

= The Box ( Fringe ) =

" The Box " is the second episode of the third season of the American science fiction drama television series Fringe . The episode was co -@-@ written by Josh Singer and Graham Roland , and directed by Jeffrey Hunt . The third season spent its time alternating between the prime and parallel universes , and " The Box " was set in the former . It followed a mysterious box that when opened , killed whomever heard it . The fringe team of Fauxlivia ( a doppelgänger of Olivia Dunham ) , Peter , and Walter investigate , with unknown consequences to the creation of a doomsday device .

It first aired on September 30 , 2010 in the United States to an estimated 5 @.@ 24 million viewers , helping the Fox network finish in fourth place for the night . The episode received generally positive reviews , and it was described as a " strong start " and " chock full of good stuff " by various critics . " The Box " was nominated by Motion Picture Sound Editors for the 2011 Golden Reel Awards but lost to an episode of Boardwalk Empire .

= = Plot = =

In the prime universe ( aka " Our Side " ) , the parallel universe 's Olivia ? " Fauxlivia " ? ( Anna Torv ) ; meets with Thomas Jerome Newton ( Sebastian Roché ) , who provides Fauxlivia several dossiers and books to help her acclimate herself to the prime universe 's version of the Fringe team . Through them , she is able to successfully impersonate the prime universe 's Olivia to Walter ( John Noble ) and Peter ( Joshua Jackson ) , and joins the ranks of the Fringe division . Her first case on the team is at a house in Milton , Massachusetts . At first it appears to have been a robbery , with the family tied up and two thieves having dug a hole in the basement ; however , all of the people are dead due to being placed into a vegetative state . Walter believes that a third thief took whatever was uncovered in the hole , but is somehow unaffected by its presence . On examining the corpses , Walter determines that the people were exposed to an ultrasound signal , likely generated by the object that was stolen .

Meanwhile , they discover the identity of one of the dead robbers , Blake , and learn of his abandoned apartment . Fauxlivia goes to the apartment alone without alerting Peter , but Peter soon joins her . The two find that Blake had a roommate , likely the third man , but he is nowhere to be seen . That night , while at Olivia 's apartment , Fauxlivia studies Olivia 's case files , and comments of her prime counterpart , " You have a photographic memory . How am I gonna do that ? " indicating that she does not possess this ability . A moment later she is visited by the third man , Joe ( Russell Harvard ) , who had seen Fauxlivia at Blake 's apartment and , believing her to be a cop , brought the item stolen from the Milton home - a small box . Fauxlivia finds Joe is deaf , and thus was unaffected by the ultrasonics of the box . Fauxlivia contacts Newton , who collects the box ? having originally hired the men to collect it for him ? and offers to kill the deaf man . Fauxlivia tells him she will take care of things herself and shoots the deaf man . While hiding the body , Peter arrives to talk to her . To distract him and prevent him from noticing a pool of blood seeping under the bathroom door , Fauxlivia engages in romantic actions with Peter .

Newton takes the box to a crowded subway station , and entices a homeless man ( Eric the Midget ) to watch the box for a short while , expecting the person to steal it after he leaves . The Fringe team is soon on the scene having discovered the ultrasound signal , and find all of the passengers at the station are dead . They find no evidence of the box , and fear that someone took it into the tunnels and may still be active ; the ultrasound would kill everyone on any train that passed . Peter offers to go find the box , and Walter has the idea to make Peter momentarily deaf by having Fauxlivia fire her gun next to Peter 's ears . He finds the box , its lid cracked , in the dead hands of the homeless man . Without a way to seal the lid , Peter is forced to try to defuse the box . He does so in time before his hearing returns , but cannot hear the warning of an errant train bearing down on him ; Fauxlivia enters the tunnels to save Peter . After recovering , Peter and Walter surmise the box is part of the machine , and Peter begins studying it . On her own , Fauxlivia contacts the parallel world through the typewriter shop , informing them that Peter " has the first piece " and is

now " engaged " .

In a side plot , William Bell is officially declared dead , and his will is read to Nina ( Blair Brown ) and Walter . Walter is hesitant about opening the envelope left for him , but Astrid ( Jasika Nicole ) assures him of William 's friendship . Ultimately , Walter finds the envelope contains a typewritten note reading " Don 't be afraid to cross the line , " and a key to a safe deposit box , containing the entirety of the shares of Bell 's multi @-@ billion dollar biomedical technology corporation Massive Dynamic , making Walter the sole owner .

