

Altered Carbon Episode Guide

Episodes 001-018

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Season One

Out of the Past

Season 1

Episode Number: 1

Season Episode: 1

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Laeta Kalogridis
Director: Miguel Sapochnik
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcris Falconer)
Guest Stars: Byron Mann (O.G. Kovacs), Waleed Zuaiter (Samir Abboud), Antonio Marziale (Isaac Bancroft), Olga Fonda (Sarah), Daniel Bernhardt (Jaeger), Paul Lazenby (Trooper #1), Jane Hancock (Orientation Woman), John Emmet Tracy (Warden Sullivan), Tahmoh Penikett (Dimitri Kadmin), Troy Rudolph (Re-Meet Dad), Elfina Luk (Re-Meet Mom), Glynis Davies (Old Junkie Woman), Howie Lai (Meditech 1), Kwasi Thomas (Meditech 2), Joel Montgrand (Meditech 3), Nicole Anthony (Trainee), Zahf Paroo (Curtis), Shayn Walker (Security Guard), Cory Chetyrbok (Spirit Saver Demonstrator), Jay Cardinal Villeneuve (Spirit Saver Demonstrator 2), Morgan Gao (Young Tak), Riley Lai Nelet (Young Reileen), Dario de Iaco (Gene Freak Neanderthal), Fraser Aitchison (Gene Freak Rhino Man), Amitai Marmorstein (Junkie Dealer), Simon Chin (Alcatraz Guard), Alyson Bath (Woman Speaking Hologram), Lisa Chandler (Mary Lou Henchy), Leonie Bennett (Sexy Synth Girl), Kat Pasion ('B' Side Synth), Jason McKinnon (Handsome Guy), Tina Grant (Overextended Mom), Richard Ian Cox (Cheap Lawyer), Nickolas Baric (Man of Kadmin), Sean Kohnke (Man of Kadmin #2), Nigel Brighton (Man in Black), Peter Brown (Attendant), Jim Eliason (Police Officer), Will Yun Lee (Stronghold Kovacs), Celeste White Steele (Fell Station Detective)
Summary: Waking up in a new body 250 years after his death, Takeshi Kovacs discovers he's been resurrected to help a titan of industry solve his own murder.



Prologue — Altered Carbon is a wild cyberpunk ride through a dystopian future telling the story of Takeshi Kovacs, a centuries old supersoldier, rebel, and former mercenary who's been imprisoned and asleep for 250 years. The method of his imprisonment is the removal of his "stack" from his "sleeve," meaning the disc which contains his soul and consciousness was removed from his spine and stored until a wealthy man who requires his services pays for his release. His stack is then inserted into a new sleeve, also known as a body, that his patron bought for him to use while Kovacs

works the murder case he's been hired to solve.

Everyone in society is fitted with a stack when they are very young, but new sleeves vary in price. Functional immortality using clones and backup stacks is fashionable for the very rich. Normal people hope that their stacks aren't damaged when they die so that they can be brought back, and that they can afford a decent new sleeve. Neo-Catholics believe that being spun up in a new sleeve is a sin and vow to live only the single life span their original sleeve allows them. Overall, life has become cheap because it's so easily replaced, and corporate decadence rules society.

The episode begins with images of modern Kovacs before he's revived, dreaming that he's floating in water. The view of his body is interspersed with images of original Kovacs being intimate with a woman, and mercenary Kovacs showering intimately with another woman, or at least another sleeve (although they start out covered in blood). The future gets confusing at times, with all of the body hopping. We can see the stack insertion scar on the back of the showering woman's neck. The floor of the shower is littered with stolen stacks.

In voiceover, a woman tells us:

"The first thing you learn is that nothing is what it seems. Ignore your assumptions. Don't trust anything. What you see. What you hear. What people tell you. What you think you remember. We are Envoys and we take what is offered. Let experience wash over you. Absorb it like a sponge. Expect nothing. Only then can you be prepared for anything."

The scene settles on merc Kovacs and his companion in a future hotel room. Kovacs lies on the bed and smokes while his companion cleans the stolen stacks. He crosses the room to look out the window, where there are two moons looming over a dense, futuristic cityscape. The woman wonders who the stacks are. She swears in Russian. Kovacs doesn't care, as long as they get paid.

Woman: Have you always been such an asshole?

Kovacs: Every sleeve, every time.

The electronics flicker. Kovacs turns off the electronic window. He turns on his enhanced vision and looks into the hall. A tac team of 12 heavily armed soldiers is coming to arrest them. The soldiers bust into the room. A violent fight ensues. Kovacs and the woman have limited weaponry, but stand their ground. Thanks to Kovacs superior skill, they almost win, until reinforcement soldiers show up just in time to turn the tide again.

Female voiceover continues:

*"Your body is not who you are. You shed it like a snake sheds its skin. Leave it, forgotten, behind you. Make it personal. It is you. You are the weapon. You are the killer and the destroyer. One thing I can promise you. Coming back from the dead is a b*tch. Every single time."*

Interspersed with the hotel room fight, we see modern Kovacs brought into a utilitarian lab facility. He's packaged in a vacuum-sealed bag. A male lab technician wearing a hazmat suit and goggles tells the female technician in training to watch what he does. The trainee is grossed out by the thought of the process ahead.

The technician unzips Kovacs packaging and goeey liquid gushes out on the floor. The technician emphasizes that they need to decant this subject efficiently, as they have four more to do in the next hour. The technician tries to show the trainee how to remove the umbilicus, the breathing apparatus and tube that covers Kovacs face. Kovacs becomes agitated and writhes on the lab table. The technician says that this happens sometimes. It usually means that the subject's last death was violent.

They try to move Kovacs to a chair to remove his umbilicus. He wakes up and punches the technician in the face. The trainee calls for help while Kovacs pulls out his own umbilicus, after rolling onto the floor. Several burly men run into the room and threaten to sedate Kovacs if he doesn't calm down.

He takes one of the security guards down, and asks how long he's been out. They look up his file and tell him it's been 250 years. Then he demands a mirror.

Technician: There are no mirrors here. You need time to adjust to your new sleeve. You risk schism or a psychotic break.

Kovacs, um, strongly insists that they give him a mirror. They give him a shiny metal tray. When he looks into it, at first he sees his previous skin, an Asian man. He howls at the mirror as it shifts to his new face, that of a caucasian man. Kovacs drops the mirror and hides his face for a moment. The technician berates Kovacs for breaking his nose.

Kovacs calmly says that he hates getting shot, then asks where he is. When they tell him he's in Alcatraz Prison, Bay City, he scoffs and demands to know what planet. They tell him he's on earth. He stands up and asks where the shower is, then walks there on his own, completely naked and covered in goo.

Joel Kinnaman does put on clothes eventually.

After showering and dressing, Kovacs is sent to an orientation session with other newly resleeved prisoners. The orientation is interrupted by security taking him to see the warden.

Orientation Hologram:

"Welcome to Alcatraz. You've successfully completed your prison sentence. You may notice you are no longer in the body you arrived in. Now that you have paid your debt to society, you have been resleeved from our available inventory of prisoners. You may feel confused or strange. (Quell: After all, you're not supposed to be here.) Disorientation, visual and auditory hallucinations, and even low-grade amnesia are normal. But don't worry. This orientation will answer all of your questions. This is a cortical stack. As Protectorate citizens, we each have one implanted when we are 1 year old. Inside is pure human mind, coded and stored as DHF: Digital Human Freight. Your consciousness can be downloaded into any stack, in any sleeve. You can even needlecast in minutes to a sleeve anywhere in the Settled Worlds. A sleeve is replaceable. But if your stack is destroyed, you die. There's no coming back from real death. So, avoid blunt force trauma to the base of the brain, and energy weapons fired at the head."

Female voiceover:

"When you wake up, the world will not be what it was. And neither will you. They have forgotten who and what we are. Make them remember."

Meanwhile, back in the merc Kovacs sleeve and the now destroyed hotel room, the woman's sleeve is fatally injured and Kovacs is subdued. The leader takes his helmet off and tells Kovacs that he's "under arrest for treason against the Protectorate. Working for the terrorist leader Quellcris Falconer."

Kovacs: "I didn't work for her. It was more like an autonomous collective."

They toss a couple of insults and threats at each other, and Kovacs recognizes that he knows the team leader, calling him Jaeger. Jaeger goes over to Kovacs' companion, whose stack is still viable. Kovacs says he knows that Jaeger has order not to kill him, so he should just take him in now. Jaeger asks who the woman is. Kovacs hesitates half a second, then says she's nobody, just a local merc. Jaeger shoots her in the stack, causing real, permanent death. (Or appears to, anyway. Trust nothing and no one. First thing Quell told us.)

Kovacs was smoking in the merc body, and is already smoking in the new body. Some noir characteristics never change. The first thing the warden does is tell him to put out the cigarette. He does, and sits down.

The warden says, "You... File's incomplete, parts of it sealed. What is here? Espionage, terrorism, crimes against the state and more murders than I can count. And when they finally arrested you, you gunned down your own partner in the stack. Report says she was shot from behind, so, along with everything else, you're a coward."

That pause after the warden says "you" is interesting. Kovacs looks startled when he hears that Jaeger framed him for the death of his partner, but he doesn't say anything. When the warden asks if he has anything to say, he replies with a flippant remark. It wouldn't do him any good to argue anyway.

Warden: "This is your parole document certifying that your DHF was shipped from Millsport Maximum Security Prison, received here intact, and sleeved in this body, which came equipped with military-grade neurachem and combat muscle memory. You've been provided with clothing and incidentals, as per the specifications of Bancroft Industries, which has leased you. As such, you are the property of Laurens Bancroft for the duration of that lease."

Kovacs: "Property? What about my rights?"

Warden: "You don't have any. Failure to comply with the terms of this parole will result in your immediate desleeving and return here, to serve out the rest of your term, which does not appear to have an end date. You're going to screw up. Do something violent, hurt someone, kill someone. I know people like you."

Kovacs: "There aren't any people like me. Not anymore."

Female voiceover:

"There will be places where they'll wait, the people left behind. Wait to see their friends, lovers, children, parents come back to them, riding unfamiliar bodies out from digitized exile. They'll look into the eyes of strangers, searching for a glimpse of the person they've lost."

Kovacs is taken to dress in civilian clothes then out to the front lobby for release. The lobby is full of people wandering, searching, and waiting. An older woman who'd been in orientation with Kovacs also gets up. She walks over to a young couple and says, "Mommy?" The young woman looks at her hopefully and says, "Cindy?"

Cindy's dad looks over at an employee and irately asks what they've done to his daughter. She's seven years old and was murdered in a hit and run accident. According to the law, she's entitled to a free sleeve. The employee responds that free sleeves are whatever is in inventory. If they don't like it, they can put their daughter's stack back in storage, or pay for an upgraded sleeve. Cindy sobs that she doesn't want to go back into the dark.

Another young woman perks up when she sees Kovacs. She introduces herself to him as Kristin Ortega, and says she'll be driving him to the Bancroft residence. Kovacs is disgusted that they've put a little girl into the body of an older woman. Kristin repeats what the employee said, that for victim restitution, the state gives out the worst of what they have on hand. They lease out better sleeves for profit.

Appreciate the bodies you were born into, guys. At least you probably own them, free and clear!

Kovacs says they didn't have that where he comes from. Ortega asks where that might be? But they reach the front door at that point, and the protest shown in the top photo on this page. The crowd chants, "Justice! Let the dead speak! No resleeving! Shouldn't have come back!" Protesters get right up in Kovacs face to condemn him.

He and Ortega take off in the Bancrofts' flying car. She continues to make conversation, including a lot of questions about Kovacs, as they drive.

653: Justice for Victims. They deserve to be heard.

Ortega: " Spirit Savers and Afterlifers. 653 failed, and still they can't stop yelling."

Kovacs: "What is 653?"

Ortega: "Something about spinning up murder victims to testify who killed them."

Kovacs: Why wouldn't you spin them up if they're witnesses to their own murder?

Ortega: "Archdiocese says you only get the sleeve you're born with. Once it dies, they spin you back up for anything, even to identify your killer, your soul goes to hell."

She asks Kovacs what he thinks, and he says that he thinks no one in the Archdiocese knows what it's like to be murdered. He remembers back to watching his most recent partner being murdered by Jaeger. Merc Kovacs jumped up to attack Jaeger, but was shot in the chest, sending him to the floor. Jaeger demanded that he stay down. Merc Kovacs got up and ran for the glass bathroom wall, as the tac team shot him repeatedly. By the time he crashed through the glass he was dying. Merc Kovacs lay on the bathroom floor as he died, looking at his own reflection in a broken mirror. Modern Kovacs is haunted by his past.

Ortega asks modern Kovacs what he was in prison for. He gives her a vague answer, ending with, "Some people just need killing." They discuss Laurens Bancroft, since Kovacs has never heard of him. Ortega explains that Bancroft was one of the first founding Meths. A Meth is one of the obscenely wealthy and powerful class who live like gods, named for the Bible verse Genesis 5:27, "And the days of Methuselah were 969 years." Laurens Bancroft is 360 years old.

The car has been flying higher and higher as they've talked, surrounded by skyscrapers and giant holographic advertisements. Suddenly, it breaks through the cloud ceiling, where only the

top few floors of a few buildings rise. Ortega says, "They call it the Aerium." Kovacs is mesmerized by the Aerium. Ortega continues to pump him for information, but he doesn't give anything up.

After a clumsy landing approach and a not quite crash landing, he finally gives her his name and tells her to look him up, just as she's putting on a police badge. Bay City Police Lieutenant Ortega and Kovacs are met by Miriam Bancroft, Laurens' wife, and his security team, who threaten to shoot Ortega for trespassing. Ortega isn't threatened by them. Miriam asks why Ortega is driving the family limo.

Before she can answer, a Bay City Police car pulls up with Ortega's partner Aboud and the Bancrofts' son Isaac inside. Isaac was supposed to pick up Kovacs, but was picked up for drunk driving instead. Ortega borrowed the Bancrofts' limo so that she could meet their mysterious new guest. Once she's figured out who Kovacs is, Ortega throws a few intimidating comments his way, and tells him she's not done with him as she leaves.

Miriam welcomes Kovacs to Sun House and brings him inside. The large foyer has an alien tree that's a few stories tall, but very delicate. Kovacs thinks it should be in a museum because of its rarity and sacredness. Miriam says that she had it shipped from its home world because she has a passion for artifacts from the Elder Civilization. It's the only Songspire tree on earth. At the ends of its weeping branches are glowing buds, similar to tassels. Merc Kovacs was wearing one of these as a pendant around his neck.

She tells Kovacs that no one knows what they were originally for, but on their home world the trees grow to be thousands of meters tall. He says he knows. He's seen them, and thinks back to a time when he was with a group of people surrounding a tall Songspire tree in its natural habitat. Miriam realizes her mistake, and says, "Of course. Stronghold."

Throughout this conversation Kovacs looks sad and lost, but he eventually grows desolate. It's the feeling you'd expect from a man who's lost everyone and everything, even his culture, time period and planet. But since he woke up he's been surrounded by the mythology that he's the last of the legendary and mysterious Envoys, supersoldiers of an earlier era, and a vicious terrorist, practically a mass murderer.

There's been no time for him to feel his own feelings, until this brief moment when he's suddenly confronted with a powerful symbol of everything he's lost. And now he's in front of a shallow woman who'd like to collect him along with the rest of her artifacts.

He follows her into the elevator and crowds into the corner, hunched in on himself with his arms crossed, very aware that his life is not his own. Like the Songspire tree, he's been bought and paid for, brought to this world at great expense. Miriam either doesn't notice or doesn't care that his armor has momentarily failed him. She comes on to him anyway. People, like the sleeves they are housed in, are just another commodity to her.

Laurens Bancroft meets Kovacs in his study, which looks like Escher-designed architecture, with multiple levels of stairs, balconies, halls and smaller rooms off to the sides, becoming a confusing maze. Bancroft himself greets Kovacs from a balcony high above Kovacs' position, then slowly makes his way downstairs, allowing himself to be distracted by his bookshelves and memories, making Kovacs look up to him, then wait for him.

When he finally stands in front of Kovacs, he hands Kovacs a handwritten, original book by Kovacs lover and mentor, Quellcris Falconer. On the surface it appears to be a generous, if slightly insensitive gift, but it also sends the message that Bancroft owns EVERYTHING. He knows everything about Kovacs. He has bought Kovacs and his past, even the noble parts. There is no revolution for Kovacs to return to, because the Meths own it now, along with anyone left who fought for it.

Kovacs is momentarily thrown off kilter again, but then he's done.

Kovacs: Listen to me. I spent this entire morning being well and truly f*cked around with, so, uh, let me be painfully clear. Some things can't be bought. Like me. Now I didn't ask you to bring me back into this world. In fact, I fought a war to stop people like you from happening. So, if someone doesn't tell me right now what the f*ck this is all about, I might very well lose my temper. (Gives Bancroft back the book.)

Bancroft offers Kovacs a full pardon, a very generous line of credit, the Falconer book, the sleeve he's wearing or a sleeve of his own choosing, and 50 million UN credits, if he takes Bancroft's case.

Bancroft wants Kovacs to solve his own murder. He dramatically pulls down a cloth that had been covering one of the study walls to show that it's covered in blood and brain matter.

At the police station, Ortega is beside herself as she wonders why Bancroft needs his own terrorist, especially a terrorist as gifted as an Envoy. Her partner, Aboud, reads up on the Envoys. They were able to absorb local language, culture and customs, and pass in almost any environment. Ortega adds that they could, "Infiltrate and manipulate computer systems, other people."

Bancroft explains that Miriam found him in his study with his head vaporized by a particle blaster. There are no outside weapons allowed in the Aerium, but he keeps a particle blaster in a safe that only he and Miriam have access to. He's aware that this looks like Miriam should be the number 1 suspect, but he trusts her and doesn't think it's her.

Kovacs asks how Bancroft is still here, if his head was vaporized. Bancroft explains that he uses full spectrum DHF remote storage back up. He has Kovacs look through a telescope to see his own personal military grade satellite. The satellite backs up a new copy of Bancroft's consciousness every 48 hours. The next backup was due ten minutes after the murder, so he has no memories of the two days prior to the accident. Moments after his death, someone attempted to hack into his satellite feed.

Kovacs suggests that Bancroft tried to kill himself, and failed. Bancroft assures Kovacs that he wouldn't kill himself. And if he did want to die, he wouldn't fail. He'd be dead.

It does seem as though Bancroft has the money to pay people to make sure the job is done right the first time. Unless he's trying to frame someone for attempted murder.

Kovacs: I don't want your money or your pardon. I'll take eternity on ice, thanks.

Bancroft insists that Kovacs take a day to reconsider. He suggests that Kovacs go into the city and remember what it's like to be alive. And Quell's book is Kovacs' to keep, just like everything else listed in Bancroft's contract, if he takes the job.

Kovacs sits at the top of a very tall dam and remembers his childhood with his younger sister Rei on his home planet, Harlan's World. A hallucination of adult Rei joins him. She asks him what he's going to do. He laments that Quell was right. They lost the war, and the Meths own everything. He's going to decadently enjoy his new sleeve for one night, then go back to prison and his eternal sleep. He throws Quell's book into the water (in his hallucination).

Returning to the current real world, he keeps the book and wanders into the busy part of the city, full of brothels, tattoo parlors, street food, gambling halls, strip clubs, bars, and every other decadence imaginable. Certainly much more than my tame brain could come up with on its own. He runs into a man with a pink child's backpack who offers him some "brain grease", to help him settle into his new sleeve. Kovacs asks what's in the bag.

Dealer: I got Stallion, Somno, Tetrameth, Veuron, Merge5, Stiff, Reaper. Oh, this is some epic shit.

Kovacs: Then, I'll take it all.

I think he wanted the backpack itself, truth be told.

Kovacs starts in directly on his plan to get f*cked up, and it doesn't take long with that selection to help him. Seconds, in fact, with some eye drops. Eye drops are the drug of the future, according to current TV.

Kovacs wanders through the streets, taking in the holographic sex displays advertising local businesses. He's taken with one in particular: "The Raven Hotel provides sanctuary to the weary traveler. Come, let us enfold you in the dark and delicate world of luxury." It's an AI hotel, run completely by an artificial intelligence, with an Edgar Allan Poe theme.

Before he can do anything about the hotel, he's distracted by a holographic ad for Panama Rose Fightdrome, always live, never cast, with the most brutal combat sleeves. Holo fighters attack him. He fights, then they disappear, and he's left having flopped to the ground in his drunken state.

Ortega appears out of nowhere and slaps a small device on the back of his neck. It's a broadcast blocker, which stops Kovacs from seeing the holos. She says it's a peace offering, then asks if he wants to get a drink. He says he's fine on the ground, because he was right in that opening scene, he's an *sshole in every sleeve. Virtually everyone he meets in this episode agrees.

She asks what he's doing, and what Bancroft wants him for. Kovacs tells her that he's apparently being followed, and Bancroft wants him to work on a case of hers that she screwed up. Ortega realizes that Kovacs is high- great detective work on her part, since he's still on the ground- and starts to walk away. Kovacs calls her back.

He grabs his rainbow pink bag of drugs and reintroduces himself to her. They go for the drink she suggested at the strip club he picked out. The strippers are in their faces, ostensibly because he chose to sit close. Sleeves continue to produce hormones in storage so that the newly resleeved have a powerful need to get laid. He clearly had no intention of sleeping with a stripper, so the strip club was just to tease himself and give the audience the nudity it had missed for the last few minutes.

Kovacs says that he knows it was Ortega's case because of Envoy Intuition: total absorb of everything around him without preconception or assumption. He sees the details.

She lists his accomplishments: Mercenary turned Envoy turned mercenary again. Sole survivor of the Battle of Stronghold. Known by the names Mamba Lev, One Hand Rending and Icepick.

Kovacs tells her he likes that one. She should call him Icepick.

Ortega: So why would you care what happened to Bancroft?

Kovacs: Who says I care about Bancroft? You don't like him, though.

Ortega: He wanted me reprimanded when I couldn't find his killer. Tried to screw with my career, which means with my life. And he's still f*ckin' doin' it.

Kovacs: Are you saying you didn't deserve it?

Ortega: I'm saying I polygraphed the wife at her own insistence. She passed without a twitch. Friends, enemies, people with opportunity and motive, and we always came back to the same thing. Laurens Bancroft locked himself in his study and blew his stack out.

Kovacs: And conveniently forgot that he'd be resleeved less than an hour later.

Ortega: Let me tell you what went over my desk the night Bancroft bought it: Four stabbings, ten shootings, three of which were RDs by the way. One sleeve kill. Oh no, not a sleeve kill. She was a Neo-Catholic dumped in the bay. So she can't be resleeved. She was actually murdered.

Kovacs: As opposed to Bancroft, who was incompetently murdered.

Ortega: Are you a moron or just an *sshole? There's no Bancroft case!

Kovacs is way better at interrogating someone without seeming like he's interrogating someone than Ortega is. At least one of the other cases from the night Bancroft was shot will come up again.

He turns down the stripper who's interested in him, but reminds Ortega of the whole thing about being hot and resleeved, accompanied by an invitation to join him. She turns him down. He leans in close to her, as if he's going to say something sexy. Instead, he tells her that his Envoy Intuition is telling him that Bancroft absolutely believes that he was murdered.

Kovacs goes on to say that he turned Bancroft down and is going back into storage after a night of fun. He's out of place in this world. He pays the tab for their drinks, and tells Ortega that he'll be at the Raven Hotel if she changes her mind. Like everyone he meets, she tries to talk him out of staying at an AI hotel, saying they're like stalkers. Kovacs thanks Ortega for her concern and leaves.

The Raven is in an empty part of town. The desk clerk, Poe, is pretending to be, yes, Edgar Allan Poe. He offers Kovacs every amenity and form of entertainment a hotel can offer, including some that probably don't exist in this century. They reach an understanding that Kovacs wants private entertainment sent to his room that can provide variety, but nothing too elaborate.

Just as he's about to pay using his DNA trace and the credit account at the Bank of Nations provided by Bancroft, someone sticks a gun up against his stack.

The hitman trash talks Kovacs and his own back up for a while, before shooting a rude member of his team. Poe insists continuously that he can't provide *guest amenities* until Kovacs is fully registered. Kovacs just has to touch the pay screen. It's clearly a giant hint. Poe eventually begins a countdown until Kovacs' time to pay runs out. Who hasn't been there, although usually people aren't shooting at you.

Meanwhile, the hitman beats Kovacs up and mocks his Envoy Intuition. Kovacs struggles to get back to the pay screen, pushing the button just in time. The hotel unleashes firepower from the ceiling and the desk clerk, easily taking care of the thugs. It kills everyone, despite Kovacs asking it to leave the leader alive. Apparently AI hotels don't like to be insulted. Seriously, the hitman called him a microwave.

Ortega and Aboud arrive momentarily, finding Kovacs winding down by having a drink at the front desk/bar. Kovacs tells Ortega that the thugs knew him by name. He reasons that there's

no one in this century who would want him dead that badly. They must know that he's awake to solve the Bancroft case.

The hitman turns out to be Dimitri Kadmin, also known as Dimi the Twin, who works out of Vladivostok. He does a lot of work for the yakuza, the Japanese mob. (I'm thinking that maybe he's a good contact for a mercenary like Kovacs, if Kovacs stays awake.) Dimitri has a habit of double-sleeving: Making an illegal copy of himself and downloading it into a black market sleeve. The penalty is real death.

Eventually they'll catch the other copy of Dimitri and then he'll be done. Ortega pulls Dimitri's stack from his damaged sleeve. It's been damaged as well. It gives an ID, but nothing more, so they can't interrogate Dimitri.

Ortega gives Poe a hard time for going overboard protecting Kovacs. Poe says Kovacs is his first guest in 50 years. He's getting the full service. Plus, the thugs were incredibly rude. Aboud points out that Ortega has shot people for less.

Kovacs and the cops argue for a minute over whether the hitman was after Kovacs for himself or because of Bancroft, then Kovacs gives up, grabs and kisses his rainbow pink bag of party favors, and heads up to his room. Ortega can visit him there if she decides that the attack on him was his fault.

As Kovacs rides upstairs in the elevator, he hallucinates snow falling. Or is it ashes? He remembers his original sleeve running through a burning wood with snow on the ground and ash swirling in the air around him. He's alone. Is this the end of the Battle of Stronghold, of which he's the sole survivor?

Once in his room, he sits on the floor and leans against a wall. He puts more drug drops in his eyes. Quell, played by Hamilton the Musical's Renée Elise Goldsberry, appears as a hallucination, but also as memory and voiceover. She's his world. His past and his current isolation are finally overwhelming him.

Quell: This enemy you cannot defeat. You can only drive it deeper inside you.

Kovacs takes a gun from his bag.

Quell: Is that really what you want to do with your only night on Earth?

Kovacs: I don't know... How to be in this world without you.

Quell: I'm here.

Kovacs: You're dead.

Quell: Tak!

We see Quell consumed by an explosion of flames.

Kovacs: I don't have to go back on ice. I... could just end it now. Make it stop. Blow out my stack. Make it all go away.

He holds a gun to the base of his skull. Quell appears next to him and speaks into his ear.

Quell: If you do that, it won't all go away. Just you. Tak. (Urgently.)

He lets the gun fall. She holds his face.

Quell: 250 years is long enough. Move on.

Kovacs: Never. Do you hear me? Not ever.

Quell: Then do what you were born to do. What I trained you to do. Make things change.

Kovacs: By saving a Meth?

Quell: There's more here than you're willing to see. It's not the threat. It's the unanswered question. The mystery that needs to be solved. The box that needs to be unlocked. Envoys take what is offered, Tak. Take this chance. This is how you finish the mission.

Kovacs: Without you?

Quell: Finish the mission.

He gets up and stands on his balcony, looking out at the city.

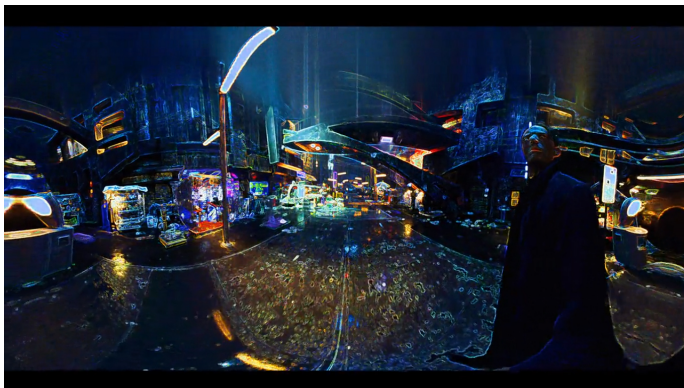
The song *The End*, by Daughter, plays over the scene.

Tak gets a snake infinity tattoo that matches the one merc Kovacs had, and the symbol in the opening credits. Then Tak places a video call to Laurens Bancroft, and tells Bancroft he'll take the case.

Fallen Angel

Season 1
Episode Number: 2
Season Episode: 2

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Steve Blackman
Director: Nick Hurran
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcris Falconer)
Guest Stars: Tamara Taylor (Oumou Prescott), Waleed Zuaiter (Samir Abboud), Lisa Chandler (Mary Lou Henchy), Stephanie Cleough (Anemone), Marlene Forte (Alazne Ortega), Teach Grant (Jimmy DeSoto), Hiro Kanagawa (Captain Tanaka), Hayley Law (Lizzie Elliot), Sean Amsing (Gus), James R. Baylis (Dick), Vern Bevis (Bouncer), Aaron Collett (Advert Spokesman #1), Maddie Dixon-Poirier (Little Girl), Jillian Fargey (Mrs. Henchy), Alika Autran (Okulov), Garfield Wilson (Gomez), Eddie Flake (Uniform Cop), Vivian Full (Receptionist), Joshua Jorssen (Son), Ken Kramer (Hank), David Lewis (Director Nyman), Tim Perez (Father), Jesse Redmond (Maddy), Sukh Singh (Morgue Tech), Andre Tricoteux (The Mongol), Sheila Tyson (Carla), Nalani Wakita (Advert Spokeswoman #2), Celeste Ziegler (Advert Spokeswoman #1), Justin Fortier (Enraged Person #1), Guy Christie (Enraged Person #2), Philip Cabrita (Enraged Person #3), Michelle Clarke-Brown (Enraged Person #4), Vanessa Richards (Enraged Person #5), Gaalen Engen (Enraged Person #6), Amro Majzoub (Enraged Person #7), Natascha Schulmeister (Enraged Person #8), Shawn Bordoff (Enraged Person #9), Chris Loubardeas (Enraged Person #10), Naomi Simpson (Enraged Person #11), Lauren Overholt (Enraged Person #12), Peter Brown (Meth), Jessie Fraser (Screaming Woman), Will Yun Lee (Stronghold Kovacs), Lionel Marye (Grounder), Kristi Taylor (Miriam Clone #3)
Summary: While Kovacs tracks down a man who sent Bancroft a death threat, Lt. Ortega bends the rules to keep tabs on his whereabouts.



Original Kovacs after a devastating loss in battle. Kovacs voiceover:

"Peace is an illusion. No matter how tranquil the world seems, peace doesn't last long. Peace is a struggle against our very nature. A skin we stretch over the bone, muscle and sinew of our own innate savagery. The instinct of violence curls inside us like a parasite, waiting for a chance to feed on our rage and multiply until it bursts out of us. War is the only thing we really understand."

So, there's a slightly different tone between Quell's inspirational voiceovers and Kovacs' nihilistic calls toward violence and conflict.

Having given in to the Quell that lives in his mind at the end of episode 1, stayed awake, and taken the case, Kovacs is left to navigate the world without her, other than as echoes from a long ago defeat. He begins his investigation in earnest, and considers who he can trust to become part of his team. The complexity of the case begins to reveal itself, as hallucination Quell predicted. Meanwhile, Ortega has secrets of her own. She spends much of the episode working on a separate, but possibly related, case.

The episode begins with Kovacs' voiceover as we see a very pretty view of the Bay City skyline across the bay at dawn. A father and young son are fishing in a small boat in the bay in the foreground. I'm surprised there is still something to fish for. A body drops from the sky into the bay, literally out of the blue. The boat and the body end up next to each other. The child starts to pull the woman into the boat, but his father tells him to stop. She's not their problem, and they could get arrested.

We move on to the aftermath of a terrible battle that ended in slaughter. Original Kovacs stands in a clearing, surrounded by burning woods, and weeps. One of his wounded comrades yells "Long live Quellcris Falconer!" as he lies dying. Protectorate soldiers move amongst the fallen. What looked like it snow on the ground in episode 1 is now clearly a thick layer of ash that continues to fall. Is this the Battle of Stronghold?

Kovacs wakes up from the nightmare that was his memory of the battle and its aftermath. Or he thinks he does. At first, it's as if the battle still surrounds his senses. Then he actually wakes up. This entire sequence was also beautifully done.

Poe and Oumou Prescott, an attorney who works exclusively for Bancroft, are waiting in the hotel room for Kovacs to wake up. He wakes up and, fully nude, walks over to tell them to get out of his room. Kovacs thinks that Prescott is the hooker he was expecting. Oops. She does fit the description Poe gave him, so we'll let it go this time.

Poe hands Kovacs an upgraded set of clothes that are better suited to someone who hangs out with a Meth, while Kovacs tells him, again, to take the lawyer downstairs and stay out. Prescott points out that Kovacs isn't Bancroft's buddy, he's an employee, because no one is jumping the line to get ahead of her in the race to go from employee to friend of the Meth.

Ortega wakes up to the soothing tones of her police tracker asking her if she wants an update on Kovacs position. From there, she trains with Aboud, who one has to feel sorry for. That beating can't have been good for his shoulders. He tries to convince her of the benefits of having a personal life. She'd rather be hardcore and angry, because she has an axe to grind, a score to settle, a Meth to... well, let's face it, the odds are slim to none that she's going to affect the Meth on her own.

There's a beeping sound in the gym, which Aboud declares he's going to ignore, because it's the sound of a police tracker, which they aren't currently authorized to have. If he heard it, he'd have to turn Ortega in. He leaves, with the suggestion that the tracker disappear before she gets to the station.

Prescott takes Kovacs to the Psychasec, Mission branch building where they meet with Director Nyman. While they wait, Kovacs tells Prescott that he'll need to interview all of Bancroft's closest business and social associates. Prescott replies that those people are much too important to be bothered with that kind of thing. They have a little fight for dominance, then Nyman arrives. Nobody likes an uppity terrorist. Go figure.

Nyman gives them a tour of the facility, of which he's very proud, especially the designer clones.

Nyman: Our primary business is in clones. No doubt you know that a single clone costs more than most people make in a single lifetime. (Kovacs: So Meths only.) Our clients are the most discerning, wealthiest people in the Protectorate. They don't do anything as pedestrian as dying... This is the Bancroft family vault. We keep 24/7 tech personnel in the vault. Gus was here the night Mr Bancroft needlecast back from Osaka.

Kovacs, looking at a clone of Laurens: They aren't aware, right?

Gus, the tech on duty: No, clones' brains are blanked. Stacks are empty. The bodies are electrically stimulated periodically so they don't lose muscle tone.

Kovacs: Gonna need to see any footage you have of Bancroft's arrival. Back when I went down, you resleeve too many times, eventually you go nuts.

Gus: Personality frag. It's a bitch. But it only happens if you bounce around between lots of different sleeves. So, turns out, if you resleeve into your own clone, you can do it as many times

as you want.

Kovacs: And live forever, if you've got the cash.

Gus: It's great, huh?

Kovacs: What does everyone else do?

