# The OA Episode Guide

**Episodes 001–008** 

Last episode aired Friday December 16, 2016











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## Homecoming

Season 1 Episode Number: 1 Season Episode: 1

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016 Writer: Brit Marling, Zal Batmanglij

Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

Guest Stars: Hiam Abbass (Khatun), Zoey Todorovsky (Nina Azarova), Marcus Choi (Mr. Vu), Robert Eli (Mr. Gilchrist), Nikolai Nikolaeff (Roman Azarov),

Gavin Barnes (Kid on Bus #2), Spencer Barnes (Kid on Bus #3), Eliot Brown (Kid on Bus #1), Amelia Campbell (Mrs. Winchell), Michelle Liu Coughlin (Field Reporter), Danielle Ferland (Hospital Administrator), Susanna Frazer (Mrs. Roberts), K. Todd Freeman (Masters), Sean Grandillo (Miles Brekov), Dalton Harrod (Quartet Singer #2), Shuler Hensley (Mr. Winchell), Kelly Jackson (Anchorwoman), Anastasia Lepin (Valari), Deirdre Madigan (ICU Nurse), Jeff Mantel (Mr. Roberts), Chris McCarrell (Quartet Singer #1), Cliff Moylan (Hornby), Kirill Nikiforov (Azarov's Assistant), Kurt Uy (Reporter), Shannon Walsh (Jaye), Abigail Friend (Student), Samantha Lee Johnson (Neighbor), Michael D. Joseph (Neighbor), Faith Logan (Neighbor), Longmore Mikhala (High School Student), Jesse VanDerveer (Neighborhood

Child)

Summary: After 7 years missing, a blind girl, Prairie, is found and can now see.

She also says her name is The OA, and a lot more mysteries surround

her.



The episode opens with a found footagestyle cell phone capture of a blond woman in a wispy nightgown who decides to hop off a bridge, and, although she manages to go video viral because of it, she isn't successful at killing herself. She's none too pleased about having survived her fall, but her lips are sealed as to why. All the nurses can figure out about her is that she doesn't like to be touched, and she has some wicked scar patterns on her back.

Thanks to the power of YouTube, though, her story comes to the attention of her adoptive mother, who introduces

herself to the formerly missing (for seven years!) Prairie, but letting her touch her face. Turns out, Prairie was once blind but has regained her sight thanks to the magic of ... well, we don't get to find that out either.

Prairie's not open about the details of her disappearance (except she tells authorities that she, in fact, did not disappear and was "present for all of it — all seven years, three months, and 11

days"), but she's desperate for a wi-fi connection to search for her long-lost hero Homer, who everyone suspects is the man who must've captured her. She does reveal that she and whomever she was with all these years have all died more times than she can count, which rightly freaks everyone out. (By the way, Homer was a former football stud who broke his back and was minutes from perishing but had a miraculous recovery somehow; that's all we know right now.)

Her mom is hesitant to share the password to their router because the hospital told her not to, but she's willing to bend on some of the other suggested policies, like unhinging the doors and not letting her out of sight till she's "cured" of whatever attendant psychosis has come with her perceived kidnapping. Google? A no-no. But random walks out in the nothingness by herself are just fine. Okay.

This brings Prairie into contact with Steve, a guy who likes to do handstands on the very high roofs of abandoned buildings and linger naked by the window while his dad warns him about his bullying behaviors. She gets his attention — well, beyond the notoriety that she's already carrying around the neighborhood for being the long-lost abductee come home at last — by biting his guard dog into submission after he sics the pooch on her for getting too close for his comfort.

Steve's a prototypical jerk who sells drugs to other students and is on the brink of expulsion thanks to punching a prized chorus singer in the throat over the fact that Steve's friends with benefits, Jay, might have a thing for him. He needs Prairie to pretend to be his stepmom for a parent-teacher conference, and he's willing to hook "Crazy" up with her much-fussed web connection in some Strangers on a Train-style favor trade in return for it. But her price is steeper than some mere modem. She wants him to rustle up some of his pals to meet her at one of the empty spec houses they've colonized for their meet-cute at midnight and leave their front doors open in the process. And no, she's not answering any questions about the reason for that either except to say that she "need[s] to cross a border that's hard to define."

Prairie is successful at convincing poor Ms. Broderick-Allen that she should give Steve another chance because he's a kid who can really learn something from her. But the jig is up as quickly as it went down because the teacher runs into Steve's dad at the warehouse supermarket soon after, revealing Steve's lie.

Prairie then takes her campaign for help to YouTube, which Steve's friends all see, and after he realizes that she gave him some good advice about not being such a superficial jerk all the time (something about finding his "invisible self"), he decides to go for it and show up to her little late-night story session after all. He's probably going to get shipped off to military-style reform camp anyway, so why not, right? The only surprise attendee is Ms. Broderick-Allen, who happens across her plea video online after searching for the meaning of "OA" just like the rest of us have probably done by now (it's the name she gave her during their con meeting). With her squad of five — a VERY important number, for some as-yet-unexplained reason — she fires up some candles and finally starts to dig into some meat about herself.

It's only then that we finally get the opening credits, a whopping 55 minutes into this business. There are some obvious calls back to Eleven from Stranger Things here right away: Girl whose nose bleeds as an indication of some inner power pulls together a team of curious kids — Steve, Jesse, Buck, French, and their teacher — to transport herself to another mind realm. The only thing missing is telekinesis and a box of Eggo waffles, really, but anyway.

Turns out, she grew up as the daughter of a Russian oligarch and could see just fine and got to ride a fancy bus to private school every day. Her dad was her sole parent, after her mom died in childbirth, and he had some questionable tactics for helping her get over her nightmares — instead of a trial by fire, his method is of the icier variety. That approach comes in handy for her, though, when her bus goes off a bridge and lands at the bottom of a chilly river. While the rest of the czars' kids are stuck beneath, Nina/Prairie/OA swims her way through a hole and comes face to face with a bright light.

