

Five Amazing Songs I First Heard On TV Episodes

It is a beautiful thing when I am watching a TV show and a song I don't know plays behind a significant moment, especially a climax, and I am so blown away by it that I immediately look it up on the internet. It's cool when music and TV scenes come together with marvelous synergy and it's a song I already know. Yet when I do not know the song it is even better, as I love being introduced to new music. And when this collision of an unfamiliar song overlaying a TV moment rocks my world, the two will forever be linked in my mind. The song then becomes more than music and lyrics; it becomes part of TV lore.

This has happened dozens of times in my life. Here are five that rise to the top of the list.

[Note: There are major spoilers revealed in these scenes.]

"Not As We" (Alanis Morissette)

TV Episode: *House M.D.* 04:03 "97 Seconds"

This is my favorite *House* episode as it chronicles House's argument against the idea of an afterlife. His mind is not changed after he goes to extreme lengths to find the truth but the fact Wilson cleverly and articulately pushes back against House is a huge part of why I loved this show.

The song itself plays when House, after being told by a man who was legally dead for 97 seconds that there is something amazing on the other side, tries to replicate this experience by electrocuting himself in the hospital. Where he knows he will be revived quickly but not immediately. Honestly, the song lyrics do not match the scene to me and would play far

better behind a person trying to move on after an intense break-up or a death. But the music does match the tone of the episode and I'm sure that is why they chose it.

The song reaches deep in its emotion and really pulls me in. Alanis Morissette did this for a lot of people many times over, especially women. This one time she got me as well. I've listened to it dozens of times.

"One October Song" (Nico Stai)

TV Episodes: *Chuck* 03.18 "Chuck vs. the Subway" and 04.07 "Chuck vs. the Fistfight"

Chuck is a sleeper show to me, one that doesn't have a huge following in my circles but was surprisingly good and very versatile. An action-comedy at heart, it had plenty of romance and drama and heartstring-pulling. It also had some epic guest spots that gave tribute to the 80s, including Dolph Lundgren in a one-off and Linda Hamilton and Scott Bakula in recurring roles as Chuck's parents.

Perhaps the most tear-jerking plot development in the series is when Stephen suddenly gets killed by Shaw at the end of Season 3. This song plays alongside that moment and enhances the emotion and has compelled me to listen to it over and over again. Which in turn lets me relive this *Chuck* episode. The song plays again at the end of a Season 4 episode and compliments it as well.

"Boston" (Augustana)

TV Episode: *Scrubs* 05:19 "His Story III"

The Janitor on *Scrubs* had a pretty simple role on the show: to give J.D. an extremely hard time and to make super weird off the cuff comments that bordered on disturbing. So when we got

a chance to peel back the curtain a little and see him as a human being, as we do in this episode, it is special. Make no mistake—the ending moment with the song is set up by the Janitor kidnapping J.D. and making a bunch of random hilarious declarations to a man in the hospital who needed a computer to talk but could not for a while as his computer was broken.

Since no one else would talk to him and because everyone else was busy insulting the janitor for having a menial job, the janitor utilizes this man's forced silence to vent to him. And, as a result, to bond with him. It's very subtle and doesn't really pay off until the very end the conversation when Dr. Cox comes in with the sick man's new computer and the first thing the man says is "Thank you". After Dr. Cox accepts his gratitude the man says, "I wasn't talking to you," before the camera pans to the Janitor mopping up the floor with a look of humble satisfaction at this small victory in his monotonous work life. At that very moment, the line from this song, "No one knows my name" is heard. Which is just perfect, since the Janitor's name is never given in this show and since the whole point of this subplot was to highlight his invisible job in a place where the most important life or death jobs are on display.

Honorable mentions for *Scrubs* would include "Closer" by Joshua Radkin and "Waiting for My Real Life to Begin" by Colin Hay. This show mastered music and climaxes so well I had my own "Scrubs" playlist on iTunes.

"I Go To The Barn Because I Like The" (Band of Horses)

TV Episode: *Psych* 04.16 "Mr. Yin Presents"

This is my favorite TV episode of all time, of any genre, and this song helps it achieve that lofty accolade.

The Yang trilogy is truly exceptional entertainment, from the heightened stakes, to the villain's acumen, to Mary's

presence, to everything that Shawn and Gus say and do. And at the climax of the second part—the episode that honors film Part 2s like *Empire Strikes Back* and *Godfather II* by being the apex of the series—we get a mind-blowing and goosebump-shattering cliffhanger. And the song that James Roday chose to play along with it was, in his words, the only song he could have chosen that would work for this ending.

It begins with Abigail telling Shawn that unless he can give up Psych and having psychopaths wanting to hurt the people he loves, she can no longer be with him. Then it cuts to a series of poignant scenes without words that melt my heart every time: Juliet finally breaks down in Lassiter's arms after trying to hold it together after her traumatic experience, Henry cleans the paint off of the Psych office door that Yin used to taunt Shawn, Shawn and Gus attend Mary's funeral dressed in full racquetball attire, Yang stares ahead from her padded cell and Yin comes home as the camera pans to a picture on his table of....Yang and young Shawn? WHAT???

Just a phenomenal three minutes of TV. It messed with my head for days. And I quickly found the song on iTunes, put it on my iPod Nano and listened to it 50 times the next few days.

“Easier to Lie” (Aqualung)

TV Episode: *Lie to Me* 01:01 “Pilot”

Lie To Me didn't have the best series premiere of any show ever (*Lost* and *Friday Night Lights* would be shows on that short list) but it was still excellent. And after a twist ending where Cal lies to get a girl to tell the truth, this song helps close the episode over a montage of scenes that gave me chill bumps and let me know this was going to be my kind of show. I also love the added touch of Dr. Lightman telling Rita: “Believe what you want to believe. Everyone else does.” This has never been more obvious than in the social

media age.

So that is my list. What are some of yours?
