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Hell On Wheels Remains One Of TV's Top Dramas In Its Third Season

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Courtesy: eOne/AMC

eOne will release the third season of AMC's hit western drama *Hell on Wheels* next Tuesday, July 15th. It goes without saying that the third season of this standout series is the show's best yet. And being that the series' fourth season debuts in just a few weeks, its release is perfectly

timed. It gives audiences that have watched the show since the beginning the chance to catch up should they have missed any episodes of this season or the series' first two seasons. And for those that have not yet seen even the first season, audiences that watch this season will be the most important key to its success. That key is the series' writing. While it is recommended that audiences new to the series watch from Season 1, the show's writers have done such an expert job that they don't necessarily need to watch those first two seasons in order to appreciate Season Three. The acting on the part of the cast is just as integral to the success of *Hell on Wheels Season Three*. The cast has become so accustomed to one another that it has made the acting all the more believable. In turn, it makes suspension of disbelief all the easier, too. And last but not least of all, the bonus material included in this set rounds out the whole package, proving once and for why *Hell On Wheels Season Three* is one of the year's best box sets for adults.

Hell on Wheels: The Complete Third Season is one of the best new box sets for adults in 2014. There is so much to like about this set. The most obvious of this season's positives is the show's writing. Season Three sees some of the show's strongest writing to date. That is evident in the character development on the parts of Cullen and especially Eva and Elam. Audiences start to see a much more emotional and human side of Cullen in Season Three. This is especially the case when Cullen is forced to make the choice to hang a young man at one point. The young man's father tossed him to the proverbial woods after his father had shot the then head of railroad security. Cullen knew he was condemning an innocent boy to death for the sins of his father. The pain in his eyes as the young man was strung up is deeply telling. It shows that Cullen knew that hanging the young man was wrong and that it hurt him badly to see it happen. Such a scene adds to Cullen's flawed yet sympathetic character. There is another scene shared between Cullen and Elam that shows just as much depth not just of Cullen's character, but of Elam's, too. That ties into what is perhaps the most powerful example of the show's expert writing this season—the extended story arc involving the kidnapping of Elam and Eva's daughter Rose.

Just as audiences see quite a bit of development in Cullen in each episode this season, so does the story arc involving the kidnapping of Rose help to develop both Elam and Eva. Elam's softer yet more protective side comes out as he searches for whomever kidnapped his daughter. The story arc does have a positive outcome in the short run. That ending won't be revealed here for the sake of those that haven't yet had the chance to see this season. But it's not all happy for long as things take a painful emotional turn. The turn in question ironically serves to flesh out Elam's character even more than ever. One can't help but feel for him in the long-term outcome. That audiences will be left feeling so strongly about Elam exhibits once more why the writing in this season is some of the series' best yet. There is plenty more that could be discussed in terms of how the writing in Season Three makes it a success. But there is neither time nor space enough for that without one losing interest in this review. So on to the next topic.

The second aspect of *Hell on Wheels'* third season box set that makes it a success is the acting on the part of the show's cast. Having worked together on the series' first two hugely successful seasons, it is obvious that a certain amount of chemistry has developed between the cast members. That chemistry has made the acting even more natural in this season. The end result is acting that allows audiences to completely suspend their disbelief and be pulled into the world crafted collectively by the writers and the actors. There's even some light humor thrown in for

good measure to lighten the tension that runs throughout the town and its people. And people won't be able to help but laugh at those brief moments of humor. Audiences will agree that this helps to solidify the cast's acting as an important part of the whole. And together with the solid writing, it puts this season's set at the tipping point. There is one final part of the whole that puts this box set over that proverbial tipping point—the bonus material.

The bonus material included in *Hell on Wheels: The Complete Third Season* continues the tradition established by eOne in the box sets containing Seasons One and Two. Audiences are offered a recap of Season Two in order to help viewers catch back up before Season Four starts next month. And as with the previously released box sets, this set also includes companion “Inside the Episodes” featurettes with each episode. And of course, the standard “Behind-The-Scenes” featurettes are there, too. So not only can viewers catch up before Season Four starts next month, but they are given a thorough look behind the cameras once again. They are allowed to see the work that went into bringing Season Three to life. That combination of elements works with the writing and acting in Season Three to put it over the top. Collectively, it shows once and for all why this box set is one of the year's top new box sets for adults.

Hell on Wheels: The Complete Third Season will be available next Tuesday, July 15th in stores and online. It will be available both on DVD and Blu-ray. More information on *Hell on Wheels* is available online now at <http://www.facebook.com/HellonWheelsAMC>, <http://www.amc.com/shows/hell-on-wheels>, and <http://twitter.com/HellonWheelsAMC>.