

N.B.: IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE READER USE TWO-PAGE VIEW IN ACROBAT READER OR BROWSER. VIEW/PAGE DISPLAY/TWO-PAGE VIEW (BOOK FORMAT) and ENABLE SCROLLING



"EVENING IT OUT – A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE LAST TWO YEARS OF "THE TWILIGHT ZONE" (minus 'The')"

A Study in Three Parts

by

Andrew Ramage

© 2019 The Twilight Zone Museum. All rights reserved. Author permissions are required to reprint all or part of this work. www.twilightzonemuseum.com * www.facebook.com/twilightzonemuseum

Preface

At this late date, little has not been said about "The Twilight Zone." Often imitated, appropriated, used – but never remotely matched. From its quiet and decisively non-ostentatious beginnings, it steadily grew into its status as an icon and televisional gemstone...and not only changed the way we looked at the world but became an integral part of it.

But this isn't to say that the talk of it has been evenly distributed. Certain elements, and full episodes, of the Rod Serling TV show get much more attention than others. Various characters, plot elements, even plot devices are well-known to many. But I dare say that there's a good amount of the series that remains unknown to the masses. In particular, there has been very much less talk, and even lesser scholarly treatment, of the second half of the series.

This essay is two decades in the making. It started from a simple episode guide, which still exists. Out of it came this work. The timing is right. In 2019, the series turns sixty years old. In preparation, I obviously viewed the episodes of the last two seasons again because no doubt, I had forgotten a lot about them, not having seen some of them in a long while. There was a period of more than five years – late 2010 until sometime in mid-2016 - when I watched nary an episode of the series, four years of which were spent earning a second bachelor's degree and changing careers. In that span of time, I probably watched three segments total. One of them, I recall vividly, was "A Hundred Yards Over the Rim." One of the many time-travel shows...Rod loved time travel and his early teleplays on the subject were outstanding. As I watched this episode, probably for the thirtieth time, but not having seen it in years, I found my eyes transfixed on the screen, and wholly involved in what Cliff Robertson and the other actors were doing. Everything, literally, about this 'thing' I was watching – was spellbinding. The dialogue. The portrayals of these characters of both 1961 and 1847. The desert heat of Lone Pine radiating through the TV screen. The ad hoc music by Fred Steiner – perfect too. All of them a product of this well-known program. I knew what was going to happen in the story, and yet the whole thing was rediscovery. It sounds simplistic, typed on a keyboard. But, "The Twilight Zone" has that kind of captivating power. I found myself both nodding my head at just how good it was, and then shaking my head at how bad most TV is today. "The Twilight Zone" is the only TV series that, I believe, anyone disliking would deserve to be called a fool.

The average viewer is unaware of the fact that the series relied heavily on earlier works. It's a common misconception that Rod Serling and those few others who wrote for the show, came up with completely new story ideas. It was usually not the case. Serling utilized many short stories of others and so many times, he made the forgettable and forgotten into the unforgettable. Richard Matheson and Charles Beaumont revamped their own short stories into teleplays. But even those teleplays that were not adapted were almost never from scratch. Practically everything that appears on the series had been conceived and written long before television was even invented. Some of the stories go back centuries, although this has always been either easily dismissed by the viewing public or simply not given a second thought...yet another achievement of "The Twilight Zone." It gets credit for a lot that was not originally its own.

In reading and re-reading all but a few of the short stories (unavailable) on which many of the later episodes of the series are based, I noticed the obvious and expected differences between what was conceived and what was filmed. The differences run the gamut, but it was surprising to note just how much some of the writers departed from their original work. It was even more curious that most of the directors got so much out of their actors that remained true to what had been conceived in the short stories...further attesting to the quality of "The Twilight Zone." A good number of the stories were heavy on details but not on character dialogue. In some cases, the work required to create the teleplay was significant, and their scripts turned out far better than what had been published earlier. They knew what to expand upon and what to excise.

The purpose of this work is not to serve as an episode guide or regurgitation of other works. As George Grizzard wrote to me, not too many years before he died, when I offered him a copy of my "Forgotten Gems from 'The Twilight Zone', Volume I" book, which had one of his two episodes in it, "I've always hated scripts. I'd rather not look at it again, or else I may just end up hating you and Rod and everyone else and even myself!" His words were a bit surprising. But after reflecting on them for just a moment, I realized what he meant and took no offense. Of course, a script is necessary for any actor. The lines are to be respected as the work of the writer, and internalized and committed to memory and delivered on stage or on camera. But, beyond that, actors act, they don't read. And, George Grizzard was a great talent, and certainly a major player in the TV series, responsible for becoming what it became.

This work is mere words on paper. A poor substitute for the real thing. Having said that, I do hope it will clarify and enlighten, and hopefully, educate and inform at least somewhat, with information about the show that has not been previously released.

I am forever in the debt of the actors who shared with me their experience of working on the episodes that I discuss herein. Mind you, most of these folks were, by and large, working actors in the most blue-collar sense of the word. This work is, respectfully, dedicated to each one of them, and include (in no particular order), Sandy Kenyon, Dewey Martin, Dabbs Greer, Camille Franklin, Linden Chiles, Pat Hingle, Collin Wilcox-Paxton, Irene Dailey, David Macklin, Morgan Brittany, June Foray, George Takei, Gail Kobe, Nancy Malone, George Grizzard, William Sargent, Daniel Kulik M.D., Tim O'Connor, Carolyn Kearney, Jim E. Titus, Bill Erwin, Judy Strangis, and Mary Badham....and to directors James Sheldon, Elliott Silverstein, Lamont Johnson, and Ted Post. To all of them, some now off in the great beyond, I offer a modest but most sincere "thank you." And, thanks are due the roughly 85 people – actors, writers, and directors who worked on the show, who attended the four "Twilight Zone" Conventions – the two held in Los Angeles in 2002, 2004 and the ones held in New Jersey in 2006 and 2007 (the latter two coordinated by Herman Darvick) and spoke on the panel discussions about the maverick early days of TV, which included "The Twilight Zone." I continue to be humbled, all this time later, that these distinguished people who made acting their living – for character acting was, at one time, a very blue-collar thing – took a kid in his mid-20s from Oregon seriously enough to attend a "Twilight Zone"-themed convention that he organized. Virtually all of them said the same thing about their work on the series, and this was it: "At the time, it was just another job. But it remains the one thing that I'm recognized for, amidst many other credits." And they will continue to be recognized for it, as great art always outlives both the creator and those involved in it.

Finally, I am dedicating this work to four individuals who ran in parallel (and sometimes in series) with me for many years. To Christopher Conlon, an extraordinary writer, literary scholar, English teacher, and fellow expert on the series, whom I met through George Clayton Johnson in 2002 while preparations for the first "Twilight Zone" Convention were underway. Sometimes we've gone a year or more with no emails, but once we get emailing each other, we do a lot of catch-up. To Bill DeVoe, my partner in Twilight Zone conventioning and also a TZ expert and published author on the subject, whom I will always credit for being the founder of the "Twilight Zone" Conventions, since he planned the first one in 1999 (it did not happen but helped paved the way for four more that were eventually done!) To the late Gloria Pall – who, despite having a non-starring role in a well-known episode, loved the series as much as anyone, probably more than any other actor who starred in it. She never missed the New Year's Eve marathons, and never failed to call me during them to tell me, "Andrew, my 'Twilight Zone' is on TV right now." Thank you, Douglas Heyes, for casting Gloria in that two-line part. And finally, to Wright King – a great and underrated actor, who sadly passed away just days before this was completed. Wright was the first "Twilight Zone" actor I'd ever met – we lived 15 minutes away from each other in Portland, Oregon. Our two meetings at the old Heathman Hotel – especially the second, in which we were joined by the late Arlene Martel, will forever be held fondly in memory.

Los Angeles, 1 January 2019

Part 1 – Season 4, The Eighteen One-Hour Episodes, produced 1962-1963

INTRODUCTION

The final season-and-a-half of “The Twilight Zone” TV series aired between January 1963 and June 1964. For all its popularity, the series was cancelled after three years on the air, as it had only done marginally in the ratings, and Rod Serling, having felt that his best work had been accomplished, took a teaching job at Antioch College and even taught out of his home in upstate New York. Buck Houghton, producer, took on an executive position at another production company.

As early as the series’ second season, the idea of scaling the show up to an hour-long format was discussed. After a six-month production hiatus following cancellation in the spring of 1962, the gears were once again in motion – along with a much larger budget – for 60-minute episodes (52 minutes with commercials.) CBS was hoping that the increased air time would bring in more viewers, but after airing of eighteen episodes – a handful of which were outstanding television dramas - this had not happened. Nonetheless, they retained the series, back in the old half-hour format, for another year.

There were other changes happening too, which the audience was less aware of. There were three producer replacements for the duration of the series – Herbert Hirschman, who directed the first of the Season 4 episodes, and Bert Granet, who produced the second group and a fraction of Season 5. Both moved on to other projects after some months. William Froug was the last of the producers. On the writing front, Serling was still involved with the show and his writing chores stayed about what they’d always been. The regular writers Richard Matheson and Charles Beaumont continued to write as well, although Beaumont’s health by late 1963 had plummeted to the point where he was no longer able to do so, and his Season 5 episodes were done almost entirely by ghost writers. Filling in for the regular writers were a number of cameo writers, who penned one or at most two episodes, often borrowing ideas from earlier and better episodes. Most of their episodes ranged from very good to inferior, very few if any outstanding, although even the weakest entries surpassed just about every other show on the dial at that time – and continue to do so to this day.

Many of these last fifty or so segments out of the series’ 156 are generally unknown to TV viewing audiences, with a handful of notable exceptions. Among these are “Living Doll” by Jerry Sohl, “Nightmare at 20,000 Feet” by Matheson, “The Masks” – Serling’s last great episode of the series - all from the final year of the show. Season 4 had “Death Ship” by Matheson, “Jess-Belle” by Earl Hamner, and a few by Beaumont which fare with any of the best from the first three years. Most of the remainder get very little discussion. The main reason for this was Season 4 not being in syndication for over twenty years, and the overall climate of the show having very little connection to the earlier seasons, which boasted numerous superclassic episodes. With the advent of Columbia House VHS tape subscriptions in the late 1980s and DVD in the late 1990s, however, the final two seasons at last became equal to the rest of the series. However, to those who relied solely on TZ reruns of the yesteryear, these episodes still remain mostly unknown to the average individual. As Serling himself said, “When it was bad, it was usually my fault.” The director Ted Post remarked, “In the last year of the show, Rod gave me three scripts to direct. He

admitted to being tired when he wrote them, and told me, 'Just do your best with them.'" But, as time has told us, Rod greatly underestimated himself.

Boris Karloff's series "Thriller", which had a good number of actors who starred in "Twilight Zone" episodes, left the air in the spring of 1962, precisely the same time that "Twilight Zone" was cancelled for the first time. It was hoped that "Twilight Zone" at one hour might be able to succeed where "Thriller" had failed. Also in the background was "The Outer Limits", created by Leslie Stevens and produced by Joseph Stefano (best known for his screenplay of Hitchcock's "Psycho") which came on in 1963 and like "Thriller", lasted for two seasons, also in a one-hour format. Both shows had a sprinkling of impressive episodes, but the production quality was often greatly lacking (save for some groundbreaking special effects and costumery of "The Outer Limits") and the storylines were frequently bland and forgettable. However, these two shows often get unfairly compared to "The Twilight Zone." In fact, they had different objectives. "Thriller" focused on spooky, often Halloweenesque stories that were meant to give the viewer nightmares. Somehow or other, even with Karloff as host – and essaying the title roles in five or so episodes, it didn't generate a lot of interest. "The Outer Limits" went on to be re-made and had a run of far longer than the original (1995-2002) but like its predecessor, not much other than the title of the show has retained popularity despite many A-list actors, writers, and directors involved. Users would tune in every week knowing precisely what they would be getting. It was the same for "One Step Beyond" (1959-1961), although somewhat different, as the scripts were based on supernatural occurrences that were documented and submitted through the mail by those who watched the show.

"The Twilight Zone" has always been known as an "uneven" TV show that limped along from one week to the next because it didn't follow a specified format. This has always been an unfair assessment. But, imagine, if it had followed a certain format, beyond the traditional set-up-conflict-resolution one that almost any story has...it would have been as routine as a situation comedy. Series TV writers are constantly challenged to continue storylines and develop characters. No two characters were seen on "The Twilight Zone" twice. The primary thing that Serling and Buck Houghton and the frequent writers worried about in the first three years was keeping the show at a high level and staying away from certain themes and story elements that were best left for other shows. "I don't recall Buck Houghton ever saying 'no' to anything I did," said Elliot Silverstein, who directed four episodes over the course of the series. "He trusted that you knew what you were doing." But undoubtedly, there were certain 'thou shalt nots' during the first three years of the show when Serling and Houghton were at the helm.

"The Twilight Zone" didn't take long to find its footing from a production standpoint. It hit the ground speeding, and within a year's time, the two words 'Twilight Zone' had become as American as the Red Sox. Expectations for future episodes remained high, and the public wasn't let down. Houghton and the network were careful about the airing of certain storylines every week...they couldn't do too many overly dramatic scripts back to back, i.e., a Hitler story one week and a story about war the next week. There were a few periods during the first two years where "The Twilight Zone" churned out one excellent episode after another. It was impressive, to say the least. Revolutionary, in a way. Even "Alfred Hitchcock Presents", which by then had been on the air for many years – and would continue to be - wasn't achieving what Rod Serling's show was.

