

= Fracture ( Fringe ) =

" Fracture " is the third episode of the second season of the American science fiction drama television series Fringe . The episode followed the Fringe team 's investigation into a man who mysteriously hardens and then explodes , killing those around him . The case leads them to a secret government project and an AWOL colonel .

The episode was written by David Wilcox , and was directed by Bryan Spicer . " Fracture " was the third of a four episode plot arc called the " gun arc " , which focused on Olivia 's physical and mental recovery from the season premiere . It featured guest actors Kevin Corrigan and Stephen McHattie . " Fracture " first broadcast in the United States on October 1 , 2009 on the Fox network to an estimated 6 @. @ 21 million viewers . It received generally mixed reviews from critics .

= = Plot = =

In Philadelphia , an on @- @ duty cop gets a call from a man he calls " Colonel " to pick up a briefcase at Suburban Station . As he does so , a nearby pulse causes electronics to gain static , and his body becomes hardened . He explodes , killing eleven people and injuring others with his hardened body parts . Initially thinking the explosion was caused by a bomb , the Fringe team arrives to investigate , and discover that instead of a bomb , the cop 's body parts killed the others . A further autopsy reveals needle marks between the cop 's toes , and they realize he was injecting some type of drug every day for at least a year .

While Peter and Olivia interview his wife , Olivia gets sick with flashes of crossing to the parallel universe , and accidentally discovers the drugs the cop was injecting . The cop had served in Iraq a year previously , and was involved in a secret military experiment called " Project Tin Man " . Peter tells them they can find the project 's doctors , and he and Olivia travel to Iraq . Peter learns from an old acquaintance the identity of one of the Iraqi doctors ; he tells them the project was meant to cure soldiers exposed to a fatal chemical , but it failed to work , instead turning remaining survivors into human bombs . An AWOL colonel , Raymond Gordon , was opposed to ending the project ; Peter and Olivia suspect he is behind the cop 's explosion , and caused the deaths by emitting a radio signal . They find a list of names from the experiment , the victim in the train station being one of them . They return to find the surviving members , and are able to prevent the next subject , Diane Burgess , from exploding after she is contacted by Gordon to take a briefcase at a train station . Peter and Olivia find Gordon ( Stephen McHattie ) at the station , and bring him into custody ; the man suggests the bombs were intended to eliminate agents working for the Observer .

In a side plot , Olivia and Sam Weiss continue to meet at the bowling alley , where he subjects her to seemingly menial tasks like tying her shoes and keeping score during games . Although initially finding their conversations useless , he cures Olivia 's inability to walk without a cane by the end of the episode .

= = Production = =

Co @- @ executive producer David Wilcox wrote the episode , and filmmaker Bryan Spicer directed it . According to producers Ashley Edward Miller and Zack Stentz , " Fracture " was the third episode in the " gun arc " , which involved Olivia gradually recovering from the wounds sustained in the premiere enough to be able to wield a gun and fight the shapeshifters .

Sound editor Bruce Tanis explained the production of sound that went into the episode in an interview with Designing Sound :

" In ' Fracture ' , the villain has created a serum which several characters inject because of a type of post @- @ hypnotic suggestion . He has invented a frequency generator which causes these people to crystallize and then explode . In one of the best scenes all season , Walter and Astrid are in the lab and , using a watermelon for their experiments , are able to determine the exact frequency that the villain 's generator operates on . It was something like 68 @. @ 7 megacycles ( I don 't recall exactly ) , so I used the signal generator plugin and created some tones that started out as 68 @. @

7 megacycles . They were simply low @-@ frequency tones on their own so I processed them so that they warbled and chorused and were a bit more mysterious than the straight tone . It ended up being pretty subtle for television , but when Walter identifies the tone as a certain frequency , that ? s what ? s actually playing . "

Actor John Noble noted that in the episode , " We see [ Olivia ] broken down . And it 's kind of frightening to see our heroine who 's carried the series basically ... Suddenly she can 't move , she can 't even load her gun " . " Fracture " marked the first and only guest appearance by actor Stephen McHattie as Colonel Raymond Gordon , as well as another appearance by previous guest actor Kevin Corrigan as Sam Weiss .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode featured the song " The Air That I Breathe " by The Hollies , as well as music from Roy Orbison , Les Paul , and The Marshall Tucker Band . Olivia makes a reference to Star Wars when she says , " Cut the Yoda crap and tell me what 's happening to me " . Peter mentions that his father taught him human reproduction using a jigsaw puzzle of " Ms. July " , a reference to a glamour photography shot of an unknown Playboy model used in calendars to differentiate each month of the year .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

The episode was initially watched by an estimated 6 @.@ 21 million viewers in the United States , and scored a 2 @.@ 3 / 6 rating share among viewers 18 ? 49 and 3 @.@ 7 / 6 for all households . After time shifted viewing was taken into account , Fringe was among the shows with the biggest increase , as its 18 ? 49 rating rose 30 percent to score 3 @.@ 9 .

= = = Reviews = = =

Reviews of the episode tended to be mixed . Noel Murray from The Onion 's A.V. Club graded the episode with a D + , writing that " Unlike the previous two weeks ? episodes , which juggled a number of storylines and locations and generated a real sense of Fringe ? s expanding milieu , ' Fracture ' is so curtailed that it almost feels like it was made for the Fox accountants . The cast is small , the sets are few , and not much happens . The plot ? s practically twist @-@ free , until the very end . Large chunks of the episode are given over to Peter talking to Walter about finding a new place for them to live , and Walter trying to learn more about Astrid ? and really not discovering much , except that she doesn ? t like it when he experiments on fruit . So Astrid ? s underused yet again , even in an episode where she gets a lot of lines ... The story 's too simple and the acting too broad , and yet the episode still felt choppy , as though the Fringe creative team had to scramble to fix ' Fracture ' in post . "

Conversely , IGN 's Ramsey Isler viewed the episode more positively , and rated it 7 @.@ 9 / 10 . He explained it " deserves praise for doing a lot of things well , " and lauded the actors ' performances , the props , the direction , and cinematography . Despite however finding Walter less entertaining than the previous season , and believing the first half of the episode moved too slowly and resembled " an ordinary procedural crime show , " Isler enjoyed the ending for " [ bringing ] it all together and [ making ] the previous 90 % worthwhile " . After watching the episode , MTV columnist Josh Wigler " declared [ his ] fondness " for Joshua Jackson , stating the actor had " won [ him ] over thanks to Peter 's central role in these first few episodes of Fringe 's " second season " . Wigler continued that it was " an excellent mystery @-@ of @-@ the @-@ week episode to be sure , though I 'm really itching for more details on the alternate reality . Luckily , that 's supposed to come next week with the return of Nimoy 's William Bell , which makes tonight 's less mythology @-@

oriented outing easier to swallow . Plus , the end reveal with the Observer was pretty spicy , to say the least . "