Gus: Folks resleeve in whatever they can find, if they can afford it.

Kovacs: So your clients, they needlecast directly into the clones here in the building?

Nyman: Our lower levels house a fully secure satellite-to-download DHF facility.

Kovacs: It can't be that secure, if someone tried to hack Bancroft's backup the night he was shot.

Prescott: Police think it was Dippers. They steal snippets of Meth memory during uplink. Moments from a king's childhood, a socialite losing her virginity. (Kovacs: Is that common?) Oh, it happens all the time. Black market value is huge for a slice of those memories.

They are brought the video file of Bancroft's needlecast back from Osaka on the day he was murdered. It's only a few seconds long, showing him opening his eyes, then Miriam kissing him. He's very blank faced. Kovacs is surprised it's so short.

Nyman: We only record the moment of reacclimation for quality control. Anything more than that would infringe on our clients privacy.

Miriam and Laurens enter, with Laurens agreeing that he values his privacy, even though he's stark naked. He tells Kovacs that he wanted to watch Kovacs at work on the investigation. When Kovacs asks about the video, Miriam tells him that she likes to greet her husband when he wakes up after traveling for business.

Kovacs asks when the footage was recorded. Prescott replies that it was six hours before Laurens was murdered.

Laurens: I know I'm watching myself, but it feels as if I'm watching a stranger.

Wow, my clue alarm is pinging. Was that someone else in one of his clones? The facial expression just didn't look like him.

Kovacs: What were you doing in Osaka before you came back?

Prescott: Mr Bancroft closed a 400 billion credit trade deal.

Laurens: Which I also have no memory of.

Kovacs: And your associates there were questioned?

Prescott: They saw nothing amiss with Mr Bancroft. On the contrary. They remarked on his focus and skill.

Laurens: Yes, I still have no idea how I managed to pull that together quite so quickly.

After he needlecast back to Bay City, Miriam went home, but Laurens went out. Security cameras showed him coming home in the morning. Prescott has continued to answer the questions instead of Laurens, and Kovacs remarks on it. Laurens loses his temper. He doesn't see the point of this line of questioning.

Laurens: The one person who is not a suspect in all of this... is me.

But what if his stack was sitting in the vault at Psychasec while someone else who was double-sleeved used his clone for 48 hours, then made the clone shoot itself in the head?

Kovacs: You wants answers, they come with questions attached.

Laurens: Let's take a walk, Mr Kovacs. (He's now fully dressed. They walk down the designer clone display model hall.) Just to be clear, if I die, you go back on ice. If you don't solve this quickly enough, you go back on ice.

We're down to the fine print conversation regarding their contract. Kovacs lays his side on the table.

Kovacs: I'm going to need access that you don't want to give and I'm going to find answers that you may only think you want. You wanted me to work for you, I'm working for you. You want my respect? That's a little harder to come by. If you don't like it, just put me back on ice right now.

Laurens: I admire a man who can look over the edge without flinching. Might make a Meth of you yet.

In other words, he likes a guy who doesn't back down, and who has the goods to go with his nerve, so he'll accept Kovacs' terms.

As they leave Psychatec, Prescott informs Kovacs that surveillance footage and suspect/witness interviews have been sent to his hotel. They run into Ortega on the way out. She confronts Kovacs about taking the job, but he doesn't respond directly. Instead, he asks about the investigation

into who tried to have him killed the night before. She hasn't made much progress yet, since the assailants are all dead.

Poe meets with the other AI businesses in town. The rest have moved on from being hotels into more lucrative ventures. One, Maddy, has been enslaved by someone. He only speaks in sign language. Poe owes the rest money, and will be able to pay them back now that he has a guest.

Because she checked up on Kovacs, Ortega is late for work and missed the morning briefing. Her boss, Captain Tanaka, tells her to handle the mother of a murdered woman who's there to complain again. Ortega balks that it's not her case, but the Captain reminds her that she missed the morning meeting, so this one's hers.

Ortega doesn't want to talk to Mrs Henchy because the department has lost her daughter's body. She's waiting impatiently for the body to be released, so she can bury her daughter, but the police keep stalling and giving her excuses. They haven't told her that they've somehow lost the body.

This is the body of the young woman who fell from the sky into the bay in the opening sequence. The police have been holding her body for 2 months. Mrs Henchy hadn't seen her daughter for 3 years before she died, and was told that her daughter converted to Neo-Catholicism, so she can't be resleeved. The body is all she has left.

Ortega pauses and thinks for a moment when Mrs Henchy says that her daughter converted. The mother works herself up into a crying jag. Aboud starts to come into the room to take over, but Ortega goes to her and holds her.

Kovacs sits in the hotel and goes through the recordings sent to him by Prescott. Poe suggests he use his ONI, a high tech multi purpose wrist device, rather than the ancient hotel viewer. The ONI is fast and state of the art. He's able to quickly sift through videos to remove the unlikely candidates.

Quell: Rage at injustice is universal. The ability to strike back is not. And at its heart, violence is almost always, in one way or another, personal.

Kovacs settles on one death threat, from a man with a disguised voice but holding an easily identified weapon, with a visible serial number. He says he's going to kill Bancroft for his girl, his Lizzie.

He goes to visit the man he identifies as the gun owner, Vernon Elliot, proprietor of Elliot's data brokerage. On the way there, Kovacs walks past a museum advertising an exhibit about Quell. That's probably why Tak breaks down Vernon's door when he doesn't answer it immediately. Tak has some unresolved anger issues to work out. It'll take a century or two of therapy.

Vernon comes to the main room of his dwelling and complains about the broken door. He didn't answer because he's closed for business. Kovacs explains the situation using his usual sarcastic tone. Vernon pulls a gun and politely explains that he had nothing to do with Bancroft getting murdered, now Kovacs should get the f*ck out.

Kovacs questions Vernon as they go along, discovering that Vernon was a tac marine and medic. Lizzie is his daughter. They fight, of course, and Kovacs wins, of course. He ties Vernon up. Kovacs looks around and figures out that Vernon's wife is gone. Vernon says she was sentenced to 30 years for dipping (hacking).

Kovacs notices virtual reality scars on Vernon's temples, and looks for the interface. He puts it on, though Vernon desperately tries to stop him. Kovacs enters a crude cityscape and walks toward a young woman who's lying on the ground, crying. She's lying on her side, clutching a porcelain baby doll to her stomach. When Tak tells her his name and asks what happened to her, she screams and nightmare images flash through her memory. There's a pink neon sign above her that says "Jack".

When Kovacs comes out of virtual reality, he's angry at Vernon.

Kovacs: What the h*ll's wrong with you? Can't you tell she's suffering? She's caught in a trauma loop! Why do you have her spun up in VR?

Vernon: Because it's the only way I can see her. Her body was beaten to death, but her stack was untouched. It damaged her mind. She hasn't said a word since that night.

Kovacs: Why do you think Bancroft did it?

Vernon: Cause she told me she was seeing him! She said he needed her. That he was going to take care of her. And then she ended up dead.

Vernon breaks loose from his bondage, and they fight again. It's bloodier this time. Tak duct tapes Vernon to the couch and has a bowl of cereal, though he accuses Vernon of having spoiled

milk. He's decided that although Vernon is smart enough and skilled enough to have killed Bancroft, he wouldn't have done something that would have risked Lizzie's safety like that. He pays Vernon for the cereal and the broken door, and leaves.

Tak gets a new black sidekick, just like all of the other superheroes.

After Tak leaves Vernon's place, he goes back to the museum to see the Quell exhibit, against his better judgement. As he walks into the museum, a recording says, "Welcome to the Battle of Stronghold. Experience the brutality of Envoy terrorists murdering countless women and children. Witness the Protectorate courage and triumph."

People dressed like Protectorate soldiers, which means in head to toe black with black helmets and masks with red lights around their faces and where their eyes should be, stalk toward him, as they do with everyone who comes through the door. He looks like he's trying to sink into the floor without being obvious about it.

Tak voiceover: "I knew I shouldn't go, 'cause when the victors rewrite history, it's just another kind of war, waged after the battlefield killing is done, to murder the memory of the defeated. But it was a chance to see her again. Not as a dream or a hallucination. I thought it would give me a moment of peace. I should have known better."

Tak leans against a glass case filled with ruined stacks. A little girl sees him playing with a Songspire bud, and comes over to him to tell him he shouldn't have it. They strike up a conversation. She explains that she doesn't want to rejoin her class because the new girl, Emmeline, is there, and she's stolen this girl's best friend. The girl and another girl named Monica had been best friends since they were little kids, until Emmeline came along.

The little girl says that her mother told her, "Grudges are stupid. You have to let them go or they'll kill your soul." She asks Tak what he thinks. He says that her mom, "Doesn't know what she's talking about. Friends are overrated. Eventually, someone will come along and shoot them in the stack. So you're better off alone."

Kristin Ortega comes home to find her mother, Alazne Ortega, waiting for her. Alazne is concerned that Kristin isn't eating enough and will be too skinny to be an effective cop. She's making enchiladas for the both of them for dinner. Since Alazne's husband was the chief of police and died in the line of duty, she likely finds excuses to make dinner for her children as often as possible.

Alazne also complains that Kristin hasn't unpacked and settled into her home. Alazne says that Kristin is waiting for someone in particular, someone who's not her mother. Kristin, like any adult child, refuses to talk about it. Her mother wants Kristin to move out of this home that isn't really her own and live in one of the new places going up in the Tenderloin District. Kristin refuses. Is this just Alazne trying to get Kristin to move past an old boyfriend, or is there more here?

They discuss the Neo-Catholic belief in having religious coding attached to their stacks to ensure that they aren't resleeved after death. Kristin's father/Alazne's husband died and wasn't brought back, even though he might have been able to identify his murderer. Kristin has had her religious coding removed for this reason, among others. Alazne worries for Kristin's soul and doesn't know what to say about the rest. They discuss it a while, but neither is able to make progress with the other.

As they are finishing dinner, Kristen's police tracker goes off again, telling her that Kovacs is in Licktown, the busy, decadent part of town that he keeps ending up in. She takes off to follow Kovacs, while Alazne is concerned that Kristen isn't supposed to have a tracker at home with her.

Kovacs is wandering through Licktown searching for answers to Lizzie's traumatic memories. He finds the spot she was lying in front of, a brothel called Jack It Off. There are rats on the ground around the storefront, where Lizzie was in her trauma loop. Maddy the AI asked Poe if rats had eaten the corpses in the hotel after the shoot out. Are the rats in front of Jack It Off cleaning up blood and human remains?

Kovacs enters Jack It Off, is told by the bouncer that he needs to leave his gun up front, then assigned to Cabin 102 for his personalized experience. He enters the booth and sits down. A mostly naked woman dances behind a frosted glass wall, encouraging her viewer to put credits in the slot so that she can come out into the room, and then so that he can touch her. Kovacs pays up so that he can interview her face to face.

He begins to question the woman, who says she's named Anemone, about Lizzie Elliot, but she assumes he's from the police and threatens to scream. He changes tactics and tells her that he's Lizzie's mother Ava, cross-sleeved in a man's body for a particular job. Anemone knows that Ava's in prison, so Kovacs explains that someone took "Ava" off ice and gave her a job doing "wetwork" (assassination). If she does it, she'll get a new sleeve for herself and for Lizzie, but someone's blocking Lizzie's resleeving. That's why she's trying to figure out who killed Lizzie.

Anemone is taken aback. Her own mother would never do anything like that for her. Ava/Tak says, "I'd do anything for my little girl." He asks if Lizzie had any regulars, especially any who were freaks. She gently tells Lizzie's mother that everyone there is a freak. Lizzie had one regular, a Meth. She was his favorite, but he took care of his girls. Anemone touches her neck, which is covered by a heavy choker necklace. Kovacs questions what she means and carefully takes the necklace off. Her neck is covered with bruises from being strangled.

Anemone insists that Lizzie's regular didn't give her these bruises. And anyway, he's one of the good ones. If he accidentally kills a girl, he buys her a new, upgraded sleeve. One time he bought a girl a sleeve that was ten years younger with great breasts.

Of course, since he's a fabulously wealthy Meth and he's compensating them for murder, he could set them up with better lifestyles, in whatever version of middle class exists in that world. Instead he makes it easier for them to find success as hookers. Great guy.

Anemone tells Kovacs that she didn't know Lizzie well, but promises to ask around about her. He should come back tomorrow to see if she finds out anything else. As she's leaving, Kovacs tells her, "Doesn't matter what anyone pays you. You shouldn't let anyone hurt you. You're worth more than that." She hugs him and confesses that her name's not Anemone, it's Alice. They leave the booth separately.

When Tak leaves the building, Vernon's waiting for him, angry that Tak is still investigating his daughter. Before they can talk much, two thugs join the party. One, with a cyborg apparatus on his spine, tells Kovacs that he shouldn't have come back, then jumps him. So, the sleeve was probably a local guy, is what I'm getting here.

Alley fight ensues. Tak beats cyborg guy when he knocks out the guy's power pack, which is attached to his belt. I think Vernon's opponent took off when the flying Bay City Police car showed up, but I couldn't tell. Kovacs tells Vernon to take off, too, so that he doesn't get arrested. Obviously it's Kovacs police stalker, Ortega, who's in the police car. She tells him he's under arrest for organic damage and puts him in a cell at the station, but later admits she can't charge him with anything.

Ortega: Tell me something, Kovacs. You're getting to know Bancroft. Why are you still willing to work for that pice of sh*t?

Kovacs: Before I was an Envoy, I worked for the Protectorate. For a long time.

Ortega: I didn't know that.

Kovacs: No one does. It's not the kind of work that gets logged into any system anywhere. And I was good at it. You want to know why? Because I'm capable of almost anything.

Ortega: You don't think it's possible to go so far you can't come back?

Kovacs: Maybe. When I get there, I'll let you know.

Ortega: When you get there, I'll be right next to you, and I'll stop you.

Kovacs: Somehow Ortega, I get the feeling you can't even stop yourself.

By the end of this intense flirtation, their faces are very close, with just a pane of safety glass between them.

Ortega and Kovacs are interrupted by Prescott bailing Kovacs out. Prescott tells Ortega that she's gone too far, this time.

Ortega thinks about the murdered woman's missing body. She waits until no one is in the morgue, then opens up a supposedly empty drawer, Cold Chamber #7. Inside is the missing corpse. She looks at the body and says, "You should know, your mother loves you."

Kovacs returns to the Raven, where Poe greets him wearing a fedora. He tells Kovacs that he's been watching old detective movies and now feels that's he's educated himself enough to become Kovacs' sidekick. He notes that the sidekick usually ends up dead, though that seems unlikely since he's an AI (his words).

Poe gives Kovacs the bad news that there's someone in his room again, because of course there is. Poe legitimately couldn't stop this one though, because it's our resident femme fatale, Miriam Bancroft. She's placed herself all artfully on the balcony, then moves to the balcony door.

Kovacs: Why are you here?

Miriam: I want to know what progress you've made. I'm worried about my husband.

Kovacs: Your husband who pays to beat up whores in Licktown.

Miriam: It's a complicated thing, being with someone over a century. I've given Laurens 21 children. He's never had a child with anyone but me. Sometimes complexity can be exhausting... You fascinate me. You come from a time of real bravery, real risk. You're everything this world has lost.

Kovacs: You twirl your fingers when you're nervous, you know that?

Miriam: Why would I be nervous?

Kovacs: Could be fear.

Miriam: If I were afraid, would you save me Mr Kovacs?

Kovacs: I'm not sure you need saving.

Miriam puts down her glass and moves closer to him. She asks if he's been with anyone since he's been decanted as she takes his Matrix coat off. He tells her that's enough. She tells him that she's a Meth, the word "enough" doesn't apply, as she continues to undress him, slowly. Then she asks if he's heard of Empathin, or Merge9 on the street, when you can get it. "It puts bodies in touch with one another. This sleeve is state-of-the-art biochemtech from Nakamura Labs. I secrete Merge9 when I'm aroused."

Suffice it to say that the Merge9 mixes with her bodily fluids, wherever bodily fluids are made. The Meths must change their sleeves like other people change their clothes, if she has a dedicated sex sleeve.

They're both naked by now, and she's been breathing her sex pollen all over him as she's been talking in his face. Next she kisses him and rubs it in. She's not a nice girl or a hooker that he'd feel bad about using or exploiting, she's real and not virtual, and she's there offering. He's in a desperate sleeve. He gives in to the inevitable and spends the night having sex with her all over the room.

Ortega goes to confession, which acts partially as a voiceover for the sex: "Forgive me father, for I have sinned. I've had lustful thoughts,. I've done terrible things. Violent things, unforgivable things. I've abused my authority for selfish reasons. Caused pain and heartbreak when I had no right. Please forgive me."

As she confesses, we also see Laurens contemplating his bloody wall; a morgue attendant finding the missing body, lying on the table in the middle of the room, wearing a toe tag we can now see says Mary Lou Henchy; the place in Mary Lou's neck where her missing stack should be, and the stack in Ortega's hand as she leaves the confessional booth.

Kovacs: "The moments of peace that we find sometimes, they aren't anything more than warfare, thinly disguised. And sometimes surrender can be as savage as any attack."

There is a bug in Kovacs' room, a small drone disguised as a literal bug. It's watching everything they do. This man, who's been lurking in the shadows throughout the episode, watches the camera feed.

In a Lonely Place

Season 1
Episode Number: 3
Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Brian Nelson
Director: Nick Hurran
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcryst Falconer)
Guest Stars: Tamara Taylor (Oumou Prescott), Waleed Zuaiter (Samir Abboud), Morgan Gao (Young Tak), Hiro Kanagawa (Captain Tanaka), Hayley Law (Lizzie Elliot), Antonio Marziale (Isaac Bancroft), Riley Lai Nelet (Young Reileen), Anna Van Hooft (Clarissa Severin), Michael Adamthwaite (Father Kovacs), Mauri Bernstein (Wei Receptionist), Nikohl Boosheri (Nalan Ertekin), Kai Bradbury (Tadao), Stephanie Cleough (Anemone), Demord Dann (Guard), Michael Eklund (Dimi 2), Toby Hargrave (Flake), Wolfgang Klassen (Security Office Guard), Yukari Komatsu (Mother Kovacs), Michelle Lee (Female Fighter), Chris McNally (Sergei Brevlov), David William No (Male Fighter), Zahf Paroo (Curtis), Yuichi Saito (Shimoda), Christian Sloan (Vincente Giraud), Andre Tricoteux (The Mongol), Fiona Vroom (Sandy Kim), Bree Woodill (Meth Woman), Charles Zuckermann (Control Tech), Colin Corrigan (Man-Servant), Peter Brown (Meth), Jim Eliason (Police Officer), Derek Schnobb (Refugee)
Summary: Kovacs recruits an unlikely partner to watch his back during a banquet at the Bancroft home, where Ortega oversees the night's grisly entertainment.



work Man. The Patchwork Man turns on the miller and rips him to pieces, then goes out to wander the world. But he's continuously falling apart, so he's always looking for more children to kill and make a part of him.

As the story ends, Tak's parents come into view, arguing. His Slavic father is telling his Japanese mother that she shouldn't complain so much, now that they live on a new world.

Their father looks a lot like the mad miller. Their mother tries to backtrack and apologize for her complaints, but it's too late. Their father slaps and beats her in the background, as Tak tells his sister, "We stick together, Rei. Never face the monsters alone."

We switch to current day Tak in the shower. He gets out and dries off, being careful not to look directly into the mirror until the very end, when he slowly slides his eyes up to look at his face. This face is not just a stranger's face, but a face that reminds him of his father's hated face rather than his sister and mother. It haunts him to see Mad Mykola staring back at him with his own eyes.

As Tak is getting dressed, Poe brings him an invitation to a dinner party that Laurens is holding that night. Poe also informs him that the hotel was hacked the night before, and a spy drone got footage of Tak and Miriam having sex. At that moment, Laurens calls to ask why Tak hasn't responded to his invitation. Tak half-heartedly tries to get out of attending, but of course this is a working party. Laurens has invited everyone he knows who might want to kill him. Tak will have a chance to observe and talk to all of them.

Tak decides that he needs a wingman for this job. Poe can't take the job, since, as an avatar, he can't leave the hotel. He can go anywhere in cyberspace though, a very useful skill. Tak asks Poe to become qualified in psychosurgery to help a friend- not Tak himself.

Ortega is tapped to monitor the fight which will be the entertainment at Laurens' party. She's angry, because it would normally be done by a beat cop, not a detective. Laurens requested her specifically to harass her again. Captain Tanaka tells her to suck it up for the night and kiss the ring.

Tak pays a visit to Vernon, disarming him and offering a trade. He'll pay for psychosurgery for Lizzie if Vernon will be his wingman at the party tonight. Vernon is skeptical, but agrees. They bring Lizzie's stack to the Raven, where Poe appears and introduces himself as Tak's partner colleague the proprietor of the hotel the hotel itself. Poe has a VR suite ready for Lizzie, but Vernon won't be able to talk to her at all during her treatment. Vernon says that he understands that sometimes you have to get burned to pull someone out of the fire, and consents to the procedure, putting Lizzie's stack in Poe's hands. Then he promises to destroy Poe if anything happens to Lizzie.

Ortega goes over Laurens' guest list. Many of the attendee's are potential suspects in Mary Lou Henchy's death. She asks Aboud to help her by scanning the cars at the party, while she interviews suspects.

Tak and Vernon visit the neighborhood arm dealer, Flake, who also sells candy to children from a street cart and wears furry pants. He shows them his top of the line weapons. Tak gets an Ingram 40 flechette gun prototype from CTAC R&D. It uses flanged armor-piercing rounds, has a ten round clip, with homing tech onboard. He shoots a flechette into the wall, then has the machine call it home. When you reverse the field generator, the plasma homes through a plasma chamber, and autoloads right into the mag.

Flake notices the weapon Tak's carrying, and recognizes it immediately as a modified second series Nemex. Tak declines to be specific about where he acquired it. (From Dimi the Twin, as far as I can tell.)

They look at knives next. Both Tak and Vernon go for Tebbet knives- twinsies — with a tantallum steel alloy blade, flint in the pommel for weighting, and runnel (or blood groove) coated with Reaper/betathanatine, a bioweapon scientists created to study near death experiences. The deeper you stab, the bigger the dose. Vernon adds on a Sunjet 2320 classic firearm.

The Sunjet 2320 sends Tak into a memory of using one during his Envoy training with Quell. They use a combination of martial arts moves and their weapons as she lectures the Envoys.

Quell: "You must learn the weakness of weapons. This sleeve is a tool. It does not control me. I control it. The true strength of the wolf isn't fangs, speed and skill. It's the pack. Whatever world you needlecast into, build a pack. Find ways to inspire loyalty in a few capable locals, even if many of them will ultimately be expendable. We are Envoys. And we take what is offered."

Back at the Raven, Poe is making progress with Lizzie's treatment. He's slowly converting her spot on the street in front of *Jack It Off* into a bedroom, with a warm pink glow. Tak says the pink is Poe's idea of non-threatening, while Vernon thinks it looks like the inside of someone's stomach. Vernon is watching the process on an old TV from the 1950s.

Lizzie moves from lying on the street, surrounded by rats, to sitting on a bed. She never lets go of her baby doll. The camera makes sure we get a good look at it. When Poe turns on a small

bedside lamp, Lizzie grabs his arm. He kneels in front of her, and tells her that he's there for her. She says, "They took Mommy away because she stole stars from the sky. They ripped her soul out through her eyes and froze it. Now she just spins around and around, a dancer in the frost. She has icicles in her hair."

Poe is mesmerized. He responds: "I will let nothing harm you in this place."

Let's hope some of that is metaphorical. Some of it likely means there's more to Mama Elliot's imprisonment than we've been told. I wonder if Lizzie's words meant something in particular to Poe.

After that the TV feed dies.

Now that Lizzie's settled in, it's time for Laurens' party. Tak reminds Vernon that he's invited so that he can watch Tak's back, not to go after Laurens. Vernon solemnly swears to fulfill his duties as Envoy wingman.

Speaking of pink, Tak packs his weapon in his favorite pink backpack, but has to leave both at the coatcheck. Vernon is acting as a server for the evening. The Meths are all wearing white, pale silver, or pale champagne. Tak is in black, as are the staff. Kristin wears a bit of color, making her stand out as the most vibrantly alive person in the place, and someone who doesn't care about the Meth's unwritten rules.

Miriam approaches Tak, and comments on his unusual fashion choice. She wonders what he brought for his unique item, but no one told him that they were each supposed to bring an item for Show and Tell. The reason why will become obvious later.

Tak tells her that there was a spybot watching them last night. She looks mildly surprised, then mildly uncomfortable. Laurens joins them to ask Tak to meet him in his study to discuss business.

Ortega uses her com connection to Aboud, who's back at the station, to get him started on checking the party guests' cars. Then she goes to the fight arena to check the credentials of the evening's entertainment- a married couple who fight to the sleeve death in zero G. Their winnings include new sleeves, which they wear home to their 5 and 7 year old kids.

Tak follows Kristin to the arena and joins the conversation. When the couple say that their kids are used to Mommy and Daddy coming home in new sleeves, Kristin and Tak agree that the kids actually aren't.

When they get back down to the party, Kristin asks Tak why he's there, when there's no case. He informs her that someone bugged his room last night. Since he was with Miriam Bancroft, it seems like something's going on. Kristin is angry with him for sleeping with a suspect, but Tak reminds her that there are no suspects if there's no case. She walks away in a huff.

Tak goes upstairs to meet with Laurens. As they stand on a balcony overlooking the party, Laurens says that he's been thinking about who the most likely suspects are. Tak replies that he thought maybe Laurens was going to talk about his habit of renting biocabins and brutally beating women. Laurens didn't think it was important, since he's careful to never injure anyone to the point of real death, unlike Tak, whether it's his sexual exploits, knife fighting, or gambling.

It doesn't occur to Laurens that people who are still alive can grow resentful and want revenge. Or that sometimes it's kill or be killed, and you can't always pay someone else to fight for you.

Laurens' son Isaac causes a disturbance. Tak wonders whether Isaac should be a suspect. Laurens scoffs at the idea. He thinks Isaac is too weak to get up the nerve to pull off a murder. Tak notes that by staying alive for centuries, Laurens has disturbed the natural order of things. Isaac has never gotten to grow up completely and inherit the kingdom. Laurens thinks that's a ridiculous point of view.

Laurens tells Tak that he could have all of his lost comrades and loves back if he lived in this time period. No one has to die. Tak insists that it's up to God to decide who lives or dies. Laurens declares God dead, and himself and the others like him the new gods. Tak wonders why they need him then. Laurens says that all Gods have minions.

He sends Tak back to the party to use his Envoy Intuition. I think Laurens actually very much enjoys their little chats. He probably hasn't had anyone stand up to him this way in centuries. At least not someone who he valued enough to hold back on squashing them like a bug.

Tak works his way through questioning the guests. None of them care that Laurens was shot, but they do care that it could happen to them. The guests are appalled that someone got to a Meth so easily, and covered their tracks so well.

Kristin sees the Asian man who was watching the drone's footage and asks About to ID him. But there's no one on the feed Kristin is sending About.

Tak sees Miriam slip upstairs and behind a secret panel. He's suspicious, so he follows her. He discovers "Miriam" having sex with Curtis, part of the security staff. Curtis leaves the room so they can talk privately.

Tak has figured out that someone else is wearing Miriam's sleeve. It turns out to be Naomi, the 67 year old, 12th daughter, who's taking Mom's state of the art sleeve out for a joyride. Tak wonders if Naomi could have removed the particle blaster from the safe to shoot Laurens, but she explains that if Laurens dies, the rest of the family gets nothing. They'd be penniless.

Tak returns to the party and finds Isaac telling racist jokes to his father's Japanese business associates. Tak apologizes for Isaac's behavior in Japanese, and drags Isaac into the next room, where he slams him against the wall. He begins to question Isaac, asking how drunk you have to get to go Oedipal on your father. Isaac responds seriously, looking completely sober. He says he's not stupid. He knows they're all backed up.

That wasn't a denial.

Prescott and a friend rush in to stop Tak's interrogation. They quickly send Isaac away. Whatever the cover up is, Prescott is one of the chief people making sure no one ever discovers it. Isaac slips his spoiled, drunk rich boy persona back on as he leaves.

Prescott's companion, who introduces herself as Clarissa Severin, dealer in art and antiquities, tells Tak that she expected more from him than pushing Isaac around. Maybe she was wrong about him when she brought him to Laurens' attention. Laurens has been obsessed with Quell for forever. Clarissa received a hefty finder's fee for Tak.

Tak gets that look on his face again, like he literally wants to jump out of this sleeve. He's been turned into a commodity once again by these people. Did he fall under art or antiquities, I wonder? He needs to find a way to buy his own sleeve, as quickly as possible, much as I'm in love with Joel Kinnaman. Tak needs to make sure he doesn't owe anyone, anything, most especially the Meths and their toxic culture of hanger ons.

After Clarissa leaves, Prescott reiterates that Tak needs to behave and not make waves. He's just there as a useless novelty. She won't allow him to get in the way of her plan to become a Meth.

So, whatever's going on, she's not just covering it up, she's in on it, in exchange for a rise in status. If she's not murdered first, to keep her from talking or using the plot for blackmail material.

It's time for Show and Tell. Isaac's up first, with a dessicated human hand he claims belonged to Konrad Harlan, founder of Harlan's World. He has the hand give the finger to the crowd as a message, undoubtedly meant for Tak or Laurens or both.

Clarissa has a 6 foot long snake around her neck that she says is the sleeve for a rapist and murderer named Janus. Putting a human into an animal is illegal, but Clarissa thinks the laws don't apply to people like them. Janus was about to be erased when she convinced him to come with her, but she didn't tell him the details about his new sleeve. She put him back into a human once, but he just writhed on the floor, so he remains a snake.

Laurens is last, bragging that he has the most unique object of all, something no one but he owns. He introduces the last Envoy, Takeshi Kovacs. Tak looks uncomfortable, while everyone applauds. Laurens sends the crowds into the arena for the next round of entertainment.

Vernon slips down into the control room to offer the security guard stationed there a drink. As the guard drinks, Vernon pokes the man's shoulder with the tip of his knife so that he gets a tiny dose of Reaper. The guard falls unconscious, with Vernon giving him post-drug use care instructions as he's going under, like any good assailant. Vernon taps into the Sun House records and downloads the surveillance files for the night of Lizzie's attack.

Laurens walks by Tak on his way to the arena. Tak says, "I thought you didn't want to own me." Laurens replies, "In this world, the only real choice is between being the purchaser and the purchased." Then he keeps walking.

Laurens introduces the fighters, saying, "Tonight, combat to sleeve death, between a married couple who love each other."

So, maybe he knows something about Tak's childhood. Plus he gets the two-fer of threatening Miriam. If that's the real Miriam now? I'm not clear on if it's been her most of the time, or not at

all. If anyone has figured it out, let me know. I think it was Naomi who said hello in the beginning of the party, but it's the real Miriam now.

"Miriam" feels the show is in poor taste, But Laurens feels that no one's forcing them. Ah, yes, the rapist's excuse. It was only sorta coerced. There was no gun to their heads, just starving children to feed. They could be doing some of those other, nonexistent, jobs. Just like I'm sure Laurens would let Miriam or his children leave him.

The couple beat each other brutally, falling out of zero-G and fighting inches away from Tak. That was, of course, Laurens' plan all along. Tak finally can't stand it and reaches out a hand to stop the husband from punching his wife in the face repeatedly. Laurens quickly calls out that he'll upgrade them both if they can take out the Envoy.

As soon as Tak enters the arena, Kristin insists that the fight be stopped. The man at the control panel says the fight sequence is locked. Laurens says it was an unfortunate accident that he didn't turn in paperwork on the Envoy. But after all, Tak is legally his property.

The fight is graphic and bloody. It's tense and exciting, since it's in zero-G and two on one. After a few minutes, Laurens throws a ninja star in, saying that should make it more interesting. The wife catches it and uses it to slice down Tak's back. Painful, but no finesse.

Tak calls Vernon on his com, but Vernon is still in the control room downloading files, and doesn't know what's happening. He hangs up on Tak. So much for back up. When he finishes, he rushes up to the arena and pulls out Tak's gun. Kristin sees him and grabs it. She shoots out the control panel, disabling the zero-G and sending all three fighters crashing to the ground.

Kristin: "Gun just went off. One of those unfortunate accidents."

Laurens just stares at her.

The husband's leg breaks badly when he hits the ground. His wife loudly complains that his sleeve is ruined. Tak tells her that they fought an Envoy and lived, they should be happy. She tells him that, since no one died, they don't get paid. She can't afford to fix her husband's injuries. Tak throws the ninja star into the husband's heart, killing him, and says that the couple can have his winnings, including upgraded sleeves for both. Unless Laurens is going back on his word? Laurens says he'll pay. "It's only fair."

Laurens and Miriam watched that entire exchange avidly, like it was the most interesting part of the show. A real person, with real concerns, and an honorable man who fought and died to protect freedom from being bought and sold, having a conversation about how the wife would take care of her husband and feed her children. Laurens and Miriam were like some kind of vampires. Nothing truly makes them feel anything any more, so they have to force out feelings in others, then feed off of them. Or sets up tests, to see how long it takes to corrupt good people, or to break them. Anyone caring about anything beyond themselves and money is fascinating to them.

Tak finds Laurens a little later. Laurens wants to be clear with Tak. He's to stay away from Miriam. Tak assumes that Laurens was the one who spied on them the night before, but Laurens seems surprised by the accusation. He says he doesn't need to spy on her.

Laurens: When you've been married to the same woman for over 100 years, you know what she does, and you know what she can't help doing.

Tak: Why do you care what your wife does in her spare time, considering what you're doing in yours?

Laurens: Your limited life experience can't possibly encompass what it is to love another person for over 100 years. You achieve something close to veneration. How does one match such respect with the basest desires of the flesh?

Tak: So you love your wife too much to f*ck her?

Laurens: I certainly love my wife too much to let you f*ck her. Now, do you have anything to report on your investigations tonight?

Tak: No. Great party, though. Thanks.

Sometimes, I'd like to join the plot to get rid of Laurens. Also, we still don't know who sent the spy drone.

Tak, Vernon, and Kristin meet up outside. They agree that the way the Meths live disgusts them. Kristin and Vernon introduce themselves to each other. Kristin returns Tak's gun and tells him to stay out of trouble for a while. Tak gives Vernon a hard time for being terrible back up, then goes on to his next meet up. Vernon asks if Tak needs back up. Everybody gives Vernon a look.

Tak goes to *Jack It Off* to see if Alice has anything new for "Ava". Alice stumbles out from behind her screen, covered in bruises. She grabs Tak's shoulders and tells him they made her do it. He asks her what's wrong, and what they made her do, just as she injects him with a giant syringe. He slowly drops, spectacularly shattering the glass screen as he falls through it. Tak hangs onto his backpack for dear life, but slips off his Oni before he loses consciousness.

The security goon with the spinal apparatus comes into the room with another man, saying he knew she'd do it. Then he slits Alice's throat, and let's her drop to lie on something furry next to Tak as rivulets of blood run down her neck. Can't have violence done to Tak if there isn't violence done to a mostly naked woman as well.

Vera Hall's Death Have Mercy plays over the scene.

Tak wakes up strapped to a gurney, being wheeled into a lab facility. A woman behind a desk asks how long he's going to take. A Russian accent answers, "As long as we need. He's waking up. Dose him." A technician injects something into Tak's neck.

Tak remembers telling his little sister, "We stick together, Rei. Never face the monsters alone." Has he been taken by another Mad Mykola?

