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***Justified: City Primeval* bosses say 'all bets are off' in limited series: 'Raylan could die'**

"If you're bringing Raylan back, you put him up against a really, really bad guy who doesn't have any problem killing people," showrunner Dave Andron says.



By **Sydney Bucksbaum**

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After seven years, Timothy Olyphant is back as U.S. Marshal Raylan Givens for a new season of *Justified*. But while he's wearing the same hat and flashing the same badge as he did during the FX drama's original six-season run, that's about the only thing that's carried over to *Justified: City Primeval* (premiering this July). "You're not going to recognize anyone — the world, the relationships," Olyphant tells EW. "I just don't think you're going to see what's coming. On one hand, I really missed

the cast from the original series, and on the other hand, I was so in awe and honored to work with the cast on this one."

Having left the hollers of Kentucky 15 years ago, Raylan now lives in Miami, a walking anachronism balancing his life as a U.S. Marshal and part-time father of a 15-year-old girl, Willa (played by Timothy's real-life 20-year-old daughter, Vivian Olyphant). When a chance encounter on a Florida highway sends Raylan and Willa to Detroit, he crosses paths with Clement Mansell (Boyd Holbrook), a.k.a. The Oklahoma Wildman, a violent, sociopathic desperado who's already slipped through the fingers of Detroit's finest once and aims to do so again with the help of his formidable lawyer Carolyn Wilder (Aunjanue Ellis). These three characters set out on a collision course in classic Elmore Leonard fashion, to see who makes it out of the City Primeval alive.



Timothy Olyphant as Raylan Givens, Norbert Leo Butz as Norbert Bryl, Victor Williams as Wendell Robinson, and Marin Ireland as Maureen Downey in 'Justified: City Primeval'

| CREDIT: CHUCK HODES/FX

"For all intents and purposes, as far as I'm concerned, we are doing a new show," showrunner Dave Andron tells EW. "Sure, we have Raylan — we knew that was money in the bank — and we have [author] Elmore's book, but we had to create this whole new world for him to be in, this whole new cast of characters." He pauses, then adds, "I was just trying to make sure we didn't f--- it up. We understood that we ended the show really well the first time around, so we didn't take the plane back up lightly."

The reason Andron and fellow showrunner Michael Dinner, who spoke to EW prior to the writers' strike, risked that legacy to make a new, one-season version of *Justified* is simple: They all loved Leonard's Detroit-set novel *City Primeval* too much to not adapt it into a Raylan story. "It's kind of a gem in Elmore Leonard's collection. This is kind of the granddaddy for Raylan's character, in a way," Dinner says. "We didn't intend to reboot *Justified*, we didn't intend to pick up where we left off, but we thought it would be interesting to, what I call, 'do a mashup.' What if we took our character and dropped him into the middle of this story, and yet pay homage to a character that was in the book and also do service to the book? It wasn't so much trying to recapture the past, but to recapture the feeling that we had working together in the past, so we took Raylan and put him into this story."

A lot has changed since *Justified* fans last saw Raylan, however. "He's older. That's the thing I notice most often," Timothy says, before adding with a smile, "There's less desire to run."

"He's older and wiser, but he's still got it," Dinner explains. "He has about five years before there's a mandatory retirement in the Marshal service, so he's coming to the end of that life. The road in front of this guy is a lot shorter than the road behind. We're dealing with this next chapter of his life — we did *Justified* for six or seven years, and that was kind of like Act 1. This is Act 2 of his life, and it's an existential story."



Vivian Olyphant as Willa Givens and Timothy Olyphant as Raylan Givens in 'Justified: City Primeval'

| CREDIT: CHUCK HODES/FX

Timothy always had a desire to return to this character again, but he loves getting to explore this next stage in Raylan's life because of what he's grappling with. "You've got a US Marshal who's midlife, and through talking to the other Marshals out there, you get a sense of what he's up against and what's on his mind — if he's still in the position he was in when we last saw him, he's either been passed over, or he just loves it. And he still loves the chase," he says. "When guys like that are still hanging around, they start thinking, 'How's this going to end? How much longer are you going to keep getting away with this?' Guys like that have to come to admit the chase allows them to avoid a bunch of other stuff."

For Raylan, that means finally figuring out how to be a father to his daughter Willa. "His parenting is not one of his strong suits," Timothy says. "Now my kids might tell you, 'Yeah, that's exactly the same as in real life.' But I'd like to think I have a slight edge. This kid is, like Raylan, getting older, and how many chances is he going to get to be able to be in her life as she gets older? And at what point do you not drop

everything to put the thrill of going to hunt somebody down and realize what's in front of you is pretty great? That gets tough."

"A lot of the themes of *Justified* were about fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, the generational curse that gets handed down with violent tendencies, or tendencies towards anger," Dinner adds. "Those things only really start to emerge when your kid ends up in their teen years, and that is when you really start to realize what's been passed on. I think that was interesting to us, the notion of how much of this is being passed on to Willa."

Raylan and Willa's strained relationship couldn't be further from Timothy and Vivian's real-life, loving father-daughter dynamic, much to everyone's delight on set. But Timothy still had some reservations about having his daughter join the series. "This opportunity came up to audition and she didn't have any plans for the summer — she was looking for a summer job, so this seemed like it was one of the better options for her," he says, before adding with a laugh, "She won the lottery on that one. But as soon as she got the job, I was concerned we'd all made a terrible mistake. I'd raised her and I thought this hopefully will be easier than that — the time commitment was shorter, so that I thought was an upside. But quite honestly, it was wonderful, better than I could have expected. I loved working with her."



