

= The End of All Things =

" The End of All Things " is the fourteenth episode of the fourth season of the American science @-@ fiction drama television series Fringe , and the series ' 79th episode overall . In the episode , the fringe team investigates Olivia 's (Anna Torv) disappearance , ultimately tracing back to David Robert Jones (guest star Jared Harris) .

It was written by co @-@ executive producer David Fury and directed by Jeff Hunt . The episode marked the beginning of a four @-@ week break for the series , though the producers initially thought the gap would start with the following episode , " A Short Story About Love " . Executive producer Jeff Pinkner called it a " game @-@ changer " that would " peel back some layers " surrounding the Observer 's background .

" The End of All Things " first aired on February 24 , 2012 in the United States on the Fox network to an estimated 3 @. @ 1 million viewers , an increase from the previous week . It received generally positive reviews from critics , with many praising Harris ' performance and the unveiling of more of the series ' mythology . In 2013 , following the conclusion of the final season , IGN ranked the episode the fourth best of the entire series .

= = Plot = =

Olivia Dunham (Anna Torv) has been taken to a disused medical facility by David Robert Jones (Jared Harris) and his agents . She is placed in the same room along with Nina Sharp (Blair Brown) , also secured to a chair , revealing she was also abducted by Jones the night before . Jones arrives and asserts that Olivia has great abilities due to her Cortexiphan doping but he must coax them out of Olivia . He presents a light box test that Olivia should be able to activate with her mind , torturing Nina to create the emotional driver , but Olivia admits she can 't do it without rest . During this period , Olivia , her memories a mix of her own and that of Olivia from Peter Bishop 's (Joshua Jackson) timeline , asks Nina to help her make an emotional connection , but she recognizes that this Nina is not the real one but instead the one from the parallel universe . Olivia continues to play along , explaining to Nina that her Cortexiphan abilities could only be induced by being near Peter ; Nina fakes illness to be extracted from the room , where she explains to a complicit Jones that they need to abduct Peter .

Following Olivia 's disappearance , Peter discovers a surveillance camera in her apartment . He takes its memory device , which has been overwritten numerous times like a palimpsest , to Walter Bishop 's (John Noble) laboratory , using forensic tools to examine previous images on the disc . Lincoln Lee (Seth Gabel) and Phillip Broyles (Lance Reddick) take Nina into custody , learning that someone with Nina 's bio @-@ metric signature had accessed the Massive Dynamic supply of Cortexiphan over the last few months ; Nina is surprised by this but refuses to talk . As they work , Walter accuses Peter of taking advantage of Olivia 's state , even if unintentionally , imprinting his memories of Olivia of the original timeline onto her . They identify a face belonging to Leland Spivey (Monte Markham) , a man with ties to Jones and Nina , and Peter suspects that they are dosing Olivia with Cortexiphan for nefarious purposes . Their work is disrupted by the sudden appearance of the Observer September (Michael Cerveris) , bleeding from a chest wound .

With September nearly dead , Peter decides to use Walter 's equipment to enter the Observer 's mind to try to learn of Olivia 's location . Within September 's consciousness , Peter learns the Observers are a team of scientists from one possible future of humanity , having used technology to travel to the past to witness their own creation . September , however , disrupted events by attempting to observe the point where Peter 's cure was discovered , and his disruption has since caused several unintended changes within the timeline , including the war between the two universes . Ultimately , this would lead to the birth of Henry , Peter 's child with the parallel universe 's Olivia , which September claimed never should have happened and will be a catalyst for disruption of future events . By Peter entering the Machine and altering the timeline , Henry also ceased to exist . September explains that Peter 's reappearance may be a means to set things right , and insists he find a way to reunite his romance with his original Olivia . As the reality of September

's mind breaks down and he claims " they are coming " , the Observer tells Peter to " go home " . Peter is suddenly woken up in the lab , September 's body goes into convulsions and vanishes .

Peter realizes that September 's message was literal , and returns to his home , where he is knocked out by Jones ' men . He is brought to the same facility as Olivia and tied up . As they prepare to torture him , Olivia begins to use her powers to activate the lights , not only on the box but within the facility , creating electrical sparks that kill one of Jones ' men . As Jones and Nina retreat , Olivia frees Peter and they give chase , though Olivia suffers from a seizure , following excessive use of her powers . They catch up to Jones and Nina as they are crossing back to the parallel universe , but the two are able to escape . Peter contacts the authorities to bring medical help for Olivia . As they are waiting , Peter admits to Olivia that he fears what he has done to her memories , and has seen his original Olivia through the Observer 's mind . He leaves her , believing that staying away from this Olivia would be for the best .

