

# [***'3 Body Problem' should claim the throne as Netflix's next sci-fi obsession***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BKW-TPP1-JBSS-S002-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; Series seldom arrive as nicely scaled for long (potentially very long) multi-season runs as "[*3 Body Problem*](https://www.cnn.com/style/article/netflix-three-body-problem-adaptation-intl-hnk-scli/index.html)," a brainy science-fiction concept from a producing team - "[*Game of Thrones*](https://www.cnn.com/entertainment/game-of-thrones-timeline-history-cec/index.html)'" D.B. Weiss and David Benioff - whose last major venture shared similar attributes. Rapidly disgorging secrets, the eight-episode opening salvo effectively plants a hook for many more problems to come.

Based on the books by Chinese author Liu Cixin, revealing details about the show risks spoiling it for the uninitiated, but it's safe to say the premise sets in motion a sweeping mystery: someone appears to be killing off scientists, for reasons that become clear, given the pace of most first-year series, with surprising alacrity. Moreover, some of the scientists are plagued by strange visions, seeing numbers that appear to be counting down - toward what, being the operative question.

Much of this plays out through an extended group of friends who work in the sciences - played by, among others, Eiza Gonzalez, Jovan Adepo and Jess Hong - and lose one of their members. Elsewhere, a detective ("Doctor Strange" star Benedict Wong) investigates these seemingly connected cases, while another government official (Liam Cunningham, one of the "Thrones" alums in the cast along with John Bradley and Jonathan Pryce) begins to grasp the bigger picture and gird for the somewhat nebulous battle to come.

Another strand, slowly but cleverly connected, involves a young scientist in China during the 1960s after the Communist regime takes over, Ye Wenjie (Zine Tseng), who becomes aware of the issue that will face those aforementioned characters decades later.

In that sense, "3 Body Problem" (a title derived from physics) shares certain attributes with "Game of Thrones," which established the threat posed by the White Walkers early, then got caught up in other Westeros ***politics*** and relationships while that tantalizing, existential danger loomed ahead, growing closer as the show progressed.

The particulars of this globe-spanning, time-jumping series pose an even thornier challenge, narratively speaking, in much the way a novel like [*"Foundation"*](https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/24/entertainment/foundation-review/index.html) has turned into an unwieldy offering on Apple.

For the most part, though, this show (overseen by Benioff and Weiss along with [*"The Terror"*](https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/12/entertainment/george-takei-the-terror/index.html) producer Alexander Woo, while boasting a lengthy roster of co-producers that includes Brad Pitt and director Rian Johnson) proceeds with such a steady hand as to remain highly watchable throughout what amounts to this extended overture.

Netflix could certainly use another obsession within this genre as [*"Stranger Things"*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/01/entertainment/stranger-things-season-4-review/index.html) nears its end, and "3 Body Problem," while a very different kind of show, appears well positioned to scratch a similar itch.

The culmination of [*a long journey*](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/tv/tv-features/3-body-problem-benioff-weiss-netflix-thrones-interview-1235783117/) from page to screen, what the future holds for such a complex and demanding construct remains to be seen; still, after rabidly consuming season one, most of the show's problems look strictly to be of the high-class variety.

"3 Body Problem" premieres March 21 on Netflix.

Review by Brian Lowry, CNN

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