Adelaide Clemens as Sandy and Boyd Holbrook as Clement Mansell in 'Justified: City Primeval'

| CREDIT: CHUCK HODES/FX

Vivian admits she was too young to watch the original run of *Justified* ... and she still hasn't, even now. "My dad never really wanted us to watch the stuff that he was in," she says. "I did go to set — I remember the last day when they were ending the series and there was a sundae ice cream situation going on. I remember the ice cream!" But when she heard about the revival from her father and that they were looking to cast someone to play his daughter, she leapt at the chance to audition. "I was in my freshman year of college, my parents came in to visit me, and we worked on the audition together which was really fun. We ran the lines so many times that I was sleeping in my dorm and my roommate told me that I was sleep-talking my lines."

Both showrunners reveal Timothy didn't use his power to help Vivian land the role. In fact, he was hesitant to even tell them about Vivian's intention to audition. "Tim was even tentative about bringing it up; he felt weird about it," Dinner says. "And she auditioned like anybody else would, and we thought there was something about her that was very unusual."

"Viv just felt so kind of raw and real," Andron explains.

"And in a weird way, they bring their own baggage to it, you know what I mean?" Dinner adds. "She's kind of a pistol — there would be times where I'd see her saying to her daddy, 'Don't tell me what to do,' or, 'I got this.' She's a chip off the old block to a certain extent."

Timothy says he was proud to see how dedicated Vivian was, both during the audition process and after she landed the role. "I mean, people roll their eyes when you hear that, but I saw her work really hard, and I was impressed," he says. "I don't think anyone was a fan of the idea when it first came up. I think everybody thought, 'Oh, Jesus.' But she made quite an impression."



Boyd Holbrook as Clement Mansell and Aunjanue Ellis as Carolyn in 'Justified: City Primeval'

| CREDIT: CHUCK HODES/FX

And she made sure everyone knew it, too. One day on set, she started a popularity contest between her and her father. "I was bored because we were waiting around to film, and in the green room there was a whiteboard and I just [wrote], 'Which Olyphant do you like better?'" Vivian says with a laugh. "And then there was Team Viv and Team Tim. I ended up winning — it was nine to one." Although Andron is quick to point out, "There were a lot more marks on the Viv side than the Tim side, and I don't know how many of those marks Viv put there, in all fairness."

That on-set drama was all in good fun, but Raylan's onscreen troubles are much, much worse this season thanks to City Primeval's villain. Gone are the days of Raylan's back-and-forth with fellow Harlan brother-in-arms Boyd Crowder (Walton Goggins) — there's a new Boyd in town, as actor Boyd Holbrook joins the Justified world as Clement Mansell. "Well, we went and got another Boyd, so that helped us," Timothy says. "I love that dude. It's definitely a different vibe."

"Walton Goggins is one of my favorite actors to watch," Holbrook tells EW. "Hopefully, I live up to filling his shoes ... but the costume director said I had bigger feet than him, so I don't know."

What's even more ironic is that Holbrook actually comes from "the hollers of Kentucky" himself, much like Raylan and Boyd. "I was very reluctant to ever see [Justified] because I didn't know if it's just another Beverly Hillbillies sort of thing, but my mom was such a huge fan so I ended up watching the show and I loved it, man," he says. "It is totally not what I expected. Tim does a great job keeping everything real and legit. The show's calling card is 'f---ed up and funny,' and Kentucky is littered with wild characters. The fact that it wasn't poking fun or making fun of something, but it was actually just showing culture authentically, and from that there's truth in comedy — I just think the authenticity of it all won me over."



Timothy Olyphant as Raylan Givens in 'Justified: City Primeval'| CREDIT: CHUCK HODES/FX

But he never once thought he'd actually join the show years later, especially playing a character who's not from Kentucky at all. "Boyd Crowder kind of supported Raylan, really; they needed each other," Holbrook says. "But these guys, Raylan and Clement, they're trying to get away from each other. Clement is kind of a walking calamity, way in over his head. He's a thief, but not really a great thief. This guy sucks the life out of every moment as if it's going to be his last. He's really unstoppable in his own way. He also thinks he's such hot s---. His ego is just out of control. He's a sociopath. There are no F's given with him."

And that's what makes him even more formidable than Boyd ever was. "This character is one of the best bad guys Elmore ever created," Dinner says. "He's just a really dangerous, cool, bad motherf---er. Now, Boyd was those things too, but Boyd and Raylan were cut from the same cloth. Clement, he's really unpredictable."

Raising the stakes through the villain was very important to the showrunners. "If you're bringing Raylan back, you put him up against a really, really bad guy who doesn't have any problem killing people, because Raylan could die," Andron says. "This is a limited [series] and Raylan could very well not make it out of this. Every season we ended the show with 'You'll Never Leave Harlan Alive,' but then he does. Right up until the end of the show, you know Raylan's not going to die, and obviously he did not at the end. But I think, at this point, all bets are off."

Dinner explains that one of the core aspects of the novel is how it's really a "three-hander" between the cop, the criminal, and the lawyer in between them. "We wanted to stay true to that," he says. "When American crime fiction is working on all cylinders, you have a feeling that cosmic forces are maneuvering people together and that one, if not all, of them will not be standing at the end. Raylan's made it this far, but will he survive this? He very well might not."

Justified: City Primeval is slated to premiere this July on FX.