



‘Hell on Wheels’ ships Bohannon off into the sunset

BY AARON PRUNER AT 07:07 PM ON JUL 23, 2016



It all came down to this. On Saturday (July 23), AMC aired the series finale to their western juggernaut “Hell on Wheels.” It’s been a long road for Cullen Bohannon (Anson Mount) and the Central Pacific Railroad, and while it looked like loose ends were being tied up, a few new issues were thrown into the mix.

A photo op showing the hammering of the Golden Spike is exactly where Thomas Durant (Colm Meaney) needed to be to continue showcasing that false stature of success. But it was not long before the rug was pulled out from under him. A subpoena by President Grant himself had Durant and Bohannon tasked with a trip to Washington. It looked like Mr. Durant was finally being brought to justice for all his dastardly deeds.

But first, a bar fight ...

Yes, what better way to continue the camaraderie between the railroad men than to incite a brawl in Mickey's bar? While the men are punching each other to smithereens, you could feel the joy emanating from violent scene. It's an odd way to end this four-year project, but sometimes you just have to let off steam.

It's in Washington where Bohannon is offered a new army job from Grant. Identifying Cullen as a soldier without a war, it's a gig our hero almost takes. After all, where else is he supposed to go? Welp, there is always China ...

After a few episodes mulling over her departure, Cullen finally had the note Mei left him translated. As soon as Mr. Lee revealed that it was an actual address, it felt like the obvious choice was for Bohannon to set sail.

Story choices aside, it was still a slightly surprising visual to see our hero travel to San Francisco to board a boat. It wasn't necessarily the image one expects from a western — you know, of the atypical cowboy hero riding off into the sunset on horseback ... but we'll take what we can get.

Ending on Bohannon crossing the Pacific Ocean to reunite with Mei was a hopeful way to bring to a close this often times dismal-feeling series. Plus, how many characters, aside from Mr. Durant, can “die a lonely wretched thing?” Heck, at least he went out with one of the best monologues of the series.