

## **“BACKPACKERS”**

### **LOGLINE:**

Fed up with life inside a sterile technology utopia, a late-20s seeker chases clarity in Argentinian Patagonia and faces his demons.

### **WHAT IT IS:**

Inspired by “The Beach”, “Westworld”, “American Psycho”, “Breaking Bad”, “The Count of Monte Cristo”, and “The Great Gatsby”, Backpackers explores the human condition and lust for adventure in a technology driven world.

Backpackers is a show about the desire for adventure and connection in a post-digital world, set against the backdrop of remote backpacking destinations. It follows the journey of late twenty-something Jack as he travels to Argentina and stumbles across a mysterious pair of augmented-reality glasses. What he finds leads him down a path of self discovery and a fight against dark forces both within and without.

The main theme in Backpackers is the human desire to seek out paradise, but that ultimately paradise does not exist as a physical place. Paradise is a state of mind.

Backpackers is a show about the role of technology in a post-modern society, wanderlust, human connection, greed and revenge.

Backpackers is a show about what it is to be human in an age where technology rules.

### **SEASON 1 STORY ARC:**

In the near future (self-driving cars, automated industry, holographic media), our Narrator is in a hospital bed looking back on his life. He introduces himself as Jack, and recounts his life experiences. After a series of unfortunate events (loss of job, loss of girlfriend), Jack becomes disillusioned with society and the vapid life in his neo-tech city. A chance encounter with a girl, Kelly, pushes him over the edge and inspires him to take a trip to South America. There he falls in with a group of travelers and meets a group of locals that offer to show him the true way to find himself: an Ayahuasca ceremony. At the ceremony, Jack discovers one of his new traveler friends has been taken advantage of and left for dead, and the locals reveal themselves as neo-Nazi drug smugglers. They instruct Jack to carry a package to an airstrip in Chile. Jack agrees, but only under the circumstances that a girl (Carlita) being held hostage comes with him. Along the way, the girl kills the escort that is sent with them, and the pair steals the package. In the package, Jack finds a pair of augmented reality glasses.

Upon donning the augmented reality glasses, Jack sees what looks like a digital overlay on the terrain that makes up a map. As they reach different checkpoints on their journey, the duo is presented with a series of clues that they have to solve to unlock more directions. The augmented reality glasses eventually lead Jack and Carlita to a chamber that holds a vast treasure. This treasure makes up a large portion of the ill gotten gains that were smuggled out of Germany during the fall of the Nazis. While the duo deliberates on what to do with the treasure, two thugs show up. Carlita reveals to Jack that she is taken everything for herself. They shoot Jack in the gut and toss him in a nearby river, leaving him for dead.

Jack, near death, is rescued by a native Argentinian tribe. They nurse him back to health. They also teach him their ways, their history, and fighting style through a tribal ceremony. He tries to communicate his story to the tribe, but when he takes them to the original treasure location, the chamber has been caved in.

Once Jack is fully recovered, he discovers a silicon disc in his clothes that he absentmindedly pulled from the original neo-Nazi package. After fiddling with the disc, he manages to make it show a hologram that reveals a map of sorts, showing the Indonesian Islands. Jack travels to Bali in search of the mystery it might contain.

Jack finds a man in Bali that operates a schooner. He tells the man of a legend of a mass of treasure on a small island off shore. Jack travels with the man to the island shown on the holographic disc. After solving several clues, he discovers another treasure. The man becomes Jack's mentor, teaching him how to fight with knives and operate guns. The man also reveals himself to be an ex-socialite that left his own life after being disillusioned with the lack of true human connection in his city.

As their trust deepens, Jack tells the man about the betrayal in the Argentinian jungle, the other treasure, and Carlita. The man cautions against pursuing revenge, having traveled down a similar path himself, but Jack has made up his mind. He returns to the neo-tech city that he came from intent on establishing a base of operations with his new found wealth.

Jack sets himself up in the city he came from and plots his revenge. He uses the fortune he amassed from Bali to set himself up in the city as an influencer/socialite. Much like Gatsby, no one knows who he is or where he came from. He follows Carlita and sees that she has set herself up as a socialite in the city. He throws massive parties, knowing that it would lure Carlita out into the open. During this time, Jack reconnects with Kelly after he sees her at one of the parties, and they start a romance.

When Jack is ready to take his revenge and confront Carlita, the neo-Nazis he left behind in Argentina capture him. They inject him with a toxin and interrogate him. Assuming he will die, they leave him without finishing the job. Before he passes out, someone saves him and takes him to the hospital.

