

Smoke Signals presents



The TWILIGHT ZONE

Halloween Edition

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Welcome to The Twilight Zone

There is a *Twilight Zone* beyond that which is known to the casual fan. It is a *Twilight Zone* rich in history and timeless in its relevance. It is the meeting place between entertainment and morality play, between science-fiction and horror, and it lies between what we fear and what we think we know. This is the dimension of Rod Serling's brilliance. It is what we call "timelessly classic".

Some may think that what I've just stated is a bit hyperbolic. But in a time when censors were hypersensitive about what they would allow on the air and sponsors were nervous about any discussion of race, war, government control, atomic warfare or any other timely issue, Rod Serling managed to talk about all the topics of the day without alerting anyone that's what he was doing. There were a lot of viewers who understood though. Yes, *The Twilight Zone* is a short format science-fiction show and it can be enjoyed as just that. But *The Twilight Zone* is much more than that. The issues *The Twilight Zone* tackles are just as relevant today and just as universal. Fear and death and how we deal with them were major themes in episodes of the show and they are relevant to everyone.

So, why did I choose *The Twilight Zone* for Halloween? Honestly, I thought I would give you a break from the morbid and monstrous for one

season. *The Twilight Zone* is just creepy enough for Halloween, but it doesn't quite go to the level of gut-munching shadow monsters, bleeding icebergs or catacombs full of body parts. Don't worry though, I still have plenty of ideas for more of that too.

Besides, I've always found it odd that they have *Twilight Zone* marathons on New Year's and not Halloween. What kind of sense is that?

I'm not sure when I saw *The Twilight Zone* for the first time. I am pretty sure that it's something my father would have introduced to me before I could even speak. Of course, I could say the same thing about Dracula, Frankenstein, the Wolfman and the Mummy. You could say I had a different kind of childhood. So, while some of the things shown on the *Twilight Zone* may have been shocking or frightening to many, I just enjoyed the show. First because there were funny creatures, then later because of the concepts.

Submitted for your approval... What follows is a brief biography of Rod Serling, a short history of *The Twilight Zone* and then a compact discussion of some of the best episodes.

By the way, although "submitted for your approval" has become associated with Rod Serling, he only said it three times during the entire run of the show and its first use wasn't until the 101st episode ("Cavender is Coming").

If you want to know more about *The Twilight Zone*, I recommend reading *The Twilight Zone Companion* by Marc Scott Zicree. You may also enjoy *The Twilight Zone: Unlocking the Door to a Television Classic* by Martin Grams, Jr., but at over 700 pages and nine chapters of *Twilight Zone* history, it's more for the hardcore fan or TV historian. If you want to watch the episodes, I recommend getting the [Image Entertainment/ CBS 2012 Blu-Ray release](#) of the complete series. It has the episode meant to be the pilot, audio commentaries (often more than one for each episode), interviews and lectures by Rod Serling.



Rod Serling showing Inger Stevens (from "The Hitch-Hiker") one of his model airplanes.

Rod Serling: Narrator of Nightmares

Rodman Edward Serling was born in Syracuse, NY on December 25, 1924. At the age of two, his family moved to Binghamton, NY where his father operated a grocery store. The morning after his high school graduation, Rod enlisted in the US Army, hoping to fight Nazis in Europe. During his training, he became a boxer as a flyweight and fought seventeen bouts, receiving a broken nose in both his first and last bouts. Instead of fighting Nazis, he was sent to the Pacific as a paratrooper in the 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 11th Airborne Division and took part in fighting in Leyte (where he suffered injuries to his knee and wrist) and Manila, both in the Philippines, and later as part of the occupation force in Japan. He came home with a Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the Philippine Liberation Medal and emotional scars that would dog him for the rest of his life. Soon after returning home, his father died of a heart attack.

Serling enrolled at Antioch College in Ohio as a physical education student. While attending college, he made some extra cash testing equipment for the Air Force. Some were so dangerous that he earned \$500 to \$1,000 per test, half paid up front and the other payable upon survival. The physical education student performing perilous tests quickly realized his passions and talents lay elsewhere.

Serling changed his major to English literature and began writing. He used his experiences with everyday working class life and WWII as inspiration. As a senior, he married Carolyn Kramer. At this time, he also submitted his first script, titled "To Live a Dream", as part of a writing contest. His script was selected for broadcast and he won a trip to New York City and \$500. Heartened by this, Serling began writing more scripts for radio and television. In 1948, Serling moved to New York City, working as a freelance writer. By 1951,

he was regularly selling scripts to live network series, selling ninety scripts over the next four years. In 1955, he won his first Emmy Award for "Patterns", about ruthless business executives, and won a second Emmy in 1957 for "Requiem For a Heavyweight", starring Jack Palance.

Despite his success, Rod Serling was plagued by network censorship. In August 1955, Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old black young man visiting family in Mississippi was abducted, beaten and killed. That fall, an all white jury acquitted the two white men charged with the crime. The verdict sparked outrage, the civil rights movement and a story from Rod Serling. He knew there was no way that any network would air a true to life story, so he prepared to change the story enough to thinly veil it. He changed the victim from a black teenager to a Jewish pawnbroker. *The US Steel Hour*, an anthology on ABC, green lit the script and Serling simultaneously began writing a script for Broadway, where he knew there was less censorship and the real story could be told. But Serling made the mistake of telling *Daily Variety* that his script was based on the story of Emmett Till. *The Steel Hour* and ABC began receiving threats over the script and Serling says the script was "gone over with a



The Serling family with young Rod at center.

fine-tooth comb by 30 different people," and he was left to show up to "at least two meetings a day for over a week, taking notes as to what had to be changed." By the time "Noon on Doomsday" aired on April 25, 1956, there was no trace of the South anywhere and the opening made it

very clear that the story was set in New England. The victim was now just a foreigner and the killer was portrayed as a good boy briefly gone wrong. Serling said, "I felt like I got run over by a truck and then it back[ed] up to finish the job." The deal he had arranged for his Broadway script also

fell through and it was never performed in his lifetime. Serling tried another script about the Till murder for *Playhouse 90*, but the CBS executives shifted the story a hundred years into the past and erased Till from the story, along with any allusion to black/white relations. At least this script, “[A Town Has Turned to Dust](#)”, more meaningfully communicated Serling’s message about hate and prejudice. Another script written for CBS in 1959, “The Rank and File”, about labor union corruption, was also heavily censored. Serling’s response to this censorship was the TV series *The Twilight Zone*.

