Special Ops: Lioness Episode Guide

Episodes 001–008

Last episode aired Sunday September 03, 2023



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Sacrificial Soldiers

Season 1 Episode Number: 1 Season Episode: 1

Originally aired: Sunday July 23, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: John Hillcoat

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Michael Kelly (Byron Westfield), Celestina Harris (Charlie), Graham

Shiels (Drill Sergeant), Ariella Ezekiel (Isabel), Ethan Jones Romero (Edgar), Stevie Ray Dallimore (Colonel Dirves), Daniel Abeles (Captain Hansmuth), Ramon Nuñez (Cherub's Boyfriend), Mikaela Nina Secada (Cherub), Pascal Arquimedes (Punk), Anthony Ruiz (Manager of Tast E Burger), Martin Fisher (Recruiting Marine), Gabe Bowling (Police Officer), Aaron Matthews (Sergeant Hastings), Colt Bauder (Guard), Travis Roberts (Driver), David Neil Cohen (Homeless Man), Scottie Di-Giacomo (Patient), Joseph Giambrone (Homeless Man), Anita Moore (Police Officer), Zoryah Nomak (Pit Soldier), Scott Swope (SWAT), Scot

Teller (Neighbor)

Summary: Things go awry for Joe and her team during a mission out in the field;

Joe is left devastated. Upon her return home, Joe's family life presents it's own challenges. Cruz tries to escape a dangerous situation. Joe

must choose a new recruit.



The episode begins in Kobane, Syria, where Isabel, an operative of the CIA Special Activities Division frantically phones Joe, her boss. Joe is at a CIA/Socom forward outpost, 17 km away. Isabel tells Joe her cover is blown. Someone saw the cross on Isabel's ribs from when her brother died and her identity was revealed. They now have to extract her from the compound.

Just then, a huge explosion goes off near the outpost. The guy who had apparently missed tactics training (accord-

ing to Joe's team) was carrying a detonator cord. Armed militia attacks in swarms. Joe calls air support who clear out the crowd, making way for her team to head on their way for extraction.

Joe calls Bobby, a member of her team, as the terrorists get closer to Isabel. Joe gets an estimate of the extraction time. Bobby reports that the team is facing heavy resistance from armed militia and it will take some time to get to Isabel. She hears screams on the phone and Joe asks the extraction team not to engage. Joe orders the place to be blown up. There is an eerie, unshakeable discomfort in her, despite doing the "right thing."

In Oklahoma City, four years prior, we meet our protagonist. Cruz works at a fast-food restaurant. She was formerly a stripper. She is in an abusive relationship with Edgar and tries to break out one day by hitting him and running away. Edgar catches her but she ends up in a Marine

office. Edgar and his thugs wait outside the restaurant that night and her manager calls the police. He then takes her to a shelter for the night.

Sometime later, Cruz takes the exam to become a marine and passes it. She creates a record in her ASVAB and PT tests. Her superiors are extremely impressed. Cruz explains that when her mother died, she lost the will to try. She became hateful of everything in the world, including herself.

We come back to the present. Joe debriefs her superiors about the drastic measure of calling a drone strike on the ISIS camp. Joe is struggling with her decision and with the fact that her instinct to trust led to Isabel losing her life. She goes home without calling her partner Neal and is almost clueless as she navigates her children.

Joe leaves for Fort Bragg a few days later to pick out a new asset. It is revealed that Joe heads the Lioness team working in the Special Activities Division. Their task is to locate female relatives and acquaintances of high-value targets and place operatives close to them. She asks Cruz to take off her clothes to show her that she doesn't have any tattoos (which led to Isabel's death). Cruz takes offence to Joe's methods but the latter is impressed.

The duo leaves on a plane for the camp. The target for this mission is Asmar Ali Amrohi, one of the leaders of the Iranian-backed Militia in Iraq. Cruz's mark is his daughter. She will be starting her mission in Kuwait. They head to Camp Arifjan in the city to get Cruz prepped. Joe introduces her to the team — Bobby, Two Cups, Tex, Randy, and Tucker. The team doesn't know the location of Asmar's house yet. He has an apartment in Kuwait where his daughter resides.

The next morning, a hungover Cruz gets ready for her new mission. Joe and she get down to intercept the daughter. Cruz is visibly apprehensive about going in without any background on her mark. She bumps into the target trying on new jewellery. Her cover name is Zara Adid and Aaliyah, the daughter, is quick to make friends with her.

The Beating

Season 1 Episode Number: 2 Season Episode: 2

Originally aired: Sunday July 23, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: John Hillcoat

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Matt Gerald (Cody), America Olivo (Dr. Elsa Ramirez), Michael Park

(Dr. Gary Brown), Josh Crotty (Delta Captain), Gigi Grace (Soccer Girl), Nora Winer (Maddie Rawlins), Alex Podulke (Mike Rawlins), Marguerite Stimpson (Vickie Rawlins), Imani Love (Nurse Jenny), Jared Shaw (Delta Cruz Interrogator), Joshua Graverholt (Ranger QRT Residence), Michael Jibrin (Delta Operator), Sean Avery (SF Operator), Er-

icka Boston (Parent), Scott Swope (Bouncer)

Summary: Joe continues her training with Cruz, whose methods are question-

able. Cruz starts to build a relationship with Aaliyah. Kate gets into a fight during her soccer game. Neal has to deliver difficult news to a

patient.



The episode begins with a meeting between Kaitlyn Meade (Nicole Kidman) and Joe. Aaliya is now in New York having previously gone to visit Paris. Cruz has stood to her task by placing seeds of friendship with her.

