

TV Review: NBC's 'Saving Hope' Takes Supernatural Approach to Hospital Melodrama

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 7, 2012 - 11:32am

- [Brian Tallerico](#) [2]
- [Daniel Gillies](#) [3]
- [Erica Durance](#) [4]
- [Ghost](#) [5]
- [Grey's Anatomy](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [Michael Shanks](#) [8]
- [NBC](#) [9]
- [Saving Hope](#) [10]
- [Television](#) [11]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [12]

CHICAGO – If the pitch line of “Ghost meets Grey’s Anatomy” sounds like something that intrigues you, NBC has a show for your melodramatic soul, the often-nauseatingly cliched and over-done “Saving Hope,” a Canadian import filling the black hole on Thursday nights that this network used to dominate but now only brings ratings sadness.



TV Rating: **2.5/5.0**

To be clear, I like “Ghost” and “Grey’s Anatomy” wasn’t bad at the beginning. What I mean is that the cheesy concept of a show in which a doctor lies in a coma and communicates with other patients in comas while he keeps an eye on his doctor girlfriend and tries to figure out how to get back to the real world isn’t inherently bad. Oh, it’s inherently ridiculous. But if “Saving Hope” had figured out a way to have fun with its concept by integrating into a genre in need of some new life; if it was crafted by clever writers, the show could have overcome its Velveeta set-up. Sadly, it doesn’t come close to doing so, mining the depths of melodrama in its pitch and genre instead of finding interesting characters, despite the best efforts of its talented lead.



Saving Hope
Photo credit: NBC

Hope-Zion Hospital Chief of Surgery Charlie Harris (Michael Shanks of “Stargate Atlantis”) and surgeon Alex Reid (Erica Durance of “Smallville”) are a beautiful couple on their way to marriage when a car accident puts the former in a coma. Not only does it throw Alex for a loop but it sends the whole hospital into a tailspin. Little does anyone know that Charlie can see it all “Ghost”-like as he watches Alex struggle both professionally and emotionally. Does Charlie’s state mean he’s a ghost, headed to the afterlife before his body is dead, or can he return to the land of the living?

The most unusual thing about “Saving Hope” is how much it plays like little more than a generic medical drama outside of its “Ghost” twist.

The non-supernatural elements of "Saving Hope" seem straight out of the medical melodrama cliches playbook almost to the point that one forgets that Hope-Zion is essentially haunted. We've seen this kind of manipulative, heartstring-tugging material before and it's not written well enough here to make it interesting again.

What does save "Hope" is the natural charisma of Erica Durance, a woman who could easily be a star on a better show. She's very likable, beautiful, and can carry a program like "Saving Hope." If the Canadian import connects (like "Flashpoint" or "Rookie Blue" have in the past for other networks), it will be because of what Durance brings to the show. Even with all the hokey pitch lines and unique twists, it comes down to whether or not we like and believe in the lead characters and Durance does her best to save this show, even if the patient is dead on arrival.

"Saving Hope" stars Erica Durance, Daniel Gillies, and Michael Shanks. It premieres on NBC on Thursday, June 7, 2012 at 8pm CST.



[13]

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