The term “twilight zone” is actually an Air Force term and Serling said that he was unaware of it until much later. He thought he made it up. Serling’s *Twilight Zone* served to obscure from the censors all the topics that Serling wanted to write about: prejudice, corruption, fear, war. Serling gave the pilot script to CBS, who passed it on to Westinghouse Desilu Playhouse. The script, “[The Time Element](#)”, was a hit and CBS green lit the series. In an interview with Mike Wallace, it’s clear that Serling has learned his lesson about showing his hand. When Wallace accused him up giving up on important scripts, Serling responded, “If by important you mean I’m not going to try to delve into current social problems dramatically, you’re quite right. I’m not.” We know today that is clearly not true. Serling wrote 92 of the 156 *Twilight Zone* episodes and was the on-screen narrator. It also earned him his third Emmy. His personal favorite episode was “Time Enough at Last” and his favorite written by someone else was “The Invaders” by [Richard Matheson](#). The *Twilight Zone* ran for five seasons, from 1959 until 1964.

Serling served as President of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences for 1965 and 1966. In December 1966, NBC aired “The Doomsday Flight”, a television movie written by Rod Serling. The story revolves around a plane rigged with a pressure bomb set to explode if the plane goes below 4,000 feet. The show was a ratings success, but had unintended consequences. Within six days, there were eight bomb threats called in to TWA, Eastern, American, Pan Am and Northwest

Airlines. Serling’s reaction? “I wish to Christ I had written a stagecoach drama starring John Wayne instead. I wish I’d never been born.” In 1968, he wrote the first three scripts for the film adaptation of *Planet of the Apes*. His story had technologically advanced apes, but the studio deemed it too expensive to shoot. Michael Wilson, who shares writing credit, was brought in to rework the script.

In 1970, Serling hosted *Rod Serling’s Night Gallery*: Serling himself was never happy with the series. More horror than science fiction, he described it as “Mannix in a cemetery.” He wrote more than a third of the episodes, but rejected the offer of creative control, a choice he regretted. By the last season, most of his scripts were rejected or heavily modified.

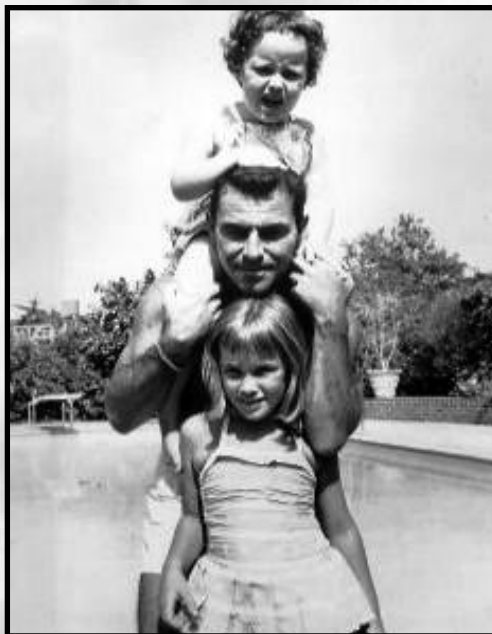
He narrated several Jacques Cousteau specials, along with some programs about UFOs and aliens. In 1973, Serling returned to radio with a dramatic series called *The Zero Hour*. His final performance was a *Zero Hour* episode titled “Fantasy Park”.

From the early 1960s, until his death, he also taught at Ithaca College in New York and tried to instill in his students a moral responsibility to tell meaningful and relevant stories. “The writer’s role is to be a menacer of the public’s conscience,” Serling later said. “He must have a position, a point of view. He must see the arts as a vehicle of social criticism and he must focus the issues of his time.”

Serling wrote 252 scripts and won six Emmys, the most Emmys ever given to an individual for dramatic writing. In May 1975, at age 50, he suffered a heart attack and then a second heart attack a couple weeks later. He went to the hospital for open heart surgery, but died on June 28, 1975.

Below are additional YouTube links:

[Ben Mankiewicz’s comments on Requiem For a Heavyweight](#)
[A Conversation with Rod Serling](#)
[Rod Serling’s interview with Chris Wallace](#)
[Rod Serling on Writing](#)
[Rod Serling speaking at UCLA](#)



Rod Serling with his daughters, Jodi on his shoulders and Anne.

Twilight Zone History

In 1958, CBS purchased Rod Serling's pilot for *The Twilight Zone*, "The Time Element". It had a lot of the elements the show would ultimately go on to be known for: a science fiction/fantasy storyline, opening and closing narration and the series defining twist. Unfortunately, after purchasing the script, CBS shelved the script indefinitely. Enter Bert Granet, who was producing Westinghouse Desilu Playhouse in 1958. It ran fairly work-a-day dramas three weeks out of four and then a sitcom starring Lucille Ball and Desi Arnez for the fourth week. He was looking for big actors and better stories written by big names to improve the show. He wanted Rod Serling. He met with Rod Serling, who told him about a script that CBS had shelved. After some persuasion, Granet bought the script for the princely sum of \$10,000. Westinghouse at first refused to air the story. Granet insisted that he wanted the story and Arnez backed him. Westinghouse backed down, but insisted the main character never try to warn the military (as in the original script) because they had a number of government contracts and that there had to be a more definite ending. This last edict caused a brief monologue by Arnez to be inserted at the end. It was praised by audiences and critics alike and Granet's office received more than 6,000 glowing letters in response. While it was well received by audiences, there's nothing inherently great about "The Time Element". In and of itself, it is fairly mundane, especially for modern viewers. But what it led to was brilliance on the small screen.

Encouraged about the prospect of a series, CBS began talks with Serling. There was just one problem. The pilot had already aired and Serling needed a new one. First, he wrote "The Happy Place", about a society where everyone is forced into concentration camps at age sixty. The network thought this was too depressing (wonder why) and asked him to write another pilot. In all, Serling wrote four pilots, the last one was "Where Is Everybody?", the CBS approved pilot for the series. *The Twilight Zone* was promoted to the public starting early in 1959. Despite his Emmy wins and admiration from the writing community, Serling found it hard to sell the series to critics. Most critics saw science fiction as simple childish

fantasy. Mike Wallace asked him in an interview, "...[Y]ou're going to be, obviously, working so hard on *The Twilight Zone* that, in essence, for the time being and for the foreseeable future, you've given up on writing anything important for television, right?"

