First teaser for Veronica Mars revival is everything we loved about the series



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National Treasure Kristen Bell is back as everyone's favorite PI in Hulu's miniseries of *Veronica Mars*.
Marshmallows, rejoice, for Hulu has dropped the first teaser for its miniseries revival of *Veronica Mars*. Based on the footage, it looks like a return to peak form for our favorite sassy, taser-wielding, crime-fighting heroine.

(Spoilers for first three seasons and the 2014 film below.)

The cult-classic crime drama premiered on UPN in 2004 and continued for three seasons. The last season ran on UPN's successor network, The CW, and despite some improvement in the

ratings, the series was officially canceled in June 2007. As my Ars colleague Sam Axon wrote last fall, “Between its ties to struggling new broadcast networks and the fact that it was way too smart and had way too much social commentary for its own good—especially for a series that was framed as a teen show but that in a lot of ways really wasn’t—the series met an early mid-season demise with low ratings.”

He added, “*Veronica Mars* wasn’t a ratings hit on broadcast TV, but on Hulu, maybe it doesn’t need to be.”

> *Think an edgy, irreverent Nancy Drew armed with plenty of sass and a taser.*

Season 1 set the overall tone of the show: elements of SoCal *noir* and high school drama punctuated with witty dialogue and a smart, savvy heroine who was just vulnerable enough to still be human. Think an edgy, irreverent Nancy Drew armed with plenty of sass and a taser. High school junior Veronica Mars struggles in the aftermath of the murder of her best friend, Lily Kane. She used to date Lily’s brother, Duncan, giving her status among Neptune High’s privileged, ruling cool kids, despite her humble roots. She’s since become an outcast, and she spends her time helping out her PI father on various cases while trying to solve Lily’s murder, culminating in a terrific twist ending.

In season 2, Veronica becomes involved with bad boy Logan Echolls (Jason Dohring), Lily’s former flame, and solves the mystery of a devastating school bus crash that killed many of her more underprivileged classmates (those from wealthy families would never deign to take the bus). And in season 3, she was a freshman at Neptune’s Hearst College. This was the weakest of the seasons, in part because the writers tweaked the format from a single overarching mystery (with various smaller standalone cases interspersed throughout) to include two different completely separate mysteries. It just didn’t hold together as well as the prior two seasons. Still, it

broke my heart when the show was cancelled.

- Would-be mugger about to meet Veronica’s trusty taser.
  YouTube/Hulu
- Capturing the moment for Instagram.
  YouTube/Hulu
- Veronica’s troubled high school sweatheart, Logan Echolls (Jason Dohring), is still a hottie.
  YouTube/Hulu
- The spark is still there for these crazy kids.
  YouTube/Hulu
- It’s spring break in Neptune and everyone’s getting into the spirit.
  YouTube/Hulu
- An explosion ruins the mood.
  YouTube/Hulu
- The city hires Mars Investigations to find the culprit.
  YouTube/Hulu
- Father and daughter make a killer PI team.
  YouTube/Hulu
- “Follow the money.” Patton Oswalt’s pizza delivery guy offers some advice.
  YouTube/Hulu
- Clyde Prickett (J.K. Simmons) is a fixer for the Casablancas family.
  YouTube/Hulu
- Yeah, nothing suspicious about this at all.
  YouTube/Hulu
- The violence escalates.
  YouTube/Hulu
- And escalates even more.
  YouTube/Hulu
- Trading in her taser for a gun.
  YouTube/Hulu

The series lived on via DVD (streaming wasn’t all the rage back then) and continued to build a small but fiercely loyal

audience. In 2013, creator Rob Thomas, Bell, and others banded together to launch a Kickstarter campaign to make a follow-up feature film. The campaign raised $5.7 million, well over the $2 million target. The film showed Veronica nine years later, living in New York City and about to join a prestigious law firm. Then ex-boyfriend Logan, now a lieutenant in the US Navy, asks her to clear him of charges that he murdered his girlfriend. Once the main mystery and various subplots come together, Veronica takes over Mars Investigations instead of returning to New York.

I found the final film, released in 2014, a bit disappointing, nice though it was to see the gang back together again. While critics praised the strong writing and solid performances, it really only drew in diehard fans of the show, earning about $3.3 million at the box office, although DVD and Blu-Ray sales were stronger. After that, hopes for any more of Veronica's adventures seemed dashed for good—until Hulu announced last year that it would revive the series. Per Variety's synopsis:

> *In the new installment, spring breakers are getting murdered in Neptune, thereby decimating the seaside town's lifeblood tourist industry. After Mars Investigations is hired by the parents of one of the victims to find their son's killer, Veronica is drawn into a mystery that pits the enclave's wealthy elites, who would rather put an end to the month-long bacchanalia, against a working class that relies on the cash influx that comes with being the West Coast's answer to Daytona Beach.*

According to creator Thomas, the miniseries is set about five years after the film's events and will "take *Veronica Mars* back to its hardcore So-Cal *noir* roots." It will also focus on a single overarching case, so this looks like it will be a true return to peak form.

Enrico Colantoni is back as Veronica's PI dad, Keith Mars, and

Mars Investigations now seems to be a father-daughter business—technically it always was, no matter how much Keith tried to prevent his teenage daughter from interfering. Noticeably absent from the teaser are fan favorites Wallace Fennel (Percy Daggs III), Cindy “Mac” MacKenzie (Tina Majorino), and Eli “Weevil” Navarro (Francis Capra), although they are listed as cast members for the miniseries.

Veronica Mars S4 starts streaming on Hulu July 26, 2019.

Listing image by YouTube/Hulu

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