Joe requests to put Cruz "through the grinder" with her CAG team to ensure she doesn't have any surprises waiting when push comes to shove. Kaitlyn agrees but asks her to displace Cruz from Fort Bragg immediately. They cannot afford to have Aaliyah and Cruz run into each other by chance.

We then get insights into Joe's family.

Her partner, Neal, is a doctor, who navigates a tough situation at work. The doctors discover that a six-year-old patient, Maddy, has cancer but Neal wants the family to know all options before being confronted with the hopelessness of the situation. Neal breaks the heart-wrenching news to the couple. He explains that, in his experience, Maddy will not be able to survive the surgery. The cancer is aggressive and gives her only 6 months to live. When Neal suggests they do not go ahead with the surgery, Maddy's father jumps at him with fists. While the doctor clearly understands having it would elongate Maddy's suffering, the father's emotions blind him.

Kate, Joe's daughter, gets suspended from school for beating a fellow student. Neal angrily confronts her in the car when Kate says that "A white man like you won't understand."

Joe comes home and takes note of the situation. Neal confesses to Joe that his job where most of his patients die before they come of age takes a toll on him. But he still finds hope because the remaining ones do make it. Joe embraces Neal to comfort him. Next, she deals with her brat-head

kid Kate, who has no measure of what her parents are going through. Joe's stick and carrot style sets Kate right for now. She asks her to show some love to Neal, whose day might get a little better with it.

We switch attention to Cruz, who is having a tough time sleeping. She goes out for a run in the wee hours of the morning and is kidnapped. As Joe and Neal get some "we time" together, their phones ring simultaneously. Duty calls. Even though it is heroic (what they do), that is the reason for the dysfunction in their family.

Cruz is brutally tortured by Joe's team. She is given the worst treatment but Cruz endures. She is livid with Joe, who explains that she wanted to test if Cruz was up to the task of escaping the clutches of the enemy when her cover is blown.

Joe mocks Cruz's life choices, informing her that Edgar, her abusive partner, is now dead. This seems to be part of Cruz's training exercise but Cruz squirms in her chair. Joe wants to know Cruz's breaking point and signs off on the torture to continue. Cody further piles on the pressure by asking Cruz invasive questions. It is revealed that her father, Josecito, had no one else in the house to take care of him. Cody pins her to the ground and restrains her when the man in charge calls it off. Joe doesn't want to but decides to call it off when Cruz is pushed to her limits. When Cody backs down, Cruz violently beats him and the other operatives. More men are needed to pull her back as she screams in anger and pain.

Joe brings Cruz to Fort Bragg. Before she leaves, Joe asks Cruz for insights she has gathered from Aaliyah. But Cruz says that she won't talk about her father. Joe explains that Asmar is driven by greed and not a religious agenda. Even though his family is obscenely rich, they do not share it with the country. When Cruz is able to make her way to Asmar, she must not hesitate to pull the trigger. And more importantly, she must endure anything and everything they put her through until Joe and her team can extract her.

Cruz comes inside to meet the team she will be staying with. These are the same operatives we met before — Joe's team. When they learn that Cruz was put through a S.E.R.E test alone, they gather together and head for the bar. They confront Cody and his mates, which materializes into a real bar fight. In the middle of it all, Aaliyah calls Cruz, who lies that she got into a car wreck. Aaliyah proposes they meet the next day and Cruz cannot say no.

Bruise Like a Fist

Season 1 Episode Number: 3 Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Sunday July 30, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: Anthony Byrne

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Martin Donovan (Errol), Thad Luckinbill (Kyle), Clark Carmichael

(Senator Palmer), Ray Corasani (Ehsan), Carla Mansour (Malika), Layla Mohammadi (Nashwa), Priscilla Doueihy (Nala), Adam Budron (Sami), Sam Asghari (Kamal), David Alan Basche (Dr. Brumley), Brandon Ocasio (Steakhouse Waiter), Jackson Dorfmann (Michael), Ryan Garbayo (Surgeon on Zoom), Aziz Attougui (Snitch), Richard Haddad (Asif), Karim Nematt (Guard #2), Avi Vichner (Guard #3), Fawad Siddiqui (Guard #4), Luis Arroyo Jr. (Bodyguard), Josh Giannarino (Pedestrian), Ray Steven Lober (Senator), Jordyn Rax (Kamal's Girl),

Erich Reimer (Pedestrian)

Summary: Cruz is invited to spend the weekend with Aaliyah and her inner-circle.

Joe keeps Kaitlyn informed of Cruz's progress. Kyle comes to Joe des-

perate for help with an asset.



The episode picks up from the previous episode, ending with Aaliyah inviting Cruz to a party. Cruz heads toward the location in Chesapeake, Maryland taking final instructions from Joe on the phone. The latter is particular about how and what Cruz should say to Aaliyah and her friends. Joe shores up her profile by asking Cruz to "answer questions with questions" and make the friends talk about their lives since that is the only thing they care about. She also warns her that her car would be planted with a bug and

tracked.

Joe meets with Kaitlyn to discuss the mission. They talk about Aaliyah and her access to Asmari's resources. Kaitlyn thinks it might be intentional; a ploy set up to catch the mole. Even the house Cruz is going to is owned by Qudrah Petrol.

Joe has an extraction team ready just in case something bad happens at the party. As she leaves the restaurant, Joe is approached by Kyle, who seems to be an old acquaintance from her days of service in Afghanistan. Joe is visibly unnerved seeing him. Her step is anxious because she knows he wants something.