Another problem for the series lay in the narration. [Cornelius Westbrook Van Voorhis](#) narrated the pilot, but found himself unavailable for the series because of other commitments. Orson Welles was approached for the part, but wanted too much money. Finally, with time running out, Rod Serling suggested that he do it himself, despite his nervousness in front of the camera. It was another stroke of luck for future *Twilight Zone* fans. Apparently, many people, including producer [William Self](#), felt that Van Voorhis sounded too pompous. Serling was dubbed over Van Voorhis for the airing of the pilot episode.

The iconic intro changed from season to season, but perhaps it's most significant change is one most people don't even know about. Rod Serling originally had the opening line as "There is a sixth dimension..." When William Self heard this he asked, "What happened to the fifth one?" Serling answered that he thought there were five already and changed the opening line, realizing the mistake. Another change was from "the sunlight of his knowledge" to "the summit of his knowledge."

Now they needed the music. The great [Bernard Hermann](#) composed the theme used for the first season, but the music most associated with the show began in the second season and was composed by [Marius Constant](#) (this is the music everyone imitates to signify something weird. "Da-da da-da, da-da da-da"). Contributors for other music used in the show included [Jerry Goldsmith](#) (*The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* theme, *The Agony and the Ecstasy*, *Planet of the Apes*), [Leonard Rosenman](#) (*East of Eden*, *Rebel Without a Cause*, *Fantastic Voyage*, *The Jazz Singer*), [Fred Steiner](#) (*The Andy Griffith Show*, *Father Knows Best*, *Gunsmoke*, *The Color Purple*), [Nathan Van Cleave](#) (*Easter Parade*, *Funny Face*, *White Christmas*) and [Franz Waxman](#) (*Bride of Frankenstein*, *Rebecca*, *A Place in the Sun*, *Mister Roberts*).

The series was also fortunate in finding very talented writers, including **Charles Beaumont** (co-writer of *Burn, Witch, Burn!* and the Roger Corman productions of *Premature Burial*, *The Haunted Palace*, *The Masque of the Red Death*), **Ray Bradbury** (*The Martian Chronicles*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, *The Illustrated Man*), **Earl Hamner, Jr.** (*Gentle Ben*, *The Walton's* and the animated film *Charlotte's Web*), **George Clayton Johnson** (*Star Trek's* "The Man Trap", *Ocean's 11*, *Logan's Run*), **Reginald Rose** (*Twelve Angry Men*), **Jerry Sohl** (episodes of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *Star Trek*) and the legendary Richard Matheson (*I Am Legend*, *House of Usher*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *Duel*, *The Incredible Shrinking Man*, *A Stir of Echoes*, *Hell House* and sixteen episodes of *The Twilight Zone*).

In season two, in an effort to save some money, the network made the decision to shoot on videotape. Serling was opposed to the idea, partly because it precluded the show from location shooting. The change was abandoned after only six episodes ("Twenty Two", "Static", "The Whole Truth", "The Lateness of the Hour", "The Night of the Meek" and "Long Distance Call"). Another change came in season four. The first three seasons are all thirty minutes, but the fourth season episodes are one hour long. The show returned to thirty minutes in its last season.

In January 1964, CBS decided to cancel the show, claiming the show was over budget and the ratings were suffering. Neither was true. Serling's agent tried to get another network to pick up the show. NBC wasn't interested, but Tom Moore at ABC was. Unfortunately, Moore seemed to want monsters and that didn't sit well with Serling. Moore and Serling met, but the meeting apparently did not go well as the next day, Serling gave *Daily Variety* a fairly scathing opinion of what Moore wanted for the series. After reading Serling's comments the next day, Moore told the media that the project was dead.

Serling had sold his stake in *The Twilight Zone* to CBS. Later he approached CBS about buying the series back, but CBS rebuffed the idea, along with a separate offer from Francis Ford Coppola. Yet it would be years before *Twilight Zone* saw daylight again.

The Twilight Zone would not return until *Twilight Zone: The Movie* in 1983, produced by Steven Spielberg. It had some major star power

attached. Actors included Dan Aykroyd, Albert Brooks, John Lithgow, Scatman Crothers, Kevin McCarthy, Bill Mummy and Vic Morrow. Burgess Meredith did the narration. There are four stories with three remakes of original episodes and one story inspired by and reworked from an original episode. Each segment had a different director: John Landis, Steven Spielberg, Joe Dante and George Miller. Jerry Goldsmith composed the music. Unfortunately, this movie is perhaps best known for a **tragic accident** during John Landis's segment in which a helicopter accident killed Vic Morrow and two children.

In 1984, CBS decided it was time to revive the series. Serling's iconic opening is nonexistent and the narrator is never seen. It never approached the notoriety of the original series, although some episodes were well-received, and the series ended in 1989. In the early 1990s, an outline for a two-hour TV movie was produced by Richard Matheson and Carol Serling, but was rejected by CBS until Carol Serling discovered an unused shooting script by Rod Serling. CBS decided to air the two-hour movie on May 19, 1994 as "Twilight Zone: Rod Serling's Lost Classics" with Serling's found script "Where The Dead Are" and Matheson's adaptation of "The Theatre". James Earl Jones does the opening and closing narration. There was a planned sequel with three adaptations by Matheson, but critical response was mixed and the ratings were not good enough to support a sequel.

A third series was aired on UPN in 2002 and hosted by Forest Whitaker. These were hour-long episodes of two half-hour stories. It was canceled after a single season.

As early as late 2012, it was rumored that *Twilight Zone* was making another comeback. In December 2017, CBS All Access ordered a fourth series, hosted and narrated by Jordan Peele. The series premiered on April 1, 2019 with "Nightmare at 30,000 Feet". The show was canceled after only two seasons.

The show may or may never be revived, but no matter. The show lives on in books, comics, TV and pop culture references too numerous to name. And people everywhere enjoy a shared experience whenever they hear the opening bars of music or parts of Serling's iconic opening. It doesn't matter where you are on planet Earth, we've all got one foot in the *Twilight Zone*.

For Your Consideration...

What follows is a list of some of the best episodes of *The Twilight Zone*. Each episode's section begins with some statistics, Rod Serling's opening narration for that episode and a short synopsis. After that, I provide a very short personal opinion of the episode, followed by some interesting facts. There are no spoilers in the opening narrations and I think I managed to avoid them in the synopsis, but there may be spoilers in the text after that. Reader be warned. Following the featured episodes is a listing of other very good episodes. The episodes are not ranked, they are presented according to their original air date. Enjoy.

