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- Rick and Morty ★★★★☆

Sonic Prime ?????

I think I just have to admit I love animated movies and shows something like 2x or 3x more than live action movies. It's easier for me to forgive their flaws, and honestly, I love looking at colorful things on screen. I watched Sonic Prime to get more of my Shadow the Hedgehog fix, and though I was disappointed by a number of things in the show, I really enjoyed it, especially that one episode that exclusively featured Sonic and Shadow together. In fact, I would say that episode did good guys fighting each other in a frenemies style rivalry better than Batman v. Superman. Well, that's not that difficult. How about better than Captain America: Civil War? Yeah, that's my controversial opinion. It's just a shame that the show didn't feature the two of them together even more, because their relationship was a perfect match for the overarching theme of the show.

The lesson that Sonic has to learn throughout this show is actually pretty unique. Sonic's character flaw is also a strength for him. He believes that everyone has the capacity for good, and that people can just come together and agree on how to live in harmony without conflict. The problem is that his thinking is rigid, and he just assumes everyone is on board with his plans and ideas for the future. His optimism is endearing, but it leads him to have blinders on for how he might be stepping on others' toes without realizing it, assuming that what's best for himself is always best for his friends.

Most of his friends do go along with Sonic because he is a genuinely nice person who tries to help. But Shadow is a foil for Sonic, because Shadow is brutally honest with Sonic about how Sonic needs to change. They genuinely have amazing chemistry, and as opposites, they bring out the best in each other, Sonic keeping Shadow from being overly pessimistic, and Shadow keeping Sonic grounded in reality. It's super fun. I also may have gone into the show with the headcanon that they are totally in a relationship with each other, which I will say, there's not really evidence for, but also not really any evidence against that being the case. So it will stand in my head as my personal canon. They are a very cute couple.

Okay, what else is good here? Sonic travels to different dimensions, meeting three different versions of each of his friends, dystopian city themed, pirate themed, and jungle themed. As Shadow keeps reminding Sonic, they aren't his Green Hill themed friends, they are fully separate people with their own motivations and backstories, and I never felt like I was just watching duplicates. Some of the alternate versions become friends with each other in very sweet ways that were interesting to watch. I particularly like robot Amy Rose, "Rusty Rose," who I felt had a believable arc where she switches back and forth from bad guy to good guy.

The show throws in homages to various movies, and they all worked without being heavy handed. Like dystopian themed Tails has 7 mechanical tails in additional to his two organic tails, and the first time we meet him, he and Sonic fight on a train, in a clear reference to the Doc Ock fight in Spiderman 2. Very iconic, I enjoyed it.

There's sort of a twist at the end of season 2, where the villain switches from the alternate version of Eggman (more on that in a second) to a different, arguably more threatening villain, which I think is good in principle, but that brings me to my gripes about the show.

The entire third season of the show (each season is only 7 or 8 episode long) is basically one long fight. It should have probably been about 3 episodes, maybe 4. The villain's goals at one point even seem perfectly aligned with Sonic's but some bullshit reason leads them to fight anyway, which left me confused about what the plot even was anymore. The good guys set up multiple plans to assault the villain's lair only to not really make progress. In fact, that's a problem the entire show has. There are many fights, especially one-on-one fights, that are really fun to watch, with honestly amazing choreography that shows off Sonic's unique fighting style. And there are many fights where the villains can literally just conjure up infinite minions to fight, so it feels like fighting is totally pointless. As soon as they finish off one group of minions, another appears, and no progress is made. My guess is that this is one of those corporate problems, where the studio, Netflix, has requested a specific number of episodes of a specific length, so they have to fill up the time with this pointless fighting instead of making the best possible show.

The alternate version of Dr Eggman is actually 5 Dr Eggmans working together. This contributed nothing to the story. Two of the Eggmans are so cringy I could barely watch them on screen, a baby Eggman that babbles incoherently (but everyone in universe understands), and an elderly Eggman whose only character trait is "being old." These Eggmans don't feel very villainous, as they are constantly just played for laughs that fall empty, unless maybe you are very young. The story could be barely changed and feature just one alternative Dr Eggman, or even 3, as long as they ditched most of the "jokes."

