



## AWARDS

# All hail TV's goats and GOATs with the Envy Awards



It's the little moments, like these from "Severance," "Julia," "Stranger Things" and "Star Trek: Strange New Worlds," that make television special. (Chris Morris / For The Times)

BY RANDEE DAWN

AUG. 16, 2022 6:15 AM PT



So many great moments in TV, so little time — particularly during the Emmy Awards. Though actors, crew, writers, producers and directors will all get their brief time in the spotlight on Sept. 12, there are hundreds of moments from the past year in television that never get their due. That's what the Envy Awards are here for: to look

at TV not for its great acting, scripts, sets or production values but for the unique moments that also deserve a statue. Or at least the idea of a statue. The suggestion of a statue. A passing mention of a statue.

## **Most Infuriating Use of a Terrible Trope**

### **‘Killing Eve’ series finale (BBC America)**

“Killing Eve’s” ending may have been satisfying for its writers, but some of its most ardent, vocal fans (including Luke Jennings, author of the Villanelle books) had a real issue with the death of one of its key characters in the BBC America finale — particularly after she’d finally found some happiness in a same-sex relationship. While there was any number of reasons to bump off Villanelle — like her being an assassin and causing straight-up mayhem — it’s a tricky business to do so in a storytelling world where happy same-sex relationships seem to always end in death or tragedy. There’s a reason the trope is sardonically called “bury your gays.” The message audiences get? Same-sex love is only useful as a prelude to pain and suffering. Do better, writers.

## **Lack of Explanation Award**

### **The Goats of ‘Severance’ (Apple TV+)**

The surreal world of Lumon Industries in “Severance” is packed with so much Kubrickian knife-edge humor (Is it terrifying? Is it funny? Is it both?) — from waffle party rewards to departments like Optics and Designs to the “Break Room” punishments — that it’s hard to single out the weirdest moment. The place is a nightmare. And yet: Mark and Helly stumble briefly into a strange white room where a man in a suit sits on a toy barn, feeding baby goats. There is no explanation, except that the man says the goats aren’t ready yet. Ready for what, however ... is left unsaid.



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**BAFTAs, SAGs, Oscars — sure, those awards are exciting, but don't miss these**

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**Song in Your Heart Prize****‘Stranger Things’ (Netflix)**

Is there a series that hasn't had a musical number yet? If not, just wait, it's surely coming. From “The Peacemaker's” (HBO Max) opening credits to Jasper's rap in “The Afterparty” (Apple TV+) to singalongs from “The King & I” in “Pam & Tommy” (Hulu) and happiness personified in “The Boys” (Prime Video), musical numbers are everywhere. But while a funny musical number can brighten a story, we have to thank “Stranger Things” for showing how Kate Bush's music (specifically, 1985's “Running Up That Hill”) can literally save a life (in this case, Max's) and introduce a song to a new audience, which pushed it way up the charts some 37 years later.

**Most Unexpected Feminist Face-Off****‘Julia’ (HBO Max)**

When Julia Child backed her chair into Betty Friedan's seat at a WGBH event in “Julia,” it came with a bit of a surprise: Who knew those two movers and shakers of their era had ever crossed paths? Then came the other shoe: Friedan gave Child a lecture on how what she was doing in the kitchen was hurting the feminist cause. Was it? The thought exercise lent the soufflé froth of the series some heft and context it had heretofore avoided, and was a refreshing exchange. (Though, really, yelling at Julia Child? How gauche!) Alas, there's a third shoe to drop here: There's no record of Child and Friedan ever crossing paths — or swords.

## Quiff of the Year

### ‘Star Trek: Strange New Worlds’ (Paramount+)

Talk about Pike’s peak! Look, we know Paramount’s logo is a mighty mountaintop, but was the intent with Capt. Pike’s soaring gray quiff meant to be a brand shoutout? Truly, it was an amazing achievement in gravity-defying tresses, worthy of its own SAG card. Long may it wave.

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## Canniest Meta World Building

### ‘Ms. Marvel’ (Disney+)

Disney is going to find a Marvel comic property for every single human on planet Earth or die trying. The good news is that “Ms. Marvel” is charming and sweet (and gives voice to a first-ever Muslim superhero from the franchise). The *ka-ching* news is that somehow, Disney managed to create a world in which everything is a potential tie-in: Kamala is a huge comics nerd, so she and her pal surround themselves with all things superhero (Marvel, of course), which gives Disney free rein to sell itself to audiences over and over and over again.

## Truthiness Award

### ‘The 94th Academy Awards’ (ABC)

Reality TV went to the Oscars in March as an uninvited gate crasher when Will Smith

took offense to a joke Chris Rock made onstage about wife Jada Pinkett Smith's alopecia areata (which has affected her hair) and slapped Rock during the ceremony. That was strange enough, but stranger still was that for some time afterward few people knew whether it was a staged joke that fell flat, or if we'd just seen an Oscar nominee (who became a winner moments later) assault a fellow performer in real time. Truthiness wins yet again when it's hard to tell the real from the fiction.

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