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Angela Bassett Can 'Absolutely Not' Picture a World Where *9-1-1*'s Athena and Bobby Don't End Up Together (Exclusive)

"I don't even know what the show would be like without them together," the actress tells PEOPLE exclusively

By

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Envisioning a world where *9-1-1* coupling Athena Grant-Nash and Bobby Nash doesn't exist is tough, especially for star Angela Bassett.

"Yeah, absolutely not. It would be so different," Bassett, who has played Athena since the show's 2018 premiere, tells PEOPLE. "I don't even know what the show would be like without them together. It's hard to imagine."

The honorary Academy Award winner, 66, notes that the twosome are "your metaphorical, weekly mom and dad" as she adds, "We'll keep you safe."

Bassett's Athena, an LAPD patrol sergeant, began dating LAFD Station 118 captain Bobby, played by Peter Krause, at the end of season 1. The characters eventually wed in season 2 and have remained an anchor for the show ever since.

The *Black Panther* actress' bond with Krause, 59, extends beyond the ABC procedural, as the two have developed a close friendship offscreen as well.

Praising the *Parenthood* alum, Bassett says: "He's just so strong, and stable, and secure."

"He's just calm. He's just a calming influence," she continues. "He'll joke a little bit, but he don't mind being the butt of the joke. Yeah. So he'd always have one."

Recently, Bassett's Athena stepped away from her home at *9-1-1* to board *Doctor Odyssey* for a special crossover episode. Per a synopsis of the episode titled "Casino Week," Athena spotted "two suspicious passengers eyeing the vault" and then teamed up with Max (Joshua Jackson) to "counter their plans in a high-stakes gamble."

Bassett says it "was absolutely wonderful meeting" both Jackson, 46, and Don Johnson on the *Doctor Odyssey* set because she's "just big fans of their work."

"It was just a love fest. It was certain times I had to, with the guys especially, I would have to walk away, center myself because they have so much wonderful energy and so much to say," she adds. "They are just such a delight."