While continuity of storylines was not a factor, the series certainly had enough variation in its episodes that it had its own certain thread that held it together. The coverage of material was done in such a way, and in such an order, as to build a bonafide anthology. James Sheldon, commenting on two of the six episodes he directed, "one week it was frozen people, the next week it was talking to the dead on toy telephones...it was never the same thing twice, and that's what made it all so interesting." The fact is, the

first two years of the show were remarkably consistent. Some of the greatest television to date was produced on "The Twilight Zone" from 1959 to 1961. The third year had some weaker ones, but not by a large margin. But it was clear at the end of three years that the show needed to go in another direction in order to survive. There was no way that Cayuga Productions could turn out a Burgess Meredith or Robert Redford episode every single week. Thankfully, they didn't try to; they knew their limitations, and they knew that the show was going to follow the usual bell curve format that most television shows that are on the air for years tend to have – every season, a select group that are outstanding, a few that are weak, and most of which are good but average fare. In its opening year, "The Twilight Zone" had so many outstanding ones that it pretty well buried every other show of its kind. It was picked up again immediately. The second year cemented what had been done in the first, with even more of the same. But, as Serling also freely admitted, "After the first year, it was a struggle, and we had to fight to stay on."

Was "The Twilight Zone" a writer's show or an actor's show? Or even a director's show? Indeed, exactly what should be examined of its final year and a half on the air? The performances or the scripts? Or the production of each installment? Literary scholars have remarked that the series had very few, if any, original stories. They'd all been done before...on paper. What hadn't been done was presenting them on the small screen. As George Clayton Johnson remarked, "My scripts, in particular – "A Game of Pool", "Kick the Can", "Nothing in the Dark"...overwhelmed me. They were done with what I'd call a 'grand power.' I knew my story, "The Four of Us Are Dying", very very well, and I watched, along with the rest of the country, how Rod used it as a windshield, and stuck a new car under it." The performances largely came from well-established actors who were known for their feature film work, and ditto for the directors. "Rod knew that he was going to need help," said Johnson. "He found two of the best writers in town, Charles Beaumont and Richard Matheson...and to direct, they hired these guys like Mitchell Leisen, who had done many, many movies who were now backing off and doing half-hour television shows. We writers were words on paper, but the actors built the temple, of course, and on that show, you never had to worry about inept actors struggling with what you were trying to do." Indeed, seldom was a role miscast.

The last two seasons rounded out the series as a whole...neatly leveled off the cup of flour. The later episodes made the earlier ones more memorable; they were mostly true to the precepts and ideas of Rod Serling – while giving us a slightly different kind of program to digest. This is the primary reason why the series has withstood the test of time and not dated. "The Twilight Zone" had its own all-but-patented format, one that couldn't be quantified or qualified.

* * *

The unofficial pilot for the new format of "Twilight Zone" (the network decided to drop 'The') was "**In His Image**". Co-Starring Tony Award winner George Grizzard and Gail Kobe, it is a masterwork by Charles Beaumont, from his short story of the same title. "In His Image" deals with the notion of cloning, although the word is not specifically used. Duality and pairings of things persisted throughout the series. The additional 28 minutes gave Beaumont an opportunity to expand upon what he'd done earlier. Indeed, the television episode has significantly more material than does the short story, which pales by a large margin to what was filmed. For some reason the additional time did not have such a positive result for many of the remaining episodes that followed.

If there was one writer who was all but destined to write episodes of "The Twilight Zone", it was Beaumont. He had definite connections to it well before the series was conceived. Despite a marriage

and children and a successful career, he lived in his own dystopic underworld. He was afraid of the dark. He was easily frightened and incredibly superstitious, as his surviving colleagues have all attested. He was in touch with the dimmest corners of human existence. Death, at the youthful age of thirty-eight, was stalking him many years sooner than it should have and he instinctively knew this and it no doubt fueled his productivity. What he did produce was nothing short of outstanding. Had he lived out the balance of his life, he would certainly have shared an iconic status comparable to that of any of the finest Hollywood writers and personalities.

The first act of “In His Image” is led off with a markedly different, alarming introduction – we’re introduced to an ordinary man waiting for the subway, who encounters an old hag. Katharine Squire plays a zany gypsy of a pamphlet-pushing Bible thumper who is waiting too – the type to only be found on public transportation, where she can easily find a captive audience. Her late husband neither preached nor believed the word of God and ended up dead because of it. She is hell-bent on proselytizing to this seemingly gentle man who, come to find out, has an animalistic desire to kill, when provoked. She provokes him. After fleeing the scene of the crime, we meet Jessica Connelly – who might end up as hapless a victim as the evangelist woman. But somehow, we know that she won’t be. She’s a homely woman, but clearly has enough intellect and stamina and chutzpah that death at the hands of this man would not come easily.

No doubt, “In His Image” explored territory that Serling and the other regular writers dared not tread in, if for no other reason than they weren’t familiar enough with it. The remarkable Act 2, wherein Alan Talbot (Peter Nolan in the short story, named after Beaumont’s close friend, the well-known writer William F. Nolan) literally meets his maker, Walter Ryder (Walter Cummings originally), goes a distance beyond the technical sci-fi that might be expected. It is grippingly real, and heartwrenching...

ALAN

Look, I’m in no mood for jokes, mister.

WALTER

That’s a pity because this whole thing is a joke.

ALAN

Well, I’m not laughing.

WALTER

You will. Because the joke’s on me.

ALAN

Would you get to the point?

WALTER

You’ve been to Coeurville, you know that Alan Talbot never lived there, you know you’ve been behaving oddly of late and judging from that handkerchief on your arm, I’d say you know about that too. So, with all this information, what do I need to tell you?

ALAN

Who am I?!

WALTER

You're nobody, Alan. Nobody at all.

ALAN

Stop it, Walter!

WALTER

Who is this watch I'm wearing, ask me that? Who is the refrigerator in the kitchen? Don't you understand?

ALAN

No.

WALTER

You're a machine, Alan. A mechanical device.

ALAN

I don't believe it.

WALTER

I don't blame you. I wouldn't believe it either, but it's true. The fact is, you were born a long time ago, inside my head. All kids have dreams, don't they? You were mine. The other kids thought about joining the army or flying to Mars, and they grew up and they forgot their dreams. I didn't.

George Grizzard plays both parts so flawlessly that the two characters are fully distinguishable. It's easy to imagine what a writer inferior would have done with a similar story, and the failings of an actor any lesser. The set design of Ryder's living room had to be such that it's as if there were two different George Grizzards in the same room via rear projection. This too was seamless.

While Alan Talbot encounters trouble in Coeurville, in his seeming case of mistaken identity, it isn't delved into too deeply. The farthest it gets is a man who gets angry at Alan for banging on the door of the house he claims belongs to his Aunt Mildred, and later when the man summons the police and finds them at the cemetery, he chastises Alan again (unfortunately, the actor playing the part turns in an overly abrasive, scripted performance.)

Gail Kobe: "George and I had a sympatico – we could answer each other's lines. What you see on the screen was exactly how we were - the chemistry between us was just that good. I'd seen him in a Broadway play with Hume Cronyn in the 50s and that was fabulous, and then we got to work together on this, which was incredible." George Grizzard: "Watching it now, my God, I could be my own grandson! I have fond memories of Gail [Kobe] and Katharine [Squire]. As I remember, Perry Lafferty, whose daughter went on to marry William Shatner, directed." Indeed, Lafferty did direct "In His Image", as well as "The Thirty Fathom Grave" and "Valley of the Shadow", two lesser installments produced and aired in the following weeks. Like Grizzard and Kobe, his performance – albeit behind the camera – was nothing short of miraculous. Herbert Hirschman, too, recalled the episode as a highlight of his short time on the show.

It is the second act that encompasses virtually everything that is “Twilight Zone.” Alan Talbot gets far more than he bargained for. He is eventually deactivated, but not before he finally learns the truth about himself:

ALAN

You did this all by yourself?

WALTER

No, that wouldn't have been possible. I'm afraid the day of the lone inventor has passed. I had some of the finest scientific minds in the world assisting me. Of course, they didn't take the project seriously. To them, it was just a game, a lot of theoretical wool-gathering. How would it be possible to create an entire nervous system that worked like a real one? How could the brain be duplicated with all its subtleties? You see, I was after real intelligence. Mere reactions weren't enough. Those mannequins can react [indicating two inactive Alan Talbot prototypes]. My creation had to have a memory. He had to have abstract reasoning power. A past, a personality. Millions of intricate facets multiplied by millions, to make true intelligence. Now, to accomplish this from the beginning would've been...impossible.

ALAN

(very angry now)

I don't know what you're talking about! What do you mean that you decided to use yourself?!

WALTER

Just that. I made certain impressions. My own memories went into the selves. Some of my talents, some of my knowledge. Bits and pieces of myself.

ALAN

So now you're telling me that I'm you?!

WALTER

That's right.

ALAN

Well that's impossible! I'm me! This is my flesh!

WALTER

(shakes head)

Nonconductive plastic.

Again, the dialogue is such that every word had to be flawlessly delivered, lest it come off as “a lot of theoretical wool-gathering.” It's unequivocal that this Alan Talbot was literally born by accident and leapt up off the operating table as a finished product, versus a mere laboratory experiment.

WALTER

As much as I hate to admit it, luck had a great deal to do with your creation. Skill alone wasn't enough.

ALAN

Are you saying I'm an accident?

WALTER

I'm afraid so. You see, Alan, I was like a blind man with a machine gun. I kept firing and reloading and firing and finally I hit the target, but it was off-center. I don't even know if I could come close again.

That's the story of my life, right down the line. Success in the little things, failure in the big ones.

I told myself I wanted to make an artificial man. But I think what I really wanted was to build another

Walter Ryder. Only without the drawbacks. Sort of a reverse Jekyll and Hyde. Everything I wished I was, my creation would be. Where I was shy, he would be aggressive. Where I was cold and withdrawn, he would be warm and outgoing. Loneliness would be unknown to him. Disease and pain and death, all unknown. He would be unselfish. He would be ambitious but not fanatical. Alan, he would be perfect.

That was my dream, a perfect version of myself.

ALAN

(bitterly quiet)

I oughtta kill you.

WALTER

That's right. You should.

And he almost does, once again, but Walter makes a narrow escape that leads him to the precise place that he's always longed for.

The conclusion – one of them must die, and the other one must live. From the short story:

“Together, they walked into the hall and down the long flight of stairs to the laboratory below. Hours later one of them returned to the study. The door was opened to the length of its chain by a girl who was mostly shadow.”

The subtlety was retained in the teleplay, and without missing a beat, we know that it is Walter. The series was always known for its endings, but few others had quite the heart and soul of this one. Walter is now righted, thanks to his creation-gone-wrong. He's picking up literally right where Alan left off. There is a great sense of relief at the fact that Jessica Connelly is getting the man she fell in love with, and the man that Walter Ryder had always wanted to be - loyal, outgoing, confident. It is a double triumph. Again – duality, in “The Twilight Zone.”

“In His Image”, like many of the series' best, lacks gimmicks or even a punchline. Even the closing of Act 1, where Alan Talbot discovers that he is inhuman, is not a true ‘Twilight Zone’ punchline inasmuch as it is a simple yet shocking revelation. The second act has the remarkable conflict resolution. Like Serling's “Mirror Image” and “The After Hours”, “In His Image” resolves elements of conflict that were set up so well in the development phase layer by layer, forcing the viewer to step back and look at the entire landscape. In so doing, it's easy to forget that an episode of television is being watched. It was well ahead of its time and succeeds on a far higher plane than it will probably ever be given credit for.



“There may be easier ways to self-improvement, but sometimes it happens that the shortest distance between two points is a crooked line – through the Twilight Zone.”

“**The Thirty-Fathom Grave**” feels more like an educational filmstrip about a man’s conflict with the past, than it does an episode of “Twilight Zone.” Serling’s story is fine, but the dialogue is often stretched very thin, as a kind of prolonged ghost tale. Had it been done at a half-hour, it would have replicated any number of earlier episodes, as most of the material was nothing new. Simon Oakland, leading the pack as Captain Beecham, ably keeps the group afloat, to a much greater degree than star Mike Kellin, who somehow leaves no impression at all. Nonetheless, the scenes with Chief Bell (Kellin) being called by his dead cronies from the grave beneath the sea carry with them a certain amount of suspense...with a musical cue that was taken from the score written earlier for “The Invaders” by Jerry Goldsmith.

BELL

Oh my dear God in Heaven. Did you see them, Doctor, did you see them? Men. Men looking at me. They were wet, they were dripping wet and they were not alive.

Moments later, the doctor steps out into the corridor, to find a mass of seaweed.

Veteran character actor John Considine, playing McClure, the frequent diver, also had a role in one of the best-known episodes of “The Outer Limits”, “The Man Who Was Never Born”, alongside TZ alums Martin Landau and Maxine Stuart, shortly thereafter. Unfortunately, the diving scenes (likely done with a double for Considine) were very simply shot, showing us nothing of the inside of the sand-wedged submarine – the diver even wears boots instead of diving gear on both feet! Also seen are Bill Bixby, who like Considine was of course a very familiar face on TV for many years. Conlan Carter (“Combat”), Forrest Compton (“Gomer Pyle, USMC”) and Henry Scott, last seen in “The Big Tall Wish” in the first season as the traitorous boxing manager, who exchanges a few of the more memorable lines with Oakland:

McCLURE (V.O.)

714.

BEECHAM

714. She's one of ours. Come on up here McClure and get yourself a broiled steak on me. [To crew] Get that book with the hull numbers. [Looking at book] Seven-One-Four. Here it is! Seven-One-Four, commissioned December, 1941, sunk in action, first battle of the Solomons, August 7th, 1942. August...Seventh...Nineteen...Forty...Two.

O.O.D.

