

TV Review: New TNT Cop Drama ‘Dark Blue’ Has Potential For Explosion

Submitted by [Ebeth](#) [1] on July 15, 2009 - 1:56am

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CHICAGO – TNT on Tuesday launched executive producer Jerry Bruckheimer's no-holes-barred cop drama, “Dark Blue”. Like Bruckheimer’s successful predecessors in its genre (“C.S.I: Miami”, “C.S.I. New York”, “Cold Case”, and “Without a Trace”), “Dark Blue” provides captivating crime scenarios, an easy-on-the-eyes cast (including Dylan McDermott of “The Practice”), and just enough suspense to keep engaged.



Television Rating: **3.0/5.0**

Unlike “C.S.I.: Miami”, “Dark Blue” achieves both subtle and speedy depth in its characters. McDermott’s “Lt. Carter Shaw”, with his “just-rolled-out-of-a-bed-of-nails” demeanor, creates far more intrigue than one-dimensional David Caruso’s “stand-firm, wince-in-thought, turn-sideways, wince-in-thought-again,” dance as “Horatio Caine”.



Dylan McDermott stars in TNT’s drama series “Dark Blue”.

Photo credit: Danny Feld

The series opens with a charge as an undercover FBI agent, at the hands of a criminal team and undercover cop Dean Bendis (Logan Marshall-Green of TV’s “The O.C”), is electrocuted within inches of his life. The plot eases only slightly, as the remainder of the pilot is spent with the suspenseful sorting of the soldiers from the sinister.

The second episode is just slightly less engaging, due to predictability, as Officer Ty Curtis (Omari Hardwick of TNT’s “Saved”), struggling with the balance of marriage and loyalty to his work, breaks his ultra-undercover persona. This mistake leads him and his wife to death’s door, and the team – no surprise - must exhaust all options to save them.

“Dark Blue” has all the elements of a typical cop drama - there is nothing all that original, here. But the all-too-complicated characters leave us curious as to what comes next. Scenes are shot creatively – with an almost dark and blue element to many of the frames. And we become part of this secret world through a storyline that is as engaging as the actors who bring it to life.



Nicki Aycox, Logan Marshall-Greene and Dylan McDermott in TNT's “Dark Blue”.

Photo credit: Richard Foreman

There is certainly some room for improvement. As usual, we’re expected to suspend reality and accept that the good guys can outrun bullets the bad guys can’t. There are several attempts at comic-relief that don’t make it out of the barrel, such as a gun-smuggler’s whiney curiosities about “couples therapy” with his stripper girlfriend.

Pacing of the second episode is horrible. As if blessed with “beam me up” technology, the team seems to transport all-too-fast from one showdown to the next. Curtis crosses town to stop a killer in a seeming one-minute span. These time warps become a bit much when the team shows up on Curtis’ driveway nanoseconds after having made a multiple arrest.



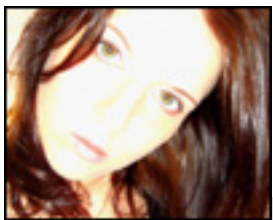
Dylan McDermott, Nicki Aycox, Omari Hardwick and Logan Marshall-Greene in TNT's "Dark Blue".

Photo credit: Timothy White

Nicki Aycox (of TV's "Supernatural") plays a rather bland and unmemorable (thus far) Jaimie Allen, an officer recruited by Shaw because of her jaded past. The writers need to step up their game. And each of the two episodes introduced a new brand of criminal, rather than establishing a continuing storyline.

The series risks becoming too episodic, focusing each installment on individual crime busts rather than focusing on a bigger picture. However, spots of what-has-been and what's-to-come: the passing of Shaw's wife, Bendis's walking of the fine-line between undercover officer and criminal and Curtis's balance of his alias's scorned love with his real-life wife - all hint at mindful and balanced writing.

Overall, "Dark Blue" has great potential for success. This no-one-knows-it-exists-world of undercover crime-stomping is about to be brought into public awareness, and it couldn't have come at a better time. As TV becomes saturated with some "unwitnessable" crimes of reality television, "Dark Blue" busts through as a worthwhile flip of the dial. "Dark Blue" premieres this Wednesday at 10 PM (ET/PT).



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By [ELIZABETH OPPRIEHT](#) [13]

HollywoodChicago.com

elizabeth@hollywoodchicago.com [13]

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