

BLACKSTONE, FEATURED

BLACKSTONE'S NEW/OLD CHIEF

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I'll never skip reviewing episodes of Blackstone again. Of course this is the final season, but by skipping reviewing the last two weeks, I missed out on opining at length about two major characters.

Two weeks ago, Julian Black Antelope turned in an incredible performance as Darrien Tailfeathers. The man everyone has loved to hate over the past two seasons—especially when he kidnapped Wendy—showed a side of him we've never seen: a man abused when he was a child and fighting to keep off that same path. When Darrien took hostages, I feared the worst: he'd go down in a hail of bullets, a victim of violence. Instead, we saw a tearful, tender side to Darrien and he turned himself in. I'm hoping the producers supply the Academy with his scenes and he's nominated for a Canadian Screen Award. Yeah, he's that good.

As for last week's instalment, Blackstone said goodbye to Victor. The victim of an apparent broken ankle, Victor almost made it back from the brush before collapsing on the reserve's border, expiring from exposure. After flirting with a bit of romance last season, Victor came under fire as the new chief and never really lived up to expectations. Of course, Sarah doesn't believe Victor died simply of a broken ankle (I don't either), and it remains to be seen if anyone will be brought to justice for his death.

There was a lot going on this week too. As "Back in the Saddle" began, Andy continued, and was successful, in his plans to resume being chief of Blackstone with Leona as his only challenger for office. Right off the bat, the episode featured a simple, yet dramatic scene as Francine spoke of long-past better days on Blackstone, before leaders stole from the people. But can Andy change his ways now that he's had the murder charges dropped? (The fact that Francine could see and was talking to Andy's dad clearly freaked him out.) On the surface, Andy's plan for Blackstone to build timber homes is a step in the right direction, but after so many scams and false promises, can anyone trust him?

Unfortunately, by episode's end it looked like Andy had been bluffing the whole time. But I'm not buying it. I think his declining health (coughing up blood is never good) is a message to Andy that now is the time to turn things around and make a lasting, positive legacy behind.

Gail's life, meanwhile, has taken an interesting turn. Her visit to Wilma's new home has clearly opened a new, artistic door for her to express her feelings. Sure, she's still quick to bark at people—the artist was just trying to help—but seeing Gail spread paint out on the page is a wonderful outlet. She obviously loves it.

Blackstone airs Tuesdays at 10 p.m. ET on APTN.