That was twenty years ago. Captain Beecham, who's down there? Who's inside that sub?

BEECHAM

Somebody who dies damn hard.

The concluding conversation between Beecham and Bell is not without poignancy. Although Kellin's performance as the man possessed suffers, Oakland continues to carry the load. He was a great talent, and although the material was bland, he admirably seized the opportunity to make it work. Somehow, we are reminded of his stellar performance of a mere several minutes as the all-knowing psychiatrist at the end of *Psycho* as the gruesome details are revealed...

BELL

I don't know what happened. I dropped the signal light. The infrared filter fell off. They were waiting for us out there, the Jap destroyers. They saw our light, they let us have it. Straddled us with their first salvo. The captain took the sub down, but it was too late, they unloaded depth charges. That sub wasn't ever going to be able to come up again. I got flung over the side when the first salvo hit. And all the time I was in the water, I could...I could...hear the voices of our guys, they were...and I was screaming!

BEECHAM

(trying to placate him)
Alright!! Alright!!

BELL

This thing has been bugging me...I know what it is. I got out, see. One guy, our whole crew, I got out. Oh, I got picked up later by one of our destroyers. I got out. You understand that? I sunk that sub, I was responsible, I got out!

BEECHAM

I want you to listen to me now.

BELL

That's what this thing is. Them guys, down there, they know I'm up here. That's what this thing is. I should be down there with them. I should be down in that sub, I should be dead, and all this noise, this pounding, this clanging, that's them guys down there, they're calling muster on me!

BEECHAM

I want you to listen to me! One man does not sink a sub. One lousy circumstance does not decide a battle. One case of sudden fear does not add up to a coward. You've been taking a dirty rap for twenty years. You've slept with it, you've hung it around your neck, you've let it dig deep down inside and tear

you to pieces. Now let me tell you something, Bell. It's not deserved, it's not right. It's a dead weight guilt that you've blown way out of proportion to the facts and do you know what the facts are, Bell? The fact is that that sub was dead in the water and surrounded by enemy craft. That was a crew that was doomed! Do you understand that? A frightened sailor didn't destroy that ship or kill off that crew. Bell, you've got to understand. A war did! A set of circumstances did! Bell, you've got to believe me, you've simply got to believe me. All you should put in your sea bag is a regret, not a guilt. Do you understand? Not a guilt!

BELL

(He's heard none of it)

They're calling muster on me.

With that, he runs out to the edge of the ship and dives off, never to be found.

"The Thirty Fathom Grave" was a quieter episode of the series, lacking anything too profound, and yet another entry in the catalogue of war-connected Serling commentaries on the traumatic things that can develop from, in the words of another Serling script, "having done too much and felt too much and finally having to succumb to it." ("The Purple Testament", Season 1.)



"**Valley of the Shadow**", also by Beaumont, was one of the better sci-fi episodes of a series which, to quote former producer Buck Houghton, "was not a sci-fi show." This was the third and final episode directed by Perry Lafferty; while his first effort was a home run, the others were challenging enough that he was undoubtedly relieved to move on to other work away from "Twilight Zone."

The title is of course extracted from Psalm 23 – "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, for Thou art with me." The irony, and black humor, come from the fact that the journalist gets trapped there, and God help him! This makes for an intriguing storyline. Where it suffers is in its execution – Peaceful Valley is a boring place with boring residents, who are selfishly content to keep their trade secrets hidden from the rest of the world, although they're not utilizing them to accomplish anything more than "comfort" versus focusing on social responsibility. The town was made up

to look like the old west, and it has a government led by three odd gentlemen who seem to do little more than guard some Sacred Equations and await outsiders who might stumble unknowingly into their private world, which is not well-guarded, except by an invisible wall that gets raised and lowered as needed. They even give Redfield a house, which he and his dog Roly are only allowed outside of when the bubble is deactivated.

Quite possibly, Beaumont set up this episode to feature special effects and some science fiction elements that were considered innovative in 1962, to be seen on then-primitive television sets. The script was not based on any of his earlier short stories and it lacks much of what he succeeded with in the past. Today, it comes off as little more than a calculated, cold-blooded story with a weak ending, wherein the governing men conveniently decide to erase everything that happened and send Redfield on his way again. This serves as no more than a convenient wrap-up.

In the lead as Redfield, Ed Nelson is merely average. In the co-starring role of Dorn, David Opatoshu plays the head official with similar blandness although his dialogue with Redfield is thoughtfully well-delivered. Natalie Trundy submits a fine performance as Ellen Marshall, a love interest, although the set-up that brought them together is so awkward that it makes very little impact.

The show does boast a few good scenes – the least of which was Dabbs Greer getting stabbed with a knife and Hershey’s chocolate syrup “blood” spilling out, only to be reversed moments later. “The cleaners were never able to get my shirt back to the point where it was wearable again,” he remarked (as many TZ actors have attested, wearing one’s own clothes for the job was common practice in those days.) And, there’s some crisp Beaumont dialogue here and there, mostly heard in the government office:

DORN

You sensed a story in this town, Mr. Redfield, and you were right. You turned off onto the road to Peaceful Valley and you saw certain things that defied logic and people began to behave oddly and you became curious, so we had to stop you. And now we must do even worse because, Mr. Redfield, you stumbled upon the best kept secret in the world.

REDFIELD
What secret?

DORN

Our gift, Mr. Redfield. Bestowed upon the people of this village one-hundred and four years ago. A man came to Peaceful Valley, from what land or what planet nobody knows. He was a brilliant scientist, many hundreds of years before his time. But he was also wise, as you shall see. From his brain came the likes of equations that no one had ever seen or dreamt of. Not on this planet, at any rate. Of course, I can not tell you what they are. Mr. Redfield, you are aware, I trust, that the basis for this complicated thing we call life is energy.

(beat)

It’s a frightening and mysterious force. The scientist’s equations unlocked this force and from it came the greatest power of good or evil, that the universe has ever known. He decided to entrust these secrets and the equations and the machines that he had built to three men that he had selected, and he instructed them to give the benefit of this power to the people of Peaceful Valley for their comfort but under no circumstances were they to release the secret to the outside world. They were to remain in Peaceful Valley until humanity learned the ways of peace. That is your story, Mr. Redfield, and you see we cannot allow you to leave us.

Obviously this certain unnamed individual who came to Peaceful Valley more than a hundred years earlier did not come up with the gadgets used to move furniture around and break people apart and reassemble them in other locations....these were apparently borne out of the Sacred Equations – which must be kept somewhere other than the safe (connected to an alarm) which holds the blank book that Redfield tries to abscond with. Oddly enough, they use a punch card machine to make virtually everything (as evidenced by numerous file cabinets full of these cards). Surely this isn't the only machine in town, but the likelihood of everyone having one in his/her home is slim. Laughably, when Ellen Marshall – charged with the task of setting up a home for Redfield, she gives him a rickety old typewriter with the excuse of, "We didn't have a punch card for any newer model."

Morgan Brittany says, "That was the start of my villainess days...I was the evil brat on the sidewalk who made the dog disappear. Ed Nelson was great and we were very friendly, even though my character was so mean to him!" Sandy Kenyon, who played the gas station attendant-slash-undercover cop, also remembered it enthusiastically. "Being in that milieu – you knew immediately that you were working in class, and we all knew that it would go on to become the best TV series of all time, and it did. No question about it. Everyone connected with it was concerned with doing the best that they possibly knew how to do. I'm thinking of my friend John Anderson ["The Odyssey of Flight 33", Season 2, which they starred in] although, my favorite of the three I did was playing a bigot in "The Shelter" alongside my old friend Mary Gregory [they worked together on several other shows]...and who doesn't like to play a bigot? I loved doing it. "Valley of the Shadow" gave me a smaller part, but of course, I wasn't about to turn down a third appearance on that amazing, amazing show. I'm a fan!" In a sense, Kenyon got to play a bigot here too, as a member of a very odd cult.

Serling always wrote well about social change, but the notion of Hitler coming back to life was too tidy a punchline for "He's Alive". While Dennis Hopper does as well as could probably be expected in the lead, and manages to portray the neo-Nazi Vollmer with a good touch of saltiness, the standout performance comes from Ludwig Donath as Ernst Ganz, a retired cellist who took care of him as a child. "He's Alive" marked the beginning of many abrasive roles that Hopper, still in his twenties, would play over the next four decades.

VOLLMER

The economy of our world, now, then, and forever, has always found insidious greed of international banks. These are the worshipers of currency. Their religion is monetary gain. Their shrine is gold.
Their loyalties, first and foremost and primarily deal with money.

HECKLER

What's wrong with that?!!

VOLLMER

(ignoring him)

Examine the phenomenon of foreign control. You examine it, and you will note with absolute clarity that the lines lead directly to Palestine, they lead directly to Africa, they lead directly to The Vatican! Um...so, there we are! There it is! There is a conspiracy. There is an insidious, enveloping conspiracy. A conspiracy enveloped by the yellow man, by the black man, and by foreigners who come in and infiltrate our economic structure. There will come a morning, oh yes, there will come a morning when these men

have taken over your home, they've taken over your daughters, and they will be sitting right there on your doorstep!

HECKLER

If there's anyone sitting on your doorstep, buddy, he's a man in a white coat and you'd just better go with him quietly.

VOLLMER

You think that's pretty funny, don't you? You think it's pretty funny that your country can be sold out, that they can sell out your flag, and your birthrights, you think that's funny?!

HECKLER

Well maybe you oughtta do something about it, punk! You're such a big tiger, why don't you come down here and do something about it?

VOLLMER

Let me tell you something right now. Someday this country is going to wake up. They're going to wake up, and when they find out that Izzy sold them out and how Rastus sold them out and how Poncho sold them out, they're gonna make up a list of all the people that will get paid back and do you know where you're gonna be? You're gonna be right on top of that list! Right on the top!

The heckler throws tomatoes at him, and a fight breaks out.

It could've been that "He's Alive" was too much for audiences at that time. By today's standards it's pale, but it was done at a time when the revolution of the sixties was quickly up and coming. Street protests and arrests were becoming more and more common. Peter Vollmer is clearly a competent leader of whatever movement he's attempting to start, but his hang-ups outweigh his leadership skills.

The unnamed character of Hitler was not completely without interest, although some have called it unnecessary. Metaphoric cloaking was something Serling did often, usually to better effect than this. The actor who played the part was Actor's Studio actor Curt Conway, a fine talent whose career was cut short by premature death. While the roles he got were usually dramatic, his final role was in the genre of comedy, as the judge on one of the most memorable episodes of "The Odd Couple" called 'My Strife in Court.' Howard Caine played the part of Nick Bloss, a member of Peter Vollmer's group, whom they eventually conspire against and murder. Most TV fans know him for a similar role that he played on "Hogan's Heroes", Major Wolfgang Hochstetter (the 'Bloss' name was used in "Death Ship" later - both uses were a nod to John Bloss, who was on the "Twilight Zone" staff). And, making his third and final appearance as a "Twilight Zone" actor was the well-known Hollywood director Paul Mazursky, earlier seen in Serling's "The Purple Testament" and "The Gift", where he also played officers.

Some viewers have asserted that Vollmer does not die at the end. It would seem so, as the officers riddle him full of bullets, but it's equivocal.

“Twilight Zone” had some other controversial episodes. People have voiced reservations about “The Hunt” by Earl Hamner, “The Howling Man” by Beaumont, “The Shelter” by Serling, and a scant few others including “**Mute**” by Matheson.

Telepathy was a theme that TZ dabbled in, here and there. But, “Mute” covered it in greater detail. Although Matheson himself was not displeased with the finished product, it does not remain a popular episode. Matheson wrote it, as he related many years later, “in a deliberately professional way,” which likely meant that more attention was given to the telepathic character and how she reacts to the new environment that she is in, and how her brain processes things in ways that are not possible with normal discourse. In the original story, the main character was a boy named Paal Nielsen. The gender was, for some reason unknown even to the writer, changed for the TZ teleplay.

Like Terry Burnham before her, Ann Jillian out-performs the adult actors. She had a difficult second task with the voiceovers of the telepathic sequences (Matheson refers to these as ‘Thought Voices’), which she also surmounted with aplomb. However, the performances of co-stars Barbara Baxley and Frank Overton as the adoptive parents are disappointing. Cora Wheeler, as portrayed, is a conniving, possessive, delusional woman. No sooner than she hears that the parents are probably dead, her thoughts immediately go to the girl, who *probably* survived the fire. She burns letters written minutes before by her husband, in a frying pan on the stove. Moments later, when Ilse runs out into traffic after being traumatized by this, Cora repeatedly screams “leave her alone!!” to concerned onlookers. The worst moments – in both the script and the performances, come at the conclusion, with another tremendously over-acted fit that she throws upon the arrival of the German people who were involved in the telepathy pact set up by Ilse’s deceased parents. Not knowing how to respond to her hysterics, all they can do is leave – no sooner than they arrived. Overton, who was usually wonderful in everything else he ever did, is icy throughout, as the town sheriff. He offers a rather pathetic apology to the travelers that fails to have any impact, which kills his character as well. Interestingly, Overton’s two “Twilight Zone” performances frame his unforgettable and sensitive performance as another sheriff, Hector “Heck” Tate in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

It shouldn’t be forgotten that the public schools of the day were often run more like army platoons, and the school Ilse attends in German Corners, Pennsylvania was no exception. Schoolteachers were rarely sympathetic to those students who failed or came up short, and they made no bones about dressing them down in front of their peers. Those who couldn’t recite properly were often shamed mercilessly. In that sense, Miss Edna Frank – whose name was most appropriate for the way she ran her classroom and her personal life, found a voice in Irene Dailey. The character was a strong competitor for the bitchiest character in all of “Twilight Zone,” along with those portrayed by Patricia Donahue (“A Stop at Willoughby”) and Eileen Ryan (“A World of Difference”)...not to mention Barbara Baxley! We can smell the putrid scents of Miss Frank’s witch hazel and cheap perfume, are blinded by the glittering rhinestones around her neck, hear the snap of her yardstick, and feel the spray of spittle coming out of her mouthful of clenched teeth. She is a ferocious human being. Of the part, Dailey said, “I was always based in New York in the theater and it was only my second role in Hollywood. They flew us out to L.A. for the juicy roles. Working with [director] Stuart Rosenberg was always a joy.” She later would be directed by him in the first “Amityville Horror” film. Memorable is the conclusion of Ilse’s first day of school – she blocks Ilse from exiting the room behind the other children...

