

## TV Review: Twisted Guilty Pleasures of ABC’s ‘666 Park Avenue’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 29, 2012 - 3:23pm

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CHICAGO – It is far from the new TV season’s most creative or engaging show (both “Last Resort” and “Vegas” are notably better) but there’s something about ABC’s “666 Park Avenue,” debuting tonight, that could make it the year’s most delightful guilty pleasure. And it’s such a perfect fit with the relocated “Revenge” and “Once Upon a Time.” Betrayal, fantasy, and the supernatural — “666 Park Avenue” could make for a great way to start your week.



Television Rating: **3.5/5.0**

That is if you’re willing to go along for the B-movie ride. The reason that “666 Park Avenue” works as well as it does is that it doesn’t take itself overly seriously. Terry O’Quinn’s sly smirk betrays a writing aesthetic that makes it clear that this is all supposed to be seen as over-the-top soap opera and not as straightforward morality tale. The basis for “666” may be Faust but don’t expect highbrow drama. This is supposed to be cheesy fun, and judged on its own terms, it delivers on its intentions. With a strong cast, Hollywood production values, and some clever plotting, “666” is a devilish guilty pleasure.



666 Park Avenue  
Photo credit: ABC

The concept of “666 Park Avenue” is the kind that just works in a pitch meeting. The devil (or a powerful force like him) lives in Manhattan. He grants the tenants of the high-rise apartment building which he oversees their greatest wishes...at a cost. Taking the name Gavin Doran (O’Quinn), this Bernie Madoff-esque Satan harvests souls at The Drake, the most coveted address on New York’s Upper East Side.



666 Park Avenue  
Photo credit: ABC

Our entry into this world of fulfilled desires is through the eyes of Jane Van Veen (Rachael Taylor) and Henry Martin (Dave Annable), the new tenants of The Drake who have moved to the Big Apple to manage the legendary address. Jane becomes immediately suspicious of some of the bizarre behavior in this supernatural residence but both she and Henry are also drawn into this world of elite opulence. Other tenants include Brian & Louise Leonard (Robert Buckley & Mercedes Masohn), Alexis Blume (Helena Mattsson), 14-year-old Nona Clark (Samantha Logan), doorman Tony DeMeo (Erik Palladino), and Gavin's wife Olivia (Vanessa Williams).

The best of "666 Park Avenue" brings back memories of '70s horror in which talented filmmakers played around with the concept of the deadly trappings of the big city in films by the likes of Roman Polanski, George A. Romero, and David Cronenberg. The idea is simple — if you leave the comfort of your Midwest upbringing, you also leave safety for the sin of the big city. Who knows what evil lurks behind those thousands of doors in a city like New York? The idea that every apartment in a major metropolis could hold something twisted or dangerous has long been a horror staple and it's an aesthetic that's well-used here (although the piece could use a bit more atmosphere and dread overall and a bit less cheese.)



666 Park Avenue  
Photo credit: ABC

The casting director for "666 Park Avenue" deserves a large portion of the credit for why it works. O'Quinn & Williams and Taylor & Annable make perfect counterpoint couples as the former perfectly captures the city edge as the balance to the latter's more Midwestern innocence. Taylor & Annable make protagonists that are easy to root for while audiences will secretly like the villains of the piece even more in O'Quinn & Williams.

What does "666 Park Avenue" look like long-term? I have my doubts that the show will work for months or years. I think it's the kind of B-movie guilty pleasure that could easily peak in its first season and then wear out its concept over time. However, what seasons two and three will look like mean nothing now. Fans of the show and the people who made it may pay the price by losing their creative souls down the road but the first season could be worth the cost.

*"666 Park Avenue" stars Rachael Taylor, Dave Annable, Mercedes Masohn, Robert Buckley, Helena Mattsson, Erik Palladino, Tony DeMeo, Vanessa Williams, and Terry O'Quinn. It premieres on ABC on Sunday, September 30, 2012, following the season premieres of "Once Upon a Time" and Revenge."*



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