Whether you follow the television trades or not, odds are you've heard by now that former CBS Evening News anchor, Katie Couric, has inked a deal with the ABC network for a syndicated daytime talk show. Her show is set to debut in 2012. But there are only so many daytime hours of programming available, and even with ABC already canceling two of   its daytime soaps (All My Children and One Life to Live) earlier this year, the network has promised Couric's team that her new syndicated show will bump General Hospital on several stations by giving the talker GH's time slot.

According to the Hollywood Reporter, ABC did not come out and say that it was likewise about to cancel General Hospital, which was probably wise given the fury the cancelation of AMC and OLTL is causing. Instead, their press release says that "the network is set to return the last hour of its daytime network block to affliates no earlier than September 2012 but continues to support General Hospital."

In a follow-up note to the Hollywood Reporter, an ABC spokesperson said, "The announcement does not mean the inevitable cancellation of General Hospital. Rather, it means that in September 2012, we will program our daytime block with our three strongest shows. We are simply giving ourselves options for the future, which is a smart way to do business," the spokesperson added. "The best way to ensure a favorite show stays on the air is to watch it."

With AMC and OLTL replacements The Chew and The Revolution filling the other hours, it's definitely conceivable that one (or both) of those ill-conceived hours of reality drivel will fail royally early on and get axed. But what do we know? As the Hollywood Reporter so aptly put it:

"...given the growing competition and the network's willingness to pull the plug on other offerings in the genre, it would be naive to assume General Hospital is 100 percent safe."

Guess it is going to be up to us to keep tuning in to General Hospital, now more than ever. Please share your thoughts in the comments section below.