Time Enough At Last

Aired 11/20/1959
Season one, episode eight
Written by Rod Serling, based on short story by Lynn Venable
Directed by John Brahm
Music by Leith Stevens
Starring Burgess Meredith as Henry Bemis
Total Cost: \$57,044.16
Shooting Time: 3 days

narrated the 1983 *Twilight Zone* movie. Viewers will also recognize him from *Batman* (as the Penguin), the *Rocky* movies, *Clash of the Titans* (1981), *Torture Garden* (1967), *Burnt Offerings* (1976) and *The Sentinel* (1977).

Opening Narration: "Witness Mr. Henry Bemis, a charter member in the fraternity of dreamers. A bookish little man whose passion is the printed page, but who is conspired against by a bank president and a wife and a world full of tongue-cluckers and the unrelenting hands of a clock. But in just a moment, Mr. Bemis will enter a world without bank presidents or wives or clocks or anything else. He'll have a world all to himself... without anyone."

Synopsis: Henry Bemis, a timid bookworm, constantly harangued by his wife and his boss at the bank, just wants to be able to sit in peace and read a good book.

Review: This is among the best-known episodes of *The Twilight Zone* and I have seen it a few times. Burgess Meredith is, of course, very good in this episode, but, for me, the ending lacks the punch of other episodes. Other than "be careful what you wish for", there's not much of a moral and there's just not enough of a twist.

Episode Facts: Meredith used two pairs of eyeglasses. A pair with very thick, distorted lenses was used for close-ups. A pair with window glass was used in long shots to allow Meredith to see.

Some special sets were used for this episode. The bank vault set was built on springs to achieve the concussive effect of the bomb. The large, bombed-out landscape was a sound stage with a painted sky left over from a movie. The large set of library stairs was a standing set on the MGM back lot. The same steps are used in *The Twilight Zone* episode "A Nice Place to Visit" and in George Pal's *The Time Machine*.

This was the only *Twilight Zone* episode to be nominated for a Directors' Guild Award. However, the award went to Phil Karlson for the *Untouchables*. This episode did contribute to the series winning the 1960 Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation, an award the series would also win in 1961 and 1962. The episode also helped Buck Houghton win a Producers' Guild Award.

This was the first of five *Twilight Zone* outings for Burgess Meredith. He would go on to appear in "Mr. Dingle, the Strong", "The Obsolete Man" and "Printer's Devil" and



Top: Burgess Meredith as Henry Bemis. Bottom: Burgess Meredith on the stairs from *The Time Machine*.

The Hitch-Hiker

Aired 1/22/1960

Season one, episode sixteen

Written by Rod Serling, based on the radio play by Lucille Fletcher

Directed by Alvin Ganzer

Music was stock music

Starring Inger Stevens as Nan Adams

Total Cost: \$47,721.63

Shooting Time: 3 days

Opening Narration: “Her name is Nan Adams. She’s twenty-seven years old. Her occupation: buyer at a New York department store. At present on vacation, driving cross-country to Los Angeles, California from Manhattan.” The narration continues after the dialogue between Nan and the mechanic. “Minor incident on Highway 11 in Pennsylvania. Perhaps, to be filed away under “accidents you walk away from.” But from this moment on, Nan Adams’ companion on a trip to California will be terror. Her route: fear. Her destination: quite unknown.”

Synopsis: After a tire blow-out, Nan Adams continues on her journey, followed relentlessly by a mysterious hitchhiker.

Review: I watched this episode recently. The story is quite good and the twist at the end is satisfying. My one criticism might be that to modern women watching the episode, Nan may come off as a bit hysterical.

Episode Facts: This story is the only one adapted from a radio play. Serling heard the broadcast on *The Mercury Theatre on the Air*, long before *The Twilight Zone*. When he was working on *The Twilight Zone*, Serling remembered the story and gave instructions for Buck Houghton to buy the story from the

author, Lucille Fletcher. Because it was a well-known story that had been broadcast three times on *The Mercury Theater on the Air*, Houghton thought that they might have to pay up to \$1,000. They started with an offer of \$750. The offer was rejected and Houghton learned that Lucille Fletcher had previously turned down a \$2,000 offer from Alfred Hitchcock. The deal was eventually done for \$2,000 and a standard W. G. A. (Writers’ Guild of America) percentage rerun pattern based on \$1,100.

Fletcher’s story was based loosely on something that happened to her. While many other stories were extensively reworked for *The Twilight Zone*, the only real change made to this story was to change the main character from a man to a woman. Lucille Fletcher saw no purpose in the change and disapproved.

She was much more happy with Orson Welles’s radio program, made possible by her then-husband, Bernard Hermann, musical director of *Mercury Theater on the Air* and the first *Twilight Zone* theme.

The scene where Nan’s car stalls on the railroad tracks was originally to be shot head-on to the train. They couldn’t afford to rent a train, so they simply set up a cameraman on the tracks at a railroad crossing. A train that passed in the opposite direction convinced them they could never pull the camera off the tracks in time. The scene was ultimately shot from the side of the tracks. Regardless, the scene required two motorcycle police officers to detour traffic for filming, the presence of a fireman and permission from S&P Railroad to film on the tracks.

Nan’s car is a light-colored 1959 Mercury Montclair four-door hardtop with the inside rear view mirror and front door vent windows taken out. But, in the scene where Nan attempts to run down the hitchhiker, the car shown is a black 1957 Ford two-door sedan.



Above: Nan calls home. Bottom left: Nan drives past the mysterious hitch hiker. Bottom right: The strange man is following her.

The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street

Aired 3/4/1960

Season one, episode twenty-two

Written by Rod Serling

Directed by Ron Winston

Music by Rene Garriguenc

Starring Claude Akins as Steve Brand, Jack Weston as Charlie and Barry Atwater as Mr. Goodman

Total Cost: \$56,888.77

Shooting Time: 4 days

Opening Narration: “Maple Street, U.S.A., late summer. A tree-lined little world of front porch gliders, barbecues, the laughter of children, and the bell of an ice cream vendor. At the sound of the roar and the flash of light, it will be precisely 6:43 P.M. on Maple Street.” The narration continues after the neighbors wonder if what flew overhead was a meteor. “This is Maple Street on a late Saturday afternoon. Maple Street in the last calm and reflective moment before the monsters came.”

