NEW YORK, March 10, 2006

The waiting is over for fans of "The Sopranos," which was on a break that lasted almost two years. The HBO mob hit returns for its sixth, and final season Sunday night.

There will be twenty episodes in all, a dozen this year and the other eight early next.

Lorraine Bracco is back in her role as Tony Soprano's therapist, Dr. Jennifer Melfi, who may be the only person who truly knows the mob boss, played by James Gandolfini.

This season, Tony is "back in therapy, which is good, good for him, and dealing with issues, kind of sort of, trying? You know?" Bracco remarked to The Early Show co-anchor Harry Smith Friday.

Why does Bracco's character keep seeing Tony?

"Because," she answered, in–character, "I believe I can help him. ... Absolutely. I think I've helped him. I don't think he's as angry as before. And I think he's kind of processing a different way of thinking."

Smith observed that, "Everything that's been written about the show thus far says this is a kind of a darker season."

"I think so," Bracco concurred. "I think it's a sadder season."

She says she hasn't "allowed myself to" mull that the end of "The Sopranos" is near. "I figure," she says, "I still have almost a year to cry about it. So why go now?"

Bracco also agreed with Smith's assessment that the show is like one, big movie: "I mean, I think we've been so lucky to have incredible support from HBO and ("Sopranos" creator) David Chase."

It was Chase, Bracco says, who wanted the show shot in New York and New
Jersey. "He believed that it would bring, you know, those elements to the show. I think we have an incredible crew of unbelievable creative people who didn't want to, you know, leave home. And they were willing to work 18 hours a day."

When Smith interjected that the casting is what's key, Bracco responded, "It's a combination plate of everything."

The therapy sessions, Bracco noted, are "where you see (Tony) is human. That's what you are really seeing, and that's where David (Chase) was really, really smart to make him come bare his, not full soul, but a small part of him. But it does make him human, there's no doubt about that, in my opinion."

During the show's long hiatus, Bracco went to Italy, where she'd lived for ten years. She began picking out wine bottles, and imports them with her own label on them.

She also has an autobiography due out in June.

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