Force of Evil

Season 1

Episode Number: 4

Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Russel Friend, Garrett Lerner
Director: Alex Graves
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcris Falconer)
Guest Stars: Will Yun Lee (Stronghold Kovacs), Waleed Zuaiter (Samir Abboud), Matt Biedel (Abuela), Adam Busch (Mickey), Alike Autran (Okulov), Stephanie Cleough (Anemone), Michael Eklund (Dimi 2), Marlene Forte (Alazne Ortega), Teach Grant (Jimmy DeSoto), Tahmoh Penikett (Dimi 1), Katie Stuart (Vidaura), Fiona Vroom (Sandy Kim), Garfield Wilson (Gomez), Mauri Bernstein (Wei Receptionist), Hector Borderas (Xalbador Kid #1), Melanie Chan (Dimi Asian Woman Sleeve), Nada Cosovic (Cousin #2), Isabella Farrier (Cousin #1), Hesham Hammoud (Officer #2), Juana Lerma Juarez (Xalbador's Wife), Chad Krowchuk (Miles), Enrique Lopez (Xalbador Kid #2), David Milchard (Al), Muhumuza Mushega (Dimi African Male Sleeve), Jody Racicot (Mr. Philips), Alex Rockhill (Dimi Latino Male Sleeve), Andre Tricoteux (The Mongol), Francisco Trujillo (Xalbador), Seth Whittaker (Officer #1)
Summary: Tortured by his captor, Kovacs taps into his Envoy training to survive. Ortega springs a surprise on her family for Día de los Muertos.



The episode begins at the Wei Clinic, an interrogation facility which specializes in "extracting data from unwilling subjects". The clinic manager, Mr Phillips, is checking in with the two technicians assigned to Tak's "procedure", Al and Miles. He reminds them that they need to finish on time for once and leaves them to it. The torturer is already on his table and ready to go. Miles tells Al that he's going to ask out the piece of *ss in payroll with the... [makes gesture like he's carrying a large melon in each arm in front of his chest].

Al stops him, reminding him that they taught him not to talk about women that way during sensitivity training. Miles retorts that he's just expressing his appreciation for the female form. What's wrong with that? As they're talking, the camera moves around behind their work area to show Alice's body, naked, bruised, still in her hooker make up, about to be sliced open.

They turn on the VR simulator. Tak appears in a run down room, wearing only pants. The man who kidnapped him appears a moment later. Tak asks who he is, and the man says he's the one asking the questions. The torturer holds up his hand and requests a chain, which immediately appears. Actually one of the technicians sends it to him. The program is a bit low tech, since the torturer can't control the entire thing from inside.

As he attacks Tak, the torturer explains the condition of Tak's VR body: no neurochem, no combat conditioning, no reflex aggression, slowed reaction times, limited strength and stamina, weakened bones. So, a normal person's body.

He breaks Tak's arm as he mentions his bones. He's been beating Tak with the chain as he talks, herding him toward a lab table. Now he throws Tak onto it. The lab technicians monitor their progress using an injury and pain chart.

Vernon finishes watching the surveillance footage he downloaded from Sun House, but is frustrated because 3 hours are missing from the record of the night before Lizzie was found in the alley. Well, that's convenient. Vernon wants to talk to Lizzie, but Poe says that, while she's making progress, she's still not ready yet.

Poe is deadly serious about this, as in Halloween, All Hallows' Eve, Dia de los Muertos dead. Tonight is the big night, and he adores the holiday's traditions, the history, the way various cultures come together. Vernon rudely tells him that holidays are about people and families, something an AI couldn't understand.

Poe describes cycling in and out of insanity during his decades of loneliness. Then he suggests that Vernon apologize to Tak for being such lousy back up at the party. Vernon gets defensive, and somehow flips that around into accusing Poe of being a stalker. Actually, a stalker is just what Tak needs right now. Poe is generally more helpful than Vernon, truth be told. Vernon's Spidey senses must kick in though, because eventually he insists that Poe turn on his Oni location program.

As the torturer repeatedly asks who he works for, Tak is sent into a memory of Envoy training. The Envoy recruits, including Rei and Tak, sit in a group outside in a forest and listen to Quell's instructions. She explains that if they're captured, they'll be tortured.

Quell: "Assume nothing. Only then can you truly understand what you're dealing with."

She continues by telling them that in VR, you can be tortured to death in the worst ways, over and over. No conditioning can prepare you for that. The mind perceives all pain the same, virtual or real. Eventually, you'll either break or go insane. Envoys learn to use the mind's reactions to adversity, such as hallucination, displacement or retreat, as moves in a game.

Back in current day VR, Ryker Tak's starting to look pretty scratched and bruised. He mumbles and gets torture guy to lean in close, then head butts him. The guy insists that Tak is someone named Ryker. Tak insists he's Ava Elliot. Torture guy tells Tak that he was clever to wear his tracker in his broadcast blocker, but they've removed both, and the building blocks tracking signals. Tak didn't know that he was being tracked by Kristin. He is, once again, a much better interrogator just by showing up than the official interrogator.

Ortega's police data guy, Mickey, examines her Oni party footage. He specifically looks for signs of the Asian man she saw lurking, who Aboud couldn't see. The guy doesn't show up in the footage, so Mickey writes a program to specifically look for data distortion and air displacement in the area where Ortega saw the ghost. Sure enough, both are found. Somehow, the ghost got the Oni to not see him. That's cutting edge technology. If the man can scale it up to satellites, surveillance cameras, etc. he could disappear from all footage, everywhere.

That gets Ortega wondering if the ghost could be connected to the Mary Lou Henchy case, since neither she nor her assailant have shown up on any footage, anywhere. Mickey says he'll try to come up with a program to search for sequential cascades. He complains that inventory is all over him about a missing Hawkeye tracker. Ortega decides the conversation is over and quickly leaves.

Kristin calls her mother once she's leaves Mickey's desk. Alazne is deep into cooking for the family's Dia de los Muertos celebration that night. She and her brother are quarreling about which cheese their mother used in her chiles rellenos — oaxaca or pepper jack.

In the background, a very loud, very violent criminal is being dragged in. He has a shaved head and is covered in tattoos. Kristin tells him to be quiet so that she can hear her mother on the phone. He insults her and her mother's honor. She whips out her cattle prod and tazes him unconscious. The other cops leave him on the floor as they take off for their holiday. Ortega tells them to clean up the mess, but they're off the clock.

She tells Alazne that she'll get some oaxaca on the way home and hangs up. She gets the skinhead onto a table, presumably with his stack removed, and starts to leave, then turns to give him a calculating look.

Torture guy is moving up to pliers. He's continuing the same line of questioning, adding in a question about why Tak was asking about Lizzie. The face that torture guy is wearing starts to wear off though, revealing his favorite sleeve, and his identity as Dimi the Twin. Dimi thinks that his "brother" must have been lured to the Raven to be murdered by Ryker. He won't believe that Tak was the assassination target.

Tak tells Dimi that where he comes from personality frag is another word for insane. Dimi doesn't care that his sanity's been questioned. He just wants revenge. And now he wants to know where Tak is from.

Back in flashback, Quell asks her students if any of them know the story of Iphigenia Deme. Tak looks slightly sick.

Quell: Iffy Deme was a great fighter on Adoracion. The Protectorate sent CTAC to pacify the planet. Her family was slaughtered. Iffy was captured, tortured. She died a hundred deaths. They thought they had broken her.

Tak: And then she asked to see the top brass, said she'd only confess to them. She got the top 17 CTAC officers on planet into a room with her, in the real. They didn't know she'd been surgically implanted with enzyme-triggered explosives. The enzyme was fury-related.

Quell: When they were all around her, waiting for her to betray her fellow rebels, she let herself get angry. She turned the room and the surrounding 50 square meters into ash.

Tak: Her last words, strapped to the interrogation table, where they'd raped and killed her over and over again, "That's f*cking enough."

Quell and Tak stare at each other a moment.

Quell: In VR interrogation, they control the construct. I can teach you how to manipulate virtual in ways they will never anticipate, because they won't even believe it's possible.

She sends them to the VR table to prepare to practice.

Quell whispers to Tak: No one knows about Iffy. All the rebels were killed. The only ones who would remember what happened-

Tak: Were the interrogation team loaded in from offsite.

Quell: She was my friend.

Tak: I should have died with her.

Quell: Why didn't you?

Tak: They sent me out. Not high ranking enough.

Quell: You were just their bloodhound, trained to hunt us down.

Tak: You knew what I was when you let me in here. Is it different because you can put a face on one of the dead?

Quell backs away from Tak and says, "See you soon," to the group as she turns on the VR simulator. Rei has listened intently to their entire conversation.

Dimi asks Ryker who got him out, and why they wanted him to go after Dimi, because there's no way Ryker is capable of taking out Dimi on his own. Tak asks who Ryker is. Dimi says, "Wrong answer," and shoots him in the head. The technicians restart the program, so Tak is alive again in VR.

Kristin is shopping at an outdoor market for cheese. The skinhead is with her, and is now speaking kindly to her, with a Spanish accent. He tells her to get queso valladares because it melts the fastest. Then he tells Kristin that she's too thin and asks if she's eating enough. Skinhead is now Kristin's abuela, spun up to celebrate the holiday with family.

Al and Miles ogle Tak's Nemex weapon, mock his pink backpack, and are frustrated with his high pain tolerance. They have places to be after work, and they need him to break so they don't have to work overtime. But the immolation program is next, and that generally works.

Dimi wakes Tak up with the children's rhyme, "Wakey, wakey, eggs and bakey." What he really means is gas and a blow torch. As he covers Tak in gasoline, Dimi asks again who hired Ryker to kill his brother. Tak says that Dimi tried to kill him. Dimi doesn't believe his brother would bother. Ryker was arrested for RD'ing ("real deathing") a CTAC officer. He's due to come up for trial soon. Ryker should get at least three life sentences. Dimi planted to evidence himself to make sure of it, since it's not easy to take down a cop.

Tak pretends he's losing it for a minute, then swears at Dimi as Dimi lights the gas on fire. Tak burns. Virtually, but real to his mind.

Kristin and Abuela arrive at Kristin's apartment. Alazne, Abuela's daughter and a staunch Neo-Catholic, greets them at the door. Abuela gets a kick out of showing up in Skinhead's body

and shocking her conservative daughter. She continues to stretch her boundaries throughout the episode, as being in the body of a big, tattooed criminal frees her to do things she felt weren't appropriate for her to do in life.

Alazne thought that her mother's stack was coded as a Neo-C and couldn't be spun up, but Kristin tells her that Abuela renounced the Neo-C belief before she died. Kristin says that renting a sleeve for the holidays and spinning up lost relatives is what everybody does. Alazne is scandalized, and prays for both her mother and her daughter's souls.

Current Tak wakes up back in the VR chamber, with Dimi still holding the blowtorch. In flashback, original Tak wakes up to his VR torture training. He's in what I think is his childhood home, chained to the wall, up high enough that he's hanging, with several Praetorian guards watching. Quell explains that the program pulls subliminal memories of trauma. This is someplace he felt trapped.

Quell: The first step is how we experience helplessness. What do you do when you can't get out?

Tak breaks out of the chains and takes down the guards. Quell asks what he'd do next. "They control the construct. They just send more and you're still here."

She fights him hand to hand until he's back in chains.

Quell: "You have to beat the player, not the game. There are some things you can't kill your way out of."

In real life, present day Tak is pale and shaking. The techs marvel again at his pain tolerance.

Meanwhile, Kristin is for once ignoring the Hawkeye tracker in favor of her family, just when tracking Tak would do some good.

Aboud arrives at the Dia de los Muertos party, bringing a pie. Kristin asks about the ghost program. Aboud says Mickey will be working on it over the weekend, since he doesn't have a family. Kristin says that not everyone is as lucky as she is, while several children run and laugh through the apartment, and Abuela comes over to say hello.

Aboud's jaw drops as he sees whose body Abuela is in. Abuela is loving the whole thing. Now everyone is telling her that 5 drinks is enough, but that body probably routinely downs more than a 6 pack in one go. It's not her old lady body that could only handle a drink or two.

Abuela: "Please, your father, he was the true believer. I only went to church for a little blood of Christ, if you know what I mean. (Alazne: Mom! There are traditions here! You are a bad example to the kids.) Me? The traditions that tell you to live without love? You think this is a good thing? It's f*cking tragedy is what it is. Maybe we should only get one body. But then, you have to enjoy it, huh? Not feel trapped every minute of your life. Con permiso, I have to pee. (Leaves the table.) Hey guys, I'm peeing standing up!"

The kids have been giggling through Abuela's entire speech. Their father jumps in to remind them that God gave them one body, and if they use another after dying they'll never get into Heaven.

Kristin says that it's hard to believe in a god who won't let murder victims tell the world who did this to them. Aboud says that they just want to help give victims some peace by bringing their attackers to justice. Kristin's uncle is firm in his belief that the dead should not speak, no matter what.

They begin to talk about God and miracles. Kristin feels the stack technology is a miracle.

Kristin: "Didn't God create the explorers that led us to the Elder ruins and the metal for stack technology?"

Alazne brings up the devil, saying he can lead people to damnation the way God leads them to salvation.

Dimi's currently using the blowtorch to burn off parts of Tak's body, starting with his legs. All we see are the cauterised stumps that stop above his knees.

Quell: The pain will be without limit, the interrogator without mercy. It is a universe of suffering. There will seem to be no end. Accept that it will never stop. Scream your way through it, or cry, or bleed. Let them think they have begun to break you. Remember only one thing. (Tak: What's that?) An animal in the forest is caught in a trap. It will flail, bite, snap, try to escape, gnaw its own leg off. You Are No Animal. You Are An Envoy. You Aren't Trapped, You're Waiting. Your enemy is not the interrogator. Your enemy is despair. They control the construct. Wait, find the weakness in your enemy, and then get to the next screen. *You should know there's nothing I won't do, nothing, if it will save you.*

Tak: What if I can't be saved?

Quell: We are patient. We wait. We endure. We find the weakness and then we strike. Even if it is only to destroy the weakness in ourselves.

Dimi decides he'll use the blowtorch on Tak's left arm next, but his session is going into overtime, and it's time for the shop to close up for the day. Dimi wants authorization for additional time and protocols. Given that it's also the start of a holiday, nobody is okay with this except for Dimi. The manager has Al and Miles pull Dimi out of VR.

It's time for Abuela to go back to wherever sleeveless stacks go. She says goodbye to the family, but Alazne refuses to speak to her. After everyone else leaves, Aboud stays behind to speak with Alazne alone. He hugs her from behind. They seem very close. The conversation switches between Spanish, English and Arabic.

Aboud: Sometimes we must realize that faith evolves as we do.

Alazne: Is it evolution, using the work of aliens, to extend our own lives? Are we even God's creatures any longer? Why am I asking you? We don't even believe in the same God.

Aboud; But we both believe in the soul. And so does your daughter. Cut her some slack.

Alazne: When did this world get so complicated?

Aboud: When God put people into it.

When Dimi comes out of VR, he complains that the clinic's torture programs aren't strong enough. He needs more time and better programs. Phillips insists that there's nothing wrong with their programs. Dimi says, "So you want me to believe this man can't break?" The manager replies, "Everyone breaks."

Then he offers Dimi a new program from Beijing called Hellminth Code that's so powerful that it left the last victim with a psychotic break. Al and Miles look like Christmas just came early. Dimi is fine with that. He goes back into VR, while Phillips rushes to take an important call from "HER".

Dimi returns to VR carrying a metal box. Tak plays scared and twitchy. Dimi asks again who hired Ryker to kill him. Tak doesn't answer. Dimi takes a 2 foot long, thin lizard out of the box and holds it over a slice he's made in Tak's shoulder. Tak stops him and agrees that he's Ryker, but says he doesn't know who hired him to kill Dimi.

Quell: Convince him you are broken. He believes you are the one in the trap. Use that. Hallucination, Displacement, Retreat.

Dimi doesn't believe Tak. He drops the lizard on Tak, and it crawls inside his body.

Dimi: You're lying. You play dumb with me all you want, but I know that the kind of firepower that came after me means this is something big. And the fact that you won't roll on this guy just means that you think he's more dangerous than me. You're wrong. I am what you need to be afraid of.

Dimi holds another lizard over Tak's face.

Quell: Take what is offered, and use it.

Tak appears to be losing it, then accepts that this is happening. Dimi drops the lizard down his throat.

Abuela and Kristin have a heart to heart back at the station. Abuela misses her lost love, Kristin's Abuelo. One of the only things they ever disagreed about was religion, so now he's coded Neo-Catholic, and she's not. Maybe he's up in Heaven, and she'll never be. Then Abuela asks if they have any confiscated drugs hanging around the station that she could try. She's never done drugs before.

Quell: Take control of the construct. Delete the chain.

Tak: Delete the chain.

In the flashback, he deletes the chain and drops to the floor.

Quell: Delete the Praetorians.

Tak: Delete the Praetorians.

The Praetorians disappear. Quell looks excited and hopeful.

Quell: Excellent. But it won't be that easy with me.

Tak: Yes it will. I already know your weakness. (Quell: Really?) You let the other recruits out faster.

Quell: You have more to pay for.

Tak: Or maybe you have more to prove. About how much you don't care for me.

Quell: I don't care about you.

Tak: I think you're going to show me how to break out of the simulation next.

Quell: Focus on what you care about most in this world, with every atom of your existence. Rip yourself open, and you can rip a hole in the virtual world. That is how you get back to the real. That is how you get to the next screen.

They kiss. After a minute, Quell drops the knife she's holding, which makes her come to her senses. They're jolted back into the real world.

The other recruits are waiting for them, teasing Tak about how long he took compared to them. Tak says he's a slow learner. Quell says he was sloppy. He points out it worked.

Quell (to recruits): I could kill you where you stand... All of you! Escaping the construct is not enough by itself. When you get back to the real, that's your one chance. You have to be ready.

She kept him longer than the others because he's better than the rest, and could get further—the others probably weren't deleting Praetorians yet. But also because she wants to push him to succeed, to make sure he's able to survive. They recognize the scary level of fierceness and determination in each other. She's trying to give his internal fire a direction.

Quell (to present day Tak in VR): Let him believe you are weak, until the moment he discovers you are not.

As Dimi reaches down to get another lizard from the box, Tak breaks the straps that bind him to the table, and gets down. He falls to the floor, ending up kneeling. Quell's image kneels in front of him as he reaches a hand into his chest, through skin and bone, to pull out his still beating heart. Tak holds it out in front of him in two hands, offering it to Quell.

Tak: Take it. It's yours. From the moment I met you, it's yours.

Quell (softly, but urgently): Takeshi, get to the next screen.

Dimi asks who Tak is talking to. Tak and Quell lean their heads together for a moment, the way he did with Rei as a child, then he disappears out of VR.

Tak wakes up in the real, to the technicians racing around frantically because he stopped his own heart. Alice has been butchered as thoroughly as the tiger at Laurens party, to the point of having organs strewn on the floor and filling up large containers. Tak sheds a tear for her. Dimi yells for them to get Tak back into VR. Quell is waiting.

Tak starts spinning. He tells the techs they'll be RD'd if they put him back in VR, because he's not who they think he is. If they think about it, they'll know he's telling the truth. Has Ryker ever been offworld? Can he stop and start his own heart? They've kidnapped and tortured a CTAC officer. Now CTAC are going to hunt down the entire crew and kill them and everyone they care about.

Dimi asks what CTAC was doing in Licktown. Tak says there's a biopirate operation moving stolen military inventory out of places like *Jack It Off*. He promises to let the one who lets him loose from the table live. The other two will be killed by the Corps until they're really, really dead.

As soon as one of the techs gets one of his hands loose, Tak swings around and grabs one of his guns from the next table, where his backpack is still sitting. He shoots the strap off the other hand, grabs the other gun, and kills everyone in the room. People have started running in by this time. He shoots most of them twice, once to put them down, then a second time in the stack. Al tries to save himself by saying he just works there. Tak doesn't hesitate to shoot him next.

Tak packs up his Hello Unicorn backpack and leaves, killing everyone in the facility the same way on the way out. I like to think it was for Alice. At the entrance, he runs into Vernon with spinal apparatus guy from *Jack It Off*, who sold him out and killed Alice. He kills that guy, too. Vernon, who really is spectacularly bad back up, says he promised the guy could live. Vernon is very brave though. He gives Tak back his Oni and notes that Tak's covered in blood. Tak says it isn't his. Tak's also carrying Dimi's latest head, presumably to preserve his stack.

Over at the police station, Abuela is as high as a kite and loving it. But she doesn't want to be brought back in another sleeve next year. She's ready to let go of life.

Abuela: I think it's time for me to go, my darling. No matter how long you live, you never finish. You have to let the world continue. Accept that death is part of life. Please, my love. Don't bring me back again. Okay? Please?

Once Abuela and the sleeve are back where they go, Ortega gets the call about the massacre at the Wei Clinic. Kristin gets to the scene, and sees the dead guy from *Jack It Off*. She realizes Tak was probably involved, and asks Hawkeye to locate him. Hawkeye can't, because the tracker is still inside the clinic building with its signal blockers. Once she's inside the building, Hawkeye

picks up the signal and leads her to Dimi's headless sleeve. She's relieved that it's not Tak's body, then it hits her that he must be the shooter.

Kristin goes straight to the Raven and up to Tak's room. Poe and Vernon watch her go by, claiming they have no idea where Tak is. Vernon seems to be living in the lobby of the Raven now, where he can be close to Lizzie. He's a devoted dad.

Tak has sensibly saved his shower for the end of the episode, because Vernon was right, that really is a lot of blood. Poe lets Kristin into the room, but keeps the bathroom door locked, so she stands outside and pounds on it. Tak comes out with a towel around his waist, which is practically like being fully clothed in a three piece suit and tie for him when he's post shower. He has Dimi's head resting on ice in the room's ice bucket, and reassuringly pats it with his hand as he walks by.

Kristin tries to take control of the conversation as soon as Tak comes out of the shower, but he ignores her questions. Instead, he asks how long she's been tracking him, and if she knows his sleeve. He's realized that she was already aware of what the sleeve was doing long before she knew who he was. She jumps in and says she was following him because he's so dangerous, and points out what he just did. He says he deserves a medal for shutting the torture clinic down. Which, seriously, any sane person has to agree.

He asks who Ryker is and says that the only thing that makes sense is that she was tracking Ryker, not Tak. She tries to deny it again. He stands close to her and grabs the knife from her belt. He opens it up and stands across the room from her.

He makes a cut in his chest and says, "Still don't give a sh*t?" She replies, "No, stab yourself in the d*ck for all I care."

Tak tells her that Dimi kept calling him Ryker. He asks again who Ryker is to her. She says Dimi's crazy. Ryker's no one.

Tak circles her as they talk. Then he makes a big cut in his forearm. She's been getting nervous as the conversation has gone on. Now she admits that she and Ryker worked together. But says it was nothing more.

Tak prepares to slit his own throat. He draws a few drops of blood, then Kristin grabs his hand and begs him to stop. She begins to cry and promises to tell him everything.

He's still the best interrogator on this show. Tak probably has a right to know about Ryker's history at this point, given that the guy has enemies who are coming after him. Nobody else could have survived that torture session, and Kristin dropped the ball on protecting the sleeve.

The Wrong Man

Season 1
Episode Number: 5
Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Nevin Densham
Director: Uta Briesewitz
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcryst Falconer)
Guest Stars: Byron Mann (O.G. Kovacs), Waleed Zuaiter (Samir Abboud), Matt Biedel (Dimi), Adam Busch (Mickey), Dario de Iaco (Neanderthal), Michael Eklund (Dimi 2), Marlene Forte (Alazne Ortega), Matt Frewer (Carnage), Hiro Kanagawa (Captain Tanaka), Antonio Marziale (Isaac Bancroft), Fiona Vroom (Sandy Kim), Nyla Alleyne (Child #3), Asia Au-Yeung (Child #2), Jesse Downs (Child #1), Camille Martinez (Mother), Zahf Paroo (Curtis), Anoop Randhawa (Policeman), Trevor Roberts (CTAC Intel Officer), Winson Won (Uni Levine), Lisa Chandler (Mary Lou Henchy)
Summary: After learning his sleeve's identity, Kovacs demands the full story from Ortega. A tip from Poe leads to a major breakthrough in the Bancroft case.



Mary Lou Henchy balances on a platform above the clouds, then loses her balance and falls.

Elias Ryker has tied up a government bureaucrat in a deserted warehouse. He questions the man about her death, asking if she fell, or was pushed, or jumped? Elias says that from that height, the impact with the water would have killed her. But the bureaucrat claims he knows nothing. Elias punches him, hard, in the face. Then Elias puts drops in his eyes. He says that Mary Lou had never been a

she died, her coding had been changed.

The bureaucrat suggests she kept her conversion secret, but Elias says she wouldn't have kept it secret from him. They grew up together.

Ryker: You're a senior sys op, interplanetary record and coding. You got root access to the entire Protectorate database.

Sys Op: I'm just a systems tech. I don't handle religious conversions.

Elias: But you didn't do a religious conversion. You faked her code.

Sys Op: You can't fake religious coding on a stack. What the h*ll do you want from me?

Elias: How did she die? How did she die?

Sys Op: Oh, God, I don't know.

Elias threatens to shoot the Sys Op in the stack, just as Kristin enters, pointing her gun at Elias. She tells him to put his gun down.

Joel Kinnaman is doing some new and extra wild, crazy, out of control faces in this scene.

Elias: There's no witness on Mary Lou's conversion, no personal statement, no four levels of f*cking protocol, just his office writing the recode.

Sys Op: I don't know what he's talking about.

Elias: Someone runs you, and you're going to tell me who.

Kristin: Hey, think about this. CTAC doesn't handle religious coding. That's domestic systems jurisdiction. They only touch DHF when someone's shipping between worlds and I don't think Mary Lou ever got close to jumping planets. The reason why he has no answers is because what you are talking about is not real. There's no conspiracy. Just a dead friend. And you and me.

She takes Elias' gun from him as he moans and pulls at his hair. Then she cuts the Sys Op's ties and tells him to run. Elias falls to his knees. Kristin holds him as he says, "She's all alone in there."

Tak isn't happy to just find out now that he's wearing the sleeve of Kristin's boyfriend who was also a crooked cop. Kristin tells him she has trust issues and a conflict of interest, as in she doesn't trust Tak, and if he doesn't solve the murder case, he goes back on ice and Ryker's sleeve goes safely back into storage.

They argue back and forth, saying basically the same things at each other- people are shooting at him because they think he's Ryker, and a lot of people have reasons to want to kill Ryker. She knew this, so she's been trying to protect him. But there are reasons why people might be shooting at Tak as well: because he's a terrorist/Envoy, because he's working on the Bancroft case, or because of whatever Dimi's involved with.

He tells her that Dimi 2 was torturing him because he thinks that Tak is Ryker. He thinks Ryker killed Dimi1 because Dimi2 framed Ryker for killing a CTAC officer. But Dimi1 wasn't after Ryker and didn't even recognize his sleeve. He was after Tak.

Kristin gets the important part- Ryker was framed by Dimi2. Tak says that Ryker's conspiracy and Bancroft's murder are connected. She wonders how, so Tak tosses her Dimi's head and tells her to ask him. And she thought he never did anything nice for her.

Poe and Vernon are squabbling over whether Lizzie has improved enough for Vernon to visit her yet, when Kovacs comes out of the elevator. Vernon decides that Kovacs should act as mediator, and asks him to intervene with the megalomaniac of a hotel.

It's the wrong time to ask Kovacs to act like a person- not sure there's ever a right time. He turns around and tells them both to back off. He doesn't have time for them, he's not friends with them, and he's only doing what he needs to do to gain his freedom. Poe tries again to talk, but Kovacs shuts him down. He doesn't want to hear from Poe until Poe has useful information for him. Poe looks sad and concerned.

So, I'm getting that he came out of his interactions with Kristin with a slight sense of betrayal. If you can't trust the cop who was dating your sleeve, who can you trust?

Once Kovacs is gone, Kristin comes out of the elevator, carrying Dimi's head. She gets to the front door, then thinks better of carrying the head the way it is. She turns and wraps the head in what turns out to be an antique linen cloth from a nearby table. Poe is having a bad, bad day, and splutters that he hopes she intends to have it dry cleaned. AI hotels get no respect.

Tak takes out some of his frustrations on the Bancroft security staff when he arrives at the Aerium. Miriam stops him before poor Curtis is damaged beyond repair, and offers him a drink and a trip to a private island for an orgy with her clones.

First, Tak asks where Laurens is. Miriam says that he's gone to the Old City to minister to the masses. She offers to have Tak driven over, or he could be her very, very special guest for a while. Miriam wonders if he enjoyed what they did together? When Tak says it seems like a long time ago, she says it was the night before last.

Tak: "I've been in virtual for a while. Busy screaming and dying."

Miriam tells him that she wants him to drop the case. She says it firmly, rather than the gentle, enticing tone she usually uses. She offers to double whatever Laurens is offering him and to buy him a new identity anywhere in the Protectorate along with a new life. She promises that Laurens would never find him.

Miriam: My husband dragged you here, and he locked you into a deal you had no choice but to accept. Do you really think he'll set you free?

Tak: That's what the lease says. I expect him to honor it.

Miriam: Mmm, honor. He threw you into a fight pit. When you learn the truth, the only possible truth, that Laurens pulled the trigger, that he was weak and he gave up, he's a coward,

he won't forgive you for that. Your freedom, that thing you want so much, he'll make sure you never see it. You have no idea what he's capable of.

Tak: You're terrified.

Miriam: He will want someone to punish. And my family means everything to me. Laurens will not allow what he loves to grow and change. Our children, he's trapped them in kind of a benevolent dependence forever. And when a Meth says forever, it isn't hyperbole.

Tak: So you're afraid of what he'll do to all of you.

She says that she believes in reward rather than punishment, then tells him about her private island that not even Laurens knows about, with a full cloning facility. Sometimes she lets her clones out to play with each other. He could play too, for as long as he liked, and when he was done, she'd give him his freedom.

Tak tells her that he's not there to save her. She says that she's offering to save him. He should think about it, but not for very long. They're running out of time.

It's dark and pouring rain. Kristin takes Dimi's head to a back alley. She crouches next to a storm drain and pulls out his stack, then tosses the head into the water in the drain. She calls Mickey and tells him that she has another secret job for him.

Officer Levine, a beat cop, stops to buy coffee at a street kiosk. Ghostwalker pays for it, then chats up the cop. Levine is wearing a ring with a religious symbol. Ghostwalker asks if Levine is a believer.

Tak goes to the Old City, where he's told access is restricted, but is granted access because he works for Bancroft. The guards try to give him gloves so that he doesn't get infected, but he brushes them off. They tell him prolonged skin contact with the inhabitants will lead to death.

When he finds Laurens, Tak asks if Laurens put him in Ryker's sleeve just to harass Ortega. Laurens says that, "You needed an effective sleeve, she needed to be taught some respect."

Tak says that it seems like a childish move for someone Laurens' age. Laurens says Tak can't possibly know what it's like to be his age. Tak says he would have chosen a younger sleeve. Laurens goes on and on about how the men who get the most respect are the middle aged father gods who've fought many battles and had many children. As he talks he walks through the walled village he's visiting, hugging and touching people. They are very poor and downtrodden, and call him "city father". He is clearly beloved here.

Tak notices that Laurens is infected and it's spreading fast. He asks if it's a bioweapon. Laurens explains that a contagion bomb was accidentally detonated, killing thousands within hours. These are the descendants of the survivors. They were left as carriers in hundreds of walled camps. Tak asks why he doesn't truly help them by buying them new sleeves. Laurens says, "Are you saying because I can't fix everything, I should fix nothing at all?"

That sounds very noble, except that he could wipe out this man-made plague and end their suffering. That's well within his means. He's not solving anything by personally handing out chocolate occasionally. He talks about the sacrifice that he makes, to walk amongst them and touch them when no one else will, as if he's Jesus among the lepers. But he's not healing anyone; he's not inspiring them with the Kingdom of Heaven; he's not even offering a message of hope or sacrificing anything beyond a sleeve. All he's doing is showing them that he won't desert them the way everyone else has, even though he could permanently save them.

But, of course, helping the people isn't the point. It's to make himself look like a benevolent god (more on that later), and to maintain the loyalty of his bioweapon. The people won't accidentally explode like the bomb, as long as he keeps them convinced that their situation is reasonable given their circumstances, and that he loves them. But he can send one or all out into the world, wherever, whenever he wants a plague, and say that they escaped.

Laurens: I give them something to believe in.

Tak: It's just another display of power.

Laurens: Then you have misunderstood me. For power, true power, is hidden, like a mammoth sea creature, just beneath the surface of the ocean. Nothing but the faintest of ripples. I'd love to debate the finer point with you, but I'm going to cast out soon.

Moments later, he's needlecased away, just as he's dying, with his face nearly unrecognizable from the plague. Tak walks away in disgust. But Laurens knows that kings and gods keep their power by the will of the people on the ground. They have to make themselves legends, one way or another.

At the station, Kristen asks a beat cop to bring her coffee. It's the Ghostwalker in Levine's uniform. Then she hands Dimi's stack off to Mickey. She wants him to spin it up in virtual so that she can question him about Ryker off the books, but he can't do VR secretly. He'd have to spin Dimi up in the real. Kristin agrees. Mickey sarcastically says he'll just go ahead and do that, while also listing everything that could go wrong. Kristin agrees he should just do it.

Tak slinks back into the Raven, and sits down at the bar looking contrite. Vernon is sitting alone at the bar drinking, also looking contrite. Tak takes the bottle and pours himself a drink, saying, "So, you're stealing his liquor, now?" Vernon replies, "It's only stealing if you get caught. You see any cops here?" That was "I'm sorry" and "I'm sorry, too" in "Tough Guys Who Don't Talk About Their Feelings," language, in case you missed it.

Aboud, who is standing in the doorway, clears his throat and asks if it's a bad time. Vernon and Tak look at each other. Now that they've gotten away with another crime together, they're firmly best friends again. Vernon grabs his stuff and leaves, while Aboud joins Tak at the bar for a "friendly" chat about Aboud's dead best friend's daughter, Kristin Ortega.

Or at least Aboud says he was going to make this a friendly warning, but he doesn't like the look of amusement on Tak's face, so he changes tactics. Kristin's been torn up since Ryker got into trouble, and seeing Tak in Ryker's sleeve is just making it worse.

Aboud: Ryker and Kristin, they were close. After he went down, she came apart at the seams. She believed she was responsible, so she convinced herself he was set up. But the man had demons. (Tak: And enemies.) You know she's been paying his sleeve mortgage? And on a lieutenant's pay, that's not an easy thing to do. She never figured on an overbid like Bancroft pulled. It was terrible. I know what you are. And I know that men and women in harm's way grow closer. Promise to treat her with decency and fairness. And whatever this insanity with Bancroft is, you keep her away from it.

Tak: So what's my word worth to you?

Aboud: Then I'll make my own promise. Hurt her, and I'll kill you.

When Tak questions whether Aboud can keep his promise, Aboud stands up so that he can loom over Tak. Tak, in a show of respect that Aboud probably doesn't recognize, lets him. Aboud makes the usual hurt her, I hurt you threat. Tak says, "I'm not here to save anyone." Aboud says, "Not even yourself?" And walks out. Tak looks down in silence.

Poe pops up to inform Tak that he's come up with useful information that he got from Madison, the AI who manages Fightdrome. Is that Maddie, who's enslaved by someone? Is Maddie enslaved by Carnage?