Kyle's team is undertaking an operation where they will be stopping trafficked Syrian nationals at the border. His mark is in jail and is being transferred over state lines. But once the word gets out that the prisoner is a snitch, he won't survive prison. He proposes an unimaginable plan: halt the transfer midway and extract the mark. He asks for Joe's team for this purpose and she

looks at him incredulously. After a lot of consideration, she agrees to give him three members of her team but wants them back within 2 days.

As expected, Cruz is met with intense scrutiny from Asmari's team. They instantly do background checks and latch a man onto her for the party. Aaliyah warmly greets Cruz and introduces her to the friends group. Their reaction to Cruz is interesting. Actually, they aren't as interested because they think "Aaliyah has rescued another stray." They even call Cruz her next "project" when Aaliyah takes her for a dip in her wardrobe for a swimsuit. Aaliyah is shocked to see the bruises on Cruz's body (once she changes). She is more concerned than suspicious and immediately calls her doctor to inspect Cruz.

Joe informs her team about Kyle's side mission and three of them volunteer to go. There is nervous tension among the remaining members of Joe's team as they feel Cruz's cover is close to being blown. And they aren't wrong. Dr Bramley takes one look at her and is convinced she wasn't in a car wreck. He feels domestic abuse is involved and is obligated to report it to the authorities.

While the team gets ready to leave, Joe wants to give Cruz some time to convince Bramley otherwise. Joe's bet pays off as Cruz does well to slip out of the situation.

Aaliyah sends all her friends away to the city and takes a stroll on the beach with Cruz. There is clear disdain in her voice about the wound-up Middle East region. She hates their restrictive rules and lack of affluence beyond the premises of the palace she lives in. Her fiance, Ehsan, works in Manhattan, and that is perfect for Aaliyah. She also warns Cruz to stay away from Malika and Nashwa (her friends) since they try to sabotage Aaliyah's new friendships.

Joe goes back home and walks in on Kate making out with a boy. She calls his mother and informs her about what he has been up to. Kate throws typical teenage tantrums at Joe, not realizing the folly of her argument.

Joe listens patiently, not reacting to Kate's provocation. Neil is out on the porch instructing on a surgery via video. Joe informs him about Kate and Neil surprises her with the "rules" he has established with Kate about such indulgences. Joe wanted him to consult with her but he rightly points out she is never home.

Meanwhile, tensions in Maryland also run high. Cruz isn't able to fall asleep and runs into a drunk Sami in the kitchen. He tries to force himself on her but she fends Sami off effortlessly. He does not give up and ferociously pounds at her door.

Cruz arms herself with a pen but security spots it on the CCTV and takes Sami away. Kyle and Joe's team wait to execute their mission in Texas. They're flushed when they learn that the mission isn't authorized by any agency. But they still go ahead with it. The mission goes smoothly as they are able to extract the mark. The men dump their car and gear in a barn, switching to another car. Kyle assures the men that the media will not pick up on this news as the administration would prevent any broadcasting of it. This makes them look weak and incompetent.

The next morning, Eshan sends Sami home. His actions from last night have ensured he is no longer allowed in the group. The episode ends with a tense Joe writhing in the aftermath of learning Aaliyah is surprising Cruz by taking her to a fixed base operator. These are companies that provide charter services for private jets. The destination as of now is unknown. But Cruz smartly intimates the plate number of the plane and Joe makes sure they are trailed by a jet.

The Choice of Failure

Season 1 Episode Number: 4 Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Sunday August 06, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: Anthony Byrne

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Michael Kelly (Byron Westfield), Thad Luckinbill (Kyle), Ray Corasani

(Ehsan), Carla Mansour (Malika), Layla Mohammadi (Nashwa), Priscilla Doueihy (Nala), Sam Asghari (Kamal), Michael Tow (Dr. Hammond), Daniel Reece (Paul), Hazel Graye (Daisy), Ruby King (Jasmine), Richard Haddad (Asif), Karim Nematt (Guard #2), Avi Vichner (Guard #3), Fawad Siddiqui (Guard #4), Lily Sondik (EMT 1), Kevin Sebastian (EMT 2), Matt Consalvo (EMT 3), Paige Herschell (Hostess), Kimberly Dodson (Nurse (Kate's OR)), Crystal Chau (Physician), Shanna Bess (Trauma Nurse), Casey Schryer (Waitress), Stephan Godleski (Bouncer), Jack Herholdt (Charge Nurse), Chris Lindsay-Abaire (Dr. Shipley), Eunice Bae (Nurse (Neil's OR)), Amalina Ace (Tami), Jadaya Bivins (Cheerleader #1), Angelina Boris (Cheerleader #2), Ellie Kim (Cheerleader #3), Andrew Haserlat (Anesthesiologist), Mike Heslin (Polo), Wayne Johnson (Surgeon Assistant), Erich Reimer (Pedestrian)

(Polo), Wayne Johnson (Surgeon Assistant), Erich Reimer (Pedestrian)
Cruz is put in a compromising position in the Hamptons; causing Joe

and Kaitlyn to doubt her. Kaitlyn and Westfield confront Kyle over what happened at the border, complicating things further for Joe and her

team.

Summary:



The episode begins in East Hampton in Long Island. Cruz has progressed well in her friendship with Aaliyah. The two have been spending a lot of time together lately. So have the people keeping track of them — Joe's team and Asmari's men.

While out on a casual swim in the ocean with Cruz, Aaliyah confesses that she doesn't want to get married. Although Ehsan is kind and a great prospective partner, Aaliyah feels there is more for her in life.

