

THE STAND

Episode Guide

Episodes 001-009

Last episode aired Thursday February 11, 2021





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Season One

The End

Season 1

Episode Number: 1

Season Episode: 1

Originally aired:	Thursday December 17, 2020
Writer:	Josh Boone, Benjamin Cavell
Director:	Josh Boone
Show Stars:	James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars:	Hamish Linklater (Dr. Jim Ellis), Eion Bailey (Teddy Weizak), Daniel Sunjata (Cobb), Nicholas Lea (Norris), Cameron McDonald (Frannie's Dad), J.K. Simmons (General William Starkey), Jennifer-Juniper Angeli (Harold's Mom), Curtiss Cook Jr. (Charles Champion), Spencer Driver (Younger Brother), M.J. Kokolis (Billy), Harrison MacDonald (Corporal), Rob McEachern (Vic), Troy Mundle (Ralph Hodges), Tebo Nzeku (Sally Champion), David Parent (Tommy), Mariessa Portelance (Blood Tech), Donald Sales (Sergeant), Veena Sood (Dr. Biswas), Jesse Stanley (Amy Lauder), J. Douglas Stewart (Hap), Bryan Cranston (The President (voice))
Summary:	When the "Captain Trips" flu epidemic wipes out more than 99% of the population, the remaining few immune to the disease, including Stu Redman, Frannie Goldsmith, and Harold Lauder, set out in search of other survivors, all the while, experiencing visions of the nurturing Mother Abigail and the menacing figure of The Dark Man.



The episode opens on rows of corn, with Whoopi Goldberg's Mother Abigail narrating. "There's bitter days ahead," she says. "Death and terror, betrayal and tears, and not all of you will live through 'em." Abigail goes on to declare that the Dark Man will build his kingdom in the West, telling "you" that this is where you must go to make your stand.

The next scene takes us to Boulder, Colorado. Multiple individuals in makeshift hazmat suits and face-coverings enter a Catholic church filled with decay-

ing corpses, but the odor is too overwhelming. One of them ends up out front, hurling his guts into the bushes with the picturesque Flatirons behind him (and judging by the location, the corpse-filled church would probably be St. Thomas Aquinas).

One of the other workers comes over to comfort the puker, and says that in spite of several decades of paramedic work he's never seen anything like this — dropping the statistic of seven billion dead, an important expositional detail.

In another house, as other workers carry a corpse up the stairs, another worker scans a DVD collection for movies. He tells the puker that, when the power is back on, he plans on opening an outdoor theater. As he leaves the room, the puker takes a look at the magazines and sees a copy

of "Expose Weekly" from June 9th, 2020 that has Tom Cruise on the cover (as well as a sidebar about a celebrity named "Ashley" returning to the I.C.U., perhaps from a case of Captain Trips).

At the end of the day, the workers gather and their manager tells them that they put away a thousand "units" that day — presumably meaning corpses. He says that there's no shame in not being able to return to the extremely dirty work the next day, but when he asks that those who will return raise their hands, the majority do, including the puker. Throughout the conversation, he makes reference to "the Zone"... and reveals that we're actually in something of a flash-forward.

However, the next scene flashes back to five months earlier, in Ogunquit, Maine. Exposition delivered by a radio's Fourth of July chatter quickly puts the date at mid-summer, and a man coughing while working in the garden immediately ratchets up the dramatic irony when considered with the church full of corpses.

The puker (who's name is Harold) is on a bicycle. He stops to peek through a fence to creep on Fran, whose father is the one coughing in the garden. As Fran takes her dad inside, noting that many others have come down with the same illness he has, Harold is roughed up by a couple of his classmates (who note that he was suspended for reading a "manifesto" in class that Harold insists was fiction). After a brief bicycle chase, Harold wipes out, and his classmates tell him to stay out of the neighborhood.

Harold then heads to a crowded pier, where we overhear a news report declaring that although the CDC has placed a moratorium on public gatherings, the reporter is not going to let "fear of the sniffles" make her rearrange her holiday plans.

When Harold returns home to his house, he is immediately greeted by sound of distant coughing and a rejection letter from Cemetery Dance publications. He has a brief conversation with his sick sister, who is upset that the disease conflicted with her bridal shower, before adding the rejection to a stack and then having a little freak-out.

As Harold cleans his face in the mirror, the radio gives us more exposition: the CDC has quarantined Arnette, Texas, and the uniformed guards holding the line refuse to answer any questions from the press. With cell phone service inside the perimeter being jammed, those inside have been cut off from the rest of the world.

On the words of the radio announcer, we cut to a U.S. Military Research Facility in Kileen, Texas. The man who is being contained in a room is Stu Redman, and he's being held against his will. Doctor Ellis arrives and explains that the guinea pigs that are in the room with him are a sort of canary in a coal mine: the rodents are just as susceptible to the disease as humans, and so it appears that Redman is not contagious.

Ellis says that Redman doesn't actually appear to be infected at all, and gives us the first instance of the use of "Captain Trips," the name with which the virus is most often referred — however, Ellis says that Campion did succumb to the virus. Redman asks if Campion was the guy in the car, and we go into another flashback — this time in Arnette, Texas, the quarantine zone mentioned by Harold's radio.

Redman is drinking at a gas station with some other patrons when a car erratically pulls up, sending the patrons scattering. Redman believes the driver was military, but the Doctor won't confirm or deny that. As Redman and the doctor go over the events that led to Redman's captivity, we get a lot of exposition at once: Redman is former military; he has a late wife; the military apparently arrived at his home to bring him in wearing suits. Soon, Redman learns that nearly everyone he knows is dead.

A flashback to the night when Redman met Campion continues being intercut with Redman's conversation with Ellis. Redman asserts that if Campion drove from a weapons facility in California, he must have made multiple stops along the trip, exposing countless more people to the infectious disease.

Meanwhile, Ellis tells Redman that they hope to use his blood to determine what gives him immunity and provide them with a chance to establish some preventative measures for those who are susceptible to the disease... but as the technician enters the room to set up Redman's MRI, she sneezes. Not a great sign.

Meanwhile, back in Maine, Harold's experience has radically changed. As he bikes around the same once-crowded pier, the location seems abandoned, aside from a corpse floating face-down in the ocean and a few unresponsive bodies on the benches.

Harold returns to Fran's house and peeks through her fence again, and sees her digging a grave in her backyard. Harold steps back and call aloud to "anyone," pretending he doesn't know she's there and letting her call to him. Harold says he's happy to see her (perhaps a little too enthusiastically). Harold tells Fran that he brought the bodies of his family to the funeral home and then delivers a surprisingly accurate account of the current state of things (the world having been ravaged by a government-created disease) before leaving when Fran tells him she isn't his babysitter anymore.

Then, in contrast to Harold's indifference about the death of his family, we see Fran's death rituals for her father: she pins his military medals to him, places a photograph of their family, and says she loves him.

Meanwhile, Harold has biked through the abandoned town to gather supplies at a local store. He finds a cop car that crashed into the front of Derry & Sons Antiques then strips the late cop inside of their sidearm.

As Fran buries her ex-military father, we hear audio of the President insisting that the government did not engineer the disease... but his words are increasingly interrupted by coughing until the power goes off and ends the broadcast.

Then, we return to the cornfield. Fran is navigating the maze when she hears children giggling. She follows the sound and finds a clearing with a baby doll at the center... and then meets Abigail Freemantle. She tells Fran to come see her at Hemmingford Home, Colorado.

Fran wakes up to the sound of Harold's typewriter from several houses away: he's writing by candlelight, and totally indifferent to a scorpion that is crawling very close to his keys.

Back at the Texas facility where Redman is being kept, the doctor wakes him up in the middle of the night and tells him that they're relocating him to Vermont, where the immunization effort is being spearheaded. Redman asks plenty more questions, receiving intermittent answers — but the doctor paints a pretty clear picture anyway: the country is in a crisis zone, and the government's control is loosening at an alarming rate. Redman is loaded into a vehicle and as their caravan heads out, Cobb, the brusque individual who is charged with "protecting him," gives Redman a hood to put on (like those Gitmo prisoners, notes Redman).

Meanwhile, as Harold brushes his teeth, he listens to the radio again — a broadcast that notes the hospitals are overflowing (2020) and that the DJ isn't going to succumb to the disease, taking his fate into his own hands by committing suicide. Harold takes this in stride before he begins rehearsing his speech to convince Fran to join him in a cross-country journey.

Redman and Ellis are now in the Vice President's fortified bunker (which actually looks quite nice) playing cards. They're being watched via television monitors as Redman wonders whether or not he could beat up Cobb... and Ellis coughs.

Harold arrives at Fran's house on a scooter, well groomed and with his helmet under his arm, but she doesn't respond to his calls. He enters and we see flies buzzing around a piece of pie Fran had been eating earlier, creating tension. Harold goes upstairs and finds Fran in a running shower, with evidence that she had been attempting to commit suicide by medication overdose. Harold pulls Fran out of the shower and induces vomiting.

Afterwards, Harold takes advantage of the situation, putting on a slow song and giving her a mug of something. In the ensuing conversation, we learn that Fran put the nail on the wall that Harold uses to track his rejection letters.

Harold tells Fran he thinks they should head to Atlanta, to meet up with the officials at the CDC.

Like Fran, Redman has a dream of a crying child in a cornfield. But when he arrives at the same clearing as Fran, he is not greeted by Mother Abigail — instead, he finds a wolf with glowing red eyes.

When he awakes, he finds that Ellis has contracted the disease... as has Cobb. Ellis notes that just a month before, we were "all worried about ebola." Ellis tells Redman that they haven't heard from the General in command of the station in 19 hours, and he seems to have locked down the facility. Ellis says he might use a scalpel to off himself early, giving the weapon to Redman.

Suddenly, Cobb enters, extremely diseased — swelling at the neck and spraying mucus, the visible signs of advanced Captain Trips infection. Cobb tells Ellis to leave but when Ellis resists, Cobb quickly murders the doctor. When he advances on Redman, Redman uses the scalpel to kill Cobb before Cobb can kill him, too.

After Cobb has died, Redman hears a voice that presumably belongs to the General instructing him to follow the lights that are directing him down the hallway. He enters a lift, leaving his gun (as he is instructed by the voice).

Redman enters the control room, which is filled with screens displaying piles of the dead and corpses being loaded into trucks. General Starkey greets him, looking overwhelmed. After disavowing Cobb, he invites Redman to sit. Starkey reveals that two days earlier was the last time they have heard from anyone outside the facility and he believes Cobb was following previously-given orders.

"Men like Cobb don't stop taking orders just because the orders stop making sense," Starkey notes, which could be yet another 2020 slogan, couldn't it?

Starkey tells Redman that several years earlier, his daughter gave him a book for his birthday. He picked it up a few days before the conversation between him and Redman, and refers to the fact that it's a book of poetry — Yeats. Starkey reads "The Second Coming" over footage of Redman exiting the facility full of corpses and leaving the General behind — and while the images are striking, it's really a treat to get to hear Simmons deliver Yeats.