Kristin returns home in the dark and the rain. She takes a shower. Martha Higareda's nudity clause must have expired, or now Kristin has guilt to wash off. She touches her sleeve scar, then hears gunshots and her mother yelling.

She rushes into her living room to find her mother firing at Tak and calling him an abomination. While she talks her mother down and takes the weapon, Tak says, "That explains everything."

Alazne goes back to her cooking, chopping vegetables in a VERY threatening way. Best mom ever. No crooked cop/Envoy abomination is getting near her little girl on her watch. She doesn't care how tough and amazing her daughter is. Abominations are a whole different thing and Kristin doesn't take the devil seriously like she should!

That look might kill an Envoy. If not, he'd better watch his back as long as the knife's in her hand.

Kristin and Tak banter back and forth a bit. He enjoys the sight of her in nothing but a towel. Then Tak tells her that Madison says there's footage of Bancroft at Fightdrome the night he was murdered. Kristin says that there is no footage of Fightdrome. People pay a lot of money for once in a lifetime fights with the assurance that they aren't recorded. Tak says to trust him, then remembers that Ryker and Kristin were partners.

At Fightdrome, Tak asks if Ryker had any particular patterns he should copy. Kristin says that she usually did the talking while Ryker stood there and looked angry. Tak says he can look angry. She tells him to cross his arms. He does, and hunches, self-consciously tries to look broody.

Carnage, the owner of Fightdrome, comes into the room and is delighted to see "Ryker".

Carnage: So the rumors are true. You're back from the rack and riding your old skin. How'd that happen. Lieutenant?

Kristin: None of your business, Carnage. Is that a new synth sleeve? Thought the whole point was that you could arrange the face into whatever you want.

Carnage: It is. And I did.

He briefly rearranges his facial features. Kristin starts to walk further into the building, but Carnage stops her, saying it's private property. Kristin tells him that they know he records his fights. And they know Bancroft was there the night he died. They want to see the tape.

Carnage insists that he build his brand on never broadcasting and never recording, but gives up after a minute. He lets them in when Kristin threatens to get a warrant. It would ruin his business for it to get out that he has recordings.

They walk down a long hall full of cloned fighting bodies, ready to be worn for fights. Carnage explains that he's stocked up for some exciting events that are coming up, including a humiliation bout featuring classic and modern subjects.

He changes the subject to trying to find out the name of the person who talked about his recording set up. Kristin says it was a data rat that dug something up, but refuses to give him anything more.

Tak stops to stare at the cloned body of his last sleeve before he was sent to prison. Carnage notices and starts selling.

Carnage: Hot rod Envoy flesh with all the modern accoutrements. Taken from DNA harvested on Harlan's World. You like it? Yeah, I can tell. I found a single cloning facility in Edmonton willing to stitch together something ancient and illegal for a one-time bloodletting. Cost me a king's ransom to grow him, but people love the classics. Would you like to see it fight? Would you like to see it die? Or maybe you'd like to wear it. This old thing's worn out. Come back Friday. I'll put on a private show.

Tak looks overwhelmed, confused, and angry throughout this. He'd definitely like to have the sleeve back, but not at whatever cost it would take to get it from Carnage.

Ortega pulls Tak along before he can blow his cover.

It turns out that Carnage is recording on old-fashioned videotape, so it can't be hacked. The recording shows Isaac watching the fight calmly. Laurens rushes in and furiously beats Isaac up, looking drugged and as if he wants to murder Isaac. He's yelling something at Isaac that can't be heard.

Carnage takes out the tape and says, "There, I've given you a free show, which is more than anyone else alive has ever gotten from me. Show's over."

Really? No one else alive knows about the recordings? Or at least no one has seen them, preserving his brand and promise to his patrons. They remain as potential blackmail material and proof of events, in the case of serious injury or death to someone important. Carnage looks unhappy as they leave.

Outside, Tak tells Kristin that he can read lips. Laurens was repeating, "You're not me, you never will be." Kristin says that Laurens attacking Isaac would give Isaac a motive, but it doesn't explain how Isaac got into the genelocked safe to get the murder weapon.

Kristin pulls a cigarette out of Tak's mouth and tells him she was trying to get Ryker to quit.

The next stop is Isaac's place, which looks like it could be part of the Aerium, but almost every building on this show seems to be made from molded concrete, so who knows.

Kristin debates getting a search warrant, but Tak shoots out the lock on the door before she can decide. Once inside, she turns off the security alarms with her Oni, since they call the police, and she is the police. I knew they'd work well together, after they got over all of their posturing and mistrust.

The house is nearly empty inside, aside from a bed and some artwork that's in the process of being sold. Kristin notes that the art is all real.

In the bedroom, they find emitters on the wall that play videos of Laurens in various meetings and activities. Tak realizes that Isaac must be using them to study his father so that he can impersonate Laurens. Kristin notices a locked door in the corner. She "Kovacs" it by kicking it in.

Kristin: Wow. Portable 3D bio-organic printer. Do you have any idea how illegal and expensive these are? The cell mass you need to print is just... Even Bancroft slow grows his clones. This must have cost Isaac everything he had.

Tak: Guess we know why he was selling art.

They go over to a lighted storage unit and wipe away the condensation from the glass. It reveals a clone of Laurens.

Kristin: Bancroft.

Tak: The Japanese didn't deal with Bancroft in Osaka. Bancroft wasn't Bancroft. It was Isaac. Japanese told me they'd been dealing with Bancroft for months, then Bancroft closes the deal in less than 48 hours. Doesn't let Isaac use an older sleeve, keeps him young so no one takes him serious. But if Bancroft dies, the kids get nothing. So he can't die.

Kristin: Isaac didn't have to compete with his father. He could be his father. Replace him. Take every thing he had.

They realize they've solved the murder case. Isaac shot Laurens so that Laurens would forget discovering that Isaac had impersonated him. Isaac could unlock the genelocked safe by wearing his father's clone.

Then Kristen asks, "So how does it feel... To be a few a few hours a way from freedom?"

Tak doesn't answer. Reality comes crashing down around him.

Neither looks happy, but he might just equal The Winter Soldier for silent depth of tragic, tragic suffering manpain that must be comforted. I didn't think anyone could rival Sebastian Stan in that department.

She goes to call the evidence in.

Kristin: I need a team for a gene-mat sweep and transport for an unlicensed sleeve. 3-D printed. Yeah, might as well pick up the printer, too.

Tak's voiceover as the police collect evidence:

"Finding truth is more than a search for data. It's an excavation of self. You have to keep going, no matter where it takes you, because nothing can stay hidden forever."

Tak has dug so deeply into himself for the truth, that he develops stigmata. Tak has learned to bleed on cue to help him get girls into bed. Tak's knife cuts from that morning have opened up again and are artfully dripping down his arm under his sleeve and onto the floor. Kristin takes him home with her to patch him up.

Tak's pain bleeds out onto the Bancroft floor while he silently accepts it.

When they get to Kristin's apartment, she hands him a bottle of liquor and tells him to take his shirt off. Now he's happy again, since clearly she's not abandoning him anytime soon. She takes out some kind of medical laser wand and tells him it's going to hurt. He gives her a look like he appreciates the fact that she's getting kinky already.

Her mother isn't in the house, for once.

She runs the laser wand over his knife cuts to heal them. He says she must have stitched up Ryker a lot too, and she agrees that someone had to. Then he uses the age old come on of asking her to tell him about Ryker's scars. It is a unique twist, to have her tell him about the scars on his own body, but I'm still deeply disappointed that Tak couldn't come up with something better.

The bleeding on cue was at least creative, if gross and OTT. I'm going to hope that he could do better if it hadn't been such a rough 3 days. Surely Quell expected more. I'm also going to quote the seduction, but only because it has the type of details that can come back later and become important.

Tak, pointing to shoulder scar: Where's this from?

Kristin: Dealer in the Mariposa District, high on synamorphosterone. It's a male aggression enhancer. They call it Stallion. Guy killed half his family by the time Ryker got there. This is what it took to save the other half.

Tak: What about this one?

Kristin: Steel-tipped boot with a toe blade. Right Hand of God martyr. Resisted arrest in New Haight.

He caresses her hand.

Tak: When you look in my eyes, what do you see?

Kristin: They're not your eyes.

Her puts her hand on the side of his face.

Tak: What about this?

Kristin: That one's from me. I forget why, but you deserved it.

She caresses his face, but then turns away.

Kristin: This is a mistake. When I look into his eyes, I see you looking back at me and it's been a long time since someone looked at me like that.

Tak: I'm sorry I'm not Elias.

Kristin: Just shut the f*ck up.

She jumps into his lap and kisses him.

They end up in her bed, having lots of what looks to be very satisfying sex. Then they take a long nap. Let's all just take a moment here to enjoy our thoughts. The beginning of the sexy times may have been cliché, but the rest looked like it deserved a high grade.

They were both looking for a connection that was more than physical, and were drawn to the things in each other that reminded them of the people they were really missing and couldn't be with. It's bittersweet, but the best either was going to do under the circumstances.

Kristin wakes up first, and gets Mary Lou Henchy's stack from her desk. She wakes up Tak and hands it to him. Kristin reminds Tak that Ryker had interrogated the CTAC officer that he was framed for murdering. In flashback, we see Ryker and Kristin in bed asleep, while there's pounding on the door, and men yelling for Ryker to open up. Ryker gets his gun.

Tanaka and Aboud storm in, announcing that Ryker is under arrest for the murder of Leonid Kye Harris, senior sys op and CTAC administrator. Kristin gets upset. Aboud tells her to calm down and stay out of it. Ryker says he didn't kill anyone. Tanaka says he shouldn't mind coming in, then.

Ryker becomes more agitated and points the gun at Tanaka, saying, "They got to you. They get to everyone." The situation escalates. Kristin tries to calm Elias down. She says, "Look at me. If this is a mistake, you have nothing to..." Elias goes cold and lowers the gun. He just keeps staring at her and repeating the word, "If??" She's betrayed his trust at his lowest point. He let's them take him away, yelling at her, "How could you not f*cking believe me?"

In the present day, Kristin shows Tak photos of the murder victims that Ryker thinks had counterfeit Neo-Catholic conversion coding. Tak realizes right away that there would be a big market for ensuring that one's murder victims couldn't testify. Kristin hopes Mary Lou's coding can be reversed eventually so that they can find out the truth.

Then Kristin tells Tak about the Ghostwalker and shows him a futuristic police 3D sketch. Ghostwalker and Dimi are her only leads on Mary Lou's case. Tak understands that Ghostwalker may have been able to use his technology to cover up the evidence surrounding Mary Lou's murder as well as his own existence.

Tak: Ryker's case, Bancroft's murder, Ghostwalker. They're connected. (Kristin: Yeah.) But they f*cked up. (Kristin: How?) Because they haven't killed me yet.

Mickey calls Kristin into the station. He's spun Dimi up into our favorite skinhead's sleeve. Matt Biedel gets to take a crack at playing Dimi the Personality Fragged Twin.

Dimi mostly talks trash and waits to be broken out, but he does have a few interesting things to say. Dogs can be put into humans and speak a little if you heavily tranquilize them. Which means people bring back their pets in new sleeves, too.

Then Dimi gets poetic: "Limited vision. Where is the voice that said altered carbon would free us from the cells of our flesh? The visions that said we would be angels. Instead, we became hungry for things that reality could no longer offer. The lines blurred. You want to know who I work for? The people who understood that, who used it to become wealthy beyond words in the only currency that truly matters: the appetites of the immortal."

Ortega pressures Dimi for a name, but he prattles on about the difference between reality and VR, while Tak tells her that Dimi is stalling and she needs to blow his stack out. Tanaka and others can be heard in the distance, searching the station for her and Dimi. Dimi tells her that VR leaves you with the false impression that you're in control, which is chilling.

Tanaka rushes in with a couple of regular cops and rescues Dimi. His righthand man, Aboud, is with him and throws Tak out, after blaming Tak for dragging Ortega into it. REALLY? Dragging her into working on the case she's been following for months?

Tanaka doesn't even know who's in skinhead's body. So why is he so worked up then? She's not allowed to interrogate a suspect? Surely they all bend the rules occasionally? Aboud gets in another shot at Ortega, saying that she partnered up with the Envoy and he played her. Huh? How does he get that Tak played her from this conversation?

Ortega argues with Tanaka that she needs to ask Dimi more questions, and suggests every possible way she can think of, as they walk through the station. Finally Ortega convinces Tanaka to let her ride down in the elevator with Dimi to continue to question him. Aboud says he's going, too. Tak isn't invited, of course.

Ortega, Aboud, Dimi, and ONE police guard get in the elevator. The guard is half Dimi's size, and all Dimi's restrained with are loose handcuffs with his hands bound in front. This doesn't seem like it should be standard procedure, with a huge perp who's so dangerous, but no one questions it. There were two cops holding onto Dimi until they approached the elevator. What happened?

As the elevator doors close, the guard looks straight at Tak and smiles. It's Ghostwalker. Tak screams for Ortega, but it's too late.

Let's just try to get through this fight, okay? This is the most brutal fight we've seen so far, since it's in such close quarters, with no escape and an attacker who's intent on vicious murder. It's not played for fun and excitement. Aboud and Ortega are outmatched and desperately trying to survive.

Once the elevator doors close, Ghostwalker asks the room, "Are you a Believer?" the same way he asked Officer Levine. So that's his "I'm about to kill you" tell. Then he pulls out a horrific weapon, a handheld metal rod with two levels of claws forming cups, that he jams into Ortega's shoulder and pulls back out. It slices out an octopus-shaped chunk of her flesh. She's bleeding profusely from the wound but she keeps fighting.

Meanwhile, Dimi and Aboud are fighting. Ghostwalker gets Ortega in the hip with his weapon and maybe other places that I missed. She fights back and tries to shoot him. Dimi throws Aboud up at the ceiling. Aboud's head breaks through glass and he's left unconscious on the floor. Ghostwalker tells Ortega that he appreciates her spirit, but it's time to let go and give up. She bites his wrist.

Eventually, she's too wounded and can't get up again. Ghostwalker starts saying prayers, getting ready to shoot her in the stack. Aboud wakes up and realizes what's about to happen. He throws himself over Ortega just as Ghostwalker fires. Aboud takes the shot in the stack.

Ghostwalker kneels down beside Ortega, points the gun at her stack, and says more prayers. Then he pulls the trigger, but he's out of bullets. Before he can grab the other gun, the elevator opens at their floor and Dimi forces him out. They escape.

Tak races up and down the stairs of the building, trying to catch the elevator. He misses it when Ghostwalker and Dimi get out, but catches it when it finally stops the next time. He sees that Aboud is dead and Kristin is dying, so he picks her up and tells everyone to get out of his way. He rushes out of the station with her.

Man with My Face

Season 1
Episode Number: 6
Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Steve Blackman
Director: Alex Graves
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcrist Falconer)
Guest Stars: Tamara Taylor (Oumou Prescott), Byron Mann (O.G. Kovacs), Waleed Zuaiter (Samir Abboud), Matt Biedel (Dimi), Adam Busch (Mickey), Marlene Forte (Alazne Ortega), Antonio Marziale (Isaac Bancroft), Hayley Law (Lizzie Elliot), Hiro Kanagawa (Captain Tanaka), Matt Frewer (Carnage), Fraser Aitcheson (Rhino Man), Paul Cheng (Scary Guy), Eddie Flake (Officer Davis), Hyuma Frankowski (Uniform Officer), Dario de Iaco (Neanderthal), Lillian Lim (Hostess), Chris McNally (Sergei Brevlov), Zahf Paroo (Curtis), Arnold Pinnock (Hemingway), Colleen Wheeler (Nurse), Ben Wilkinson (Doctor), Muhumuza Mushega (African Male), Trevor Roberts (CTAC Intelligence Officer), Celeste White Steele (Fell Station Detective), Sarah Ziolkowski (Police Officer)
Summary: With Ortega's fate hanging in the balance, Kovacs drops a bombshell on the Bancrofts. Later, he comes face to face with an unsettling opponent.



The episode begins with a brief flash forward and a return of the Mad Mykola song. We see through Tak's eyes, but his head is covered by a ragged black cloth. He looks down and sees his hands in cuffs and chains.

In the here and now, Tak and Kristin are being driven to the hospital, while Tak tries to keep Kristin alive. She's bleeding profusely from her wounds. He keeps her talking so she doesn't pass out. If her sleeve dies, he can put her in a new one, but her mother and the rest of her family,

all devout Neo Cs, will never speak to her again.

When she asks him about Samir, he tells her that Aboud is fine. Then he asks her to tell him about Ryker. She says he had more open cases than anyone at the station. It drove her crazy.

At the hospital, Tak rushes Kristin into the emergency room. In a commentary on emergency rooms across America, the waiting room is full of people who've been waiting for hours, and will wait for hours more. The nurse at the desk speaks in a bored voice the entire time, until she sees Tak's credit score. Before that, the nurse tells Tak to put Kristin's hand on the scanner to see if she can pay for services. Since Kristin doesn't have enough money for the kind of treatment she needs, she'll have to wait until they get to her. They aren't turning her away, not at all. They don't turn anyone away. They can't help it if she bleeds to death in the waiting room.

Tak spits on the scanner to get his DNA approved and to express his opinion. When the nurse sees his credit score, everything changes. Kristin is taken straight back into surgery, and offered the best of everything. Her shoulder is so badly damaged that her right arm will have to be amputated. The doctor recommends a new state of the art biomechanical synth arm.

Doctor: We offer a wide range of replacement models for someone with your considerable financial resources. These are our most popular options: biomech, gene-spliced, cloned or full mechanical. Personally I would recommend the Jager-Schuster model 16. Reinforced titanium mechanical substructure covered in a neurachem-enhanced cloned human skin. Seamless interface with the patient's nervous and musculoskeletal systems. And the real selling point is that it's completely natural looking. Truly the best of both worlds.

Tak agrees to the Jager-Schuster model 16, but also threatens the doctor with violence, should he offer to sell Tak one more thing. He punches out the pay screen. It leaves enough DNA for the payment to go through.

Vernon is watching Poe work with Lizzie in the Psychosurgery VR suite. Poe is changing up the color scheme, since Vernon doesn't like too much pink. It reminds him of Pepto-Bismal. Poe has added black and red.

Lizzie: I was in the black, and the monsters turned my insides to red.

She was unconscious, and someone hurt her in a way that made her bleed internally. On the plus side, the baby doll is gone, or at least not in view right now, and she's talking more. Was the doll her child self, or was she pregnant and lost the baby along with the sleeve?

Poe explains that he has a treatment that might help her and offers to let her hit him. He doesn't feel physical pain, so she can't hurt him. Poe tells her, "It is not our enemies that defeat us, it is our fear. Do not be afraid, Miss Elizabeth. Make them afraid of you."

Lizzie punches him and he flies across the room. He jumps up cheering, and she smiles. But Vernon isn't okay with Poe teaching his little girl to fight. He puts on the VR cap and appears between Poe and Lizzie, threatening to hit Poe himself. Poe orders Vernon to leave.

Vernon ignores Poe and turns to speak to Lizzie.

Vernon: Ladybug. It's me. I'm here.

Lizzie: I was in the forest, Daddy. It was dark and full of monsters. I couldn't get out. WHERE WERE YOU?

Vernon (bewildered): I didn't know!

Lizzie: I SCREAMED AND YOU NEVER CAME!

Poe tosses Vernon out of VR.

Lizzie's living in a fairy tale nightmare that has a lot in common with Mad Mykola. She's been in the darkness, with no one to save her, attacked by monsters that turn children bloody. Her mother is gone and her father is ineffective. At least he's not one of the monsters.

Then again, maybe he could be. He takes out his frustration with the situation on Poe, yelling angrily at Poe for taking him out of VR and teaching Lizzie to hit people. Poe explains that he's teaching Lizzie to defend herself, because self-defense training, in conjunction with psychosurgery and trauma therapy, is very helpful for survivors.

Vernon angrily sweeps the glasses off the bar, then picks up one that he missed and drops it on the floor. He asks if Poe can feel pain, to which Poe replies that he can feel anger, and lowers his guns out of the ceiling.

Vernon continues egging Poe on, but Poe gets a call from the hospital informing him that Kristin has been admitted in critical condition. Vernon tells Poe that this isn't over and leaves for the hospital.

Tak stands outside in the rain, letting it wash away his guilt and Kristin's blood. Quell appears a short distance away. She says, "Locals. Ultimately, they're all expendable." Tak replies that Kristin isn't expendable, and he's not going to let her die, even though Quell continues talking, reminding him that his centuries old pattern is to leave a trail of death in his wake and that she's only a figment of his imagination. He tells her that it won't happen this time, or ever again.

Quell and Tak, each in their own boxes. She lived and died on Harlan's World, an advocate of freedom, equality and mortality. She's surrounded by deep water because she's already cleansed. She's with the trees, since nature symbols are a motif for Harlan's world, and red lights, meaning family, love and mortality. Quell's box is larger than Tak's because her life was lived for a larger purpose. Tak stands undecided about the way his life will go from here. Accept the blood money

of the Meths and what it can do for his future, or try to gain his freedom, again, and find a new purpose for living.

They debate whether he's grown to care for Kristin. Quell thinks he has. He says it's sleeve memory, or pheromones, or the ghost of Quell that he's chasing.

Quell: That isn't who we were to each other, Tak. Love isn't finite.

Tak: Maybe life shouldn't be either. Maybe we should keep living, forever. Maybe we all fought for nothing. Maybe you died for nothing.

Quell disappears, now that he's disavowed their cause. He's left with the bars and white lights behind him. A cold, sterile, boxed in future, if he's not careful.

Vernon shows up just after that. He reassures Tak that Kristin is a badass and will pull through. But he also wonders why Tak doesn't just resleeve her. Tak explains that she'd never forgive him, since she was raised Neo-C. Vernon doesn't understand the nuances of the situation, since she's renounced her religion, but most of the family haven't.

Poe interrupts with an ONI call. First he turns into a junior high schooler, and asks Tak to tell Vernon that Poe isn't speaking to him. I really wanted him to have a messenger deliver Vernon a note somehow with scathing slights written on it, like your jacket is wrinkled beyond repair, but, oh well.

Poe really called because he's figured out who bought Isaac Bancroft's art. It was Sergei Brevlov, using a series of shell companies. He's from Volgograd, and used a shell company he owns called Ural Syth Co. Sergei was at Bancroft's party, just like Ghostwalker. Tak prepares to go talk to Sergei, since there's nothing he can do for Kristin at the hospital. Vernon decides to give being Tak's wingman another shot, since he can't actually hit Poe.

Meanwhile, Tanaka is still cleaning up the mess in his station. Prescott shows up with a snide remark about the blood bath and her absolute certainty that she won't have to frequent places like this much longer. The police are still holding the clone seized at Isaac Bancroft's house, and that is unacceptable. Laurens will visit his plague upon them if they don't turn it over immediately, no paperwork required.

Once Tanaka understands what the heck she's talking about, he tells a cop to take her to evidence and help her get what she needs. But she can't resist taking it a step too far, into being disrespectful toward him in front of his subordinates, when she chides him for his hesitation like he's an unruly child.

He grabs her by the arm and pulls her aside, then tells her she's no better than him, so stop acting like she is. She tells him, no, they're not the same. "One of us is a powerless puppet being used by forces that can't quite be comprehended, and the other one is me." Why do I think she just unknowingly described herself as well?

Prescott struts away just as another cop comes over to tell Tanaka that they found Officer Levine's body RD'd in the basement, just like Aboud. Ghostwalker was wearing Levine's uniform while he was impersonating a cop.

Tanaka goes to Mickey to look at the elevator footage of the attack. Of course Ghostwalker can't be seen on it. Mickey shows Tanaka the footage from Bancrofts' party as well, but of course Tanaka starts complaining rather than listening to Mickey's explanation of what he's seeing. The ironic thing this time is that he's complaining that they didn't tell him about these theories sooner. Yeah, cause he's always so open to ideas that might interfere with the Meths 24/7 party and oppression lifestyle.

On his way out of Mickey's closet, Tanaka has the nerve to blame Mickey and Kristin for Dimi's escape. Except Dimi was secure until Tanaka came riding in to free him and hand him over to the serial killer. Tanaka is the consistent variable when people are wrongfully imprisoned, Meths are allowed to escape justice, and hardened criminals just happen to escape.

Ghostwalker, whose name is Mr Leung, escorts Dimi2 into a restaurant for a meeting with a new character, Hemingway. The restaurant is like a greenhouse, with trees and plants. Each table sits on a glass platform that floats in a long tank of water filled with fish. The effect is like the tables are on rafts floating down a lazy river.

Hemingway is cultured and sophisticated, but not as condescending as the Bancrofts and their crowd. He speaks softly throughout his exchange with Dimi2, despite becoming very angry with him.

Dimi sits down at the table with Hemingway and (sort of) thanks Hemingway for sending Leung to free him. Now he can get on with the business of killing Kovacs. Hemingway tells Dimi

that Kovacs is an Envoy and Dimi won't be laying a hand on him.

Dimi lectures Hemingway on his closeness with his "brother", the only person he could trust for 200 years. He WILL have his revenge on Kovacs. Hemingway says that he understands. He has family himself that he'll protect at any cost. He further explains that Dimi1 was hired to go to the Raven and pick up the Envoy, then bring him to Hemingway. That's it. Instead he picked a fight with the hotel and died very publicly.

Dimi2 slams his fist on the table and screams again that he wants Kovacs. Hemingway tells him, "Then you are destined for disappointment."

Hemingway goes into a backup cycle, while Dimi considers the knife on the table in front of him. Leung/Ghostwalker puts his death tool to the back of Dimi's head and promises to kill him if he interrupts Hemingway's backup cycle. When Hemingway comes out of it, he looks at the tension in both men, and the knife next to Dimi's hand, and has no trouble guessing what happened.

Hemingway reminds Dimi that he will leave Kovacs alone. Leung will take Dimi to a safehouse until the larger situation is resolved. Hemingway gives Leung a long, slow look. As Leung escorts him back out, Dimi still looks like he wants to jump over the table and kill Hemingway.

Tak and Vernon shoot their way into Sergei's apartment for dramatic effect. Tak grabs Sergei and roughs him up, while Isaac appears with a gun and shoots at them. Tak finishes with Sergei, accusing him of using his company and art purchases as a cover to funnel money to Isaac. Then Tak grabs Isaac, and he and Vernon both rough Isaac up a little, accusing him of murdering his father's sleeve. And murdering 48 hours worth of back up? How is that crime described?

Next, Sergei appears with a gun, but he's easily disarmed by Tak. Isaac repeatedly tells them they'll be in big trouble when his dad finds out. Sergei doesn't see why they have to be so violent about everything. Isaac recognizes Vernon as a waiter from the party. Isaac and Sergei try to protect each other, giving Tak pause. Both Isaac's notice of details and unimportant people, and his loyalty to his lover, say good things about him that aren't true of his father.

Tak and Vernon bring Isaac and Sergei to the Aerium, arriving at about the same time as Prescott arrives with the clone. They all meet in the study, joined by Laurens and Miriam. Laurens sends Vernon and Curtis out, but makes Prescott stay.

Isaac sits in the one chair in the room, with Sergei and Miriam on either side and to the back. He looks like a king attended by the queen mother and his consort. Laurens probably thought it would look like a punishment chair. But they are next to the fire (symbolizing family and home, and now the king in his castle), while Laurens is standing next to a dead copy of himself, and otherwise alone. Tak and Oumou are nearby, but stay far enough away to avoid overtly choosing sides. Right now it's clear who pays them, but they could jump ship anytime.

Tak gives Laurens his basic report about what he found out concerning Isaac wearing the clone to go to Osaka to close the deal. Then Tak tells Laurens about the altercation at Fightdrome when Laurens beat Isaac senseless.

Laurens verbally rips both Miriam and Isaac to shreds, saying Isaac is a huge disappointment. He blames Miriam for coddling Isaac. His anti-gay sentiments aren't said out loud, but there's a certain amount of homophobic code in the language.

Isaac says he didn't try to kill his father, he just wants his father's respect. Laurens looks sickened at the idea. It's clear he'll only be proud of children who are exactly what he is: ruthless, abusive gamers who are proud of the slaughter they've left in their wake. The "fighting and f*cking machines" that he bragged about to the people of the Old City. A kind, thoughtful, intelligent successor isn't what he had in mind.

After listening to the family argue, while remembering how abusive his own father was, Tak realizes that Isaac couldn't have done it, because he doesn't hate his father in the way that would lead to murder. Miriam and Sergei have been very protective of Isaac through all of this. Sergei finally tells Laurens that Isaac couldn't have shot him because they were in a grounder hospital at the time, getting treatment for the injuries Laurens gave Isaac when he beat him. I'm not sure I believe Sergei, but onscreen no one questions it.

Protect the heir to the throne at all costs.

Laurens throws out a few terrible words to his wife and son as he passes by them to grab a heavy fireplace poker. Worried Laurens is going to use it on Isaac, Miriam and Sergei shield him with their bodies. Laurens goes to the clone and viciously beats it to "death" until it's a bloody

pulp, leaving himself covered in clone blood, and Prescott with blood speckles. She forces herself to remain stock still through the destruction, despite how close she is to the violence.

Laurens looks like a shriveled old man here, after he's killed a version of himself, and drained his own life's blood. Maybe Miriam was right. Maybe he is killing himself in symbolic and non-permanent ways, over and over, out of anger, because he can feel his mind deteriorating and can't stop it.

When he's done, Laurens turns to Tak and thanks him for the information as if nothing unusual has happened. He holds out his bloody hand to shake, and says he looks forward to the next report. Then he leaves the room, and leaves Tak with blood on his hands.

Laurens must hate Isaac at this point. He takes every opportunity to denigrate his son, but the reality is that Isaac closed the Osaka deal more efficiently than Laurens could have. Isaac encourages loyalty in the people around him through his natural personality, while Laurens either buys it or gains it through fear. Isaac is a better potential king than Laurens is, and is a true threat to him.

But Laurens will never admit it. Isaac will have to take the throne, like so many sons have had to take their rightful places from father-god-kings who refused to step aside when the time came. That's the story that Laurens expects and wants to play out, even if he won't admit it consciously.

Tak and Oumou ride down in the elevator together. She hasn't wiped the blood off her face yet. He asks her if she still wants to be a Meth. She says yes, she has what it takes. Tak responds by showing her the police sketch of Ghostwalker. She says she doesn't recognize him, but she twitches when she looks, and breathes harder after that.

Leung/Ghostwalker escorts Dimi through Licktown. They stop on a footbridge to talk for a moment about their philosophies of independent contracting vs working for a large organization.

Leung: "If we do not know our role in this world, why are we in it?"

Dimi: "I cannot speak for you, my friend, but I am here to kick great amounts of *ss. Call it what you like, you are an attack dog on another man's leash. I make my own way. I'm not a tool for someone else to use."

Leung: "A pawn in the army of the righteous can be more powerful than a king who is without faith."

Dimi: "Me, I prefer checkers."

Leung: "This does not surprise me. [Or anyone else.] ... Tell me, are you a believer?"

Dimi looks at Leung for a moment, then springs into action. Leung chases Dimi through Licktown, with Dimi using every creative way to lose or distract Leung that he can find. Dimi eventually gets a little breathing room and runs into a tattoo parlor. He rips the seat cushion off the back of one of the client chairs, and pulls out a transmitter device, putting part around his neck.

It's a portable needlecass device. Dimi tells the person on the other end that he's interested in taking them up on their previous offer, but he needs immediate extraction. Whoever's on the other end must have a condition of their own, to which Dimi agrees. Dimi touches a finger to the device, transmits his location, and is gone. Leung comes inside the tattoo parlor just as the needlecass causes the power to go out. Skinhead's sleeve lies abandoned on the floor.

Over at Fightdrome, Tak's last sleeve comes to life while Carnage watches. He says, "Looking forward to working with you, Mr Kadmin." Then he smiles a Very Evil Smile. Very Evil Indeed.

Kristin is sleeping in a recovery room after her surgery. Alazne, dressed in black for Aboud, is at Kristin's bedside when Tak and Vernon show up. She stalks over to Tak and wallops him in the cheek hard enough to hurt. Then she considers hitting Tak a second time, or hitting Vernon, but figures it can wait. She goes to get coffee.

Vernon notes that all of Kristin's read outs look really good. Tak goes to her bedside and holds her hand. When she wakes up momentarily and mistakes him for Elias, he decides he should leave. Vernon stops him, saying that Tak may not be the one Kristin wants, but he's the one that's there, so he's owes it to Kristin to stay with her. Tak settles in.

Hours later, Tak has taken a nap in the chair next to Kristin's bed. When she wakes up, the first thing she does is ask about Aboud. Tak has to tell her that Aboud didn't make it. Real death. Kristen gets angry that Tak lied to her on the way to the hospital when he said that Aboud was okay.

As she goes to sit up, her new arm pushes too hard on the metal bed rail and bends it. Kristin quickly understands what that means, and asks if he gave her any other new body parts. Tak tells her no, just the arm. It's a state of the art arm, the best Bancroft money can buy. She's happy to hear that Bancroft paid for it. Personally, I hope Tak also got the full lifetime warranty, so she's not stuck paying for expensive maintenance or repairs.

Tanaka comes in the door carrying a large bouquet of flowers. Tanaka's very friendly and supportive, telling Kristin that Aboud died a hero and his photo will go up on the wall next to her father's. She asks about Mickey, and Tanaka says that Mickey is fine, he's on the case. Meanwhile, Tak is looking at the giant bouquet of flowers and the overly friendly police captain suspiciously. His spidey senses Envoy intuition is tickling his awareness.

Tak questions Tanaka about his bouquet of guilt and why Mickey is on the case instead of suspended. Shouldn't there be an investigation into what happened? But that would bring up whatever Tanaka wants to keep hidden, namely his arrangement with whoever sent Ghostwalker to the station. Kristin slowly gets out of bed during this conversation, not wanting to believe it's true, but knowing that the things Tak is saying make sense. Tanaka nods that yes, Tak is right.

Kristin sends Tak from the room, then slams Tanaka into the floor using her new cybernetic arm. Tak has already figured out that Tanaka gets paid off to look the other way occasionally, but they don't fully own him. Tanaka insists that he was promised no one would get hurt.

Kristin is angry because people trusted him, and he's setting them up to be killed. Tanaka tells her that the city police have so little power that they can't change much of anything. The most they can do is a little good here and there. Kristin doesn't accept his excuses for being on the take. She throws him around a little more, using her new arm.

Tanaka admits that he meets with someone occasionally, but he doesn't know who it is. He has a burner phone and sends a ping to an unknown number, then they meet at a cheap VR cafe in Oakland. But he's never seen the man's face. Kristin tells Tanaka to ping the man and send her the information. She looks for her clothes, then she and Tak head for the cafe.

At the cafe, they sign up for low res minutes. Tak insists that he should be the one who goes into VR, because he can control the construct. He disguises himself as Tanaka once he's inside VR. The VR version of Hemingway appears. Tak tries to confront the him about the murders at the station.

Hemingway immediately plays down the deaths, and says that the mission was successful. Tak demands a face to face meeting in the real, but Hemingway refuses. Then Hemingway figures out that he's not talking to Tanaka. After a moment of looking closely at Tak's Tanaka VR image, Hemingway says, "Takeshi, is that you?"

Kristin pulls Tak out of VR before he can answer. The cafe has gone completely silent. They stand up to investigate, and when one of them touches a customer, heads start falling off of bodies. Everyone has been garrotted.

Dimi, in the Byron Mann sleeve, is sitting in the corner watching them. When they notice him, he says, "I've been thinking, that's f*cking enough." He tosses a small grenade that knocks them out. The next time we see them, they're hooded, cuffed and chained with the Mad Mykola theme playing. It's the episode's opening flashback.