Joe's team is still trying to figure out

the underlying transaction in Aaliyah and Ehsan's marriage. There has to be some logic about a Saudi royal marrying a Kuwaiti national in the present circumstances. Joe wants to nab Asmari at the wedding, feeling it is the perfect setting. But if it happens on foreign soil like the Emirates, the team would have a nightmare keeping track of Cruz.

While talking to one of the members of her team who did the job with Kyle, Joe is furious to learn there were casualties. And that the lawlessness was to such a level that her team could be in trouble. She immediately phones Kyle and tells him off for his carelessness. With everything going on, she can't afford to have such distractions.

Kaitlyn Meade (Nicole Kidman) and Byron Westfield (Michael Kelly) question Kyle over his offgrid operation. Footage obtained from authorities clearly shows them driving up to the scene in a car. He is forced to divulge that he used Joe's team for the job, which invites more distress from his superiors. Kyle saves the day somewhat by telling them that his contract agent (the one he rescued) is bringing over five Al-Qaeda operatives to San Antonio, where the CIA can nab them.

In a rather distressing scene, we see Kate, Joe's elder daughter, get into a vicious car accident. Neal is informed of her arrival and he instantly drops everything at the hospital to be with her as she is treated. Kate will be fine but one of her friends didn't make it. He informs Joe over the phone, who is in New York. After he keeps the phone, Neal suffers the shock of her life when he discovers that Kate is pregnant. To prepare her for surgery, she will have to be aborted to avoid fetal injuries.

Neal has a sombre conversation with Kate about her situation. He seems heartbroken that his daughter broke the promises she made to him. Trust is the hardest to win back once lost and Neal's eyes give away his pain.

Cruz accompanies Aaliyah and her friends to a high-end club. Joe and her team are keeping close track of her movements. When no one volunteers to get closer to Cruz in the club, Joe takes it upon herself to do so. She struggles to reconcile Kate's reality when Neal calls her about it. The duo promise to work this out together and meet the next day at the hospital.

Cruz spots Joe at the bar and purposely tries to rile her by flirting with a stranger. Unbeknownst to Cruz, he slips a roofie in her drink as Kaitlyn arrives outside the club to meet Joe. When the drugs start taking effect, the stranger tries to slip Cruz out to take advantage of her. Although Aaliyah's security was watching her, they are distracted by a brawl that breaks out. Joe loses sight of her as well and intimates to her team where the man is taking her.

In a tense sequence, they follow Cruz's tracker into the woods where the man prepares to rape her. Joe and the others get to her in time and save the day. Joe threatens him to keep quiet and also takes his DNA sample and ID as security. Cruz gains consciousness but is still struggling to come to her senses properly. Aaliyah keeps calling her as Cruz reveals the wedding will be in Dubai. Her position undercover is under scrutiny as Joe and Kaitlyn doubt she will be able to carry her cover.

The episode ends with another shock for Joe as Kaitlyn reveals her team is in deep trouble having been caught on the Border Surveillance footage along with Kyle.

Truth Is the Shrewdest Lie

Season 1 Episode Number: 5 Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Sunday August 13, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: Paul Cameron

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Michael Kelly (Byron Westfield), Martin Donovan (Errol), Thad Luck-

inbill (Kyle), Celestina Harris (Charlie), Michael Tow (Dr. Hammond), Erick Betancourt (Hernandez), Migs Govea (Jimenez), Ana Cruz Kayne (Means), Zach Appelman (Lt. Jennings), John Anthony Gorman (CIA Agent — AF Base), Noga Blum (Nurse), A.J. Franklin (San Antonio SWAT #1 (Van at House)), Jamie Guyer (San Antonio SWAT #2 (Hangar)), Logan Crawford (News Anchor), Essam Ferris (Alashka), Abraham Justice (Eyes), Mustafa Haidari (Suicide Bomber), Mike Heslin (Polo), Marisol Correa (SA SWAT Shooter #1), Robb Cremen (Politician), Brian Foreman (Congressman), Alexander Gineitis (Standby), Anthony Gullotta (Secret Service), George Ludden (Diner), Sam McCrea (Zeb), Mikeski (Doctor / Chef / Protester), Robert Olausen (ExSpecial Forces), Juan Szilagyi (Aaliyah's Security Team), William G. Tomek (Pedestrian), Scott Vogel (Hospital Patient), Tim R. Worley (Sur-

geon Assistant)

Summary: Joe and Neal deal with the aftermath of Kate's accident. Westfield and

Kaitlyn deploy Joe's team to subdue a terrorist threat. Cruz's cover

may be in jeopardy.



The episode begins with Cruz waking up in a CIA safe house. She has finally gathered her senses, contrary to what we thought in the dying moments of episode 4. Tucker briefs her about what really happened since Cruz has no clue about the night. Her voice has a sense of apprehension and terror as she asks about her missing underwear. But Tucker assures her that Cruz was not violated.

Meanwhile, Joe and Kaitlyn reach the hospital to see Kate. The latter gives Joe a couple of hours to be with Kate, beyond

which she must get back to her professional duties.

Kate's pregnancy has been rejected by her body, meaning they don't have to make a decision on abortion. Things are still dicey as far as recovery is concerned. They don't have assurances that Kate will be back to normal anytime soon. Joe emotionally confronts Kate about her life choices. It is arguably the best moment of the series as Joe pleads with Kate not to "take out her anger with Joe on herself." The CIA vet is completely vulnerable as she confesses she hasn't done her bit as a mother, among other things. This might turn out to be a turning point in their relationship and let's hope that materializes.