Meanwhile, Harold and Fran begin their journey away from Maine, leaving a brief message informing any reader that they are heading to Atlanta.

Then, we flash forward to the time we glimpsed in the first scenes of the episode (presumably December 2020), once again seeing Harold working with the crew to remove bodies in the Boulder Free Zone. These images are intercut with scenes of Harold jogging and typing at his typewriter, with narration revealing that Harold believes "pride" and "hate" are the two greatest virtues.

After rescuing one of his fellow workers from falling into a pit of corpses, Harold appears to be struggling with the possibility that he might turn a new leaf, and become a "new Harold Lauder." The other workers appear to be fully willing to embrace Harold and bring him into their community.

However, Harold cannot let go of the hatred in his heart. We see him look up from his keyboard and see a vision of the wolf glimpsed by Redman in his dream, along with glowing neon signs depicting scantily-clad women. In the distance, the skyline of Vegas shines on the horizon. A man approaches him, coming from the direction of the city, proffering a glowing stone to Harold. The man is wearing a smiling face button...

Then, Harold wakes up. We see him practicing his ghoulish Tom Cruise-smile in the mirror before he takes it to the streets of Boulder, where a revelation is delivered: Redman and Fran are together, and Fran is pregnant with Redman's baby. The couple thanks Harold for his efforts on the crew and invite him to dinner, and although Harold plays nice in the moment, he is actually enraged.

As he types away at his keyboard, his narration tells us that he plans to murder Redman — and maybe kill Fran, too. By the conclusion of the first episode, the character who was presented to us as a (somewhat) sympathetic individual at the outset has pulled off his mask and revealed himself to be a villain: a dark narrative arc to give structure to the first chapter of *The Stand*.

At the conclusion of the first episode of *The Stand*, we flash back to where it all began: Campion working at the military facility and witnessing the beginning of the outbreak. He activates the lockdown protocol, but the door leading to Loading Dock 19 is jammed. Campion looks at the image of his wife and daughter on his cell phone, weighing his options. As the door slides closed behind the fleeing Campion, we see a boot had held the door ajar...

Campion arrives home and loads his wife and daughter into the car we saw collide with the store in Texas earlier in the episode.

As the car drives away, we cut to those same boots walkin' along the highway. As Campion passes the man by the side of the road, the walkin' dude sticks out his thumb for a pick-up. Campion ignores him — but nevertheless, right there in Campion's rearview mirror, the hitchhiker is along for the ride, his arm around the soon to be dead baby in the backseat.

Pocket Savior

Season 1

Episode Number: 2

Season Episode: 2

Originally aired:	Thursday December 24, 2020
Writer:	Josh Boone, Benjamin Cavell
Director:	Tucker Gates
Show Stars:	James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars:	Heather Graham (Rita Blakemoor), Kristy Dawn Dinsmore (Larry's One-Night Stand), Gabrielle Rose (Judge Harris), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Reese Alexander (Sniffing Guard), Primo Allon (Savino), Peter Anderson (Ghostly Man), Jagua Arneja (Terrified Cashier), Tim Carlson (Male Patient Stage 5), Miles Chalmers (Male Patient #2 Stage 5), Darren Dolynski (Wayne Stuckey), Fletcher Donovan (Boulder Male Resident #1), Eddie Flake (Hospital Doctor), Camden Filtness (Suited Man), Shishy Gebru (Hipster), Leah Hennessey (Female Mormon Type #1), Jeremy Jones (Andrew 'Poke' Freeman), Richard Meen (Tube Necked Inmate), Sean Millington (Stalker #1), Jenny Mitchell (Female Mormon Type #2), Iris Paluly (Female Patient Stage 5), Luvia Petersen (Stacie), Lisa Renee Pitts (Alice Underwood), Michel Issa Rubio (Stalker #2), Eric Ruggieri (Boulder Male Resident #2), Carolyn Tinglin (Hospital Nurse), Danny Wattley (Trask)
Summary:	Larry tries to escape from New York City. Meanwhile, Lloyd ends up in prison and gets a visitor.



The episode opens on a man walking through a big-box hardware store whilst carrying a propane tank over his shoulder, which he connects to a barbecue and uses to cook.

Inside one of the nearby display tents is a woman and a child. She's wearing a necklace with a stone that matches the one Harold received in the previous episode. In the next scene, we see them riding in a car that's part of a caravan, heading towards Boulder.

As they approach the city, they're greeted by Stu Redman, who welcomes them to the Boulder Free Zone before asking which one of them is Larry Underwood. Just before the cut to The Stand title card, it becomes clear that it is the man who was barbecuing. It's a neat way to introduce the perspective for the second episode, while clearly communicating to the viewer how these new characters connect to those we met last week.

After the title card, we flash back to the "before Captain Trips" times: five months ago in New York City. Underwood is abusing various substances in the dressing room before a scheduled show, telling "Stacy" that he isn't performing without his band — but naturally, the other members of the outfit have come down ill. Larry is confronted by his mother in the hallway outside,

and he assures her that he only had one drink — but there's clearly some long-standing issues there. As Larry heads to the stage, his mother coughs...

Larry takes to the stage amid sporadic hacking from the audience ("real New Yorkers" who wouldn't be stopped by "the sniffles"). The stage décor displays the title of the episode, "Pocket Savior," revealing it to be the name of Larry's album.

But as Larry prepares to play, Wayne Stuckey, one of Larry's former band mates, arrives to crash the show, and those of us who watched the first episode can see he's displaying the visible symptoms of an advanced Captain Trips infection. The wait staff does not seem particularly surprised when the pair succumbs to a fistfight...

From there we cut to a rowdy prison block. Two guards are leading Lloyd Henreid to a prison cell, where he meets his cellmate. After they introduce themselves, we get a flashback that reveals why Lloyd was incarcerated in the first place: an armed gas station robbery gone awry (thanks to the early stages of a Captain Trips infection, no less) which culminates in a bloody shootout.

Then we return to Boulder in December 2020. Redman and Underwood are riding in a car and discussing their visions of Mother Abigail. Underwood mentions Harold Lauder and Frances Goldsmith, the other two main characters we were introduced to last week, and Redman assures him that they're both present.

Then we cut to Frannie showing Nadine Cross and Joe, the woman and boy from the opening cold open, around some of the houses in Boulder. After discovering (and being delight by) the fact that Nadine was a teacher, Frannie asks Nadine if she would be willing to act as mother to Joe.

Next, we flash to Underwood being spotlighting in dream space. He's in the same nighttime desert where Harold found himself, with the neon lights of Vegas on the horizon. A sign proclaiming a show by Underwood lights up nearby, and the musician is clearly tempted by the allure of performance. But the sound of the crowd is soon overtaken by the sound of rats...

... And Underwood wakes up to the sound of traffic in New York City. The woman he's sleeping next to is displaying some of the earlier stages of Captain Trips infection, and Underwood quickly flees the scene, making excuses about his mother. As he stumbles into the hallway of the walkup, he answers the persistence calls on his phone: they're from Bellevue Hospital.

Underwood arrives at Bellevue to find the hallways crammed with patients. As medical staff in masks and faces shields attempt to administer treatment to the coughing patients, Underwood sees police officers stacking bodies of corpses. Then he finds his mother, who is visibly infected by Captain Trips, with snot, sweat, and a swollen neck.

Underwood gets his mother home, where Wayne pulls up and threatens to kill him over the song. As he tucks his sick mother in, a voice over a loudspeaker announces that violation of a curfew and stay-at-home order may be met by force. Underwood holds his mother's hand as her breathing becomes progressively more belabored, before stopping entirely.

Outside, Underwood finds Wayne dying in the street beside his car. Underwood liberates the stash of drugs from the trunk of Wayne's car before presumably leaving Wayne there to die.

Back in December 2020, Underwood and Redman arrive in a suburb of Boulder, where a crowd of people gather around dozens of parked cars, hanging clothes to dry and tending cooking campfires. As they make their way through the friendly crowd, Redman explains that the houses with X's on the front door have been so marked because they are cleared of the dead.

Redman introduces Underwood to Ray Bretner. Redman excuses himself, saying he needs to ensure there's sufficient deer meat for dinner and he needs to deal with two additional approaching caravans that have been noticed by the spotters, giving a few tantalizing details into how the Captain Trips survivors in the BFZ live their day-to-day lives and emphasizing that everyone in the community has their responsibilities.

Inside the house, Underwood waits to meet Mother Abigail — but first he meets Nick Andros. Andros ushers Underwood into Mother Abigail's room, but before we get there, we cut back to Underwood's dream.

As Underwood flees from the rats in the desert, he stumbles, and the figure of the Walkin' Dude appears beside an illuminated neon green "\$" symbol. The Walkin' Dude winks at Underwood before he is seemingly rebuked by Mother Abigail. Underwood abruptly awakes on a park bench in Central Park, to the sound of gunfire and screaming. His first thought is to check and ensure his drugs are intact (they are), and then encounters an old naked man eating a bag of potato chips who tells them they've been "freed from society's restraints."

Underwood wanders around Central Park until he encounters a woman with an umbrella on a bench. The woman, who is dressed entirely in pristine white (shades of *The City We Became* by N.K. Jemisin), introduces herself as Rita Blakemoor, and then uses a gun in her purse — which she says was her husband's — to engage in some target practice. In your face, society's restraints! She asks Underwood what he did "before all this" and he says that he'll show her.

Back in the Arizona prison cell block — which has a real TWD season 3 vibe going for it — corpses are carted out of cells by guards. Lloyd begs for sympathy but the guard just figuratively throws the fact that he's a cop killer in his face while literally flinging snot from a deceased inmate.

In NYC, Underwood shows a "Pocket Savior" billboard to Blakemoor. Soon, the pair are on the verge of intimacy... and while Underwood's appetite is somewhat challenged by a crow eating the eyeball of a dead horse, he nevertheless accompanies Blakemoor to her swanky penthouse for some of the pleasures that are reserved for the living (food & sex, natch).

Afterward, Underwood reflects on the fact that they can't remain in NYC, given the number of corpses and the inevitability of decay. After a very neat time lapse of a post Captain Trips NYC, Underwood and Blakemoor take to the vehicle-packed streets of the City that Only Sleeps When it's Mostly Dead.

After they turn down a man in a suit who offers a suitcase full of money in exchange for "15 minutes" with Blakemoor, the man is joined by two other men who chase Underwood and Blakemoor through the abandoned city streets... but our protagonists escape through the sewers with the help of a GPS device ("Just pretend we're Ninja Turtles" says Underwood).

Blakemoor freaks out about the rats and heads back to the surface, taking a gun from Underwood as she goes. Back in the Arizona prison, Lloyd is dealing with some CGI rats himself, attempting to swat one with a rolled-up magazine presumably so he can eat it. His attempt failed, his thoughts turn to a meal made of his late cellmate...

Back in Boulder, Underwood and Cross put Joe in his room, and the kid begins playing his guitar. Cross asks Underwood what Mother Abigail told him, but Underwood demurs and said he's going to find Harold, agreeing to bring the child with him.