MISS FRANK

I want you to know that you’re not fooling me, Ilse. I know exactly what you are. I know because my father tried to force me into being the same thing when I was your age. And after many years of

concentrated effort, I overcame that sickness which my father had forced on me. As I am going to help you overcome it, Ilse.

(pause; sharply)

It's true, isn't it? They've been training you to be a medium. Trying to distort your innocent mind to communicate with the dead. You've been trained to be a medium, haven't you?

Her eyes narrow. Suddenly, she thinks the words.

MISS FRANK

(V.O.)

You've been trained to be a medium, haven't you?

Ilse stiffens as she gets the thought.

MISS FRANK

(V.O.)

Haven't you?!

Ilse shakes her head rapidly.

ILSE

(V.O.)

No, it isn't true, that's not what they were training me for!

Miss Frank smiling in cold triumph as Ilse shakes her head.

MISS FRANK

You understand me. You know what I think! Don't you see, Ilse? You've proven my point. You've proven it to me!

She leans over and pulls Ilse's face close to hers, her eyes glittering vengefully.

MISS FRANK

(V.O.)

You...are...a...medium.

ILSE

(V.O.)

No, I'm not! You're wrong! I'm not a medium!

She pushes Miss Frank's hand away as Cora appears.



"...but the boat isn't words!"

The thesis of "Mute" is not so objectionable. It's a fairly realistic, albeit odd, situation. It's an acceptable piece of science fiction, as a short story and a teleplay. But the television episode takes many wrong turns and leaves the impression that the same or better an outcome for the protagonist could have been achieved, had things been handled differently. Whether or not the house fire was, as Miss Frank says, "the blessing of Ilse's life" is a debatable point. She could have lived an acceptable life in either situation. It is up to the viewer to decide which is the better, although the 'forced' happy ending continues to be objectionable to many. Although, with the adoptive parents Ilse ended up with, one can't help but feel at least a trace of sympathy for her.

But to call it, as one reviewer writes, "A wicked family drama" would shortchange it. "Mute" merits an infrequent look, if only for Jillian's performance.

Matheson was only assigned two scripts in Season 4, both based upon previously-published short stories versus inspired "Twilight Zone"-style ideas. He remarked on the relative ease of writing them, so it's curious that he wasn't given more. "**Death Ship**" is a disquieting, tension-packed and often violent script essaying human will and need for control, and man's longing for love. A combination of themes that only "Twilight Zone" could explore so successfully, and without this entry, it would be far less complete.

Ross Martin and Jack Klugman generate most of the steam, most notably when Captain Ross (Klugman) breaks up the serene reuniting of Mason and his wife and daughter who were killed in an automobile crash. The two actors, in character, exchange a considerable amount of eye contact, under which lies an ocean of resentment. Frederick Beir, as Lieutenant Carter, is not the pacifist of the group, nor does he try to be. He clearly has the same hatred for Ross, if not more, but it isn't as prominently displayed. When he arrives home, on the long road to his house, he barely hears the voice of his friend (played by Ross Elliott), focused solely on the passions that run long and deep inside him.



*Lt. Mike Carter is more interested in getting home to his wife than in hunting.
The Carter home. Nearly sixty years later, it still passes as a futuristic-looking residence.*

Despite the technical limitations of the day, "Twilight Zone" could always be counted on for convincing photography in place of special effects. Particularly impressive set design work was done for both the wrecked ship and the Carter home. The film editing was good for its time, and presents what is supposed to be a horrific illusion. The music heard throughout is a well-placed mixture, mostly from the scores of Jerry Goldsmith's "Back There" and Fred Steiner's "King Nine Will Not Return".

Fine acting and emotional fireworks aside, "Death Ship" makes the important assertion that there are people, like Captain Paul Ross, who cannot and will not accept things that are beyond their power to accept.

ROSS

Listen. You both remember what they told us once in training?

About the theory of circumnavigating time?

(beat)

They said it that it might be possible for us to leave Earth during one year and, when we got back – even though we thought it was the same year – it might be the year before – or the year after. You remember that?

MASON
(not getting the drift of Ross's argument)
It was only a theory, Captain.

ROSS
It's more than a theory. It's what happened to us. We went through some kind of time warp – right into the future.

MASON
(getting the point, incredulously)
And that –
(pointing) – ship over there is in the future, is that what you're saying?

ROSS
Only the probable future.

MASON
And what does that mean?

ROSS
(gesturing toward the cabin)
It means that we're not dead!

MASON
(cutting in)
It also means that we're going to be dead!

ROSS
Not if we don't go up.
(pause; quietly)
If we don't go up, we can't crash.

Directing "Death Ship" was Don Medford, who had so competently dealt with such despondence in "Death's Head Revisited." He had at his disposal considerable talent in the leading cast and was able to breathe even greater fire into them. He also had Mary Webster (last seen with Klugman in "A Passage for Trumpet", which he also directed) and Ross Elliott as a man who died in a hunting accident and appears in Carter's trip home - the first evidence that the three astronauts are in fact dead. Elliott also bears the distinction of playing the director of the famous "Vitameatavegamin" commercial in "I Love Lucy." A girl named Tammy Marihugh submits a remarkable thirty seconds of screen time as Mason's daughter, Jeanie. While Ross Martin noticeably overacted the scene where he finds Jeanie and his wife Ruth (named after Matheson's own wife), it remains one of the most moving minutes in all of "Twilight Zone."

One individual who never warmed to the episode was Jack Klugman. He remarked on more than one occasion that although he still heard a lot about it from people, he felt it far inferior to the other three he

did. This is quite perplexing, as the character was very well conceived and it's doubtful anyone else could have done better with the part. With an extended time on the TV screen, more of the character was available to the audience, enough for a kind of character study. In fact, Paul Ross had all the power and intensity that Klugman was known for in his performances. Although they were all about the same age, the actor outlived both of his co-stars by more than three decades. Beir and Klugman appeared together once again on "The Odd Couple," not many years before his death.

After three weeks of incredibly heavy drama – "He's Alive", "Death Ship", and "Mute" - it was time for a lighthearted hoedown on "Twilight Zone", and Earl Hamner was, of course, the man to provide and the result was "**Jess-Belle**." He was given less than a week to write the script for producer Herbert Hirschman. He accepted. But it wasn't all hoedown and lightheartedness. It became the best-known of the "Twilight Zone" love stories and ultimately Hamner's chief contribution to the series, although unintentionally so. It could have been titled "Bewitched", but, from a literary perspective, giving the main character the title was most appropriate. Hamner could easily have extended the "Twilight Zone" script into a successful stage play. Or, if not a play, then a story that would have fared well in a 'Best Short Stories'-type volume. There is more of a theatrical atmosphere to it than almost any other episode in the series, due in large part to Buzz Kulik's directorial efforts.

It is Jeanette Nolan's Granny Hart that serves as the backbone. Although she made somewhat of an impression the previous season in Hamner's "The Hunt", here was her chance to steal the show, and she did. She is a cauldron-stirring sorceress with many tricks and spells and curses up her sleeves, who takes great pleasure in her life as a witch. Linden Chiles, who co-starred in Serling's "Four O'Clock", also in the previous year, worked with Jeanette Nolan and her husband, John McIntire (also a TZ alum) many years later in the film *Cloak and Dagger*. He said, "They were amazing people, well-known and very respected in the industry. A pleasure to work with." But despite Nolan's show-stealing, Anne Francis was outstanding in the title role, as was James Best. Like Nolan, both integrated what they did so well in their earlier "Twilight Zone" characterizations. In "The Last Rites of Jeff Myrtlebank", Best – back from the dead – had magical power bestowed upon him. This time around, he got to kill a witch. A silver hairpin is needed to end the unruly Jess so that Billy Ben and Elly Glover can begin their life together. James Best seemed to be one of the go-to actors for country-themed episodes – he remarked many times that he felt fortunate that a show like "Twilight Zone" had three roles that perfectly suited his acting talents; most do not know that Best was also a respected acting teacher for many years. Francis, by then, had become a household name, soon to get her own show, "Honey West" in 1965. Although she was New York-born and raised, and didn't specialize in Southern Belle types specifically, she had few peers when it came to portraying them, and she was an obvious choice. Like Best, she also served as a sometime acting coach, although sporadically, and she remarked more than once that teaching acting was immensely rewarding. Playing her mother, Ossie Stone, was Virginia Gregg, then a stalwart fixture of television and one of the most versatile character actresses working in Hollywood. The harrowing scene where Jess-Belle accidentally lets out the truth about her new identity is not easily forgotten by the viewer, as mother fits her for her wedding dress...

JESS-BELLE

You and your tonics. You're worse than Granny H...

OSSIE
(taken aback)
Granny Hart?

JESS-BELLE
You know, she sells them old potions and things.

OSSIE
She ain't sold none to you, has she?

JESS-BELLE
Of course not.

OSSIE
(realizing, she grabs her)
Is that what made Billy Ben Turner blind to every other woman on Earth, save Jess-Belle?!

JESS-BELLE
Where would I get the money for potions and powders?

OSSIE
That old woman don't always ask for money! That's what makes my heart turn cold as ice!
(beat)
Jess, how did you pay her?!

No response.

OSSIE
Oh God, Jess, how did you pay her?!

JESS-BELLE
With my flesh and my blood, and my soul and my brain. And my sleep, my hands, my heart, my head...I
paid dear for Billy Ben!!

OSSIE
Jess, kneel down with me!

JESS-BELLE
It's too late, Mama.

OSSIE
And we'll pray to God to hep' ya!

JESS-BELLE
No. My prayers aren't answered in Heaven anymore.

OSSIE
I'll think of a way to hep' ya.

JESS-BELLE

If you want to see me alive in the morning, bolt my door when I go to bed tonight. No matter what happens, don't open that door until the morning.

Francis, Best, and Hamner met again, forty years later, at the first Stars of the Zone Convention, in 2002. On the panel discussion of actors, Francis and Best recalled the fun – and danger – they had on the set that week, particularly about the aggressive panther.

BEST

She turned into a panther at twelve at night!

FRANCIS

Still do!

BEST

The cat was up on the roof and I came out to the porch to light my pipe and I hear the trainer say, "Don't move!" And I'm thinking, 'why is he telling me that? He's not the director!' And I said, 'Can you please get a chain on that animal?! Because I don't want to have to go through that again.'

[...]

These days, if you're over thirty, you're not on the cutting edge anymore. I'm glad I'm dull! [...] I impressed her so good that she forgot that we were both in a film together [written by Serling] with Paul Newman called "The Rack."

FRANCIS

And what about "Forbidden Planet?"

BEST

I was killed off so fast in that one...kaboom, and that was it!

Both films were released in 1956.

BEST

["The Dukes of Hazzard"] set me free, but I'd like to go to my grave being remembered for more than just Rosco P. Coltrane "kee kee kee!"...as a fairly good actor and not the village idiot.

FRANCIS

Honey, you're just playin' yourself!

Francis remained enthusiastic about "Jess Belle" throughout the rest of her life, as did Best. She remarked, "I'd love to do it again – and I'd love to play Jeanette's part! I'd have to have a good makeup artist though."

Charles Beaumont's last few scripts for the show were completed in early 1963. The story of "**Miniature**" – a man integrating himself into a living dollhouse, was not one of Beaumont's best, although the finished

episode product has become known as ‘the Robert Duvall episode.’ But the relationship between 30-something Charley Parkes (note the odd spellings of both names) and the people in his life is what resonates. The dollhouse is almost secondary. He has a mother who has never let him mature; a married sister who worries about him constantly but matter-of-factly tries to get him to shape up; a boss who fires him after 4 years simply because he finds a reason to discharge him. Even his coworkers pick on him. One of the highlights comes just seconds after the episode begins – Charley is in the museum, walking up a flight of stairs, when suddenly he is flogged by a mob of museum tourists who force him back down the stairs. Some people have all the bad luck – usually the meek. Certainly, the world Charley Parkes is a part of is one that he’s very lucky to break out of, as it wants not for his presence. To most, it’s probably clear from this point that this man will somehow escape and that the ending will be a happy one.

While Pert Kelton, whom many remember as the actress who preceded Audrey Meadows as Alice Kramden in “The Honeymooners”, and comedian/comedy writer Lennie Weinrib turn in splendid characterizations, those of Barbara Barrie and William Windom are special. Windom, always playing the gruff professional man (here, a psychiatrist) tries to convince Charley’s family that it was Charley who cured himself – when in fact, nothing changed within him at all. A good statement to the public, if a bit humorous, that psychiatry rarely works out. Barbara Barrie played a lot of mothers and aunts. In the early sixties, she was still playing sisters, and fits the bill to a ‘T’ as the sensible Myra. She is a very likeable, in-vogue person who chose an affable husband who is seemingly none too bright, and their partnership is utterly convincing. Somehow, she escaped the reigns of their possessive, hysterical mother and forged her own way. But, thankfully, she, and her husband too, are still around the old house enough to keep an eye on things. As many know, the Academy never awarded any Emmy Awards to any of the actors or directors on “The Twilight Zone.” This does not equate, given that it was also one of the best-acted shows on TV. Barrie certainly submits an Emmy-caliber performance.