"We were a message, you see? From the void to our parents. A message that said you are powerful to be sure, but you are not all powerful. The youngest sons and daughters of every Russian zion was on the bus that day. They all died. Every single one of them, including me."

She finds herself transported to a starry realm where a woman offers to let her surface to safety in trade for her sight — this angel tells her she doesn't want her to see those horrors ahead of her. When she comes to on the beach, where her father is shaking her back to life, she's blind. And with that, we're left with far more questions than answers...

#### **New Colossus**

Season 1 Episode Number: 2 Season Episode: 2

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016

Writer: Melanie Marnich Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

Guest Stars: Zoey Todorovsky (Nina Azarova), Will Brill (Scott Brown), Robert Eli

(Mr. Gilchrist), Zachary Gemino (Carlos Sosa), Nikolai Nikolaeff (Roman Azarov), Genevieve Adams (Ms. Prescott), Jaxon Bartok (Nina's Classmate #3), Michael R. 'Mikey' Berry (Nina's Classmate #1), Ivy Cordle (Nina's Classmate #2), Jason Ferreira (Nina's Classmate #4), Yusef Komunyakaa (Guard), Ashley Rivera (Nina's Classmate #5), Victor Slezak (Kevin Harris), Svetlana Efremova (Zoya), Danny Guzman (Adrian Sosa), Milagros S. Linares (Adele), J.C. MacKenzie (Dr. Mark Shea), Martha Millan (Claudette Sosa), Ravin Patterson (Mrs. Valen), Faina Reinhardt (Raven-Hair), Faith Logan (High School Student)

Summary: The OA retraces the dramatic twists and turns in her life after a child-

hood accident, leading up to a fateful encounter far from home many

years later.



The episode starts with The OA in a private school. This definitely isn't Russia. It's a school for blind children.

Her biological father smuggled her out of Russia to attend a boarding school in America, promising that he would join her soon. Now I'm no expert, but in my experience, in shows like this, whenever someone says they'll do something, they end up dying. Pessimist? No, I'm a realist.

By the way, The OA's name before she was Prairie was Nina.

And just like that, the headmistress calls Nina into her office to tell her that

her father died. I might be able to see the future. Keep this between us, everyone!

Nancy and Abel meet Nina's aunt at a house full of Russian women, with the intention to adopt a baby. But Nancy runs into Nina, and the rest, as they say, is history.

I lied, it's not history because we're only 10 minutes in and nothing has been explained.

"Your eyes are as blue as the prairie sky," Nancy remarks. "We'll call her Prairie!" Hey guys, that's how she gets the stupid name! The biggest mystery surrounding The OA has finally been explained!

Whoa, this is the first genuinely creepy scene in the show. Prairie is sleepwalking and sleeptalking, but in Russian. Abel is taping the phenonemon because he has a weird fetish wants to show the footage to a doctor. As if a child sleepwalking and sleeptalking aren't creepy enough already,

Prairie picks up a knife ... that was inexplicably in her suitcase. It's the little things like this that raise the most questions for me.

A doctor, who can apparently also translate Russian, tells Nancy and Abel that Prairie is having dreams that she thinks are premonitions.

The OA explains that she was medicated for 13 years, but the premonitions never stopped.

Creepy dream sequence where Prairie and her biological father are standing in a dark room staring at each other.

On her 21st birthday, Prairie decided to leave Nancy and Abel to meet her father at "the face of a giantess surrounded by water," because that's what she saw in the premonitions. Although she failed to mention to the confused viewer exactly where that is.

That was seven years ago. That was how Prairie disappeared.

Oh, I'm an idiot. The "face of a giantess surrounded by water" is the Statue of Liberty. I thought it was some weird cryptic message. See what this show is doing to me?

Prairie's father totally shows up and it's a happy family reunion! They hug and dance and sing and move back to Russia.

I hope you didn't believe that. He never showed up.

Prairie's new plan is to play her violin in Grand Central Station until her father gets off a train and hears her song. Her plan worked. But don't get too excited, because her father never found her. However, the man who changed her life did.

Alfonso, one of the boys who agreed to help The OA, gets an athletic scholarship: a full ride to any college in Michigan. Anyone else think he'll lose it by the end of the season? Of course he will.

As the show transitions back to seven years ago, I'd like to say that Prairie's violin playing is beyond creepy, but so soothing at the same time. It sounds like a song you hear before die, but in the most peaceful way possible.

Prairie is approached by a doctor named Hap, who inquiries about her musical talent. He asks her if she had a near-death experience. Prairie freezes, eyes widening. My eyes actually widened too. Has he had a near-death experience? Did he write his senior thesis on near-death experiences (NDE)?

Over oysters and fries, Hap admits that his life revolves around NDE. He's fascinated by the subject and wants to learn what happens to people who have NDE. He studies NDE survivors. The survivors he has worked with all come back from their NDE with new skills: perfect pitch, increased intelligence, or other remarkable talents they didn't demonstrate beforehand.

At this moment, I'd like to make a not-so-bold prediction. Prairie is going to work with Hap, and he's going to perform deadly tests on her, causing her to have NDE over and over again. Remember in episode 1 when she said, "we all died more times than I can count?"

Coincidentally enough, Prairie begs Hap to take her with him, and they take his private plane to his house, which is in a location the name of which I failed to catch.

In a scene of perfect dramatic irony, while Praire attempts to call Nancy and Abel, Hap puts on a record. The song? "Operator," by Jim Croce.

"Operator, well could you help me place this call?" Croce croons as the phone keeps ringing and no one picks up.

That's warning sign number one. Warning sign number two follows shortly after. Hap's lab is in a basement, behind a door with a keypad lock.