Finally, I have to admit the animation quality is pretty low, although I think the animators used their budget well, putting time and effort into making Sonic's movements look hella cool, but the backgrounds definitely suffer a lot. Overall, I would recommend this show if you're looking for something lighthearted that's not a big time commitment Well, I guess if you think about 8 hours is a small commitment. It had a definitive ending, though, so it's not like you have to keep catching up. I seem to be in the minority in disliking Sonic 3, but I genuinely think this is a better representation of the Sonic Universe than those live action interpretations. Maybe it's my bias towards animation talking. But after Sonic 3, I really needed more of Sonic + Shadow, which I got by replaying Sonic Adventure 2, and then by binging this show. I give it 4 stars out of 5, I recommend this show, but I give no guarantee you'll enjoy it, since you have to look past a lot of junk to find the good bits.

Last Exile ?????

The anime Last Exile from 2003 is good, I'd give it 4 stars out of 5. I came for the exciting dogfights, I stayed for the complex politics and commentary on war and power. The ending is maybe a bit cheaper than I would have liked, but I don't think they flubbed it or anything. It's hard to bring in a show like this for a satisfying ending, when you have set up so many moving parts. They made sure they hit all the big points, even if it felt like a bit too easy of a win, it still felt earned.

All that's good, go watch the show! I want to rant about the romantic subplot of this show. Because it was very weird, and I think they were going for a certain kind of romantic tension, but I don't think they quite hit it. This was my second time watching the show, and I even still have memories of thinking about how weird it was for decades after watching it for the first time about 20 years ago. I have some ideas about how the plot could be improved, so I'm going to summarize the plot in the show, and then I will offer my modifications. So major spoilers ahead.

Claus Valca and Lavie Head are our main characters of the show, and also the main romantic plot. About halfway through the show, we learn their backstory. Their dads were best friends, and they were couriers who used vanships to deliver messages across the world of Prester. Vanships are little World War II style planes, except instead of using wings to fly, they use a basically magical element called Claudia. Importantly, vanships have two seats, one in front for the pilot, and one just behind this seat for the navigator. Vanships are often used to demonstrate relationships between characters, but I'll get to that. Claus and Lavie's dads head out on an important mission, to deliver a message from Anatoray to Disith.

The world of Prester is divided into two parts, Anatoray, and Disith, connected only by a dangerous area know as the Grand Stream. The dads are assigned a mission to deliver a peace offering from Anatoray to Disith, who have been at war due to Disith's weather getting to cold to survive in, and generally there not being enough resources to go around. Unfortunately, the mission fails, and both dads die in the Grand Stream when Claus and Lavie are just 7 years old. Lavie's mother was already dead, and Claus' mother dies 6 months later, leaving them orphaned. They have to sell their house in order to keep their dads' vanship, which they learn how to fly and take care of as they grow up. Soon they both become naturals in the sky, with Lavie as navigator and Claus as pilot. They survive on courier work, just like their dads, and the main story starts when they are both 15.

They take on a dying courier's mission to deliver a girl named Alvis to a flying air ship called the Silvana. Claus particularly feels responsible for her safety, and does not trust the Slivana or her crew to take care of Alvis. So he and Lavie stay aboard, at first in an adversarial position, but eventually they learn to trust the crew and feel that Alvis is in fact safest on board the Silvana and especially under the captain of the Silvana, Alex Row, and his second in command, Sophia.

Claus and Lavie's vanship is damaged, but the Silvana has its own vanships on board, kind of like an aircraft carrier. We meet another vanship pilot, Tatiana, and her navigator, Alis. Tatiana is initially cold with Claus and Lavie, partially because she feels that compared to her, Claus and Lavie are not very capable. This is due to the fact that the first time they fly in a combat mission, Lavie passes out, and decides that she does not want to fly in combat situations. Lavie says that she will continue to be a mechanic for Claus, and hopes that someday they will still fly together across the Grand Stream, just as their fathers tried to do 8 years ago. This is the start of my dissatisfaction. I think the messaging they are going for here is that everyone is forced to be in a war, and fighting is an evil necessity, so Lavie sees the evil part, and Claus sees the necessity part. But unfortunately, it weakens Lavie as a character.

