 's exit was a result of the cut in costs during the show 's transition to DirecTV . The show 's budget was reduced by " a reported \$ 4 @-@ to- \$ 5 million " to secure the renewal on a new network .

= = Reception = =

Kerr was nominated for the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Actress in a Daytime Drama Series at the 39th NAACP Image Awards for her portrayal of Whitney . She was also nominated for Outstanding Younger Lead Actress , and alongside co @-@ stars Lindsay and Justin Hartley for the Favorite Triangle award at the 2005 Soap Opera Digest Awards .

The exact nature of Whitney 's relationship with Chad attracted frequent speculation from media outlets and fans . The incest storyline led media outlets to sensationalize Harmony as the place where " half @-@ siblings sleep with one another " . An article in Soap Opera Digest listed the 2006 revelation that Whitney and Chad were not related by blood as one of Passions ' most shocking secrets .