While Kaitlyn and Joe ride together in the car, the latter briefly advises Joe to "not turn out like Errol and her marriage," even suggesting Joe might be better as a station chief somewhere. She takes Joe to Langley, CIA HQ, for a meeting with Deputy Director Byron Westfield. Kyle is there too and Byron clearly establishes that they broke the CIA's rules of engagement with their unsanctioned illegal operation.

But despite the "grey area," the intel about Al-Qaeda operatives is actionable. Joe's team has already landed in San Antonio to nab them. Kyle will take the lead and Joe will run the tactical side of things. Westfield isn't done with Joe, though. He sounds out a warning: no deployment of CIA assets without his express permission. To ensure something like this doesn't happen again, Kaitlyn will personally oversee this mission.

During the briefing, Joe's team expresses their discomfort with the fact that they cannot return fire if fired upon. But Kaitlyn lays down the law clearly: "Only capture, and not kill." The stakes for this mission are high, considering that the team watches the terrorists arming bombs in anticipation of deploying them soon. There is a high possibility that the bombs will have to be discarded without disarming them because it won't be possible. This could mean casualties on their side. Since the team isn't large enough, Cruz and Joe will join the others in the field.

The mission schematics change at the final instance when Joe's team is allowed to kill the subjects (due to the bombs). Although they do it successfully, one of the subjects activates his suicide bomb vest, which means that it will go off. The police are told to evacuate the neighbourhood and a bomb squad is sent to take control of the site. It turns out that the mission was not kept under wraps at all as the media got wind of the operation and who the targets were.

Errol shows Kaitlyn — when she comes home — the news piece about the mission. She indicates that this will happen again with Mexican cartels sending people over the border again. Kaitlyn also declares that she is inviting their daughters for dinner that week, something that she might have been inspired to do due to what happened with Joe. We see Joe going to the hospital and to Kate and Neal, who informs her that their daughter has been administered morphine for the pain.

At the safe house, Cruz opens her phone and realizes Aaliyah has been trying to get in touch. When she calls her, Aaliyah asks Cruz to FaceTime her, indicating how tense she has been about their friendship. It is quite clear that they are attracted to each other.

The episode ends with a genius scene which shows Joe walking toward Neal in the hospital lobby with the news about the mission on the telly. But her stride is interrupted by a phone call and she turns the other way to attend it.

The Lie Is the Truth

Season 1 Episode Number: 6 Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Sunday August 20, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: Paul Cameron

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Morgan Freeman (Edwin Mullins), Michael Kelly (Byron Westfield),

Martin Donovan (Errol), Jennifer Ehle (Mason), Bruce McGill (Hollar), Thad Luckinbill (Kyle), Narmar Hanna (Massage Therapist #1), Reem Raouda (Massage Therapist #2), Edward Brence (Punk Thief #1), Amit Barnathan (Punk Thief #2 (Damian)), Braxton Fannin (Punk Thief #3 (Driver)), Richard Haddad (Asif), Guy LeMonnier (Colonel), Alexander

Blaise (Congressman Hay Adams)

Summary: Aaliyah bonds with Cruz over a spa day. Bobby, Tex, Two Cups, Randy

and Tucker confront a threat at the Safe House. Kaitlyn and Joe are

scolded for the San Antonio mission in a debrief.



The episode starts with a glimpse of Cruz's scenic drive to the Hamptons. Aaliyah invited her to stay at the beach house in the last episode, where she is currently alone. The "surprise" that is waiting for her at the house is a luxurious, relaxing spa day, something Cruz is completely unsynced with.

Byron, Kaitlyn, and Joe have been called for a debriefing at the White House. Kaitlyn learns from Errol that Secretary of State, Mullins, will also be present. This a huge development as Mullins rep-

resents the President directly in the debriefing.

All the noise made with the border extraction and the San Antonio executions is catching up with them. Kaitlyn also gives Errol a leg up by revealing to him that Qudrah Petrol has a mole; a large conglomerate that controls almost \$80 billion worth of oil. If that could somehow end up on the open market instead of the black market, it could mean a huge opportunity for the US. Before Cruz goes in, Joe advises her not to tell lies to Aaliyah since she won't be able to keep up.

To be sure that Cruz remembers what she says to her, Cruz should use real-life events with changed names and locations. It is a clever ruse by Sheridan to embolden both the storytelling and character arc at the same time. Cruz goes through a foreign experience with the spa treatment. But what matters here is that Aaliyah trusts her completely. Her naivety is surprising but significant for the Lioness team. They are closer than ever and this also means inroads to Asmari, the real target.

Joe's QRF team has a scare when they hear a break-in at their safe house. But it turns out to be petty teenagers looking to make quick money. Joe and Kaitlyn are mad to wait for 11 hours before being called in. Kyle is also present at the meeting to explain his actions. The White House

is livid with the CIA's emboldened carelessness and recklessness. The official stance of Kaitlyn, Kyle, and Joe is denying any involvement in the concerned actions. They toe the same line: that the San Antonio PD saved the day and a terrorist attack was averted.

Mullins and the others push back which prompts Byron to accept that the CIA's QRF team was indeed involved. But he slights them by saying they will never be able to prove it. The evidence is already dispensed with. It seems Mullins and the others are convinced. They also touch upon Cruz's mission and order Kaitlyn and Byron to take an active supervising role from now on. They are taken aback by Joe's admission that Cruz will be sacrificed for the mission if that would ensure its success. The operation is officially called "Yellow Jacket" and the codeword to order the strike on Asmari to neutralise him is "Mabel."