Alex Row sees talent in Claus, and orders him to run an escort mission with him. He needs a navigator, and Alis volunteers. Alis has been dissatisfied flying with Tatiana, because she does not feel as free with her. Remember when I said that vanships demonstrate relationship dynamics? Tatiana and Alis feel like they are in a lebian coded relationship. Given that this is an anime from 20 years ago, you couldn't just outright say it, but it would have been pretty cool if they did. So Alis wants to fly with Claus, and Tatiana takes this as a slight toward her, and the next time there is a combat mission, Tatiana orders Claus to be her navigator. During the fight, Tatiana and Claus get separated from the Silvana, and crash land in a desert. There's a sort of bizarre subplot here. Before the fight, Lavie gives Claus a set of clothes to take with them just in case, and in the crash, Tatiana's clothes get some engine liquid spilled on them, so Claus give her the clothes that Lavie gave him to wear. When they return to the Silvana, Lavie is upset because she feels that it may mean that Tatiana and Claus were intimate with each other. It's true that Claus and Tatiana are much closer after the mission, and Tatiana seems to feel that Claus giving her clothes was an intimate act in its own way, but to me, it reads like Claus is just being the nice and pragmatic person he always is, and does what needs to be done for both of them to survive. But Lavie can't get over it so easily, but she also can't bring herself to ask Claus outright if he slept with Tatiana.

Eventually she tells him that she doesn't see the same sky as he does anymore, and that she doesn't like who her is becoming with him getting more into combat rather than peaceful flying. There is also one more bizarre thing that happens romantically. The first officer, Sophia, is revealed to be the daughter of the Emperor, and she is going to leave the Silvana to take hes place as the new Empress. Before she leaves, she has a conversation with Claus, and with no prior build up, she kisses him on the lips, and he seems to like it, and becomes mildly obsessed with her. I fully thought she was a 30 year old woman who was kissing a 15 year old boy, so it felt really weird and bad. Apparently she's only 19, but that's still quite the age gap, still a rather problematic power gap, and also there's nothing in the story that really supports her liking him in that way. She seems to like Alex Row, who is too obsessed with his own revenge arc and his own dead lover to even notice that she's interested in him. I think maybe the idea the writers had was to show that she was using Claus as a substitute for Alex, but it simply doesn't work for me.

Anyway, of course the romantic tension between Lavie and Claus resolves by...I guess time just goes by, and they both agree that combat sucks, but it has to be done in order to make the skies free again. So in the end, stuff happens, and Claus and Alvis are in Anatoray, while the Silvana is in the Grand Stream, on its way to Disith, and it's very important for Alvis to get to the Silvana in Disith for reasons I won't go into, so Claus and Alvis make their way to the Grand Stream. The

Silvana sends several vanships to relay Claus and Alvis to their destination, and of course it's Lavie who navigates for Claus in their dad's old vanship, and they make it through the Grand Stream just like they always dreamed of.

Okay, some things I love about Claus and Lavie. Their story is so tragic, and yet it's wonderful to see how they bonded together to survive through their childhood. They mean so much to each other, and they have good chemistry with each other because of it. I like the idea of them having some romantic tension. I can see how they would grow up with each other, and maybe they just assumed they would be together forever without thinking about the ramifications of that. I just think that in the story that was presented to me, there was no earned growth in their relationship. Things happened, and then they just moved on. So here's how I would have done it.

Everything happens as normal until about the middle of the story, when Claus and Lavie come back to the Silvana from their combat mission, which is a failure, just like in the original story. However, this time, it's not just Lavie's fault. Claus is also not a very good gunner. (This is actually kind of true in the original story. He wastes a lot of the very limited ammunition in trying to hit the enemy.) They fight a little, and blame each other for the failure. Later, Lavie comes to Claus and says that she wants to learn how to be a pilot. She's been stuck in the back seat too long, literally and metaphorically. Claus is skeptical, and says he would be worried about her passing out in the pilot's seat. Lavie goes away fuming. Lavie starts to realize that she's never put herself first in their relationship, and she doesn't know who she is without Claus, but she wants to find out.