They're taken to Fightdrome, where Dimi enjoys taunting Tak for a minute about Tak fighting someone wearing his own face. Dimi's developed an unhinged giggle in this sleeve. Then Carnage strolls in and tells them it's time. The three are going to fight each other.

Carnage looks at Ortega and Tak and tells them never to threaten a man's profit margin. He can't let them live, now that they know he records fights and customers. Tak tries to be chivalrous and get Carnage to let Ortega go, not understanding that she saw the recording set up, as well, so Carnage won't let her go. Guess his Envoy intuition failed him this time.

Carnage and his goons lead them through the backstage area and the crowd, who are chanting, "Ryker, Ryker, Ryker!!" Tak insists, to no one in particular, that he's not Ryker. Dimi tells him that the crowd doesn't know who's in the sleeve.

Carnage goes into the fight ring to introduce the main event: "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Fightdrome! Tonight we bring you a very special, very exclusive Fightdrome event. One time, and one time only, you alone in this room, with the man who has hurt you and those that you love. And so tonight you will see the love of his life hurt, her stack cut from her sleeve, her very soul destroyed! All in front of this monster's eyes! You will see the final and most terrible

humiliation of Elias Ryker! For this is a love story... with a body count! Real blood, real pain, real death!"

As Carnage introduces them, Tak and Kristin are brought into the ring. When he finishes, a buzzer goes off and their chains drop to the ground. A few Lord of the Rings rejects are released from the cages that surround the ring, and the fight to the death begins. Kristin quickly discovers that a superstrong, superdurable arm is very handy in a fight.

They take care of the first two goons quickly, using teamwork and the discarded chains. But that was just an appetizer to tire them out and rile up the crowd. A moment later, Dimi drops into the ring wielding two Reaper-laced knives. He flips and somersaults around them, slicing their limbs and verbally taunting them as he goes. Dimi likes to put on a show and play with his food, and the crowd wants to watch "Ryker" and Ortega suffer.

They begin to stumble and move slower as the Reaper takes effect. The crowd chants, "Real death, real death, real death!" Both Kristin and Tak end up down, the Reaper and their injuries overwhelming them. Kristin grabs the chains and throws them at Dimi, but he brushes them off. She keeps fighting, but Dimi overwhelms her. Dimi drags Kristin next to Tak and tells Tak that he's going to cut Kristin apart, piece by piece.

That's his big mistake. No way is Tak going to let the Patchwork Man destroy another woman. He throws his arm between Dimi and Kristin, stops the knife from falling, and pulls Dimi onto himself. As they roll on the ground, Dimi stabs Tak in the stomach. When Dimi stops to gloat, Tak pulls the knife out of himself and stabs Dimi in the neck. Then he moves the knife around and pulls out Dimi's stack. Tak hands the stack to Kristin, who uses her cyberarm to crumble the man who framed Ryker into tiny pieces.

When she done, they collapse next to each other on the floor. Kristin says, "Kovacs, I really like my new arm." Carnage has gone from glee to outrage within moments. He yells for his remaining goons to, "Kill them both!"

Just then, a ninja fights her way down the hall that Kristin and Tak were brought through, sword in hand. Kristin throws herself on top of Tak to protect the sleeve. When the ninja reaches them, Kristin gets up and tries to fight it. The ninja knocks her out.

The ninja kneels down next to Tak. He lifts his head to see who's come to save them. She pulls down her hood and says, "Hey, big brother." It's his sister Rei, who he thought died long ago.

Tak lets his head drop and faints.

Nora Inu

Season 1

Episode Number: 7

Season Episode: 7

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Nevin Densham, Casey Fisher
Director: Andy Goddard
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcris Falconer)
Guest Stars: Will Yun Lee (Stronghold Kovacs), Alika Autran (Okulov), Daniel Bernhardt (Jaeger), Teach Grant (Jimmy DeSoto), Katie Stuart (Vidaura), Garfield Wilson (Gomez), Morgan Gao (Young Tak), Riley Lai Nelet (Young Reileen), Arnold Pinnock (Hemingway), Michael Adamthwaite (Father Kovacs), Jojo Ahenkorah (Grant), Primo Allon (Dodds), Maddie Dixon-Poirier (Little Girl), Chelsea Gill (Needlecast Tech), Darcy Hinds (Kerwin), Anna Van Hooff (Clarissa Severin), Yuvraj Kalsi (Boy at Stronghold #1), Yukari Komatsu (Mother Kovacs), Veda Maharaj (Boy at Stronghold #2), Eijiro Ozaki (Saito)
Summary: As Kovacs reconnects with a figure from his past, his tangled history with the Protectorate, the Uprising and Quell plays out in flashbacks.



Present day: Tak lies unconscious while Rei heals him. He spends the time reliving his memories of their shared past, so that his brain can try to fit this new development into place. Tak and the audience discover some missing puzzle pieces about present day mysteries as well. None of it is encouraging.

Tak's voiceover: "The danger of living too many times is you forget to fear death. We dismiss the Grim Reaper as a quaint metaphor. But fearing death- it's good for you."

Young Rei sits on the floor in the Kovacs family kitchen on Harlan's World.

Her father tells her to take off her necklace, but she refuses because it was her mother's. It's a pendant in the shape of the infinity snake that matches the tattoos Rei and Tak will get on their forearms as adults.

Their father, Jakub, hurls vicious insults at Rei as she and Tak watch him haul her mother's body to the edge of an industrial coolant pit and throw it in. The coolant will disintegrate the body and destroy the evidence of her murder.

Before Jakub can do the same thing to Rei, Tak shoots him in the stack from behind, killing their father instantly. Rei is scared that he'll be arrested and taken away, but Tak asks her to trust him.

The next time we see Tak, he's in a VR interrogation room with Jaeger, cuffed to the chair he's sitting in.

Jaeger: Why did you kill your Father? You're just a kid, and you blew his stack out.

Tak: He deserved it.

Jaeger: Because he beat up your sister?

Tak: He wasn't going to stop. He killed my mother.

Jaeger: Cops say your mom ran away.

Tak: Cops are stupid. I told them what happened. He dumped her in the coolant pool. There was no body. Nothing left. So they didn't believe me.

Jaeger: I believe you. The Settled Worlds are full of lawlessness. Killers, rapists, slavers, gangs. They leave behind victims. Innocents. We travel between planets. Protect our citizens.

Tak: Mister, I've got nothing left for you to take. They took my body, probably sold it off already. What do you want?

Jaeger: To recruit you. Colonial Tactical Assault Corps.

Tak: You're CTAC?

Jaeger: Looking at you, I see potential. I can make something out of you son.

Tak: What about my sister? I did what I did because of Rei. I want her safe.

Jaeger: You've never been able to trust anyone, have you? Son, We are The Protectorate. We protect. I'll see to it she's placed in a good family. That she gets a good life with people who will love her and treat her well. You have my word.

Tak: What happens next? Will I get my body back?

Jaeger: I'll requisition it for the core. You can use it if you ever come back.

Tak: Where am I going?

Jaeger: You're casting off this planet with me. Train on different worlds, in different sleeves. This time tomorrow, you'll be in a man's body, and no one will ever hurt you or yours again.

Tak: Off-planet? What about Rei?

Jaeger: You disconnect from this life. Anyone who knows what you are will be in danger.

Tak: I have to tell her!

Jaeger: If you want her to be safe, you're never going to be able to see her again. Trust me.

Jaeger just told Tak that no one would ever hurt "you or yours again", but now Tak can't be close to anyone. Which is it? Plus, the picture keeps blurring in and out, making it look even more like Tak was drugged into compliance, Then there's the fact that he's in a high stress situation in which he feels like he can't say no, and is a child who isn't old enough to give clear consent for something like joining the military.

Jaeger must have spies who keep an eye out for violent child criminals with little to no family so he can recruit them into his special ops unit. Once he resleeves them, no one can tell that they started out as child soldiers. He becomes the parent they never had, ensuring their loyalty. That also must make Tak's betrayal sting all the more, since he's the father that saved Tak from prison and made him an elite soldier. Jaeger would feel that Tak owes him his life.

In the present day, Tak is mortally wounded from the fight with Dimi at Fightdrome. Rei has taken him to her house to tend to him. When he comes to, she tells him that his sleeve is going to die. It's covered in lacerations, bleeding internally, gone septic, and drugged with Reaper, which is counteracting her efforts to save him.

She tries to give him an injection to kill the sleeve, so that she can resleeve him more quickly, but he stops her and insists that she fight to save it. Rei argues with him, but gives in after he passes out again. Odds are good that she was eager to kill the sleeve because it's Ryker's, as well as to get Tak back into a sleeve that looks like her brother, her stated motivation.

Being with Rei causes Tak to remember his previous life with her. He dreams of when they were young children playing on Harlan's World.

When Tak wakes up, his superficial wounds are healed, and he looks much better, though he's still sick and weak. Rei comes to sit next to him again and they press their matching tattoos against each other, proof that they are who they say they are. The tattoos match the pendant on their mother's necklace.

Tak says that Rei was supposed to be dead, and she says that it didn't take. They reminisce about how long it's been since they were together (Rei says 250 years-shouldn't it be more?) and how gaijin he looks. (Gaijin is Japanese for foreign and can be used as an insult.)

Tak asks how Rei survived the shuttle explosion that he thought killed her at the end of the Battle of Stronghold. She tells him that an archaeology student found her stack and some genetic material among the wreckage, and resleeved her in a synth. She took off with her genetic

material, made her fortune and her clones, and has been on her own since then. Tak caresses her face and tells her she's not alone any more.

Then he passes out again. He dreams about the first time he cast back to Harlan's World after joining CTAC, about 25 years after he left as a child. He cast into his birth-sleeve, now a grown man who had been used by others in his absence.

As Tak looks over his sleeve and gets to know it again, Jaeger describes their mission.

Jaeger: This team has been thrown together from who was available on cast. ReAc for half day, then we stand up at 0300. Kovacs, how does it feel to be back in your original skin?

Kovacs: Lot more mileage than I expected. Reflexes still good.

Jaeger: Thank the Corps for keeping it in shape.

CTAC Grunt: Who is this guy, he gets a retread?

Kovacs: It's my home world. First time I've been back since I joined up.

Jaeger: The target is a yakuza kumicho by the name of Gottfried Saito. Domestic terror, murder, prostitution, and he doesn't pay his taxes. They need to be taught a very public lesson. The must-kill is Saito. Slag his stack. Everyone else is kill as kill can. Most kills, most days off, most bonus money. Even you guys could figure out how that works.

Once they get to the mission site, Jaeger puts Kovacs on Saito, which means he's in the lead. Once they've shot their way into the building, Tak shoots his way past the worst of the enemy, and makes it into the room where Saito is. He's approaching Saito when Rei sneaks up behind him and tells him to put his weapon down.

Tak recognizes her necklace as having been his mother's, and asks where she got it. Then he takes off his mask, and they both realize who they must be looking at. Rei asks where Tak's been, just as a Praetorian approaches from behind to kill her, and Saito tries to kill Tak. Rei kills Saito, and Tak kills the Praetorian.

They take a long look at each other, decide that they're in it together again, and start firing at everyone else. They fight throughout the warehouse. When they're done, only Tak and Rei are left standing.

They go to a bar to discuss their options and catch up. Rei was sold to the yakuza rather than being adopted by a good home, which Jaeger had to know. Now both the yakuza and CTAC will be out to kill both of them. Tak decides they should hide out in the woods they used to frequent.

Rei and Tak hike into the forest where they played as children. Rei says that she used to think that the Patchwork Man lived out there.

They hike for hours, until they are deep in an isolated area. Rei gets worried that they're lost, but Tak sees Songspire roots growing across a boulder and knows exactly where he is. They will follow the roots east to get to the caves.

Tak admires the way the Songspire roots thread through the boulders. He wonders if the Elders designed it that way, to create underground structures with branches as scaffolding? Rei isn't impressed with his thought process. He's barely talked to her for hours, and now he's talking about rocks.

She wants to keep moving, but Tak insists they stop for the night. They talk about their plan, and Rei says she'd want to find allies, but they just killed everyone they know, so... Tak bursts out laughing and Rei joins him. She tells him how much she missed him. He tells her that he's sorry for leaving her behind. She asks why he did. They both cry and hug.

Modern Tak's voiceover: "Death isn't only about the destruction of the body. Sometimes, just like that, you extinguish one self, and another is born. But every birth is violent and there's no death without pain."

Quell and the rebels sneak up on them while they're sleeping. Rei tells him she doesn't care if she dies, he should try to escape. But Quell knows that he cares too much about Rei to risk her life. Tak is knocked out.

He wakes up tied alone in the middle of a long foot bridge over a ravine, with guards at either end. DeSoto, one of Quell's Envoys, wants to kill Tak before they even talk to him. Quell can think of better uses for a former CTAC SpecOps soldier.

She approaches Tak and lets him know that she knows exactly who he is and why he and Rei are on the run. Word has spread all over Harlan's World. Their faces are all over the wanted beacons with a high bounty attached.

Tak says that he knows who she is, too. She tells him she'd be disappointed if he didn't. Rei is fine and being given something to eat.

Quell says that between Rei and Tak, they "know the secret workings of crime and government, which are more or less the same."

Quell: On some level, you know we're on the same side. The enemy of my enemy—

Tak: Is just one more person who might knife me in my sleep.

Quell: You're a little cynical, Takeshi Kovacs.

Tak: I'm tied up. I'd say I have reason to be.

Quell: Join us. Make a difference.

Tak: Nothing makes a difference. I'm done fighting in this war.

Quell: War is like any other bad relationship. You want out, but at what price.

Tak: If they knew an Uprising base was on Harlan's World, they'd tear apart this planet to find you. Aren't you worried I'll tell them?

Quell (cuts Tak free): No.

Tak: If I killed you, the Protectorate would forgive everything.

Quell: Do you want their forgiveness? The innocent, the person you were before all this, he's still there. I see the boy inside the man. Tell me something, Takeshi Kovacs, what did the Protectorate take from you?

Tak: Everything.

Quell: What would you do for revenge?

Tak: Anything.

Quell: That's a good start. (She begins to walk away.)

Tak: You don't want me. Don't you understand what CTAC does to make someone like me? They burn out every evolved violence-limitation instinct in the human psyche. And they replace it with the conscious will to do harm.

Quell: And yet you haven't hurt me.

Tak: I might still.

Quell (turning back to him): No, you won't, Kovacs. You're only pretending to be one of the monsters.

Tak and Rei are taken to Stronghold, the Uprising hideout and base of operations. Rei told Quell she'd stay if Tak stays, but she doesn't particularly want to stay. Now, she makes Tak promise: From here on out, family, no matter what. He repeats her words- Family, no matter what. The next order of business is finding their weapons.

They're surprised to discover that Stronghold is more than just a military base. It's filled with families and children living their daily lives, and a beautiful, tall Songspire tree grows toward the sun in the center of the cave.

Without them having to ask, Quell tells them to see DeSoto about getting their weapons back. They'll start Envoy training the next day. But despite them living and training side by side with the rebels, it takes a long time for trust to develop.

We've seen pieces of Quell's Envoy training in earlier episodes, always geared toward viewing the mind and other people as the most important tools available, while shunning the material world as unreliable and burdensome. Drugs and physical weapons are useful, but can't replace the strength and determination of the mind that wields them. Even other people eventually become expendable, and we are reminded of this over and over.

Quell: CTAC troops shoot themselves up with reacclimation drugs to try to make the sleeve obey them. But none of their techniques touch the pure mind, and that is what you must control. Master yourself, and you can ride any skin, anywhere in the galaxy, at a moment's notice.

The scene switches to the training session in the woods that's been shown in part in multiple previous episodes. Quell brandishes a handgun and tells her students that they must learn the weakness of weapons. When Tak scoffs at her, she tosses the gun to him, and tells him to shoot her in the stack. When Tak refuses to shoot her, she throws a gun to her righthand man Jimmy DeSoto, and a knife somewhere in the crowd. She tells both men to work together to bring her down. But they hate and would rather shoot each other.

As the two men draw on each other, Quell leaps between them and uses hand to hand skills to disarm them, ending with Tak pinned to the ground. She reminds them that the sleeve and the weapons are tools. They aren't what gives you power.

As Quell finishes talking, Rei fires on her from behind. Without turning, Quell shoots the gun out of Rei's hand. Quell tells them all, "You are the weapon. You are the killer and destroyer."

Then she turns to Rei and says, "You had the right idea. But next time, if you wanna save someone you love, move faster." Rei answers, "I'll remember that."

After Quell lets Tak up, she gives the speech about the strength of the wolf being in the pack. She tells them to gain the loyalty of a few capable locals wherever they go, even if the locals will ultimately be expendable. They are Envoys. They take what is offered.

Eventually, Rei and Tak start going on missions with the Envoys.

Tak: These are the access protocols on the CTAC barracks on Taurus 4.

Vidaura: The secure military R&D facility?

Tak: They leave the backdoor open on a squad of combat sleeves, just in case the locals ever breach security and get inside. It's a fail-safe.

Okuluv: So we're casting into Protectorate meat primed on the slab?

DeSoto: Or we're walking into a trap.

Rei: You trying to say something about my brother, DeSoto?

DeSoto: You can't f*ckin' trust him. How can you trust him?

Quell: Because he gave us the intel that's getting us in. We're going for the site database. Where we'll download the security specs on the facility listed here. Then we blow the database, make it look like simple sabotage. They won't even know we took anything.

The team needlecasts out to the facility, then back to base. DeSoto is back first, upset because Tak made him leave first, potentially sacrificing himself to whatever the threat was. After a very long minute, Tak comes back as well. Rei and DeSoto are happy and mad at the same time, but Quell, who'd been staring in silence at Tak's chamber the whole time, looks shocked at her own actions.

At dinner that night, DeSoto rushes in and sits down next to Tak. He tells Tak that they need to be clear: he could have gotten in and out without Tak's help. He'll never need Tak's help. Are they completely clear on that? Tak doesn't answer. DeSoto takes a swig from his flask, then hands it to Tak. Tak takes a swallow, too. DeSoto laughs, everyone laughs, and everything is fine.

Quell and Rei are also at the table. Both watch the interaction, and draw very different conclusions from it. Rei sees her brother being happy and settling in, but won't stop watching out for his safety. Quell sees a team that has bonded and is ready for the final, and most important, step in her plan.

Tak is unaware of the machinations going on around him.

Tak's voiceover: I can't remember all the things Quell taught me. It was like oxygen, soaking into me. She gave me the life I never had.

It's not long before Quell is ready to make Tak pay for his good times.

Quell: I have lied to you. We cannot win a conventional war against this enemy because it's not the Protectorate we're fighting. It's immortality itself. The creation of stacks was a miracle and the beginning of the destruction of our species. A hundred years from now, a thousand, I can see what we will become. And it's not human. A new class of people so wealthy and powerful they answer to no one and cannot die. Death was the ultimate safeguard against the darkest angels of our nature. Now, the monsters among us will own everything, consume everything, control everything. They will make themselves gods and us slaves in all but name.

Rei: What?

Tak: You see what I see?

Rei: Pretty much never. I hate that intuition shit.

Quell: Civilization is at a tipping point. We are riding the fulcrum between hope and oblivion.

Rei: What do you see?

Tak: Doubt.

Quell: If we do not stop the curse of eternal life in our realm, our children will inherit despair. The ebb and flow of life is what makes us all equal in the end. The Uprising must end Immortality.

Vidaura: You're talking about bringing back real death.

DeSoto: What about you?

Quell: I'm prepared to die to reset the balance. That's my decision. You have to decide for yourselves. I've created a program called Acheron that downloads into DHF and rewrites it, giving every mind exactly 100 years. No matter how rich and powerful you are, death will no longer be optional.

Gomez: But how is that even possible?

Tak: You'd have to download the program into every stack on all the Settled Worlds at the same time.

Quell: I'll run a DA mission into the on-planet Protectorate garrison here. Steal the casting source codes for the Central Core. Once we bring back the codes...

Tak: You'll use the codes to cast into the Central Core.

Quell: Full mobilization. The Uprising will fight our way in and spike the Core with Acheron. It will spread into every DHF in every system.

Vidaura: Nobody's ever come back from the Central Core.

Quell: I'm not planning on coming back.

Rei: You're asking us to die.

Quell: I'm asking you to embrace being human. We aren't meant to live forever. It corrupts even the best of us.

The camera looks straight at Rei when Quell says this.

Quell tells the crowd that anyone who wants to leave can go, she won't stop them. The mission of the people who stay will be to save humanity. She stands and asks if the crowd is with her. In a world where living multiple lifetimes is entirely possible and immortality has been achieved by a few, asking the crowd to agree to limit everyone's life to 100 years is a radical action. And that's in addition to the fact that it's a suicide pact for some of them.

At first, everyone is still and silent. Tak is the first to raise his fist in solidarity, then others from her inner circle join in. After a moment, the rest of the crowd raises their fists as well. Rei is the very, very last, clearly only bowing to peer pressure.

Quell needs a 5 person team for the first stage of the plan, the raid on the garrison on Harlan's World. Quell's usual core group, including Tak, Jimmy DeSoto, Vidaura, and Okulov volunteer. Rei tries to stop Tak, but he wants to make a difference.

They break into the garrison at night. Quell is able to upload the data she needs easily. Everything goes smoothly until the last moment, as they are almost past the perimeter on their way out.

Something trips an alarm and a force field goes up between Tak, who was guarding the rear, and everyone else. A squad of Praetorians appears immediately. Quell doesn't want to leave Tak, but there's no other choice. As she's being dragged away, the Praetorians use an energy weapon to knock him out.

When Tak wakes up, he's back in the same VR program that Jaeger used to recruit him when he was a child. It also looks distorted in exactly the same ways that it did when he was a child. Since Quell is going to tell him in a minute that he's drugged, it's safe to say that Jaeger drugged him as a child as well. It's not like Jaeger plays fair.

Jaeger spends a little time gloating that they've captured Tak, and a little time nostalgically marveling that it's been 28 years since they were last in that "room". Then he goes for the fatherly neck hold as he asks if the woman with Tak was his sister.

Tak isn't 12 anymore and Jaeger's routine doesn't work on him. He gives sarcastic replies in return. Jaeger repeatedly smashes Tak's face into the table. Then he manifests a knife and threatens to cut Tak's nose off. Quell appears and fights Jaeger off. She tells Tak that they can't pull him out of VR because of the drugs, so he's going to have to get himself out. She begs and bullies Tak into pulling himself out while she also fights Jaeger. Tak is dazed, but finally manages it.

They wake up in the real with the whole team waiting to help him escape. Jimmy runs over to give him a helping hand.

Back at Stronghold, Tak and Rei play a game while Rei tells Tak off for getting captured and for planning to go through with the next mission. Tak is impressed that the team rescued him. No one has done that before. Rei claims that they only went back for him because Quell ordered them to, so that he wouldn't give away her plans when tortured. Rei says that everything Quell does is calculated. None of her feelings are real. It's all move-countermove. Pretty sure Rei's actually talking about herself here.

Quell is the equivalent of a general fighting a war. Of course every move is calculated. It's called strategy. That doesn't mean that she doesn't also have human emotions. Tak tells Rei that she's exaggerating. Rei says that Tak's naive.

She asks him to consider that Quell could be wrong. Maybe the Protectorate will find a way around her program, and all of this will have been for nothing. Rei doesn't want them to die when

they've had so little time together. Tak says he's not leaving, no matter what. Rei moves away from him, and he follows. He asks her what they are, and she gives the expected answer when that question is asked between the two of them: We're family. But Tak corrects her with Quell's answer: We're Envoys, and we have a job to do. If he hadn't lost her already, that exchange just did it.

Tak finds Quell sitting on the beach, writing in the journal that Laurens gave him in episode 1.

Are we ready for this scene, knowing how things end up for them? Get your tissues, or a friend, or whatever you need, because it's a killer.

He sits down a few feet away from her, giving her a knowing smile. He reminds her that she saved him, when no one else ever has. She tries to keep her walls up, and says, "Why wouldn't I?" He asks about her journal, and she tries to make it sound impersonal, saying it contains the names of the fallen, and other things she should know by now. Then she reminds him that she plans to be dead the next day.

Tak tries to apologize for bringing their group and her plans to the attention of the Protectorate, but Quell won't let him. She confesses that everything is her fault. She invented stacks and created the whole mess. Tak is confused, because stacks were invented by a woman named Nadia Makita.

This is why he needs to work with a smarter more devious partner. Years on the run, and it doesn't occur to him that someone can change their name.

Quell/Nadia gives him a look and he figures it out.

Nadia: I wanted to be an explorer, see other worlds with my own eyes, but one life wasn't enough time to see the stars, so I found a way to transfer the human consciousness between bodies, and in that creation, soar. Suddenly anyone could travel distances beyond imagination faster than light, and no one would ever be limited by one lifetime again. (Tak: That's... That's beautiful.) Rome was a town of refugee cattle herders, but it became the most powerful empire of ancient earth. Do you know how? Roads. Roads were the technology that let them send their armies all over the world. I thought I was freeing the human spirit, but I was building the roads for Rome. Eternal life for those who can afford it means eternal control over those who can't. That is the gift I gave humanity. And that is the reason we are all going to die. So stop looking at me like I'm a hero, because I am not.

Tak: I can't stop looking at you. I won't.

He goes to her and kisses her. After a moment, she stops and says they can't. He says, "Forget heroes and monsters. You're the woman who set me free."

The kiss is initiated by both of them this time. They spend the night on the beach, making love all night.

When Tak wakes up at dawn, he writes a poem on a page in Quell's journal, amongst the branches of a drawing of a Sunspire tree.

It's the poem and the page that he turned to, when Laurens handed him the journal in episode 1, more than 250 years later. This is the stuff epic romances are made of.

Tak puts the book down and turns to embrace Quell as she wakes up. As he does so, Rei appears and sees them together. She realizes that they've become even closer, and runs away.

Tak tells Quell that he'll go talk to Rei. Quell reminds him that their mission to the Central Core begins in less than 5 hours. Then she tells him that their night together wasn't a mistake. He agrees with her. They kiss one more time, and he leaves to go find Rei.

Meanwhile, people are starting to feel strange back at the base.

In the present day, Tak wakes up. Rei tells him that she saved the sleeve, but he's still weak. He'll have to juice up if he wants to get back his fighting capabilities quickly. She offers him Goliath, a CTAC stim that works great if it doesn't make you stroke out. One last attempt to kill the sleeve? Tak refuses the stim, anyway.

He asks what she's been doing for the last 250+ years. She tells him that she went back to Harlan's World, but everything had changed. She's found the constant change the hardest thing to get used to. Nothing survives. Tak takes Rei's hand and says, "Nothing but us." She gives him a faint smile.

In the past, Tak runs through the forest calling for Rei, but she doesn't answer. Fighter jets fly overhead. Tak runs back to the caves, knowing that Stronghold must be under attack.

When he gets there, almost everyone is already dead and the cave is covered in ash and rubble from CTAC weapons. The Songspire tree is dead.

He sees Vidaura, who is terribly injured, in the back of the cave and goes to her. She rambles incomprehensibly about monsters and enemies, until Okulov, also seriously wounded, wanders near. Then Vidaura jumps up and shoots Okulov in the head. Vidaura says, "It was us. The enemy was us," and falls down, dead. Tak stands looking at them in shock. How could this have happened so quickly?

Rei shouts at Tak over the coms, trying to find out what's happening. Tak tells her to get to the shuttle bay. As he's talking, Jimmy DeSoto grabs his ankle. DeSoto's left eye is gone. He wrenchingly tells Tak that he did it to himself, but he doesn't know why.

Just as Tak helps DeSoto stand so that they can get out, Jaeger and a squad of Praetorians enter the cave. Tak and DeSoto hide behind a table, but DeSoto is screaming uncontrollably with pain and madness. He thinks he's in VR and can't get to the next screen. Tak has no choice but to shoot DeSoto in the stack, so that the Protectorate can't capture and torture him and Tak can at least escape.

Tak makes the emotionally devastating shot, grabs the biggest gun he sees, and runs for it. He makes it out to the burning forest (we've seen shots of this in previous episodes) and radios Quell and Rei. He tells them that Stronghold has fallen. Quell and Rei have made it to the high footbridge where Tak first woke up after being captured by Quell. From his position on the ground behind a large boulder, he can see Quell on Echo Bridge in the distance.

Quell asks him what happened. He tells her that CTAC were in the caves, but before that there was a viral strike with direct stack download. The virus caused everyone to go crazy and kill each other. Quell recognizes it as Rawling virus, and says that the three of them must have been out of range.

Tak orders the other two to get to the shuttle so that they can still complete the mission. They still have a chance to escape the planet and deploy Acheron. He'll lead CTAC off so that they have time to escape. Rei and Quell argue with Tak at first, but then accept that he's right. Before she runs from the bridge, Quell orders Tak to, "Survive!"

Jaeger hears Tak talking with Quell and they exchange fire, then Tak keeps running. He stops to watch the shuttle take off, happy that Jaeger won't be able to get Rei or Quell. But his happiness is only momentary, because the shuttle is quickly targeted and shot out of the sky. Quell screams for Tak as it explodes. Tak falls to his knees, his world destroyed.

But Quell ordered him to survive, so at some point, he finds a hiding spot, lies flat and still on the ground, and lets himself be covered with falling ash. The ash confuses the Praetorians' devices, so they can't find him. Jaeger is furious, yelling to the forest that he'll find Tak, no matter how far he runs, or how long, or how many sleeves he goes through, or how many planets he casts to, or how many other people Jaeger has to kill in the meantime. He'll always be there, a few steps behind Tak, hunting him down.

Once the Praetorians are gone, Tak rises from the ashes like a very sad phoenix and looks around. Ashes swirl around his head as he turns and walks away.

Present day Tak sits on Rei's couch and broods. Hallucinatory fireflies swirl like the ashes after Stronghold. Rei is finishing saying something about Dimi: "Apparently, he was a real pain in the ass. Nobody liked him. I heard you decapitated him. I mean, a head's portable, I guess... "

Tak interrupts her to ask how Quell died when the shuttle exploded. That seems like a question that answers itself, but maybe there's some nuance that I'm missing. Rei tells him that everything happened fast and she can't remember, which should be a realistic answer, but maybe stacks don't have memory lapses the way injured, traumatized brains do.

Tak's hallucinatory fireflies have been hovering around Rei off and on throughout the episode. His Envoy intuition tells him that it's time to do some investigating, so he says he's going to splash his face with some water. He follows the fireflies where they lead him, as he hears Quell's voice chanting "hallucinations, displacement, retreat" again, the brain's coping mechanisms when it's under duress. "You have to fight the despair," Quell continues.

He's led into a clone storage room, with three waiting clones: Clarissa, the art and antiquities dealer who convinced Laurens to hire Tak and get him out of prison (who also put a human stack in a snake); Hemingway, the handler for Tanaka, Dimi and Ghostwalker; and the little girl from the Quell-Envoy exhibit at the museum, who told Tak about someone stealing her best friend. Rei has been following Tak around all season, secretly interacting with him. She's also been the

one giving the orders to Dimi and Ghostwalker, and paying Tanaka to look the other way. This is probably the tip of the iceberg, given that Clarissa is the one who said, "Laws don't apply to people like us."

Flashback to the shuttle, just before it crashed: As the shuttle leaves its bay in the mountain-side, Quell realizes that Rei has programmed in the wrong escape route. Rei pulls out a knife and attacks Quell. They fight. Quell stabs Rei in the stomach. Rei pulls out some kind of device and activates it. Quell asks, "Why?" Rei answers, "They gave me life," as she triggers the device. Two red streaks of light intersect each other where they hit the shuttle as it explodes. The streaks go through the shuttle, both toward the sky and toward the ground.

Quell says, "Tak!" just before she's consumed by flames.

It's not clear whose memory this flashback is. Is it what Tak imagines happened, Rei's real memory, or the lie she's pieced together by the time Tak is done questioning her? My current guess is that it's her current lie, but she does remember the explosion. She's been lying to him and toying with him for the entire season. Lying is her native language now.

In the present day, Tak says to Rei, "There's only one reason why you wouldn't remember what happened. You were backed up before the explosion." Rei responds, "I never could lie to you." (Ironic lie about lying.)

Tak: "Why would you do that?"

Rei: "That's what she asked. I told her it was because they gave me life. But the truth is, Big Brother, I did it all for you."

Clash by Night

Season 1
Episode Number: 8
Season Episode: 8

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Brian Nelson
Director: Uta Briesewitz
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcris Falconer)
Guest Stars: Tamara Taylor (Oumou Prescott), Adam Busch (Mickey), Cliff Chamberlain (Ava Elliot), Hiro Kanagawa (Captain Tanaka), Hayley Law (Lizzie Elliot), Anna Van Hooft (Clarissa Severin), Antonio Marziale (Isaac Bancroft), Fiona Vroom (Sandy Kim), Sean Amsing (Gus), James R. Baylis (Dick), Bruce Blain (Re-Sleeve Guard), Maddie Dixon-Poirier (Little Girl), Zahf Paroo (Curtis), Arnold Pinnock (Hemingway), Lisa Chandler (Mary Lou Henchy), Celeste White Steele (Fell Station Detective)
Summary: His world rocked, Kovacs requests a dipper to help him sew up the Bancroft case quickly. Ortega races to identify the mystery woman from Fight Drome.



The episode begins with Tak reeling from the discovery of what his sister has turned into, or possibly always was. He can't take in the fact that Rei is confessing to killing Quell, the love of his life, and the rest of the Uprising rebels, who had become the family he never had. Even worse, he can't accept that it was premeditated murder, done in cold blood with no remorse.

Tak: Quell and the Envoys were our family. How could you kill our family?

Rei: They were just soldiers. You and

I, we're family. Our lives will be better now.

Tak: When everyone I ever loved was taken away from me? Do you know what that did to me? What I became?

Rei: I tried to find you.

Tak: How hard did you look?

Rei: And then you got yourself caught by CTAC. They locked you up so tight no one could get to you.

What Rei did to the rebels was horrible and unforgivable, but Tak was about to lose everyone anyway, by Quell's hand. He clearly hadn't faced that, and thought they'd pull out some daring escape at the last minute. Quell thought of Tak's "family" as expendable soldiers, just like Rei. She was just nicer about it because she needed their loyalty. Rei internalized some parts of Quell's lessons better than Tak did.

Tak asks why she watched him and even talked to him while wearing other sleeves. She claims that she knew he wouldn't trust her right away, especially after Dimi attacked him.

But, why wouldn't he trust her? As far as he knew, she was an innocent victim of CTAC, and Dimi had nothing to do with her. He should have been thrilled to find out she'd survived.

More lies. She wanted to find out where his head was at before she approached him.

Rei claims that she had to step in and reveal herself when Dimi² was about to RD him and Ortega, but that was a show. She could have sent Leung, or her army of henchman, or simply threatened or bought off Carnage.

She arranged that situation so she could swoop in as the hero and surprise Tak at his most vulnerable. Tak will say it later in the episode: These reveals are more convincing in groups. Convince the crowd, convince the man. She probably paid Carnage for the privilege of saving the day, and made some sort of promise that Carnage's recording set up wouldn't be revealed.

Tak asks what she wants from him, and she answers that she just wants him to see her as the sister who loves him and would do anything for him. He wonders how destroying the Uprising benefitted him. She replies that the Uprising was already doomed. Quell had brainwashed them all to fight and die for nothing.

Rei: I was the only one who was going to take care of us.

