

AFTERSHOCK

Series Concept

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THE BIG IDEA

What if travelers from the future came to the present to help us avoid armageddon...only to be seduced by the temptations of our world?

THE MISSION

A high-concept sci-fi series that marries the serious tone and global geo-political scope of *24* and *Prison Break* with the mind-bending concepts and structural audacity of narratives like *Lost*, *District 9* and *Flash Forward*. Twelve episodes - each corresponding to the twelve months of the most dangerous and challenging year ever faced by humanity. A show set in our world - simultaneously grounded by strong point-of-view characters who must face the consequences of an Earth-shattering event while taking the audience on a wild ride through a world that will never be the same.

THE SET-UP

An ordinary day in the year 2010, and NICOLE BENNETT (29 - a charismatic linguistic analyst for the NSA: imagine her as Anne Hathaway) gets ready for her day, dressing, fielding calls from her soon-to-be-ex husband - as well as skyping with several friends from overseas, the many languages she speaks pouring naturally from nimble lips - and listening to NPR in her convertible on the way to work.

The news stream out with a stultifying familiarity - the economy hasn't gotten any better, war continues to rage in the Middle East, the globe is still warming and no one will sign a treaty, American cars still suck...

...and then Nicole's car radio goes haywire. Her GPS malfunctions. Her cellphone chimes - but it's not her ringtone, it's a piece of music she has never heard before.

Nicole loses control of her car, crashing...and blacking out as the airbags deploy. In a series of BLACKOUTS, Nicole comes in and out of consciousness as EMTs tend to her - and she lands in the ER - and agents in HAZMAT suits shoo the ER doctors away and grab Nicole.

Nicole comes to in a government facility. With her are one hundred others - including the Chinese Ambassador and a Russian Envoy, several very high-powered scientific types including a Carl Sagan-like scientist (CALVIN JAMES: early 30's, played by Matt Damon in *Good Will Hunting* supergenius form) - and a special advisor to the

president (WADE SHETTERLY: early 40's, played by Jason Bateman).

They all heard the same tones sent to them through a variety of electronic devices...but no one heard the totality of the piece.

The foreign dignitaries demand immediate release, the entire affair devolves into chaos...until Shetterly, Calvin, and Nicole bond, broker a truce and unite the disparate parties: a display of skill that makes it clear they are born leaders.

The team decyphers the message...

...be at Barringer crater near Flagstaff Arizona. In 12 hours.

That night, Nicole, Wade and Calvin lead a makeshift, hastily assembled multi-national delegation to the crater. Speculation runs rampant. Are they setting themselves up for some kind of attack? An alien invasion?

Several news helicopters travel overhead - making it clear that someone in the group leaked the information..

...but before the debate can continue a wind whips the desert - thunderclouds gather and a rainstorm BUFFETS the crater site. A helicopter is STRUCK BY LIGHTING AND CRASHES...and in the chaos...

...the rain coalesces into a WHIRL. Heat RISES. Raindrops BOIL.

A glowing maelstrom of light opens on the floor of the crater - and when the wind, rain, light and thunder are gone, all that remains are nine humanoid beings in spacesuits, walking toward the delegation...

...the lead traveler pulls off the helmet to reveal a lean, rugged and handsome man in his fifties (this is VICTOR: imagine Harrison Ford in *Air Force One*).

The insignia on the travelers uniforms become visible.

UNESCO

Yes. UNESCO. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

More helmets come off - a rakishly hot second in command (MAX - 21, imagine Zac Efron), a beautiful Indian scientist in her late 20's (INDIRA - imagine Sheetal Sheth of *Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World*), a buff Asian engineer in his mid-30's (NAM-JUN, imagine *Lost's* Daniel Dae Kim).

In short: the incredibly appealing, multi-cultural crew of J.J. Abrams's Starship Enterprise just emerged out of a time-space singularity in the Arizona desert.

Victor delivers a message: the nine travelers standing here were chosen to journey to the present day from the 23rd century.

"We are here to help," Victor declares, before his tone turns dire.

In less than two hundred years, the Earth will be finished: the seas will be black and lifeless, the skies choked with pollution - the population whittled down to medieval levels.

It took all of the resources of the dying Earth to convey these nine specialists through a hole in the time-space continuum.

They have brought with them all of the skills and technology necessary to fix the environment, bring about world peace and stop the coming apocalypse. They have records of all of the history and knowledge of the next 200 years.

In exactly one year, the singularity will open again, and the travelers will return to 2199 to gauge the success of their plan.

Today is the tipping point: if we do not start to fix the world now, the future will look like this:

Victor lifts his hand. Everyone in the delegation sees a PSYCHIC VISION of the year 2299. It makes *The Terminator* look like *It's a Small World*.