Claus flies the escort mission for Alex with Alis as in the original, and then Claus flies as navigator with Tatiana. They crash land together, but there's no subplot with the clothes though. Instead, they come back, and clearly Claus is closer to Tatiana. Lavie is acting distant from Claus, but then she asks him if something happened between him and Tatiana. Angry at her, he says nothing happened. He goes to find Tatiana, and unexpectedly, Tatiana gives him a kiss. He can't stop thinking about it. Claus is unsure how he feels. Meanwhile, Lavie asks if Alis will help her learn how to pilot a vanship, and they train together. Though Lavie isn't as good of a pilot as Claus, it turns out she is a natural at being a combat gunner. In the original, Alex acquires a map of the Grand Stream, and I think it would make sense if Lavie were to study this map, and start to show that she is dedicated to learning the ins and outs of this dangerous place, full of fickle, deadly strong winds.

Tatiana and Claus kiss again, but this time Lavie spots them. Lavie goes and talks to Alis, and Lavie even tries to kiss Alis in revenge. Alis draws back, however, and tells Lavie that Lavie needs to talk to Claus because she can't expect him to read her mind. Eventually Lavie goes to Claus, and says that she was hurt seeing him kiss Tatiana, and she was hurt because she loves Claus, she wants to be with him forever, and if he's with anyone else, they won't be together. Claus awkwardly says that he hasn't thought of Lavie that way. Lavie runs away crying at this rebuff. Claus almost immediately stops feeling attracted to Tatiana, as he realizes that he's been suppressing his feelings for Lavie, subconsciously not wanting them to lose their childlike, innocent bond. Eventually, after several episodes of doubt and awkwardness, Claus goes to Lavie, and expresses this. Lavie directs Claus to hold her tightly, and they kiss for the first time. For the rest of the show, it should be clear that the two of them are more intimate with each other, with a lot of touching and holding each other. There is only one last thing to do, and that's to demonstrate their relationship in their vanship. Just like in the original, Claus and Alvis will be separated from the

Silvana, and need to get to back in order to win the fight. The Silvana is in the Grand Stream, being attacked by the enemy, the Guild, who has their own super dangerous equivalents to vanships. Lavie realizes that she needs to go back to get Claus, but Alex won't let her, because it's too dangerous. But she and Alis defy his order and go anyway, and Lavie proves that she deserves to be a combat fighter by expertly punching through the enemy's ships. They make it back to Claus, and Alis stays behind while Lavie and Claus fly back through the Grand Stream. Claus does the flying, but Lavie instucts him on the fly how to be a better gunner when they need it most.

And they make it through the Grand Stream, as was always their goal. And now they've advanced their relationship from that sweet childhood bond to a strong bond of respect for each other.

Well hopefully this made sense and was entertaining. At the very least, it's now out of my head, so I can go watch the next perplexing anime series.

Rick and Morty Episode Ratings

I'm watching through the series, and just going to write down my personal ratings and thoughts for each episode

Season	Episode	Title	Rating (out of 5)	Notes
1	1	Pilot	5	The start of it all, a must watch. Perfect pacing, love the cold open and "They're robots Morty!"
1	2	Lawnmower Dog	4	I enjoy the inception knock off storyline the most, the bit where they're deep inside the dreams having to remind themselves of the plot is too perfect.
1	3	Anatomy Park	4	The image of a gigantic dead old man being exploded above the US is amazing, plus Jerry's dad jumping in the closet with a superman costume is perfect. "Would you like to ride the bone train?"
1	4	M. Night Shaym-Aliens!	4	I love trying to figure out when Rick knew that he was still in a simulation, and wondering if he suspected Morty was a fake. "Hungry for apples?"
1	5	Meeseeks and Destroy	4	"I'm Mr. Meeseeks!" Iconic, not to be missed. A little uncomfortable with the jellybean scene though.