Then we flash back to Underwood in the sewers of New York, which is going just as well as you'd imagine it would. As the water level gets dangerously high, Underwood has a nightmarish vision of his late mother spewing sewer rats out of her mouth before being attacked by an angry (and possibly symbolic) crow.

Underwood escapes from the sewer, reuniting with Blakemoor at the destination, just in front of the George Washington Bridge.

In Boulder, Underwood and Joe arrive at Harold's house. Harold answers the door with his creepy Tom Cruise grin, and Underwood tells him that the signs Harold left along the way helped him over the course of his journey. Underwood asks if Frannie is there too, and after awkwardly saying she doesn't live there, Underwood tells Harold that he was also with someone on the road, but it "didn't work out," offering to share the story over a drink (another opportunity for Harold to create rather than destroy community in response to his pain).

In flashback, we see Blakemoor crying after Underwood had gone to sleep. She takes a lot of pills, washing them down with alcohol and crying. We cross-cut from Blakemoor crying in the rain to Cross standing alone in her Boulder home. She hears a thudding noise, which is coming from inside a box that has been stashed with the board games... could there be a glowing stone concealed inside?

In the prison, Lloyd awakes to the sound of the voice of Randall Flagg. The Walkin' Dude, who is wearing a Scorpio belt buckle and a smiley face button, crouches before Lloyd's cell and sees evidence that the prisoner has been eating both rats and his cell mate.

Flagg questions Lloyd about the cannibalism, and Lloyd doesn't take too well to being confronted by this reality. Lloyd says he must be the devil, and Flagg says that isn't nice before turning one of those glowing stones into a key that has "RF" on it. Flagg tempts Lloyd with the idea of food, telling him that he'll be his right-hand man and speaking of vengeance.

Flagg makes Lloyd swear fealty before releasing him. He gives him the RF key and it returns to its glowing stone form, telling him that he believes it is the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Blank Page

Season 1
Episode Number: 3
Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Thursday December 31, 2020
Writer: Jill Killington, Owen King
Director: Danielle Krudy, Bridget Savage Cole
Show Stars: James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars: Eion Bailey (Teddy Weizak), Olivia Cheng (Dr. Sylvia Wen), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Nyla Alleyne (Amanda), Isla Crerar (Young Nadine), Briar Diallo (Isabella), Alexis Paige Dixon (Jesse), Brandyn Eddy (Vince), TJ Kayama (Heck Drogan), Tarun Keram (Steve), Kim Kon-drashoff (Sheriff Baker), Jasmine Lukuku (Lacy), Myles McCarthy (Booth)
Summary: Flagg communicates with Nick and Nadine, and sends a message to Abigail and the Committee.



The episode opens with a group of four girls playing with a planchette, including a young Nadine Cross. The other three flee after the planchette writes "Nadine will be my queen." Then, we flash forward to the Boulder Free Zone in December 2020, where Nadine wakes up from a nightmare.

Meanwhile, Larry Underwood and Stu Redman are walking along a road when a blood-spattered yellow sports car pulls up and a half-dressed man falls out of it. Larry checks the keys and finds a Las Ve-

gas keychain. Stu checks the man's wounds and determines that the man had been crucified.

The man wakes up and says that he "couldn't be forgiven" until he had delivered a message: "he's coming."

Back in Nadine's house, she finds Joe hiding under his bed. She has a brief flashback to meeting Underwood on the road, and having to stop Joe from stabbing him.

At the school, workers are clearing out the debris, and Joe finds what appears to be a blood stain. Back in the flashback, Nadine tells Larry that she and Joe want to go with him, but Larry tells Nadine that the woman he left New York with killed herself, so maybe he's meant to be alone. But after an initial outburst, Larry explains to Cross that he's following the signs that have been left behind on the road by a man he's never met, Harold.

At the BFZ Hospital, the pregnant Fran Goldsmith is getting an ultrasound. She holds up a photograph and says, "Hey Jess, meet our kid" before we go into a four-months-earlier flashback of Harold and Fran on the road. They stop to refuel and Stu appears and introduces himself.

While Stu is friendly, Harold isn't interested in joining up with him, and he gives Fran an ultimatum: stay with "the guy whose kept you safe the past few weeks" or go with Stu.

Back at the Boulder Hospital, Fran wonders whether or not Captain Trips immunity is hereditary as Stu arrives at the hospital. He's approached by Nick Andros, who flashes a note that reveals that the arrival from Las Vegas is not unexpected.

Stu asks Nick who would have the knowledge to successfully execute such a punishment, Nick has a flashback to a bar in Shoyo, Arkansas five months earlier. After a misunderstanding leads to a bar fight, Nick finds himself knocked unconscious.

Back in the same desert dreamscape we've seen in the past few episodes, Nick is confronted by the Walkin' Dude. Flagg implies that although Nick has been dealt a bad hand, Flagg can connect him with better opportunities — it's a deal with the devil, which Nick rejects.

Nick wakes up amid the corpses that fill the Shoyo Urgent Care to discover that the bar fight has left him without the use of his right eye. The only living person present appears to be the man who instigated the bar fight, who is handcuffed to his hospital bed. But in spite of the harm the man had visited upon him, Nick retrieves a cloth and begins to clear the Captain Trips mucus from the man's face.

Elsewhere, Stu is walking when he meets a golden retriever — Kojak, apparently. Stu soon meets another man, Glen Bateman. They share a meal and Stu has caviar for the first time, then bond over their late wives. After dinner, they're vaping and discussing the other animals that can be infected by Captain Trips (like dogs and horses), in a conversation that calls to mind the discussion of what animals can become undead in *The Living Dead* by George A. Romero and Daniel Kraus. As "Do It Again" by Steely Dan plays, Glen argues that maybe society shouldn't be rebuilt.

Back in the dreamscape, Nick is making his way through corn stalks, eventually arriving in room with Mother Abigail Freemantle. Mother Abigail tells Nick that he can speak here, and says that she is an old woman who god speaks to, and god has said that Nick has been chosen to be her voice.

Abigail tells Nick that the world is now a blank page, and that the only way to rewrite it is if everyone works together. Then she tells him to come find her at Hemmingford Home... spelled M-O-O-N. An open book blows to a blank page before Nick wakes up at the urgent care, where's he's greeted by Tom Cullen, who is wearing a Dolly Parton t-shirt that is totally dope... M-O-O-N, that spells dope!

Tom launches into a recitation that explains that he is developmentally disabled and has a hard time with social cues. Furthermore, he can't read, which creates a problem so far as communication with Nick goes, as Nick can only communicate through his notepad. Nevertheless, they work out that both of them have heard from Mother Abigail.

Elsewhere, in an empty baseball stadium, Larry is singing "Baby, Can You Dig Your Man?" Joe is interested in the performance, and Larry gives him the guitar, only to have the kid immediately begin playing.

Stu is looking through Glen's paintings when he finds one of Mother Abigail in the cornfields. Glen tells Stu that it's a depiction of the most vivid dream he ever had, but when Stu tells him he's having the same dream, Glen says that they most both be remember the same dream... however, when they both recall the name "Hemmingford Home," it becomes more difficult to deny their shared vision. Then, Stu discovers a portrait of a pregnant Fran, which Glen says he painted three days earlier.

In the Boulder Free Zone, a pregnant Fran looks over the collapsed man from Vegan. Glen, who is still wearing the same reindeer sweater, is advocating for keeping people informed. Glen expresses skepticism about the fact that Mother Abigail conveys god's will, and about the fact that god wants Glen, Larry, Stu, and Fran to govern the Boulder Free Zone, with Nick acting as a go-between for them and Mother Abigail.

Mother Abigail arrives with Ray Brentner accompanying her, silencing Glen's arguments with a meaningful look. The group gathers around the Las Vegas refugee and he awakes at Mother Abigail's touch. The man explains that Flagg arrived at a vulnerable time and offered to put them on top "for once." But when they began bringing in slaves, he fled. He reiterates that he's meant to deliver a message, and then seems to become possessed, becoming a conduit for Flagg's menacing message to those in the Boulder Free Zone.

Elsewhere in the BFZ, Nadine pulls out a planchette and pulls on the glowing rock she wears around her neck. As she begins using the planchette, she is transported to Flagg's desert dreamscape. Nadine says that she doesn't care for Boulder because she can't feel Flagg there, and Flagg

tells her that that's why she must spy for him there.

Flagg instructs Nadine to kill those who Mother Abigail have put in charge, but her séance is soon interrupted by Joe. Nevertheless, the planchette has written "Harold Lauder"...

Elsewhere, Harold and another worker are dumping the escaped Flagg follower's corpse, commenting on how different it feels than their usual deliveries of weeks-dead bodies... and Harold comments that it's the first of many.

The House of the Dead

Season 1

Episode Number: 4

Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Thursday January 07, 2021
Writer: Jill Killington, Owen King, Benjamin Cavell, Eric Dickinson
Director: Danielle Krudy, Bridget Savage Cole
Show Stars: James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars: Natalie Martinez (Dayna Jurgens), Eion Bailey (Teddy Weizak), Angus Sampson (Garvey), Katherine McNamara (Julie Lawry), Gabrielle Rose (Judge Harris), Nicholas Lea (Norris), Olivia Cheng (Dr. Sylvia Wen), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Bruce Blain (Poul Impening), Lisa Chandler (Susan), Carlos Joe Costa (Townsperson #1), Liza Huget (Townsperson #2), Tarun Keram (Steve), Mike Wasko (New Arrival)
Summary: The Boulder Free Zone Committee looks to solidify their leadership and bolster the community with a town hall meeting, but Flagg continues to make inroads as he plots to destroy the newly-forming society from within.



The episode opens on Frannie narrating, recording her thoughts in a journal. Meanwhile, the rest of the Boulder Free Zone Committee prepares for a meeting. Larry dumps his pills down the drain, Harold leers at his Tom Cruise cut-out.

The Boulder Free Zone is having a meeting about the arrival of the individual who had been crucified. There's a quick flashback to what seems to be the house of resident stoner Glen, where the Committee decides that Stu will be the one to speak. Then, back at the meeting,

Stu takes the stage, but it doesn't go too well.

When the crowd starts to turn too far, Frannie points out that Larry has more experience working a crowd, and he takes over. Larry makes a point of highlighting the individuals who have been working on the power station, the body crew, and at the school before announcing that the power will be coming back on Friday. After warming up the crowd, Larry hands the mic back to Stu, and we get another flashback to Glen's house.

Glen says that they should tell everyone the truth, but Frannie says that they don't really know what they saw, which Glen concedes. Nick Andros asks if they care more about their personal sense of honor than about protecting Boulder, and while Stu has some reservations about withholding information from the people, Glen notes that desperate times call for desperate measures.

At the meeting, Stu acknowledges the injured man and says that he must have run into the wrong man "out there" (you can say that again). He says that this highlights the value of the Boulder Free Zone, and the community that has arisen around Mother Abigail, especially "in

these uncertain times". Stu hopes that the body crew, whose work is nearly complete, will be willing to transition to a street safety patrol.

