

TV Review: Stana Katic, Nathan Fillion Continue to Carry ‘Castle’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 19, 2011 - 1:47pm

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CHICAGO – The new season of ABC’s hit “Castle” picks up right where the stunning cliffhanger of season three left off. Kate (Stana Katic) has been shot. Castle (Nathan Fillion) has confessed his love for her in the emotion of the moment. And we race with everyone to the hospital as they try to save Kate’s life.



Television Rating: **3.5/5.0**

Of course, they’re not going to kill one of the most popular stars on television, but the opening scenes of the fourth season of this above-average thriller create quality tension nonetheless. It’s a bit melodramatic but illustrates one of the main reasons this show works — we believe and like these characters. Through the stellar work by Stana Katic and Nathan Fillion, we’ve come to love and care about them. Even though we know that Kate will make it, we get tense at the very suggestion that she won’t. I adore the simple, old-fashioned, star-making work done here by Fillion and Katic and couldn’t be happier that “Castle” has become a steady, reliable, beloved hit for them.



Castle: Season Four

Photo credit: ABC

After the very-intense opening few minutes (more so than the entirety of all the intense moments in the first three seasons combined), the season premiere of “Castle” settles in a bit. There’s still some recovery to be done after Kate’s heart stopped due to the shooting and there are certainly some emotional bridges to be crossed after Richard’s proclamation of love and Kate’s boyfriend blaming him for putting her in that situation.



Castle: Season Four
Photo credit: ABC

Of course, it takes some time for Kate's recovery in hospital and so the program has to jump forward several months with a new Police Chief (Penny Johnson Jerald from "24"), new tension, and a missing Castle. I won't spoil how any of that plays out or the challenges faced by both Kate and Castle as the majority of the episode unfolds, but you should know that the show jumps right back into another mystery of the week, but this time it's headed by Esposito (Jon Huertas), and Ryan (Seamus Dever) while Beckett and Castle deal with the ripple effect of the shooting (and the whole gang continues to secretly investigate the shooting and the murder of Beckett's mother).

What's notable to me about the season premiere of "Castle" is how comfortable these two great actors look in these roles (and, to be fair, the supporting cast as well). They've been great since day one (having arguably the best pilot chemistry of the last several years) but they're even better with each passing season. Their chemistry, their characterizations, their attention to detail — Nathan Fillion and Stana Katic are simply two of the best actors on television. This kind of material may seem easy compared to the melodrama on other network dramas but it's not. They rarely get the flashy moments. They rarely get the heartfelt speeches. They just rock scene to scene to scene. Watch the interaction between the two of them in their first post-shooting scene and try and argue otherwise.

I've been a fan of Katic and Fillion's work on "Castle" (even suggesting both, especially Stana, as possible Emmy nominees) for years but I've often complained that the writing needed to be beefed up a bit to match their performances. I still feel that way, but it's becoming less of a problem. It helps that the season premiere hints at a depth that hasn't often been seen in the first three seasons of the ABC hit, Fillion and Katic can do even more dramatic work than they do here. Give them something meaty, which it feels like the writers are very slowly doing, and this show could go from an above-average mystery series to one of the most addictive on television. That is if you're not hooked already.

'Castle,' which airs on ABC, returns on September 19th, 2011 at 9PM CST. It stars Nathan Fillion, Stana Katic, Molly C. Quinn, Susan Sullivan, Tamala Jones, Jon Huertas, and Seamus Dever. It was created by Andrew Marlowe.



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