1	6	Rick Potion #9	6	The actual best episode in the entire series. I love Jerry's character arc here, and the solution to the main problem really elevates the lore.
1	7	Raising Gazorpazorp	3	Not terrible but not very impactful, plus somewhat problematic with its gender essentialism, though you could take it as parody.
1	8	Rixty Minutes	5	Improvised nonsense at its best, the first anthology episode of the series has to be the best. "It's just two brothers. . . "
1	9	Something Ricked this Way Comes	4	The pluto storyline is boring, but you don't want to miss this one for the iconic bits, like Summer and Rick getting roided up to beat down bullies, and "You pass butter." "Oh my god."
1	10	Close Rick-Counters of the Rick Kind	5	First episode that introduces a substantial continuity and expands the lore. Hard to forget the Evil Morty music.
1	11	Ricksy Business	4	Can't miss the introduction to Bird Person, of course. Solid episode.
2	1	A Rickle in Time	5	I love this type of "high concept" sci fi. The B story with the Titanic was pretty boring though.
2	2	Mortynight Run	4	I'm not a huge fan of the moonman song, but this episode has some of the best one liners "Oh boy, here I go killing again!"

2	3	Auto Erotic Assimilation	4	Somewhat thought provoking.
2	4	Total Rickall	5	Classic Rick and Morty. I'm still not convinced Mr Poopybutthole isn't a memory parasite.
2	5	Get Schwifty	4	A lot of laughs, what else can I say? Except "Get schwifty!"
2	6	The Ricks must be Crazy	5	The best episode of the season. "Keep Summer safe." Perfect execution of a clever concept, and hilarious through the whole episode.
2	7	Big Trouble in Little Sanchez	5	"Get your shit together, put it in a backpack, just get it together." I was laughing the whole time, so many good bits. I like Jerry's solution to the B story, I wonder what happened to goddess Beth.
2	8	Interdimensional Cable 2: Tempting Fate	4	Not as funny as the first, but still funny.
2	9	Look Who's Purging Now	4	Funny, but a little too gratuitously violent for me.
2	10	The Wedding Squanchers	5	I love the lore episodes. Having just read "The Sociopath Next Door," I was beginning to think of Rick as a sociopath, but he does appear to have something of a conscience here. It's fun to think about!

3	1	The Rickshank Rickdemption	5	I'm craving szechuan sauce now. Okay, maybe Rick is just a sociopath. It's still fun to watch him outsmart everyone around him.
3	2	Rickmancing the Stone	3	This one feels a bit preachy or forced with its "moral." Still has a few funny bits though.
3	3	Pickle Rick	5	"I'm pickle Rick!" There's a good reason that this one gets memed so much. Solid, fun story, decent monologue by the therapist.
3	4	Vindicators 3: The Return of Worldender	5	I guess we're just trashing on Rick this season, and I'm loving it!
3	5	The Whirly Dirly Conspiracy	4	It's got some strong moments and some weak moments. Am I grading these too well, or was early Rick and Morty just this good?
3	6	Rest and Ricklaxation	3	"In and out, 20 minute adventure!" Kept my attention at least.
3	7	The Ricklantis Mixup	5	Honestly kinda feels prescient, with the assassination attempt on the Morty candidate and then the very quick changes in the Citidel after the election. This one is the best episode in the season.
3	8	Morty's Mind Blowers	4	Not as good as Interdimensional Cable, but a good few laughs here and there.

3	9	The ABC's of Beth	4	"Don't jump a gift shark in the mouth" This one loses points for the very gross cannibal-incest plot point, but gains points for Beth's character arc.
3	10	The Rickchurian Mortydate	3	I'm ambivalent about this one. There are some funny bits, but I don't feel the ending with Jerry being reunited with his family is satisfying. I suppose that's the point, that Jerry and Rick are unlikeable for different reasons, and both are uncomfortable patriarchs.
4	1	Edge of Tomorty: Rick Die Rickpeat	5	"You little monster, I thought you were masturbating!" I love the concept of the death crystals and how Morty uses them. And the after credits reveal really pulls everything together. Best episode of the season
4	2	The Old Man and the Seat	5	OMG, confirmed, Rick uses Linux. Specifically he uses Debian, which is amazing. Also, this episode is very funny. Great character arcs.
4	3	One Crew over the Crewcoo's Nest	5	"You son of a bitch, I'm in!" I forgot "Elon Tusk" was in this. He's as terrible an actor as he is a...person.
4	4	Claw and Hoarder: Special Rick Tim's Morty	2	Maybe the first real dud in Rick and Morty. Boring, weird and unnecessarily sexual/incestuous.