Harold makes a point of submitting a motion stating that the ad hoc committee members should serve as the permanent committee, and while the crowd accepts this wholeheartedly, it nevertheless strikes an ominous note as we head into the title card.

After the meeting, Harold arrives home, only to be surprised by Nadine Cross. After a fraught few lines, Nadine tells Harold they have a lot to talk about. Nadine says that she was sent by the man who gave her the glowing rock, and he believes they can do great things together... and then she tells him that while she doesn't want to have PIV intercourse, she's willing to do anything else with Harold, up until they leave Boulder. Nadine says that she's the Dark Man's queen, but he can be the Dark Man's prince... then he comes in his pants.

Two months earlier, in Daleville, Virginia, Harold and Frannie are camping out under an overpass when Frannie awakes from a nightmare. Harold says that he can only think about Frannie, and tries to come on to her, but Frannie spurns his advances, telling him that she'll never feel these things for him. Harold immediately blames Stu, who they encountered on the road in a scene we saw in the previous episode.

Meanwhile, Stu and Glen are driving in a pick-up with Kojak the golden retriever, following the signs left behind by Harold and Frannie. Stu notes that Harold would choose the most efficient route — Stu knows because Harold made a big impression, and Glen notes that Frannie must have, as well (referring to Stu's reaction to the Glen's painting of Frannie, also seen in the previous episode).

Frannie and Harold stop for a truck that's parked across the street. They stop to leave a note but discover that the driver isn't actually dead. The driver surprises them and cuffs them at gunpoint, revealing that he has two more women chained up in the truck. While calling Harold a beta snowflake, the driver beats him, and he's about to sexually assault the women when Stu and Glen arrive.

The truck driver fires at the truck, but it gives the imprisoned women a chance to seize a metal pipe and bash the driver with it. In the ensuing chaos, one of the women the driver had imprisoned is shot in the head, but the other manages to dispatch the driver using a metal pipe.

Afterwards, Stu and Glen offer Harold and Frannie the opportunity to join up with them and head to Boulder, where their dreams are directing them. When everyone else has gone to bed, Frannie and Stu share another dream they've both been having, about the Dark Man, and Frannie confesses that she's pregnant to Stu (which he notes was predicted by Glen's painting). Meanwhile, Harold stews.

In December 2020, Stu helps organize the safety patrol, noting that they aren't cops and asking everyone to turn off any lights to spare the grid undue stress to the electric grid. Harold dons one of the orange parkas, then finds one a brochure in the pocket about the Boulder Ski Patrol... which warns about avalanches. Harold is pulled from his thoughts by his friend Teddy, who wonders if The Rock is still alive, to which Harold responds that anything is possible.

At Glen's home, Glen suggests they send scouts/spies into Vegas to discover what the Dark Man might be doing. Stu says that he doesn't feel right sending someone else in his stead, but Glen points out that the committee has become crucial to running the city.

Frannie suggests Dayna Jurgens the woman who survived the trucker, who grasps the danger of the situation and agrees to take part. Larry suggests Harris, an older woman who he believes will be more likely to evade detection because of her age. Glen says that they should consider Tom Cullen.

Glen assumes that Frannie is going to argue, but instead, she agrees, and Nick notes Tom will surprise you, and then we head into another flashback: this one two months earlier in Boulder.

The flashback takes place in a furniture store, where a woman in a dress (Julie Lawry), who is wielding a shotgun, finds him and discovers he's deaf. She immediately uses as a pretense to bang him... but then Tom interrupts, and they make the rest of the introductions (in spite of Julie's "sense of humor").

Julie begins hurling slurs at Tom, and after a few moments, Tom and Nick decide to leave. Offended, Julie turns the shotgun at the receding backs — which would have been a death sentence, if not for the fact that the hearing Tom pushes Nick aside. Tom and Nick flee the store, seeking shelter in a nearby bus stand, and as they embrace in relief, Nick see a poster advertisement for Hemingford Home, a senior living home, which is where they are meant to

travel to find Mother Abigail... and included among the people raising their glasses on the poster is a cameo from the man himself, Stephen King. Salut!

At Hemingford Home, Mother Abigail is the sole survivor, and she tells the corpses she doesn't know how much longer she'll survive without supplies. Fortunately, that's when Tom and Nick arrive.

In December 2020, the committee coaches Tom about what he's meant to say when he arrives in Vegas, instructing him to return to Boulder when the moon is full, hiding during the day and traveling at night... and they tell him that if there's a single individual pursuing him, he should kill them. Ultimately, the committee unanimously agrees to send Tom, although they each retain reservations about the decision.

Elsewhere in Boulder, Ray Brentner tells the people waiting outside Mother Abigail's home that she won't be seeing anyone else that day. Inside, Mother A explains to Nick that because it's impossible to know what God's will might be, they shouldn't take action because they don't want to make the wrong decision.

Over a montage of two of the three spies being sent on their way, we return to Frannie's narration as she writes in her journal (and in a particularly nice detail, Nick and Tom are wearing matching jackets).

But the machinations of the Dark Man are at work, as well. Elsewhere, Harold and Nadine investigate the resources available to them at a National Park Service station, discovering a shed full of explosives.

In Boulder, the people of the Boulder Free Zone gather for the lighting ceremony, which brings illumination to the city, and spotlighted on the rooftop, Larry performs an electric guitar version of "America, the Beautiful."

However, that's when Teddy — formerly of the body crew, now of the watch — comes upon Nadine as she wheeling out a cart full of explosives. Then Harold arrives, and while it momentarily seems as though the situation will be stabilized, Nadine shoots Teddy... and just before the end of "The House of the Dead," we hear a few bars of Larry playing "America, the Beautiful."

Fear and Loathing in New Vegas

Season 1

Episode Number: 5

Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Thursday January 14, 2021
Writer: Jill Killington, Knate Lee
Director: Chris Fisher
Show Stars: James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars: Natalie Martinez (Dayna Jurgens), Katherine McNamara (Julie Lawry), Fiona Dourif (Rat Woman), Eion Bailey (Teddy Weizak), Nicholas Lea (Norris), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Mark Gibbon (Burly Guard #1), Shadi Janho (Bookie), Arkie Kandola (Foreman), Angela Moore (Female Clerk), Lissa Neptuno (Neighbor), Hugo Raymundo (Bo), Seth Whittaker (Burly Guard)
Summary: In Las Vegas, Dayna tries to get close to Flagg. In Boulder, Stu and Frannie have Harold to dinner.



The episode opens at a power substation, where a glammed up Julie Lawry is fetching "Flashdance". Lawry says she's there at the request of Lloyd Henreid. Apparently Dayna has been asking questions, which Lawry says is okay — depending on the question. Lawry wants to know why Dayna wants to know more about Flagg.

Lawry introduces Dayna to Henreid, who seems to have been living high on the hog (especially compared to when we last saw him). After flaunting his connection to Flagg, Henreid asks Dayna where she's been for "months and months" before arriving in Vegas. Then, to the sound

of Henry Belafonte and Peggy Lee singing Black Magic, the camera pulls back and reveals they've been in the Hoover Dam before an aerial shot that soars over the empty highways that lead to Las Vegas.

Elsewhere, Tom Cullen is undertaking the initial intake procedures, and struggling with the questions. While the woman asking him the questions is ready to just "throw him in the slave cages," the men who brought Cullen in say that according to Flagg's rules, anyone who arrives voluntarily qualifies for citizenship. She sends him to "Gladiator Hall."

In the next scene, Henreid leads Dayna and Lawry down a hallway filled with debauchery in a hotel filled with debauchery, and declares "Welcome to Heaven" before we cut to the title card.

Back in Boulder, Stu Redman calling for the late Teddy over the radio, as Harold Lauder and Nadine Cross move to cover the evidence that they murdered their fellow Boulder resident. Lauder has a helpful expositional flashback to Teddy's death as Cross shoves their bloodied clothes in a garbage bag, and while Lauder says they could abandon Boulder, Cross says that they can't — because of him (meaning, of course, Flagg).

Shortly later and elsewhere, Redman and Larry Underwood stand over Teddy's corpse and wonder whether or not he might have shot himself. While Underwood is skeptical, Redman says that he's surprised that after all they've been through, he's more surprised more people haven't killed themselves (which is grim, but hard to argue). Redman says that while it's tempting to believe it's all connected, he doesn't necessarily think that's the case. Shortly after, Redman tells Lauder, who gives a reasonably convincing performance in reaction to the news of Teddy's death, but from which he recovers a little quickly...

Elsewhere in Boulder, Nick Andros is chewed out by Mother Abigail, who notes that she had told them not to take action until they "received word from above," suggesting that sending the spies might be the catalyst for a conflict.

In Vegas, Henreid and Lawry are in bed, while Dayna contemplates a pair of scissors before joining them (although after Lawry mentions "Mr. Flagg," Henreid can't maintain an erection). Instead of sex, they head downstairs for some "shopping." The center of the resort hotel has been converted into a gladiator pit, and an announcer gives a play-by-play while soliciting bets.

As they circle the hedonistic revelry, Lawry points out Cullen in the gladiator ring. Mercifully, he seems to be on cleanup duty rather than the battle roster, but Lawry tells Dayna that she recalls meeting him and Nick on the road.

In advance of the main event, the announcer spotlights Henreid (and Lawry reaches over the clean some coke off his nose as they do so) before shouting out their benefactor, Randall Flagg, in the penthouse. Flagg makes his first appearance on-screen in the episode, hovering above the ground. Then, a video image of Flagg addresses the crowd... but as it does so, the image seems to simultaneously focus his gaze upon Dayna.

Cross has dreams that mix visions of sleeping with Underwood with Flagg in the desert, the later of which tells her that he gave her purpose. Flagg tells Cross that when she was living alone in the state home, he was her only friend, suggesting that she should continue to remain indentured to him before he kisses her.

Lauder and Cross meet at the school and Lauder says that it wasn't necessary to murder him, that he could have been talked him out of turning them in. Cross sees the vulnerability in Lauder and exploits it by going down on him again.

Shortly after, Frannie Goldsmith arrives at the school and offers Lauder her condolences over Teddy's death. Caught off guard, Lauder is somewhat less convincing in his mourning this time, but he accepts an invitation to dine with Goldsmith and Redman the next day as Cross eavesdrops from the next hallway.

Goldsmith then visits Underwood, and tells him that while Lauder is at dinner with them, she wants Underwood to search his residence. Underwood agrees: something's off about him, and such a search seems reasonable.

Cross made lunch for Joe, but can't find him. Fortunately a neighbor points her toward Mother Abigail's house, where Joe is playing a piano and Mother Abigail tells him that they've been "talking" (making a distinction between "talking" and "talking"). Mother Abigail tells Cross that it's good that she made the choice to help Joe, and Cross says that she didn't really have a choice. Mother Abigail disagrees, and says that we always have choice — until we don't.