MYRA

I want you to listen to me because this is important. You’re over thirty years old and you’re living exactly the way you did when you were fourteen. Some of it’s mama’s fault. But some of it’s yours. And it’s not natural, Charley. It’s sick. And you know it’s sick and that’s why you’re scared.

CHARLEY

(feigning agreement)
You’re probably right.

MYRA

Charley, stop agreeing with me!
(suddenly lowers voice, realizing she’s yelling)
You agree with me all the time! I could say that you were a blue monkey and you’d agree with me.

CHARLEY

No.

MYRA

Look, Charley, I don’t know anything about psychology or anything like that. But, I think I know what’s the matter with you.

(beat)

You need a girl. You’re at that time of life. You know what I mean?

CHARLEY
Not exactly.

MYRA
(puzzled)
Well, um...it's a little difficult to explain...but you've never had a girl, have you Charley?

CHARLEY
Not actually.

MYRA
(disappointed)
That's what I thought. Well, we are going to change...all of that.

CHARLEY
How?

The 'how' is Charley's date Harriet, arranged by her. It's an embarrassingly bad evening for the both of them. Is Charley homosexual or wrestling with the possibility of it, as some will predict? "You don't need a girl, you need a doctor!", Harriet says to him after belting him across the face. And he gets a doctor! But, Charley clearly has no problem with the female persuasion. He also gets the perfect girl, to replace all the ones in his former life who did him zero good. One critic called the punchline of the episode "weak and phony; Charley needs to learn how to fit in with the world he is a part of, not try to escape from it." However, the clever vehicle of a Victorian dollhouse was the only way for Charley to move himself out of our world. His not being given a second chance was a blessing, as he quite clearly was beyond the help of anyone! As an interesting side note, actress Sally Kellerman appears in the first act of the episode, uncredited. She was a good friend of producer/writer Joseph Stefano, who cast her first in the episode "The Human Factor" and then in "The Bellerose Shield" on "The Outer Limits", the latter directed by TZ's most prolific director, John Brahm. Kellerman had completely forgotten of her work, albeit for a day or less, on "Twilight Zone" until several years ago, when her memory was jogged at a convention and someone presented her with a still photograph taken on the set. As great an actor as she was, she remains in that small company of actors who, by rights, should have gotten a part on the show.

Burgess Meredith often over-acted in a delightful, old world Vaudevillian way. His last of four starring roles, on "**Printer's Devil**", written by Beaumont based on his short story "The Devil, You Say?" was arguably his best. The Devil, as essayed by him, is a delightfully sinister man. Beaumont had a decisively refined sense of humor, a product of the kind of life he led. As newspaper editor Douglas Winter – a Serlingesque character on the brink of failure who gets a second chance, Robert Sterling is splendid. Good too, although a bit abrasive, is Patricia Crowley as his VP and fiancée, Jackie Benson. However, the rougher edge that she gives to the part may have been for the best; it would not have been as effective if she'd played the character as a submissive homebody type who has designs on the local newspaper editor. "The Devil, You Say?" was a funny but overall tepid piece that, today, is rather dated. The story had a certain Mr. Jones, 90 years old, as the Devil, who was considerably more innocuous than Mr. Smith. The newspaper owner was Richard Lewis, who had inherited the failing paper from his late father and like Douglas Winter, he he's also on the edge, leading a frustrated and unsuccessful existence. The paper was *The Danville Courier*, changed to Danzburg in the teleplay – a good choice, as the former is a well-known

city. The female character in the story was only a minor character named Elissa Traskers, who is employed by another newspaper in New York, and not romantically linked to Lewis. But, as Jackie Benson does at the end, she helps divert The Devil so things can get back to normal. Beaumont wrote another short story with the title "Printer's Devil", some years before he wrote "The Devil, You Say?" The villain in the first story was named Tomerlin, after his friend, writer John Tomerlin. Basically, Beaumont excised everything that was overly broad, or not as interesting, and gave it all a more believable, if not hip, set-up. In some way, it remains remarkably current.

TZ rarely did storylines of dark comedy, but this was one occasion where it did and succeeded. Serling was not adept at writing comedy, although he loved doing it. And in such earlier and more light-hearted episodes as "A Nice Place to Visit" starring Larry Blyden & Sebastian Cabot, and "The Fugitive" starring Susan Gordon & J. Pat O'Malley, Beaumont was not at his best either. "Printer's Devil" brought together his affinity for the macabre and the occult with the usual "Twilight Zone"-style fantasy that he was by then well-known for. This was certainly a segment that needed a full hour to be effective. While Mr. Smith may have pulled one or two too many pranks, the story is so enjoyable that the viewer doesn't think much about it...although stock footage of a collapsed office building and a banker killing his wife were a bit much.



SMITH

Well, it's not the latest model, but it's a good one.

(sits down, turns it on)

Listen to it hum!

(passes cigar to Jackie)

Kindly hold that cigar for me? Keep it burning.

Starts to type, fast and almost rhythmically.

JACKIE

Well, if he doesn't play Chopin's "Polonaise", I'll be disappointed.

Continues typing; the metal discs fall in succession; they can't believe how fast he's going.

SMITH
Could I have my cigar back?

JACKIE
Oh...yes.

SMITH
Put it in my mouth, please.
(puffs happily on it)
I may have to make a few modifications but on the whole, it's in fine condition. A little stiff, perhaps.

He finishes, then stops typing and turns it off.

WINTER
What's the matter?

SMITH
Matter?

WINTER
Why did you quit?

SMITH
Finished.

WINTER
That's impossible!

SMITH
See for yourself.

He does.

WINTER
Mister Smith, why would a man with your talent want to work for a hick paper like *The Courier*?

SMITH
Call it a challenge.

While linotype machines have long since vanished (as of 2016, only one newspaper in the US still used one to produce their paper), the one in "Printer's Devil" remains a character all its own. As per Mr. Smith, "I've made some special modifications and I wouldn't want anyone else to touch it." Eventually, it is exorcised along with its operator.

Camille Franklin, who played the waitress Molly, remembered, "I was a student of [Sanford] "Sandy" Meissner, and I am sure that's why [director] Ralph Senensky hired me for the part. I think he came to class one day and saw me performing and offered it to me. We spent a good amount of time getting my close-ups, and it was actually a lot of work for a small part – I was only in a couple scenes. But, you couldn't

ask for much more, acting opposite talents like Bob Sterling and Burgess Meredith. I worked on a lot of shows but they're not re-run anymore. But every time there's a "Twilight Zone" rerun – and we all know how many times it's been re-run (!!) or gets issued on video or DVD, a check turns up in my mailbox!" As a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Franklin was a frequent judge on the Academy Awards panel.

With "**No Time Like the Past**", Serling took the story of "Back There", from Season 2, and expanded upon it. The main character Corrigan, played by Russell Johnson, ended up changing the past, but this time the main character, Driscoll, caused the past, although not for the better. Dana Andrews was one of the great dramatic actors and pedagogues of the first half of the 20th century, although he remains largely forgotten today. He got a stint on "The Twilight Zone" in one of many Serling time travel episodes – which reportedly had some fifteen versions of the script before the final (shooting) script was shot. It also reportedly weighed in as one of the most expensive episodes of the series produced in the five seasons, although the special effects are minimal, and for the most part, very simple sets were used. Justus Addiss had directed another time travel episode by Serling, "The Odyssey of Flight 33", so he was probably a good choice for this one. However, he had a good number of hurdles to overcome – the main one being Paul Driscoll jumping from one period of time to the next in just a matter of moments. Indeed, the first two segments are very much throw-away – Driscoll's arriving in Japan just before the bombing of Hiroshima, segueing to the 1915 *Lusitania* bombing and then on to Hitler's new Germany. The teleportation of Driscoll, via a very curious apparatus used to facilitate the time travel, is utterly unconvincing. But that was the least of it. Andrews had trouble with the part and did not deliver the "walloping performance" promised by Serling in the previous week's preview. Save for two or three scenes, his performance is very cautious. Patricia Breslin turns in a similarly inferior performance as Abigail Sloan, who falls for Paul Driscoll and vice versa. To quote one viewer, "It's as if she'd just come out of a lobotomy." Audiences remember her almost solely for her appearance in Matheson's "Nick of Time" in Season 2, opposite William Shatner.

The one and only scene that Andrews seems in accord with, comes in the fourth and final sequence in Homeville, Indiana, where Driscoll has an altercation with Hanford another boarding house resident, a banker named Hanford played by veteran character actor Robert Cornthwaite. Serling may have gotten the name 'Hanford' from the now-defunct Hanford nuclear plant in Washington state, which would have been most appropriate. Cornthwaite had fond memories of the shoot, remarking, "I played the banker and Bobs Watson played the minister – he was a famous child actor of the past, he even got to work with Beulah Bondi!" Watson was not credited on screen and it's suspected that most of his lines were cut. Serling elucidates the reality of the more conservative folks who are more concerned with the US gaining more nationalistic strength in proportion to the amount of time spent in combat. So this was once again very familiar turf for him, and the dialogue is crisp and effective.

HANFORD

Say there, Mr. Driscoll, what are your international views?

DRISCOLL

I don't have any, Mr. Hanford.

HANFORD

Of course you do, man, of course you do! Everybody has to have views as to the destiny of our country. Now, you take the case of the Indian War, five years ago. All this silly, conciliatory nonsense about

giving the Indians land, as if you could make savages understand treaties! Why, we should have had twenty George Custers, and a hundred thousand men, and we should have just swept across the plains, destroying every Redskin who faced us. And then we should have planted the American flag - deep, high and proud!

ABIGAIL

I think the country is tired of fighting, Mr. Hanford. I think we were bled dry by the war. I think anything we can get by treaties, as long as it saves lives, is the proper course to pursue.

Driscoll smiles at her.

HANFORD

My dear young lady, I trust this isn't the pap that you spoon-feed to your students. Treaties, indeed! Peace, indeed! Why, the virility of a nation is in direct proportion to its fighting qualities. Why, we'll live to see the day when this country of ours feels an army of a million men! And I mean just sweep everything before us!

Gesturing, he 'sweeps' the glasses on the table, knocking them over. Mrs. Chamberlain makes an irritated face.

HANFORD

I'm sorry, Mrs. Chamberlain, I get carried away. You some kind of pacifist, are ya Driscoll?

DRISCOLL

No, I'm just some kind of sick idiot who's seen too many young men die because of too many old men like you who fight their battles at dining room tables.

MINISTER

Oh, my goodness!

HANFORD

I take offense at that remark, Mr. Driscoll!

DRISCOLL

And I take offense to armchair warriors like you, who don't know what a shrapnel wound feels like. Or what death smells like after three days in the sun. Or the look in a man's eyes when he realizes he's minus a leg and his blood is seeping out. Mr. Hanford, you have a great enthusiasm for "planting the flag deep," but you haven't a nodding acquaintance with what it's like to bury men in the same soil.

HANFORD

I'll not sit here and take talk like that!

Hanford stands.

DRISCOLL

Oh no, you'll go back to your bank and it'll be business as usual until the next dinnertime, when you'll give us another of your vacuous speeches about the country growing stronger by filling its graveyards.

Driscoll rises, as Hanford sits down again.

Well, you're in for some gratifying times, Mr. Hanford, you can believe me. Oh, there'll be a lot of graveyards for you to fill. In Cuba, and in France, and all over Europe and all over the Pacific. And you can sit on the sidelines and wave your pennants, because according to your definition, this country is going to get as virile as the devil. From San Juan to Incheon, we'll show how red our blood is because we'll spill it. There are two unfortunate aspects of this. First, you won't have to spill any and the other is that you won't live long enough to know I'm right!

He exits. Mrs. Chamberlain proudly glares at Hanford.

MINISTER

A violent man!

Abigail turns to look at them all, then rises and follows him.

This is one of the very few occasions where we get a rather 'homey' scene on "Twilight Zone." Rarely do we see the characters gather together, eating and having an intelligent discussion – appreciated much more nowadays, when the art of conversation, and over home-cooked food too, is all but lost as the younger generations revel in technology, even during what should be a time reserved for more respectable communication.

A conversation between Driscoll and a French horn player (John Zarembo) is also good for a chuckle. Oddly enough, the man plays a few notes and when Driscoll greets him with a 'how are you?' he replies "Flat." He plays a few more notes and says "ah, that's better..." but the educated listener will attest to the fact that it was actually more out of tune than before! The late climax of the episode featuring Malcolm Atterbury – appearing as essentially the same character he played in "Mr. Denton on Doomsday" – a traveling peddler of phony health tonics – is what kills "No Time Like the Past." By this point, the envelope has been pushed to the point of overextension. Predicting catastrophe, Driscoll demands that the horses be unhitched from the wagon, to which the salesman violently refuses, sending the horses into an unlikely frenzy, causing a lit lantern to fly off the wagon, and... 'catch' on the school building, causing it to burn to the ground. This was a laughably bad gimmick that does not wash. Faults aside, Addiss staged Indiana of 1881 and the integration of President Garfield's assassination well, but the children in the background singing "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean" for minutes on end was excessive.

While it requires some patience to get through, Driscoll's quest to change the world as 'the voice of history', and the surprisingly touching conclusion are perhaps reason enough to watch it.



