

TRANQUILITY

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LOGLINE (SERIES): A wormhole provides a gateway to a parallel universe for a band of fugitives who escape from a sinister consortium, only to become embroiled in events with far worse consequences on a planet seeming very much like 19th-century Earth.

LOGLINE (PILOT): When a band of mercenaries discover the cargo they must deliver to a nefarious cartel is human - and immensely valuable - they instead flee, their only chance of escape hinging on a dubious scheme which could have consequences more dire than their capture.

GENRE / SETTING(S)

TRANQUILITY is a Sci-Fi / Western drama one hour TV pilot set first in the 26th century in a star system 950 light years from Earth known as Kepler-20. Most of the action in the pilot takes place aboard the spaceship Tranquility. Its crew of mercenaries pick up and deliver cargo for anyone willing to pay for their services - no questions asked. Their most recent adventure has the motley crew double-crossing a shady organization vying for dominance of Kepler-20: the Syndicate. Rather than hand over the precious human cargo they carry, the crew have chosen to flee. During their escape from the Syndicate's most vicious bounty hunter, an unexpected detour through a space anomaly crash lands them on a parallel universe version of Earth and the setting changes to 1863, in and around Lawrence, Kansas, although the 26th century will be revisited via flashbacks and the Syndicate's ongoing efforts to reclaim what is theirs.

PILOT SYNOPSIS: The crew of TRANQUILITY are on a routine cargo delivery mission when a rocky trip through a meteor storm crashes one of the pods they carry into the cargo bay door, breaking the lid seal and setting off an alarm. The crew must open the pod to disarm it and, in so doing, discover its contents: a male adult human! Opening the second pod has a similar result - this time female.

Once revived, the mysterious couple tell the crew that they are husband and wife - SUKIO and AUTUMN TANAKA. He is a genius physicist - she a gifted surgeon. They were kidnapped from his research facility, placed in pods, and slated for delivery to the Syndicate by the unsuspecting crew of Tranquility...at least, that's their story.

The ship's captain - VAL - reneges on the delivery once he discovers the nefarious reasons the unsavory cartel has for wanting the scientists. Not at all pleased with the turn of events, MISCOV, the bounty hunter the cargo was intended for, gives chase as Val and company flee.

An EMP energy blast, courtesy of Miscov, partially disables Tranquility and, with a deadly radiation belt blocking their way, things look grim for Val and crew. However, Sukio hatches an ingenious but risky plan to allow Tranquility to pass safely through the radiation belt. It succeeds, but with an unexpected consequence: the ship inadvertently passes through a rift in the space-time continuum, and is transported half-way across the galaxy...and back in time!

With life support down, Val and crew are forced to crash land on a planet seeming very much like 19th century Earth. As the others busy themselves with repairs, Val steps outside to determine the hull damage and is not-so-warmly greeted by a man with a shotgun.

Unable to locate Val's ship, Miscov determines it must have entered the radiation belt and, despite objections from his crew, decides to take his ship through it as well, knowing the severity of the punishment for returning to the Syndicate empty-handed.

The Syndicate has been monitoring Miscov's ship and is dismayed when it suddenly vanishes. They dispatch another ship to investigate, indicating just how badly they covet the Tanakas.

MAIN CHARACTERS

VALERIE (VAL) BRENNAR: Caucasian, mid 30s. Captain of Tranquility. Val is a bold leader who always seems to have a plan for any situation. He is a 20th century movie buff and loves to quote movie lines to add levity to a tense situation, much to the chagrin of the crew.

QUANIKA (NIKA) LIU: Oriental, 30ish. Captain's first-mate. Detail-oriented. Fiercely loyal to Val. Excellent marksman. Martial arts expert. Knows the ship well. Can help in engineering in a pinch.

CISCERON (GONZO) GONZALES: Hispanic, late 20s. Tranquility's top-notch pilot. Willing to take chances; hence, his nickname. A bit of a card. Also loyal to Val.

ZEBULON (ZEB) KOLTEN: African-American, 40ish. Big and burly. Not the sharpest tool in the shed but no one knows weapons better. Excellent fighter. Motivated by money. Doesn't like taking orders from Val but tolerates it for the payoff.

ELIZABETH (LIZZY) MACINTOSH: Caucasian (Irish), late 20s. Tranquility's engineer. Smokes. Speaks with a slight brogue. Tough-as-nails. Sweet but has a temper. Knows her trade well.

SUKIO TANAKA: Oriental, 50ish. Genius physicist. Part of the "cargo" Val was to deliver to the Syndicate. His research of late has been in the field of teleportation.

AUTUMN TANAKA: Caucasian, late 40s. Wife of Sergio and the other half of the "cargo". Gifted surgeon and empath, who's abilities are heightened by passing through the rift.

