

= Peter (Fringe) =

" Peter " is the 16th episode of the second season of the American science fiction drama television series Fringe , and the 36th episode overall .

Considered a keystone episode of the series , " Peter " is a flashback episode , told as Walter Bishop (John Noble) reveals to Olivia Dunham (Anna Torv) that his son Peter (Joshua Jackson) is really the Peter of the parallel universe . Walter explains the events that occurred in 1985 that led to this , and the impact it had on the parallel universe to be at war with the prime one .

The episode 's story was written by Akiva Goldsman , J. H. Wyman , Jeff Pinkner , and Josh Singer . Its teleplay was written by Pinkner , Wyman , and Singer . David Straiton directed the episode . It was guest star Orla Brady 's first appearance as Walter 's wife Elizabeth .

" Peter " first aired in the United States on April 1 , 2010 . An estimated 5 @.@ 8 million viewers watched the episode , giving it a 2 @.@ 2 rating share among those 18 ? 49 . The episode received almost overwhelmingly positive reviews , with numerous critics considering it to be the best Fringe episode to date . Actor John Noble was lauded for his performance , and " Peter " topped many " best of television " lists for the year . It was ranked the best episode of the entire series by IGN and Den of Geek and the second best by Entertainment Weekly .

= = Plot = =

The introduction scene follows from " Jacksonville " , where Olivia (Anna Torv) has discovered , through her Cortexiphan @-@ induced abilities , that Peter (Joshua Jackson) is from the parallel universe , and Walter (John Noble) takes her aside to tell her how this came to pass , shown to the viewer in an extended flashback .

In 1985 , Walter and William Bell had theorized the existence of a parallel universe , and created a window @-@ like device to observe it . Though they use their observations for military benefits , Walter has a more personal interest in the parallel universe , to seek a cure for a genetic disease crippling his son Peter (Quinn Lord) . " Walternate " , Walter 's doppelganger in the other universe , is also seeking a similar cure , his Peter suffering from the same disease .

The prime universe 's Peter succumbs to his illness and dies , and Walter and his wife Elizabeth (Orla Brady) mourn their loss , supported by Walter and William 's friend , Nina Sharp (Blair Brown) and Walter 's lab assistant , Carla Warren (Jenni Blong) . Walter , through his window , shows Elizabeth the other Peter , and asserts they should be happy knowing another Peter exists . Later , Walter watches Walternate explore other cures . Walternate is distracted by the arrival of an Observer , September (Michael Cerveris) , and fails to see the telltale color change indicating a cure . Walter is able to recreate and stabilize Walternate 's cure , and then decides to use untested equipment to cross over to give the cure to Peter . Carla tries to stop Walter , knowing the technology could damage the fabric of space @-@ time , and contacts Nina for help . Separately , September informs his fellow Observers that he may have made a mistake and assures them he will correct it .

Walter sets up his equipment on the frozen ice of Reiden Lake , near a cabin where Elizabeth and Peter are staying ; Walter theorizes the frozen waters will buffer the effects of the crossing . Carla arrives with Nina , and both try to talk him out of it . When Walter realizes William is not with them , he takes this as an implicit sign of William 's consent to his plan , and activates the portal . Nina attempts to tackle Walter as he steps through , but instead part of her arm disappears in the portal as it closes ; Carla rushes her to the hospital .

In the parallel universe , Walter finds the cure vial shattered when Nina tackled him and he devises a new plan : to bring Peter back , administer a new batch of the cure , and return him . Meeting the parallel universe 's Elizabeth , he explains he is taking Peter back to the lab for some tests . As Walter walks Peter back across the lake to the portal , Peter realizes that Walter is not his real father . They cross through the portal safely , but the ice has weakened and both fall through , losing consciousness . Walter wakes to find September driving him and Peter back to Walter 's lab . September warns that " the boy must live " , and leaves Walter to drive the rest of the way . At the

lab , as Peter receives the cure , Carla informs him that William will see to replacing Nina 's arm . Elizabeth arrives unannounced , and is overjoyed to see Peter , even though it is not her child . At that point , Walter realizes he will never be able to make himself return Peter to his proper universe--the pain of losing their child for the second time would be too great .