Tak: So what did they pay you? Backups? Money? Clones?

Rei: All of them. And none of it mattered unless I could get you back.

Tak reaches for a sword and holds it to Rei's throat. She doesn't try to stop him.

Tak: I loved her.

Rei: I know. But she was going to get you killed. Kill me, if that's what YOU need. I'll come back for you, Big Brother. No matter what, I'll always come back for you.

Tak drops the sword. He leans his head forward as if he's going to touch their foreheads together the way they always have in times of closeness, but stops himself and walks away. Rei stands stock still, looking fiercely proud and angry, but determined. That last bit about always coming back for him was both a reassurance and a threat.

This last part of the conversation has a certain amount of truth to it. She does believe that Tak is the one person in the universe who is hers, whether he wants to be or not. She will do anything to keep him alive, but she'll also ruthlessly punish him, and anyone else who she perceives as coming between them.

Later in the episode, Quell will say that the best lies have the truth woven through them. That's another lesson that Rei learned well in creating her lies. It needs to be applied to anyone potentially involved with the conspiracies on this show.

Ortega, still bloody from Fightdrome, makes her way back to the police station. At the entrance she finds local reporter Sandy Kim inflating the Fightdrome story to make it sound like Ortega was fighting by choice and is a corrupt cop. Prescott stands nearby, watching Kim and waiting for Ortega. It's clear that Prescott is feeding Kim her information. A drone brings Kim another message.

Ortega asks Prescott why Laurens is still harassing her, now that she believes he was murdered. Ortega asks who Prescott is really working for and where Kovacs is. She threatens to suppoena Prescott. Prescott threatens Ortega back, telling her that she's already lost so much, isn't it enough? It's time for Ortega to walk away from this case.

Ortega heads inside the police station. Between her appearance and how quickly she's returned to work after the attack, everyone stares at her. Tanaka asks her what she's doing there. His injuries are already healed using expensive medical treatments. She's angry because there's no missing persons report on Kovacs. He calls her into his office to talk privately.

Once there, they continue arguing. Ortega needs answers to all of the dangling threads of her case, more of which seem to pop up everyday. Tanaka wants her to go home, take paid leave until the Fightdrome investigation is done, and drop the whole investigation into Ryker's conspiracy theories. Otherwise the people who pay Tanaka on the side will have her killed.

She threatens to expose his corruption. He tries to get her to see that they won't let her, but she's determined. Tanaka gives up on Ortega, and tells her she has 15 minutes to clean out her desk and leave the building. He can't protect her anymore, and he won't let her take him down with her. She scoffs at the idea that he's protected her so far.

Tak and Rei continue to talk about his anger toward her and whether she deserves forgiveness, or if what she did is even something that should require forgiveness. Tak feels that their mother instilled them with better morals than this.

Rei eventually gives up on trying to get him past his anger, and moves on to her real purpose. She needs him to close the Bancroft case so that Laurens will stop digging into what happened that night. She didn't kill him, but she did dose him with Stallion, the male aggression enhancer. It was difficult to drug him, and Tanaka made sure that the drug didn't show up on the post-mortem paperwork.

Rei actually gave Laurens something he'd always wanted while he was dosed with Stallion, but he wasn't very appreciative. None of that is the issue right now, though. Tak just needs to convince Laurens that he's not in any current danger. Frame someone if necessary. No one is completely innocent, so it doesn't matter who.

Tak asks what happens if he refuses. Rei pushes a button on her Oni, and Mr Leung appears. She says that she didn't want to have this conversation yet. Meaning she'd hoped to wait a day or two before she started threatening him, and the people who are important to him, with the gruesome death that Leung specializes in. She really is a loving sister.

Tak is shocked to see Leung, and wants her to confirm that he works for her. Rei explains that she's become a titan of industry, with businesses that involve the weaknesses of the flesh. She has interests that need protecting.

Tak wants her to give him a straight yes or no answer, and she never does. That's interesting in that Leung sees himself as her worshipper and servant. Maybe he's more part of her cult than he is her employee. Or maybe he's one of her children. That would help explain his unswerving loyalty. If Miriam can have 21 kids, Rei could do the same.

Or maybe Leung is Rei, double and cross sleeved. That would be the safest answer, since he has such intimate knowledge of her business and personal dealings. Like Dimi, it makes sense that she would really only trust another version of herself. But for Rei, it's useful to have that version be a man. Maybe she turned her other self into a replacement brother, but this one acts the way she always thought Tak should.

Rei reveals that she owns the Wei Clinics. "Information extraction is a very lucrative market." She claims that she didn't know Tak was being tortured, and would have stopped it if she had. Either a lie, or she's not very omniscient for a goddess. She threatens to use the Hellminth Code torture program that was the program of last resort in episode 4.

Rei: These people you've become so attached to, Vernon Elliot, Kristin Ortega. To me, they're fireflies, each a tiny spark whose beauty lies in how quickly it's extinguished. Convince Bancroft the case is closed. Or your friends will go into one of my other clinics and they won't come out until they're quite, quite mad.

Tak: I'll need a dipper.

Tak was seeing ashes falling during her firefly speech, just like at Stronghold. She turns everything that's beautiful and loving to ashes. In trying to protect her own, she has to ruin everyone else's.

Rei must agree to the dipper, because Tak and Leung end up in an elevator together. Everyone but Leung is pretty sure it's too soon to be putting Leung in another elevator with a main character. That's why Rei did it of course. She's all about the implicit threat. Leung doesn't bother to leave the threat implicit.

Leung: Are you a believer?

Nooo! Tak's not back to fighting strength yet!

Tak: I believe you're my sister's bitch.

He's not going down any more quietly than he did with Jaeger in episode 1, while he was wearing the Byron Mann sleeve.

Leung: You do not show her the proper respect.

Tak: What is it with these Meths and respect? They're just a bunch of rich *sshholes who don't look their age.

Any aristocrat knows that you need the respect and fear of the peasants. They have to believe you can crush them at any time, or they'll rebel. Since the peasants always outnumber the aristocrats, they will win if they all join the rebellion.

Leung stops the elevator. Tak jumps to high alert.

Leung: You misunderstand me, Mr Kovacs.

Tak: I know better than to trust you in an elevator.

Leung: Throughout history, we have prayed to gods. Pleaded for their mercy, begged for their protection. Avatars of sun and sky, blood and war. The God of Abraham or Muhammad or Christ

or Krishna- all were silent.

Tak: Just attack me, please. It'll hurt less than listening to this.

Leung: For the first time in human history, when we pray, they answer.

Tak: They're not gods, no matter how much they listen to their own propaganda.

Leung, practically shaking with religious fervor: Their power is absolute, and they never die. What else would you call them?

Tak, pointing to Leung's forehead: Has anyone ever told you that you're really f*cked up in there?

Leung: You are the brother of a living god. Blessed to share her bone and blood. You will someday realize the holiness of She Who Endures. Until then, your obedience will suffice. (Tries to hand Tak a hood.) Put this on your head. (Tak refuses.) Your sister doesn't want you to know our location. I have been told that you obey or others die. Whom should I kill first?

Tak takes the hood with a sick look on his face.

It's interesting that Rei qualifies as a god, but Tak's blood relationship to her, longevity, ability to evade death despite CTAC hunting him, and reputation as an Envoy aren't enough to confer godhood onto him as well. Money and the power it brings are essential parts of the equation. Answering prayers through heroism or working toward societal change don't count. People want the big, splashy gestures that only money can buy, even if they are ultimately meaningless.

Rei wouldn't need Leung if her power really was absolute. She wouldn't need Tak's help either.

Ortega, who literally can't follow a direct order even if it will save her life, clears out her desk then goes to Mickey's office. Mickey's not happy to see her, since he values his life and his job. But it turns out that she hasn't cleaned up yet because she has Rei's blood on her hand and she wants Mickey to do a gene-mat (genetic material) typing for her so that she can try to identify the woman who took Tak. Mickey is reluctant, but Ortega talks him into it. While he's taking the sample, he reminds her that they could do the test in the OrgDam lab. She replies that she can't trust them, or anyone except for him.

She also convinces him to do a facial recognition scan for Tak while she changes into clean clothes. Mickey finds Tak in the crowd outside of the Psychasec resleeving facility in the Haight. Leung is there, too, but doesn't show up because of the Ghostwalker technology. Ortega races out.

Tak and Leung are waiting for Ava Elliot to be released. A guard brings out a newly resleeved man, telling them he's brought their rerun. The guard tells Leung to tell his boss that he's done doing favors. Leung replies that Mr Hemingway will decide when the man's debt is clear. Guessing that will be never.

Tak says that they brought the wrong person. The dipper is supposed to be a woman in her 40s. Leung says that Rei told him to tell Tak, "She is not running a charity for your strays." Ava has been cross-sleeved in a man's body, supposedly because that's what was available. In reality, it's out of spite and so that Rei doesn't have to worry that Tak will fall for another woman who might take her place in his affections. The cross-sleeving is probably safest for Ava for now, truthfully. Rei hates other women.

Tak explains to Ava that he's taking her to Vernon and Lizzie, and that her family is basically okay. She's upset about being cross-sleeved, but wants to see them. At that moment, Ortega comes into view. Leung pulls out his death weapon and points it at Ava's stack, ordering Tak to get rid of Ortega. Tak says that he'll drive Ortega away, so long as Leung backs off, too. He'll do what Rei wants, but he'll work independently. Leung agrees.

When Ortega sees Tak, she runs up and hugs him. He remains stand-offish, telling her Ryker's sleeve is fine. She tells him that she was worried that he was dead. He tells her he's fine. She asks why he's at Psychasec. He says that he's trying to get rid of Ryker's sleeve, but Bancroft's blocking him because of his grudge toward her.

Ortega knows that he's not being straight with her and asks if this has something to do with the woman at Fightdrome. At first Tak says that Rei was nobody important, then he says that she's someone who actually cares about him. She's the one he's been looking for, and he found her.

Tak tells Ortega that whatever was going on between the two of them is over. Kristin argues that she doesn't believe him. He cuts her off, saying he'll make sure she gets Ryker's sleeve back, to have some dignity in the meantime. Tak returns to Ava and Leung. Kristin's upset, but gives up for now and walks away.

Que Sera Sera (Whatever Will Be Will be) is playing on the radio as Vernon watches Lizzie practice knife throwing. Vernon is still bitter that his little girl, the brutally murdered prostitute, has lost her innocence by learning to use weapons. Poe explains, again, that empowering her may help her feel safe enough to join the real world soon. The priorities of the middle class continue to baffle me, in every reality.

Poe greets Tak and Ava at the door as they arrive at the Raven. Poe was worried about Tak because he'd been gone so long. Ava sees Vernon and rushes over to embrace him. She's still sleeve-sick, so it looks especially bad from Vernon's perspective. Vernon bats Ava away, asking if "he's" drunk. Ava tells Vernon that it's her. Vernon tells Tak he's got some explaining to do.

Tak explains that he needs a dipper. They need to run a hack involving subverting security protocols and injecting code. He figured he'd get Ava out, but things didn't go completely smoothly.

Vernon accepts that it's really Ava in a man's body and they have their reunion. Poe is totally into the romance of it. Ava looks around for Lizzie, and Vernon says that he needs to explain a few more things.

They take Ava into Lizzie's VR suite. She and Vernon stay hidden and watch Lizzie practice her hand to hand skills. Both are sad at the way their little girl has had to toughen up. Ava is despondent that she wasn't there for her family during such a difficult time. When Lizzie takes a break in her practice (and Poe tells her she's become formidable) Ava rushes out to see Lizzie.

Lizzie recognizes her mother immediately, despite the change in body. She doesn't seem to notice the change, sensing something's different and but deciding it's Ava's hair. Given that Ava has a beard now, that's absolutely true. Ava laughs with nervous hysteria at Lizzie's easy acceptance of her. When Lizzie sees Vernon, she accepts his presence and they share a family hug.

Tak's voiceover: Sometimes belief isn't about what we can see. It's about what we can't.

He watches the reunion on the TV in the lobby, happy that at least one family is relatively okay.

Lizzie decides to show off what she's learned while she's been living in VR. She manifests a gun in her hand, and tells them that Eddie (Poe) figured out how to do time dilation for her, so that months in VR is only days in the real.

She suddenly turns and fires several times at the Jack It Off sign, expertly destroying it and sending the remains crashing to the ground. She tells her parents that she hates that sign. Symbolic destruction of the place that allowed her to be murdered, and destruction of her own pink, softer, feminine side, which she thinks made her weak and easy prey.

Back in the real, Vernon wonders how Lizzie recognized Ava. Poe explains: "There are a variety of species that do not rely on visual cues to find their own kind. The star-nosed mole, for example, is utterly blind, yet has no difficulty finding its mother..."

Tak cuts him off, but that might be important later. Metaphorically speaking, obviously. Who are the mothers? Miriam, Ava, possibly Rei, Alazne, Abuela, Mary Lou Henchy's mom. Will motherhood come up again in relation to one of them?

It's a similar question to the one Tak asked in episode 5: "How do I know you are who you are? Before stacks, yeah. A face is a face. But now? Could be anyone in there."

It's part of the ongoing theme of identity, and understanding what it is that makes us who we are. What is the significant, irreplaceable part of us? What is it that makes our loved ones want us above all others? Can that even be defined and quantified? Copied?

Ava and Vernon are fretting over the changes Poe's treatment has brought on in Lizzie. In a world where the personality is the only constant, are you still the same person after a major personality change? Ava blames Tak and thinks he's destroying who Lizzie is.

Tak: Someone did that already. She's shattered. Whoever she was is dead.

Ava: What am I supposed to do with that?

Tak: Same thing she did. Adapt. Because my sister will do way worse than kill you if I don't close the Bancroft case. And I need you on this run. I need all of you.

Poe: Really?

Vernon: I wouldn't get too excited.

Ava: What does this run involve exactly?

Tak: Lying, stealing, breaking the law. If we're going to pull this off, we've got to get our hands dirty.

The scene changes to the Elliot's workshop. Tak dumps a pile of dead stacks on the counter in front of Ava and Vernon. It's the Envoys who died at Stronghold, stolen from the museum exhibit. He explains that they died from Rawling virus, and he wants Ava to recreate it. Ava is reluctant to recreate such dangerous malware, but Tak brusquely reminds her that if she doesn't, she'll go back on ice.

Poe meets one of the other AIs for a poker night. Dick, who runs Prick Up, is one of the most anti-human AIs, and treats Poe with disdain. He pushes Poe to include Lizzie in the bet. Poe protests, but Dick insists. Poe uses infected poker chips, which he's careful not to touch. When Dick collects his winnings, the virus spreads through his system, quickly shutting him down.

Vernon and Ava tie up some loose ends, collecting data and images, then creating the documents and videos Tak needs to present as evidence to convince Laurens of his story. Ava isn't sure she wants to go through with ruining someone's life, but they don't really have a choice. Then all that's left is for Tak to sell the lie to Laurens.

As Miriam escorts Tak up to Laurens' study, she makes one more pitch to get him to give up the case and leave with her. The sex island offer is still open. She's impressively ballsy about keeping her secrets, and must have a fast getaway vehicle.

Tak has invited a group of people worthy of an Agatha Christie novel. Miriam and Isaac, the scheming wife and son. Curtis, the head of security who sleeps with the kids and knows the family secrets. Captain Tanaka, the corrupt cop. Oumou Prescott, the family attorney who wants to be their equal. Laurens himself, one of the only people who had access to the murder weapon. And Laurens has invited Clarissa, who suggested he hire Tak. She isn't what she seems, and is guilty of countless crimes.

Let's hear Tak's story:

From the beginning of this case, the details just didn't add up. All the evidence said suicide. It was neat, tidy, perfect. Nothing real is perfect. Someone wanted the world to believe you killed yourself. But how could you possibly bring down Laurens Bancroft? (Tak turns on a projection from his Oni.) This is a VR jack in called Prick Up. It specializes in simulated rape and murder. It's the last place you visited before you died.

Laurens: I'm not overly familiar with this particular establishment.

Tak: And yet there you are. (Video created by Ava plays.) Prick Up was a trap, set up just for you. Captain, check in with your cybercrimes unit.

Tanaka: Yeah, do we have any reports on a place called Prick Up? I'm looking for anything. Okay. Alright. Thanks. Sir, Prick has shut down.

Tak: Are you going to tell him?

Tanaka: The core was destroyed by Rawling virus. Prick Up went insane, The AI core melted.

Tak: You were infected. Your download at Psychasec was clean. So your stack needed to be contaminated by direct contact, which means VR 'troles.

Laurens: This is absurd.

Tak: Here's the next interesting thing. Prescott knows everything about what happened in Osaka.

Prescott: I was with Mr Bancroft. That's no secret. I often accompany him as counsel.

Tak: You forgot to mention that he was furious with his son when he returned. Put a beating on him at Fightdrome. You wore a blonde sleeve in Osaka, right?

Prescott: I wear a variety of sleeves. It's part of my travel allowance.

Tak pulls out a sleeve rental and repair receipt: This one?

Prescott: Yes, but what's all this?

Tak: It's a bill for damages, signed by you. Damages for the sleeve being strangled and raped.

Prescott: What?

Laurens: I've never seen this invoice.

Tak: Because Prescott handled it.

Prescott: This is ridiculous. Complete fiction.

Miriam: Laurens, what is going on?

Laurens: Not now.

Tak: Why would she pay damages on a work sleeve herself? Because she lost access to company funds. What's the only way that could happen?

Laurens: If I fired her.

Prescott: Mr Bancroft, you can't possibly be taking anything he says...

Tak: The women you like to hurt all have something in common. They look like Prescott did that weekend. Like your wife.

Prescott: He wants to get rid of me. He's trying to replace me.

Tak: Did he rape you? Or did you come on to him because you saw his anger as an opportunity for leverage?

Miriam: After everything this family has done for you.

Prescott protests her innocence loudly and repeatedly, throughout the conversation, until Miriam threatens her.

Tak: Whatever happened between the two of you in Osaka, you decided to fire her over it. Who knows your habits better than anyone? She knew that when you're this angry, you'll find the nearest VR dive where you can kill as many blonde whores as you want. All she had to do was time your arrival to Prick Up for the viral strike. See none of this was supposed to look like murder. It was all supposed to look like just bad luck. Malware racing up your needlecast into your satellite backups and destroying them. When you got home, your internal contam alarm was screaming. You had to stop your backup from going through. You didn't have much time. It was all supposed to look like Bancroft went crazy, his backups were shredded, and he killed himself. But you outsmarted her.

Laurens: Right. I must have faked the needlecast. Pretended I'd done the backup so you just killed me too soon.

In fake flashbacks, we see Laurens trying to shoot himself to stop the viral backup, then Prescott intervening. She taunts him while he suffers from the virus. After she sees his eyelids do the typical backup eyelid flutter, she helps him shoot himself in the head.

In the present day, Miriam wants Prescott escorted from the house. Tanaka starts to arrest Prescott, but Bancroft stops him. He swears everyone in the room to secrecy. Then he tells Prescott that he's going to ruin her. She'll be stripped of her license to practice law and everything she owns. He'll make sure that no Meth will ever hire her and that she never leaves the ground again.

Prescott stares at Laurens, then looks at Miriam for confirmation. Miriam stays silent, with her head held high. Prescott gets hysterical and starts babbling. Just before she's dragged out, Miriam rushes over, gets right up in Prescott's face and squeezes her mouth shut, saying, "You stop talking." Like you'd do to stop someone from saying too much or revealing a secret.

Everyone leaves the room but Clarissa(Rei), Tak and Laurens. Tak asks Laurens for his payment and his pardon. Laurens muses that his great mystery turned out to be nothing more than his own weakness and Prescott's greed. He leaves to make the arrangements for Tak's compensation.

Rei says that she thought he was trying to outmaneuver her by inviting so many people to the reveal, but she realized that wasn't it at all. He says that reveals are more convincing when they're done for a group. Clarissa says Tak "played them well," then leaves.

Once Rei is gone, Tak has a conversation with the Quell in his mind. Those are becoming fewer and fewer as time goes on. She congratulates him on his win, on getting Laurens to believe his story. Tak disagrees, arguing that Rei won, he just followed orders.

Quell: How do we practice deceit? We rip the truth apart and reweave it into the lie. Nothing is more convincing.

Tak: People talk about Envoy intuition like it's magic. It's not. It's a pull at the back of the mind. A scratch inside your skull that won't go away. It's the details.

Kristin wanders the streets, mulling over everything she's learned and everything that's happened. Tak left an open tab for her at the hospital, so she's gotten healed and cleaned up. She calls Mickey to check his progress. He asks about Tak, and she tells him that Tak was a jerk to her, so she thinks something's wrong. Mickey tells her that Tak could just be a jerk.

Mickey got a hit on the gene-mat typing. It's for a Psychasec vault, but it's not registered to any account. Technically, it doesn't belong to anyone. He sends her the information. Then he tells her that he's really done this time. He needs to protect his job and his future, and that means cutting her off, since she won't let go of these conspiracies.

Next Kristin turns to Gus, the Psychasec tech who was working in the Bancroft vault the day Laurens was murdered. Kristen knows him because she picked him up last year for a misde-meaner sleeve-jack in Licktown. Psychasec never found out about it, so the charges must have been dropped. Gus says he had the records sealed. Kristin threatens to expose him to Psychasec

and get him blackballed from ever working in the industry again if her doesn't help her. She wants him to take her to the Psychasec vault that matched the blood on her hand.

Tak climbs up to look through Bancroft's telescope, remembering that Laurens looks through it when he's troubled. He resets it to the position it would have been in when Laurens died, to see what Bancroft would have been looking at before the shot was fired. It's the upscale satellite brothel that Poe mentioned in episode 1, Head in the Clouds.

Suddenly, everything falls into place, and he understands the truth, or at least the gist of it. The clues: Head in the Clouds; Rei saying she's "become a titan of industry, dealing with the many weaknesses of the flesh;" Dimi saying, "We became hungry for things that reality could no longer offer;" Laurens saying, "I have a line that I am very careful not to cross;" Miriam saying, "You have no idea what he's capable of;" Rei saying, "Being high on Stallion may have affected his judgement;" Kristin saying that Stallion is a male aggression enhancer; Rei saying that she, "Gave him what he always wanted;" Vernon saying that Lizzie told him that Laurens told her he needed her; Miriam saying that Laurens would want to punish someone if he didn't like the story Tak came up with, especially if it pointed to suicide; Neo-Catholics protesting resleeving.

So Tak has figured out that Rei owns Head in the Clouds and that's where Laurens was that night. Stallion lowered his inhibitions and increased his aggression enough that he did terrible things that he would never normally do. His victims were some of the prostitutes with fake Neo-C coding. Rei and Miriam both don't want Tak or Laurens to know what happened. However much power and influence Rei has, Laurens still has more. He's still the father-god, while she's the god of sin and lies. She's Lilith, pushed to the side as not good enough, and forced to endure and survive any way she could.

Quell asks Tak if he understands how he wove his lie from the truth. He once again looks sickened by the whole thing.

Laurens comes back into the room, saying that Tak's payment has been processed. Then Laurens puts his official seal on the pardon and hands it to Tak. As he does, Laurens says, "If you speak of this to anyone, I will have you killed. Permanently."

Tak says that he enjoyed working with Laurens, too, and leaves.

Gus brings Kristin to the unregistered Psychasec vault. He lets her inside, but closes her in, alone, as soon as she recognizes the clones as the woman who took Tak. Kristin tries to call Mickey for help, but he doesn't respond.

One of the clones awakens and breaks through the glass window to her pod. One by one, they all join the party. Kristin shoots most of them in the head before they take more than a step or two. Why don't they slide the door open instead of breaking the glass, you may ask? Obviously it looks much cooler for a naked Dichen Lachman to leap through a glass window over and over, than it does to tamely open a door, even if it does ruin the element of surprise and injure the clone before she even starts fighting.

This isn't just about Rei fighting with her brother's latest flame. It's about good vs evil, family vs friends, swords vs bionic arms, youth vs age, the old making way for the new.

Oh look, there's a new pile of naked and bloody dead women. Geez, we were doing so well with that. It's been since episode 4 and Alice's dissection. The irony is, I'm almost certain that Rei created the rest of the dead and battered women. Here, she has no care for her own body either, torturing it more than necessary, using glass as a weapon instead of the hand to hand methods that we saw Quell use to disarm Tak and DeSoto.

Rei hates women, and hates herself for her own female weaknesses most of all. She hates that Tak, who she thinks is ultimately inferior to her, had to save her from her father. She hates that they were separated because of gender, with him going to be a powerful CTAC soldier and her becoming a slave, probably a prostitute. She hates any woman who had the opportunity to choose the high road, when she was forced to do terrible things to survive. She hates the female body that made everything happen the way it did. But she learned how to use a female body as a weapon, whether it's a child's body or an adult. She has a powerful need to destroy other women and happy families, particularly if Tak gets anywhere near them.

She's not necessarily trying to win this fight, though if she'd be fine with it if she did. But she doesn't actually want Kristin dead yet. Rei is Killing time until she can get the little girl clone in place, wearing Kristin out so that she's not thinking clearly. The little girl is a distraction so that she can capture Kristin. Remember, Rei likes to torture people, and likes to use loved ones

as leverage. If she kills Kristin, she loses her as leverage. She wants to have Kristin under her control, not dead. Then Rei can toy with her like a cat with a mouse, and make Tak watch.

Kristin takes the bait. She fights off the clones, one by one. Her bionic arm and gun trump a naked Envoy who probably doesn't do much real fighting anymore and just cast into each sleeve moments before. When the clones are all dead, the vault door opens again, and she sees Rei's little girl sleeve crying in a corner in the hall. The little girl complains that she's cold and has been left alone.

Kristin goes over and reaches out to her, telling the girl it will be okay. If Kristin hadn't fought the clones first, she might have questioned the sudden presence of an abandoned child in that particular spot, but everything happened too fast. The screen goes dark.

Rage in Heaven

Season 1
Episode Number: 9
Season Episode: 9

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Russel Friend, Garrett Lerner
Director: Peter Hoar
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcryst Falconer)
Guest Stars: Adam Busch (Mickey), Cliff Chamberlain (Ava Elliot), Lexi Atkins (Belle), Lisa Chandler (Mary Lou Henchy), Marlene Forte (Alazne Ortega), Hiro Kanagawa (Captain Tanaka), Hayley Law (Lizzie Elliot), Francisco Trujillo (Xalbador), Hector Borderas (Xalbador Kid #1), Toby Levins (Pervy Guard (HITC)), Enrique Lopez (Xalbador Kid #2), Hannah Rose May (Synth Woman), Peter Woodward (Pleasure Concierge), Jim Eliason (Police Officer)
Summary: After a devastating rampage, Kovacs and his allies hatch a bold — and very risky — scheme to infiltrate Head in the Clouds.



The episode begins with another brief fast forward, this time with two hands playing Rock, Paper, Scissors.

In the present time, Tak sits at Poe's bar while Poe examines Tak's pardon. Poe pronounces the pardon exceptionally thorough, which is a welcome surprise. Tak says he knows what really happened to Bancroft, but Poe doesn't take the bait.

Poe's feeling a little pissy about Tak putting the entire gang in danger and making Poe kill a fellow AI, in order to give Laurens a solution that was a lie. Tak

notes that the dead AI was no great loss, and he wanted to turn Lizzie into a sex slave. Poe comments that no one is ever going to hurt his little girl again.

Poe asks Tak if he told Bancroft the truth. Tak says, "What do you think?" Poe replies, "I think your relationship with honesty is passing at best."

Tak calls the Elliots, who don't answer because they're out to dinner. Poe the matchmaker sensed that there was still tension between them and recommended a nice restaurant.

Tak tries to call Kristin, over and over, but she doesn't answer. Poe, who's on fire today, notes that maybe Kristin isn't answering because the last time Tak saw her, he told her that he was throwing her over for another woman. It's truth time at the Raven.

Just then, Ortega stumbles into the hotel, wounded and bleeding. When they ask where she's been, she tells them that she's been killing Tak's sister, a lot. Poe asks if it's because of their deception. Tak takes Ortega up to his room to get her cleaned up and healed. He uses the laser wand thingy to heal her while she bathes. She's appalled that Rei used the sleeve of a child. Tak says that Rei won't be stopped by this setback for long. Kristin says that he makes Rei sound superhuman.

Isn't he just making her sound like a Meth who knows how to fight?

Poe visits Lizzie and tells her how worried he is about the escalating violence surrounding Tak. He thought helping Tak would help calm things down for the Elliots, but instead it seems to be making things worse. Lizzie sits and sharpens her knives as she listens to him. She reassures him that fighting back is a good thing, just like he taught her.

Lizzie: I go out on the array sometimes by myself. Just look and listen and find things out. (Poe: You spy on people?) I collate data. It makes a web inside my head. Spiders can spin webs that cover whole trees. But they have a signal line, a single thread they touch, and they know what's happening anywhere in their web. They can even feel vibrations if something is about to hit the silk, before it even happens. (Poe: Lizzie, I don't understand.) You will. I have to practice. It's almost time.

Tak continues to heal and wash Ortega as she sits in the bathtub, naked. He tells her that his sister will keep coming after her. She says she wishes she'd known that before he told her to kill the clones. Tak is confused, since he never told her anything like that. Ortega says she knows that's what he meant, when they talked outside of Psychasec.

Tak says he was just trying to protect Ortega. She says she knows, then pushes him to tell her he loves her. He's confused, since she's supposed to be in love with Ryker. Tak asks Ortega why she's playing games. She says that maybe she likes playing games, and that finally tips him off for sure. It's Rei using Ortega's sleeve, not Ortega.

Rei continues to play games with Tak, once he knows it's her in Ortega's sleeve. She says that it took way too long for him to figure out that it was her instead of Ortega, and that she can see why he likes that sleeve. Then she says, "Relax. When you've lived long enough, you'll get it. There are no rules. We do what we want." Given that she's still naked, that sounds suspiciously like she wants to sleep with him while in Ortega's sleeve, and would have if he hadn't recognized her.

She won't tell him if Ortega is still alive. Eventually she says she should have known she could trust Tak. But now Ortega owes her for the lost clones. Tak tells her she can have the money Laurens paid him, but Rei says that blood was taken so blood is owed. Tak becomes dense and can't figure out whose blood.

Rei: I won't let anything come between us again. Ortega messed with my family, so I'm going to take hers. Let go of all these fireflies, Tak. If you don't, I'll do it for you. I'll burn every one of them down if that's what it takes to bring you back to me.

Tak races out to try to stop Leung, but it's too late. Leung is already at Kristin's brother's house. Leung asks Xalbador if he's a believer, making him think that Leung is a church member, so that he lets Leung in. Leung uses his death weapon to quickly kill Xalbador, Alazne, and the two children, then leaves, with the house still set up to have a holiday meal. By the time Tak gets there, it's too late.

The next thing we see is like the beginning of a new episode. It's some time later, and Tak meets with Rei, who's back in a clone of her birth sleeve, to tell her that he's done with her and leaving town. Black Rebel Motorcycle Club's cover of Johnny Cash's God's Gonna Cut You down plays over the scene change.

As Tak waits at a table for Rei, he fidgets with Mary Lou Henchy's stack. We see images from her death scene. The music sounds like something you'd play before a hanging, or before the four horsemen of the apocalypse ride into town.

Rei walks in alone and sits at the table with Tak. She says she thought she'd have to wait a lot longer than a day to hear from him. Tak plays his card first. He puts Mary Lou's stack in the middle of the table, and tells Rei what he's figured out. Rei goes from disappointed to impressed as she realizes he's figured out the whole snuff whore conspiracy.

Tak: She worked for you, but she was never Neo-C. You found a way to fake religious coding. You recruited street whores, secretly recoded them, served them up. And if they die- they stay silent. So how many lives have you taken? How much blood's on your hands?

Rei: Girls like Mary Lou are only a small part of the services I provide. I built an empire that spans the Settled Worlds and I did it for us.

Tak tells her that he doesn't want her empire. He's going on an all expenses paid island vacation, then leaving this planet for good. Now Rei plays her trump card.

She remembers how she used to always beat Tak when they'd play board games. She knows he still cares about the people he's leaving behind. Tak says that he doesn't care about Rei or anyone, and gets up to leave. Rei slams a childhood photo of her and Tak with their mother down

on the table. He sits back down and picks up the photo to stare at it. He hasn't had any photos of their mother or Rei.

Rei: Remember what Mom used to say? "I love you so much I could eat you up?" When you were arrested, they put me in an orphanage. All I had left of you was one of your old shirts. When the yakuza came, they said I couldn't take anything. I fought them. They ripped that shirt out of my hands. I can still feel it tearing, the threads still in my fingers, and I knew they were going to take those too. So I swallowed them. Just to have something, anything, left of you.

Tak, throwing the photo on the table: It's in the past. It doesn't matter.

Rei: You're the only one who knows me as I was.

Tak: The sister I remember, she was kind. I can't save you. I can't save anyone. I'm done trying.

Tak walks out of the restaurant. Rei follows him, saying she doesn't deserve to be abandoned again, and she knows he'll come back. Then she tells Leung to follow him.

The shirt and its threads story explains a lot. She's still trying to eat him up and swallow him whole so that he can't escape her again. She's become a version of the Patchwork Man, trying to sew him and everything that's his onto herself, hoping it'll make her whole again.

Tak gets into a car with Miriam, who's dressed in a filmy, revealing dress, and is looking very pleased with herself. They drive away, as Leung watches from the ground. Do you think Leung believes in islands full of sex clones?

The Scooby Gang watches Tak leave from a monitor in the Raven's lobby. A 2nd Tak watches, too. Wait, what?

We rewind to 18 hours earlier, when Tak found the bodies of the Ortega family. He starts to panic and rushes to find the Elliots at dinner. Ava is still coming to terms with Lizzie's attack, and they're both trying to adjust to the changes her therapy is bringing out in her. They seem to finally be making progress, just like Lizzie.

When Tak gets the Elliots back to the Raven, he's clearly been fussing at them the whole trip. He thought they were dead because their Onis were off. He's really failing on the whole expendable locals thing.

Mickey shows up at the Raven a few minutes later. Both Tak and Poe draw their guns on him. Poe really, really wants to shoot him. But Tak knows that Mickey used to be a friend of Ortega's, so he says they should hear Mickey out.

Mickey feels terrible because he refused to help Kristin after he gave her the info on the Psychasec vault. Now her whole family is dead, and she's missing. He knows that there won't be any official help for her or an investigation into her family's deaths. He wants to help the gang find her. He's finished the Ghostwalker tracking program and knows where Leung is.

That makes Tak spring into action. He takes Mickey's police ID card so that he can steal some stuff from the evidence lock up, and tells the gang that they need to get out of town by sundown. Poe can get them new IDs. Tak is going after Reileen, and she'll kill them all if she can find them. Tak hurries out of the hotel, while the rest stand in the lobby in shock.

Reileen has Kristin strapped into a VR simulator. She informs Kristin that she generally murders Tak's girlfriends. Next, she taunts Kristin with the knowledge that Tak knows where Kristin is and doesn't care, then she sends Kristin into VR to be creatively tortured by Mr Leung. Maybe that'll at least keep him off the streets for a while and away from everyone else. Hopefully Kristin's tough enough to withstand Leung until Tak can rescue her.

Tak brings Isaac's clone printer and its accessories back to the Raven. Poe has set up a work-ops station in Tak's room as requested. Tak holes up in his room to enact his evil plan for a solo mission. Poe says that he won't let anyone into the room.