Synopsis: A light streaks through the sky just before the power goes out on Maple Street. The phones won't work, the cars won't run. A kid among the growing crowd suggests that what they saw earlier was a flying saucer and that an advanced scout was already among them. But who?

Review: This is another episode I viewed recently. It is quite rightly one of the most highly-regarded episodes. Not only is it a wonderful science-fiction story, it has a lesson to teach.

Episode Facts: People today may forget that at the time this episode aired, the era of Joseph McCarthy was only a couple years in the past and this episode clearly speaks to that part of our

past. Of course, the paranoia that pits neighbor against neighbor can be generalized to many situations and still speaks to us today.

The two aliens shown at the end are wearing outfits from *Forbidden Planet* and the parting shot of the ship flying away is reused from *Forbidden Planet*, shown upside-down and backwards. The retractable stairway into the ship is also reused from *Forbidden Planet*. Serling revealed in a letter that the use of the *Forbidden Planet* props were not his first choice, but that it was a budgetary decision.

The episode was a near universal hit and the moral of the episode was not lost on many. Educators everywhere wrote in requests for 16mm copies of *Twilight Zone* episodes, in particular “The Monsters Are Due On Maple Street.” There were so many requests that CBS made a blanket decision that they were no longer giving out copies of *Twilight Zone* episodes, in large part because of the demand for this episode. Given its popularity, even today, it's no surprise that this episode was redone for the 2003 UPN reboot of *The Twilight Zone*.

Claude Akins would go on to star in *Twilight Zone's* “The Little People” and viewers may recognize him from his character work in shows like *The Rifleman*, *Wagon Train*, *Bonanza*, *Rawhide* and *Gunsmoke*. He also featured in *The Caine Mutiny* (1954), *Rio Bravo* (1959), *Inherit the Wind* (1960) and *Battle for the Planet of the Apes* (1973). Jack Weston would later appear in *Twilight Zone's* “The Bard” and Barry Atwater may be recognized as the vampire in *The Night Stalker* and as Surak in *Star Trek: The Original Series* “The Savage Curtain”.



Far left: The Goodmans. Top left: Maybe it was aliens. Top right: Claude Akins as Steve Brand. Bottom right: Nervous neighbors outside the Goodmans' house.

Eye of the Beholder

Aired 11/11/1960

Season two, episode six

Written by Rod Serling

Directed by Douglas Heyes

Music by Bernard Hermann

Starring Maxine Stuart as Janet Tyler (bandaged) and

Donna Douglas as Janet Tyler (unbandaged)

Total Cost: \$48,599.00

Shooting Time: 3 days

Opening Narration: “Suspended in time and space for a moment, your introduction to Miss Janet Tyler, who lives in a very private world of darkness. A universe whose dimensions are the size, thickness, length of the swath of bandages that cover her face. In a moment we will go back into this room, and also in a moment we will look under those bandages. Keeping in mind of course that we are not to be surprised by what we see, because this isn’t just a hospital, and this patient 307 is not just a woman. This happens to be the *Twilight Zone*, and Miss Janet Tyler, with you, is about to enter it.”

Synopsis: Janet Tyler lies in a hospital bed, her face in bandages after surgery. She was born with an abnormal face, hideous to everyone around her. She’s undergone surgery to correct it. Janet just wants to look like everyone else.

Review: Everyone familiar with *The Twilight Zone* knows this episode. The fabulous lighting and direction keep its nasty secret until the last. It earns its reputation as one of the best episodes.

Episode Facts: The makeup was achieved through a collaboration between the director, Douglas Heyes (who had worked as a cartoonist for Disney) and makeup artist William Tuttle (who had done the Morlocks for *The Time Machine*). Tuttle told Heyes that the makeup he had in mind was too expensive. Heyes suggested using makeup pieces pasted onto the actors faces. What Tuttle produced were two foam rubber appliances, one covering the brows and another covering the nose, cheeks and upper lip.

Two actresses were cast as Janet Tyler. It was important that the actress under the bandages was good at acting. Once the bandages were off, they just needed a girl that was stunningly beautiful. Maxine Stuart was chosen as the girl under the bandages for the expressiveness of her hands and the harsh quality of her voice that wouldn’t foreshadow the reveal. Donna Douglas was cast as the girl outside of the bandages and would soon become famous as Ellie Mae on *The Beverly Hillbillies*. Maxine Stuart found it ironic in a story against conformity that they insisted on casting another actress because of her conventional beauty. For her part, Donna Douglas turned out to be a very good actress, studying Maxine Stuart’s performances and making the planned dubbing

of her lines by Stuart unnecessary.

When it came time to remove the bandages, to get the perspective they wanted, a fish bowl wrapped in bandages was placed over the camera and unwrapped while the camera rolled.

There were many camera tricks used so that the audience would not see anyone’s faces until the final reveal. Knowing this, Buck Houghton was looking for actors and actresses with a sympathetic quality to their voice and interviewed all of them with his back to them, choosing them solely by voice.



Top and center: Janet Tyler under bandages. Bottom: Janet Tyler after the bandages are removed.

Long Distance Call

Aired 3/3/1961

Season two, episodetwenty-two

Written by William Idelson and Charles Beaumont

Directed by James Sheldon

Music was stock

Starring Billy Mumy as Billy Bayles

Total Cost: \$50,474.16

Shooting Time: 2 days

Opening Narration: “As must be obvious, this is a house hovered over by Mr. Death, an omnipresent player to the third and final act of every life. And it’s been said, and probably rightfully so, that what follows this life is one of the unfathomable mysteries, an area of darkness which we, the living, reserve for the dead—or so it is said. For in a moment, a child will try to cross that bridge which separates light and shadow, and, of course, he must take the only known route, that indistinct highway through the region we call The Twilight Zone.”

Synopsis: For his fifth birthday, Billy receives a toy phone from his grandmother. Soon after, his grandmother dies. Billy begins talking to his grandmother through the toy phone and she’s asking for something terrible.

Review: This might be one of my favorites. It’s chilling in so many ways. This is Billy Mumy’s first of two outings on The Twilight Zone, before he

was famous as Will Robinson. He’s a joy to watch and that can’t be said of many child actors.

Episode Facts: Idelson took inspiration for the story from a toy phone that his son received from Idelson’s mother (who, like the grandmother in the episode, lived with him and his wife) for his second birthday.