In the show 's conclusion in the present day , Walter tells Olivia that his crossing is what caused the crack between the two universes , including the Pattern on their side , and leading to the oncoming " storm " that William warned Olivia about .

= = Production = =

The episode 's teleplay was co @-@ written by supervising producer Josh Singer and co @-@ showrunners Jeff Pinkner and J. H. Wyman , based on a story by Singer , Wyman , Pinkner , and consulting producer Akiva Goldsman . House M.D. veteran David Straiton served as episode director .

Fringe began casting for an actress to play Walter 's wife Elizabeth in November 2009 . In their report , they were looking for a woman roughly forty years old who was described as being " strong (yet broken) , intelligent , attractive , likable , lovely and extremely versatile " . In December 2009 , Entertainment Weekly announced Irish actress Orla Brady had been cast as Elizabeth Bishop , a possible recurring character . Some critics questioned the casting , as they considered Brady to be too young and were unsure if she would appear in the present or a flashback sequence .

" Peter " was set in 1985 , with a much younger Walter and Peter Bishop , and also features an appearance by Walter 's wife Elizabeth . Actor John Noble used material he had created since the airing of the pilot , which he explained was his sense of " what was this man like before he deteriorated . " The production crew tried different methods with the actor to create a younger Walter , such as changes to his hair , make @-@ up , and wardrobe ; they ultimately decided on using " tabs " to keep the wrinkles in his face back . He did not wear a wig , but the crew did add parts to the front and back . When asked what preparation went into playing a younger Walter , Noble explained :

" Quite a lot , but in the sense in my preparation to find the Walter that we all know now , I had to go back to him right at the beginning to see where he came from . So that process was started before the pilot really , what was this man like before he deteriorated , so I was able to revisit that . Physically , of course , what I had to do was capture the energy , to capture the physicality of the man , the vocal physicality of the man , this was my task . I was aided enormously by my hair and makeup and special effects people here in terms of getting the overall , and indeed wardrobe helped a lot as well . And then we , the shot up through these beautiful lenses that we got a different feel to the episode than we would now . All of those elements work together ... to create this version that you see in the episode . "

The episode was shot through special lenses to make it more reminiscent of the decade . At Peter 's funeral , actress Blair Brown wanted her character Nina Sharp to wear sunglasses , because she thought Nina would not share her emotions at the funeral . Unlike Noble , Brown wore a wig . The scenes at Reiden Lake were actually shot on a parking lot , and the crew placed a covering over it to simulate the cracks normally on a lake .

To reflect the episode 's setting in 1985 , the typical title credit sequence was redone using different music , the Asimov font for early computer type for the show 's logo , and terms that were " fringe science " at the time , such as " virtual reality , " " genetic engineering , " and " personal computing " . Pinkner later recalled , " One of our writers said off @-@ handedly that if we ? re doing a show from 1985 , shouldn ? t we do a credit sequence from 1985 , and literally , we pounced on it " . He and Wyman asked J. J. Abrams , who wrote the original credit sequence melody , to write a 1980s version ; Abrams was " very , very happy to do that , " according to Wyman .

As with other Fringe episodes , Fox and Science Olympiad released a lesson plan for grade school children based upon the science depicted in " Peter " ; the lesson 's intention was for " students [to] learn about the challenges of effectively communicating scientific principles and concepts , especially via non @-@ verbal methods . "

= = Cultural references = =

In viewing the parallel universe through the window , Walter and others witness a zeppelin docking at the Empire State Building , which was originally part of the building 's purpose until it was shown to be impractical . In a scene that takes place in the parallel universe , the Observers are seen leaving a theater having watched Back to the Future starring Eric Stoltz ; in reality , Eric Stoltz was originally cast in the role of Marty after Michael J. Fox was unavailable , but after filming for several weeks , Stoltz was replaced by Fox .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

On its first broadcast , " Peter " was watched an estimated 5 @.@ 8 million viewers , achieving a 3 @.@ 6 share in all households and 2 @.@ 2 share of viewers between 18 and 49 . In a Thursday night that had rating slumps from all the network shows , " Peter " was down 15 percent from the previous episode " Jacksonville " .

