General Hospital is using scab writers, and it’s complicated

According to Peace, the show has run through all the scripts that were written before the strike began and has now employed non-union writers in order to keep the show on the air. Typically, people who cross picket lines to perform struck work are met with derision, but Peace acknowledged that the current situation is unique for soap operas. (*Disclosure:* The Verge*’s editorial staff is also unionized with the Writers Guild of America, East.)*

“We hate to see our characters and storylines handed over to ‘writers’ who cross the picket line,” she wrote on her Instagram. “But we’re also keenly aware that stopping production could spell the demise of soap operas.”

Actors on soaps are also in a unique position as they are a part of SAG-AFTRA but work under a different contract called the National Code of Fair Practice for Network Television Broadcasting or Netcode. The Netcode contract governs unscripted reality shows, game shows, news shows, and non-primetime programs like soap operas and isn’t due for renegotiation until July 2024 — meaning actors under Netcode contracts are permitted to keep working on Netcode-affiliated projects and aren’t crossing picket lines to do so.

The effects of the writers and actors guild strikes are being felt across Hollywood, with press junkets and red carpets all but drying up. Soap operas have been mostly insulated from this disruption because of banked scripts and the separate Netcode contract that allows them to continue production. This

insulation, however, comes at a cost as the serial, daily nature of soap operas makes them susceptible to outright cancellation should they go off the air for lack of scripts to film. So, as scripts run out, more of your favorite daytime soaps could also turn to scab writers to keep them going.

Peace wrote on her Instagram that it would be painful to see characters and storylines developed by *General Hospital*'s writers room handed over to others but hoped that viewers would still support the show while also supporting the the striking writers.

"Hoping the AMPTP does the right thing soon — not just for writers, but for the integrity of storytelling."

The Verge has reached out to Disney for comment.

https://www.theverge.com/2023/7/25/23807471/general-hospital-scabs-wga-sag-aftra-strike