4	5	Rattlestar Ricklactica	4	Time travel shenanigans. I'm pretty sure it doesn't make sense. Snake jazz.
4	6	Never Ricking Morty	4	Not as many laughs, but I love this kind of story. Very meta, with Story Lord.
4	7	Promortyus	4	I like the concept, and I like the way the story is revealed non linearly
4	8	The Vat of Acid Episode	4	OMG, Rick is such a psycho. Includes a great bit of non verbal storytelling.
4	9	Childrick of Mort	4	"Getting high and playing video games is the best!"
4	10	Star Mort Rickturn of the Jerri	4	I do always like the lore episodes, and space Beth is a great addition to the cast. But this episode felt too short, like they tried to cram too much into 25 minutes.
5	1	Mort Dinner Rick Andre	4	Classic Rick and Morty. "Fuck off, I'm a time God!"
5	2	Mortyplicity	5	Another one of those sci fi concept episode that I really like. Decoys. My favorite episode of the season, except maybe the final episode? Best non-lore episode for sure.
5	3	A Rickconvenient Mort	4	I didn't laugh much, but I liked the stories of both Planetina and the apocalypses. The animation of Summer averting an apocalyse is actually really good.

5	4	Rickdependence Spray	2	Yuck. Was this necessary? I didn't give it the lowest rating because I did laugh a little.
5	5	Amortycan Grickfitti	3	Boring for the most part, but not terrible. It's the one with the demons who enjoy pain.
5	6	Rick & Morty's Thanksploitation Spectacular	3	Not particularly interesting but not offensive.
5	7	Gotron Jerrysis Rickvangelion	4	A point away for integration of the giant incest space baby, but otherwise I loved it. The voice overs were great!
5	8	Rickternal Friendshine of the Spotless Mort	4	More lore. Pretty good.
5	9	Forgetting Sarick Mortshall	4	"Rick and Two Crows forever!"
5	10	Rickmurai Jack	5	Satisfying ending (?) to Evil Morty's arc. Makes me think about philosophy and stuff.
6	1	Solaricks	4	Solid lore episode "Parmesian. Gross."
6	2	Rick: A Mort Well Lived	4	Solid, but not too many laughs.
6	3	Bethic Twinstinct	4	I found this funny. Is it bad that I think it's totally cool to make out with a clone of yourself?
6	4	Night Family	3	It's fine. I have lost all sense of whether my ratings have any kind of objective meaning

6	5	Final DeSmithation	3	It's fine, I actually laughed quite a bit, but it left me feeling empty...or maybe I just feel empty right now.
6	6	JuRicksic Mort	3	Actually pretty funny, but missing some kind of spark?
6	7	Full Meta Jackrick	3	Good concept with all the meta stuff, but actually kind of boring. Missing something, maybe heart? I don't know what that means.
6	8	Analyze Piss	4	I had a good couple of laughs, but ultimately, this one fails to feel very great. "Is that man dead?" "Is everything here confidential?" "Everything but murder" "Then he's fine."
6	9	A Rick in King Mortur's Mort	2	So boring. No stakes at all. Nice reference to the vat of acid episode though.
6	10	Ricktional Mortpoon's Rickmas Mortcation	3	Not too interesting, but not too bad. I ended up like Robot Rick
7	1	"How Poopy Got His Poop Back	3	Pretty generic
7	2	The Jerrick Trap	5	First episode that made me laugh hard in a while. The new amalgamation of Rick and Jerry are good.

7	3	Air Force Wong	5	I really liked the story of this one. I think I like Rick and Morty more for the fact that any crazy premise is possible, and the creators can deliver great stories based on those premises. Laughing out loud is a bonus, but not necessary for me to feel good after watching an episode. Like this one. This one's the one with Virginia
7	4	That's Amorte	5	Now I'm hungry for spaghetti. Just kidding. I laughed so hard.
7	5	Unmortricken	5	Holy shit. Great lore episode. I forgot everything about this episode since last time I watched it, including Evil Morty. Great characterization.
7	6	Rickfending Your Mort	5	"I'm a leg Morty!" This season's version of a clip show or anthology is very funny, and the framing story is good on its own as well.
7	7	Wet Kuat Amortican Summer	2	Not a fan. Maybe it's because I haven't seen Total Recall. Just kind of annoying and gross.
7	8	Rise of the Numbericons: The Movie	3	I guess not the worst? I didn't really enjoy it
7	9	Mort: Ragnarick	4	I liked this one. Not top quality, but close

7	10	Fear No Mort	4	Really good character arc, interesting concept, I wouldn't want to miss this one if I watched the series again, but it does feel like it's missing a little something.
8	1	Summer of All Fears	4	Funny! Pretty good start to the season

Rick and Morty ?????

