

TV Review: 'Happy Endings,' 'Don't Trust the B---- in Apt. 23' Return to Crowded Night

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 23, 2012 - 10:11am

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CHICAGO – Two comedies that were on the bubble of cancellation just a few months ago are being thrown into the deep end on Tuesday nights by ABC, starting tonight. “Happy Endings” and “Don’t Trust the B—— in Apt. 23” return at 8pm CST and face off with similarly skewing comedies on NBC (“Go On” & “The New Normal”) and FOX (“New Girl” & “The Mindy Project”). All of these shows are also reaching a point where they’re being watched more on Hulu or other On Demand services than live. So how will their success be determined?



Television Rating: **3.5/5.0**

Perhaps there’s a better question — which ones are worth your time? I think the reason I lead with the pile-up of similar programming is because the quality level is also similar across the board. “New Girl” is probably the best of the six comedies but ABC may have the best overall hour with the smartly written and wonderfully cast “Happy” and “Apt. 23.” The former returns tonight with a slightly subpar episode but picks up next week while the latter returns more confident than ever. Overall, it’s a very solid hour of comedy. There’s room for improvement on both programs but these are shows I hope are given time to swim in this crowded pool (or are quickly moved to another one).



Happy Endings
Photo credit: ABC

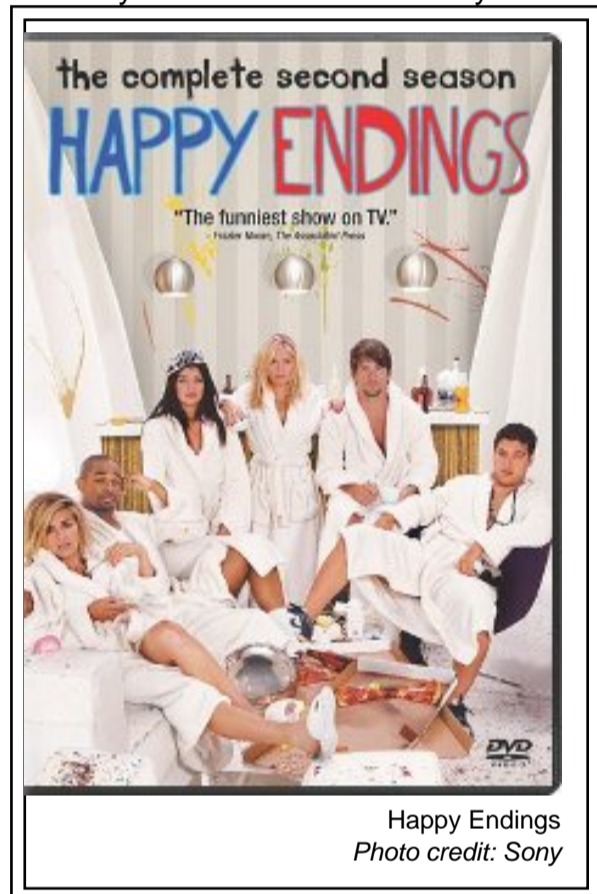
“Happy Endings”

I've been a champion of "Happy Endings" since it premiered and so while it's slightly upsetting that the third season starts with a truly mediocre episode, I beg you not to give up on one of the best comedy ensembles on television. By next week, they're back in the groove and doing what they do best — offering the best modern take on "Friends" since Ross & Rachel went off the air. We have seen dozens of clones of that NBC hit over the years but I've found few as likable and enjoyable as "Happy Endings."

In the season three premiere, "Cazsh Dummy Spillionaires" (no typos there, trust me), Dave (Zachary Knighton) and Alex (Elisha Cuthbert) try to have casual sex a la "Friend with Benefits" but we all know how that movie ended, Brad (Damon Wayans, Jr.) hides his unemployment from Jane (Eliza Coupe), and, in the best plot of the week, Penny (Casey Wilson) gets "Misery"-ed by Max (Adam Pally) after he crushes on her physical therapist.

The writing on "Happy Endings" is often strong but it's the cast that gets nowhere near the credit they deserve from most critics. This is one of the best ensembles on TV. Even the players who didn't immediately seem to click — Elisha Cuthbert & Zachary Knighton — are now clicking as much as anyone. Casey Wilson, Damon Wayans Jr., & Eliza Coupe have such different comic timing styles but they just work well together and Adam Pally is a guaranteed laugh producer every week. Even when the writing is down, the cast elevates it.

See how they got here with the second season DVD release for "Happy Endings," also released today by Sony. I know I sound like a broken record to most of our readers but it's just straight-up silly that a show like this isn't released on Blu-ray. What you'll find on DVD is below and it's one of the best standard-def comedy season sets in recent weeks. If you stumble across "Happy Endings" now that it's moved to Tuesdays and wonder if it's always been this funny, pick this up.



Synopsis:

Crank landlords, nosy childhood friends, Brozilians, gym bullies, sexy Halloween costumes, racist parrots, Happy Endings: The Complete Second Season offers more, more, more of the hit series about six best friends navigating life and love in Chicago's hip downtown. Alex (Elisha Cuthbert, TV's 24) and Dave (Zachary Knighton, TV's FlashForward) become real friends again (with - whoops! - benefits?). Jane (Eliza Coupe, TV's Scrubs) hilariously tests out her maternal instincts while hubby Brad (Damon Wayans Jr., TV's The Underground) unwittingly gets a "work wife." Max (Adam Pally) actually lands the perfect boyfriend that the gang falls in love with. Meanwhile, "The Year of Penny" is off to a rocky start as Penny (Casey Wilson, TV's Saturday Night Live) struggles with everything from birthday curses to '80s-themed scavenger hunts. Another round of laughs, please, for the funniest show on TV!

Special Features:

- o Deleted Scenes
- o Outtakes

Click on to page two for a review of "Don't Trust the B—— in Apt. 23"

"Don't Trust the B—— in Apt. 23"



Television Rating: **3.5/5.0**

When this ABC comedy premiered, I felt like the writing was too tonally inconsistent to work but that the cast was talented enough to potentially turn it around. That's exactly what seems to be happening now at the start of the second season, as the show returns with the funniest episode I've seen to date, one that perfectly balances tones, doesn't over play the "B——" angle of its title, and highlights the hilarious performance from James Van Der Beek as a twisted version of himself.



Don't Trust the B---- in Apt. 23
 Photo credit: ABC

The primary plot of "A Reunion..." centers on James discovering that the letter he's received every year from former "Dawson's Creek" castmates begging him to do a reunion was forged by Chloe (Krysten Ritter) in a manipulative move to make him feel better and do more for her. Of course, this just makes him want to do the reunion even more and June (Dreama Walker) pressures him with some hilarious presentations about the importance of "Dawson's." Busy Philipps, Mark-Paul Gosselaar, and Frankie Muniz guest star.

Ritter, Walker, and Van Der Beek are very talented and their comic timing has notably improved since the season premiere. It helps to have fantastic cameos, especially the laugh-out-loud ones from Philipps and Gosselaar. I'm still not convinced this show can maintain its high degree of snark every single week but it's off to a more promising start than it was a year ago.

"Happy Endings" and "Don't Trust the B---- in Apt. 23" return on October 23, 2012 at 8pm CST.



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