Jack wakes up on the hospital bed that we see at the beginning of the series. As he tries to regain the strength to leave, Carlita enters the scene. She's holding a gun. She reveals to him that she was the mastermind all along and the neo-Nazis work for her. She is actually a descendant of a Nazi lieutenant, who intermingled with the Argentinian people. She says she is running for political office and that there are more like her than we know ("we hide in plain sight"). She says she knows about the other half of the treasure, and demands that Jack tell her where it is. When Jack refuses, one of the neo-Nazi thugs walks in and knocks him out.

Jack wakes up shackled and chained, and the neo-Nazis torture him. He finally reveals that he has spent all of the treasure. Carlita walks in incensed. In her company? Kelly, the girl that Jack has fallen deeply in love with. Carlita introduces Kelly as her niece. Both Jack and Kelly are dumbfounded. Carlita reveals that it was Kelly that sent Jack down to Argentina to solve the puzzle and help find the original treasure. After this reveal, Carlita intones that there is no more use for Jack, and holds up her gun to fire. Kelly throws herself on Jack, but Carlita has her guards pull her away.

As Carlita's finger grazes the trigger, the man that mentored Jack in Bali appears with a machine gun and lights up the room, killing everyone except for Jack, Kelly and Carlita. Carlita is wounded. Jack considers letting her go, as Kelly convinces him to walk away. But just as he turns his back to leave, Carlita pulls a gun from her underwear and puts 6 bullets in the mentor. Carlita turns the gun on Jack, but Jack has no reaction. Carlita says "stupid bastard, no fight in you". She pulls the trigger to hear an empty "click". Jack pulls the trigger on his mentor's gun with a heavy sigh and hits Carlita in the forehead. He and Kelly walk to a park bench, surrounded by people on their phones and various devices. They both stare ahead, until they pull out their own phones and starts to swipe.

## **SEASON 1 EPISODES:**

1. PILOT - "Augmented": Fed up with life inside a sterile technology utopia, a late-20s seeker chases clarity in Argentinian Patagonia.
2. "Plunder": Jack and Carlita follow a mysterious map. A turn of events result in a change of fate for Jack.
3. "Tribe": Jack comes across a local tribe that takes him under their wing.
4. "Nasi Goreng": Jack comes across a clue and travels to a distant land.
5. "Galleon": Jack meets a man that makes sense of a clue. He travels offshore to track down a myth. A mentor takes Jake under his wing.
6. "Reboot": Jack plots his return to his city and seeks to tie up loose ends. He meets an old acquaintance and a relationship is born.
7. "Gatsby": A mysterious man makes his mark on the town. Word spreads of massive underground parties that draw people from all walks of life.
8. "Monte Cristo": Some shadowy figures from Jack's past return.
9. "Comatose": Jack finds himself in a compromised position and learns some terrible truths.

10. "Woke": Jack finishes what he started.

### **THE SHOW'S THEMES:**

- Paradise as a state of mind
- Reality as perception
- Technology as Boon or Bane to Humans
- Societal Expectations vs. Human Desire
- How Purpose Can Change a Person
- What is Human Connection?
- Revenge and It's Toll

### **CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS:**

#### **Jack:**

General Background: Jack grew up in neo-San Francisco, a near future paradise akin to that in Logan's run. He has a limited scope of humanity shaped by a lack of serious adversity and growing up amongst a homogeneous population. As he moves into his late-20s/early-30s, however, he feels he does not fit in with society and his peer group. As a result, society is rejecting him (loss of job, loss of girlfriend, loss of lust for life).

Parental Background: Jack has loving parents but he has distanced himself from them in an attempt to become financially independent. His parents are not well off, but like most in the community they put up a front to keep up appearances. Jack is somewhat of an embarrassment to his parents, because he has not fulfilled his potential (in their eyes - a job at a brand name corporation).

Dreams/Aspirations: He craves wealth and fame to achieve independence/freedom, as well as respect from his peer group. Wealth is also abundant in his community, and he feels he should have some. He has a complicated relationship with women, as he did not receive affection from the opposite sex when he was younger. To compensate he tries dating beautiful but vapid women that he has little in common with. This also feeds into his craving for respect.

