

Ollie is not dead—not anymore, anyway. I didn't even bother with a spoiler alert for that bit of information because I have absolute confidence that no one, not even the most naïve of viewers, believed that Ollie could stay dead in his own show. Just because death ceases to be a source of suspense, however, doesn't mean it loses all its value. Arrow has developed a strong supporting cast over the years and now it has a prime opportunity to make them stronger in their leader's absence. Sadly, Team Arrow doesn't seem very interested in stepping into the spotlight. The cold open shows them making an attempt, with Roy taking point, Diggle sweltering in Ollie's tight costume, and Felicity briskly calling shots. But as Ollie's radio silence grows heavier in the air, their resolve quickly seeps away, and before the episode's halfway done, Roy and Diggle are already asking what the point of it all is. It's a rather shocking attitude from two men who joined Ollie's cause out of their own sense of righteousness. Since when did Ollie become the beginning and end of justice in this town? This may be ()'s way of showing how indispensable a fixture Ollie's become for both Starling City and the show as a whole, and they're right; there is something hollow about Team Arrow acting without the Arrow. But it doesn't make anybody look good when they decline to fill that vacuum. For Roy to just give himself up as aimless without his mentor, or Diggle to see himself as a failure of a bodyguard (a perception which tells you how low on the totem pole his character stands), or Felicity to unilaterally throw away everything, but everything Ollie's worked for, that's a grim outlook for the people we've considered the show's top heroes for the last three years. On the other hand, Team Arrow's recession allows Ray and Dinah to rise to the occasion, and they're the ones most in need of such a chance. Ray's gotten by on the strength of Brandon Routh's ability to make his character's borderline psychotic behavior almost charming, but it's about time he made himself actually useful to the show. We're still a ways off from seeing him don a costume, much less get into some shrinking action, but he's forging ahead, Felicity's increasingly distraught naysaying be damned. As for Dinah, after years of ups and downs with her legal career, substance abuse, family drama, and physical training, she still hasn't established herself as a necessary part of the show. The episode almost forces her into that position, since she's the only active vigilante left by the end. *So the city isn't completely defenseless, but one Black Canary in training and a still nascent Atom won't be enough to keep things under control, now that nearly all the criminals Team Arrow's caught since D[eathstroke]-Day are free again. ** This would be a disaster in itself, but with the whole motley crew being led by Danny Brickwell ("Brick") to conquer the Glades, we're looking at a potential hard reset on the city. Brick's not even that especially outstanding as a villain. Vinnie Jones brings all his stone-faced physicality to bear in making Brick imposing, but he can't compete against the likes of Ra's Al Ghul, Malcolm Merlyn, and Slade Wilson. Heck, Roy and Diggle can take him down with a bit of teamwork. He exists as a threat only in the absence of equal contenders and with a host of muscle behind him. See? There's plenty to talk about even without Ollie in the picture—or minimally so, at any rate, since he does pop up in the Hong Kong flashbacks. To be perfectly candid, I frequently have a hard time remembering exactly what the plot of these flashbacks are—something China White did/is doing?—but this episode's set complements present events more gracefully than others. While Ollie continues to be hounded by Waller into doing her dirty work, he preserves his heroic spirit by helping Maseo recover Tatsu along the way. His investment pays off years later [Spoiler alert!] as Maseo, despite being a League goonie, pays back his debt by recovering Ollie's body and getting Tatsu to revive him. It's kind of disappointing that he's alive so soon, but at least the how of it remains intriguing and Tatsu is officially part of Arrow's ongoing canon. Some Musings: * To be fair, Roy and Diggle haven't

clearly counted themselves out of the game, but they're not making any promises either.** A bit of fanciful legal fiction. I'm pretty sure even with most of the physical evidence gone, that doesn't just mean every defendant on lock-up just gets out. Surely a bit of legal wrangling can keep them in there for a while so the evidence can be recovered?The post Arrow: Left Behind appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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