Billy Mumy’s mother was very concerned with the story line. Mumy remembers his mother thinking it might make a rather morbid impression on him. Also of concern was the scene where Billy drowns in a small pond. Mumy really did float face-down in the pond, although it never made it to the screen.

The end scene with Billy’s father talking on the phone was filmed as scripted, but it was decided that it needed to be rewritten. Charles Beaumont was suffering from Alzheimer’s and unable to do the rewrite, so after the first shoot, everyone took a quick break and Serling rewrote the scene and it was taped again.

Like several *Twilight Zone* stories, there were accusations of plagiarism. Only one was serious enough to require a meeting with the plaintiff’s attorney and the case was dropped after Idelson explained the genesis of the story.

Billy Mumy would go on to star in *Twilight Zone*’s “It’s A Good Life” as creepy Anthony Fremont and “In Praise of Pip”. He also starred in *Lost in Space* as Will Robinson and in *Babylon 5* as Lennier.



Top: Hearing breathing on the other end of a toy phone. Center: Billy talks to his dead grandmother. Bottom left: Billy’s grandmother is dying. Bottom right: Billy Mumy as Billy Bayles.

Will The Real Martian Please Stand Up

Aired 5/26/1961

Season two, episode twenty-eight

Written by Rod Serling

Directed by Montgomery Pittman

Music was stock

Starring John Hoyt as Ross

Total Cost: \$44,750.80

Shooting Time: 3 days

Opening Narration: “Wintry February night, the present. Order of events: a phone call from a frightened woman noting the arrival of an unidentified flying object, then the checkout you’ve just witnessed, with two state troopers verifying the event – but with nothing more enlightening to add beyond evidence of some tracks leading across the highway to a diner. You’ve heard of trying to find a needle in a haystack? Well, stay with us now, and you’ll be part of an investigating team whose mission is not to find that proverbial needle, no, their task is even harder. They’ve got to find a Martian in a diner, and in just a moment you’ll search with them, because you’ve just landed – in *The Twilight Zone*.”

Synopsis: Two troopers follow tracks from a possible UFO landing to a diner where a bus has stopped to wait out a storm. In the diner is the soda jerk, the bus driver and seven passengers. And that’s a problem. They all look human, but the bus driver is sure that he only took on six passengers. Some strange things happen in the diner, but everyone is stuck there until a bridge is repaired. Once the bridge is repaired, the troopers allow the bus to continue its trip. They can’t hold it

without any evidence. But who was the alien?

Review: If I were to choose an episode with which to introduce *The Twilight Zone* to someone that had never seen it before, this would make the short list. It’s a science-fiction whodunnit with a twist after the twist. Forget trying to figure it out, just sit back and take it in.

Episode Facts: Jack Elam as Avery (the eccentric old man) required almost no makeup for his role. His teeth were naturally in rough shape, his nose was misshapen, his eyes protruded and one of them was sightless because of a childhood fight. His appearance gives the audience a red herring to focus on. Elam did a lot of character work in shows such as *The Rifleman*, *Bonanza* and *Gunsmoke* and starred in *Creature From Black Lake* (1976) and *Uninvited* (1993).

John Hoyt, who plays Ross in this episode, also appeared in an episode of *Lights Out*, a popular horror serial TV show that ran from 1946 to 1952, titled “*The Martian Eyes*” (1951), where a man claims he can spot a Martian’s third eye by wearing infrared glasses. In this episode of *The Twilight Zone*, it’s the Venusian that has the third eye. Hoyt would later appear in the *Twilight Zone* episode “*The Lateness of the Hour*”. He also starred in *Lost Continent* (1951) and did character work in *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*, *Perry Mason*, *Star Trek: The Original Series*, *Time Tunnel*, *Petticoat Junction*, *The Virginian* and *Hogan’s Heroes*.

Barney Phillips, playing the soda jerk, also did character work in *Dragnet*, *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, *Have Gun-Will Travel*, *Gunsmoke* and appeared in *I Was a Teenage Werewolf* (1957). Phillips would also appear in three other *Twilight Zone* episodes:



Top: Jack Elam as Avery. Bottom left: Troopers question the diner patrons. Bottom right: Barney Phillips as the soda jerk.

It's A Good Life

Aired 11/3/1961

Season three, episode eight

Written by Rod Serling, based on the short story "It's a Good Life" by Jerome Bixby

Directed by James Sheldon

Music was stock

Starring Billy Mummy as Anthony Fremont, John Larch as Mr. Fremont and Cloris Leachman as Mrs. Fremont

Total Cost: \$47,130.13

Shooting Time: 3 days

Opening Narration: "Tonight's story on The Twilight Zone is somewhat unique and calls for a different kind of introduction. This, as you may recognize, is a map of the United States, and there's a little town there called Peaksville. On a given morning not too long ago, the rest of the world disappeared and Peaksville was left all alone. Its inhabitants were never sure whether the world was destroyed and only Peaksville left untouched or whether the village had somehow been taken away. They were, on the other hand, sure of one thing: the cause. A monster had arrived in the village. Just by using his mind, he took away the automobiles, the electricity, the machines because they displeased him — and he moved an entire community back into the dark ages — just by using his mind. Now I'd like to introduce you to some of the people in Peaksville, Ohio. This is Mr. Fremont. It's in his farmhouse that the monster resides. This is Mrs. Fremont. And this is Aunt Amy, who probably had more control over the monster in the beginning than almost anyone. But one day she forgot. She began to sing aloud. Now, the monster

doesn't like singing, so his mind snapped at her, turned her into the smiling, vacant thing you're looking at now. She sings no more. And you'll note that the people in Peaksville, Ohio have to smile. They have to think happy thoughts and say happy things because, once displeased, the monster can wish them into a cornfield or change them into a grotesque, walking horror. This particular monster can read minds, you see. He knows every thought, he can feel every emotion. Oh yes, I did forget something, didn't I? I forgot to introduce you to the monster. This is the monster. His name is Anthony Fremont. He's six years old, with a cute little-boy face and blue, guileless eyes. But when those eyes look at you, you'd better start thinking happy thoughts, because the mind behind them is absolutely in charge. This is the Twilight Zone."

Synopsis: A six-year-old boy keeps his family and everyone around them in fear. Little Anthony Fremont only needs to think of something to make it happen.

This episode was redone twice, once for the 1983 movie with Kathleen Quinlan, Kevin McCarthy and Billy Mummy and again in the 2002 reboot, starring Cloris Leachman, Billy Mummy as a middle-aged Anthony Fremont and Mummy's daughter, Lilianna.