Five minutes later, Vernon kicks the door to Tak's room in. Poe cheekily points out that he didn't "let" anyone in. The team all argue that they have a stake in bringing Rei down, too, so this fight is their fight, and he's stuck with them. Tak tries to explain the whole expendable locals thing, but they don't go for it. They all look at what he's got going on his work station and figure out the plan pretty quickly. They can see that it's not really a one man plan, anyway.

Ava notices that Tak has the schematics for Heaven in the Clouds pulled up on his work-station, and starts calling out the stats about it, figuring out very quickly which part of the facility Rei lives in. Her quarters are heavily guarded and secure, with the electronic security only dropping briefly, once every 24 hours, while her backup goes through.

The team gets right back to work, starting with printing a clone of Tak, and doublesleaving him. Presumably that's the lucky boy who got to go on vacation to Miriam's Sex Clone Island. Apparently doublesleaving is a painful process. Who knew? The Tak twins have a chuckle over how weird it is that there are two of them and that they think exactly alike, then they decide who gets to do what with the game of Rock, Paper, Scissors from the episode opening flashforward. Unsurprisingly, Tak wins.

Original Tak wins and sends New Clone Tak, who is technically a virgin, off to Orgy Island. That brings us back up even with the point in the story where Tak got into the car with Miriam.

Original Tak visits Lizzie in Virtual, where she's practicing throwing knives at a picture of a sweet kitten. He's come to say goodbye. She thanks him for bringing her to Poe, but says he can say goodbye to her later, after one of them is dead. She's just not sure which of them it will be. She's happier, saner, and more talkative than when she went into psychosurgery, but she still talks in riddles.

One of the lizard-worm creatures from the Hellsinth Code torture program at the Wei Clinic crawls down Lizzie's front and lands on her foot. Tak asks if those were used on her. She says that they used them on her to make her mad and silent, but she's not quiet any more.

She tells Tak that she'll miss her next throw, and she does. Then she tells Tak it's time for him to go. She says goodbye, or is it hello? She can't keep them straight.

She has her own version of Envoy intuition, but it's not something anyone else can follow. She was the woman who they'd already tried the Hellsinth Code on and who was driven insane by it, before they used it on Tak.

Vernon inserts the microwire camera into Tak's eyeball. With it he can record Rei's confession, so that he can have her backups, clones, businesses, bank accounts, and assets taken away from her. She'll be put on ice for a century or two. Maybe she'll come out a human again. It's the only thing Tak thinks might bring the sister he loves back again.

The mission revolves around getting an antenna within 1 meter of Rei's backup transmission. The antenna will block her real backup transmission to the satellite, and send a malware virus out to all of her stored backups instead.

Poe and Mickey made Vernon the fake identity of a general in order to get him into Head in the Clouds without arousing suspicion. He'll have to pretend to be a customer who's gone through introductory training sessions.

The brothel puts a thermal tag on the customers and any untagged body heat signature will alert them to an intruder, so he and Tak can't just sneak in.

Once inside, Vernon can access the Head in the Clouds security systems and help Mickey get a thermal tag for Tak. They had to buy Vernon the most expensive package, the Iridium Experience, to give him the access he needs. Then Tak can make his way to Rei's quarters while Vernon leaves. After Tak enters Rei's quarters, all communication will be cut off. Tak's camera will record the conversation for later download, but that's it. Tak packs up his supplies in his pink Hello Unicorn backpack and they're ready to start the mission.

Vernon drives them up to the airborne brothel. They arrive 17 minutes before Rei's backup. Tak stays hidden in the trunk of the car. Vernon is met in the parking bay by a host dressed as the Pope and two security guards. The guards scan him, then he's taken inside, while the Pope spouts marketing propaganda at him. Vernon has the whole floor to himself, and a prostitute is already waiting in his room.

Vernon is supposed to drug the girl unconscious and go get Mickey access to the house computer system, but when he's confronted with a young woman the age of his daughter in a place like this, he freezes. She starts talking, offering herself up however he wants her, moving up from tamer experiences to the Iridium Experience options when he stays silent.

As anyone who's been paying attention can guess, the Iridium Experience allows the client to murder the prostitute in whatever way they choose, and mutilate the body however they want. The prostitute doesn't know it, but she's been recoded Neo-C so that she can't talk afterwards. She thinks there's just a lot of staff turnover at Head in the Clouds, and the girls don't socialize much.

Vernon finally gets them both a drink and slips the drug into hers. She passes out immediately. It's now 10 minutes until Rei's backup. Vernon takes the giant knife from the Iridium kit and heads to the computer terminal. When he gets there, the system proves more complicated than expected. He and Ava have to work on it for a few minutes

Meanwhile, security is patrolling near the car and Tak accidentally sets the car alarm off. He uses his knife to give himself a tiny dose of Reaper to lower his body temperature so that he doesn't set off thermal alarms, then gets out of the car to fight the security guards.

The first goes down easily, but he loses most of the contents of the backpack while fighting the other. He does rescue the antenna that will contaminate Rei's backups. By the time he's done fighting, there's only a little over two minutes left until Rei's backup, so he decides to take a shortcut through a storage corridor to get to her quarters, rather than through the safer service corridor.

Vernon runs into the Pope and more security on his way out. They're surprised that he's finished so quickly, and offer him more experiences, this time with a man or a child if he prefers. Vernon decides that it's really time for him to leave.

Ava has lost contact with Tak by the time Vernon reaches the car. When the Pope accosts him, again, and says that Vernon just needs to tell him what he wants to do, Vernon has no problem telling the Pope that shooting him in the head is what he wants to do, as he does just that. Then he rushes to find Tak, with less than a minute before backup.

They reach Rei's door with ten second's left, and shoot their way through the lock. Tak slides the antenna across the floor to where Rei's standing, just as the backup starts. The malware gets through, but as it finishes, everything at the Raven goes dark. Poe stands paralyzed for a couple of seconds. They're cut off from Head in the Clouds. Something got sent back through to the Raven.

Once Rei's backup is done, she starts tossing out threats and accusations. She can't believe Tak would lie to his own sister, the only person who ever cared about him, which is a hilarious statement when you think about everything thing she's done before this. Narcissists are so funny when they aren't ruining your life.

Tak tells her Jimmy DeSoto says hi. Her backup was spiked with the Rawling that was recreated by Ava from the dead Envoy stacks, which is what you'd call karma. So now she just has the one life to live. Maybe if she loses everything she'll remember hat it's like to be a real person and he'll get his sister back. Rei insists that he hasn't lost her.

Tak tells her he wants a full confession, and to start with the night Bancroft died.

Rei: I knew he liked to choke girls out, and I knew he was coming back from Osaka angry. That night I needed him to go further. (Tak: Why?) So I could blackmail him into stopping 653.

Tak: You had him drugged with Stallion, how did you do that?

Rei: Transdermal. Through a kiss. (Tak: Miriam.) She owed me. She knew once he was dosed he'd kill the next thing he f*cked. She also knew it wouldn't be her.

Tak: And Mary Lou Henchy?

Rei: She jumped.

Tak: Yeah, but why?

Rei: Because she didn't want to die at Bancroft's hand. I'd invited him to Head in the Clouds, made sure he was dosed, and it worked. He went further alright. He real deathed the first girl, smashed her stack. Even I didn't know there was that much fury in him. So, Mary Lou ran.

Flashback video shows Mary Lou climbing out onto the edge of the roof. Rei follows. She yells to Mary Lou: "Don't worry about him! Worry about me!" Mary Lou let's go and falls.

Rei: She did the one thing she thought could checkmate us both. She thought her body would die, but her stack would be found. That they'd spin her back up, she'd tell the police what happened. What she didn't know is I recoded her the moment I hired her.

Tak: Brings us to Ryker.

Rei: He wouldn't back off. He was a piece that needed to be taken off the board.

Tak: So Mary Lou washed up coded and dead, and he guessed what happened.

Rei: I was lucky he was so unstable. He wasn't hard to frame.

Tak: But 653 was moving forward...

Rei: I'd be ruined. Erased.

Tak: So you used Bancroft for his influences at the UN court.

Rei: It took planning, being ready to leap at the perfect moment, force him to do what I wanted. Once he'd slaughtered two Neo-C coded whores, he had as much to lose as I did. He did what I told him. Derailed 653. But what happened next, I couldn't predict. He has an archaic streak. You'd call it honor. The fool wanted to forget. As if that would make him clean of what he'd done.

He slagged his own stack. His arrogance wouldn't let him believe he killed himself. He insisted he was murdered. Wouldn't let it go. Which brings us to you.

Tak: You needed somebody that Bancroft could trust. An Envoy.

Rei: I didn't need someone, I needed you. You're right about the blood on my hands. I drenched myself. To build a future for us. I waited. I waited for you, Tak. I waited for the perfect moment to get you out so we could start again. I missed you so much. I never thought I would be whole again. Until now.

A knife flies through the air into Vernon's leg. Leung and a security team fly into the room and surround Tak. The whole confession and speech about undying love, while they had truth in them, were a stalling tactic. At some point, when she was moving around the room, she managed to sound an alarm. I think it was when she pointedly looked up to the corner of the ceiling, a minute or so after Tak threw the ninja star.

The Killers

Season 1

Episode Number: 10

Season Episode: 10

Originally aired: Friday February 2, 2018
Writer: Laeta Kalogridis, Nevin Densham
Director: Peter Hoar
Show Stars: Joel Kinnaman (Takeshi Kovacs), James Purefoy (Laurens Bancroft), Martha Higareda (Kristin Ortega), Chris Conner (Poe), Dichen Lachman (Reileen Kawahara), Ato Essandoh (Vernon Elliot), Kristin Lehman (Miriam Bancroft), Trieu Tran (Mr. Leung), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcris Falconer)
Guest Stars: Tamara Taylor (Oumou Prescott), Adam Busch (Mickey), Cliff Chamberlain (Ava Elliot), Marlene Forte (Alazne Ortega), Hiro Kanagawa (Captain Tanaka), Hayley Law (Lizzie Elliot), Antonio Marziale (Isaac Bancroft), Chris McNally (Sergei Brevlov), Morgan Gao (Young Tak), Riley Lai Nelet (Young Reileen), Zahf Paroo (Curtis), Fiona Vroom (Sandy Kim), Francisco Trujillo (Xalbador), Alison Araya (Female Investigator), Nikohl Boosheri (Nalan Ertekin), Hector Borderas (Xalbador Kid #1), Edward Dalmas (Meth Client), Darren Dolynski (Male Investigator), Rob Hayter (Corridor Guard), Toby Levins (Pervy Guard), Enrique Lopez (Xalbador Kid #2), Courtney Richter (Ava), Hannah Rose May (Synth Woman), Tom Bonello (Convention Protester), Jim Eliason (Police Officer)
Summary: As a cornered Kovacs braces for a final showdown in the sky, a new hero emerges and more buried secrets come to light.



Kristin climbs the stairs to her brother's apartment. She finds him lying dead on the floor, just as Leung left him. She reaches for her gun, but doesn't have it, so she picks up a candlestick and follows the sounds of gunshots to the boys' room. There she finds the boys both dead, laid out on the floor in a growing pool of their own blood, partially hidden behind a couch.

She drops the candlestick in shock and starts to panic, but then she hears her mother's voice. She searches the

house until she finds Alazne, who falls into her arms, bloody and dying. As Alazne is dropping to the floor, she warns Kristin, "He's behind you!"

Kristin turns to find Leung and his evil death tool. He says, "You defy a god." He repeats it a few times, even though he disappears, as she screams, "Where are you?"

When he reappears, he backs her up to a wall and forces her arms above her head and against the wall, without touching them. Kristin realizes she's in VR, saying, "This is a construct." Leung tells her that it's all real, and her family is dead. He filmed the murders for her to relive, and has been making her go through it over and over. Each time he wipes her mind clean and starts again.

She goes through the scenario over and over, like she's stuck in a time loop, until Leung finds out what's happening to Rei in the real. Then he disappears completely from VR, leaving her alone in a blank matrix. She screams to be let out.

Leung and his goons run into Rei's quarters, surrounding Tak and wounding Vernon with a knife. Rei pulls the knife from Vern's leg to use as a back up weapon to the gun she now has. Her gun is the only one on board. Tak fights to break loose from the goons, but Rei stops him, informing him that their batons hold enough electric current to kill him from only a few seconds of contact with his stack.

Rei checks the status of her backups, and finds that they really are compromised. She blames Ava, but Tak is quick to try to deflect the blame over to himself. Rei agrees that he's also broken her heart. She orders Leung to kill Poe and bring everyone else to her.

Tak asks her to listen to him, planning to talk her out of being so extreme with her revenge. She refuses, telling him that he's never listened to her. She asks why she should listen to him? He's always made all of the decisions, no matter what she wanted, now it's her turn. (That's stretching the truth a bit. Usually he hasn't had a choice, or she willingly deferred to him.)

Ava, Mickey and Poe mill around the Raven and fret about what's happening in Heaven in the Clouds. Leung busts in and turns on an electron destabilizer that begins to shut down Poe's systems, starting with Poe's sensors and defenses, then moving on to his avatar. Poe's begins to turn into shiny black dust.

Poe moves his consciousness into VR with Lizzie, insisting that he send her onto the array immediately so that they can't find and kill her. She refuses, saying she knows her way around and what she's doing now. She doesn't need to run away. She wants to be sent to the sky, to Head in the Clouds. She's already seen what happens. Salvation. Death. Retribution. Poe asks in what order she sees them?

As Poe and Lizzie talk in virtual, Mickey decides to play hero in a completely out of character way and grabs at the gun of the goon standing in front of him. Leung turns and almost casually shoots out Mickey's stack. THIS IS NOT OKAY.

Leung was just hoping someone would try something. We've already seen how murderous Leung is and how much Mickey hates violence. Why character assassinate Mickey with such a stupid move when he's been so smart up until now? If they needed him to die, okay, just find a better way to accomplish it. But I don't see what difference his death made, anyway. It's just one more gratuitous death to thin the herd.

Lizzie is successful in convincing Poe to send her up to be an angel in Head in the Clouds as his dying act. Poe's consciousness is split between the hotel lobby and Lizzie's VR suite during this conversation:

Lizzie: You gave me so much. Whatever it means to be human, Eddie, you are.

Poe, to Leung: You don't deserve to be called human, you despicable creature.

Leung: And you are a dead machine walking.

Poe to Leung: Then I will see you in H*ll.

Poe to Lizzie: I'm sending your mind to Head in the Clouds. Be careful, Lizzie.

Lizzie: You shouldn't be afraid for me. You should be afraid for the monsters.

Her stack goes black, and her avatar beams up to the that great big brothel in the sky.

Poe still has some last words, as he lies in Lizzie's VR suite letting go.

"And neither the angels in heaven above,

Nor the demons down under the sea,

Can ever dissever my soul,

From the soul of the beautiful... "

Annabel Lee. It's a quote from Edgar Allan Poe's last poem, of the same name. It's about his lost love, a beautiful young woman from whom he will never truly be separated. Hmmm, maybe Lizzie isn't the only one who just got sent up to Head in the Clouds. Poe would be injured and in need of repair, so he'd stay hiding in solitude for a while, somewhere in a corner of Lizzie's new stack.

With Poe and Mickey both gone, Ava is left alone with Leung and his henchman. She somehow holds it together as he pulls Lizzie's dark stack from its receptacle and tells her that it's dead, the person inside gone forever. Then Leung leads her out of the Raven.

Lizzie uploads into a synth stored in the corridor near Rei's quarters. She's still adjusting to her new body, when a lecherous guard discovers her. He assumes that she must be one of the regular prostitutes, who's in the synth because her boyfriend wanted to try it out. The guard promises not to turn her in for using the synth body, if she lets him rape her and she pretends

to like it. Lizzie remolds the synth's body and its features so that it looks exactly like her birth sleeve, then snaps the guard's neck. Seems like a reasonable compromise.

She looks through the outfits stored in the corridor and finds a pleather and chains number that she likes. Then she heads out to find the action. On the way, she finds a customer bodies deep in the Iridium Experience, and decides to help him experience the full nature of his sexual desires, on the house, by virtue of a knife through the stack. That combination therapy really did work wonders. Lizzie keeps the knife, for luck, and continues on her way toward Rei's quarters. I think she somehow got Envoy training while she was in virtual.

Tanaka oversees the crime scene investigation and clean up of the Ortega household. Prescott shows up and talks her way in, insisting that Tanaka see her. She tells him that she's trying to become a decent human being again, and she thinks he still has a core of decency, despite being on the take. Prescott knows where Ortega is, because she knows who has Ortega. All Tanaka has to do is ask Prescott for the information.

I knew Prescott was in on the evil-doing on some level. She seemed especially close to Clarissa, Rei's alter ego that's an art and antiques dealer, like they were good friends or lovers. If Prescott knows who Clarissa really is, then it's either common knowledge, or they are quite close, and Prescott knows more than Laurens.

Tak pulls Kristin out of VR. She's relieved to see him, and melts into his arms, until she sees that Rei and Leung are in the room. Then she comes right back to life, ready to tear them both limb from limb for killing her family. Rei slaps Kristin, then Leung drags her over to kneel in a row with Vernon and Ava. Tak is begging Rei to spare their lives, saying he'll do anything Rei wants. She tells him he has to choose which one he's going to RD first. If he doesn't, she'll kill them all.

She holds out a gun loaded with one bullet. She says, "It's time for you to evolve. transformation is always painful. But I changed to make myself stronger. You can too. All you have to do is pick one." Rei continues, explaining that real power consists of cutting away the things that make you weak. She wants Tak to find that power within himself. Tak refuses. Instead, he holds the gun to his stack and demands Rei let the others go. She doesn't think he'll go through with it.

Kristin uses her eyes and facial expression to beg Tak not to kill himself and wreck Ryker's sleeve. Tak tries to subtly tell her it's okay, then fires. The gun isn't loaded. Rei tells Tak that she not stupid enough to give him a loaded gun.

Rei: You'd risk your life for them? You think you love her, don't you?

Kristin: I can't stand this f*cking *sshole.

Rei: Right, you're hopelessly unavailable and doomed to die. (To Tak) You really do have a type.

She threatens to kill them all, again, and Tak says he'll stay with her, just the two of them, like it used to be. She's mollified, and has the hostages sent out, telling Tak that she'll save them for him to execute later, just for fun, when he finally becomes as detached from reality and amoral as her.

But anyway, Lizzie is busy (ha! rhyme not intended!) wandering the halls, waiting for her parents and Kristin to appear. They do, being marched somewhere unpleasant by Leung and the goons. Vernon spots Lizzie hiding around the corner, and starts a fight. Lizzie jumps in, proving that her VR ninja skills absolutely transfer to being inside a synth in the real world. Vern tells Kristin to go back for Tak. Leung follows Kristin. Vern and Lizzie take out the rest of the goons, mostly Lizzie. Her parents are impressed. Maybe that whole "learning how to defend herself to feel empowered" program wasn't such a bad idea after all.

Rei gets ready to take Tak's eye camera out and kill Ryker's sleeve, like she's wanted to do all along. She must have really hated Ryker. But first, Tak and Rei have a chat.

Rei: I'm a Meth. We take what we want, when we want.

Tak: Like the Ortega children?

Rei: They were raw material. A means to an end to get the respect I'm owed.

Tak: They were kids, just like we were.

Rei: You think I wear this because I miss her? I don't miss her. I hate her. Mom was weak. She deserved to die. I keep this as a reminder, never to be like her.

Tak: Rei-chan.

Rei: Don't call me that. I'm not that pathetic little girl any more. I killed her, and became something stronger... I'm going to show you how much I love you.

Tak: I'm sorry for all the times I failed you.

Rei: I'm going to eat you up... Hold him still.

Kristin shows up just in time, and throws a knife at Rei. Rei dodges it, letting one of her goons take the hit. This show loves knife throwing. Tak joins in the fight. Kristin and Rei fight each other, while Tak fights the goons. Rei throws Kristin out toward the hall.

The Elliots go to the ship's engine/utility room and prepare to kill the ship by flipping three master power relays at the same time. Since all of the ship's systems run through those relays, if they are all down, the ship will lose altitude and crash. Each Elliot chooses a master switch, and they all pull their switches at the same time. You'd think something that important would need a key, or a password, especially with Rei's level of paranoia and the fact that it's up in the sky.

The power goes out all over the ship, including Rei's quarters. Emergency systems come online. A firewall falls between Kristin and the room Tak and Rei are in. Kristin is unable to break through it. Tak finishes off the last of the goons just as Rei grabs the gun and fires at him. She misses, blowing a hole in the side of the ship instead.

Leung catches up to Kristin on the other side of the firewall. Now it's Leung and his death tool against Kristin and her arm on one side of the wall with Tak and Rei on the other side. Both fights are vicious. The gun ends up getting knocked through the hole in the side of the ship and sitting on the edge of the floor, about to fall overboard. Tak and Rei each grab a sword and attack. Tak tells Rei, "No more dead children." Rei tells Tak, "I'll kill you before I let you put me in a cage."

Leung slams Kristin's head into a wall, then lets her drop to the floor, stunned. He tells her that Alazne prayed to God as she died. Where is her God now? Kristin says that Leung will be meeting God soon, and crushes his lower leg bone with her new arm. Then she tosses him against the walls several times, and stops to pick up his death tool. Leung gets up and tries to run away, running straight into Tanaka.

Tanaka pulls out his weapon and holds it on Leung. Leung questions why Tanaka is doing this, since Rei owns him. Tanaka responds that she doesn't today. Kristin drags Leung to the floor. She holds Leung down and activates the weapon, then says, "My mother prayed to God and he put you in my arms. So tell me, are you a believer, motherf*ck*r?" She plunges the weapon into his neck and stack. Leung goes still.

Tak and Rei fight even more intensely, until finally they end by simultaneously stabbing each other in the chest. They pull their swords out and fall backwards. Kristin and Tanaka bang on the door to be let in. Rei says they'll never get through. Tak says that they'll stay where they are, crash, and Rei will still stand trial.

Rei reaches behind her and grabs the gun, where it was resting just out of Tak's view. His eyes go wide- will she never quit? Rei says that if Tak helps her reach the escape pods, she'll give him back Quell. She backed up Quell just before the explosion without Quell even knowing it.

Called that one. This changes everything for Tak, but he can't help Rei escape. They have the standard conversation about him always knowing deep inside that Quell's still alive, and Rei teasing him with the idea that Quell still exists, perfectly preserved, but he'll never find her without Rei. But Tak knows Quell wouldn't want him to let Rei continue on as she is.

He goes for the gun, she fires, and he partially dodges it, getting hit in the shoulder. He grabs the gun from Rei and holds it on her, point-blank against the base of her neck. She says, "Go on. Do it. I'll never stop. I'll never stop." Tak bends his head down and they touch their foreheads together as they've always done at moments of closeness. He fires.

Tak sits on the floor, holding Rei's body in his arms. Kristin yells to him when she hears the shot. He tells her goodbye, and to make all of this worth something. After a minute Tanaka drags her away.

Quell appears next to Tak. He tells Quell that he still loved Rei. Quell responds that Rei loved him, in her own lost way. Tak sings the Patchwork Man song to Rei as he holds and rocks her, as if they were still children. Head in the Clouds begins to lose altitude in earnest.

Tak asks Quell to tell him a story that doesn't end in death and tragedy.

Quell: Long ago, and worlds away, there was a young princess, orphaned in a time of war. She was called upon to lead the armies of her kingdom for there was no other. She was the fiercest of

warriors, beloved by her people, unstoppable on the field. She rode out everyday and saved her subjects in battle after battle.

But every night, when the fighting was done, she was alone. Until one day, a peasant boy came, looking to join her army, lonely, and angry, and fierce as she. For the first time, she found that when she strode out onto the field to save others, there was someone at her side, who had come to save her.

Then there came the darkest battle of the war. The princess and her peasant boy stood, side by side and vowed that they would be separated by nothing less than death itself. She fell to an enemy sword and died before his eyes. And those who heard the story cried for the death of love.

Meanwhile, Head in the Clouds has been accelerating as it falls, catching fire and burning, and finally, crashing into the bay below it. The Elliots, Kristin and Tanaka watch it fall as they escape in a police car, while everyone else in the brothel gets out in the escape pods.

Tak is debriefed in virtual. Both Taks. Original Tak's stack was fished out of the bay, but his sleeve died on impact. Clone Tak talks to the authorities in virtual as a solidarity thing. The authorities have Tak's pardon and are grateful for his help with this matter, but it's illegal for there to be two Takeshi Kovacs DHFs. The two of them need to decide which will survive. Tak and Tak play Rock, Paper, Scissors to decide, of course. It's pretty obvious that the clone DHF throws it. Once he's in the clone sleeve, Tak lets Kristin know that he's alive and Ryker still has a sleeve.

Life is back to normal in the Aerium. Miriam is having a party to show off her latest acquisition, a fossilized Elder, which looks like a large bird or a small winged dinosaur. Her guests fawn over her and it.

Kristin crashes the party and uses her Oni to project a broadcasted news report about Rei's confession. Miriam finds Laurens watching the broadcast alone in his study. She tells him she'll stand by him, no matter what. Laurens still insists he's not a murderer. Purposely causing sleeve death, over and over, purely for fun, is always going to feel like murder to me.

Tak enters the study and tells Laurens the truth, that it wasn't Prescott who pulled the trigger, and Laurens wasn't insane or drugged. He was just a coward. Laurens continues to be in shock over these new revelations. No one mentions that Rei drugged Laurens with a powerful aggression enhancer to get him to cross his firm moral line. Not that his line matters much to me, but there were some extenuating circumstances that would argue for shortening his sentence a little, according to the morality of their world.

Tanaka and several police officers arrive to arrest Laurens. As he crosses the room to present himself to Tanaka, Laurens stops to tell Isaac that he's in charge now, and inherits everything. The king is dead, long live the king. Then Laurens surrenders himself to the police.

Tak says that they aren't done there yet. Right, Miriam? The Elliots come in. Laurens recognizes Lizzie. Miriam calls her a whore. Lizzie says that she couldn't remember what happened to her for a long time. Now she does. She was pregnant. She came to the Aerium to talk to Laurens. He wasn't home but Miriam was.

After Lizzie refused all manner of bribes for getting rid of the baby, Miriam beat her and kicked her until she lost the baby. Miriam asked Prescott to get rid of Lizzie, so she called Rei to act as fixer. Lizzie was taken to Wei clinic, and they used the Helminth protocol on her until she went insane. When they were done, they dropped her body in front of Jack It Off. The police didn't care about another dead hooker, so Miriam was safe.

Miriam tries to explain, saying that the children are hers. They're all she has. Rei called the favor in by having Miriam drug Laurens with Stallion.

Laurens is disgusted with Miriam's betrayal. She tells him to get over himself, he's been betraying her for a lot longer. Laurens realizes that he and Miriam have ruined each other. Kristin arrests Miriam for Lizzie's sleeve death and the death of her unborn child.

Tak narrates in voiceover that Ava Elliot was pardoned and Tak got her original sleeve back for her. Lizzie kept her synth. 653 passed, so the dead could now accuse their murderers. Ryker was also exonerated.

Tak helps Kristin finish unpacking her apartment so that it will be ready when Ryker comes home. She asks him what he'll do after he turns in Ryker's sleeve. He says he doesn't know anything, except that Quell is still alive. They say a tearful goodbye.

Quell finishes her story: After his princess died, the peasant boy wandered the world, lost to despair. Until one day he came upon an immortal who told him his princess had been stolen,

trapped in an enchantment. So now he seeks her, across this world and every other. Because somewhere, sealed behind thick glass and a thick wall of deadly thorns, she sleeps, waiting to be awakened. And someday, without fail, he will find her.

Season Two

Phantom Lady

Season 2

Episode Number: 11

Season Episode: 1

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Laeta Kalogridis
Director: Ciaran Donnelly
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Treppe), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcryst Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Jihae (Torch Singer), Michael Shanks (Horace Axley), Oliver Rice (Matias Stone), Bradley Stryker (George the 'Shifty Man'), Marcus Aurelio (Latin Man), Steve Chang (Asian Guy), Sonia Beeksa (Newscaster), Craig Haas (Renouncer Holo), Andrew Chin (Yakuza Thug), Tamiko Brownlee (Bar Patron #18), Hugo Raymundo (Latino Guy), Maxwell Sloan Yip (Mickey Nowaza), Kyle Charles Gannon (Axby's Guard)
Summary: Thirty years after the Bancroft case, a Meth tracks down Kovacs to offer him a job, a high-tech sleeve and a chance to see Quellcryst Falconer again.



30 years after the Bancroft Case, we return to Maghda Prime in the Raven Hotel as Poe listens to a woman singing. A synth at the bar asks Poe where Kovacs is but he simply tells her he's off looking for Quellcryst Falconer, the leader of the Uprising. She offers him credits to speak but the synth doesn't divulge anything, dissipating as the actual bartender arrives.

Things quickly go awry when a man with a briefcase full of credits enters the bar, announcing to the crowd that whoever Kovacs is now — the money is all

theirs. Inevitably a fight breaks out as everyone clamors over the money, leading him to slip out the back... and straight into the path of Kovacs himself, who happens to be the female singer from the start of the episode.

Midway through negotiating terms for another job, the messenger shoots him in the face and tells him Horace Axley, a Meth, wants to talk to Kovacs about a job. When she refuses to play ball, the messenger shoots Kovacs in the back.

We then cut to Kovacs in a meeting with Axley, who offers him a brand new sleeve — this one of Anthony Mackie with state of the art biometrics. After choking him out, Axley offers him Quellcryst Falconer in exchange for his help. Eventually Kovacs agrees, and as he wakes up in the glass container, he's reborn. With the resleeving now complete, he narrows his gaze and prepares for what comes next.

Only, he finds Axley and a number of other guards dead on the floor. With Axley the only person still alive among them, Kovacs grabs him and asks where Quellcryst is. He manages to squeeze out a strained "gone" before he dies. As Kovacs heads outside and looks out at the gorgeous skyline, he realizes it's been 30 years and they're on Harlan's World.

Walking through the neon-awash market, he speaks to Poe about Quell and Axley, tasking Poe to check the news feed, where he learns Konrad's daughter Danica has now taken up the

mantle of leader here, who informs the crowd that she's entered into talks with the Quellist Leader Joshua Kemp.

Kovacs makes it to the Yakuza and tells the leader he's Taneseda Hideki. Unfortunately he's actually talking to his great-grandson, and as Poe arrives it's just the distraction needed for Kovacs to start fighting the gang, his facade broken. It's not enough to overcome them though and he finds himself face to face with Hideki himself. Kovacs reveals his true form and asks him for a favour — a place to stay off-grid. After berating his grandson, he agrees to help Kovacs.

Alone, Kovacs questions his life and entering another wild goose chase looking for Quell. Seeing Quell in his mind's eye, she tells him the answers are in the one place he's not looking. As he stares in the mirror, Kovacs proceeds to stab himself in the chest, where he flashes back to Axley's apartment and sees Quell beating him down and stabbing him in the chest. Flashing back to the present, he realizes that Quell is still alive and sets out with renewed vision.

Payment Deferred

Season 2
Episode Number: 12
Season Episode: 2

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Sarah Nicole Jones
Director: Ciaran Donnelly
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Treppe), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcrest Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Fraser Aitcheson (Praetorian), Lorna Joan Barrie (Escort), Dalias Blake (Batu / Wedge), David Cubitt (Dugan), Cecilia Deacon (Meth), Xander Hall (Meth), Kareem Malcolm (Millsport UNI), Sharon Taylor (Myka)
Summary: As Col. Carrera takes charge of the murder investigation, Kovacs sets out to find Axley's bounty hunter, and Poe's memory glitches worsen.



The episode begins with Colonel Carrera marching purposefully up to Axley's apartment and seeing the devastation firsthand. Talking to the detective on site, he learns about the custom sleeve and gives them his theory, proceeding to slaughter the officers in cold blood.

Meanwhile, Poe does a full scan analysis of Kovacs' new sleeve, trying to suss out what other tricks it may have. Poe suggests finding the bounty hunter that shot him in the back and as he starts doing the scan, he glitches, replacing the

monitors with pictures of Lizzie. Kovacs tells him to reboot but the synth refuses, telling him he doesn't want to let go of his life.

Kovacs catches up with the bounty hunter (who's called Treppe) and confronts her while she hunts a new target, a man named Raab. Things quickly turn violent though and having tracked down and killed the other top bounties, Kovacs gets her attention and she agrees to talk. Alone, they discuss Axley's partners — Anton Durov and Haruki Okada. Treppe suggests teaming up but Kovacs refuses, dropping the precious cargo and heading back to the hotel where he tells Poe he believes there's a sleeve-jacker out there.

Carrera confronts Danica, who tells him to find the killer and get off her planet. This rivalry is far from over but for now, the Colonel agrees to leave. Meanwhile, Kovacs heads to the Soul Market in search of answers, where he sees the graveyard of stacks firsthand. He heads to the club and speaks to Semetaire, the man in charge of this area and as he does, Carrera learns of his location and immediately tasks his group to gear up.

Treppe trades the bounty credits for a reward in finding a missing person. This offers up some valuable intel in exactly what her end-goal is but for now, she remains separate to Kovacs for the rest of the episode.

Kovacs himself catches up with Durov and Okada, gaining their trust in the bar as he learns from them that Quellcrest is back. It's here he solemnly informs them Axley is dead, going on to request they tell him what they know in exchange for keeping them safe.

Quellcrest crashes into the club and proceeds to murder Axley's partners in cold blood, asking if they can hear screaming. Kovacs watches from afar, realizing this isn't the Quell he knows and

tells her to get out the sleeve. Inevitably, the two begin fighting. As he throws a knife through the air, Quell shakily calls his name and appears to know who he is. Unfortunately she bolts as Carrera arrives with his men. Kovacs is unable to kill him though and thanks to the sleeve being Wedge tech — he's programmed not to hurt one of his own.

Carrera knocks him to the ground and takes him away as we leave things hanging on a knife edge.

Nightmare Alley

Season 2

Episode Number: 13

Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Michael R. Perry
Director: M. J. Bassett
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Trepp), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcrest Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Dalias Blake (Batu / Wedge), Kindall Charters (Miner), Naiah Cummins (A.I. Directory), Xander Hall (Meth), Ian Hawes (Mandrake Guard), Britt Irvin (Lila), Brittany Mitchell (Female Synth 2), James Rha (Tech #1), Kat Ruston (Disheveled Synth), Carmela Sison (DIG 682), Sharon Taylor (Myka), Kyle Charles Gannon (Dianca's Guard)
Summary: Kovacs contends with ghosts from his past as he's tortured by Carrera. Poe seeks help from a fellow AI. Trepp gets a lead on the man she's after.



The episode begins with Carrera bringing Kovacs to Danica, convinced that he's the Meth-Killer and the one who killed Axley's partners. Forced to kneel before her, Kovacs admits that he's not working with the Quellist. As he's taken away, Carrera struggles to remain calm in the face of Danica transferring him once The Circle is done.

Poe hears the news about Kovacs being set to death and immediately gets to work righting this wrong, connecting to the AI Archaeologist Club where he asks

the group for help. Dig 301 perks up and agrees to throw her hat in the ring, as Poe tells her that his guest has been consigned to The Circle.

Kovacs wakes up and finds himself imprisoned, with the ghost of Rei hovering over him. She tells him chasing Quell is a death wish and as she disappears, Carrera arrives to interrogate him. Using a high-tech neural tool, Kovacs screams in pain as they successfully extract the information they need, including the names of Rei and Quellcrest Falcon. With this, they deduce the man inside this custom sleeve is Kovacs himself.

