

= Going , Going , Gone (Grey 's Anatomy) =

" Going , Going , Gone " is the first episode of the ninth season of the American television medical drama Grey 's Anatomy , and the show 's 173rd episode overall . Written by Stacy McKee and directed by Rob Corn , the episode was originally broadcast on the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) in the United States on September 27 , 2012 . The initial airing was viewed by 11 @. @ 73 million people and garnered a 4 @. @ 4 Nielsen rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , registering the show as the week 's highest rated television drama .

Grey 's Anatomy centers around a group of physicians struggling to balance their professional lives with their personal lives . In this episode , the doctors of Seattle Grace Mercy West Hospital cope with the physical and emotional reverberations of the aviation accident that took place in the season eight finale , while several surgical residents are promoted . Further storylines include Dr. Cristina Yang (Sandra Oh) relocating to a different hospital , and a group of new interns being intimidated by Dr. Meredith Grey (Ellen Pompeo) .

The episode saw the death of Dr. Mark Sloan (Eric Dane) ; the actor was let go due to budget cuts by the producers . Excessive spoilers were not released , in order to keep the fates of select characters unknown . However , multiple cast members leaked pictures from the set . Jason George returned in guest capacity , along with newcomers William Daniels , Steven Culp , Philip Casnoff , Gaius Charles , Camilla Luddington , Tina Majorino , and Jerrika Hinton . Critics generally regarded " Going , Going , Gone " as disconsolate .

= = Plot = =

In the season eight finale , Dr. Meredith Grey (Ellen Pompeo) , Dr. Derek Shepherd (Patrick Dempsey) , Dr. Cristina Yang (Sandra Oh) , Dr. Lexie Grey (Chyler Leigh) , Dr. Mark Sloan (Eric Dane) , and Dr. Arizona Robbins (Jessica Capshaw) are caught in an aviation accident , leaving Lexie Grey dead , and the rest of the doctors stranded . " Going , Going , Gone " picks up about one month after the crash , and throughout the episode , features home videos of Sloan . The episode begins with Seattle Grace Mercy West Hospital 's new interns , Dr. Shane Ross (Gaius Charles) , Dr. Jo Wilson (Camilla Luddington) , Dr. Heather Brookes (Tina Majorino) , and Dr. Stephanie Edwards (Jerrika Hinton) , expressing fear of Meredith Grey , who is now an attending general surgeon . It is revealed that former resident Dr. Alex Karev (Justin Chambers) will be pursuing a pediatric surgical fellowship at Johns Hopkins Hospital . The scene switches to Minnesota , where Yang is now a cardiothoracic surgical fellow .

Back in Seattle , Dr. Ben Warren (Jason George) surprises his fiancée Dr. Miranda Bailey (Chandra Wilson) with a visit . The couple reunites with constant sexual activity , for which the interns tease Bailey . Meanwhile , Dr. Callie Torres (Sara Ramirez) allows Shepherd to operate on a spinal cord , despite his hand being broken from the plane crash . Thereafter , it is revealed that Sloan is in a comatose state , and will be taken off of life support that evening . In the hospital cafeteria , Meredith Grey announces that Wilson will be given the honor of performing a supervised appendectomy , a procedure historically used as a reward for interns . The hospital 's chief of surgery , Dr. Owen Hunt (Kevin McKidd) , introduces the new pediatric surgery attending , Dr. Mel Barnett (Philip Casnoff) , to Torres and Karev . Barnett informs Karev that he will not be continuing with the African orphan charity program (a function to treat ill children from Third World countries) , something that was initially finalized by the latter and former chief of pediatric surgery , Robbins . Karev becomes upset about this , and asks Torres to prevent Barnett from discontinuing the program , though Torres shows no interest in helping Karev .

During Shepherd 's surgery , his hand becomes numb , and he frustratedly exits the operating room . In the intern appendectomy , Wilson makes a mistake and freezes , leading to a scolding from Meredith Grey . Back in Minnesota , Yang is annoyed by the peppy attitudes of her superiors at Mayo Clinic , Dr. Craig Thomas (William Daniels) and Dr. Parker (Steven Culp) , so she decides to take a trip to Seattle for Sloan 's death . However , her PTSD hinders her from boarding the plane , and she ultimately remains in Minnesota . Meanwhile , Dr. Jackson Avery (Jesse Williams) , now

a plastic surgical fellow , sits by Sloan 's bedside and talks of medical cases to him . Dr. Richard Webber (James Pickens , Jr .) enters Sloan 's hospital room and removes him from life support . Unable to cope with Sloan 's death , Meredith Grey boards a plane to visit Yang , but panics before it takes off . Shortly thereafter , Meredith Grey finds Karev at the airport bar , where he reveals that he will be staying at Seattle Grace Mercy West Hospital . The next morning , Hunt visits Dr. April Kepner (Sarah Drew) at her family 's farm , and asks her to begin working in Seattle again . At the conclusion of the episode , Torres returns home to Robbins , who is revealed to have had her lower left leg amputated as a result of the crash .

= = Production = =

Running for approximately 43 minutes , the episode was written by Stacy McKee and directed by Rob Corn . The episode featured the songs " Body of Work " , " My Heart Goes Boom Boom " , " My Oh My " , " Feels Like the End " , " Portions for Foxes " , " Without You " , and " Into You " . George returned to the episode as Warren , while Daniels , Culp , Casnoff , Charles , Luddington , Majorino , and Hinton made their first appearances as Thomas , Parker , Barnett , Ross , Wilson , Brookes , and Edwards , respectively . The episode 's initial script read @-@ through took place on July 16 , 2012 . Scenes in the operating room were filmed at the Prospect Studios in Los Feliz , Los Angeles . While creating the visual of Robbins ' amputated leg , the special effects crew digitally removed Capshaw 's real leg , and replaced it with a graphically created limb .