Once Hap leads Prairie to the basement, we see warning signs three and four. Hap calls Prairie an "asset," and her bed is no ordinary bed. It's a glass cage.

As Prairie starts to break down, a rather menacing voice speaks to her via a PA system. The voice tells her that everything will be explained, and that this is no one's fault but her own. His name is... Homer.

## Champion

Season 1 Episode Number: 3 Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016

Writer: Brit Marling, Dominic Orlando

Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

Guest Stars: Will Brill (Scott Brown), Juan Castano (Mr. Bandy), Rosalind Chao (Pa-

tricia Knoller), Jack DiFalco (Jimmy), Ryan Homchick (Rod Spence), Chloe Levine (Angie), Alexa Marcigliano (August), Valeri Mudek (Joanne), Sharon Van Etten (Rachel), Olivia Boreham-Wing (Teen Girl),

And Palladino (Costco Shopper), Anthony Pettine (Theo)

Summary: A journalist approaches the family with an offer. At Hap's, a bond is

forged with Homer and the others as they hatch a desperate plan.



If only Pat from *The Chicago Tribune* were one of the chosen five, she might just get her story. But, alas, there will be no healing biopic book from Prairie Johnson just yet, no matter what kind of loot it might bring Prairie's financially strapped family. See, the difference between her other captives who choose to be written about is that her story doesn't have its ending just yet. I'll say.

Reunion numbers three and four of the midnight storytellers brigade (of which Steve and French have come to

major blows and Mrs. Broderick-Allen is dealing — or not dealing, as the case may be — with the death of her brother) takes us deeper into Happ's lair, where we finally get to learn a thing or two about Prairie's fellow captives, Homer, Rachel, and Scott.

"We were the living dead, right next to each other but alone," she says. "There's nothing more isolating than to not be able to feel time, to not know the distance between hours, days."

To break the silence and separation, the four start talking to one another. Homer reveals that he's not so much concerned about being rescued from their little prison as he is making sure his baby son knows he didn't abandon his mother during her pregnancy. The whole reason he's in this mess to begin with is that Dr. Happ (if that's even his real name) offered him \$500 to do a medical experiment on NDEs, and while he did pay up, the money never got to his ex-girlfriend or child. It's still wadded up in a crinkly ball of cash down there with Homer, completely useless to everyone.

Just before Homer was abducted, he reveals, he got a sneaking suspicion that things weren't what they seemed and hid his championship ring in the doc's bathroom before being stowed away in his glass cage for who knows how long. Why is this information useful, you ask?

Well, Prairie here has gotten on Happ's good side by making him a sandwich with the giant butcher knife she comes across in the kitchen, instead of trying to stab him to death. Happ gave her a hall pass to get a split second of sunshine because, as a blind person, she needs that more than everyone else for some reason. Why he's taken a liking to her above the others isn't clear, but she suspects it has something to do with the fact that she can't see and tell what he's up to (or where he's up to it, for that matter).

This eventually progresses into a full-on gig as his house elf, and although she's cooking up her own plan for finding a phone or some other means of escape, Homer just wants her to snag that ring and a piece of mail that they can use to send word to Mandy and everyone else that the quartet is alive and well and needs help (although Homer himself isn't as concerned with that last part of the equation as everyone else).

Prairie finds out that the good doctor has to take sleeping pills and decides to squirrel them away, one by one, until she's got enough to poison his batch of stew, and while she's sweating and suspicious as she can be when she pours him a bowl, he still feasts on a few spoons of the beet-filled soup (an ingredient which serves as a nice metaphor for her, actually, as it's favored by Russians for surviving the frost). He starts to choke more quickly than she expected, but it's not because of the meds she's sprinkled into it; turns out, he's allergic to the tomato paste that's in the stock, and he's having a severe allergic reaction as a result.

He sends her to his restroom to get his EpiPen from the medicine cabinet, saying if he doesn't survive, the other three will be stuck downstairs and starve to death. She dutifully retrieves it but still hesitates to deliver the life-saving device, especially after she feels the hair of a dead girl lying in his bathtub. Turns out, the woman Rachel was screaming for, August, has been dead since before Prairie arrived. Dr. Happ doesn't tell her why, but Prairie knows it has something to do with the gas that's been sprayed on Scott, and although it looks like he might bite it without his shot, especially since she started this story with "it's really hard to kill a man, it's even hard to allow a man to die." But because that would be too easy, he mud-crawls his way into the bathroom and sticks himself to safety.

Despite her failure to kill — or even subdue — the doctor, she does manage to snag a piece of mail addressed to Verizon, along with Homer's ring, and together they compose a letter alerting whoever receives it to everything they can remember about where they are, who's down there with them, and who should know about it. This could work because it's just being written on an already-outgoing statement, but the class ring bulge could also totally give them away. In the end, the wisdom of the plan doesn't matter because even though their idea is to slip it under the little shale stream they all share is solid, it floats past her hands and into oblivion, mixing with whatever river the stream ultimately runs into.

Prairie's hesitation to deliver the EpiPen earlier doesn't cause her any problems with Happ, somehow, because she's back in his service soon enough. Homer gives her a nice pep talk about how to survive their epic letdown of an escape attempt, and Rachel reveals her crystalline post-resurrection vocal tones (and her backstory of returning to her body after a gnarly car accident with her little brother). This gives Prairie a pair of wings, so when she has a chance to, she throws Dr. Happ down the stairs and makes a break for it.

She gets through the window by bashing it out with a frying pan and runs as fast and far as she can before coming upon a giant cliff — how Scott and Homer arrived via car makes no sense on that note — before being knocked out herself.

