

TV Review: CBS Has Another Likely Hit in ‘Mom’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 23, 2013 - 10:58am

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CHICAGO – CBS must have a whole wing of their headquarters dedicated to Chuck Lorre. Why not? He paid for it. He has been such a key part of their success over the last decade that it’s hard to think of any network-creator relationship that’s been more financially notable. “Two and a Half Men,” “The Big Bang Theory,” “Mike & Molly” — all winners of acting Emmys and at least the first two stand among the most popular comedies of their era. Can he do it again with “Mom,” premiering tonight, September 23, 2013? Don’t bet against him.



Television Rating: **3.0/5.0**

Like so many shows this year, “Mom” was clearly designed around its stars. How can we get Anna Faris the comedy vehicle she should have been on years ago and how can we get Allison Janney back to TV? In an era of high-concept, welcome to the old-fashioned “Mom,” a show for which the depth of its ingenuity is pretty much right there in the title. Faris plays Christy; Janney plays Bonnie, her mom. It writes itself.



Mom

Photo credit: CBS

Well, sorta. While Faris and Janney save this comedy in ways that many of their new show brethren can’t (Sean Hayes, Tony Shalhoub, Seth Green, and Robin Williams can’t rescue their respective freshmen programs from disaster), one hopes the writing soon rises to the level of its stars. Especially for the first half of the series premiere of “Mom,” the jokes are stale and the characters are thin. Christy is the hard-working,

recovering alcoholic just trying to make ends meet by waitressing at a fancy restaurant and providing for her teen daughter Violet (Sadie Calvano). She's sleeping with her boss (Nate Corddry), dodging barbs from her restaurant's Gordon Ramsay-esque chef (French Stewart), and trying not to let her ex (Matt Jones) ruin her life.

Into Christy's already-stressed life drops her relatively estranged mother Bonnie. Filled with a mental library of passive-aggressive comments, Bonnie challenges her daughter's volatile world and sobriety even further. The verbal volleying between Christy and Bonnie is easily the reason to watch "Mom" at least at the beginning. The supporting cast is uninteresting and cliched but when Janney & Faris get going? It reminds one of how good they can be with the right material. There's one scene in a restaurant in the premiere that's one of the best sitcom moments of the new year. And, in this incredibly lackluster year of new programs, one great scene is good enough. Let's hope Lorre gives us a few more before "Mom"'s run is over. If his incredible streak continues, it could be a decade before that day comes.

"Mom" stars Anna Faris, Allison Janney, Nate Corddry, Matt Jones, Sadie Calvano, Blake Garrett Rosenthal, Spencer Daniels, and French Stewart. It premieres on Monday, September 23, 2013 on CBS at 8:3pm CST.



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