Written by Samuel Zimmerman Thursday, 17 January 2013 13:23



People have long put much thought into whether the universe is cruel. AMERICAN HORROR STORY's is. In ASYLUM, no one leaves Briarcliff unscathed. No one really leaves. Those who did find a way out are drawn back, as if in a vicious circle, even though time progresses.

It seems AMERICAN HORROR STORY: ASYLUM effectively ended in "Spilt Milk." Our two windows into Briarcliff, Kit and Lana, had found their way out; one a survivor and a hero, the other a father. Sister Jude, the endlessly fascinating matriarch of the asylum, despite her new perspective, could not escape her past deeds, and thus could not escape at all. Declared dead, she found herself locked up, now an inmate and the under the sniveling, cruel thumb of a man of God she once admired. Mostly everyone else? Dead.



Thus, "Continuum" and next week's season finale seem more epilogue than anything else. In a series of *more, more*, *more* it's unsurprising two episodes worth of where everyone's got to is on the plate. Monsignor is now Cardinal, and that's all we've got until "Madness Ends." Lana has sacrificed integrity for notoriety, embellishing details (like her relationship with Wendy) of her already harrowing ordeal to sell more books. She's left her baby and Briarcliff behind, something Kit takes issue with after his free-living family life is horrendously upended by Alma's disinterest in remembering the aliens, and Grace being all too open about it clashing.

It drives Alma to murder Grace. It's, as with other violence this season, unceremonious, harsh and tragic. Alma is off to—where else—Briarcliff, where she eventually meets her end. Kit is

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alone, arguably just as hard up as when he was hauled off to the asylum, himself.

After a season that called back to *giallo*, exorcisms and nunsploitation, AMERICAN HORROR STORY had one more homage up its sleeve. With Monsignor gone, Briarcliff is state property, seeing overflow from prison, including a bad bitch played by Frances Conroy (who previously played the goth, kiss on the lips Angel of Death). What follow is a small chunk of Women in Prison as Jude, mistaking this tough cookie as the Angel is alternately frightened and aggressive. Of course, we eventually learn Jude's truly lost it, fabricating her entire scenario and grasping little of the passage of time.

Time passes further and AMERICAN HORROR STORY: ASYLUM reveals all roads lead to Lana. This is where we're headed: Neo-Bloody Face, a rat-tailed Dylan McDermott, is off to find his mother, still alive and ready to reveal all in a television interview. Odds are we'll see what comes of Kit and Jude in the intervening years, but as with "Spilt Milk" these three episodes and this season, as a whole, feels tailor-made for continuous watch. In a time where audiences consume television differently than ever before, does ASYLUM fare better as marathon?