## **Away**

Season 1 Episode Number: 4 Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016

Writer: Ruby Rae Spiegel Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

Guest Stars: Riz Ahmed (Elias Rahim), Hiam Abbass (Khatun), Will Brill (Scott

Brown), Sharon Van Etten (Rachel), Marcus Choi (Mr. Vu), Nikolai Nikolaeff (Roman Azarov), Melanie Ehrlich (Ali), Ryan Homchick (Rod

Spence)

Summary: OA is given a new perspective due to a dilemma; and Homer tries to

learn more about Hap's experiments.



Prairie wakes up surrounded by what looks like something straight out of *The Lord of the Rings*. Apparently she is aware that she is dead.

No, why would you walk into the creepy red shack? That's the first thing you learn in Surviving Horror Movies 101! Hey, it's the weird mystic Arabic woman from the first time Prairie died. Sure, let's all fall into her lap and let her stroke us because we know so much about her. Did Nancy not teach Prairie about stranger danger?

Prairie's odd spirit guide explains that her purpose is to do good for others, and should she ever die, it is an accident. Maybe that's her special post-NDE talent?

Huh, Hap doesn't appear to be too upset that she tried to escape. He even claims to be worried about her.

The gas that gets filtered into the cages knocks the captives out so Hap can experiment on them. In their gassed, drugged state, the captives don't remember what happened during the experiments.

The mystic Arabic woman gives Prairie her sight back, but she'll never be able to see her biological father again. She passed up an opportunity to be with someone she loves to be there for people she just met. Her gift is starting to sound more like a curse.

I still don't understand why The OA Five has to leave their doors open every night. Was that explained and I just missed it? Unlikely, because this show explains nothing. Ever.

Jesse seems to have the most normal home life of the five, except for the fact that his mom committed suicide and his dad left.

Just as I was about to say that I'm having trouble figuring out Mrs. Broderick-Allen's life, hark! A rare explanation! She reported her twin brother to the cops, he ended up in rehab, and died of unknown reasons.

In the past, Scott is being a dick as usual. He wants no part of Prairie's plan. To escape. From the twisted doctor. I don't know what his problem is, but he needs to clean up his act before he singlehandedly ruins this show.

Prairie is doing an excellent job pretending she's still blind, even while facing a lie detector. At some point, she's going to slip up and get everyone in hot water.

Ah, and now I feel bad for talking smack about Scott. He's unusually bitter because when he was taken by Hap, he was ill. He reveals to Prairie his chest and stomach, which are riddled with hives of some variety.

Because Scott doesn't want to gas himself to let Prairie witness the experiments, Rachael and Prairie herself volunteer to inhale the gas so Homer can do some recon. Of course the football quarterback is stepping up to be the hero. My favorite cliche TV trope!

Naturally, the plan failed. What were they expecting, really? There's no way Prairie and Rachael could have inhaled all the gas without passing out before they finished.

Apparently the gas doesn't have the effect the captives thought it did. Scott the hypocrite, while reading Prairie the riot act because he thought she was awake and didn't inhale any gas, discovers that Prairie is in a state of hypnotic mind control. She does everything he says. The gas makes its victims compliant.

Fun fact: the gas is called Devil's Breath. What else would it be called?

The OA informs The OA Five that it took the captives another year to perfect the plan.

Fast forward to a year later. Thank God, I don't know how many failed plans I would be able to sit through.

We're about to see some really messed up stuff, guys! Get excited!

Prairie and Rachael successfully inhale the entirety of the gas intended for Homer. It's up to him now to play puppet. I've got a bad feeling about this.

Hap straps Homer into a dentist's chair, if dentist's chairs looked like medieval torture devices. He then proceeds to rub oil all over Homer's head. No, I'm not taking this from an erotic novel. This is actually happening.

Homer looks incredibly nervous, the kind of nervous you look before a first date, and rightfully so. Hap steps back into what looks like a 1970s NASA control room. A large cylinder is dropped on Homer's body and starts filling with water. Is that all Hap does? Drown the captives?

Hap abruptly stops the drowning process, a suspicious look on his face. Oop, it's all over now. Hap reapplies the gas via a mask. The OA says that for three years, they failed. But Homer never gave up, because he's the dreamy football quarterback hero.

Hold on. If they keep trying the same thing for three years, how has Hap not caught on yet? How has he not killed them yet? I feel like that's something he would do. He seems like a guy comfortable with vengeful killing.

This time, the captives distract Hap while Homer sneaks into the NASA control room. Will this end well? You decide.

It ended well-ish, believe it or not. Homer was able to listen to some recordings that probably won't be explained anytime soon.

Homer finally did it! He died awake! His time in the other side is... odd. After falling through a vent, and leaving a flooding bathroom, he happens upon a fish tank that looks exactly like the glass cage complex in Hap's lab. He eats one of the fish, because the only way to come back to life from an NDE is to eat a living thing.

The episode ends with Homer shaking violently before falling limp.

#### **Paradise**

Season 1 Episode Number: 5 Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016 Writer: Brit Marling, Zal Batmanglij

Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

Guest Stars: Riz Ahmed (Elias Rahim), Paz Vega (Renata), Will Brill (Scott Brown),

Sharon Van Etten (Rachel), Robert Eli (Principal Gilchrist), Robert Morgan (Sheriff Stan Markham), Andrew Breving (Parking Lot Dad), Katia Caso (Cuban Concierge), Dalton Harrod (Quartet Singer #2), John-Michael Lyles (Quartet Singer #3), Chris McCarrell (Quartet Singer #1), Martha Millan (Claudelle Sosa), Danyer Toledano (Handsome Cuban Man), Victor Slezak (Kevin Harris), Isaac Delgado and His

Orchestra (Themselves), Faith Logan (High School Student)

Summary: Hap singles out a new test subject; Homer and OA work on their es-

cape plan; and Scott can't take it anymore.