MISCOV: Caucasian (Russian), mid 40s. The Syndicate's most adept and ruthless bounty hunter. Tasked with retrieving the Tanakas at all costs. Has had dealings with Val before.

TOBIAS EVANSTON: African-American, mid 30s. Former slave of Sarah Ibarra. Now farms near Lawrence, Kansas. Wife and son were murdered a year ago. First human to make contact with Val and company after they land.

SARAH IBARRA: Caucasian, mid 30s. Lawrence saloon and brothel proprietor. Widow (husband Joseph murdered). She and Val develop a romantic relationship. First appears in Episode 2.

WILLIAM QUANTRILL: Caucasian, late 20s. Leader of "Quantrill's Raiders", a group of bushwhackers planning to sack the town of Lawrence in retaliation for perceived Union atrocities against the South. First appears in Episode 2.

BLOODY BILL ANDERSON: Caucasian, late 20s. Has his own group of followers, also hell-bent on revenge against the North and joins Quantrill's men. First appears in Episode 2.

JAMIESON KURCK: His ship crash-landed in the Lawrence, Kansas area two years previous. Was found by Tobias and nursed back to health. Went on the run following the murder of Tobias' wife and son. Finds Tranquility and aims to steal it to return to the 26th century.

SUBSEQUENT EPISODE SUMMARIES

EPISODE 2 highlights: Tobias reveals to the crew where they are (Kansas), the year (1863), and that there is no Civil War...yet...though hostilities abound between the North and South.

Autumn confesses that the visions she has been having relate to an event called the Lawrence Massacre, and that many innocents will be slaughtered unless the crew intervenes.

They decide to head to Lawrence to warn the town but are ambushed along the way by bushwhackers (South loyalists). Val and Sukio are seriously injured and are rushed into town in an attempt to find supplies and instruments Autumn can use to save them.

Lizzy, who stayed on the ship to work on the engines, is surprised by an unexpected visitor – her former captain – who crash-landed in the area two years ago. He plans to steal the ship and, after tying up Lizzy, sets a trap for Tobias and Zeb, who have been dispatched to rescue her.

The wagon with Val and the rest of the crew makes it into town. A doctor's office is found and Autumn begins to treat the wounded. Sarah, the saloon proprietor, pays a visit and is immediately smitten with a still unconscious Val, as he resembles her murdered former husband.

The second Syndicate ship arrives at the radiation belt and begins the search for the Tranquility. A brief cut to Miscov's ship's bridge shows all appearing to be dead...until Miscov's hand twitches.

EPISODE 3 highlights: Miscov comes to and searches his ship for any signs of life or power but there are none. The second Syndicate ship continues to search for the Tranquility.

Lizzy escapes from her bonds and thwarts Jamieson's attempt to off Zeb and Tobias, who demands that Jamieson tell him what happened to his wife and son. Jamieson claims he didn't kill them but has a notion who did. The two ride off to search for the killers over Lizzy's objections.

Back in Lawrence, Sukio remains in a coma but Val regains consciousness. Nika catches him up on what has transpired while he was unconscious.

A town meeting is organized to warn the townsfolk about the impending attack. The town votes to stay and fight. Autumn helps create a strategy for ambushing Quantrill's men.

However, three of the townsfolk are skeptical of Autumn and plot to find and warn Quantrill so as to stave off the attack and save lives. They head up to Hogback Ridge, where Quantrill is rumored to be camped. The three are captured but granted an audience with Quantrill. One is revealed to be a spy for Quantrill and warns him that the town is prepared to ambush the raiders if they go through with the attack.

FUTURE EPISODE STORYLINES

The remaining episodes in Season 1 will center around the following storylines:

> Quantrill delays his attack on Lawrence until the following morning, catching the town by surprise. Val and crew rise to the occasion to help the town stymie the would-be massacre. Bill Anderson is captured, allowing for a face-to-face with Autumn, his distant relative. However...

> Quantrill escapes...and takes a hostage with him – Sarah Ibarra! Val is determined to rescue her. He, Nika, and Zeb chase Quantrill and a handful of his men south to Texas, where Quantrill hopes to rendezvous with Sam Bass and company.

> Sukio finally awakens from his coma but, because of his head injury, has amnesia and does not recognize Autumn. However, he slowly regains memories, including ones he was previously unaware of: experimentation on Autumn and him by the Syndicate, which gave him his super intellect and her mental powers she didn't know she had...until thwarting Bill Anderson's attack on the two caused her to suspect something's amiss.

> Jamieson and Tobias continue to search for the killers of Tobias' wife and son, revealing a KKK-type presence in the Lawrence area determined to wipe out all abolitionists.