I just rewatched all of Rick and Morty in anticipation of season 8 coming out some time in 2025. I've been a huge fan of the show since it was first released, but I remembered season 5 and 6 being a disappointment. However, I also remembered season 7 as being very funny. Weirdly, though, I had seen other ratings that showed that season 7 had a lower rating than season 5 and 6, which I thought was weird. I wanted to see if I was misremembering or if season 7 really did represent a potential comeback of the good old days of Rick and Morty. So I watched all seven seasons and gave every episode a rating out of 5.

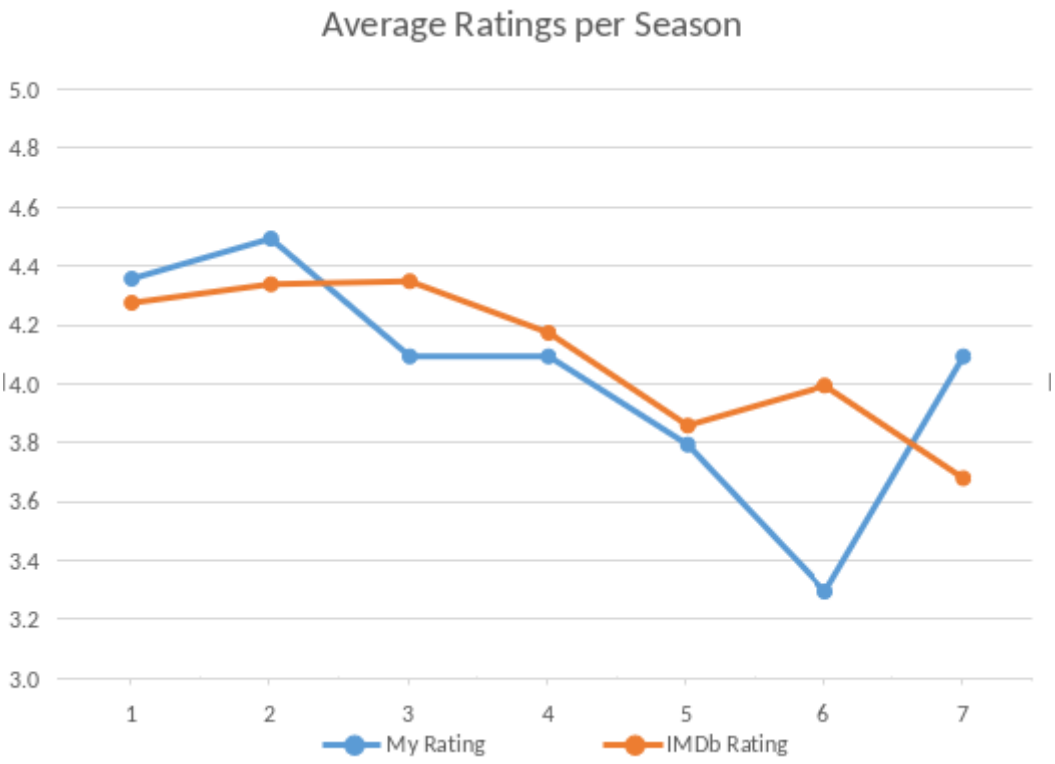
Rick and Morty is definitely a hilarious show, but there were a lot of episodes that didn't make me laugh and yet I enjoyed them as much or more than funnier episodes. I think RIck and Morty succeeds not just because of the wacky humor, but also because the premise of interdimensional travel is so bonkers, that it allows for them to explore all kinds of crazy sci-fi scenarios, and the wild consequences that other sci-fi stories might gloss over. Nothing is off limits, though, as referenced in the show, they go pretty light on time travel, only visiting the concept twice. I'm a huge fan of sci-fi and animation, so this show is automatically in my top favorite shows of all time for that reason.