Hap is actually in Cuba, meanwhile Prairie and Homer share a strangely normal intimate moment through the glass, while Hap looks on via camera. He doesn't look too pleased with this interaction. I'd speculate that he'll try to seperate them, but there's not much he can do. What's he going to do, move them to different cages?

Well, he did something to Homer because when everyone wakes up in the morning, Homer's cage is empty.

I'm not sure how I feel with The OA meeting with this FBI therapist-type man. She met him randomly last episode,

and is with him again. It seems forced, like the creators are trying to squeeze in as much mystery as possible while sacrificing good writing.

I think Alfonso is driven to help The OA because his life is unfulfilled. Everything he's accomplished has been on his own, for himself. He wants to do something for someone else for once. Since his mom is so unappreciative of his support, he looks to The OA. Is Alfonso the Homer of the present day?

The OA explains that Hap took Homer away because he was the lynchpin holding the captives together and providing them with stability. Homer and Prairie were performing yoga-esque movements, that they learned during their NDE, in an attempt to open a celestial doorway in an effort to escape.

It looks like Hap is taking Homer to Cuba to help bring the potential new subject back to the lab.

In the hotel, Homer makes a daring escape. He makes it as far as the sidewalk in front of the hotel before being greeted by Hap. How Hap managed to get outside before Homer is beyond me.

If I was trapped in a basement for at least 5 years, I too would be spazzing out whenever someone so much as looked at me.

I feel bad for Homer. The beautiful Cuban guitarist wants to seduce him, but he has too much pride to do Hap's dirty work.

I spoke too soon. He succumbs to her exotic charm, and they go to bed together. Meanwhile, in the other room, Hap listens to them have sex while watching The OA do pushups back at the lab. Normal.

Ooh, this is getting scandalous! Hap gets the devious idea to sends the sounds from Homer and the Cuban woman's lovemaking to the speakers in the basement. This is his best bet to tear Prairie and Homer apart.

Hap does more than that. He tears everyone apart. He made them feel human, like they could never be angels, by displaying Homer's vulnerability.

Renata (the Cuban woman) is now in the cages, and she hates Homer just as much as The OA does.

On a side note, this is the first time the captives are calling Prairie The OA.

Oh, is Scott really selling out The OA and Homer in order to avoid being gassed? Well, the joke is on him because Hap is still going to experiment on Scott! Even after Scott tells Hap that The OA has been able to see since the last experiment, Hap proceeds to drown him.

And by drown, I don't mean drown to the point of an NDE. I mean drown for good. Hap kills Scott and brings his bloody corpse back to its cage to send a message. Whether or not Hap meant to kill Scott remains to be seen.

In a bizarre turn of events, the blood that pooled around Scott's corpse is receding back into his body as The OA and Homer perform their movements throughout the night. They... they brought Scott back to life by doing weird interpretative dance moves.

Scott is apparently a believer in the movements now. Death gave him a whole new outlook on life! While dead, he somehow learned that there are five movements and five people are needed to open a tunnel to another dimension. No, I'm not making that up. That's exactly what Scott said.

The first big reveal of this episode is that when an NDE survivor dies, they learn one of the movements. The OA and Homer had one each, and now Scott has the third. This means Rachael and Renata will have to die again.

The second big reveal is that the captives are trapped in the other dimension, and The OA needs her five to learn the moves and rescue them.

## **Forking Paths**

Season 1 Episode Number: 6 Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016

Writer: Melanie Marnich Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

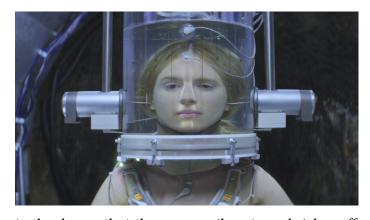
Guest Stars: Paz Vega (Renata), Will Brill (Scott Brown), Sharon Van Etten (Rachel),

Marcus Choi (Mr. Vu), Michael Cumpsty (Dr. Leon Citro), Robert Morgan (Sheriff Stan Markham), Jeryl Ann Costello (Nurse), Liz Burnette

(Nurse (voice))

Summary: As the group continues its search for the final movement, a startling

turn of events gives Hap's work a new urgency.



Well, there were two Happs. Happ's Dr. Mengele routine wasn't just born of his particular penchant for evil, but he actually inherited his perverse vision of the scientific method from his former residency fellow Dr Leon. As in, he's a protégé of murdering for discovery's sake, and he's trying to best his former mentor in a race for the finish line of who'll prove the afterlife exists first.

These two are stunningly frightening to watch together because they've normalized their captivity of these "subjects"

to the degree that they can easily eat sandwiches off a morgue table without batting an eye and have to reach deep to even consider feeling sorry for those they experiment on. Leon even more so than Happ: In fact, he thinks of his subject pool like a restaurant manager would — turnover is key to keeping things fresh. The only thing that gets either of them riled up is the conversation over who'll make use of their findings first. In Leon's case, he wants to reap the financial rewards, and he thinks he's really close to getting his hands on some proof.

Happ just wants to be part of that world, Little Mermaid-style, but, as Prairie points out, is too much of a chicken poo to go through with his own self-experimentation and find out what it's like firsthand. Instead, he's stuck emulating their little dance moves from his closed-circuit viewpoint and ravenously gnawing on every detail they give him about the experience.

The same is true for Leon, who has a nasty grin about the condition of his subjects but isn't exactly facing that bright light on his own time. The pair compares notes on what's ahead for them in the hereafter (chances are, it's not The Good Place), and Leon's beside himself over Happ's suggestion that there may be more than one possible "beyond." Instead of waxing philosophical again and congratulating each other on being equally awful, Leon gets angry with Happ. To him, his little s-word of an underling has just threatened to take away his stacks of cash on the horizon by besting him for the big discovery somehow (who can possibly keep up with the logic of two psychopaths such as these...).