Review: Billy Mummy is great to watch again and he is creepy in that way that only children can be. This episode is more of a thinker than some. Really, how do you control a god-like six-year-old and what kind of havoc might he wreak?

Episode Fact: The episode has the longest opening narration of any *Twilight Zone* episode, possibly because unlike many other episodes that have some moral lesson, this one is written just for the chills.



Top: Billy Mummy as Anthony Fremont. Bottom left: Kevin McCarthy and one of Anthony's creations from *Twilight Zone: The Movie*. Bottom right: Cloris Leachman and Billy Mummy reprise their roles in *The Twilight Zone* reboot.

To Serve Man

Aired 3/2/1962

Season three, episode twenty-four

Written by Rod Serling and based on the short story
"To Serve Man" by Damon Knight

Directed by Richard L. Bare

Music was stock

Starring Llyod Bochner as Michael Chambers,
Richard Kiel as the Kanamit and Susan Cummings
as Pat Brody

Total Cost: \$61,119.59

Shooting Time: 4 days

Opening Narration: "Respectfully submitted for your perusal a Kanamit. Height: a little over nine feet. Weight: in the neighborhood of three hundred and fifty pounds. Origin: unknown. Motives? Therein hangs the tale, for in just a moment, we're going to ask you to shake hands, figuratively, with a Christopher Columbus from another galaxy and another time. This is the *Twilight Zone*."

Synopsis: A race of seemingly benevolent aliens, bearing a strange book, solve all of humanity's problems. Too good to be true? Maybe.

Review: This is classic for a reason. For whatever reason, I saw the twist coming, but it still didn't detract from the horror and I just watch too many horror movies. This may also make the short list of episodes to introduce someone to *The Twilight Zone*.

Episode Facts: The footage of the saucer at the beginning of the episode was reused from *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and the shot of the saucer taking off at the end of the episode was reused from *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*. The retractable stairs are the same ones used in *Forbidden Planet* and the *Twilight Zone* episodes "On Thursday We Leave For Earth" and "The Monsters Are Due On Maple Street".

Richard Kiel, at just over seven feet tall, was cast as the Kanamit, but the voice was done by Joseph Ruskin in an uncredited performance. The Kanamit's dialogue had to be rewritten, but by that time, Kiel was no longer available. Kiel played all of the Kanamits in the episode. Whenever more than one Kanamit appears on screen, a split screen technique is employed. Kiel would go on to play Jaws in *Moonraker* (1979) and starred in *Force 10 From Navarone* (1978).

In Damon Knight's original story, the aliens looked like hairy, bipedal pigs.



Title translation of the Kanamit's strange book.

To save money, a number of set elements were reused. The flashing light in Chambers' spaceship room is reused from the costume of the alien in "Mr. Dingle, the Strong" and the camera at the UN is reused from Wordworth's cell in "The Obsolete Man". Stock music from the CBS library was used including music from *Twilight Zone* episodes "Back There" and "The Invaders".



Llyod Bochner on the stairs to a ship bound for the Kanamit homeworld.

The episode has a few factual errors. Michael Chambers says that the Kanamit's new nitrate was demonstrated in Argentina, as "barren and fruitless as any place on Earth". Argentina, in fact, has the thickest humus layer in the world and is a rich agricultural region. Chambers, in speaking about the Kanamit's fertilization process, says the soil has more vitamins than a drug store. While minerals are important to soil health, vitamins are almost irrelevant. The Kanamit's homeworld is said to be "100 billion miles off into space" in another galaxy. This distance wouldn't even get you to the nearest star, let alone another galaxy.

This episode has been referenced multiple times, including on *The Naked Gun 2 1/2* (where Lloyd Bochner parodies his role in this episode), *Married... With Children*, *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, *Angel*, *Futurama* and *The Simpsons* for their *Treehouse of Horror*.

In 1976, *To Serve Man: A Cookbook For People* was published by Owlswick Press in Philadelphia and is a recipe book using humans as ingredients with recipes including Chile con Hombre and Hungarian Ghoulash. The librarian in charge of cataloging books at the Library of Congress either didn't understand what the book was or had a sense of humor: it is classified there as a cookbook.

Little Girl Lost

Aired 3/16/1962

Season three, episode twenty-six

Written by Richard Matheson, based on his short story by the same name

Directed by Paul Stewart

Music by Bernard Hermann

Starring Charles Aidman as Bill, Robert Sampson as Chris Miller, Sarah Marshall as Ruth Miller, Tracy Stratford as Tina and Rhoda Williams as Tina's voice

Total Cost: \$50,035.64

Shooting Time: 3 days

Opening Narration: "Missing: one frightened little girl. Name: Bettina Miller. Description: six years of age, average height and build, light brown hair, quite pretty. Last seen being tucked in bed by her mother a few hours ago. Last heard: 'ay, there's the rub,' as Hamlet put it. For Bettina Miller can be heard quite clearly, despite the rather curious fact that she can't be seen at all. Present location? Let's say for the moment... in the *Twilight Zone*."

Synopsis: A little girl is crying. Her parents awaken, but when her father enters her room, he can't find her. They can hear her call for them, but she can't be seen.

Review: This was not only a recent watch for me, it was a first time watch. I really enjoyed this episode, hysterical mother aside. The premise is very science-fiction, but the idea is also horrifying for any parent.

Episode Facts: Matheson said this story was based on something that happened to him. His daughter called for her parents in the middle of the night, but she wasn't in her bed. She had rolled off the bed and under it, ending up against the wall in such a way that Matheson had to move the bed to get to her.

There are a couple of things that detract from this episode. First, for some reason, the little girl's voice is furnished by an adult. It sounds odd in the episode, but perhaps can be forgiven because the voice may be distorted coming from "beyond". The other detraction is the mother. Instead of doing anything actually helpful, she spends the entire time a hysterical mess.

That said, the episode has a lot going for it. The plot is interesting. What would any parent do in such a situation? It's really a terrifying idea. Terrifying enough that the notion is reused and expanded upon in *Poltergeist*. (Side note: Steven and I watched this episode yesterday and during one scene where they are searching for Tina, there's a television in the background. Steve and I both thought they should turn on the television to talk to her, because that worked in *Poltergeist*.)

The little girl that plays Tina, Tracy Stratford (uncredited) also played the little girl in the *Twilight Zone* episode "Living Doll".