“Incident on a July afternoon, 1881. A man named Driscoll who came and went, and in the process, learned a simple lesson, perhaps best said by a poet named Lathbury who wrote, ‘Children of yesterday, heirs of tomorrow, what are you weaving? Labor and sorrow? Look to your looms again, faster and faster. Fly the great shuttles prepared by the master. Life’s in the loom, room for it, room!’ Tonight’s tale of clocks and calendars, in the Twilight Zone.”

“The Parallel” was the first of 18 episodes produced by Bert Granet, which included the last five in the fourth season lineup. These were aired out of order of production, so Herbert Hirschman’s name continued to appear on, more or less, alternating weeks.

‘The Andrews Brothers’ appeared in their “Twilight Zone” episodes back to back. Dana Andrews’ much younger sibling, Steve Forrest, starred in “The Parallel”, which aired the following week, as Col./Maj. Robert Gaines. The name was after his Serling’s first agent, Blanche Gaines. Bob/Robert was probably for his brother, an aviation expert. Co-starring were Jacqueline Scott, an underrated virtuoso actress, and Frank Aletter, one of the most popular character actors of the 60s and 70s.

Parallel worlds, or planes of existence, was a theme that “Twilight Zone” explored many times, mostly in Serling’s episodes. Here Serling started with the basic idea of “Mirror Image” of Season 1. The space travel element was added and in so doing, Serling came up with an even more intriguing story. But the director did not stress fast-paced dramatic progression and the result is 52 minutes that, in the end, come off as rather ho-hum. There are several fine sequences, notably the discovery of the spacecraft that Gaines went up in not being the same as the one he arrived back in. The pale ending, where a radio communication from another Col. Robert Gaines comes in to NASA after Gaines - already having returned from the mission - is seen running toward the spacecraft is indeed spooky but concludes things on a bland

note when nothing ever comes of this. This seems to be a patched-up finish. Thankfully, a final shot of Gaines going home – in ‘the real world’ – was included. Viewers with sharp eyes will notice that the front of the Gaines homefront – with and without the picket fence - was used not once, but three times in Season 4.



Effective photography used to spiral in from the spaceship to the hospital ward.

Jacqueline Scott, who had a very long career, turns in the strongest performance of the cast, as his wife Helen (one of many times Serling used that name on the show.) She related in 2002, “I remember our first day on the set. I didn’t know Steve, he didn’t know me. I came in the morning and saw him from afar and I thought, ‘Oh my, I get to work with *that* hunk?!’” They did well together. Supposedly, there was an un-shot scene written, later changed, that had Helen not realize that the husband who returned from the space voyage was not the same person until they slept together, as Granet confirmed in a 2001 interview. Although this would probably have been done well by the two actors, the network would never have conceded. The farthest they got was what was included – she gives him a passionate kiss and suddenly she realizes that it’s someone else. The scene was played well by both actors but especially Scott. Frank Aletter and Philip Abbott are also fine components of the ensemble. But, they – like virtually everyone else in the cast, downplayed the material to the point where it suffered.

Serling’s development of the subject included a statement that JFK was not the President of the United States in the parallel world. Rarely were political figures, or for that matter, many current world issues or events, mentioned in “Twilight Zone” episodes, but – and especially in light of the fact that he would be assassinated within months of the initial airing, this is one example of the series being less than timeless. Another of the highlights, slightly acerbic, was Gaines realizing that certain events in his world had different outcomes. This is probably the most memorable segment of “The Parallel.”

CONNACHER

I just dropped over to see how you were.

GAINES

(somewhat angrily)

Me? Well, that depends. It depends on just what are the current standards for sanity, the acceptable outer limits. I've been going over a set of encyclopedias up there and jotting down some notes. I've uncovered some very revealing items. There are pretty basic historical facts that simply don't jive.

(Reading notes) For example, it talks about a man named Anderson who was sent by the US Government to supervise the construction of the Panama Canal.

CONNACHER

So?

GAINES

So, I've never heard of anyone named Anderson. It happened to be a man named Gullfoss. It also talks about a man named Eddie Rickenbacker from World War I who was lost on a raft in the next war and never found.

CONNACHER

That's right. He crashed and that was the end of it.

GAINES

But that wasn't the end of it. The raft was found, and Rickenbacker was saved. He became the president of an airlines company. I've got dozens of items like that. Men talked about who never existed. Men who existed but not even mentioned. Historical events that I know happened a certain way that, according to the encyclopedia, didn't happen or happened another way. The things I remember are not delusions. They're the legitimate recollections of things as I remember them. But somehow, some way, this world seems to have turned upside down for me. Well, not in every way, you understand. By and large, the people are the same. The names, the streets. The recollections that we all have of people and events. It's as if there were...another world, parallel to mine. As if this world were almost a twin except for some minor differences that happened somewhere along the line of evolution.

HELEN

Bob, for the love of heaven...

CONNACHER

Do you want to follow that line of reasoning? Because if you do, there are a couple of built-in conditions that go along with it. Conditions that I don't think you or anyone else wants to admit. First and foremost, they happen to be that if all this is true, if you suddenly uncover the theory that there are two Earths, two sets of people, two histories, and you somehow, inexplicably, crossed over to the other dimension, then you're not who we think you are. And we're not who you think we are.

Patronized, he suddenly rises and decides to call their daughter.

GAINES

Maggie!

HELEN

Bob?!

GAINES

Let's get it out, shall we? I'm so sick of tip-toeing and whispers. Maggie!

Come down here, baby. Come down right away.

She does, but only half-way.

GAINES

Honey, think this over before you answer, but answer. Who am I, honey? Tell Mommy and Col. Connacher who I am.

HELEN

Bob, please.

GAINES

No. Sweetheart, you say whatever's on your mind. Tell them who I am.

MAGGIE

I don't know who you are.

It deserved better than it got, and was one of the more original stories to appear on "Twilight Zone." Paul Comi related in several interviews, "It was a great story, for sure, and I enjoyed the part of the psychiatrist that I did, but it suffered in the hour format and that seems to be the general consensus." Comi, Scott, and Aletter reunited again at the 2002 Stars of the Zone Convention. Although a protégé of his lookalike, Gregory Peck, Forrest was never especially well-known, although he enjoyed much success as a character actor. He finally got his own show, the acclaimed "S.W.A.T.", which by rights should have lasted far longer than a brief season and a half in the mid seventies, but whose theme song has remained vastly popular. He also starred with Pat Boone and Barbara Eden in Serling's little-known film "The Yellow Canary" in 1963, which was released right around the time of "The Parallel."

"**I Dream of Genie**", whose working title was "Do Unto Others", was a fine and funny script by John Furia. Mr. Furia was a professor at The University of Southern California for many years, and president of the Writers Guild of America for some years. He was very good friends with E. Jack Neuman (writer of the remarkable but oft-neglected "The Trouble With Templeton", Season 2) and considered Jack an authority on TV writing. The script involved an unsuccessful, ordinary man named George Hanley who, after a series of trials and tribulations, gets to become master of the lamp. Furia had a decisive ear for comedy, as evidenced by a good number of funny one-liners spicing up the script...

GEORGE AS PRESIDENT OF THE U.S.

I can't. Let somebody else. I don't want to decide. Not me! Not me!

Cut from Oval Office to Street

GEORGE

(mumbling)

Not me! Not me!

HOMEOWNER

Yeah, you, Mack! You and your mutt, get off'a my stoop!

The script reads far better than it came off on the screen, mostly due to poor acting, casting, and direction. It was published in 2005 by BearManor Media in Volume 1 of "Forgotten Gems from The Twilight Zone" alongside Neuman's script.

It was intended to be a more light-hearted entry in the catalogue...it even featured a sweet Scottish terrier dog named, ironically, Attila. Although "Bewitched" and "I Dream of Jeannie" were just around the corner, there hadn't been a lot of shows with supernatural situations on TV up to this point, so the idea of a wish-granting genie was probably a welcome one to Cayuga Productions. Serling had a weakness for comedic guardian angel stories, and they usually didn't measure up. "Twilight Zone" often had very heavy scripts that required the audience to lend a bit more of themselves to. Serling himself often had a tendency to overwrite, particularly in the later years of the show. A lighter script was definitely in order but, despite efforts, "I Dream of Genie" missed the target. Why? It lacked enough realism amidst the fantasy elements. But the fault was mostly with the main character, who was simply not interesting enough. Even if Morris had played it differently, more upbeat, George Hanley didn't have enough substance. He got his second chance, but to what end? He became a mythical character. Howard Morris displays almost none of his infinite comedic talents as he sleeps his way through the part. Oscar winner Jack Albertson, a fine comedian in his own right, also leaves no impression as the genie. Patricia Barry, co-starring, is less memorable in the role than she was in "The Chaser" opposite George Grizzard several years earlier. There was some sort of poetic justice here – Grizzard got "In His Image", and Barry got "I Dream of Genie." In the interim, she turned in a good performance or two on Boris Karloff's "Thriller", as did Morris (and Grizzard!), but they didn't do justice to this "Twilight Zone" entry.

A few of the other supporting actors offer limited entertainment. James Millhollin, forever known as the discombobulated, wide-eyed department store manager, Armbruster in "The After Hours", this time is a curio shop owner who sells Hanley the lamp. One fan called Millhollin "a poor man's Don Knotts", although...perhaps not so poor, as he was a much more versatile actor. Bob Hastings, who later went on to play the long-suffering proprietor of Kelsey's Bar on "All in the Family", makes a brief appearance. Sharper eyes will detect Joyce Jameson, a fetching young actress who plays out her scene under the piano at a party. She and TZ alum Jean Carson ("A Most Unusual Camera", Season 2) were the Mount Pilot Fun Girls of "The Andy Griffith Show."

"My family liked it more than I did," said Furia. "I liked my story but wasn't crazy about what they did with it." He gave us a wonderful interview in 2004 for the "Twilight Zone" Definitive Edition DVDs, and during the interview it was apparent that he had more "Twilight Zone" stories in him. But, like his friend Neuman, he only got one shot at it.

Directed by David Lowell Rich, brother of the great comedy director John Rich – director of two TZ episodes himself, "**Of Late I Think of Cliffordville**" – is another lost-and-found treasure in the anthology. Or, to be more specific, deserves more than it often gets. Albert Salmi and John Anderson, both TZ semi-regulars, are at their usual best, with an equally splendid performance by Wright King. Serling reworked Malcolm Jameson's lengthy short story, "Blind Alley" – a dark and somewhat disturbing but still entertaining tale, with average results. The story took place in the town of 'Cliffordsville' in the story, with the 's' dropped by Serling in his teleplay.

Once again, time travel was the subject – and this trip cost Feathersmith all but a thousand or so dollars of his tens of millions net worth. He gets a chance to go back to Cliffordville, Indiana of 1910, thanks to the service of Miss Devlin, in effort to start over again – not that he needs to, he’s already rich. He arrives only to find out that the land he owns has oil on it but it’s miles underground and unable to be reached by the technology of that day. Basically, nothing is as he remembers it, but before he can go back to the future, he has to make a sale for 40 dollars for train fare – and sells a deed to Mr. Hecate, a working class gentleman. But once he returns to the present, the tables have been turned...it’s Hecate who is sitting in Feathersmith’s old chair, while he has Hecate’s old job as the building janitor!

It bears some similarity to “No Time Like the Past”, “Back There”, and several other episodes about going home again and the evils of doing so. But, by and large, it’s always been the Julie Newmar episode...and an unpopular one at that.

A number of characters from “Blind Alley” were dropped and new characters added, and some of the more macabre scenes were either omitted or changed significantly. One of the main plot changes was Feathersmith arriving back in town as a younger man in Serling’s script. In the short story, he arrives as an old man and eventually dies. The publicity shots for the “Twilight Zone” episode included Newmar and Salmi on the train going back in time, and this was probably a good marketing approach to take, although it was only briefly covered in the teleplay for reasons of time. The train ride, as Jameson conceived, was one highlight of the short story:

“The Limited slid on through the night, silently and jarless. Thanks to its air conditioning, good springs, well-turned wheels, smooth traction, rock-ballasted roadbed and heavy rails, it went like the wind. For hundreds of miles the green lights of block signals flickered by, but now and again another train would thunder by on an eastbound track. Mr. Feathersmith gave no thought to those things as he pillowed deeper into the soft blankets, or worried about the howling blizzard raging outside. The Limited would get there on time and with the minimum of fuss. That particular Limited went fast and far that night – mysteriously it must have covered in excess of a thousand miles and got well off its usual route. For when Mr. Feathersmith did wake, along toward dawn, things were uncannily different.”

Feathersmith, as conceived, is an obese man on the brink of some major medical catastrophe whereas Salmi’s character actually looks quite healthy (underneath a disastrous make-up job at the beginning and ending). But, he’s in no position to do so financially with only a thousand dollars or so in his pocket and we can guess that it’s unlikely that this trip will be fruitful. His fate is sealed before he even makes the trip back to 1910.

The show does have its fans. Salmi’s biographer, Sandra Grabman, author of “Spotlights and Shadows: The Albert Salmi Story” recalls, “I have a friend who just adores ‘Of Late, I Think of Cliffordville.’ So I took that book of TZ scripts with me to Portland [while Wright King and I were working on our book about live television, “No Retakes”], along with a tape recorder, and Wright and my husband Roy acted out the last scene from “Cliffordville” for me to send to my friend. When he received it, he was over the moon. While it was being recorded, his wife June and I were very still and quiet. As soon as the scene was over and the tape was stopped, she and I both burst out laughing because seeing that scene acted out again was so fun.” Grabman also remarked, “The same friend and I also came up with something interesting after discussing the episode thoroughly. I don’t know if it’s been asserted before, but in spite of her name and horns, it seems that Miss Devlin ended up saving Feathersmith’s soul. Leading up to that revelation was how she berated him for all his shortcomings. If she were The Devil, she’d be thrilled about them and would tell him to keep it up. Quite the opposite, though. She listed them in a

disapproving manner and then at the end, he was the kind and humble janitor while Hecate was the sarcastic tycoon.” The character of Miss Devlin was entirely Serling’s, and only a vaguely similar character appears in Jameson’s story. As has been noted many times, Serling liked writing about guardian angels and this time, he was even able to make the would-be Devil into just such a figure!

