

September 24, 2012



### TV HYPE: "Revolution"

They say it's, "15 years after the blackout... power is everything."--well, maybe writing should've been everything; because I have to say, I'm a little let down at the quality of writing. Especially after all the hype leading up to the first episode that aired on September 17.

Stuff just seemed too convenient.

I noticed a lot of what is known as dues ex machina, and it's a big no no in writing--unless you're writing for like kids or something; and as far as I can tell, "Revolution" is not intended to be a children's series. It comes on at 10 p.m. after all. Truth is, I wouldn't know of dues ex machina if it weren't for my writing classes and studies; and I'm sure most of you've never encountered it either. It's not a normal-day vocabulary choice for non-writers. But, it's still something everyone can't help but notice when it's there, whether they know what it's called or not.

The worst part was when the protagonist Charlie treks to Chicago in search of her uncle Miles--and finds him so easily. In fact, the show makes it out like she just goes to Chicago in this Mad Max-like world like taking a stroll through a night shaded New York park--circa 1980s of course--and just walks right up to uncle Miles, asking if he'd seen uncle Miles.

In the third edition (1992) Penguin Books: "The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory" stated that (and this is on page 237) "dues ex machina (L 'god out of the machine') In Greek drama a god was lowered on to the stage by a mēchanē so that he could get the hero out of difficulties or untangle the plot. Euripides used it a good deal. Sophocles and Aeschylus avoided it. Bertolt Brecht parodied the abuse of the device at the end of his Threepenny Opera. Today this phrase is applied to any unanticipated intervener who resolves a difficult situation, in any literary genre." And it also is applied when the author, or "narrator" has stepped in or crossed a line by making a difficult situation easily resolved, or worse, ignored completely. As in the case of "Revolution" when the writer(s) sorta just had Charlie, by her blind luck I suppose, walk right up to the person she was on a quest to find, in the middle of a powerless and lawless Chicago in ruin!

I just think that's either lazy writing, or, downsized for budget perhaps; either way, I was not impressed. A second episode comes on tonight, and like the 20 million or so that zombie-tuned to the first episode, I'll watch this one as well. But if the writer(s) reach their Hand in and play guardian angel, I won't be tuning in again. Things need to be a little harder for the characters.

At least I have an episode of "How I Met Your Mother" and "2 Broke Girls" tonight--those, I know, will be LEGEN-DARY! Besides ... Beth Behrs! Meooooow!