The effect of the dimensional portal was not achieved by double exposure, but rather by a practical effect. George Clemens, the director of photography, set up the wall so that the center section was recessed by one foot compared to the rest of the wall. The wall was then flooded with light, so that the two sections looked continuous and the wall was shot at an angle. Reaching into the recess looked like putting your hand into the wall. For the effect of the other dimension, Clemens used a glass smeared with oil in front of the camera, double exposed reflections from a mirror ball and an optical printer.

There are a couple of things to look out for in this episode. First, the street seen is the same one used in "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street". Second, when Bill is making his chalk outline on the wall, he makes his first mark, the camera pans away and when he is making his second mark, the first mark is gone. It's back again when the third mark is made. Also, the scenes were shot out of sequence, so some of the scenes of trying to retrieve Tina were shot before the discovery that Tina is missing. In order to ensure that Bill redrew the chalk outline correctly, it was copied lightly in pencil before the chalk was wiped away and the actor only had to retrace over the pencil lines. If you look over Serling's shoulder during his opening narration, you can see the pencil outline on the wall.



Defining the boundaries of the portal.

Nightmare At 20,000 Feet

Aired 10/11/1963

Season five, episode three

Written by Richard Matheson, based on his short story of the same name

Directed by Richard Donner

Music was stock

Starring William Shatner as Bob Wilson

Total Cost: \$79,895.16

Shooting Time: 4 days

Opening Narration: "Portrait of a frightened man: Mr. Robert Wilson, thirty-seven, husband, father and salesman on sick leave. Mr. Wilson has just been discharged from a sanitarium where he spent the last six months recovering from a nervous breakdown, the onset of which took place on an evening not dissimilar to this one, on an airliner very much like the one in which Mr. Wilson is about to be flown home—the difference being that, on that evening half a year ago, Mr. Wilson's flight was terminated by the onslaught of his mental breakdown. Tonight, he's traveling all the way to his appointed destination, which, contrary to Mr. Wilson's plan, happens to be in the darkest corner of the Twilight Zone."

Synopsis: Bob Wilson is a man with an interesting problem. He has previously suffered a nervous breakdown. Now he finds himself on a plane and sees a creature on the wing of the plane, tearing into the metal. Of course, no one else sees the creature and no one will believe him.

Review: I like this episode, but honestly, I absolutely love the retelling from the movie with John Lithgow. I agree with Matheson, the creature suit let's the episode down a bit. Of course, if I were on a plane and saw that thing tearing apart the plane, I'd freak out.

Episode Facts: Written by one of the best science fiction/ horror writers of all time, directed by the man who would go on to direct *The Omen*, *Superman* (1978), *Goonies*, *Lethal Weapon* and *Scrooged*, starring Captain Kirk himself and with musical cues by giants Nathan Van Cleave, Fred Steiner and Bernard Hermann, it's no wonder that this may be the most loved and recognized *Twilight Zone* episode.

As great as this episode is, the inspiration for the story was rather mundane. Richard Matheson was on a plane, looked out the window at the wing of the plane and thought about what he would do if he saw someone on the wing of the plane. And, while the creature may have frightened a lot of children when it first aired, Matheson was not pleased with it, once saying it "looked like a panda bear." At the time, Donner did not have experience with special effects and Matheson wanted the episode to be directed by Jacques Tourneur (*Cat People*, *Curse of the Demon* and *I Walked With a Zombie*, among others), who had an idea for the creature that Matheson much preferred. The idea was to have an actor wear a black suit covered with diamond dust so that you could see something on the wing, but not really see what it was.

You may have noticed that the cost of this episode far exceeds most others. Part of this is explained by the set used for filming, which consisted of the interior of the plane and the left wing attached to the outside, all suspended over a water tank to contain the rain water. Donner recalls that the shoot was very difficult, with the wirework for the creature, the sound from the wind machines, all the water, lightning and the smoke used for clouds. Despite this, Donner loves the episode.

A couple weeks after the airing of the episode, Serling had a practical joke planned for Matheson. They were booked on a flight and Serling made arrangements for Matheson to sit at a window seat over the wing, with the curtains drawn. He also arranged for a poster of the creature's face to be placed over the window, so that he could reach over, draw back the curtain just before take off and scare Matheson. Everything went as planned, but the plane took off just as Serling was reaching to draw back the curtain. The poster was ripped away from the window before Matheson saw it.

Donner had a practical joke played on him during the filming of the episode, provided by William Shatner and Shatner's friend, Edd Byrnes. They staged a fight on the wing of the plane and when Donner came running over, Byrnes "hit" Shatner and a dummy dressed in Shatner's clothes was tossed off the wing of the plane and forty feet down into the water tank. Donner said his immediate thought was not concern for Shatner, but that he was going to have to reshoot the entire episode.



Top: Bill Shatner and the creature from the classic 1963 episode. Center: The creature from *Twilight Zone: The Movie*. Bottom: The creature from Jordan Peele's remake.

Honorable Mentions

Where Is Everybody

Season 1, Episode 1

Walking Distance

Season 1, Episode 5

The Lonely

Season 1, Episode 7

Perchance to Dream

Season 1, Episode 9

And When the Sky Was Opened

Season 1, Episode 11

The Four of Us Are Dying

Season 1, Episode 13

Mirror Image

Season 1, Episode 21

A Nice Place to Visit

Season 1, Episode 28

A Stop at Willoughby

Season 1, Episode 30

The After Hours

Season 1, Episode 34

The Howling Man

Season 2, Episode 5

Nick of Time

Season 2, Episode 7

The Invaders

Season 2, Episode 15

The Silence

Season 2, Episode 25

Shadow Play

Season 2, Episode 26

The Obsolete Man

Season 2, Episode 29

Two

Season 3, Episode 1

The Shelter

Season 3, Episode 3

A Game of Pool

Season 3, Episode 5

The Midnight Sun

Season 3, Episode 10

Five Characters in Search of an Exit

Season 3, Episode 14

Nothing in the Dark

Season 3, Episode 16

The Dummy

Season 3, Episode 33

Living Doll

Season 5, Episode 6

Number 12 Looks Just Like You

Season 5, Episode 17

An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge

Season 5, Episode 22

The Masks

Season 5, Episode 25



Top: Jonathan Winters and Jack Klugman in "A Game of Pool".
Bottom: "A Stop at Willoughby".