Leon pulls one of his "look down at that thing over there, WHAM" maneuvers with Happ and a morgue drawer, and Happ surprisingly falls for the elementary attack ploy. He manages to outmuscle Leon, however, and ends up smothering him with a tray of the same purple goo Dead August was bathing in back at home.

Guess Leon got to find out all the answers to his questions after all.

Happ escapes the morgue in a ridiculous incognito scarf and sunglasses ensemble (when did he become so amateur at things!?), but before he leaves, he does do the first decent thing we've seen by alerting one of the passing nurses to people in need of help down there at the abandoned morgue. Those would be Leon's subjects, who'd starve unnoticed without his heads-up there. Has he had some major change of heart? Has Leon's callous disregard for the purity and higher purpose of this experiment brought him a soul all of a sudden here? Um, NO.

He does offer to take OA away to wherever she wants to go and put an end to the experiment, sending the others to some sort of alternative safety while they practiced healing rituals with the first two dance moves together, but OA declines the offer, telling him in no uncertain terms that she'll go with him nowhere. Like she'd have a choice about keeping company with him anyway, right? She knows he's starting to unravel and can somehow sense that he's just killed someone.

What OA is compliant to is another experiment without so much as a puff of the gassy stuff. She's fine with dying alert at this point, because now that they've gotten the other four moves (turns out, Renata, the fifth wheel, was able to scurry up the fourth after Scott), she wants the fifth so they can soul-skedaddle their ways out of there at long last. Happ wants to see them move five, too, because he's been studying their routine through his closed-circuit view of everything and wants to experience this alternative reality for himself, so he doesn't even pretend to be opposed to her goal.

When OA gets to the next level, though, no one's home. Her angel Katoon is long gone from the starry realm, and OA thinks it's because she doesn't want to share the last move and have Happ come knocking on her door next.

OA's returned to her cell and informs Homer of this new development, and the two console each other with a drawn-out discussion of raising celery stalks, while Happ listens to the sounds of Saturn because he believes that's where OA was transported during her latest romp through heaven. He falls asleep at the wheel, and that's when Stan, the policeman who'd moseyed by once before on other business, strolls in and sees his security monitor display of caged humans — and then he puts a gun to Happ's head.

## **Empire of Light**

Season 1 Episode Number: 7 Season Episode: 7

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016

Writer: Brit Marling, Zal Batmanglij

Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

Guest Stars: Riz Ahmed (Elias Rahim), Robert Eli (Principal Gilchrist), Amelia

Campbell (Mrs. Winchell), Juan Castano (Mr. Bandy), Sasha Frolova (Young Woman), Shuler Hensley (Mr. Winchell), Sorika Horng (Mickey), Chloe Levine (Angie), Valeri Mudek (Joanne), Adam Ratcliffe (Craig),

Ryan Woodle (Jason), Yurie Collins (Olive Garden Waitress)

Summary: An outing with Steve and Abel impacts OA; and Steve's life is tossed

into turmoil.



It took seven whole episodes, but we finally have an explanation for what "The OA" means: Original Angel. Facepalm. It was there the whole time, wasn't it? The significance was about more than just its homonym status with "away" after all. We find this out after Prairie/OA is prompted by her therapist to have a dinner out with her "parents," Nancy and Abel, to try and normalize their home life.

She's been having some more of those nosebleed nightmares that have, in the past, signified something horrible (the bus crash, her fateful trip to NYC). She's convinced there's some puzzle piece she's

missing, and her counselor thinks it's got something to do with her home life being so out of whack. She needs to accept her pain as it comes this time, he says.

Their dinner out goes over like a lead balloon. It's fun at first, as they reminisce about an old mustachioed boyfriend who benefited from her sightlessness, but then a rude stranger comes along and snaps an unwanted selfie with Prairie and ruins the whole mood. Nancy has a minimeltdown over what people are saying about Prairie's time in the hole — apparently, the kids all think she was sexually violated and beaten to a pulp — and that invites her own questions about what happened to her. Where was she? Where did the scars come from? Who did that to her?

As OA predicted, Nancy does not like the answers she has to give. She tells her that she's the Original Angel and that she did the scars to herself as a reminder of the dances she needs to do to enter another dimension, and Nancy slaps her right in the face. French is there waiting tables and springs her from the restaurant then and there, but he's still quick with a pep talk about how maybe, just maybe, the Johnsons are that missing piece she's been searching for. Her real family. Another "accept your pain" speech, basically, and it couldn't come at a better time because she's about to face the wrath of Steve.

See, Steve's parents have finally found out about his throat-punching incident from the pilot. The school principal found a social media subtweet that linked Steve with the chorus singer's

injury, and he dutifully reported it to the boy's parents. They then used that as leverage against Steve's parents, who have to fork over \$5,000 for the medical expenses to avoid a lawsuit. If they weren't serious about calling in the Asheville guard before, now it's really happening.

And it's kind of a shame, too, because Steve had some extra pep in his step earlier that day. He'd finally talked to (and kissed) the snarky girl from his alternative learning class, and he was even playing nice with Buck and French. Plus, he's taken to dance move training like he was made for it. So, when the guard is called in, he's disappointed that his past has finally caught up to him at a point when he's finally changing his ways.

Luckily, Ms. Broderick-Allen (who's going by BBA nowadays because everyone needs an acronym, apparently) spots him being assaulted into the van and comes up with a plan for how to keep him from boot camp. When Plan A — shouting that his escorts are molesting him at a gas station, where no one within earshot seems to care — fails, she decides to make good use of the \$50,000 cashier's check she's been holding onto.

She may not get the divine answers she's been seeking out of her brother's death, but she can rescue this boy she's grown to care for, and that's something. But even though he's saved from his prison ahead, he's still distraught over the fact that his parents looked the other way while these two men brutalized him in their front yard.