= = = Reviews = = =

" Peter " received widespread critical acclaim . As described by Andrew Hanson of the Los Angeles Times , " ' Peter ' is exactly what Fringe needs to be " for the show to distinguish itself from others like The X @-@ Files , in that it teased hints of the episode 's reveal in earlier shows , and followed through by revealing the truth , leaving the viewer wanting to know even more . Ramsey Isler of IGN considered " Peter " " the most masterfully crafted episode Fringe has ever had " , praising the performance of Noble and Brady in delivering the emotion needed for the episode . Tim Grierson of New York Magazine also praised the emotional performance of John Noble , calling it his " showcase " and one where " he didn't disappoint " . The A.V. Club 's Noel Murray considered the episode one of the best of 2010 up to that point , and that " the show came back with a sense of purpose and surety it 's rarely had , even at its best " .

Since its airing and continuation into Season 3 , " Peter " has been considered a keystone episode for the series . Jeff Jensen of Entertainment Weekly called " Peter " the episode " when Fringe crossed over from fitfully great to just plain great " , and continues to maintain that quality throughout 2010 . Time 's James Poniewozik ranked " Peter " as the 5th best television episode of 2010 , stating that it both " fleshed out its mythology " and " deepened the emotional backstory " , and further praised Noble 's acting in the episode . The A.V. Club ranked Fringe the 15th best show of 2010 , highlighting " Peter " as an episode that " finally dramatized the moment that changed [Peter 's] life , giving the series ' overarching storyline a devastating emotional core , based in a father 's love instead of in theoretical concept " . The Futon Critic ranked " Peter " as the 9th best episode of 2010 , calling it a " series defining episode that not only rationalized what appeared to be the unforgiveable but also raised the stakes on everything we had come to expect from the show thus far " .

Similarly , BuddyTV rated it the seventh best episode of 2010 , praising it for " open [ing] the door to the show 's brilliant use of the alternate universe , " and calling Noble 's acting " one of the best performances on TV " . SFX ranked " Peter " among the twenty things they love about the series , calling it " the lynchpin episode on which all of Fringe rests . " Executive producers Jeff Pinkner and J.H. Wyman , and co @-@ creator J. J. Abrams later said that " Peter " was one of their favorite episodes . In a 2013 list , Den of Geek ranked the episode as the best of the entire series .

As one result of the high praise and fan appreciation for " Peter " , a future episode , " Subject 13 " (originally named " 6 Months Later ") in Fringe 's third season aired on February 25 , 2011 . It returned to the events within " Peter " but told from the perspective of the parallel universe ,

including the impact of Peter 's abduction on both Walter and Elizabeth . Jeff Jensen of Entertainment Weekly named " Peter " the second best episode of the series , explaining that it " stands as a model for mythological storytelling that any sci @-@ fi / fantasy series would be wise to emulate . " In January 2013 , IGN ranked the episode as the best of the series :

The quintessential episode of Fringe lore , ' Peter ' gave us a flawless peek at the past , and the events that caused all this universe @-@ clashing mess in the first place . The episode was marked by a pitch @-@ perfect pace , excellent " youthenizing " special effects , and a story that plays your heartstrings like an expert bard plucking out a tearful tune on a lyre . This episode brought us so many answers to the major questions of the series ... This was Fringe at its best .

= = = Awards and nominations = = =

Writers J.H. Wyman , Jeff Pinkner , Josh Singer , and Akiva Goldsman submitted " Peter " for consideration in the Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series category at the 62nd Primetime Emmy Awards . At the 2011 Young Artist Awards , Quinn Lord received a nomination for Best Performance in a TV Series under the category " Guest Starring Young Actor Ten and Under " .