= = Production = =

" The Box " was co @-@ written by co @-@ executive producer Josh Singer and executive story editor Graham Roland , while being directed by CSI : Crime Scene Investigation veteran Jeffrey Hunt . The episode was shot in the second half of July 2010 . Hunt later tweeted on @-@ set photos in January 2011 . At San Diego Comic @-@ Con International during the summer leading up to the season premiere , actress Jasika Nicole told the audience they would finally be able to see her character 's apartment , which has previously been only alluded to in an early season two episode . She explained , " It 's really neat ! There 's all these tiny little things that give you insight into how things are . I know the color of ( Astrid 's ) walls , so watch out ! "

In early August 2010 , Entertainment Weekly reported that Eric the Midget had been cast for a small role in the new season 's second episode . Deaf actor Russell Harvard portrayed Joe , a man who is able to survive the box being opened only to be killed by Fauxlivia . Harvard later commented in an interview , " Fringe was so much fun and not even stressful compared to [ professional fighting film ] Hamill . It was very fast and rapid . Playing the dead guy was very easy . Working with Anna Torv was so much fun , she is a great , great actress and very sweet . I did not think she would be that kind of person . " He continued , " There was a stunt which she did not want to do herself , but I told her ' You want to be authentic so I want you to pull me , ' so she obliged . It was a great experience and so much fun and I wish I could have stayed on the show for a long time . "

As with other Fringe episodes , Fox released a science lesson plan in collaboration with Science Olympiad for grade school children focusing on the science seen in " The Box " , with the intention of having " students learn about the different characteristics of music and how it can have physiological effects on the listener . "

= = Cultural references = =

When researching popular culture in the prime universe , Fauxlivia says " Who 's Bono ? " ( pronouncing it " bone @-@ oh " ) , implying Irish rock band U2 and its lead singer Bono either do not exist in the parallel universe , or are not well known . Fauxlivia also mentions liking a song by country music singer Patsy Cline when she and Peter hear it playing in a bar , suggesting either that Cline is famous in both universes , or that Fauxlivia had further studied pop culture of the prime universe before her conversation with Peter . Peter tells Fauxlivia that living with Walter is like a bad buddy cop movie , referring to a genre of movies that have two men of very different and conflicting personalities forced to work together .

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" The Box " first aired on September 30 , 2010 in the United States on the Fox network . According to the Nielsen ratings system , it was watched by an estimated 5 @.@ 24 million viewers and earned a 1 @.@ 9 / 5 ratings share among adults 18 to 49 . Fox finished in fourth place for the night , though time shifted viewings increased the episode 's ratings by 42 percent in the adult demographic , from 1 @.@ 9 to a 2 @.@ 7 rating .

### == Reviews ==

" The Box " received mostly positive reviews . Salon.com gave the episode an A- , explaining " this week 's episode was chock full of good stuff . We get some more fun nuggets about how Earth 2 differs from Earth 1 ... Your Bose headphones cannot protect you from the awesome sonic power of " The Box " . UGO Networks ' Alex Zalben wrote " Two weeks in , Fringe is still the best damn show currently on TV " . Zalben loved the serial aspects of the plot , praised Anna Torv 's performance , but disliked how no one has realized Fauxlivia 's true identity . Josh Wigler from MTV enjoyed the episode particularly because although he found the parallel universe a " compelling world , sometimes it 's nice to just kick your feet up on the table and know that you 're home ... Two episodes down , and it 's safe to say that the third season of " Fringe " is off to a very strong start " . Ken Tucker of Entertainment Weekly thought it was a terrific episode , with " a tremendously clever game @-@ changer of an ending ... This Fringe was a good example of how far the series has come since its first season , dominated by pre @-@ credits scare @-@ scenarios for Fringe Division to investigate , some of which spilled over into the show 's mythology . Now , Fringe is a seamless whole " .

A.V. Club 's Noel Murray graded it with a B + . SFScope contributor Sarah Stegall wrote , " Tightly written , well acted , and directed with a sure hand , this second episode of the season bears out my original prediction : this year is going to rock . " Andrew Hanson from the Los Angeles Times praised the episode 's use of a " Harold " , in which three separate plots working off a central theme converge together . He also loved the climatic scene involving a gunshot @-@ induced deaf Peter and the subway . " I hope more people were watching this episode for so many reasons : To see how good " Fringe " has become , to get addicted to the show and , most important , to see that they quoted my blog in the promo for next week . Thursday night has become " Fringe " night " .

### == Awards and nominations ==

" The Box " was nominated for Best Sound Editing : TV Short Form Music by the Motion Picture Sound Editors for the 2011 Golden Reel Awards . The crew included Supervising Music Editor Paul Apelgren , composers Chris Tilton and Michael Giacchino , and re @-@ recording mixer Rick Norman . " Brown Betty " , a season two Fringe episode , was also nominated for Best Sound Editing : TV Short Form Music in a Musical . " The Box " lost to an episode of Boardwalk Empire .