Prior to broadcast , series creator Shonda Rhimes did not release much information about the season premiere . However , it was revealed prior to broadcast that there would be a time jump in the episode . After it was announced that Dane would be departing shortly after the commencement of the ninth season , Dempsey uploaded a set picture on Twitter of Sloan in bad condition . Due to the unwanted release of spoilers , the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) requested that he delete the photo , and it was subsequently removed . The cast and crew of Grey 's Anatomy were being particularly quiet about the fate of Capshaw 's character . This secrecy was compromised when McKidd posted a picture on his Twitter account of the editing room , in which there was a picture of Robbins alive on the screen . The picture has since been taken down .

Discussing Robbins ' storyline in " Going , Going , Gone " , Capshaw revealed that she was " shocked " when it was made known to her that the character 's leg would be amputated . The actress additionally noted that it was difficult to keep the fate of her character a secret . Following the premiere , E ! Online reported that Dane 's death and departure in the premiere were results of budgetary cuts , mandated by ABC . Speaking of Sloan 's death , Rhimes said it was the " most tragic " , adding that " he 's part of the fabric of the show " . Rhimes wrote that anything other than the character dying would entail him leaving his daughter behind , something the writers did not want . However , she noted that the writing team considered having him move to Los Angeles to be with Dr. Addison Montgomery (Kate Walsh) after her departure from Private Practice , but they feared it would have given the impression that his love confession for Lexie Grey was forgotten .

= = Reception = =

= = = Broadcast and ratings = = =

" Going , Going , Gone " was originally broadcast on Thursday , September 27 , 2012 in the United States on ABC . The episode 's total viewership of 11 @.@ 73 million ranked the show second in its 9 : 00 EST time slot , trailing CBS 's Person of Interest (14 @.@ 28 million) , and fifth for the night , behind CBS 's Two and a Half Men (12 @.@ 54 million) , Elementary (13 @.@ 41 million) , and The Big Bang Theory (15 @.@ 66 million) . The installment 's 4 @.@ 4 Nielsen rating in the target 18 ? 49 demographic ranked the series first in its time slot and second for the night , trailing only CBS 's The Big Bang Theory (5 @.@ 0) . In the key 18 ? 34 demographic , the episode earned a 3 @.@ 9 Nielsen rating , qualifying Grey 's Anatomy as the top television program of the night in that

demographic . " Going , Going , Gone " ' s total viewership and 18 ? 49 rating tallied the show 's highest numbers since " Suddenly " on Thursday , January 5 , 2012 (4 @ . @ 5 18 ? 49 rating , 12 @ . @ 12 million viewers) .

The 11 @ . @ 73 million people tuned into the episode marked a 3 percent viewership increase from the season eight finale (11 @ . @ 44 million) , and a 13 percent increase from the previous season premiere (10 @ . @ 38 million) . The episode 's 4 @ . @ 4 Nielsen rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic was a 7 percent increase from the season eight finale and previous season premiere , which both received 4 @ . @ 1 18 ? 49 ratings . The Nielsen score additionally registered the show as the week 's highest rated drama and third @ - @ highest rated scripted series in the 18 ? 49 demographic , placing behind CBS 's The Big Bang Theory (5 @ . @ 0) and ABC 's Modern Family (5 @ . @ 5) . Seven days of time @ - @ shifted viewing added on an additional 1 @ . @ 5 rating points in the 18 ? 49 demographic and 3 @ . @ 28 million viewers , bringing the total viewership for the episode to 15 @ . @ 01 million viewers with a 5 @ . @ 9 Nielsen rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic .

= = = Critical reviews = = =

The majority of critics concluded that the episode was disconsolate . E ! Online 's Kristin dos Santos called the installment " gut @ - @ wrenching " , saying it was the type of episode that " rips out your heart and feeds it to you with a spoon " . Ann Oldenburg of USA Today summarized that the episode required viewers to " reach for the Kleenex " . TV Guide 's Natalie Abrams called the episode " heartbreaking " , and praised the performances by Dempsey and Ramirez for their realism . Writing for Newsday , Verne Gay called Sloan 's death scene " touching " , and opined that the show will be different without the character 's presence .

Kelly Schremph of Hollywood.com said the installment was " emotionally exhausting " , adding that it foreshadowed a " drama @ - @ packed season " . Schremph commented that all of the changes made it feel like an alternative reality episode , such as was featured in season eight . Writing for Entertainment Weekly , Tanner Stransky expressed similar viewpoints with Schremph , commenting that the installment paved the way for a great season , and that it resembled season eight 's alternative reality episode . Stransky appreciated the " dignity " provided in Sloan 's death scene , noting that the song played during the scene was " killer " and " so fitting " . Jason Hughes of The Huffington Post called Sloan 's death day " fateful " . TV Fanatic gave a largely positive review to the season , " Grey 's Anatomy always knows how to bring the drama and they did not fail in the Season 9 Premiere . "

The International Business Times ' Arlene Paredes concluded that the episode " raised the bar for deeply emotional yet again " , and noted that it was " one of the most high @ - @ anticipated TV [returns] this fall " . TVLine 's Michael Ausiello opined that the attempt to hide Robbins ' fate was the " worst kept secret in TV land " . Writing for AfterEllen , Bridget McManus threatened to boycott the show if Capshaw 's character was killed , but thought the FaceTime calls between Yang and Meredith Grey were humorous . Mark A. Perigard of the Boston Herald was critical of the time it took to rescue the doctors , and deemed the flashbacks featuring Sloan " unconvincing " . Zap2it 's Carina Adly MacKenzie opined that it " became increasingly clear " that Sloan would die as the episode progressed , and praised Capshaw 's performance , noting that it was " brief but truly striking " .