The characters in Rick and Morty show natural growth over the 7 seasons. For example Rick starts the show as a sociopath who doesn't care about his family since he knows that there are infinite versions of them, and he can always jump to another dimension and find new versions of them to spend his time with. In the later seasons, he grows to become attached to the specific family he has found, and starts to learn how to treat them better. Introduced in season 3's episode "Pickle Rick," his therapist Dr. Wong challenges Rick to face his problems instead of running from them, and he very slowly, very reluctantly begins to do so.

RIck and Morty has a mixture of serialized episodes and standalone episodes. I used to think that TV shows that are serialized are best, but now I believe that serializing a whole show can make the stories very tedious. Rick and Morty does a good job of mixing it up. I enjoy every single lore episode, but I think it would be too much if every single episode were a lore episode. Dan Harmon, the co-creator of the show, is brilliant as a writer. He created another of my favorite shows, Community, which shares its zaniness and pop culture homages with Rick and Morty. Dan Harmon uses his formula of the "Story Circle," derived from Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey, which is what helps each episode feel like more than just a comedy sketch, with stakes, growth, and a satisfying story.

Comparing IMDb ratings (divided by 2 since they use a scale of 10) to my own ratings, I can see that what I originally thought was true. I enjoyed seasons 5 and 6 less than season 7, but reviewers on IMDb don't share my opinion. That was my subjective experience as well. As I watched seasons 5 and 6, especially 6, I just felt empty inside after most episodes. There were definitely a few duds in season 7, but I rated half the episodes 5/5, while season 6 had no 5/5s and season 5 only had two.

Season	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My Rating	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.1	3.8	3.3	4.1
IMDb rating	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.2	3.9	4.0	3.7



My hypothesis is that since viewership peaked in season 3 (according to Wikipedia via Nielsen), the people who watched season 7 were mostly the people who enjoyed the humor of season 5 and 6, which was weirdly, a lot of incest jokes and other gross humor. Another hypothesis is that people didn't like the new voice actors for the titular characters Rick and Morty after Justin Roiland was forced out due to sexual misconduct allegations. For the most part, I don't mind the new voice actors. Morty in particular is pretty much impossible to tell apart from his old voice. However, there were several episodes where I felt Rick's voice didn't match as well, a little deeper and a bit less scratchy. And Justin Roiland gave the characters, especially Rick, more of an off-the-cuff feel, which I think is lacking in season 7. So it sometimes feels like I'm watching a different Rick.

Overall, the show is great, especially the first 3 seasons. If you haven't seen this show, I definitely recommend you watch it. You may want to skip some episodes, but you have to be careful, because there are some important (and fun) lore episodes even in the bad seasons.

Here's a helpful viewing guide if you just want to skip the worst episodes:

> Season 1: Watch all the episodes, though you can skip episode 7: Raising Gazorpazorp if you want to
>
> Season 2: Watch all the episodes, every single one is a banger (at least a 4/5 on my scale)

Season 3: You can skip episode 2: Rickmancing the Stone. The last 2 episodes aren't my favorite, but they're somewhat important for the lore

Season 4: Watch all the episodes except DEFINITELY skip episode 4: Claw and Hoarder.

Season 5: DEFINITELY skip episode 4: RIckdependence Spray, and you can also skip episode 5: Amortycan Grickfitti and episode 6: Rick and Morty's Thanksploitation Spectacular

Season 6: You can skip episodes 5, 6, 7 and DEFINITELY 9

Season 7: You can skip episode 1: How Poopy got his Poop Back and episode 8: Rise of the Numbericons, and DEFINITELY skip episode 7: Wet Kuat Amortican Summer

If you just want to watch the best of the best episodes (according to both me and IMDb) along with the important lore episodes, here's the guide:

Season 1: 1,2,4,5,6,8,9,10,11 (skip 3 and 7)

Season 2: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,9,10 (skip 8)

Season 3: 1,3,4,6,7,8,9,10 (skip 2 and 5)

Season 4: 1,2,3,5,8,10 (skip 4, 6, 7, 9)

Season 5: 1,2,8,9,10 (skip 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

Season 6: 1,3,4,8,10 (skip 2, 5, 6, 7, 9)

Season 7: 2,3,4,5,6,10 (skip 1, 7, 8, 9)