

## TV Review: ABC's 'Take the Money and Run' Gets Too Goofy

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on August 2, 2011 - 10:15am

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CHICAGO – The first ten minutes or so of ABC's new reality competition series "Take the Money and Run" is relatively promising and entertaining. Then it all gets very, very silly. Not unlike watching other people stage a fake murder mystery, the foundation of "Take the Money and Run" falls away when the people involved start taking the proceedings WAY too seriously. By the end, I wasn't sure if the entirety of the show wasn't a complete scam. Don't watch. Just run.



TV Rating: **2.0/5.0**

The relatively-clever concept from the team behind "The Amazing Race" is to merge reality competition with the popular trend of police procedurals. "It's C.S.I. meets Survivor!!" That may be a slight exaggeration, but it's not far off. Each episode starts with a pair (brothers in the premiere) getting a briefcase worth \$100,000. The pair has one hour to hide that briefcase wherever they want (it's the city of San Francisco in the premiere but it will reportedly change locations). Then the cops have 48 hours to find it. If they don't find it, the contestants keep the money. If they do, it goes to the cops. At their disposal are the contestant's cell phone records, GPS tracking of their car, and, here's where it gets goofy, 48 hours of interrogation.

The interrogators are essentially actors who carry over from episode to episode — Detective Paul Bishop and Deputy District Attorney Mary Hanlon Stone. They're not in the running for the money and they're clearly playing up their roles for the camera as the action of the premiere starts to weigh heavier and heavier on their faux interrogations. I say "faux" because there's a basic oddity to what's happening here that the producers of the show just can't overcome. Watching fake criminals interrogated by people who can't really arrest them (because they haven't actually committed a crime) is just weird, especially when the criminals start to crack under the pressure. Isn't the mental pressure of interrogation heavily dependent on actually going to jail? There's NO CRIME here. Would you really have difficulty maintaining your cool for 48 hours if 100K was on the line? Would you really "break"?



Take the Money and Run

Photo credit: ABC

Perhaps the contestants on "Take the Money and Run" are so deeply involved in their game that they start to take it seriously but the basic foundation of criminal and cop in that one can actually arrest the other one isn't there and so the psychological pressure should be significantly less. Maybe I've overestimating but I could easily take solitary confinement and a few fake interrogations for \$100K. Being worried that I might give away where I put the money is one thing but actually succumbing to pressure and confessing would never happen.

The constant threat of one of the brothers confessing in the premiere of "Take the Money and Run" makes the whole thing feel oddly fake. It's too bad because there's a decent idea here. It's not always the case in an interrogation that the cop knows for a fact that the subject has committed a crime but such is the case here. The "cop" knows the "criminal" is lying. Could the criminal keep his story straight long enough to win? They didn't need to bog it down in silly theatrics to make it effective.

Where would you hide \$100k? How would you cover your tracks and what accomplices would you call in to help you? What if you only had an hour? And, if you were a cop, how would you put yourself in your opponent's shoes? It's a clever idea for a reality competition show but concept is only half the battle in the world of TV and the execution here goes from gripping to goofy too quickly to do anything but flee from future episodes.

*"Take the Money and Run" premieres on ABC on Tuesday, August 2nd, 2011 at 8pm CST.*



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