Lauder arrives for the dinner party with flowers and wine. Redman has Lauder help him find a corkscrew and Goldsmith calls Underwood over the radio. However, it's at that moment that Cross arrives at Underwood's house, insisting she talk to him now. She begins kissing him and he asks her why, but she won't explain.

Cross says she wants Underwood to fuck her, but Underwood says that that's not how she talks, and worries how their relationship might be affected if they end up deciding they don't have feelings for one another after sleeping together. Dejected, Cross leaves Underwood's house.

Soon, Underwood arrives at Lauder's home, but he's stymied by a locked door. Meanwhile, Lauder tells a (kind of uncomfortable) story about him, Goldsmith, and his sister Amy in childhood. But after insisting he was there, he then changes the story to "I wasn't there because I was never allowed." Things get more uncomfortable as Lauder starts recounting some of the bitterness he maintains toward his late family.

Lauder excuses himself to go splash some water on his face, but instead, he ends up snooping around Goldsmith's house while Underwood snoops around Lauder's, finding the creepy Tom Cruise cutout. Then, Lauder leaves early. Goldsmith radios Underwood, but as he knocks over

a chess set as he's leaving. While he manages to more or less put it back together and flee the room, it seems as though Lauder notices one of the rearranged pieces...

Elsewhere, Mother Abigail prays for guidance, but she's greeted only by the vision of a wolf.

Back in Vegas, Dayna has one of the guards single out Cullen. Dayna hands Cullen something before Henreid and Lawry find her and tell her that Flagg wants to see her. As she leaves, Cullen look at the note, which reads "RUN"... but Cullen can't read.

While Henreid and Lawry accompany Dayna up the elevator, she is the only one who gets off when it arrives at the penthouse on the forty-fourth floor. Flagg is watching over the Vegas skyline as he enjoys a glass of milk, the second time in the series we've seen him drinking dairy (although Dayna asks for a beer).

Flagg tells Dayna that he's been watching her almost since she left Boulder. Dayna confronts Flagg about the crucifixions and in return, Flagg asks her about Garvey, the rapist that she killed in last week's episode. Flagg claims that the people who come to him are looking from protection from the Garveys of the world, and says that Mother Abigail's "Kum-Bah-Yah" approach is insufficient, calling her a charlatan.

Flagg tells Dayna that he's going to send her home, but she notes that it sounds like there's a catch: he asks her who the third spy might be. He says that he knows who both the other spies are, and that one is "an old hag" who has been hiding to stagger their arrival. Dayna points out that it must be driving him insane not to be able to see the third spy... right before she stabs him in the neck with the scissors she stashed earlier in the episode.

Flagg collapses to the floor, seemingly dead, but as Dayna crouches over him he speaks to her, saying he learned the trick from his "old lover," Konstantin Stanislavski (1863 — 1938). Then, Flagg does a neat trick with his eyes and menaces Dayna some more, who breaks her beer bottle... and then stabs herself with it. Flagg sinks into the couch as "Suspicious Minds" by Elvis plays...

Back in Boulder, Goldsmith and Redman are discussing Lauder, with Goldsmith insisting she has a bad feeling about him and Redman wondering if they are being too hard on him, offering a sympathetic read on Lauder's unrequited crush.

However, in truly creepy fashion, Lauder is actually watching the whole conversation — and the subsequent lovemaking — on a closed circuit video feed, presumably what's hidden behind the locked door Underwood couldn't enter. Lauder watches a recording of Underwood investigating Lauder's house earlier that night.

Elsewhere, Ray Brentner arrives at Mother Abigail's house to find a note on the door saying that people should not come looking for her but that she will return if it is His will. Brentner's radio call searching for Abigail interrupts Goldsmith and Redman's lovemaking. "Don't Fear the Reaper" by Blue Oyster Cult begins to play as Lauder watches Redman and Goldsmith on the video screen grins a grin that is significantly less rehearsed (and more sinister) than his Cruise approximation.

The Vigil

Season 1
Episode Number: 6
Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Thursday January 21, 2021
Writer: Jill Killington, Knate Lee
Director: Chris Fisher
Show Stars: James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars: Ezra Miller (Trashcan Man), Katherine McNamara (Julie Lawry), Fiona Dourif (Rat Woman), Clifton Collins Jr. (Bobby Terry), Nicholas Lea (Norris), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Gabrielle Rose (Judge Harris), Mark Gibbon (Burly Guard #1), Paul Jarrett (Head Custodian), Sunita Prasad (Sophia), Seth Whittaker (Burly Guard)
Summary: The Trashcan Man makes his way to New Vegas, while Flagg and Abigail meet for the first time.



The episode opens on the Trashcan Man, mostly naked (and covered in what appear to be scars from burns) setting charges around two enormous gas tanks before activating the detonator. As he has a sort of religious experience watching the explosion, he's visited by a cloaked figure in the very familiar desert dream-scape.

The figure is, of course, Randall Flagg, and he delivers a vision of the destructive promises he's willing to make to the

Trashcan Man before we head to the title card.

Meanwhile, the citizens of the Boulder Free Zone are searching for the missing Mother Abigail. Harold Lauder arrives at the home of Nadine Cross and informs her, and they both wonder if Flagg is responsible for the disappearance.

Lauder seems suspicious of Cross, jealously wondering if Flagg has been communicating more with her than with him, planting seeds of doubt in her mind as to her importance. But he soon has put forward a sinister plan: to bomb the entire population of the Boulder Free Zone as they're attending a vigil for Mother Abigail.

Elsewhere, Harris, the third spy sent by the Boulder Free Zone to infiltrate Flagg's territory in Las Vegas, is sheltering in a hotel — although we know from Flagg's dialogue last week that he's aware of her presence. She seems to sense someone, drawing a revolver...

Back at The Inferno in Las Vegas, the Trashcan Man has arrived, wandering around amid the debauchery with Lloyd Henreid before heading to the elevator and bringing him to Flagg's penthouse. After bonding with the Trashcan Man over combustion, Flagg asks him what the most powerful human-made fire ever was, and they agree that it was Tsar Bomba, a Soviet hydrogen bomb test that took place in 1961.

Flagg tells the Trashcan Man that he's sending him on an errand to a military facility to retrieve "the fire," and the Trashcan Man begins shrieking "My life for you." As the Trashcan Man is removed, Flagg confirms with Henreid that the airfield will be ready by the time he is returned.

Henreid is clearly uncomfortable with the presence of the Trashcan Man, and even goes so far as to attempt to get rid of him, telling Flagg that anything the Trashcan Man can do, he can do better — but Flagg dismisses him, then instructs him to retrieve Harris from her hiding place at the edge of the desert and bring her to the Inferno — alive. He wants her so he can discover the identity of the third spy, who he still can't see.

Meanwhile, Tom Cullen, the third spy, asks the Rat Woman, whose on a smoke break, to read the note given to him by the late Dayna Jurgens last week: "run."

Then we're back in Boulder, where the citizens are gathering for the vigil for Mother Abigail. As Frannie Goldsmith arranges candles around the house, Nick Andros plays the piano, while Glen Bateman and Larry Underwood sit nearby.

Andros is briefly interrupted by a vision of a wolf before Stu Redman and Ray Brentner arrive. Brentner laments the fact that Andros won't join in on the hunt, but Andros just shows her the note left by Mother Abigail instructing them not to search for her — and after Mother Abigail lectured him about disobeying her orders by sending spies to Vegas, he's especially motivated to comply with her decree.

However, Brentner is incensed, delivering a tongue-lashing to the committee members — which is when Cross and Joe arrive at the door — ostensibly to deliver cards made by the kids for the vigil, but actually so that she can place the disguised pipe bomb. Underwood suggests that Joe will be present at the vigil, leading Cross to jump down his throat about how children "shouldn't attend vigils" because they had been traumatized by those held for Captain Trips. Goldstein jumps to Underwood's defense, but Cross is motivated by a desire to keep Joe away from the explosive.

That's when Lauder arrives and asks Redman to join him on the next search shift. Lauder's his usual creepy Tom Cruise-smiling self, dispensing platitudes and outwardly beaming while sulking over Goldsmith's relationship with Redman.

Elsewhere, Mother Abigail is walking through the forest and talking at god. Soon, she encounters Flagg, who says that he is legion. Soon, he summons a wind storm, which is followed by a swarm of ravens which attack Mother Abigail.

Back at the Inferno, Cullen is helping clean up the corpses left over from the latest gladiator games. He's given the keys to a vehicle and told to load the bodies. He sees Henried and Julie Lawry, recognizing the latter from an encounter he and Andros had with her back in episode four...

Then, to Black Betty by Ram Jam, Henried and Lawry follow Bobby-Terry through the Inferno debauchery to Flagg's penthouse. Bobby-Terry recounts his encounter with Harris, which ended with her off-screen execution.

Flagg is displeased with Bobby-Terry for executing Harris. Flagg extracts an excruciating apology from the man, wondering why Bobby-Terry couldn't "handle" an old woman. Flagg again demands an apology, but Bobby-Terry flips him the bird and then flees the room, chaining the door to the penthouse on his way out. He heads to the elevator, but despite pressing the button repeatedly, the elevator door doesn't open.

Back at the room, Flagg bursts out of the door, and in a very cool SFX shot, the smiling face on his button grows more sinister. The elevator doors finally open for Bobby-Terry and as they close behind him, he thinks he's escaped Flagg — but Flagg is already in the elevator, and as it descends, he eviscerates Bobby-Terry.

When he arrives at the bottom, the shocked denizens of the Inferno look on in horror. One of them summons the leaning crew, including "Mr. Moon — M-O-O-N," which Flagg overhears, and he instantly realizes this is the third spy. Cullen is hiding himself among the pile of corpses in the truck when Flagg's men come looking for him...

In the forest outside Boulder, the search for Mother Abigail continues. Lauder and Redman are talking about Captain Trips, with Lauder typically being creepy and sullen, even going so far as to point a handgun at the back of an unsuspecting Redman's head. But they're soon interrupted by Norris, one of the other crewmen, who tells the two of them that their efforts are probably not needed on the search — it would be a miracle if the 108-year-old Mother Abigail had survived the weather of the previous night.

Elsewhere in Boulder, Goldsmith seizes upon the opportunity to infiltrate Lauder's house as he's occupied with the search, using a crowbar to break into the locked basement door which

Underwood was unable to enter in last week's episode. She discovers his surveillance equipment, including the video monitor showing on her bedroom. She opens another door and finds his basement, along with the evidence that he's been constructing explosives and his creepy manifesto.

That's when Lauder arrives and discovers Goldsmith in his room. He says that everything is wrong, and that the Captain Trips pandemic was supposed to be "his great adventure." Lauder monologues about his crush on Goldsmith and his plan to murder everyone else in Boulder. Goldsmith pleads with Lauder, trying to convince him to renounce his ways, and for a moment, it seems like he might — but then he locks Goldsmith in the basement room and declares that he's off to detonate the bomb.