> Miscov discovers he is immune to the radiation that killed the rest of his crew and disabled his ship. He endeavors to return power to said ship and find out where he is. Meanwhile, the other Syndicate ship continues to search in vain for the Tranquility, causing its captain to contemplate a jaunt through the radiation belt, as recovering the Tanakas is the prime directive.

FORMAT

TRANQUILITY is a television drama series in which a one hour episode would be aired each week in roughly a 13 episode season. Rather than 13 unrelated stand-alone episodes, Tranquility would be continuous in that the episodes build, one upon the other, in furthering a particular storyline, all of which are interwoven into the fabric of the overall plot of the show.

Despite the time-travel and alternate universe aspects to this series, Tranquility is character-driven, with many of the storylines revealing information about a character that will help explain certain aspects of the plot as well as endear that character to the audience, either for good or bad.

Of course the crew of Tranquility will be regulars in most every season one episode, although one may be entirely devoted to the back story of the Tanakas, as they, too, will be a focal point of the first season. With Sarah Ibarra and Val becoming romantically involved, she will be a season one regular as well. The same for Tobias and Jamieson, as their search for the killers of Tobias' wife and son will permeate some of the remaining season one episodes.

Of the named pro-slavery villains who attack Lawrence, Bill Anderson will have limited facetime, even though Autumn shares her secret with him, as the townsfolk are anxious to string him up. However, Quantrill, having abducted Sarah, will be prominent in the remaining episodes.

Miscov will make one or two more appearances, as he attempts resolve his dilemma. So, too, will the other Syndicate ship, as it determines the feasibility of attempting passage through the radiation belt to track down the Tanakas.

Season One comes to a close with some of the storylines resolving while others get a cliffhanger to continue interest for season two....

- Anderson is hung for his part in the Lawrence attack, but with Doc Griswold and Reverend Snyder dead at the hands of Quantrill, BARLOW, the aforementioned spy, is free to resume his double life back in Lawrence.
- The killers of Tobias' wife and son are revealed. Their atrocities include the murder of Sarah's husband, Joseph. Tobias is captured by the scoundrels but Jamieson remains hidden. Will he flee or stay and attempt to free Tobias?
- With Sukio's memories returning, he and Autumn realize that they were, in fact, Syndicate scientists, guinea pigs for a serum that gave them their mental powers.
- Val and company finally catch up to Quantrill, setting up the finale cliffhanger as Quantrill threatens to kill Sarah if Val doesn't back down. As the screen goes black, gunshots ring out. But who shot whom?

FUTURE SEASON STORYLINES

> Val, Nika, and Zeb rescue Sarah and the foursome heads back to Kansas to reunite with the rest of the crew. With their leader dead (sniped by Nika), Quantrill's Raiders are in disarray and head south to regroup and meet up with Sam Bass. Amongst those Raiders are Cole Younger and Frank James! After strategizing and resupplying, they all head to Missouri, where Jesse James joins the clan, along with Cole's brothers, Bob and Jim. Thus, the James-Younger Gang is born. Their mission: kill Val and crew to avenge the deaths of Quantrill and Anderson.

> Lizzy and Gonzo continue to spend much time at Tranquility, attempting to make her space-worthy. Engines are sufficiently repaired but the ship has hull damage Lizzy cannot fix. They decide to befriend the local blacksmith and divulge to her who they really are. Being a wizard with an anvil, hammer, and forge, she examines Tranquility's hull and secretly begins to fashion a fix.

> Sukio has fully recovered from his gunshot wound but his memories of what the Syndicate did to him and Autumn are still sketchy. They now know they were Syndicate scientists but how did they defect to the Coalition? And what is the extent of their enhanced mental powers? Flashbacks will reveal that it was actually Miscov – having been paid a king's ransom – who smuggled the Tanakas to the Coalition, then reported back to the Syndicate as if he and his crew attempted to apprehend the perpetrators but were unsuccessful.

> Jamieson does have a conscience after all and, given all that Tobias did for him, cannot abandon him to the pro-slavery forces that now hold him hostage. Given his shady reputation with those he has interacted with, he poses as a bushwhacker to join the gang and eventually helps Tobias escape. But they are both marked men now and must go on the lam to survive.

> The aforementioned Syndicate ship devises a way to maneuver through the radiation belt. Once inside, its sensors pick up Miscov's ship. They dock and board it, donned in special suits to negate the radiation, and discover an emaciated and barely alive Miscov! They take him back to their ship, where he tells the Syndicate crew what he knows once he recovers his strength.

ABOUT ME...

Eric Christianson is an accomplished screen actor and voice artist living in Austin, TX. He took the plunge into screenwriting several months back and has been writing feverishly ever since. Credits include a three-part TV mini-series entitled Firefly: Reunion (based on the TV show), an original Sci-Fi / Western TV pilot called Tranquility (and the next two episodes), and now, Redemption. All can be reviewed at the website address above.