On the eve of him being executed, Poe heads off and finds Trepp, asking for her help but she refuses to listen. Instead, she receives a call from the bounty giver and the extra credits do the trick — they loosen some lips and give her crucial intel to go on. With a lead, she hurries out and questions the contact about her brother Anil, until she finds herself captured. As she's bailed out by her partner, she comes up with an idea; hunt Kovacs herself for the high-stakes bounty currently on his head.

Now knowing the truth, Carrera confronts Kovacs over what he knows and it's here his true form is revealed — he's Jaeger. In German, he tells him he'll see him in hell before injecting Kovacs with a drug and throwing him out. With a bounty on his head, Danica and the rest of the high-ranking group put credits down on how long he'll last in The Circle.

As Kovac is thrown into this fighting pit of death, Poe and Dig 301 work together to try and shut it down from afar. As the power goes out, Kovacs learns that the woman in front of him, Kristin, is not who she says she is, prompting another hunter to arrive, this time taking the form of Elliot. He works his way through the different fighters, killing them all as the final two hunters take the form of Rei and Quell.

Only... Quell is actually the real one and not the impostor. She heads into The Circle and starts fighting with Rei as Kovac plucks the sword out of his own chest. One of The Circle operatives realizes Quell is alive and not a synth, proceeding to shut down the power, uttering the words "Long Live Quellcrest Falconer" as Kovacs and Quellcrest slip away together.

Shadow of a Doubt

Season 2

Episode Number: 14

Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Sang Kyu Kim
Director: M. J. Bassett
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Trepp), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcryst Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Jackie Blackmore (Needlecast Agent #2), Dalias Blake (Batu / Wedge), Kheon Clarke (Passerby), David Cubitt (Dugan), Franckie Franco (Bounty Hunter), Kamran Fulleylove (Jarek), Xander Hall (Meth), Daphne Hoskins (Young Daughter), Britt Irvin (Lila), Sky Kao (Server), Will Yun Lee (Stronghold Kovacs), Damon Lipari (Dad / Jarek), Alan Mak (Needlecast Tech #1 (credit only)), Neal McDonough (Konrad Harlan), James Rha (Tech #1), Oliver Rice (Mattias Stone), Teana-Marie Smith (Needlecast Agent #1), Sharon Taylor (Myka), Kyle Charles Gannon (Praetorian)
Summary: While the planet celebrates Harlan's Day, Kovacs hatches an escape plan, Quell pieces together fragments of her life, and Poe faces a reckoning.



The episode begins with Quell talking to Kovacs about her past, how she felt like she was trapped in a dream with no way out. Desperate to wake up, she wrestled her own demons in order to save him.

In the present, Kovacs promises to help her, asking Quell to trust him to bring her off-planet. With her memories fragmented and the world out to get them thanks to how high his bounty has become, Kovacs tells her to stay behind as he heads out the hotel. Before he leaves however, Trepp shows up having followed

Poe's holo-trace. Given his old friend's sloppiness in compromising their location, he hires Dig 301 instead and fires Poe from his position as synth.

Things get fiery between the two AIs in the wake of Kovacs' absence, as they fight over what's best for this human. Poe decides on what he needs to do in order to win back Kovacs' trust and sets to work doing just that.

With the planet celebrating Harlan's Day, Carrera arrives at Hideki's hideout and promises to destroy him. He requests Takeshi find Kovacs and bring him in to prevent succumbing to a horrible fate of being erased.

As Trepp confronts Kovacs in the street, he promises to help her find Anil instead. After some deliberation, she agrees to form an alliance. She heads back home where Kovacs learns more about her life and why she's a hunter — including the high monthly price of renting her son's current sleeve after he died tragically thanks to stepping on a mine.

It's enough for Kovacs to head off to Hideki's, where he asks him for a way off the planet with Quell. It's here he admits that Jaeger has been to see him but promises to try and get him his

transport. Kovacs hurries back home where he finds Quellcrest looking at news headlines of her being a terrorist and questions just why he wants her back. As they keep talking, they wind up sleeping together.

While they do, Hideki visits Danica and requests Kovacs' envoy, keeping the knowledge that Kovacs is the one asking a secret. He hands over an envelope to her with the strange symbols on in the process and it seems to seal the deal.

Carrera continues to interrogate Lily, the girl who opened the doors for Quellcrest and Kovacs last episode. He rips her teeth out but she stands strong, refusing to give in to his torture. However, she's saved under Danica's orders by being moved. As Carrera stewes in his own fury, Poe makes a big decision and says goodbye to Lizzie, declaring himself resolved as he looks set to issue a full reboot. Only, before he presses the button Dig 301 suggests using her abilities to preserve his memories.

Meanwhile, Kovacs learns from Hideki that he's managed to secure his transport but it comes at a cost. As he stops the call, he looks up to find Quell in front of him, who takes his life. Thankfully, Kovacs rushes to the scene before his memory is completely severed and manages to find out what happened.

Trepp arrives not long after and finds Kovacs. It turns out Quell is hunting the Founders and he scrambles with Trepp to try and find her. With a system breach inside, we cut to Quell herself on the verge of blowing a building up as Carrera's secret weapon — Kovacs Prime — arrives for the hunt.

I Wake Up Screaming

Season 2
Episode Number: 15
Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Cortney Norris
Director: Jeremy Webb
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Trepp), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quell-crist Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Dalias Blake (Batu / Wedge), Matt Ellis (Joshua Kemp), Xander Hall (Meth), Alessandro Juliani (Jack Soul Brasil), Neal McDonough (Konrad Harlan)
Summary: Carrera sends his secret weapon on a deadly mission. Kovacs and Trepp smuggle Quell out of the city. Poe takes a risky trip into virtual reality.



The episode begins with Kovacs bursting back into the hotel with Trepp, where the two argue over Quell and her intention of killing the Founders. With only one left — that being Konrad Harlan — Poe smashes a vial on the floor to get their attention and informs the duo that Quell is actually with them, currently upstairs in the shower. When Kovacs heads upstairs, he finds her cowering and shaking.

Meanwhile Carrera sends his secret weapon, Kovacs Prime, out into the world a bid to kill the current Kovacs and seize

his body. With the Wedge Squad at his command, he heads to Kiteshi's where he finds the stack missing from his body.

Kovacs and Quell try to get the bottom of what's happening to her, with him asking whether there's any reason she wants to stay on the planet. As he heads back and sits with Trepp, he learns that Poe has gone off searching for Konrad. Unfortunately, Kemp intercepts the broadcast there and informs the world that the ceasefire is over, thanks to footage of Quell leaking to the press.

Overhearing the group arguing over what to do, Quell suggests heading off alone, until they're ambushed by the remaining fragments of the Yakuza. With Kovacs and the others slipping out the back, Dig 301 stays behind to buy them some time. However, the Protectorate arrive with Kovacs Prime and wipe out the gang.

With Kovacs and the others fleeing down the tunnels, Dig 301 tries to trick Kovacs Prime and the others. She holds firm, fighting him off, until she divulges crucial information regarding a serial number that leads them where they need to go.

Trepp meanwhile learns from her Father that Anil was given a mission by Kemp and came into his shop earlier in the month. With enough guns to see them progress, Kovacs leads the group into a hidden tunnel, but not before Quell hands Trepp a gun and tells her if she loses control again to pull the trigger.

As they descend down the tunnels, Stronghold Kovacs and the rest of the group follow in hot pursuit, making it to Trepp's Father's place. With him refusing to give up where they are,

Kovacs Prime loses patience and kills him, shattering his stack and leading the group to part of his childhood memories where he believes the group have gone.

With the situation precarious, Danica imposes martial law on the state. Just as the group agree to give her full control, she seizes the opportunity and puts the entire board under house arrest, knowing that they were plotting with Dugan against her the whole time.

Poe heads into the VR construct and meets Soul Brasil, intent on extracting information from him to find Konrad. Only, he shows him Lizzie and it's enough to see him distracted and following her around. He manages to push past this though and sticks to the mission at hand.

Upon finding Konrad, he realizes the entire construct is a fraud. With full control over this VR illusion, Poe is forced to take drastic measures as he uses his glitch to destroy the construct. It works too, and Poe returns to find the hotel destroyed and Dig 301 stuck in limbo.

In the tunnels, Quell grapples with her inner-demons and as she bolts off alone, she sees the blue tendrils we've seen throughout the season. As she passes out, Trepp confronts Kovacs over Quell's intentions before hurrying off to find a way out. As he hurries outside, he comes face to face with Kovacs Prime and learns the truth about the double sleeving. While Kovacs Prime throws him off a cliff to his doom, back underground Quell wakes up and grabs Trepp, choking her out.

Bury Me Dead

Season 2

Episode Number: 16

Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Adam Lash, Cori Uchida
Director: Jeremy Webb
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Trepp), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quell-crist Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Dalias Blake (Batu / Wedge), Tamiko Brownlee (Rebel #2), Matt Ellis (Joshua Kemp), Shawn Clark (Kemp Soldier)
Summary: As Quell reconnects to her past at Stronghold, she leads the clone into an underground chamber teeming with secrets. Gov. Harlan shows her true colors.



The episode begins with Quell wrestling with her own inner-demons, sitting by the shore as the blue tendrils in her mind close in around her. Memories of her past come flooding back, including seeing Kovacs and the shattered remnants of her original memories on this planet. As Quell turns around, she finds Kovacs Prime in front of her, who pretends to be the real Kovacs. Only, it doesn't seem to fool her as The Wedge close in on her position. Sensing something amiss, she tells the clone she can take him underground

to secure the cache.

Underground, Trepp wakes up and finds herself alone and abandoned. With the real Kovacs nowhere to be seen following his tumble, she scrambles to the surface and watches from afar as the clone and Quell run off together through the forest. Quell brings him to Stronghold where he sees the ordeal she went through over the years, entombed by Rei and forced into giving up answers, showing her time through the years.

Above ground, Danica loses patience and tells Carrera to work faster. As she does, Kovacs hears Trepp's voice in his mind, who manages to save him from his fate. As he opens his eyes, he's clinging on for dear life on a cliff-edge and he's still alive thanks to subconscious reflex survival instincts in the sleeve.

Having saved him from his fate, Trepp and Kovacs talk about what to do next and suggest a plan of action. As they begin killing off the squad members one by one, Joshua Kemp arrives with his men and claims to have retrieved Trepp's message. At the same time, Quell reveals that she knew the truth about Kovacs all this time and starts fighting, until Kemp arrives and handcuffs him. Only, he handcuffs both Trepp and Kovacs too.

Underground, he tests Quell's body and mind to see if she's truly part of the Uprising. After seemingly passing the tests, Quell goes on to reveal the truth about Martin Kemp. Having proven herself, Kemp bows his head and welcomes her back to the Uprising.

Meanwhile, the two Kovacs find themselves face to face, tied up together, where our Kovacs tells him the truth about Rei, about how he pulled the trigger back at the end of season 1 and what Jaeger is really like.

With tensions dissipated for now, Trepp takes the opportunity to ask Kemp about Anil but when he acts shadily she suspects he's lying. She takes Quell aside and talks to her about Kemp. It turns out he didn't get a signal to their location and even worse, he has Anil's stack strung around his neck.

Trepp and Quell team up against Kemp and call him out for being a traitor, deciding to use Kovacs Prime to their advantage. After freeing him and the real Kovac, they head out into the open. Only, as they do they're surrounded by soldiers. Kemp happens to be working with Danica too, which Carrera figures out back in the control room. It turns out Danica has been plotting this all along, and turns her attention to Carrera whom she arrests for double sleeving.

Out on the field, the soldiers open fire. They kill Kemp in cold blood and as the rest of the group hurry away, Quell hides behind a tree and loses control. She screams to the heavens and as she does, a brilliant blast of Angelfire wipes out the approaching soldiers.

Experiment Perilous

Season 2
Episode Number: 17
Season Episode: 7

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Nevin Densham
Director: Salli Richardson-Whitfield
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Treppe), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quell-crist Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Kareem Tristan Alleyne (Anil Imani), Jason Cermak (VR Tech #1), Bailey Corneal (Scratcher #2), Shane Kim (Praetorian #1), Neal McDonough (Konrad Harlan), Oliver Rice (Mattias Stone), Darren E. Scott (Warehouse Guard (Praetorian)), Sharon Taylor (Myka), Adam Thomas (Hazmat Tech #1), Leanne Khol Young (Praetorian)
Summary: When Quell's sleeve begins to shut down, Poe and Ms. Dig send her into VR, where Kovacs finally learns the truth about her deadly rampages.



The episode begins in the forest as ash falls thanks to the angelfire strike. With the group nowhere to be seen, we pan across the landscape and see that Kovacs Prime is the only survivor, captured by a new group of soldiers that enter the fray.

Back at the hotel, Poe and Dig 301 exchange pleasantries before teleporting to Quell's location and processing her diagnostics. Taking Kovacs aside, Poe reveals what he's found out before throwing Treppe headfirst into Anil's memories and seeing what led to his death. He was the

one who woke up Quell from cryo-sleep and seemingly was wrestling with something powerful and volatile inside himself.

Remembering the way Quell asked about the screams early in the season, Kovacs contemplates whether it's possible that two people are currently inhabiting the same sleeve. This would explain the Angelfire blast, as it may not be Quell that caused this — it could be the invader that hijacked her body.

Danica talks to Stone and they discuss Quell's ability to control the Orbital. Needing more resources, she heads down to the prison bay and speaks to Carrera, asking for his help and trying to make a deal. He offers him a lucrative set of terms, including Kovacs Prime, who's been brought back in for questioning.

Kovacs and Treppe work with Dig 301 and Poe to make a construct to send them into Quell's memory. Before they go however, Poe and Kovacs clear up their differences. Just before Kovacs dives in, he tasks his AI friend with keeping Quell alive. After promising not to take him out until the firewall is complete, Kovacs is hooked in and thrust head-first into the construct.

Treppe learns that Myka and TJ have been captured by Danica so she takes Kovacs' sleeve while his mind is caught in Quell's construct. Treppe tracks them down and confronts Danica, as another fight breaks out. After defeating the guards, Treppe saves TJ and Myka before heading back to the hotel and switching bodies again.

Inside the construct, Kovacs and Quell fight, teleporting through several different scenes in a really slick fight sequence. Eventually this entity reveals the truth. The blue tendrils hold memories and in particular, that of an ancient race that originally inhabited the planet called Elders. The invader in Quell's body happens to be one of these Elders.

She proceeds to show him what she originally showed Quell; Konrad underground and shooting the tendrils, committing genocide despite pleas from those around him not to. Quell's blood-thirsty mission to kill all the Founders was simply an act of revenge. Unfortunately amidst all this carnage, Dig 301 loses her life for the fight.

After learning the truth, the firewall is activated and the Elder is caught inside Quell's mind, where Carrera still happens to be. It turns out Quell was containing this being but what Kovacs has actually done is far worse. With no mercy, this Elder can now reign hellfire (or Angelfire as the case may be) down on the planet.

With Kovacs Prime back in the driving seat, leading the squad to Kovacs' location with the intention of killing him, inside the construct Carrera is attacked by a winged beast that controls his body and awakens with renewed purpose.

Broken Angels

Season 2
Episode Number: 18
Season Episode: 8

Originally aired: Thursday February 27, 2020
Writer: Alison Schapker, Elizabeth Padden
Director: Salli Richardson-Whitfield
Show Stars: Anthony Mackie (Takeshi Kovacs), Lela Loren (Danica Harlan), Simone Missick (Treppe), Chris Conner (Poe), Dina Shihabi (Dig 301), Torben Liebrecht (Colonel Ivan Carrera), Renée Elise Goldsberry (Quellcryst Falconer), James Saito (Tanaseda Hideki), Nicholas Dohy (Bounty Hunter)
Guest Stars: Fraser Aitcheson (Praetorian), Kareem Tristan Alleyne (Anil Imani), Oliver Rice (Mattias Stone), Sharon Taylor (Myka), Kyle Charles Gannon (Praetorian)
Summary: With the fate of the whole planet on the line, Kovacs, Quell and team race to find Konrad Harlan and stop a catastrophic blast of Angelfire.



The episode begins with the fate of the world hanging in the balance. A literal bang sets us off, as the soldiers enter the bar led by Kovacs Prime, intent on finding Kovacs and the others. Poe manages to surprise him though and it's enough for him and the rest of the group to rise up and overpower the troops. After killing the soldiers he's with, it turns out Kovacs Prime is on their side.

Semetaire confronts the possessed Carrera and meets a grisly end, while the group themselves head off in search of

answers. They arrive at Trepp's Father's place and she sees the snapped stack for herself, knowing he's never coming back. Given Anil is also gone from her life, Trepp turns her back on the group and refuses to take part in their mission.

Quell, Kovacs Prime and Kovacs all team up together and decide to storm Danica's mansion, arriving at her estate and pleading with her for help. She scoffs at the notion, telling them the Elders are extinct and turning her back on their idea. Quell steps forward though and reveals the truth that the Elder Stack is in her own mind.

It's here Danica admits the truth about what she's given to make sure this war has gone ahead and the guards turn the guns on the trio. Quell tries to talk her into making a deal so she can control Angelfire, as Poe suddenly arrives and informs them that The Orbitals are moving — meaning the possessed Elder is about to make his move.

With the final fight approaching, Kovacs talks to Quell about what she intends to do, which includes stopping Jaeger once and for all but taking the Elder back inside her Stack, where she can control it and save the Orbitals in the process. At the same time, Kovacs Prime speaks to Trepp and convinces her to come back for this one final fight.

Everyone converges at Needlecast Station where the fate of the world hangs in the balance. Needing to gain the Elder's trust, Quell convinces the group not to head up with weapons while down below, Trepp locks onto a signal thanks to her coils.

Inside the station, Quell tries to talk Carrera out of destroying the planet. Only, Danica turns on them all and starts firing, shooting Carrera down and prompting a fight to break out inside

and outside the Station. Carrera however, ambushes her and kills Danica. With the Governor now dead, Kovacs and Quell both charge for Carrera and try to fight him off. He's too powerful though but Kovacs Prime arrives and prompts a three on one fight to break out.

With Angelfire raining down, Kovacs sacrifices himself to save them all. With Harlan's World safe for now, Kovacs Prime sweet-talks the commission into believing Quell and Kovacs are no more. With him being the only Kovacs sleeve alive, that means it's not technically double sleeving and the group agree to run with this story.

Trepp decides to honour her Father by taking up his position in her Father's workshop and things appear to be returning to normal for the residents in the city too.

As the episode closes out, it turns out Quell survived and she intends to find a new world to settle on. Meanwhile, Dig 301 writes about Poe in her books, until Poe materializes before her, unfortunately without his memories. Deciding to start from scratch, Dig 301 renames herself Anabel and promises he'll get his memories back. As they touch hands, they begin to look through the data together. Anabel tells him to get the good whiskey ready, as we leave things open for a third season.

Actor Appearances

A

Michael Adamthwaite.....	2
0103 (Father Kovacs); 0107 (Father Kovacs)	
Jojo Ahenkorah.....	1
0107 (Grant)	
Fraser Aitcheson.....	4
0101 (Gene Freak Rhino Man); 0106 (Rhino Man);	
0202 (Praetorian); 0208 (Praetorian)	
Kareem Tristan Alleyne.....	2
0207 (Anil Imani); 0208 (Anil Imani)	
Nyla Alleyne.....	1
0105 (Child #3)	
Primo Allon.....	1
0107 (Dodd)	
Sean Amsing.....	2
0102 (Gus); 0108 (Gus)	
Nicole Anthony.....	1
0101 (Trainee)	
Alison Araya.....	1
0110 (Female Investigator)	
Lexi Atkins.....	1
0109 (Belle)	
Asia Au-Yeung.....	1
0105 (Child #2)	
Marcus Aurelio.....	1
0201 (Latin Man)	
Alika Autran.....	3
0102 (Okulov); 0104 (Okulov); 0107 (Okulov)	

B

Nickolas Baric.....	1
0101 (Man of Kadmin)	
Lorna Joan Barrie.....	1
0202 (Escort)	
Alyson Bath.....	1
0101 (Woman Speaking Hologram)	
James R. Baylis.....	2
0102 (Dick); 0108 (Dick)	
Sonia Beeksma.....	1
0201 (Newscaster)	
Leonie Bennett.....	1
0101 (Sexy Synth Girl)	
Daniel Bernhardt.....	2
0101 (Jaeger); 0107 (Jaeger)	
Mauri Bernstein.....	2
0103 (Wei Receptionist); 0104 (Wei Receptionist)	
Vern Bevis.....	1
0102 (Bouncer)	
Matt Biedel.....	3
0104 (Abuela); 0105 (Dimi); 0106 (Dimi)	
Jackie Blackmore.....	1
0204 (Needlecast Agent #2)	
Bruce Blain.....	1
0108 (Re-Sleeve Guard)	
Dalias Blake.....	5

0202 (Batu / Wedge); 0203 (Batu / Wedge); 0204	
(Batu / Wedge); 0205 (Batu / Wedge); 0206	
(Batu / Wedge)	
Tom Bonello.....	1
0110 (Convention Protester)	
Nikohl Boosheri.....	2
0103 (Nalan Ertekin); 0110 (Nalan Ertekin)	
Hector Borderas.....	3
0104 (Xalbador Kid #1); 0109 (Xalbador Kid #1);	
0110 (Xalbador Kid #1)	
Shawn Bordoff.....	1
0102 (Enraged Person #9)	
Kai Bradbury.....	1
0103 (Tadao)	
Nigel Brighton.....	1
0101 (Man in Black)	
Peter Brown.....	3
0101 (Attendant); 0102 (Meth); 0103 (Meth)	
Tamiko Brownlee.....	2
0201 (Bar Patron #18); 0206 (Rebel #2)	
Adam Busch.....	6
0104 (Mickey); 0105 (Mickey); 0106 (Mickey); 0108	
(Mickey); 0109 (Mickey); 0110 (Mickey)	

C

Philip Cabrita.....	1
0102 (Enraged Person #3)	
Jason Cermak.....	1
0207 (VR Tech #1)	
Cliff Chamberlain.....	3
0108 (Ava Elliot); 0109 (Ava Elliot); 0110 (Ava El-	
liot)	
Melanie Chan.....	1
0104 (Dimi Asian Woman Sleeve)	
Lisa Chandler.....	5
0101 (Mary Lou Henchy); 0102 (Mary Lou Henchy);	
0105 (Mary Lou Henchy); 0108 (Mary Lou Henchy);	
0109 (Mary Lou Henchy)	
Steve Chang.....	1
0201 (Asian Guy)	
Kindall Charters.....	1
0203 (Miner)	
Paul Cheng.....	1
0106 (Scary Guy)	
Cory Chetyrbok.....	1
0101 (Spirit Saver Demonstrator)	
Andrew Chin.....	1
0201 (Yakuza Thug)	
Simon Chin.....	1
0101 (Alcatraz Guard)	
Guy Christie.....	1
0102 (Enraged Person #2)	
Shawn Clark.....	1
0206 (Kemp Soldier)	
Michelle Clarke-Brown.....	1
0102 (Enraged Person #4)	
Kheon Clarke.....	1

0204 (Passerby)
 Stephanie Cleough 3
 0102 (Anemone); 0103 (Anemone); 0104 (Anemone)
 Aaron Collett 1
 0102 (Advert Spokesman #1)
 Bailey Corneal 1
 0207 (Scratcher #2)
 Colin Corrigan 1
 0103 (Man-Servant)
 Nada Cosovic 1
 0104 (Cousin #2)
 Richard Ian Cox 1
 0101 (Cheap Lawyer)
 David Cubitt 2
 0202 (Dugan); 0204 (Dugan)
 Naiah Cummins 1
 0203 (A.I. Directory)

D

Edward Dalmas 1
 0110 (Meth Client)
 Demord Dann 1
 0103 (Guard)
 Glynis Davies 1
 0101 (Old Junkie Woman)
 Cecilia Deacon 1
 0202 (Meth)
 Maddie Dixon-Poirier 3
 0102 (Little Girl); 0107 (Little Girl); 0108 (Little Girl)
 Darren Dolynski 1
 0110 (Male Investigator)
 Jesse Downs 1
 0105 (Child #1)

E

Michael Eklund 3
 0103 (Dimi 2); 0104 (Dimi 2); 0105 (Dimi 2)
 Jim Eliason 4
 0101 (Police Officer); 0103 (Police Officer); 0109
 (Police Officer); 0110 (Police Officer)
 Matt Ellis 2
 0205 (Joshua Kemp); 0206 (Joshua Kemp)
 Gaalen Engen 1
 0102 (Enraged Person #6)

F

Jillian Fargey 1
 0102 (Mrs. Henchy)
 Isabella Farrier 1
 0104 (Cousin #1)
 Eddie Flake 2
 0102 (Uniform Cop); 0106 (Officer Davis)
 Olga Fonda 1
 0101 (Sarah)
 Marlene Forte 6
 0102 (Alazne Ortega); 0104 (Alazne Ortega); 0105
 (Alazne Ortega); 0106 (Alazne Ortega); 0109
 (Alazne Ortega); 0110 (Alazne Ortega)
 Justin Fortier 1
 0102 (Enraged Person #1)
 Frankie Francois 1
 0204 (Bounty Hunter)
 Hyuma Frankowski 1
 0106 (Uniform Officer)
 Jessie Fraser 1
 0102 (Screaming Woman)
 Matt Frewer 2

0105 (Carnage); 0106 (Carnage)
 Vivian Full 1
 0102 (Receptionist)
 Kamran Fulleylove 1
 0204 (Jarek)

G

Kyle Charles Gannon 4
 0201 (Axby's Guard); 0203 (Dianca's Guard); 0204
 (Praetorian); 0208 (Praetorian)
 Morgan Gao 4
 0101 (Young Tak); 0103 (Young Tak); 0107 (Young
 Tak); 0110 (Young Tak)
 Chelsea Gill 1
 0107 (Needlecast Tech)
 Teach Grant 3
 0102 (Jimmy DeSoto); 0104 (Jimmy DeSoto); 0107
 (Jimmy DeSoto)
 Tina Grant 1
 0101 (Overextended Mom)

H

Craig Haas 1
 0201 (Renouncer Holo)
 Xander Hall 4
 0202 (Meth); 0203 (Meth); 0204 (Meth); 0205 (Meth)
 Hesham Hammoud 1
 0104 (Officer #2)
 Jane Hancock 1
 0101 (Orientation Woman)
 Toby Hargrave 1
 0103 (Flake)
 Ian Hawes 1
 0203 (Mandrake Guard)
 Rob Hayter 1
 0110 (Corridor Guard)
 Darcy Hinds 1
 0107 (Kerwin)
 Anna Van Hoof 3
 0103 (Clarissa Severin); 0107 (Clarissa Severin);
 0108 (Clarissa Severin)
 Daphne Hoskins 1
 0204 (Young Daughter)

I

Dario de Iaco 3
 0101 (Gene Freak Neanderthal); 0105 (Neanderthal);
 0106 (Neanderthal)
 Britt Irvin 2
 0203 (Lila); 0204 (Lila)

J

Jihae 1
 0201 (Torch Singer)
 Joshua Jorssen 1
 0102 (Son)
 Juana Lerma Juarez 1
 0104 (Xalbador's Wife)
 Alessandro Juliani 1
 0205 (Jack Soul Brasil)

K

Yuvraj Kalsi 1
 0107 (Boy at Stronghold #1)

Hiro Kanagawa	7
0102 (Captain Tanaka); 0103 (Captain Tanaka); 0105 (Captain Tanaka); 0106 (Captain Tanaka); 0108 (Captain Tanaka); 0109 (Captain Tanaka); 0110 (Captain Tanaka)	
Sky Kao	1
0204 (Server)	
Shane Kim	1
0207 (Praetorian #1)	
Wolfgang Klassen	1
0103 (Security Office Guard)	
Sean Kohnke	1
0101 (Man of Kadmin #2)	
Yukari Komatsu	2
0103 (Mother Kovacs); 0107 (Mother Kovacs)	
Ken Kramer	1
0102 (Hank)	
Chad Krowchuk	1
0104 (Miles)	

L

Howie Lai	1
0101 (Meditech 1)	
Hayley Law	6
0102 (Lizzie Elliot); 0103 (Lizzie Elliot); 0106 (Lizzie Elliot); 0108 (Lizzie Elliot); 0109 (Lizzie Elliot); 0110 (Lizzie Elliot)	
Paul Lazenby	1
0101 (Trooper #1)	
Michelle Lee	1
0103 (Female Fighter)	
Will Yun Lee	5
0101 (Stronghold Kovacs); 0102 (Stronghold Kovacs); 0104 (Stronghold Kovacs); 0107 (Stronghold Kovacs); 0204 (Stronghold Kovacs)	
Toby Levins	2
0109 (Pervy Guard (HITC)); 0110 (Pervy Guard)	
David Lewis	1
0102 (Director Nyman)	
Lillian Lim	1
0106 (Hostess)	
Damon Lipari	1
0204 (Dad / Jarek)	
Enrique Lopez	3
0104 (Xalbador Kid #2); 0109 (Xalbador Kid #2); 0110 (Xalbador Kid #2)	
Chris Loubardeas	1
0102 (Enraged Person #10)	
Elfina Luk	1
0101 (Re-Meet Mom)	

M

Veda Maharaj	1
0107 (Boy at Stronghold #2)	
Amro Majzoub	1
0102 (Enraged Person #7)	
Alan Mak	1
0204 (Needlecast Tech #1 (credit only))	
Kareem Malcolm	1
0202 (Millsport UNI)	
Byron Mann	3
0101 (O.G. Kovacs); 0105 (O.G. Kovacs); 0106 (O.G. Kovacs)	
Amitai Marmorstein	1
0101 (Junkie Dealer)	
Camille Martinez	1
0105 (Mother)	
Lionel Marye	1

0102 (Grounder)	
Antonio Marziale	6
0101 (Isaac Bancroft); 0103 (Isaac Bancroft); 0105 (Isaac Bancroft); 0106 (Isaac Bancroft); 0108 (Isaac Bancroft); 0110 (Isaac Bancroft)	
Hannah Rose May	2
0109 (Synth Woman); 0110 (Synth Woman)	
Neal McDonough	3
0204 (Konrad Harlan); 0205 (Konrad Harlan); 0207 (Konrad Harlan)	
Jason McKinnon	1
0101 (Handsome Guy)	
Chris McNally	3
0103 (Sergei Brevlov); 0106 (Sergei Brevlov); 0110 (Sergei Brevlov)	
David Milchard	1
0104 (Al)	
Brittany Mitchell	1
0203 (Female Synth 2)	
Joel Montgrand	1
0101 (Meditech 3)	
Muhumuza Mushega	2
0104 (Dimi African Male Sleeve); 0106 (African Male)	

N

Riley Lai Nelet	4
0101 (Young Reileen); 0103 (Young Reileen); 0107 (Young Reileen); 0110 (Young Reileen)	
David William No	1
0103 (Male Fighter)	

O

Lauren Overholt	1
0102 (Enraged Person #12)	
Eijiro Ozaki	1
0107 (Saito)	

P

Zahf Paroo	6
0101 (Curtis); 0103 (Curtis); 0105 (Curtis); 0106 (Curtis); 0108 (Curtis); 0110 (Curtis)	
Kat Pasion	1
0101 ('B' Side Synth)	
Tahmoh Penikett	2
0101 (Dimitri Kadmin); 0104 (Dimi 1)	
Tim Perez	1
0102 (Father)	
Arnold Pinnock	3
0106 (Hemingway); 0107 (Hemingway); 0108 (Hemingway)	

R

Jody Racicot	1
0104 (Mr. Phillips)	
Anoop Randhawa	1
0105 (Policeman)	
Hugo Raymundo	1
0201 (Latino Guy)	
Jesse Redmond	1
0102 (Maddy)	
James Rha	2
0203 (Tech #1); 0204 (Tech #1)	
Oliver Rice	4
0201 (Mattias Stone); 0204 (Mattias Stone); 0207 (Mattias Stone); 0208 (Mattias Stone)	

Vanessa Richards 1
 0102 (Enraged Person #5)
 Courtney Richter 1
 0110 (Ava)
 Trevor Roberts 2
 0105 (CTAC Intel Officer); 0106 (CTAC Intelligence Officer)
 Alex Rockhill 1
 0104 (Dimi Latino Male Sleeve)
 Troy Rudolph 1
 0101 (Re-Meet Dad)
 Kat Ruston 1
 0203 (Disheveled Synth)

S

Yuichi Saito 1
 0103 (Shimoda)
 Derek Schnobb 1
 0103 (Refugee)
 Natascha Schulmeister 1
 0102 (Enraged Person #8)
 Darren E. Scott 1
 0207 (Warehouse Guard (Praetorian))
 Michael Shanks 1
 0201 (Horace Axley)
 Naomi Simpson 1
 0102 (Enraged Person #11)
 Sukh Singh 1
 0102 (Morgue Tech)
 Carmela Sison 1
 0203 (DIG 682)
 Christian Sloan 1
 0103 (Vincente Giraud)
 Teana-Marie Smith 1
 0204 (Needlecast Agent #1)
 Celeste White Steele 3
 0101 (Fell Station Detective); 0106 (Fell Station Detective); 0108 (Fell Station Detective)
 Bradley Stryker 1
 0201 (George the 'Shifty Man')
 Katie Stuart 2
 0104 (Vidaura); 0107 (Vidaura)

T

Kristi Taylor 1
 0102 (Miriam Clone #3)
 Sharon Taylor 5
 0202 (Myka); 0203 (Myka); 0204 (Myka); 0207 (Myka); 0208 (Myka)
 Tamara Taylor 5
 0102 (Oumou Prescott); 0103 (Oumou Prescott); 0106 (Oumou Prescott); 0108 (Oumou Prescott); 0110 (Oumou Prescott)
 Adam Thomas 1
 0207 (Hazmat Tech #1)
 Kwasi Thomas 1
 0101 (Meditech 2)
 John Emmet Tracy 1
 0101 (Warden Sullivan)
 Andre Tricoteux 3
 0102 (The Mongol); 0103 (The Mongol); 0104 (The Mongol)
 Francisco Trujillo 3
 0104 (Xalbador); 0109 (Xalbador); 0110 (Xalbador)
 Sheila Tyson 1
 0102 (Carla)

V

Jay Cardinal Villeneuve 1
 0101 (Spirit Saver Demonstrator 2)
 Fiona Vroom 5
 0103 (Sandy Kim); 0104 (Sandy Kim); 0105 (Sandy Kim); 0108 (Sandy Kim); 0110 (Sandy Kim)

W

Nalani Wakita 1
 0102 (Advert Spokeswoman #2)
 Shayn Walker 1
 0101 (Security Guard)
 Colleen Wheeler 1
 0106 (Nurse)
 Seth Whittaker 1
 0104 (Officer #1)
 Ben Wilkinson 1
 0106 (Doctor)
 Garfield Wilson 3
 0102 (Gomez); 0104 (Gomez); 0107 (Gomez)
 Winson Won 1
 0105 (Uni Levine)
 Bree Woodill 1
 0103 (Meth Woman)
 Peter Woodward 1
 0109 (Pleasure Concierge)

Y

Maxwell Sloan Yip 1
 0201 (Mickey Nowaza)
 Leanne Khol Young 1
 0207 (Praetorian)

Z

Celeste Ziegler 1
 0102 (Advert Spokeswoman #1)
 Sarah Ziolkowski 1
 0106 (Police Officer)
 Waleed Zuaier 6
 0101 (Samir Abboud); 0102 (Samir Abboud); 0103 (Samir Abboud); 0104 (Samir Abboud); 0105 (Samir Abboud); 0106 (Samir Abboud)
 Charles Zuckermann 1
 0103 (Control Tech)