“Al Salmi and I were good friends so long ago,” Wright King recalled in 2002. “In fact, I was friends with pretty much everyone who appeared on my two episodes – Dennis Weaver, Anne Barton, Harry Townes, Al...everybody. He was a fine actor, needless to say. He and his wife, Roberta...were okay for awhile but then they started not getting along, and word got around about it – June and I had just moved to Portland in 1989 and they were up in Spokane so we never saw them again. Both of them dead. It was in the paper [in 1990, Salmi shot his wife and then committed suicide], and we couldn’t believe it.” Of Rod Serling, he recalled, “He was a sincere, decent, lovely man. I met him when I did “Shadow Play” [Season 2] but he wasn’t around when we did “Cliffordville.”” Indeed, by then Serling was off teaching on the east coast, and usually mailed in his scripts.



*Feathersmith and Hecate.
Albert Salmi and Wright King.*

The first of three scripts by Jerry Sohl was “**The New Exhibit**”, a horror story about wax dummies. Wax figures, dolls, dummies and frozen people had visited “The Twilight Zone” on many an occasion and would continue to. Sohl’s well-written script came off fine, despite the difficulty that the production team always had with such stories, and that was filming the actors such that their movements could not be detected.

Martin Balsam’s two acting entries on “The Twilight Zone” were overall disappointing. In both of them, he was obviously unsettled with the parts. Some have observed that in “The New Exhibit”, he was simply playing the psychotic Martin Lombard Senescu in an unfeeling, emotionally detached manner. But, the portrayal is not altogether believable. Sohl did give the character a most appropriate name – the Romanian Senescu is derived from the Latin ‘senex’, which means feeble-minded or senile.

The best moments in “The New Exhibit” come in the prologue, the tour of the Murderer’s Row Exhibit. It was filmed beautifully and the execution by Balsam and Will Kuluva as Mr. Ferguson, was well beyond

what Sohl wrote. Balsam describes the historic murderer exhibits with such candor that it's as if we're in the same room with him. As an added touch, the background music – which could easily pass for 'ad hoc' accompaniment for Senescu's tours – was J.S. Bach's tearjerking "Ich Rut' Zu Dir Herr Jesu Criste" ("Come to Me, Lord Jesus Christ") for solo organ, which was written within days after Bach's own wife died. But it's actually quite ominous, as Senescu will quickly spiral into a dark abyss, never to return.

FERGUSON

...and now our next group – our piece de resistance, if I may say so – here you will find
The most infamous, black-hearted killers of all time. It is not for the faint-hearted, so...

(laughs)

...if there are any who would prefer to stay behind...no? Very well, then.

Martin Senescu, who appears motionless behind the security cord, suddenly moves. A young lady at the front gasps in horror, thinking that he is one of the figures.

MARTIN

(unfeelingly)

Did I startle you?

FERGUSON

This is Martin Senescu, curator of Murderer's Row.

YOUNG MAN

You alright, honey?

YOUNG LADY

Sure, it's just that they're so real, and I thought...

YOUNG MAN

They're just a lot of wax, nothing to be afraid of.

MARTIN

Perhaps not, young man. But who can tell what evil lurks in the heart of the man standing next to you?
(introducing first figure)

This is Albert W. Hicks, mate of the oyster smack E.A. Johnson. A gentle man. Yet, one day in 1860, off the Atlantic coast, he murdered his entire crew, killed them with an ax just like this one. What made him go mad? What made him change?

(moving to the next)

And here we have Burke and Hare, the monsters of their time. But do they look like monsters? This is how they suffocated their victims. It was called Burking. Think of the agonies they endured.

SAILOR 1

Which one's he talking about?

MARTIN

Oh, sir, all of them. All of them. Surely, it is horrible to be murdered, as our victim here could tell you, if she could talk. But to murder, to take a life with your hands...again and again...and not be able to stop oneself, can you begin to imagine the horror of that?

SAILOR 2
Tell us about it.

MARTIN
Well, I cannot. But somewhere in the world, now at this very moment, there is someone who can.

SAILOR 1
Yeah, who?

MARTIN
Well, no one knows yet. But if his torment is great enough and he kills as these poor creatures did, then future generations will know. He'll be here, immortalized in wax. Remembered as you and I will never be.

(moving to the next)

This is Henri Desire Landru. One can see the agony that he too must have felt, as he was driven to strangle the life of disappointed spinsters and lonely widows. Landru was a master of the garrote, and he used a wax cord identical to the one he holds there.

SAILOR 2 steps into the previous exhibit, wanting a look at the girl being strangled, he lifts the "suffocating" pillow off her face.

MARTIN
(angry)

Get away from there! Those things are not to be touched! They're too rare and valuable. And besides, the museum can't be held responsible for what might happen to you.

"Twilight Zone" at its spookiest, although never lapsing into anything that was not believable.

Sally Field's mother, Maggie Mahoney – in those days a busy working actress herself, did well as wife Emma. But one of TZ's most frightening moments went to Emma's brother, Dave (also played well by William Mims), who got hacked to death by Albert W. Hicks.

There has been a lot of discussion about the validity of the wax figures coming alive, and who murdered who. As portrayed, the first two murders are rather subtle. The second two, of Ferguson and Senescu, are not. Whether Martin Senescu committed the murders himself is conjectural, but unlikely.

Sohl very much modeled the script after Beaumont himself. Although Beaumont's name was on the script, Sohl very much lived up to Beaumont's ideas and ideals in its conception and execution. In that respect, "The New Exhibit" succeeds. Interestingly, the episode "Waxworks" of Boris Karloff's "Thriller", starring Oskar Homolka and Antoinette Bower, produced a year earlier, ended up a nice counterpart to it – with an even more disturbing ending.

A few segments in the “Twilight Zone” oeuvre were re-made as episodes of the series, having been done before on other programs, and Reginald Rose’s **“The Incredible World of Horace Ford”** was one of them. It first aired on “Studio One” in 1955, with Art Carney as Horace.

Rose himself had a good deal to say about the story, in his commentary for his own compilation of “Six Television Plays”, published in 1956 (reprinted in 2005 in Volume 2 of “Forgotten Gems from The Twilight Zone”). Within the commentary, he mentions that “No one was neutral about this play. I got just as many letters of praise as I did letters from housewives who said that if they catch me, they’ll claw me bald.” Indeed, this still holds rather true today. Some people can identify with it, and others simply can’t relate to it. Rose’s thesis was, of course, that our idyllic childhood years are not ones that we could easily go back to. While usually less complicated than adult life, the present is to be savored and the past best left in the past. But Horace Ford, although very successful, never grew up. At age thirty-eight, he was still every bit the boy he was at thirteen. “His spirit never grew up,” said Pat Hingle. But, he must have had something special to end up with such a captivating wife, who was determined to take care of him and his aging mother. This is harder to digest for many viewers. Despite Horace’s realization that his life today is much the better, and that the past is far worse than he remembered it, it doesn’t completely convince. And yet, says Hingle, “It was certainly an audience-pleaser and Abner [Biberman], the guy who shoved Cary Grant into the mine in “Gunga Din” in 1939, sure made it work [...] more people have responded to it than anything else I did in my long career.”

Opposites attract, and Nan Martin made Laura Ford into a real person – a sophisticated, intelligent lady who probably comes from money, but she’s also a loving wife. Ruth White was a great talent who was at one time very highly regarded in the acting world, who died far too early, was perfectly cast as Horace’s nasal, doting, and hysterical mother. A year earlier, her role in “To Kill a Mockingbird” as the crotchety invalid Miss Dubose, was reduced to a mere minute or so of screen time, with only a few lines; the rest ended up on the cutting room floor. Needless to say, she got much more time here. As Mrs. Ford, she is a parent who is still raising her married child. It’s obvious that Horace is the way he is, in large part due to her.

Jim E. Titus, as the younger Horace, recalled in 2018, “I interviewed for the part with Abner Biberman. He told me that I looked a lot like a young Pat Hingle, and Pat thought so too. Bill E. Hughes [who played the eldest bully], and I were friends before we worked on “Twilight Zone”, and we interviewed for many of the same parts. He was a talented actor with many credits to his name. I ran into Abner again in 1969 when he was directing an “Ironside” episode on Ventura Blvd. in Sherman Oaks. I reintroduced myself and he remembered me straight away. My girlfriend was impressed because she did not know that I had been a child actor.

“The Randolph Street scenes were shot on the ‘New York Street’ set of MGM’s amazing backlot – the same set used for “Singin’ in the Rain” for the dance sequence. The rest of the kids and I had a lot of fun exploring those old sets that were used in so many great films. We even got some guided tours during our time off from working... The knickers that I wore for the part were last worn by Jackie Cooper – there’s a sign-out tag attached to all the clothes in the wardrobe department. They asked if I wanted a stunt double for the fight scene and of course I said hell no!” Titus retired from acting several years later and went on to a significant career in construction in Los Angeles. But thanks to a striking photo of himself and Hingle that appears in the “Twilight Zone Companion” and elsewhere, the (then) thirteen-year-old has remained an unforgettable face to millions of fans.

The character of Hermy Brandt is perhaps overlooked. The character, played well by Jerry Davis, serves as a kind of Puckish messenger boy...and by the end, has persuaded Laura that her husband successfully returned to the time he longed for, even if it wasn't for the better. At the end of Rose's original script, it is Hermy who has the final shot and the final dialogue. In the "Twilight Zone" version, he has the final shot only – most appropriately, sitting atop a tall lamp post, grinning at the camera, to remind the adults of today that while it may not be possible to go back to the past, there will always be children around to remind us of that time gone by. Hirschman wanted the ending more upbeat, so the change was made. Laura goes back to Randolph Street to look for Horace. The street is now empty, deserted. She finds Horace, the boy, who after a beat, becomes Horace, the man.

He lies exactly as the boy had, his face bruised and tear-stained, his body crumpled and beaten amidst the rubbish. Laura enters the shot, rushing toward him. She kneels beside him, touches him. He opens his eyes. The episode concludes with this dialogue:

HORACE

I don't know what happened to me, Laura. I have no idea. But for one minute, or one second, or maybe one hour, I don't know, I saw something that made every memory I ever had...a lie. Because when I was a kid...it was an ugly, sad, unbearable nightmare. And I saw it. I know what it was. I remember it now.

LAURA

I don't know what happened to you either, Horace. But, I think we're all like that. We remember what was good and we black out what was bad. Because we wouldn't be able to live if we didn't. Let's go home, there's a party waiting.

The original script, along with the "Twilight Zone" ending (previously unpublished), are available to interested readers in "Forgotten Gems from The Twilight Zone", Volume 2.

While there is in fact no Thursday in the far reaches of outer space, Serling's "**On Thursday We Leave for Home**" presented the idea of a commune on an asteroid, populated mostly with Earth inhabitants who came there as young adults in the year 1991. It is a solid script, but as Rod Serling said at the time, "I overwrote it." There are one or two scenes that are incredibly moving, where Rod was at his best, including the poetic one where Captain Benteen (lifted from history, F. William Benteen led the 7th Cavalry in the Battle of the Little Big Horn in the Great Sioux War) tells the colonists about what life on Earth was like. The sets used for the asteroid were mostly inferior. Much of the situation comes off as rather calculated – as if the people who colonized the asteroid were part of a controlled experiment by the US Government, to see if asteroid living was feasible. And perhaps this was the case, but it all feels just a bit scripted.

BENTEEN

As you all know, in less than thirty-six hours, we'll be departing. Weight allowance has been set at fourteen pounds per person. When we leave here, we'll begin a process of notation, and try to establish what your personal belongings will be and...

Col. Sloane and his people enter; the group is more interested in their presence than they are in Benteen.

BENTEEN
Col. Sloane.

SLOANE
I hope we're not intruding.

BENTEEN
Of course you're not intruding, I was just giving them the weight requirements.

SLOANE
We'll handle all that tomorrow. When I heard you were having this meeting, I brought Lieutenants Engle and Rafferty along with me. You've all been asking so many questions about Earth, I thought that perhaps this would be a good time, since you're all together, to try to answer a few more.

BENTEEN
Colonel, the purpose of this meeting is to deal with departure problems.

COLONIST 1
Colonel, my folks were from San Diego. What's California like?

SLOANE
Sunny and warm most of the time. Los Angeles is the biggest city in the world now.

BENTEEN
(agitated)
I really feel that these questions can best be answered at a later time.

COLONIST 2
Col. Sloane, do they still have public schools?

SLOANE
Oh yes, and they're pretty much the same as they were. They're larger and better equipped, and more adequately staffed. And there's a whole new system of visual aids now. Many of the classes are televised. For instance, if the student is learning about the Grand Canyon, they do an actual program, right there on the scene, and it's fed into the classroom on a new tape device.

COLONIST 3
Colonel Sloane, are there still major leagues? My dad used to tell me all about baseball and the World Series.

Benteen is now aware that they are no longer pledging allegiance to him.

SLOANE
Two leagues, same as before. American and National.

COLONIST 3
What city has The Dodgers now?

SLOANE

Still Los Angeles. They came in tenth last season. They're in desperate need of pitchers! I'll tell you what, after we're finished here, let's improvise a ball and a bat and have ourselves a ball game.

