

FALL TELEVISION REVIEW

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THERE ARE TOO MANY GOOD TELEVISION SHOWS THAT REVIEWING THEM ON A WEEK-BY-WEEK BASIS WAS NOT GOING TO CUT IT. TO FIX THAT, THE INDEX HAS PUT TOGETHER A COMPILATION OF SHORT REVIEWS OF A FEW OF OUR FAVORITES.

THE WALKING DEAD

SUNDAYS AT 9 P.M. ON AMC

HIT

I wrote a "Hit or Miss" about a month ago in which I deemed "The Walking Dead" season five marketing campaign a miss because of the producer's angle that audiences wanted more blood, more death, more angst and more of what we already have seen.

While I expected it in the premiere episode a few weeks ago, more is exactly what we got. I'll admit my faith in "The Walking Dead" sometimes wavers, but I was pleasantly surprised by how much I enjoyed the premiere episode.

Unlike the temporary salvation the prison provided during season three, Rick's group doesn't stay in Terminus — the supposed safe haven they found at the end of last season — for long, and quickly break out by episode's end. There's a surprise appearance after the credits roll by Morgan, whom we saw in the pilot episode and again during season three. For the few brief seconds we see him, he seems to be less crazy and up to something that could help with the zombie problem. But that's all speculation and my incessant hope for the show to go in that direction.

Father Gabriel, a character from the comics, is introduced during the second episode, spouting stuff about God and the world. It was reminiscent of Hershel's rambling during season two. In fact, episode two of this season felt a lot like season two, with the group wandering around in a forest.

The Terminus folks are proving to be just as creepy as they seemed when we first met them last season. As opposed to previous villains, like The Governor, I feel like they are being treated as victims of circumstance. Because of this, the audience finds themselves potentially siding with morally ambiguous characters. I still think the marketing campaign was not the way to go, but at least the writers seems to be following through with those promises.

Created by the same minds behind "Arrow," "The Flash" is a welcome surprise in this year's fall line-up.

Grant Gustin, who plays Barry Allen, first appeared for a two-episode arc during "Arrow" season two, at the end of which he was struck by lightning.

Though these two series are working in tandem, they are quite different. Where "Arrow" is dark and gritty — its title character having a lot of demons to work through — "The Flash" has a lighter tone, and most of that is because of Gustin. With his boyish looks, he portrays Barry with a naiveté that is appropriate for this up-and-coming hero.

The show seems like it will focus on family more than anything, with the strongest relationship the one between Barry and Detective Joe West, a man who basically raised him after Barry's father was arrested for the murder of Barry's mother.

There are a few concerns, and the biggest one is the villains. So far, each episode's villains are other "metahumans," people affected by the same storm that turned Barry into the "fastest man alive." They each have different powers like controlling the weather, multiplying themselves or turning into poisonous gas. In short, they are lame versions of X-Men. With the metahumans comes lazy writing in how to defeat them. Once, Barry pulled a Superman and ran in the opposite direction a tornado was spinning to make it go away. Twice, he defeated the bad guys by tiring them out.

However, good news hit the Internet recently — the two leading men of "Prison Break," Wentworth Miller and Dominic Purcell, have been cast as two of Barry's biggest enemies — Captain Cold (Miller) and Heat Wave (Purcell). In fact, Miller's first appearance occurred during Tuesday's episode "Going Rogue," and Purcell's first appearance will be during episode 10. Hopefully we will see them team up in future episodes.

THE FLASH

TUESDAYS AT 8 P.M. ON THE CW

HIT

SUPERNATURAL

TUESDAYS AT 9 P.M. ON THE CW

MISS

It's a little tricky talking about "Supernatural" because its 10th season started a few weeks ago.

Ten seasons is a long time, and there's a reason the show has lasted that long — it's good. But so far, I'm just not digging season 10. In fact, I would go so far as to say it's boring. I don't want to say that because I know what "Supernatural" can be and what "Supernatural" has been, and I know it can be better.

Throughout these first few episodes, everyone just seems so tired. Not just the characters, but the actors as well. Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles are talented actors, but I'm not seeing the same life they've put into the characters of Sam and Dean during the past. And it's not like "Supernatural" hasn't had its setbacks before — season six was a bit rocky and let's not even talk about season seven — but at least then Padalecki and Ackles seemed to enjoy what they were doing.

I think part of the problem is because it's been on for 10 seasons, everything seems like recycled dialogue or recycled plot lines. One brother is dead or dying and the other must save him no matter the cost. Case in point — this season starts off with Dean as a demon — not just possessed by one, but totally and completely a demon. Sam goes sort of dark side à la season four to try to save him.

Castiel might be under the influence of stolen grace, but now he's partnered with a female angel, which is exciting for two reasons — one, Hannah, the angel, is a parallel to Castiel from season four and five as she is learning how to be more human, and two, she's one of the longest running female characters on "Supernatural." There seems to be a relationship growing between Castiel and Hannah. There's still a lot of season to go, but based on this start I'm still convinced that season 10 needs to be the last.

"Arrow" probably is my favorite show on television right now. Although it took half of season one for the show to find its footing, season two had the most consistent, brilliant writing last year. Season three looks like it's continuing that trend.

"Arrow" follows Oliver Queen, who became a bow-and-arrow wielding vigilante called The Arrow after he discovered how corrupt Starling City was. He also spent five years on an island learning various skills that allow him to fight crime.

The only word I can think of to describe season three is "awesome." Oliver is struggling with identity issues — should he be Oliver Queen or hide under his hood as The Arrow? This, of course, gets in the way of his budding relationship with tech-girl and partner-in-crime, Felicity, who is working at a "Best Buy-esque" store. Diggle, Oliver's bodyguard and best friend, is a new dad. Honestly, I forget about how strong of a character Diggle is because he seems to spend a lot of the time in the background. But then he's thrown into the spotlight for his own episodes and I wonder why he doesn't get more of them. The best "Diggle-centric" episodes so far are season two's "Suicide Squad" and season three's "Corto Maltese."

Fans of the Green Arrow comics probably were not surprised by the season three premiere ending, and I will admit I was deeply saddened by the turn of events. But the good thing to come out of it is Laurel, Oliver's lawyer ex-girlfriend, who was reduced to having an alcohol and drug habit during season two. Now, based on the premiere ending, season three is looking to be a slow build-up of Laurel's own superhero origin — and I cannot wait to witness it.

Brandon Routh, who played Superman in the 2006 movie "Superman Returns," is new to the cast this season as Ray Palmer. Palmer has taken over Queen Consolidated, formerly owned by Oliver. He looks to be taking over Felicity's heart as well, and is actually a future Justice League member called The Atom. Right now, he's just Ray Palmer, and it's so much fun to watch. It's still fairly early during the season to accurately guess how it will turn out, so I'll just end with this — can "Arrow" finally get an Emmy nomination for best stunt coordination? That would be great.

ARROW

WEDNESDAYS AT 8 P.M. ON THE CW

HIT