

= Un @-@ American Graffiti =

" Un @-@ American Graffiti " is the sixteenth episode of the third season of the American mystery television series Veronica Mars , and the sixtieth episode overall . Written by Robert Hull and directed by John T. Kretchmer , the episode premiered on The CW on May 1 , 2007 . The series depicts the adventures of Veronica Mars (Kristen Bell) as she deals with life as a college student while moonlighting as a private detective .

In this episode , Veronica is hired by an Arab couple who own a Middle Eastern restaurant because their restaurant has recently had the word " terrorist " spray @-@ painted on it . Meanwhile , Keith (Enrico Colantoni) , as acting Sheriff , looks into underage drinking regulations in local bars after the case of a drunk 19 @-@ year @-@ old getting hit by a car comes to Keith 's attention , eventually finding that Veronica is handing out convincing fake IDs to her fellow students . In addition , Veronica attends a birthday party run by Logan (Jason Dohring) for his new girlfriend Parker (Julie Gonzalo) .

" Un @-@ American Graffiti " was the first episode of the series not to be part of a larger story arc . This was a change that had been decided upon midway through the season , and series creator Thomas thought that this would make the series more accessible to new viewers . In addition , the episode aired after a two @-@ month hiatus , during which period Thomas created the idea for season four taking place in the FBI Academy .

In its original broadcast , the episode garnered 2 @.@ 35 million viewers and generally negative reviews from television critics , with many criticizing the case @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week as cliché and moralistic . Eric Goldman of IGN compared the episode negatively to an after school special , while Rowan Kaiser , writing for The A.V. Club , disliked the portrayal of Rashad .

= = Plot synopsis = =

Logan invites Veronica to Parker 's birthday party . A woman (Carole Raphaele Davis) comes into Mars Investigations and says that her restaurant was vandalized . Veronica stakes out the restaurant before the owner 's husband (Anthony Azizi) comes out and berates her to leave . However , while they are speaking , a group of troublemakers appear and shoot paintballs at Veronica and the married couple . The husband acquiesces to allow Veronica to investigate both incidents further . Keith , as acting Sheriff , is called in to look into a case involving a 19 @-@ year @-@ old who was hit while returning home drunk from a bar using an obviously fake ID . Veronica tracks down the family of the car that was used in the paintball incident and finds that it is under the control of a group of young people . Keith 's underlings state that the bars are actually good at keeping out minors . Veronica reviews security cameras at the restaurant and tracks a person down to be a Jewish man with whom the restaurant owner 's daughter has been having an affair .

An employee named Nasir (Haaz Sleiman) has taken explicit photos of the two , and Amira 's father will disown her if the father finds out . Veronica goes to a photo @-@ developing store and retrieves the photos , but one is stuck in the printer and Nasir gets it . Amira 's father shows up at her door and angrily berates her and fires Veronica , although she says that her real employer is his wife . Keith catches Wallace and Piz , out for a night on the town , in a bar , discovering that they have high @-@ quality fake IDs from Veronica , leading Keith to reprimand her . Veronica discovers the true vandal after tracking a piece of bait . The vandal 's name is Derrick (Cole Williams) , who vandalized after seeing Nasir distributing a piece of anti @-@ American propaganda at a mall . Both owners want to meet Derrick before pressing charges . Keith sends Piz (Chris Lowell) and Wallace (Percy Daggs III) with clearly fake IDs into a bar as a test of his subordinates . He finds that the deputy does not check closely and resents Keith as well . Due to this fact , Keith fires the people who disobeyed his orders .

The two restaurant owners meet with Derrick , who does not react politely to them . However , they decide not to turn in Derrick . The husband / father has an awakening about Amira as well and forgives her , turning in Nasir to the police for an expired visa . At Parker 's party , Mac (Tina Majorino) reconnects with Max (Adam Rose) , and Veronica shows mild jealousy when Piz shows

her his new fling . Logan gets Parker a romantic cake . In order to escape from a awkward suitor whom Logan introduces her to , Veronica asks Piz to pretend to be her boyfriend . Afterwards , Wallace informs her that Piz does have a crush on her . Veronica realizes that she has not realized this because of her preoccupation with her breakup with Logan . She talks to Piz on the porch at the party , and he suddenly kisses her . Piz retreats to the elevator , but Veronica appears and kisses him back . The elevator opens , revealing Logan .