Joe banks in the favour that Kyle owed her after the border extraction. She asks him to pay off the men who wanted to rob her QRF team's safe house. In a moment of vulnerability, Aaliyah confesses she has no say in marrying Ehsan. When Cruz asks her to call the wedding off, Aaliyah breaks down and cites the cultural pressure she faces as a woman in making a decision like this. Saying no isn't even an option for her.

Joe has a reassuring night with Neal after he reveals that Kate is getting much better — physically and mentally. This might just start a new chapter in their marriage and Joe's personal life.

The episode ends with a big revelation. Aaliyah's wedding will take place in Mallorca, Spain. She jumps up and down in excitement, uncontrollably gushing to Cruz about how beautiful the place is. She kisses Cruz in the excitement and after a second of pausing, Cruz kisses her back... hard. She suddenly pulls away, realizing what a mess she is getting herself into. Aaliyah tries to act normally and takes the focus off of what just happened. Cruz looks out of the window with a hint of excitement and nervousness in anticipation of what lies ahead.

Wish the Fight Away

Season 1 Episode Number: 7 Season Episode: 7

Originally aired: Sunday August 27, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: John Hillcoat

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Michael Kelly (Byron Westfield), Martin Donovan (Errol), Thad Luck-

inbill (Kyle), Celestina Harris (Charlie), Richard Haddad (Asif), Maddie Moore (Hillary), Jacob Heimer (Analyst), Michele Ammon (Mindels

Manager), Erich Reimer (Cab Driver)

Summary: While shopping in Manhattan for the wedding, Aaliyah and Cruz get

closer. Kate returns home only to say goodbye to her mom once again. Joe guides Cruz through internal struggle and doubt in completing the

mission.



The episode starts with a glimpse of Cruz's scenic drive to the Hamptons. Aaliyah invited her to stay at the beach house in the last episode, where she is currently alone. The "surprise" that is waiting for her at the house is a luxurious, relaxing spa day, something Cruz is completely unsynced with.

Byron, Kaitlyn, and Joe have been called for a debriefing at the White House. Kaitlyn learns from Errol that Secretary of State, Mullins, will also be present. This a huge development as Mullins rep-

resents the President directly in the debriefing.

All the noise made with the border extraction and the San Antonio executions is catching up with them. Kaitlyn also gives Errol a leg up by revealing to him that Qudrah Petrol has a mole; a large conglomerate that controls almost \$80 billion worth of oil. If that could somehow end up on the open market instead of the black market, it could mean a huge opportunity for the US. Before Cruz goes in, Joe advises her not to tell lies to Aaliyah since she won't be able to keep up.

To be sure that Cruz remembers what she says to her, Cruz should use real-life events with changed names and locations. It is a clever ruse by Sheridan to embolden both the storytelling and character arc at the same time. Cruz goes through a foreign experience with the spa treatment. But what matters here is that Aaliyah trusts her completely. Her naivety is surprising but significant for the Lioness team. They are closer than ever and this also means inroads to Asmari, the real target.

Joe's QRF team has a scare when they hear a break-in at their safe house. But it turns out to be petty teenagers looking to make quick money. Joe and Kaitlyn are mad to wait for 11 hours before being called in. Kyle is also present at the meeting to explain his actions. The White House is livid with the CIA's emboldened carelessness and recklessness. The official stance of Kaitlyn, Kyle, and Joe is denying any involvement in the concerned actions. They toe the same line: that the San Antonio PD saved the day and a terrorist attack was averted.

Mullins and the others push back which prompts Byron to accept that the CIA's QRF team was indeed involved. But he slights them by saying they will never be able to prove it. The evidence is already dispensed with. It seems Mullins and the others are convinced. They also touch upon Cruz's mission and order Kaitlyn and Byron to take an active supervising role from now on. They are taken aback by Joe's admission that Cruz will be sacrificed for the mission if that would ensure its success. The operation is officially called "Yellow Jacket" and the codeword to order the strike on Asmari to neutralise him is "Mabel."

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Joe has a reassuring night with Neal after he reveals that Kate is getting much better — physically and mentally. This might just start a new chapter in their marriage and Joe's personal life.

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Gone Is the Illusion of Order

Season 1 Episode Number: 8 Season Episode: 8

Originally aired: Sunday September 03, 2023

Writer: Taylor Sheridan Director: John Hillcoat

Show Stars: Zoe Saldana (Joe), Laysla De Oliveira (Cruz Manuelos), Dave Annable

(Neal), Jill Wagner (Bobby), LaMonica Garrett (Tucker), James Jordan (Two Cups), Austin Hébert (Randy), Jonah Wharton (Tex), Stephanie Nur (Aaliyah), Hannah Love Lanier (Kate), Nicole Kidman (Kaitlyn

Meade)

Guest Stars: Morgan Freeman (Edwin Mullins), Michael Kelly (Byron Westfield),

Martin Donovan (Errol), Bassem Youssef (Amrohi), Jennifer Ehle (Mason), Bruce McGill (Hollar), Thad Luckinbill (Kyle), Ray Corasani (Ehsan), Carla Mansour (Malika), Layla Mohammadi (Nashwa), Priscilla Doueihy (Nala), Richard Haddad (Asif), Katya Collazo (Amber Mills), Brett Bartholomew (Officer O'Malley), Maggie Parto (Fariha), Karen Izaguirre (Danika), Dion Costelloe (Officer Yeagers), Charley Tucker (Army Joint Chief), Michelle Foard (Flight Attendant), Amalina Ace (Tami), Angelina Boris (Cheerleader #2), Ellie Kim (Cheerleader

#3), Guy LeMonnier (Colonel), Bobbie Peterson (Night Nurse)

Summary: Unforeseen circumstances leave the mission in jeopardy. A suspicious

Ehsan confronts Cruz before his wedding day. Joe and the team pre-

pare for the worst.