= = Production = =

" The End of All Things " was written by co @-@ executive producer David Fury , while being directed by CSI : Crime Scene Investigation veteran , Jeff Hunt . It was Hunt 's third series credit (his other two being " The Man from the Other Side " and " The Box ") . Leading up to the episode 's broadcast , executive producer Jeff Pinkner remarked in a conference call with journalists that it was a " game @-@ changer " because " our characters learn a lot more and the audience is going to learn a lot more about the über @-@ plot of the season 's bad guy , David Robert Jones . " Referring to the Observer September , Pinker added that the episode would also peel " back some layers about what his agenda has been and use that as an opportunity to revisit the things on the show we 've seen before . " Fellow executive producer J.H. Wyman elaborated " We always said you would find out about the Observers this season and we were going to investigate them a lot more . We 're excited about it all . That 's a highlight ? the Observers are a highlight . For us to constantly break what you know and reset and have people go , ' Wow , I didn 't see that coming ! ' That 's why we get up in the morning is to take people along for the ride . We 're excited about what 's coming up , too . "

" The End of All Things " began a four @-@ week break for the series , though the producers initially thought this gap would commence with the following episode . They were pleased that the switch did not cause issues , with Pinkner noting that " we 're sort of in a zone of episodes where each one is amazing and each one either turns the story or resolves something important or there 's a cliffhanger ? several episodes where each one is pretty awesome in itself and is also important to the overall patchwork of the season . We were very happy this ended up being one before we went on a little break . I think the fans are going to be well satisfied to come back and watch the next one as well . "

The episode was the first time that the characters of Nina Sharp and David Robert Jones had common scenes within the show , but both Blair Brown and Jared Harris had previously acted together as mother and son in an off @-@ Broadway production of the play Humble Boy . During the scene in which Nina was tortured to taunt Olivia into using her powers , Brown actually injured herself on the rusty bedsprings used as the prop for the show . Brown referred to the alternative version of her character as " Meana " due to her seemingly " mean " personality , and speculated that Nina may have become this way because without William Bell , " she wasn 't at the party with all of the boys , the science boys " and thus developed an " outsider " perspective . She said of the role , " It 's a really interesting thing to play . I love the fact that they look exactly the same , at least for a while . "

= = Reception = =

= = = Ratings = = =

" The End of All Things " first aired on February 24 , 2012 in the United States . The last episode before a four @-@ week hiatus , it was watched by an estimated 3 @.@ 1 million viewers , with a ratings share of 1 @.@ 2 , an improvement from the previous episode , " A Better Human Being " . Fringe and its lead @-@ in Kitchen Nightmares helped its network , Fox , tie for third place with NBC for the night .

= = = Reviews = = =

The episode has received generally positive reviews from television critics . Andrew Hanson of the Los Angeles Times remarked , " Great acting , a decent twist and the truth behind one of the most enigmatic characters in television history . Why can ? t more Fringe episodes be like this ? Why can ? t more television be like ' Fringe ? ' " . Hanson also lauded Jared Harris ' performance , calling him " a fantastic villain . Arrogant and superior , with hints of insecurity . Jones ? speech about all living creatures needing incentive might have been goofy coming from any other actor , but from Harris , it is creepy beyond belief . So glad Fringe found a way to bring David Robert Jones back . " IGN 's Ramsey Isler rated it 9 @.@ 0 / 10 for being a " fast @-@ paced story " that was " the best episode of the season so far " . He continued " Olivia 's great escape from Jones and Bad Nina was fantastic television and some clever writing . " Isler did find some of the Observer revelations " a bit of a let @-@ down " however , as he felt he had already been made aware of them ; this was not enough to make him critical of the episode .

Writing for The A.V. Club , columnist Noel Murray graded the episode with an A- , and praised September 's stumbling entrance into the lab as " yet another rich and remarkable scene " . Entertainment Weekly writer Jeff Jensen had a more negative opinion , and commented that the episode " failed to make my dinger hum , " which he attributed to high expectations set by fellow staff writer and former Fringe reviewer Ken Tucker . Jensen continued , " It was , to my eyes , ' just okay . ' Certainly not the equal of the past two episodes . And not the strongest possible kicker to a strong second act for Fringe 's fourth season , which now takes a four @-@ week snooze before rising anew on March 23 for the first of eight consecutive episodes ? a sweep of story that might represent the very end of all things Fringe . Damn , I ? m such a downer this week , aren ? t I ? Ah , but so was this episode . " In January 2013 , IGN ranked the episode as the fourth best episode of the series , explaining that " when Season 4 needed a boost of excitement , this episode delivered it in a timely fashion . It had a thrilling pace and offered answers to some questions that have lingering since the series began . "