

= What Lies Below =

" What Lies Below " is the 13th episode of the second season of the American science fiction drama television series Fringe . Set in a quarantined Boston office building , the episode revolves around a thousands @-@ year @-@ old virus that infects and then influences its victims to attempt to spread the contagion outside of the building .

It was the third Fringe episode to be written by supervising producer Jeff Vlaming , while it was director Deran Sarafian 's only credit for the series to date . After his character becomes infected , actor Joshua Jackson commented during shooting to " just imagine the worst hangover I 've ever had and multiply it by ten " .

" What Lies Below " first aired in the United States on January 21 , 2010 on the Fox network . An estimated 6 @.@ 90 million viewers watched the episode , and it received mixed reviews from critics , with one calling it average and predictable .

= = Plot = =

In Boston , a visibly sick man from the Netherlands arrives at an office building , only to collapse and die . The veins in his body erupt with blood , spraying surrounding witnesses . The Fringe team arrive on site , and while interviewing the witnesses , another man also becomes sick . The sick man attempts to leave the building , only to be stopped by Walter ( John Noble ) , who sees the man spray out blood and realizes there is a contagion . The building is quarantined with Walter 's son Peter ( Joshua Jackson ) , FBI agent Olivia ( Anna Torv ) , and the rest of the witnesses still inside .

The CDC arrives and soon clash with Walter , who wants some blood samples to take back to his lab at Harvard . As another witness , the receptionist , falls ill , the rest begin panicking that the virus is an airborne contagion . Olivia discovers that the Dutch man was an oil consultant who arrived to meet with Mr. Ames , one of the other office workers trapped in the building .

Walter explains that viruses have forms of " personalities , " that influence their hosts to act in certain ways . He posits that the virus is not airborne after all , but needs more samples for further tests . Meanwhile the infected receptionist is influenced by the virus , jumps out a window , and also scares Peter into falling into an infected pool of blood . The woman is sprayed with decontaminate spray , as Peter quickly rinses himself off . Knowing he is likely infected , Peter searches through the Dutch man 's pockets , leading to the discovery of a briefcase infected by the virus .

Walter continues his theory that the virus wants to escape the building , hence the multiple escape attempts by the infected . The virus was found on a sample taken 10 miles below the earth , and may be 75 @,@ 000 years old and responsible for wiping out the Ice Age mammals . As a bio @-@ hazard team enters the building to test people for the virus , a CDC official orders the army to prepare for a " level six eradication " , because they still do not know how to contain it .

Peter manages to fake the test and hide his infection . He and Olivia begin leading a team of healthy people outside the building , but before Peter is able to leave , his nose bleeds , clearly revealing that he is infected . While the virus overtakes Peter 's health and sanity , Walter becomes increasingly distressed as he fears losing his son again , and accidentally blurts out that he " can 't let Peter die again " to Astrid ( Jasika Nicole ) . Despite the threat of eradication and death , he and Astrid remain in the building to run further tests on the Dutch man . Walter realizes that sulfuric ash killed the virus thousands of years ago , and successfully finds a cure with some horseradish he found in the office break room .

The CDC agrees to allow Olivia to enter the building and use the air ventilation system to spread some fentanyl gas , which will gain them time while the cure is synthesized . While inside , Peter attacks her , but Olivia is able to turn the air on , successfully knocking out the building 's occupants . Peter and everyone else are successfully cured . Astrid later approaches Walter and asks what he meant when he said he couldn 't let Peter die again , to which he responds by saying " some things are meant to be left alone . "

= = Production = =

Supervising producer Jeff Vlaming wrote " What Lies Below " , his second episode of the season . Filmmaker Deran Sarafian served as the director , his first and only Fringe directional credit . The episode featured one @-@ time guest appearances by actors Demore Barnes , Geoff Pierson , Conrad Coates , Natassia Malthe , and David Richmond @-@ Peck . Actor Joshua Jackson , who plays an infected Peter Bishop in the episode , noted during shooting that he found inspiration from " imagin [ ing ] the worst hangover I 've ever had and multiply it by ten " .

Actress Jasika Nicole was pleased that the writers decided to let her character discover Walter 's secret , commenting " Astrid finds out in a really emotional way because Walter lets it slip to her accidentally . I think that it was really nice for them to invite Astrid into the importance of that instead of keeping her in the dark . At least she knows that she 's a part of this family and this affects her . I think she serves as a really important character in these later episodes because Astrid is kind of the only person that isn 't directly involved with everything that is still on his side . She has to step up to the plate and be that comfort for him because if he doesn 't have anyone there , he 's basically going to regress and go back to the place , I think mentally , that he was in when he was in the mental institution . And of course we don 't want that . "

One of the episode 's scenes involves an infected woman jumping out of the building onto a van in an attempt to spread the virus further . To simulate her 160 @-@ feet fall , stuntwoman Angela Uyeda was placed in a crane 10 to 15 feet above the van and asked to jump onto the van below . The crew removed the roof structure on the van , and carefully rigged it to cave @-@ in upon impact but also make it as painless as possible for Uyeda . To achieve this , they modified the ribs that supported the roof by placing them on pins that would snap , and also added a three @-@ millimeter glass plate that would snap between two sheets of black hard nylon @-@ type plastic to further emphasize the distance she jumped .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

The first airing of " What Lies Below " was watched by an estimated 6 @.@ 90 million viewers in the United States , with a 2 @.@ 6 / 7 rating for those aged 18 ? 49 . SFScope writer Sarah Stegall considered these numbers to be " steady but stagnant ratings " , as they were " not much different " from the previous week .

= = = Reviews = = =

" What Lies Below " received mixed reviews from television critics . The A.V. Club contributor Todd VanDerWerff graded the episode with a B- , explaining that despite some nice moments , it was " an episode of the show that started out utterly predictably , continued along an utterly predictable path and yet somehow got fairly enjoyable by the end just through sheer force of will on the part of the cast . " IGN 's Ramsey Isler also found the episode average and predictable , as it lacked " much of the quintessential storytelling elements that , once upon a time , made this one of the best shows on TV . " Like many other critics , Isler thought the episode was too similar to The X @-@ Files , and gave it 7 @.@ 0 / 10 . TV Squad columnist Jane Boursaw thought Walter discovering a cure was a little far @-@ fetched , and wished Broyles was a greater part of the show . Television Without Pity gave the episode a B + .

Andrew Hanson from the Los Angeles Times thought it was a really good episode , and even wished it could have been turned into a movie , were Fringe to get into filmmaking . Josh Wigler of MTV thought it was a " pretty cool " mystery @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week , and " while not quite as strong as when the mythology is in full gear , ' What Lies Below ' was nonetheless a compelling hour of television . " He was however bothered that there was no further information about the parallel universe . UGO Networks writer Alex Zalben compared " What Lies Below " to the similarly @-@

plotted The X @-@ Files episode " Ice " . Zalben concluded , " Though both episodes are very good , ' Ice ' is one of the best X @-@ Files hours ever , perfectly channeling ? but not ripping off ? John Carpenter 's The Thing . "

= = = Awards and nominations = = =

Director Deran Sarafian submitted " What Lies Below " for consideration in the Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series category at the 62nd Primetime Emmy Awards . He did not receive a nomination .