The episode begins at the Barcelona airport. The CIA charter plane has landed and now Cruz will depart for Mallorca. Joe prepares her for the task at hand with two emergency bracelets. Since Amrohi's security will use signal jammers at the wedding, Cruz will not be able to make contact with Joe and the QRF team using conventional means.

The bracelets will allow Cuz to trigger a distress call to them whenever she needs to be extracted. Kyle will track Cruz until she is taken by Amrohi's security

detail from the airport.

Kaitlyn will be with Joe and the QRF team on a boat as the extraction point for Cruz will be in open waters. Byron is placed in the Situation Room at the White House along with the three politicians we saw in the previous episode to oversee the mission. Contrary to what we expect, they ask Byron to call off the mission. This comes on the back of Amrohi's importance in the oil world. He provides 10% of the global oil supply, mainly to Russia and China.

The US President's political leadership is not trusted to meet the challenge in the wake of Amrohi's assassination as Russia will retaliate. Byron makes it clear that it is impossible for them to make contact with Cruz; only she can initiate it from her end. The only other alternative is to send in the QRF team which would mean a blood bath as they clash with security.

We see a different side of Ehsan as he greets Cruz with hostility. He has a sense of what went down at the hotel in New York. Ehsan is livid with Cruz and threatens to kill her if she keeps contact with Aaliyah after the wedding.

Cruz does not hold back and stands firm, surprising Ehsan. He becomes suspicious given her brazenness and runs her photo through some databases and cross-references it with web pages. To ensure that Aaliyah does not "close up" on the wedding night, he instructs security to allow Cruz to meet with her.

Aaliyah is delighted to see Cruz once again, perhaps for the final time in a long while. She tries to introduce Cruz to her mother, who is visibly indifferent. The two talk privately and Aaliyah once again confesses her fears of facing a different tomorrow than she has ever known.

The most important bit is Aaliyah's revelation that Amrohi will be present at the wedding. Earlier, she had indicated that he could not risk it. But a contrarian decision has been taken, giving Cruz a clear-cut chance to complete her mission.

Aaliyah trembles at the prospect of becoming a mother and a wife to Ehsan. She longs to retain her freedom and way of life but knows that it is not possible. There is apparent tension between the two because of their feelings. But Aaliyah leaves after dropping Cruz off at her room and breaks down in tears.

Satellite images confirm that Amrohi has arrived at the location. Meanwhile, Kate's night-mares about the accident keep getting worse. She wakes up screaming in the middle of the night when she has another one. Neal comforts her as Kate requests to talk with Joe. She picks up the call, still waiting for Cruz's signal.

Kate feels guilty over her friend's death and the fact that she couldn't make her funeral. Joe does a great job of calming her down but lashes out at Neal for ambushing her with the call. The two have a brief shouting contest but come to terms with the situation like adults.

Aaliyah comes into Cruz's room at night. She is distressed after telling Ehsan she doesn't want to marry him. But he remains unfazed, knowing that this is purely a transactional arrangement. Aaliyah leans in to kiss and Cruz kisses her back. But she pulls away moments later and goes to the kitchen outside to blow off steam.

Ehsan is shocked and prompted into action when he finds a match to Cruz's photo on a news piece that identifies her as a Marine. Cruz meets Amrohi in the kitchen, who is charming and tries to have a conversation with her.

It seems to be going well and Cruz does not try to kill him yet. But when Ehsan rushes in screaming "Marine! She is a US Marine," Cruz springs into action. She stabs Ehsan in the neck, killing him. Amrohi tries to neutralise her but Cruz slits his neck without hesitation after stabbing him multiple times. She activates the distress signal right then, alerting the QRF team who scamper to extract her. Aaliyah discovers the dead bodies in the kitchen a while later and starts screaming. That is when the security is alerted to the situation and chases Cruz through the location

She keeps running for cover through a barrage of gunshots to end up in the back garden. She is cornered but the QRF team arrives just in time to save her. The extraction mission is successful as Cruz finally informs Kaitlyn that she has eliminated the target. Byron relays the message to the Situation Room as the politicians cry out in frustration.

Joe and Cruz have a fistfight as the latter accuses Joe of "turning her into a monster." Their ideological differences will never be reconciled and both are right in their places. Joe gets back to her family the next morning to perhaps start afresh with Neal.