At Underwood's house, Cross arrives to pick up Joe. Underwood says to Cross that empathy has never been his strong suit, but Cross tells him that he's a good man. However, as Cross is leaving, Joe whispers to Underwood: "Nadine and Mommy Nadine are two different people." As she leaves, Underwood attempts to use his radio to hail someone on the North side, but someone has removed the batteries. He attempts to follow Cross on his motorcycle, but someone has cut the battery to that, too.

A quick shot shows us that Cullen is still hidden under the corpses in the pick-up truck, as two men drive the vehicle into the desert.

Cross brings Joe to the school, where other children are watching Time Bandits, presumably to keep them occupied during the vigil. At Lauder's house, Goldsmith uses her jacket to protect her arm as she punches out a window and escape the basement.

Meanwhile, Joe hears Mother Abigail's voice, and has a vision of her lying in the woods, which leads him to scream.

Lauder and Cross meet at the amphitheater, where Lauder reveals to Cross that Underwood infiltrated his basement (but never discovered the bomb). At Mother Abigail's house, Redman and Bateman are wondering where Goldsmith and Underwood are when they get a call from Norris, who says that they've found Mother A.

Those gathered at Mother Abigail's home for the vigil are instructed to head to the infirmary on the North side, where they'll be bringing her. Brentner takes a moment to tell Andros, who is in Mother Abigail's room, the news. As Andros gets up to leave the house, Lauder says over the radio that he "does this of his own free will."

In spite of the fact that he couldn't have heard it, Andros pauses inside the house, lifting the piano lid and discovering the bomb just as Lauder and Cross detonate it. Outside, Goldsmith and Redman are thrown through the air by the blast...

The Walk

Season 1

Episode Number: 7

Season Episode: 7

Originally aired: Thursday January 28, 2021
Writer: Owen King
Director: Vincenzo Natali
Show Stars: James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars: Ezra Miller (Trashcan Man), Fiona Dourif (Rat Woman), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Olivia Cheng (Dr. Sylvia Wen), Jason Burkart (Biker Security Guard), Ariana Nica (Adorable Child)
Summary: Nadine and Harold, and the Committee, head separately to New Vegas, and one of each of them falls along the way.



The cold open of the episode brings us back to the Trashcan Man, who has uncovered a nuclear missile silo. He cuts the warhead off the missile and then loads it onto a buggy, in spite of the warnings of his Geiger counter.

From there, we see Harold Lauder and Nadine Cross as they detonate the bomb from the amphitheater above Boulder. After his little avowal that he's doing this of his own free will, Lauder makes a joke over the radio.

But Lauder's mood quickly sours, and he tells Cross not to touch him any more, now that Flagg has what he wanted and

the Boulder Free Zone is no more. Lauder says that Flagg will "give him" a woman, and Cross will go to Flagg, before saying he wants to get on the road. Cross doesn't seem that pleased with the arrangement.

Elsewhere, the residents of the Boulder Free Zone are receiving treatment for the injuries that they sustained when the bomb was detonated at Mother Abigail's home. Larry Underwood talks with Glen Bateman, confirming that Frannie and the baby are uninjured.

Bateman confirms that Lauder built the bomb and Cross helped place it.

Meanwhile, Ray Brentner is sitting beside Mother Abigail when the latter awakes and says that she needs everyone beside her immediately. Stu Redman wakes Frannie, and she immediately agrees to go to Abigail in spite of her injuries.

Abigail tells them that she has failed because she has wavered in her faith. She says that she thought the late Nick would lead them, but now it must be Stu who will lead them west, to New Vegas.

Abigail tells them God wants them to undertake the journey immediately, even though one of them will fall. She says that Frannie is not to go on the journey. And then she repeats the lines that we heard her say over the cold open of the first episode. Then she dies.

As they ride their motorcycles on the road to New Vegas, Cross taunts Lauder by speeding up. Then she decelerates as they approach a sharp turn... and Lauder goes over the edge, impaling

himself on some branches below. He pleads with Cross to throw him a rope, but she tells him its better this way — then says that he can finish it himself, if he's brave.

Back in Boulder, a dejected Goldsmith asks Redman how long it will take them to walk to Vegas, and Redman estimates they'll arrive at the end of February, around the same time as the baby is due. Goldsmith says that she thinks Abigail did speak for God, and that the people in the BFZ are just pieces for him to play with, while the people in Vegas are the pieces for the other side.

Redman laments that he didn't listen to Goldsmith about Lauder, and then swears that he'll try to return. Underwood gives his guitar to Joe before leaving Boulder. Then Brentner, Underwood, Redman, Bateman, and Kojak gather to have their picture taken by Goldsmith before they leave Boulder, discussing logistics as they go.

Lauder is still bleeding to death. He eats a few bites of a Payday bar and then pulls out a notebook.

Meanwhile, the five characters from the BFZ continue their journey.

We return to Lauder to find him even more poorly off. He puts aside his notebook and looks up at a vulture before shooting himself in the head.

Then we get a Lord of the Rings style montage of the five BFZ on their journey, watched by crows the whole way. They pass a billboard that used to say "The Lamb's Reward is the Laughter of His Children," but which has been altered to read "The Lamb's Reward is the Slaughter of His Children," along with the addition of red crosses to the advert's picture of a field.

The BFZ party comes upon a trail of Payday bars leads to an overturned motorcycle, which then leads to Lauder's corpse. Underwood insists that they not leave Lauder's body uncovered, and works his way down the hill towards the corpse. He finds Lauder's notebook, which isn't exactly repentant, but which affirms that Lauder acted out of his own free will... and out of a lifelong spirit of cowardice. Underwood covers the body with his leather jacket and then leaves it behind.

Cross is traveling through the desert on her motorcycle when she stops, believing that she sees Flagg — but he appears to be a mirage. Nevertheless, she finds a trail of white rose petals that leads to a red carpet. Soon she finds herself within Flagg's penthouse.

Flagg is wearing the white rose on his lapel and drinking (surprise, surprise) a glass of milk. Flagg greets Cross and she tells him that Lauder didn't make it. Flagg says that Lauder was never meant to "ascend to Olympus," and that his purpose had been served — unlike Cross.

Flagg and Cross begin making out, and Flagg remarks that Cross kept herself "pure" for him, and now she gets to be his wife. Then they bang, which seems to start off passionate but then becomes horrifying, as Flagg is replaced with a Mummy-style monster.

The five characters from the BFZ are still walking. They reach a point at which the highway is interrupted by a long chasm. All five of them make it down, and then Kojak and Underwood have made it back up on the other side... but the must is pretty tense. Brentner makes it, and then Bateman slide back down but it still seems okay.

Redman reaches the top and remarks that there's nothing to it... before the edge crumbles away. Redman tumbles down the hill, breaking his leg in the process. His friends rush to his side and help him pull his leg into place. The idea of camping there is put forward but Redman says that Abigail knew this would happen — one of them would "fall." He insists they go on without him.

This leads to an allusion to the 23rd Psalm: "Yeah, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Redman makes Underwood recite the words, and mean it, and then tells him that he's in charge now. Bateman leaves Redman with some pills that can either help with the pain or, at the proper dosage, provide release.

Meanwhile, Cross seems to have ascended to a new level after consummating her relationship with Flagg. The couple gets into a car and heads toward Vegas.

At the bottom of the ditch, Redman isn't doing well. He hears barking and Kojak appears at the edge above him.

Elsewhere, Bateman is calling for Kojak. Then, they hear honking, and an incongruous limousine arrives. Out of the back appears Lloyd Henreid, in his now-characteristically flamboyant garb. Henreid tells them that Flagg told him when they'd be coming out of the canyon to the minute, remarking that it's a crazy world.

The limo arrives in New Vegas, which is decorated with banners of Flagg and crucified bodies. They pass prisoners being forced to transform the statue in front of Ceaser's Palace into the likeness of Flagg.

A broadcast of Flagg's voice, set to the sound of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," states that they won't tolerate whiners, and declares that the old ways didn't work. They pass a beating that's taking place on the street.

At the Inferno, Flagg hovers above the floor in his penthouse as Cross looks on. Cross, who now appears to be visibly pregnant, greets Bateman, Underwood, and Brentner as they arrive at the lobby of the Inferno — all while "Baby Can You Dig Your Man" plays in the background.

The Stand

Season 1

Episode Number: 8

Season Episode: 8

Originally aired: Thursday February 04, 2021
Writer: Benjamin Cavell, Taylor Elmore
Director: Vincenzo Natali
Show Stars: James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Brentner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars: Ezra Miller (Trashcan Man), Katherine McNamara (Julie Lawry), Fiona Dourif (Rat Woman), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Jason Burkart (Biker Security Guard), Paul Jarrett (Head Custodian), Todd Matthews (Julie's Cameraman), Sunita Prasad (Sophia)
Summary: Larry, Glen, and Ray are put on trial in New Vegas, but God has the last word.



The episode opens on an aerial shot of New Vegas, where a gladiator-type event seems to be in progress. An announcer welcomes the denizens of New Vegas to "freedom," before immediately cutting to Glen Bateman, Ray Brentner, and Larry Underwood in a cage. "Weasel Eyes Are Watching," says some graffiti scrawled on the walls.

Bateman sums up New Vegas as a "bunch of lost, scared people" who are simply "following someone who makes them feel a little less lost." The trio heads

into the type of morality discussion you might expect from Stephen King characters in a such a scenario.

Brentner cites the crucified bodies along the Strip as evidence that Flagg is evil, but Bateman points out it means that he can't necessary rely on the citizens of New Vegas to fall in line, and instead must keep them in line with such displays of brutality.

On a snarky comment by Bateman about Stu Redman, we cut to the chasm between Boulder and New Vegas where the ex-soldier from East Texas is suffering with his injury. Fortunately, he still has the company of Kojak the golden retriever, and the pills left by Bateman — which he could use to intentionally overdose, a possibility he considers. However, Kojak's presence convinces him to abstain as we head into the title card.

Back in New Vegas, the Rat Woman is presiding over a courtroom packed with the city's garishly dressed citizens. Naturally, our heroes are the one on "trial." Lloyd Henreid reads the charges as Julie Lawry goads him on (there is a gong involved).

Henreid says that the heroes should renounce Mother Abigail and swear fealty to Flagg if they hope to survive, adding some mockery to the mix for good measure (and earning the roaring laughter of the crowd in response). Bateman demands to know under whose authority the court is being convened, and the Rat Woman replies that it's under the authority of Mr. Randall Flagg, pointing to the room's closed circuit cameras.

Bateman replies by calling Flagg "the mother of dragons," which is honestly really funny. But unbeknownst to those in the courtroom, Flagg is hovering above the floor in his Penthouse as he watches the proceedings.

Bateman wants to know why everyone's so afraid of Flagg. If he's so all-powerful, why doesn't he just come down and handle it himself, rather than go through this kangaroo court? Bateman addresses the camera and tells Flagg to come down, but Henreid slaps him, breaking his glasses. Bateman observes that they're terrified of Flagg, and the Rat Woman orders Henreid to shoot him.

