



## My Take

(For what it's %\$\*&@# worth, OK?)

For what it's worth, for dose of us who watched the Sopranos' soap opera, so well-crafted and yet so maddening in its obtuse metaphors and innuendo (in who's what? Whaddaya a wise ass?) play out over it's six seasons, it's time to say bye bye. (Pop Pop, sorry Phil).

I'm sure youse heard by now (even if you don't watch) how it ended. David Chase did this, he didn't do that, he cheated us. What happened to Tony? But think back about all those of you who watched over the years saw happen...months went by between seasons, "ahh, forget about it, I ain't watchin' no more, too long between seasons"...

And then, "every time I think I'm out, they pull me back in".



So there's a lot of people who think there shoulda been some closure. Tony got whacked, the viewers got whacked, Meadow came in, Tony had a different shirt on, the guy had gun in the bathroom.... Ok, stop. Think a sec, if the guy was gonna hit Tone, why'd he need to go to the pishadoo?? He wasn't bein' patted down, just shoot already.

And, if they were gonna hit him, why follow him to Holsten's? He was by himself visiting Uncle June. Speakin' of Uncle June, hats off (salud to bald pates) to Domenic Chianese, how many actors do you see that are willing to do a few scenes sans choppers? Great stuff that. How many shows have you seen in your life that took you through so many emotions, brought you to tears, laughs like you never had watching TV (especially if you're a *paisano*), made you angry, and at the very end, admit it, at the very end had you



absolutely laying a yellow brick road wondering what was gonna happen.

What more can you ask?



What did you expect from a story about a guy who shrugged his shoulders and repeatedly said "Whaddya gonna do?" when his mother died?

There was no other way to end that show than the way it ended. Think about it, if

Tony got it at the end, there would have been a major outcry; after all, he won the beef with New York. Sure, he had plenty of people who would love to have done him in, but in the end it was all about how a man who seemingly has everything in reality has nothing. Even if you delve into his family life, who seem to have given us the impression that all was well, Carm and him closer than ever, AJ snapping out of his malaise, Meadow finding love and her career calling. Look under the surface, what they got? Money, yeah, but as Tony said, "Is this it?"



So if you wanna believe he gets it at Hosten's go ahead. It was setup that way. Me, I think Tone got just what he had coming to him, DOUBT. Indictments hanging over his head, Paulie not too crazy about taking over a crew with nothing but a legacy of dead captains, is it all worth it for Tony Soprano in the end? Ironically, he was saved by an FBI agent who fell into the trap we all did: Tony's

charisma, which is why we didn't want him to die. After all, the mask was stripped away as bare as could be so many times and we still refused to see who Tony Soprano as he really is, a cold calculating killer without a trace of remorse.

Think about living near Phil's goomar and her father and hearing the gory details about their cold blooded murder.



And when Butch brings it up to Tony at the meeting, Tony channels his mother Livia and shrugs it off: "Ehhhhh. So what?"

When you really think about it, the only guy he felt bad about killing was Pussy. Because he really loved him. He felt bad about Vito but only because he earned. Look at the way he was with Silvio, there wasn't much emotion there.



Same with Christopher. He was just *annoyed*.

But through it all, we still wanted Tony to make it. We didn't want him to pay for his crimes or his sins. We thought he was deep down a good guy. From his parents, a tough street guy like Johnny Soprano who had a reputation for being brutal and a mother whose only joy was knowing her man took from somebody to give to them, it's no wonder Tony has no conscience.



And the point of the show was him struggling to deal with whatever it was that he thought made him pass out and have panic attacks like his father. In the end, his psychiatrist rightly or wrongly turned him out because she was led to believe she was being played. And once he realizes it's over with her, the man with no shred of morality decries "I think what you're doing is

*immoral!*"



That's the dichotomy of the show, all wrapped up in the character Tony Soprano, but we want to forget the transgressions and we want believe the con, because he had that "something" that attracted us, one and all.



We see him making sure that his loathsome sister doesn't get any money from Bobby's death as she was tries to snooker her senile Uncle Junior. And Tony uses the excuse it's for Bobby's kids. Yeah, not for nothin' T, but Janice ain't getting' her taste, eh?

There was always something behind every move. Remember Dr. Melfi asking him what attracted him to Gloria Trillo? She had him pinned down and he wriggled off the hook by downplaying his attraction to her poison personality as opposed to what Dr. Melfi characterized their mutual attraction as *amour fou* or crazy love.

In the end Tony was always going to be haunted by the specter of his mother and the realization that his father wasn't the man he thought he was growing up. He finds out along the way that the great Johnny Soprano was vulnerable too. After all, he didn't beat cancer either.



His closest link to the true history of his father was none other than Paulie who tells Tony that his father loved him very much which seemed to make Tony recoil. Possibly the thought that tough guy Johnny Soprano was a loving father repulsed Tony. Maybe the messenger was not the right one to bring that to light, but it was Paulie nonetheless who brings Tony the news.

After all, it was in the episode Remember When ("the lowest form of conversation") when Paulie made that revelation. Remember when? Tony was toying with the idea of taking care of motormouth Paulie on the boat ala Pussy.

Well, the Russian never came back, Furio stayed in Italy, and ***nobody in Holsten's was anybody's brother, cousins, failed assassins or that degenerate gambler with the sporting goods store.*** It was all a plot device to make you sit at the edge of your seat.



So no matter how you saw it or wanted it to end, you got what was comin' to you padrone. They delivered in the end. For six seasons we lived inside and walked where we dare not go. And it became a sport, who was gonna win over who. In the eight inning it looked pretty bleak for our hero Tony and who saves his hide?



Who loves ya Butchie?



We'll miss ya T.

In the words of Tony himself: "Nobody wants to hear your fucking stories."

-Mike O.