

SPOILER ALERT This episode was the epitome of what is wrong with The Walking Dead as a TV show. This was self-indulgent and ineffective storytelling at its worst. The problem remains how the show wants to roll around in the human drama of it all. News flash! Nobody cares. Go chat with a TWD viewer, there are LOTS of them, and you won't find a single person who is interested in the ongoing ethics of good/bad people in the zombie apocalypse. Those viewers are interested in (a) the zombie mayhem, (b) human-on-human evil and (c) "what happens next." So, why keep going back to this concept of whether it is a good idea to trust other humans? And make no mistake, that is precisely what this entire episode centered around. After seeing how badly things could go with the Governor or at Terminus or even with those guys from Philly (back in Season 2), we've seen how Rick has turned into this nasty dude who asks everyone his Three Questions. There is no trust. Trust gets you killed. Being a nice guy gets you killed-- at least that's what they wanted us to think about Tyreese. He really got killed by being inattentive and dying a totally avoidable death (like not buckling your seatbelt). The message of this show for awhile has been a very X-Filesian Trust No One. But, drama has to have ebbs and flows, so when the gang meets this Aaron at the end of the episode, the storyline will obviously be that this guy is decent and the question will be whether Rick & Co. are too yucky to be part of a decent, post-apocalypse society. And there is nothing wrong with that type of story, as long as they do more showing and less telling. Which brings us to what the hell is deplorable about this episode. The whole point was to show how miserable Rick & Co. are out "on the road". And the only reason to do that is to give us a plausible reason why Rick won't go all Three Questions on Aaron. Or when he does, someone (probably Glen) will stop him and say, "Rick, maybe we should trust him. I mean, Darryl is sneaking off into the woods to eat worms and god-knows what else. And we've been walking a lot since we left the land of recently detailed Hyundai crossovers. And remember when Sasha found the dead frogs? That was so sad. Even Darryl wouldn't eat the frogs. I mean, we had to kill and eat dogs! The world is so wretched that even doggies are turning on us. And those zombies following us for miles have been both a literal and figurative construct to show how death is always following us if we don't keep moving forward..." So, the whole episode was just to smack us in the face that life on the road sucks, and maybe it's time to look for any port in a storm... This just isn't the type of storytelling that TWD excels at and it's also the sort of things that viewers can figure out for themselves. And trying to cram it all into a 45 minute episode is patronizing, especially when the events on viewers' minds are the recent deaths of two major characters, not the sadness of the journey. If you doubt me and think I'm just being overly cynical and snarky, consider that in a parallel universe, someone in that TWD writers' room said, "Guys! Stop this! The viewers understand that life on the road is horrible. Don't you think the viewers would rather meet Aaron at the beginning of the episode and learn a little more about who he is and where he comes from? Let's spend 45 minutes on THAT story and stop wasting time trying to create emotions that we proved a few years ago we couldn't pull off!" I know which version of this episode I'd prefer. And there's just so many things dumb about this episode. Like Sasha being all nasty because Tyreese is dead? I'm sure we've all known lots of people who have lost loved ones and they are usually sad, not stabby. Or how about Noah getting almost zero screen time this week? So last week they built up his sense of loss and this week he's just another hungry survivor? It's just an example of how there are too many stories going on. There's no point in having 10 storylines if each is going to be underbaked. The divine intervention aspect of the show also was annoying and insulting. TWD just isn't a show like Lost where "there is something bigger going on." Lost always had that idea that something bigger and more powerful

was afoot. But, TWD is unrelentingly literal; there are zombies and they eat you and your fellow survivors usually suck. It isn't a world where a God exists and sometimes saves people if they have enough faith. So, what's the point of spending one episode with Maggie and her faith and seeing Bibles before having the day saved by a fortuitous storm and a friendly stranger?-Dean Stell The post The Walking Dead: Them appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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