Bateman's playing with fire, but he stands firm. He tells Henreid that he doesn't have to be afraid of Flagg, and that Flagg only has his fear. But Henreid shoots him anyway... and when Bateman subsequently forgives him and says he didn't know any better, Henreid shoots him several more times.

Several members of the audience appear to be taken aback by the events... Henreid tries to play like he's in control, but it's clear that he's being eaten away as he stumbles out of the courtroom. And in the Penthouse, Flagg's feet sink down to the floor.

Brentner and Underwood are mourning Bateman as they're handcuffed to the appliances in the kitchen. Brentner laments that she can't see the point if they came all this way just to be unceremoniously killed.

Then Nadine Cross arrives, still looking all bleached, spooky, and pregnant. Brentner is removed and Cross tells Underwood she never thought she'd see him again. Underwood confirms that Cross and the late Harold Lauder were behind the bomb that was detonated at the vigil.

Cross says that this is who she's always been, but when Underwood forces her to confront her reflection, she realizes how spookified she's become, causing her to be wracked with pain... which apparently induces her delivery.

Henreid and a lackey use a wheelchair to bring Cross to Flagg's Penthouse, where her belly is looking kind of Xenomorph-y. As Flagg sips a glass of milk and looks on, Cross realizes that she isn't meant to survive the birthing process. In a final act of Flagg defiance, she uses his sigil necklace to shatter the glass and hurl herself out the window, arms extended crucifixion-style. She falls through the glass above the Inferno promenade, hits the bottom of the empty pool at the center of the Inferno and, you know. Splatters.

Flagg, distraught, tells Henreid to cancel the nursery.

Back in the ditch, Redman and Kojak are passing the night when a wolf appears. The two have an off-screen fight, but Kojak emerges victorious.

Later in New Vegas, Flagg is in the Penthouse with the parts of Cross's body that they could scrape off the floor. In the hallway outside, the Rat Woman tells Henreid that they were supposed to put together a show trial in the courtroom, not a snuff film, and Henreid begins to sob. Flagg appears and Henreid begins mumbling about Bateman, but Flagg is indifferent.

In the next scene, the Rat Woman is dressed like a bellhop, and delivers some "room service" to Underwood: Cross's decapitated, smashed-in skull. When Henreid and a lackey arrive, they expect Underwood to be a mess, but he points out that it's actually an indication that things in New Vegas are falling apart. Cross was, after all, meant to be Flagg's queen...

Brentner and Underwood are hooded and brought into the center of the Inferno, which is filled with people chanting, "Make them pay." Lawry appears and interviews Henreid about the "traitors" he just brought in. Henreid seems uncertain about himself, but seems to gain confidence as he introduces Flagg.

The majority of the crowd chants for Flagg (although one of the New Vegas citizens we saw looking uncertain at the trial earlier still seems to have misgivings).

Flagg addresses the crowd, telling a story about freedom of the new world, and saying that the prisoners want to shackle them using their morality. Flagg says that nature contains winners and losers, and declares that they are the predators and "they" are the prey.

Henreid turns on the water and the pool where Underwood and Brentner are shackled begins to fill. "Heaven" by U 96 begins to play, and as Flagg dances around, the Rat Woman has the video feed shift to the crowd, so they "can see themselves." Flagg says they'll drown the rats and then burn the witch, which is when they cut to the Vegas airport, where a plane is being prepped to fly a bomb to Boulder. Underwood notes that Flagg is unaware that Mother Abigail has died.

The camera feed cuts to footage of the Trashcan Man's bomb buggy heading up the Strip, and then we get a reaction shot of the same man who seemed uncertain at the trial, not quite joining in the crowd's "burn them down" chant.

Henreid enters the arena and begins beating Underwood and Brentner with a nightstick, but Underwood continues to repeat that he will "fear no evil." A woman in the crowd echoes his word and discord begins to be sown. Flagg orders Henreid to shoot the woman in the crowd, but Henreid declines. Flagg accuses him of being a weak little lamb.

More people in the crowd begin to repeat that they will fear no evil, including the doubtful man from the trail. While others in the crowd turn on him, the atmosphere of bloodlust has been shattered. Outside, thunder and lightening begin gather around the Inferno.

The Trashcan Man arrives with the warhead, and he's looking pretty, uh, irradiated. Flagg says he was supposed to go to the airport, not the hotel, but all Trashcan has to say for himself is, "My life for you."

The weird storm around the hotel continues to grow, and the clouds begin to enter the Inferno through the hole made by Cross's plunging body. Electricity makes the hair on Flagg's knuckles stand up. Lightening begins appearing inside the building, setting the banners with Flagg's sigil on fire and sending people fleeing in panic. Lawry attempts to flee and is killed by a bolt.

The crowds surge against the closed doors of the Inferno like Trumpkins at a capital building, eventually pushing their way through by shattered the glass and trampling some of their associates in the process. The carnage is still being broadcast over the televisions all over the Strip, thanks to the AV efforts of the Rat Woman (although she herself is also dispatched by a Biblical bolt).

Meanwhile, Brentner and Underwood are forgotten in the fracas. Underwood urges Brentner to look up.

Henreid narrowly dodges death by a swinging light fixture... only to be caught and decapitated by it on the back swing. Story of his life, huh?

Flagg, agog, watches the destruction culminate in a spectacular display of ball lightning. Flagg sings a little bit to the ball lightning, but it responds by giving him several blasts, which make him look more and more mutilated before he vanishes all together.

Then, the lightening strikes the warhead. Under the water of the pool, Brentner and Underwood hold each others' hands as the detonation occurs, and a nuclear explosion engulfs New Vegas.

From his position at the bottom of the ditch, Redman sees the sky turn red before the shock-wave arrives, bringing dirt and debris with it. Tom Cullen appears in the aftermath and begins to follow the sound of Kojak's barking.

Back in Boulder, Frannie Goldsmith and Joe are walking when Joe freezes, sensing what had happened. He turns and Goldsmith follows his gaze to see the strange lights in the sky. Joe tells Goldsmith that the Dark Man is gone... But before he can answer her inquiry about what happened to Redman, she goes into labor.

The Circle Closes

Season 1
Episode Number: 9
Season Episode: 9

Originally aired: Thursday February 11, 2021
Writer: Stephen King
Director: Josh Boone
Show Stars: James Marsden (Stu Redman), Odessa Young (Frannie Goldsmith), Owen Teague (Harold Lauder), Alexander Skarsgård (Randall Flagg), Whoopi Goldberg (Mother Abigail Freemantle), Amber Heard (Nadine Cross), Jovan Adepo (Larry Underwood), Henry Zaga (Nick Andros), Nat Wolff (Lloyd Henreid), Irene Bedard (Ray Bretner), Brad William Henke (Tom Cullen), Greg Kinnear (Glen Bateman)
Guest Stars: Kendall Joy Hall (Young Abigail Freemantle), Nicholas Lea (Norris), Olivia Cheng (Dr. Sylvia Wen), Gordon Cormier (Joe), Luis Javier (Native Chief), Tarun Keram (Steve), Nicholas Dohy (Boulder Citizen), Mick Garris (Boulder Partygoer)
Summary: After seeing both the light and the dark, Frannie makes her stand.



The episode opens on Frannie Goldsmith in voice over, presumably reading from her personal diary, which she's writing for her child. She wonders whether or not people will choose a different path after the "hard reset" of Captain Trips.

We see that Frannie has already had her baby, who looks happy and healthy. But then the baby begins displaying symptoms of Captain Trips, from which no one on Earth seems to have recovered. However, the baby recovers. Ten weeks later, a second baby is born to two im-

munite parents, and never develops symptoms.

Frannie notes that others have urged her to send spies towards New Vegas, but she declines — although she's forced to admit to herself that it may simply be that she doesn't want to know what happened to Stu.

The head of the body crew urges Frannie to join them at the event that night, noting that she's their only remaining connection to Mother Abigail. "Until they come back," says Frannie, but he doesn't seem hopeful.

The event is something of a memorial for those lost, and Frannie includes the picture she took of Larry, Stu, Glen, and Ray before they left for New Vegas. But that's when the sound of Kojak barking makes her realize that Stu has returned.

Stu tells her that it's only because of Tom that he survived, and the couple embraces. Then Frannie introduces Stu to the baby: Abigail.

Then we cut to the wreckage of New Vegas, and Flagg's whistling tune plays as a tracking shot navigates between the burned-out wreckage before arriving at the yellow-face button, which currently displays X'd-out-eyes. But before our very eyes, the face turns back to a smiley as the title card appears...

Back in Boulder, it's the Fourth of July — one year after the events of the first episode. Mother Abigail has been commemorated with a mural. The residents of the Boulder Free Zone are having a barbeque, and some of them are line dancing. It looks nice — y'all remember parties?

Then the music slows down, but Frannie seems troubled and leaves the gazebo where they've been dancing. Stu follows her and asks what's wrong. Frannie says that she wants to return to Maine and see the ocean.

Stu notes that since the snow melted in February they've had over 500 more residents arrive in Boulder, with three currently incarcerated. While there have only been minor crimes so far, Stu thinks its only a matter of time before more serious transgressions occur.

Frannie says that they wouldn't have to stay in Maine, and they could come back to see how people in Boulder were making out. For the time being, they agree to think about it, and kiss before beginning to dance again.

Later, but still in Boulder, Stu and Frannie are in bed (presumably after making love) and Stu asks about the journey — when they're going to "close the circle." Frannie gets up to respond to the baby crying.

Soon, Stu and Frannie are loading Abigail and Kojak into the car, and the residents of the BFZ are there to see them off. Tom Cullen tearfully says goodbye to them, making them promise they'll return. Stu makes a point of saying goodbye to Joe, and some neat expositional dialogue makes it clear that while they're gone, Joe will be cared for by "Lucy-mom".

Then we get a montage of road travel, Stu and Frannie working together to clear stalled vehicles and make camp each night. They reach Lorton, Nebraska and decide to stop at a farmhouse for the night. Frannie and Abigail stay in the truck as Kojak take off across the yard and Stu approaches the house. The music is ominous, and Kojak seems concerned with something in the cornfields. He extracts a familair dolly.

However, Stu and Frannie remain oblivious. Stu references that line from *It's a Wonderful Life* about lassoing the moon. Stu calls to Kojak but Kojak is reticent at first... however, the dog comes after a moment. Then, an arm reaches out of the corn and pulls the doll back inside...

As Stu, Frannie, Abigail, and Kojak settle into the farmhouse, we see an illuminated tent in the cornfield. A girl is singing hymns beside it, although she pauses to note that from the sound of Abigail's wails, the baby is teething.

The next morning, Stu straps a gun holster to Frannie's hip before getting in the truck to head to a pharmacy. Stu arrives and finds the door locked, but with the glass already knocked out. He whistles as he gathers supplies.

Back at the farmhouse, Frannie is nursing Abigail while Kojak sits nearby. Frannie sets Abigail down and then spots the water pump. Ominously, on the way back from the pharmacy, Stu blows a tire on the truck. Stu tries to raise Frannie on the walkie-talkie — channel 19, say true and say thankya — but Frannie has left the walkie inside the house.