Because Steve is still an unreasonable person at the end of the day, he stabs OA in the leg in a fit of rage. And because OA is still completely weird, she accepts that pain and hugs him 'til he calms down. She tells him the only way she survived for so long in her pain is by having friends. As they say, misery does love company.

#### **Invisible Self**

Season 1 Episode Number: 8 Season Episode: 8

Originally aired: Friday December 16, 2016

Writer: Brit Marling, Zal Batmanglij

Director: Zal Batmanglij

Show Stars: Brit Marling (Prairie Johnson), Emory Cohen (Homer), Scott Wilson

(Abel Johnson), Phyllis Smith (Elizabeth 'Betty' Broderick-Allen), Alice Krige (Nancy Johnson), Patrick Gibson (Steve Winchell), Brendan Meyer (Jesse), Brandon Perea (Alfonso 'French' Sosa), Ian Alexander

(Buck Vu), Jason Isaacs (Dr. Hunter Aloysius "Hap" Percy)

Guest Stars: Riz Ahmed (Elias Rahim), Paz Vega (Renata), Will Brill (Scott Brown),

Sharon Van Etten (Rachel), Marcus Choi (Mr. Vu), Robert Eli (Principal Gilchrist), Robert Morgan (Sheriff Stan Markham), Gabo Augustine (Owen), Amelia Campbell (Mrs. Winchell), Melanie Ehrlich (Ali), Julie Fitzpatrick (Preppy Mom), Shuler Hensley (Mr. Winchell), Camrus Johnson (Cory), Chloe Levine (Angie), Shelly Levitte (Student), Cynthia Mace (Evelyn Markham), Daniella Jones ((voice)), Isabelle Kornblau (High School Student), Faith Logan (High School Student), Dylan Marocola (High School Student), Sebastian Marocola (High School Student)

dent), Taylor Masamitsu (High School Student)

Summary: After OA recounts a dramatic final night at Hap's, the others begin

to see her story in a new light. The fragments of the dream click into

place.



The episode opens with a giant sinkhole in the middle of the woods!

The sheriff pointing his gun at Hap's head again! The sheriff handcuffs Hap! In a last-ditch effort, Hap tries to persuade the sheriff, claiming that the captives can cure his wife Evelyn's ALS.

Oh, that ploy actually worked? As the sheriff leads Hap down to the basement, the captives cheer, only to find out that they're not getting rescued. Hap releases The OA and Homer to cure the sheriff's wife.

So what's going to happen once/if they cure her? Is the sheriff just going to turn

a blind eye to kidnapping and imprisonment of human beings?

Don't these movements look completely made up? Well, they are completely made, up but they look ridiculous.

Oh, of course Hap has a thermal image camera. For the nighttime creepiness, right?

Evelyn moves! She grabs The OA's arm, and after telling them a story that probably isn't all too important, asks them a question. A very important question, one that Hap can't hear because the movements caused a power outage. "Will you guard it with your lives? The fifth movement?"

Um, of course they will! How else are they going to survive?

No no no! Now she's performing the fifth movement! Hap will learn it too! He glances over towards the sheriff's gun, which he left on the table. Just as Homer and The OA are about to

start making out (in the same room as the sherrif and Evelyn, mind you), Hap shoots the sheriff and seperates the two.

Hap kidnaps The OA a second time, drags her out of the car, and holds a knife to her neck. "I'm leaving you exactly as I found you," he growls.

As The OA recounts the story in the present, she is interrupted by her parents. And the parents of everyone else in the house with her.

Alfonso tries to reassure The OA's parents that everything is going to be okay. He may have inadvertently made things worse. He let slip that The OA told him everything. She didn't tell her parents anything.

Abel is sitting alone at the kitchen table. The phone rings, and doesn't stop. Abel jumps up and rips the phone off the wall. Telemarketers, am I right?

As a result of the constant phone calls, The OA and her parents pack up and leave for a hotel. Here, The OA finally deicdes to open up about the last seven years.

Nancy randomly finds the note Prairie left for her parents before she left. How it ended up in the hotel room defies explanation. This apparently upsets Abel, who storms downstairs to the continential breakfast. "I'm busy, Nancy. I'm making a waffle. Then, I'm going to eat it."

That's how I'm going to avoid all future confrontations in my own life. By marching off to the nearest available food item and become totally consumed in it.

The OA attempts to place a phone call while she has the room to herself, but she doesn't know anyone's last name. Meanwhile, at school, Steve and Alfonso try to track down Hap. Through some sheer stroke of luck, Alfonso stumbles upon a YouTube video of Prairie playing the violin in Grand Central. How convenient.

It is now official that Alfonso doesn't care about his scholarship as he breaks into the Johnson's house. It's nighttime. It's creepy. The dolls are creepy. While rummaging through The OA's room, he comes across a box under her bed. It's full of books, one of which is The Illiad by... Homer.

He goes to wash his face, because hygiene is important even when you're breaking and entering, and as he looks in the mirror, Homer's face stares back at him. I'm not quite sure what this means, but right now, it means that I'm avoiding mirrors for the foreseeable future.

How did the FBI fake therapist guy end up in the Johnson's house? Why is he here? And why is he hugging Alfonso?

The books, which are about angels, NDEs, and oligarchs, lead the four boys to believe that The OA's story was never true to begin with.

And The OA is on house arrest now? She has an anklet around her, well, ankle.

Oh man, Mrs. Broderick-Allen got fired!

It's rather depressing to see the four boys eating lunch with their respective cliques, almost as if they never went through something together.

Prairie, asleep in the bathtub, jolts awake with a nosebleed. She had another dream. She runs downstairs, says nothing but "I know" to Abel, and starts running down the road.

