

## Sopranos Recap: Episode 5

Written by {ga=mitch}

Tuesday, April 11 2006 7:00 PM -

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It has become obvious that David Chase uses previews just to screw with everyone's head. From the way we were (mis)lead from last week's preview, Tony was becoming weak and Johnny's group was poised to take advantage.

**Recap:** Scratch all of those worthless projections...they went the way of my 10-6 predictions for the 2004 Cleveland Browns. The episode starts with some details about the wedding of Johnny Sack's daughter, and his approved request to attend her nuptials. From there, we fast forward six weeks. It's a smart move by Chase, as we don't want to spend the rest of the season watching Tony's slow recovery.

So in this episode, Tony is about to start his first day back at work. He has a new driver and bodyguard, Perry, who is all brawn and very little brains. Combine that with an extremely short fused temper, and you know right away this won't turn out well. If this were a Star Trek episode, he'd be wearing a red shirt.

I want a job like Tony's, where "going back to work" means playing poker, eating, drinking, and BSing...because that's about all that's going on at the Pork Store when Tony shows back up. The only real family business that comes up is Phil Leotardo stopping by to ask a "little favor". Johnny wants one of his own captains, Rusty (Frankie Valli), whacked and wants Tony's group to do the job to keep suspicion off from him. I have no idea why he wants this to happen...except maybe Frankie decided to sing at the last Sacrimoni karaoke night, and three

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minutes of listening to his high pitched voice screeching out “Walk Like a Man” (singing it like a girl) was too much. But Tony refuses, much to the chagrin of The Hairdo.

The entire wedding scene, from start to finish, is one of Chase and director Steve Buscemi’s best ever. There were so many things happening in this one scene that will resonate for the rest of the season. Starting with the entrance to the church, where US Marshals are sending everyone through a metal detector. Tony keeps tripping it, and when he’s ordered to take off his shoes, he nearly passes out. Gandolfini does a fantastic job showing the frustration, weakness, and embarrassment as he has to be helped up on a chair and babied right there in front of so many friends, family and associates.

Johnny later corals Tony, and browbeats him into taking on the Phil whacking assignment. This pisses Christuhfuh off to no end, as he argues with Tony that backing off his initial refusal makes them all appear weak. We also get some real interesting deer-in-the-headlights looks from Finn. Based upon those, and Meadow’s earlier allusiveness regarding a wedding date, I wouldn’t be polishing up those patent leather shoes for that wedding if I were you...I’m thinking the jittery dentist-to-be is thinking that “Married to the Mob” sucked as both a movie and a lifestyle.

And finally, as the bride and groom are about to drive off in their expensive limo with the extra shocks to support their girth, the feds decide it’s time to play Bad Cop/Bad Cop, and roll in with their sirens blaring, handcuffing and hauling Johnny Sack back to prison right in front of everyone. Johnny loses it, doing his best Dick Vermeil sob-fest as he’s forced into the vehicle, causing his wife Ginny to faint...resulting in an earthquake registering 4.8 on the Richter Scale. The Hairdo is unimpressed by this violation of the Manly Book...which will put Johnny on the Whackable List at the bottom of the article.

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There were a couple of other good scenes that will set things up for later. Christuhfuh's Arab associates are back at the Bing, giving us a real good opportunity for some gratuitous nudity from the strippers giving personal lap dances (WHO-HAH!) and more speculation that Chris might end up turning them over to the Feds after they ask him for some semi-automatics. Chris had to take a call before we could see him answer them, but given the thickness of his head, I doubt he answered the Clue Phone that was also ringing.

Junior Mummyhead is back for some lines. He's gotten through some of his early competency rulings, and is placed in a prison hospital type facility that looks about as depressing as Shawshank prison (the irony is that earlier Carmela picked up a newspaper with the local page headline of "Cushy psych lock-up for Don Squirrel-Leone"...and then tossed it so Tony wouldn't see) . Junior seems to have a few minutes of lucidness where he seems to possibly grasp what has transpired; but he then drifts back into senility. I have nights like that as well, but it might have to do with the mass quantities of alcohol I'm swilling at the time.

To make up for last week's rather slow episode, we got TWO bang up developments at the end.

Vito's been upset during the entire wedding; although I'm not sure if it was that the wedding reminded him of what a farce his own marriage was, or seeing Finn put him over. So in the middle of the night, he gets out of bed and tells his wife he needs to pick up a collection ("Yeah, and we know what KIND of collection", states my wife right then, showing both the foresight and the caustic humor that makes me...watch my ass at all times).

Turns out the better half was right, as next we're seeing a couple of New York wise guys in a gay bar picking up their weekly extortion payoff when who do they

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see but Vito in leather having just played tonsil hockey with his potential pickup of the night. Vito tries to B.S. his way out of it, but it's obvious the goons aren't buying it, and there is little chance they'll keep their mouths shut. Vito rushes home, grabs a gun, and takes off to a remote motel where he calls Silvio up at 3 AM "just to check in". Later; we find that he hasn't been heard from in three days...so it's up in the air whether he swallowed the Glock yet or not. My guess is that he hasn't. He's a coward, and I think Vito believes he can wait it out. Which means the first shot from whoever gets to whack him will be to the crotch.

Tony gets two sessions in with Dr. Melfi...with the obligatory camera shot from the floor at her six foot long legs. In the first session, Tony would rather talk about AJ than what he's going through, especially his anger towards Junior. But in the second, he opens up about the problem he's having with his injuries possibly making him look weak to his men. He saw what Johnny Sack's breakdown caused with the New York crew, and worries that his collapse in the threshold of the church might do the same.

So he does what any good people manager would do. He goes to the Pork Store, sizes up all the biceps of his crew, and then picks a fight with Perry, beating the Hell out of him for no apparent reason, then goes in the bathroom to throw up blood. Personally, I would have gone after the little bastard that used to be in "Doogie Houser", but I'm not quite James Gandolfini sized.

**Best Scene:** Tony and Johnny having the "whacking Rusty" discussion at the reception table with Johnny's senile father and aunts while trying to avoid being overheard by the Marshals.

**Most Humorous Scene:** Vito prancing around with his Village People Cop outfit.

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**Best Lines:** “Jesus, can we ever talk about anything in this family besides food?” – from Johnny Sack’s obviously anorexic daughter Catherine sitting between about 900 pounds of mom, big (literally) sis and future brother-in-law.

### Latest Whacking Odds:

Thanks, Chase. My odds have just been thrown completely out of whack (pun intended) with this last episode.

1) Vito (odds – 1:5) – Just finding his cold, dead body in a hotel room would be too anti-climactic. Vito truly deserves a gross, painful sendoff to BigPussyLand.

2) Rusty (odds - 1:4) - Big surprise here. Mr. Four Seasons jumps from nowhere to the top of the list.

3) Phil (odds – even) – The odds of him going are getting greater, but I’m thinking he sticks around most of the season, now. The conflict with Johnny Sack may actually be a good thing for Tony’s crew.

4) Johnny Sack (odds – 4:1) – Phil’s disgust in Johnny’s Hines Ward impression will have ramifications. We’ve seen lots of whacking, but no prison shanks yet that I can recall.

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5) Uncle JuniorMummyHead (odds – 5:1) – That low rent looney bin he's at doesn't quite look AJ proof.

6) Paulie: (odds – 6:1) – Someone that stupid doesn't deserve to live (that statement could also apply to Christuhfuh, but that's another story).

7) Jason or Finn (odds – 8:1) – Still a chance Vito gets to Finn for one last whacking (at least in reference to killing). One will end up with Meadow...the other ends up with the fishes.

8) JT (odds – 10:1) – No change on that one.