

Interview with TV Insider – November 4, 2019

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‘9-1-1’s Angela Bassett Teases Athena’s Origin Story Episode

[Kate Hahn](#)

November 4, 2019, 9:00 am

For Three Seasons of [9-1-1](#), we’ve watched by-the-book LAPD Sgt. Athena Grant ([Angela Bassett](#)) get the job done.

On November 4, we learn how she came to wear the badge in an emotional hour that includes flashbacks to her days as an aspiring lawyer at USC and her pivotal relationship with LAPD recruiting officer Emmett Washington (Jeff Pierre) — who was killed after they became involved. When new evidence surfaces in the 30-year-old cold case, Athena takes it upon herself to investigate. Bassett fills us in.

How did Emmett get Athena to switch career paths?

Angela Bassett: He awakens something in her. She’s sparked. The pheromones are in play! Because of meeting Emmett and the woman that she is, she’s concerned about her community and young people and determined to do the right thing.

Why did she keep her past with Emmett a secret, even from husband Bobby ([Peter Krause](#))?

It was so painful, it could have caused her to unravel. She didn't talk or think about it. She put it away so that it wouldn't take her to her bed or kill off her humanity.

Did the actress playing younger Athena (Pepi Sonuga) have her job cut out for her?

She goes through it *all* — the meeting, the fresh new love, that heady time and the pain when he's murdered. I weighed in on the casting. Director [Tasha Smith](#) [[Empire](#)], one of my dearest girlfriends, said, "I want Angela to see the choices."

Is pursuing the case now, solo, dangerous for Athena?

It's dangerous because what line will she cross to find out who killed this man? Is there anything she will *not* do? She's solving [the murder] and going about it in a professional way, but right under the surface, there's the possibility of cracking.

9-1-1, Mondays, 8/7c, Fox