I don't know what's happening right now, but a kid with a tactical vest and a gun approaches the high school and starts shooting. Naturally, chaos ensues.

Naturally, The OA Five spring into action, performing their movements with deft skill and poise!

If I were one of these students cowering in fear under a lunch table, I'd have trouble determining who is crazier: the school shooter or these random people dancing in the face of death.

Meanwhile, one of the cafeteria workers tackles the shooter from behind. Was... was that the whole point of the movements? To provide a distraction?

As the shooter falls to the ground, he fires his gun. The bullet pierces the cafeteria glass and enters The OA's chest, who was standing outside.

The season ends with The OA dressed in all white, wearing all white. She says, "Homer?" before the screen cuts to black.

# **Actor Appearances**

—— A ——	Michael Cumpsty
Hiam Abbass2	<u>_</u>
0101 (Khatun); 0104 (Khatun)	D
Genevieve Adams	<b>D</b>
0102 (Ms. Prescott)	Jack DiFalco1
Riz Ahmed	
0104 (Elias Rahim); 0105 (Elias Rahim); 0107 (Elias	0103 (Jimmy)
Rahim); 0108 (Elias Rahim)	E
Gabo Augustine	2
0108 (Owen)	Svetlana Efremova1
_	
———— B ————	0102 (Zoya)
<b>D</b>	Melanie Ehrlich
0 · P	0104 (Ali); 0108 (Ali)
Gavin Barnes	Robert Eli5
0101 (Kid on Bus #2)	0101 (Mr. Gilchrist); 0102 (Mr. Gilchrist); 0105 (Prin
Spencer Barnes	cipal Gilchrist); 0107 (Principal Gilchrist); 0108
0101 (Kid on Bus #3)	(Principal Gilchrist)
Jaxon Bartok1	(Principal Glichrist) Sharon Van Etten
0102 (Nina's Classmate #3)	0103 (Rachel); 0104 (Rachel); 0105 (Rachel); 0106
Michael R. 'Mikey' Berry1	(Rachel); 0108 (Rachel)
0102 (Nina's Classmate #1)	(=)
Olivia Boreham-Wing 1	F
0103 (Teen Girl)	г
Andrew Breving	
0105 (Parking Lot Dad)	Danielle Ferland1
Will Brill	0101 (Hospital Administrator)
	Jason Ferreira1
0102 (Scott Brown); 0103 (Scott Brown); 0104 (Scott	0102 (Nina's Classmate #4)
Brown); 0105 (Scott Brown); 0106 (Scott Brown);	Julie Fitzpatrick1
0108 (Scott Brown)	0108 (Preppy Mom)
Eliot Brown1	Susanna Frazer
0101 (Kid on Bus #1)	0101 (Mrs. Roberts)
Liz Burnette	K. Todd Freeman1
0106 (Nurse (voice))	N. 1000 Fleehall
	0101 (Masters)
	Abigail Friend
C	0101 (Student)
	Sasha Frolova
Amelia Campbell	0107 (Young Woman)
0101 (Mrs. Winchell); 0107 (Mrs. Winchell); 0108	
(Mrs. Winchell)	G
Katia Caso1	a
0105 (Cuban Concierge)	
Juan Castano2	Zachary Gemino1
0103 (Mr. Bandy); 0107 (Mr. Bandy)	0102 (Carlos Sosa)
Rosalind Chao	Sean Grandillo
0103 (Patricia Knoller)	0101 (Miles Brekov)
	Danny Guzman
Marcus Choi	0102 (Adrian Sosa)
0101 (Mr. Vu); 0104 (Mr. Vu); 0106 (Mr. Vu); 0108	,
(Mr. Vu)	———— H ————
Yurie Collins1	II
0107 (Olive Garden Waitress)	
Ivy Cordle1	Dalton Harrod2
0102 (Nina's Classmate #2)	0101 (Quartet Singer #2); 0105 (Quartet Singer #2)
Jeryl Ann Costello1	Shuler Hensley3
0106 (Nurse)	0101 (Mr. Winchell); 0107 (Mr. Winchell); 0108 (Mr.
Michelle Liu Coughlin1	Winchell)
0101 (Field Reporter)	Ryan Homchick
cross (rota reporter)	

0103 (Rod Spence); 0104 (Rod Spence)         Sorika Horng	0101 (Hornby)         Valeri Mudek
J	N
Kelly Jackson       1         0101 (Anchorwoman)       1         Camrus Johnson       1         0108 (Cory)       1         Samantha Lee Johnson       1         0101 (Neighbor)	Kirill Nikiforov
0101 (Neighbor)         Daniella Jones	O
Michael D. Joseph	Isaac Delgado and His Orchestra
K	P
Yusef Komunyakaa	And Palladino
Anastasia Lepin	——— R ———
Chlor (Valari) Chloe Levine	Adam Ratcliffe       1         0107 (Craig)         Faina Reinhardt       1         0102 (Raven-Hair)         Ashley Rivera       1         0102 (Nina's Classmate #5)
0101 (Neighbor); 0102 (High School Student); 0105 (High School Student); 0108 (High School Student)	S
John-Michael Lyles	Victor Slezak
M	T
J.C. MacKenzie       1         0102 (Dr. Mark Shea)       1         Cynthia Mace       1         0108 (Evelyn Markham)       1         Deirdre Madigan       1         0101 (ICU Nurse)	Zoey Todorovsky
Jeff Mantel       1         0101 (Mr. Roberts)       1         Alexa Marcigliano       1         0103 (August)       1	Kurt Uy
Dylan Marocola	Jesse VanDerveer
Taylor Masamitsu         1           0108 (High School Student)         2	0101 (Neighborhood Child) Paz Vega
0101 (Quartet Singer #1); 0105 (Quartet Singer #1) Longmore Mikhala	W
Martha Millan	Shannon Walsh
-	