Actor Appearances

A	0103 (Senator Palmer)
11	Crystal Chau
Doniel Abeles	0104 (Physician)
Daniel Abeles	David Neil Cohen1
0101 (Captain Hansmuth)	0101 (Homeless Man)
Amalina Ace	Katya Collazo1
0104 (Tami); 0108 (Tami)	0108 (Amber Mills)
Michele Ammon	Matt Consalvo1
0107 (Mindels Manager)	0104 (EMT 3)
Zach Appelman	Ray Corasani
0105 (Lt. Jennings)	0103 (Ehsan); 0104 (Ehsan); 0108 (Ehsan)
Pascal Arquimedes	Marisol Correa
0101 (Punk)	0105 (SA SWAT Shooter #1)
Luis Arroyo Jr	Dion Costelloe
0103 (Bodyguard)	0108 (Officer Yeagers)
Sam Asghari2	Logan Crawford
0103 (Kamal); 0104 (Kamal)	0105 (News Anchor)
Aziz Attougui	Robb Cremen1
0103 (Snitch)	0105 (Politician)
Sean Avery	Josh Crotty1
0102 (SF Operator)	
	0102 (Delta Captain)
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Positive Dec	
Eunice Bae	Stevie Ray Dallimore1
0104 (Nurse (Neil's OR))	0101 (Colonel Dirves)
Amit Barnathan	Scottie DiGiacomo
0106 (Punk Thief #2 (Damian))	0101 (Patient)
Brett Bartholomew1	Kimberly Dodson1
0108 (Officer O'Malley)	0104 (Nurse (Kate's OR))
David Alan Basche1	Martin Donovan5
0103 (Dr. Brumley)	0103 (Errol); 0105 (Errol); 0106 (Errol); 0107 (Er-
Colt Bauder 1	rol); 0108 (Errol)
0101 (Guard)	Jackson Dorfmann1
Shanna Bess	0103 (Michael)
0104 (Trauma Nurse)	Priscilla Doueihy
Erick Betancourt1	0103 (Nala); 0104 (Nala); 0108 (Nala)
0105 (Hernandez)	oros (raid), oror (raid), oros (raid)
Jadaya Bivins	Ľ
0104 (Cheerleader #1)	—— E ——
Alexander Blaise	
0106 (Congressman Hay Adams)	Jennifer Ehle
Noga Blum1	0106 (Mason); 0108 (Mason)
0105 (Nurse)	Ariella Ezekiel 1
Angelina Boris2	0101 (Isabel)
0104 (Cheerleader #2); 0108 (Cheerleader #2)	
Ericka Boston	F
0102 (Parent)	I.
Gabe Bowling1	
0101 (Police Officer)	Braxton Fannin
Edward Brence	0106 (Punk Thief #3 (Driver))
0106 (Punk Thief #1)	Essam Ferris
Adam Budron 1	0105 (Alashka)
0103 (Sami)	Martin Fisher1
• •	0101 (Recruiting Marine)
	Michelle Foard
	0108 (Flight Attendant)
	Brian Foreman
Clark Carmichael	0105 (Congressman)

A.J. Franklin	— К —
Morgan Freeman	Ana Cruz Kayne1 0105 (Means)
G	Michael Kelly
Ryan Garbayo1	(Byron Westfield); 0106 (Byron Westfield); 0107 (Byron Westfield); 0108 (Byron Westfield) Ellie Kim2
0103 (Surgeon on Zoom) Matt Gerald	0104 (Cheerleader #3); 0108 (Cheerleader #3) Ruby King
Joseph Giambrone	0104 (Jasmine)
Josh Giannarino	L
Alexander Gineitis	Guy LeMonnier
Stephan Godleski	Chris Lindsay-Abaire 1 0104 (Dr. Shipley) Ray Steven Lober 1
0105 (CIA Agent — AF Base) Migs Govea	O103 (Senator) Imani Love
0105 (Jimenez) Gigi Grace	0102 (Nurse Jenny) Thad Luckinbill
0102 (Soccer Girl) Joshua Graverholt	0103 (Kyle); 0104 (Kyle); 0105 (Kyle); 0106 (Kyle); 0107 (Kyle); 0108 (Kyle)
0102 (Ranger QRT Residence) Hazel Graye	George Ludden
0104 (Daisy) Anthony Gullotta	M
Jamie Guyer	Carla Mansour
— н —	Aaron Matthews
	Sam McCrea1
Richard Haddad	0105 (Zeb) Bruce McGill
Mustafa Haidari	Mikeski
Narmar Hanna	Layla Mohammadi
Celestina Harris	O101 (Police Officer) Maddie Moore
O104 (Anesthesiologist) Jacob Heimer	0107 (Hillary)
0107 (Analyst) Jack Herholdt	N
0104 (Charge Nurse) Paige Herschell	Karim Nematt
0104 (Hostess) Mike Heslin	Zoryah Nomak1 0101 (Pit Soldier)
T	Ramon Nuñez
K Karen Izaguirre	O
0108 (Danika)	Brandon Ocasio
J	Robert Olausen
Michael Jibrin	America Olivo
Wayne Johnson	P
Abraham Justice	Michael Park

0102 (Dr. Gary Brown)
Maggie Parto
Bobbie Peterson
0108 (Night Nurse)
Alex Podulke
0102 (MIRC Rawlins)
——— R ———
Doom Doordo
Reem Raouda
Jordyn Rax1
0103 (Kamal's Girl) Daniel Reece
0104 (Paul)
Erich Reimer
Travis Roberts
0101 (Driver) Ethan Jones Romero
0101 (Edgar)
Anthony Ruiz1
0101 (Manager of Tast E Burger)
S
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Casey Schryer
Kevin Sebastian
0104 (EMT 2) Mikaela Nina Secada1
0101 (Cherub)
Jared Shaw1
0102 (Delta Cruz Interrogator) Graham Shiels
0101 (Drill Sergeant)
Fawad Siddiqui
Lily Sondik
0104 (EMT 1) Marguerite Stimpson
0102 (Vickie Rawlins)
Scott Swope
Juan Szilagyi
0105 (Aaliyah's Security Team)
Т
1
Scot Teller
0101 (Neighbor) William G. Tomek
0105 (Pedestrian)
Michael Tow
Charley Tucker
0108 (Army Joint Chief)
V
v
Avi Vichner
0103 (Guard #3); 0104 (Guard #3) Scott Vogel1
0105 (Hospital Patient)

W
Nora Winer

	102 (Maddie Rawlins) Worley
	105 (Surgeon Assistant)
	Y
Dasser	n Youssef