= = Production = =

" Un @-@ American Graffiti " was written by Robert Hull and directed by John T. Kretchmer , marking Hull 's second and final writing credit (after " Show Me the Monkey ") and Kretchmer 's fourteenth and final directing credit for the series . " Un @-@ American Graffiti " introduces a romantic storyline between Mac (Tina Majorino) and Max (Adam Rose) . Max had appeared in two previous episodes ? as a suspect in " Hi , Infidelity " and as the main client in " Poughkeepsie , Tramps and Thieves " . From the very beginning of his appearances , Max was planned to begin a romantic relationship with Mac . Rose was roommates with the other main love interest for her , Bronson Pope (Michael Mitchell) . When Rose received the call that he would be appearing in more episodes for a romantic storyline with Mac , Rose stated , " But I thought that 's what my roommate was doing . "

" Un @-@ American Graffiti " is the first episode of Veronica Mars not to be part of a broader story arc in the form of a mystery that Veronica solves over several episodes . The crew 's plan at the beginning of the season was to have the two @-@ part murder mystery of Hearst 's basketball coach , encapsulated in " Postgame Mortem " and " Mars , Bars " , to stretch over the rest of the season beginning with this episode , but this idea was changed around the airing of " Spit & Eggs " . Series creator Rob Thomas gave two rationales for the creative change . The first was that he believed that the story arcs alienated new or casual viewers , meaning that the change would solve the series ' low Nielsen ratings , while the other reason was that he noticed that after the first season , the show had garnered the most narrative criticism about the story arcs . On trying the new narrative structure , Thomas stated , " It seems like a good time to do it ? a good fun test balloon . Try it over five [episodes] and see how fans and non @-@ fans react . " However , Thomas also commented that the show would continue to exhibit a degree of serialization through Veronica 's romantic and personal life . In addition , the new story formula was a way to have episodes focus on Veronica 's personal life instead of devoting most of the episode time to advancing rushed mysteries .

The episode also features the first kiss of the characters of Piz (Chris Lowell) and Veronica , creating a love triangle between the two and Logan (Jason Dohring) that would last for the rest of the series and the Veronica Mars movie , dividing fans into " Team Logan " and " Team Piz " , depending on which relationship they preferred . The song " Rally " by alternative rock band Phoenix plays during Veronica and Piz 's kiss . Thomas highlighted the scene in Veronica returns home to find Keith reading classified ads as one of his favorite moments between the father / daughter pair in the season , stating that they both fulfilled the writers ' initial vision for the scene and that Kristen Bell in particular interpreted her lines well .

The episode was the first to air after nearly a two @-@ month hiatus , during which Thomas came up for the idea for season four to take place in the FBI Academy . Possibly done as a last @-@ resort attempt to save the show from cancellation , the series was very much on the brink of cancellation at this point in production . Prior to the airing of " Un @-@ American Graffiti " , Enrico Colantoni stated that The CW had seen the filmed first ten pages and reacted negatively . However , Thomas denied this testimony and commented that The CW had not yet seen the FBI pitch and would on May 2 , the day after the series ' return , a statement that was confirmed to be true by a representative for the network . Prior to the episode 's airing , information was released stating that middle school students would be involved in the episode , leading BuddyTV to speculate that Logan 's young friend from " Postgame Mortem " would make an appearance .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

In its original broadcast , " Un @-@ American Graffiti " received 2 @.@ 35 million viewers , ranking 95th of 98 in the weekly rankings . This was a decrease from the previous episode , " Papa 's Cabin " , which garnered 2 @.@ 66 million viewers .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Un @-@ American Graffiti " received generally negative reviews from television critics , with many criticizing the case @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week as cliché and moralistic and opining that it was not a strong start for the show 's new episode formula . Eric Goldman of IGN graded the episode a 7 @.@ 0 out of 10 , indicating that it was " good " . He was very critical of the case @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week and Keith 's plotline as Sheriff , comparing them both negatively to an after school special . He disliked what he considered to be the cliché storyline and stereotyped characters of the restaurant plot , particularly the trope of the disapproving Arab @-@ American father and the plotline ending with a speech about the American dream , concluding that " even Veronica pointing out this cliché didn 't make it less so . " While opining that Logan 's actions were out of character , the reviewer was more positive towards the budding relationships of Veronica and Piz and Mac and Max . Television Without Pity graded the episode a " C " , with the reviewer stating that it was the only episode of the series that they did not like . Reviewer Alan Sepinwall , on his blog What 's Alan Watching ? , was very negative towards the episode . While stating that it was very preachy and generally boring , particularly in the case @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week , he believed that the episode was just a fluke because he had already been sent the next episode , " Debasement Tapes " , which he enjoyed . While being less critical of the episode 's other subplots , he concluded that " this wasn 't exactly [a] triumphant return . "

Kelly West of Cinema Blend was mixed towards the episode . While calling the new formula " a breath of fresh air , " she was not entirely pleased with the final scene featuring Piz and Veronica 's kiss , opining that the location and the fact that Veronica ran after Piz and kissed him back were not in keeping with Veronica 's character . Rowan Kaiser , writing for The A.V. Club was also critical of the case of the week and the episode in general . While admiring the show 's decision to address the controversial issue of Islamophobia in the United States , he did not like the show 's characterization of Rashad , the father , noting inconsistencies about whether his storyline was one of redemption or not . " There are three seemingly equal interpretations : that Veronica Mars writers believe that the cartoon is worth ruining someone 's life over ; that Rashad is a complex character who can be petty and vindictive ; or , it 's just a bunch of stuff that happens and there is no moral . "