Nicole, Calvin and Wade stare across the crater at Victor, Max, Indira and Nam-Jun...it's up to all of us to save the Earth.

THE SERIES

Aftershock is designed as a serialized twelve-part event. Every episode takes place approximately one month after the previous to tell the story of the travelers' first year among us: and every episode shows in strokes both subtle and bold how the travelers change the world and the world changes them.

This is a narrative simultaneously intimate and vast in scope: tracing the greatest year of change and upheaval the Earth could ever experience as seen through the eyes of Nicole, Calvin and Wade (who are appointed as Presidential liaisons) - and the all-too-human travelers: who are neither alien nor so advanced that they aren't absolutely relatable.

The travelers are given a building in Los Angeles from which to live and work - and the city soon becomes the center of the world. Every nation, every businessman, reporter and politician watches even the most minute move of the travelers.

The travelers have incredible knowledge and power. They have been genetically gifted with a host of psychic abilities that will be revealed over the course of the pilot episode...they are just slightly above the average person: the better to deal with the great burden they face.

Immediately after the teaser/first act described above, the travelers expose their existence to the world and publish all of their future technology to the web.

They have brought no weapons and military knowledge of any kind, and they want to give away what they have for free: they are strictly here to help and have taken on a code of honor to make sure that they do not fall prey to temptation.

But the temptations are here, and they are many. The travelers come from a desolate, colorless and deprived future - and our brave, vibrant world is fraught with power and pleasure unlike any they have known...

...and danger is here as well. One of the travelers is assassinated in the pilot by a radical who believes them to be a hoax. The tragic loss will mar the jubilation of their arrival, and portend the complicated future to come.

In the course of the first arc of episodes, the travelers will adjust to life in our rich society...and deal with all of the seductions that come with their knowledge: to make themselves rich, to become distracted by fame and celebrity, to hold the present-day, with all of its wretched excess, in contempt.

Victor will become more and more consumed with despair as he sees his efforts continually fall short of their intended goals. His is the *West Wing* arc of the series, as he deals with politicians and

business leaders, all of whom publicly claim to embrace his efforts to make the future available to all but who secretly plot to make themselves richer.

Max will find himself a celebrity – the fodder of every gossip site on the web. With Victor – his only father figure – ever more consumed with his role as a politician, Max will lose his way: a teen idol from the future who will eventually descend into debauchery and addiction.

Indira will find herself torn between Victor – for whom she holds an unrequited love – and Calvin, who represents for her all of the idealism and potential of our time...

...and Nicole and Wade will find themselves allied with Nam-Jun in the discovery of the villain of the piece...

...one of the travelers has been using his knowledge of future events to murder people who will cause egregious harm to the planet in the future...to take out the future tycoons and generals by killing either them in their youth or their antecedents in the present-day (with no regard for how the arrival of the travelers might have changed their destiny or choices in life)...

...the chain leads Nicole and Wade to the discovery that some of the travelers have discarded their altruistic agenda...

...that they have given weapons technology to America's enemies and have been secretly stockpiling the means by which to take the present day by force...

...and to the ultimate revelation that the leader of this insurgency is Victor himself.

If Victor began the series as Harrison Ford in *Air Force One*, by the midpoint, our world has ground him down into Harrison Ford in *The Mosquito Coast* – a calculating idealist bent on reshaping the world in his own way.

Revealed as having given up on peace and democracy as the way to fix the future, Victor makes a deal with our equivalent to Valdimir Putin, and sets himself up as a military leader.

As the series reaches its final three episodes, Victor assassinates his political allies and takes over the eastern bloc – launching a strike with a neutron bomb-like weapon that kills every human being in Washington D.C. But leaves the environment intact.

Now it's war.

Millions flock to Victor's side: a benevolent dictator/god who wants nothing more than to save us all, and who is willing to take out anyone who doesn't believe that the world should be a

beautiful paradise...

...and all of the travelers - save for Nam-Jun, Max and Indira - either defect to Victor's side, swayed by his leadership or are kidnapped to help his cause...

...and on the other side, Nicole, Waid and Calvin - teamed up with the heartbroken Indira, Nam-Jun - and a slowly recovering Max - forced to play catch-up, forced to do whatever it takes to stop Victor...but hopelessly out-gunned, out-manned, and out-maneuvered as America contemplates surrender....

...and as the year ends with the Earth on the brink of a third world war...our heroes return to Barringer crater - not knowing if they even have a future to return to, not knowing how much things have changed and who will come up on the winning side...

...and at the end of our first season...the singularity opens...

...and out come a new team of travelers.

Military travelers.

Armed to the teeth with futuristic weapons and vehicles.

The leader takes off his helmet.

"We're here to help."