Frannie reaches the pump and tries it out, and it works, giving her some cold water... but as she begins to fill a bucket, the water stops. She reaches into the pump to find the obstruction... and Flagg leans over her shoulder and says, "Hello, bitch." Just then, Frannie is bit by a rat. She reacts to both, falling forward and breaking the wooden cover of the well. Kojak barks as she lies at the bottom.

Elsewhere, Stu is naturally having a more difficult than average time replacing the tire. Frannie's leg is clearly broken, she's covered in lacerations, and her shirt is bloodied. She's dreaming, running through a jungle — and she encounters Flagg sitting beneath a tree.

Flagg says that want to show her something, and nearby, one of the few indigenous tribes that remains isolated from the outside world (and isolated from Captain Trips by extension). Then Flagg leads her back to a well in the jungle. He sits on the edge and looks into it, revealing it's something of a magic mirror: within the well, Frannie can see herself, curled and injured at the bottom (Flagg tells her she's punctured a lung).

Flagg shows Frannie her daughter crying, then shows her Stu attempting to replace the tire on the truck. He makes the precarious situation clear: will Stu make it back to the farmhouse in time to protect Abigail?

But Flagg says that he's in a "forgiving mood," a "healing mood," and so in the interest of unity, he's willing to strike a deal. Flagg suggests that Stu might change the tire with no problem, and perhaps Frannie didn't suffer too serious an injury — he's clearly offering something. Frannie asks what the catch might be, and Flagg acts offended—but we know it's coming, don't we, Constant Reader?

Flagg tells Frannie he'd like a kiss, and Frannie giggles at the suggestion. But Flagg wants permission to "look through her eyes" from time to time. Flagg leans in to the kiss but Frannie

pulls back. Flagg asks if she wants to die, and Frannie says she doesn't — but she still doesn't believe the Walking Dude.

Flagg tires to manipulate Frannie emotionally, highlighting the fact that Abigail remains on the porch. They seem to lean in for a kiss... but Frannie bites his lip and tells him not for anything in the world before fleeing into the jungle.

Flagg gives pursuit... and soon Frannie finds herself in the cornfield again. She hears the sound of singing and follows it, finding Mother Abigail sitting on a porch and playing a guitar. Abigail tells Frannie that Flagg simply showed her what he thought would scare her into doing what he wanted... but Frannie resisted that temptation, which will lead to God's blessing. Abigail takes Frannie into her arms, as Frannie says she can die, but not her baby.

Back in Nebraska, Stu arrives back at the farmhouse, where Kojak is waiting for him.

At Mother Abigail's cabin, she tell Frannie that while the wheel keeps turning, the command is always the same: stand.

Stu puls into the farmhouse, where he finds the girl from the field holding Baby Abigail and nursing her with a bottle, but after glancing at her, he heads directly to the well. Meanwhile, Mother Abigail tells Frannie that she knows certain things: that Frannie will be the mother of five, which will bring forth 20, and that Frannie will live to see some of the 70 that come from that, concluding that her children will replenish the Earth.

At the farmhouse, Stu brings the truck around and the girl springs into action, instructing Kojak to guard Baby Abigail (which he unquestioningly obeys). Stu attaches the winch to his belt and then uses the pulley on the truck to lower himself down the well. He picks up Frannie and she screams in pain. Then he calls to the girl to pull them up, which she begins doing.

They reach the top of the well and pull Frannie clear. The kid says "give me some space, Stuart" and then passes her hands over Frannie, which heals her injuries. Then, she whispers in her ear just like Flagg did, instructing her to stand, which she does, feeling no pain.

The couple finds the baby doll in the crib with Baby Abigail, but the girl is gone.

One week later, Frannie, Stu, Baby Abigail, and Kojak are in Ogunquit, Maine, looking over the Atlantic Ocean. Frannie asks Stu how he'd feel about four more kids, and while Stu says he was thinking two, he admits that he's easily persuaded.

Stu asks Frannie what happened in Nebraska. Frannie says that she found out that there's two sides of the world: this, and a "deep well of darkness." Frannie says she saw both when she was dying in the well, leading her to temptation...

She quotes what Mother Abigail told her at the cabin: "The wheel turns, the struggle continues, and the command is always the same... Be true. Stand."

Then we cut back to the jungle. Flagg is naked except for his boots as he approaches the indigenous tribe, singing "Why Can't We Be Friends." One of the people shoots an arrow at him, and he catches it then points at the man's head, which explodes in blood. Then his boots lift off the ground and the people fall to their knees before him, just as they did in New Vegas.

Flagg introduces himself as Russell Faraday, and then, he demands worship.

Actor Appearances

A

Reese Alexander	1
0102 (Sniffing Guard)	
Nyla Alleyne	1
0103 (Amanda)	
Primo Allon	1
0102 (Savino)	
Peter Anderson	1
0102 (Ghostly Man)	
Jennifer-Juniper Angeli	1
0101 (Harold's Mom)	
Jagua Arneja	1
0102 (Terrified Cashier)	

B

Eion Bailey	4
0101 (Teddy Weizak); 0103 (Teddy Weizak); 0104 (Teddy Weizak); 0105 (Teddy Weizak)	
Bruce Blain	1
0104 (Poul Impening)	
Jason Burkart	2
0107 (Biker Security Guard); 0108 (Biker Security Guard)	

C

Tim Carlson	1
0102 (Male Patient Stage 5)	
Miles Chalmers	1
0102 (Male Patient #2 Stage 5)	
Lisa Chandler	1
0104 (Susan)	
Olivia Cheng	4
0103 (Dr. Sylvia Wen); 0104 (Dr. Sylvia Wen); 0107 (Dr. Sylvia Wen); 0109 (Dr. Sylvia Wen)	
Clifton Collins Jr.	1
0106 (Bobby Terry)	
Curtiss Cook Jr.	1
0101 (Charles Champion)	
Gordon Cormier	8
0102 (Joe); 0103 (Joe); 0104 (Joe); 0105 (Joe); 0106 (Joe); 0107 (Joe); 0108 (Joe); 0109 (Joe)	
Carlos Joe Costa	1
0104 (Townsperson #1)	
Bryan Cranston	1
0101 (The President (voice))	
Isla Crerar	1
0103 (Young Nadine)	

D

Briar Diallo	1
0103 (Isabella)	
Kristy Dawn Dinsmore	1

0102 (Larry's One-Night Stand)

Alexis Paige Dixon	1
0103 (Jesse)	
Nicholas Dohy	1
0109 (Boulder Citizen)	
Darren Dolynski	1
0102 (Wayne Stuckey)	
Fletcher Donovan	1
0102 (Boulder Male Resident #1)	
Fiona Dourif	4
0105 (Rat Woman); 0106 (Rat Woman); 0107 (Rat Woman); 0108 (Rat Woman)	
Spencer Drever	1
0101 (Younger Brother)	

E

Brandyn Eddy	1
0103 (Vince)	

F

Camden Filtness	1
0102 (Suited Man)	
Eddie Flake	1
0102 (Hospital Doctor)	

G

Mick Garris	1
0109 (Boulder Partygoer)	
Shishy Gebru	1
0102 (Hipster)	
Mark Gibbon	2
0105 (Burly Guard #1); 0106 (Burly Guard #1)	
Heather Graham	1
0102 (Rita Blakemoor)	

H

Kendall Joy Hall	1
0109 (Young Abigail Freemantle)	
Leah Hennessey	1
0102 (Female Mormon Type #1)	
Liza Huget	1
0104 (Townsperson #2)	

J

Shadi Janho	1
0105 (Bookie)	
Paul Jarrett	2
0106 (Head Custodian); 0108 (Head Custodian)	
Luis Javier	1
0109 (Native Chief)	
Jeremy Jones	1

0102 (Andrew 'Poke' Freeman)

K

Arkie Kandola 1
 0105 (Foreman)
 TJ Kayama 1
 0103 (Heck Drogan)
 Tarun Keram 3
 0103 (Steve); 0104 (Steve); 0109 (Steve)
 M.J. Kokolis 1
 0101 (Billy)
 Kim Kondrashoff 1
 0103 (Sheriff Baker)

L

Nicholas Lea 5
 0101 (Norris); 0104 (Norris); 0105 (Norris); 0106 (Norris); 0109 (Norris)
 Hamish Linklater 1
 0101 (Dr. Jim Ellis)
 Jasmine Lukuku 1
 0103 (Lacy)

M

Harrison MacDonald 1
 0101 (Corporal)
 Natalie Martinez 2
 0104 (Dayna Jurgens); 0105 (Dayna Jurgens)
 Todd Matthews 1
 0108 (Julie's Cameraman)
 Myles McCarthy 1
 0103 (Booth)
 Cameron McDonald 1
 0101 (Frannie's Dad)
 Rob McEachern 1
 0101 (Vic)
 Katherine McNamara 4
 0104 (Julie Lawry); 0105 (Julie Lawry); 0106 (Julie Lawry); 0108 (Julie Lawry)
 Richard Meen 1
 0102 (Tube Necked Inmate)
 Ezra Miller 3
 0106 (Trashcan Man); 0107 (Trashcan Man); 0108 (Trashcan Man)
 Sean Millington 1
 0102 (Stalker #1)
 Jenny Mitchell 1
 0102 (Female Mormon Type #2)
 Angela Moore 1
 0105 (Female Clerk)
 Troy Mundle 1
 0101 (Ralph Hodges)

N

Lissa Neptuno 1
 0105 (Neighbor)
 Ariana Nica 1
 0107 (Adorable Child)
 Tebo Nzeku 1
 0101 (Sally Campion)

P

Iris Paluly 1
 0102 (Female Patient Stage 5)

David Parent 1
 0101 (Tommy)
 Luvia Petersen 1
 0102 (Stacie)
 Lisa Renee Pitts 1
 0102 (Alice Underwood)
 Mariessa Portelance 1
 0101 (Blood Tech)
 Sunita Prasad 2
 0106 (Sophia); 0108 (Sophia)

R

Hugo Raymundo 1
 0105 (Bo)
 Gabrielle Rose 3
 0102 (Judge Harris); 0104 (Judge Harris); 0106 (Judge Harris)
 Michel Issa Rubio 1
 0102 (Stalker #2)
 Eric Ruggieri 1
 0102 (Boulder Male Resident #2)

S

Donald Sales 1
 0101 (Sergeant)
 Angus Sampson 1
 0104 (Garvey)
 J.K. Simmons 1
 0101 (General William Starkey)
 Veena Sood 1
 0101 (Dr. Biswas)
 Jesse Stanley 1
 0101 (Amy Lauder)
 J. Douglas Stewart 1
 0101 (Hap)
 Daniel Sunjata 1
 0101 (Cobb)

T

Carolyn Tinglin 1
 0102 (Hospital Nurse)

W

Mike Wasko 1
 0104 (New Arrival)
 Danny Wattley 1
 0102 (Trask)
 Seth Whittaker 2
 0105 (Burly Guard); 0106 (Burly Guard)