Hates: Charlatans, Fools, Nepotism, Corporations, Uniformity, Banality, Routine

Loves: Music, Art, Film, Pop Culture, Nature, New Experience

Fears: Being average, Losing respect, Being a financial slave, Never finding love

#### **Carlita:**

General Background: Carlita grew up in rural Argentina in relative obscurity. She was raised by a single mother who was impregnated by an ex-Nazi descendant. As she grew up she asked questions about her father and tracked him down. Her father was extremely wealthy, and made sure Carlita was groomed and trained at the finest schools (Harvard, etc...). She grew up very close to her father, until he was murdered by a mob (who discovered that he was tied to the

Nazis). Carlita grew hateful of people and carried on her father's work, namely running drugs and building an underground empire.

Dreams/Aspirations: Carlita wants to carry on her father's legacy. She wants her father's love even though he is dead. She has a strange relationship with men seeing her father's dynamic with her mother (one where the man as the power broker made the rules). She enjoys submission, but is a power leader in her everyday life, and refuses to show weakness.

Hates: Lower classes, Weak men, Waiting (She's Impatient)

Loves: Pain, Finer Things, Power

Fears: That her organization will lose respect and fear of her

### **Neo-Nazi Henchman:**

General Background: Born to German and Italian parents, the Neo-Nazi grew up in Villa 31, a slum in Buenos Aires. He had a junkie father who beat his mother. Eventually, his father killed his mother in the throes of a bad trip. His father turned to beating him, and he he ran out and stayed on the streets. A Nazi descendant noticed him stealing from one of his businesses, and took him under his wing. The Neo-Nazi was ruthless, moving up the ranks in the Nazi underground organization. He is a trusted lieutenant in Carlita's organization.

Dreams/Aspirations: He wants a sense of belonging and to be respected by his peers in the underground

Hates: People that are chemically dependent or on drugs, Weak women, time wasting

Loves: Self-Improvement, Strength, Security, Routine

### **Kelly:**

Kelly is Carlita's niece and is living in neo-San Francisco. She has no idea that she is descended from nazis as her mother shields her from that throughout her childhood. Her father was absent, and her mother tried to separate herself from her family's past. She is well traveled and she formed a relationship with her Aunt Carlita while visited Buenos Aires. She doesn't know about her Aunt's greater ambitions, but she knows that she is interested in technology, and she sends technologists from neo-SF to Buenos Aires. Carlita insists that these meetings appear organic, so Kelly sends her Aunt their pictures to meet them that way.

### **Tattooed Man (Thomás Rey):**

Thomás was raised in the shanty village of Buenos Aires, Villa 31. He was one of five siblings, and food was scarce, so he took to stealing to stay fed. His father was in the Argentinian army. His father drank and beat his kids. He event went so far as to make Thomás and his siblings fight in order to toughen them up. Thomás excelled in school, despite his turbulent home life, and is naturally brilliant. A benefactor in the underground took an interest in Thomás when he was expelled for peddling drugs on school grounds (he was snitched out by an accomplice). This benefactor had Thomás acting like a floor general, masterminding their distribution

operation. He eventually earned his stripes by doing hits, and he tracked down and kills his snitch, his first murder. The benefactor is connected to Carlita, and he recommended Thomás to her. Thomás is now responsible for Carlita's drug operation.

**Johnny Holmby & Bravo Beverly:**

General Background: Johnny and Bravo come from privilege and have wanted for nothing through most of their lives. They attempt to derive meaning in their lives through drugs and girls, but generally end up feeling hollow after their conquests. They are representative of the privileged youth and how private school and doting parents don't necessarily result in well adjusted people. They fall in with Jack during his shun of society and they meet at a warehouse party. Jack joins them from time to time at these parties. He knows they'll always be there.

**Club Girls (Leighna, Sabrina, Juliana):**

Privileged and spoiled, these girls have wanted for nothing their entire lives. Their families are new money and they benefited immensely from the rise of automation and technology. They all aspire to be more established models and have attempted to build social media followings with selfies. They choose poorly in their love lives, and are often swayed by shows of wealth and power.

**Richard:**

Richard is a vagabonder originally from neo-New York. He has been traveling for 3+ years. Richard worked as a corporate lawyer before realizing it was not for him and he left. He traveled through SE Asia, Europe and Africa before forging into South America. He is an accomplished diver, and although he acts confident, he has a deep seeded insecurity that disallows him from forming real relationships with anyone.

**Carmen and Whitney:**

These are two girls from Norway who has been traveling together for 9+ months. Like many Europeans, they live for adventure and want to explore and understand the world around them. The concept of danger is foreign to them, as they had a very nice upbringing in a comforting community. They view people as inherently good.