BENTEEN

(yelling)

I'm afraid it's much too hot for that kind of activity....please! I'll tell you what we might do, we might sing here in the cave, we haven't done that in some time. Why don't we show the colonel what kind of music we can make? Let's let him hear some real harmony!

They all exit the cave excitedly.

Was Serling predicting the internet with the Grand Canyon line of Sloane's? Perhaps. It would be more than thirty years before such things happened in classrooms, but he knew it was coming. Betty White said in her bestselling autobiography "Here We Go Again" in 1994, "When and if the information superhighway becomes a reality, don't be surprised to see Rod Serling in a driver's seat."

But as happened often in some of the later episodes, the protagonist ended up badly for no good reason – and Benteen certainly got the worst kind of punishment. Benteen absolutely refuses to accept what is inevitable and watching him devolve from leader to peasant is downright uncomfortable. Asteroid stories were done on a number of occasions, starting with "The Lonely" in Season 1, which was probably the best of them all. The results were usually subpar and "On Thursday We Leave for Home" was no exception. This was also one of three episodes to feature two suns on its asteroid, which was no more than an ineffective sci-fi gimmick.

Despite the issues, the episode remains one of the more memorable ones of the fourth year, perhaps in part for the character of Jojo, played intelligently and with feeling by 7-year old Daniel Kulick. Kulick (no relation to director Buzz Kulik), who went on to become a well-known Los Angeles cardiologist, remembers, "I was only 12 years old when I retired from acting, but I was lucky enough to get on "Twilight Zone" twice [he played the apartment building boy in "Cavender is Coming", the year before, starring Carol Burnett, in which he had but a few lines but delivered them quite well]." Tim O'Connor, who played Colonel Sloane, related in 2009, "It was a joy. I was supposed to attend an event awhile back that Daniel Kulick was attending, and I'm so sorry I missed it because I would've liked to talk to him again after all this time. My character, the Earth leader-astronaut, was an interesting one, having to stand up to James Whitmore the way I did...this tyrannical leader of the people, and I had that line where I told them all, 'And when you pray to God, his name won't be Benteen!' [laughs]."

Beaumont's final episode of Season 4, "**Passage on *The Lady Anne***", was this capital tale of an ocean trip of a young couple and retirees, after "Song for a Lady", his short story, conceived and written in 1957. It should be added that the story originally written was inferior to the script that Beaumont wrote for "Twilight Zone." *The Lady Anne* is making its final voyage across the Atlantic, but it's going somewhere else afterwards.

A good amount of material from "Song for a Lady" was altered, the most notable change being the newlyweds unhappily married for six years, never having taken a honeymoon, and nearly breaking up in

the midst of the voyage. Lamont Johnson, directing, imparted a great warmth and even some suspense to the filmed version – not altogether lacking in Beaumont’s original story, but television was required to bring it to a higher level.

The drama is provided by the two younger folks, and the more lighthearted material by a group of English couples and widows and widowers, who are sailing to their deaths. Johnson brought back, among others, Gladys Cooper, who had done so well for him in “Nothing in the Dark” the year before, and Cecil Kellaway as a widower named Burgess, who is discontent about the ship’s fate. Cooper was 15 years older than Wilfred Hyde-White, who played her husband, yet it’s palpable that their characters had been married for more than half a century. The actors had obvious fun with the roles. They pay great allegiance to “the old rust bucket”, “queen of the fleet”, which at the turn of the century was often used for 2-week wedding excursions; during most of their own lifetimes, trains and boats were the only ways to travel.

BURGESS

The chap sitting over there alone is Otto Champion, the writer. Surely you’ve heard about him. We used to call him ‘Otto of Roses’ in the old days, he was such a one with the ladies. You wouldn’t think so, to look at the poor old chap now, would you? He’s a widower. His wife died in twenty-eight, er, twenty-nine, twenty-nine that’s right, the year Trigger won the derby.

McKENZIE

What are you talking about? It was in thirty-three, the year Hyperion won the derby.

BURGESS

Anyway, it was somewhere around that time.

McKENZIE

Good heavens, look, there’s old Lord Bristol. He can hardly walk.

BURGESS

Is he alone?

McKENZIE

Decent sort of fellow. Yes, I’m afraid he is.

EILEEN

What about you, Mr. Burgess?

BURGESS

The same.

He pulls out a wallet and produces a picture of his wife.

EILEEN

(very sad)
She’s lovely.

BURGESS

We intended to do this trip together, but...

She starts crying, but quickly stops and apologizes for the tears.

As the American marrieds, Joyce Van Patten and Lee Philips are outstanding. She created one of the most independent women to be seen on “Twilight Zone.” This was long pre-women’s lib. It was the kind of role that she was often called on to do in the duration of her career of more than seventy years. She was a fearless talent, and her characterizations always went well beyond the script. Particularly impressive was the opening scene where she insists upon the travel agent selling them the tickets for a trip on the rapidly-decaying barge. She establishes the character immediately. Later, while they’re sitting at the bar, attempting to drown some of their issues in cocktails, she pulls out all the stops as she announces her intended departure from the marriage. Philips also performs admirably, although he usually under-acts, which was a nice counterpoint to Van Patten. But together, the two of them were completely convincing as troubled not-so-newlyweds. There is a most touching bit near the end, where Mrs. McKenzie gently slips her husband’s letters into the ocean, just before the ship and everyone on it disappears.



“Bury them. I don’t need them anymore.”

The background music of Lucien Moraweck was particularly good for this segment; old English tunes such as “The Last Rose of Summer” and “Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms” were beautifully integrated into fine original musical cues.

Christopher Beaumont remarked in 2004, “I remember when my dad got the idea for the story while we were on the boat heading for Europe in 1957.” In typical TZ fashion, Beaumont chose a name for the main characters that was suitable for the situation they were in. Their honeymoon had been somewhat detained for years; Alan was overly involved in his career, and presumably she had a career too, and the voyage was a feeble attempt to save what little they had. The other side of the coin was of course that The Ransomes are not being detained on the ship; they’re being forced off – from the beginning, actually. The one curious element was the offering of a stupendous \$10,000 – which is even rather big money nowadays - to them at the beginning, if they agree not to make the trip. But, at the end, when they are actually ordered to leave the ship, they aren’t paid off. They should have demanded it! In the short story, *The Lady Anne* – what’s left of it – sinks after an explosion. Beaumont wisely altered the ending so that

the viewer would imagine the ship sailing off into the fog, presumably to sink, but either way, never to be heard from again. He did retain the last line of the short story, with dialogue coming from Eileen Ransome, "I've never felt so warm in my whole life." It remains amongst the found treasures once lost at sea, in "The Twilight Zone."

Serling's "**The Bard**" was the last episode of the fourth year of the show to be broadcast.

While "A Stop at Willoughby" essayed the unnerving and often mind-numbing stress of Hollywood, Serling abandoned the didactic and the prophetic momentarily and wrote a farcical comedy about how truly silly the proceedings can be in TV, and for that matter, the entire entertainment world. While most of Serling's comedic efforts failed, "The Bard" – like "A World of His Own" (by Matheson), was a nice way to conclude the half-season of "Twilight Zone", which perhaps had a few more downs than ups. The audience would no doubt permit some leaps of faith and envelope-pushing for what was to be the final one-hour segment of the show. Just as Shakespeare put a play within the play in "A Midsummer Night's Dream", so too did Serling in the teleplay. Moomer and Shakespeare work together on "The Tragic Cycle" with Shakespeare doing almost all of the writing.

Jack Weston got a lot of work in his long career playing 'the nerdy fat guy with the lisp', and this role as Julius Moomer – a borderline-unlikely name, but still plausible - was no exception. Playing the secretary at the agency office was his then-wife, Marge Redmond, who herself had a long career. The couple got their meager start in Hollywood together some years earlier after driving across the country from New York. So, Weston was on familiar turf with the character. Burt Reynolds was the only plausible actor for Rocky Rhodes, star of the play – who eventually gets assaulted by Shakespeare. Although he was supposed to be imitating Brando, the characterization comes off a bit more like Elvis. Jason Wingreen played the director of the Moomer-Shakespeare play. He had this to say about it: "It was a fun part despite having not many lines, and my agent was asleep at the switch on that one – I didn't get screen credit! But, as it was so many years ago, it's neither here nor there." The rehearsal, attended by network executives and advertising agency men, doesn't bode particularly well for the success of the project, and Shakespeare doesn't take kindly to being called "a typist" by Moomer! He also doesn't see eye to eye with Rocky Rhodes.

SHAKESPEARE
And your role?

RHODES
My role is Jeremy. What's yours?

SHAKESPEARE
Jeremy is a lad of nineteen. Fresh as a bridegroom.

RHODES
Yeah, well, we changed all that. I mean, a guy who feels love ain't no nineteen years old. The guy who plays Jeremy has to know what it's all about. A mature guy who knows the score. A guy with some zazz, a guy with some moxie. A guy who understands tertiary motivation.

DIRECTOR

Let's go, team shall we? May we continue, please? Get ready for your cue, Rocky!

RHODES

Rhodes is my name, Rocky Rhodes. You may have seen me in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof."

SHAKESPEARE

Cat on a hot...tin...roof? And what perchance would that be?

RHODES

That would be a play, Charlie. A real play. What are you, a Tennessee knocker?

DIRECTOR

Come on, Rocky, let's go!

RHODES

It's getting so they let any uncultured, uncouth ham in here.

A fine group of newcoming cast and semi-regulars in addition to Wingreen were onboard this time. Among them were Howard McNear (forever to be known as "Floyd the Barber" Lawson, on "The Andy Griffith Show"), and John McGiver – a former schoolteacher who went on to be one of the most popular character actors of the sixties. English actor John Williams was not a household name and his TV performances were only very sporadic, but he had a substantial career in the theatre, making him a good choice to portray Shakespeare. His appearances on Hitchcock's *Dial M for Murder* and *To Catch a Thief* as well as Hitchcock's TV shows remain well-known, however. Doro Merande was a good choice for the pedantic, baseball-obsessed elderly bookshop owner who appears in the first act. "This book and I have never been introduced", she says as *Ye Book of Ye Black Arte* falls to the floor. Interestingly, Cloris Leachman recalled Merande, and not favorably, in her autobiography some years ago. The two had significant problems working with each other in a play directed by Burgess Meredith. McNear suffered a debilitating stroke not long after it was filmed, and sadly, Henry Lascoe, who played Julius' agent, died not long after the episode was originally aired of a heart attack at the youthful age of 52.



"Rhodes, Schmodes. I sell soup!"

While not a deep script, it's a fun one, purveying all of Rod Serling's wonderful sense of humor – and the lightheartedness of the man himself, despite the heavy load that he was forced to tote in his own 25-year career in showbiz.

While only half the number of episodes of a full television season were executed, more than twice as much work was required to produce them. And, most required budgets that were twice or three times what the average 24-minute TZ had. But we were given a decent variety of programs in the new format. A man who made a duplicate of himself, a story about witchcraft, some expanded time-travel episodes, a couple comedies, and even one about a linotype machine. "Twilight Zone" had gone so far beyond what anyone ever expected by this point, that it was impossible to imagine what would come next. While most of what was to come, back in the old half-hour format, would be merely average, and in some cases, a significant departure from the classicism of the first two years, it remained – and has forever remained – the gold standard for programs of its kind.

* * *

End of Part 1.

Andrew Ramage is owner and curator of TwilightZoneMuseum.com, which has been online since 2002, but which merged with its Facebook page and a Youtube channel in 2016. He has been doing "Twilight Zone"-related projects for two decades, the most significant of which was originating and co-coordinating the two Stars of the Zone Conventions, held at the former Beverly Garland Holiday Inn in North Hollywood in 2002 and 2004, which were the world's first-ever "Twilight Zone" conventions, attended by a combined 2,000 "Twilight Zone" fans, plus a combined total of nearly one-hundred actors, writers, and directors who worked on the original show. In 2004 he was Associate Producer of special features appearing on the best-selling *Twilight Zone: The Definitive Edition* DVDs. In 2005, BearManor Media released *Forgotten Gems from "The Twilight Zone"*, a two-volume set of books with 12 previously-unpublished "Twilight Zone" scripts which he edited and wrote commentaries for. He worked extensively with Rittenhouse Archives in three of their five releases of "The Twilight Zone" trading cards, writing the text and securing 50 "Twilight Zone" actors to participate in the project. He also assisted with casting Beverly Garland herself, and a number of other actors in the radio drama version of "The Twilight Zone" that continues to air on local radio stations. In 2015, he initiated the Terry Burnham Memorial Project, in which over \$3,500 was raised on GoFundMe to purchase a headstone for the well-known actress in Forest Lawn Cemetery. He has contributed to a number of books on television, including the best-selling "Official Dick Van Dyke Show Book" and "Classic Sitcoms" by Vince Waldron, which was done during his days of running MTMShow.com, the premier website on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show", in the early 2000s. He also contributed to several documentaries produced by TV Land and E! Networks, including the *Lifetime: Intimate Portrait* of Cloris Leachman. Of his numerous "Twilight Zone" activities that continue today, he says, "'The Twilight Zone' has charted a far different course for my ship than I ever expected in this lifetime. People told me nearly two decades ago that I would never retire from it. I did not believe them, but it's proven to be true!" Mr. Ramage holds degrees in Chemistry from Oregon State University and Accounting from UCLA. He is an accountant in the commercial real estate industry in Los Angeles. Prior to this, he worked for 12 years in the financial and pharmaceutical industries in California and Oregon.

© The Twilight Zone Museum, 2019. All rights reserved. Author permissions are required to reprint content of this work.
www.twilightzonemuseum.com and www.facebook.com/twilightzonemuseum andrew@andrewramage.com