

PRINCE OF THE SEA SEASON ONE

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certain highly suspect 13th century engineers
forcing a third course on an aquedeuct
well of course it all collapsed people carved out
chunks of bridgework to embellish their own homes
well of course paris was ruined after that
nobody has gone there since then
the water was ruined after that
nobody has drank water since then
certain ruined aqueducts ah reader
I still hear them mumbling dreamy rumors
how do you spell government? g-u-b-b—
no—there's a v—because you goVern—
hear dirtbikes cruising their stupid bones

our friend Herr. M_____’s big break
the lead role on TV’s “Prince of the Sea”
tagline: “A Real Fish Out of Water Story”
the Prince of the Sea strikes the shore
with his pitchfork his bride devoured
by partisans, his castle torn apart by mobs—
poor prince, elected by divine right,
son of Mars, now reduced to odd jobs around Gowanus,
his room-mates a grouchy independent cartoonist
(Damon Wayans Jr.) and a wise-assed barista
with whom sexual tension inevitably flares (Aubrey
Plaza). TV-14 for raunchy humor, language,
the abstract violence of sovereignty

essentially what I want is to strike the earth,
uncover ancient pizza (for me). have you heard?
that Gerbert d'Aurillac (aka Pope Sylvester II)
saw the statue of Octavian, and, cleverly
dug where the shadow of its finger fell
finding a cave full of gold servants and fruits
finding a cave full of hostile automatons
and moving figurations Gerbert d'Aurillac
cleverly fled decorated with a lantern,
illuminated by a carbuncle of the first quality
mounted on a column and dressed in arrows
cleverly, ruined his mouth on golden figs,
gold flat-breads, his servant ruined in feasting?

*head struck from his body in a deleted scene
paraded about on the end of a pike
(get it? pike?) anyway
consigned to the deleted scenes section,
a swiftly flagged YouTube clip. The Prince
attends a speed dating event. He meets
a single mom marine biologist played
by guest-star Kat Dennings. Is love in the air?
in what feels like a past life, the prince of the sea
brutalized serfs to maximize harvests
of kelp farms and the slaughter of fat manatees.
he decorated his slender gills with pearls
he rubbed the isinglass of virgins on his tender skin*

Susan Howe said Anne Hutchinson was “murdered in the natural wilderness by history.” Meanwhile, nerds of the internet expect history to be a kindness—ancient episodes of *Doctor Who*, the tapes erased by pragmatic BBC technicians in the mid-60s, survive as audio tracks and “tele-snaps” provided by photographer John Cura who documented serials for publicity stills, reference, and archiving. The voice goes over these frames in a desperate fashion. The voice is murdered in the natural wilderness by history. By cyber men. The voice a kind ruin in a bowl-cut wig.

*In a city you can buy a heck of a lot
of gyro for four dollars or less but
the Prince of the Sea only opens his mouth
to sift krill from the air
he’s going to go hungry
he’s going to breathe with tremendous effort
Aubrey Plaza rings a bell
in a dark room, embraces
an old-style silence with burnt saltpeter.
The Prince of the Sea, bioluminescent,
pauses in a corridor. Think about that.
Meanwhile, Damon Wayans Jr.
buys a food truck from a hobo (Zeus)*

John Cura approached the BBC in 1947
with the powerful camera he built himself.
He could provide contact sheets for entire episodes,
O! his amazing camera. It captured images at a speed
of 1/25 of a second, the standard PAL framerate,
or so they say. This made his “waste rate” extremely low.
Compared to his rivals, he could offer the BBC
an unprecedented amount of usable images.
He averaged around 60-80 clean shots per episode.
We loved everything about him, his 35mm miracle
device, his clean breathing, his clean hair.
The last episode he provided snaps for was called
The Mind Robber. He died just before the invention of color.

*Our friend Herr M_____ went wild
at a press conference, hurling trays
of shrimp puffs and snacks at photographers
and tearing off his metallic rainbow scales
and tearing off his dorsal fin and stomping
off into a taxi with his flippers still on.
It made quite a sound as he flippered off weeping.
Aubrey Plaza and Damon Wayans Jr. looked embarrassed.
What troubles the heart of Herr M_____? Union stuff?
Artistic dissatisfaction? Is it an affaire d’amour?
What is his friggin’ deal? What’s up with that guy?
Why has he put a hex on the heads of our town?
Why has he bid live frogs fall on the tops of our tall houses?*

The building was a return to building.
Heavy geometric forms seemed to emerge,
as if spontaneously, from the landscape,
water was sucked up by bluegrass,
dams were shored against the outside.
The building was a marvelous antithesis
to several generations of woodland silence.
Textiles were draped on man-like surfaces
in celebration of the realistic contours of the building.
The building, functionally, a tribute to continuity,
built upon the ghoul of the building.
To concede to co-existing with the mice beneath them.
To come to covered in mice entirely.

*In solidarity, Aubrey Plaza stages a photoshoot
in which she flips off covens of witches, pours
gasoline in a fairy-ring around herself.
Her new blog is mostly about UFO abductions.
The season finale is about sleep paralysis.
The Prince of the Sea, hungover, wears shades
to disguise his wrecked and wretched eye-balls.
Damon Wayans Jr. dies in church, and the roof opens,
and angels take his body up. Did somebody say
'Golden Globe'? I am taking two million tele-snaps
per second of their gracious hands sliding, obscuring,
effacing, and totalizing. Obliterating in the woods by mystery.
See her forearm vanish down his fish throat to be continued.*

Someone turned up the bass
until it shook apart the aqueducts.
Losing momentum over a period
of decades, the last dirt-bikes of Christendom
sputter to a dying finish on my door-stop.
These are the last moustache teens of the empire,
these are their flag-colored helmets.
From my mouth I pulled divers
poisonous frogs resembling candy, so much so
that immediately I put them back in.
In the aftermath, I hung a No Soliciting/Menus sign
on the remains of the retaining wall.
Wherever I strike down my shovel I find a free meal.

*See the Prince of the Sea don his raiments,
see him in his Christian Louboutin Rollerboy Spikes,
his rain-cape, black on black cashmere Louis Stewart
corona radiata with pearl knuckle-teeth, see his fingers
webbed and polished, his shirt the exact same Gevinchy
spotted on 2 Chainz and Gilbert Arenas for Chris Paul's
GQ covershoot celebration. See him file his teeth
beneath the lake, with his hair let down.
I saw his leopard-print bomber jacket flash over the waves.
Girl ghosts were hired to sing about the throne at half-time.
I saw that history was a mid-season replacement.
I saw the Prince of the Sea rest his hand on his office
(his other hand, cloistered, practicing silence)*

Here are the episodes for which no tele-snaps exist, due to illness, misplacement, etc:

Marco Polo, episode four. The Reign of Terror, episodes four and five. Galaxy Four, episodes one, two and four. Mission to the Unknown (all episodes). The Myth Makers (all episodes). The Daleks' Master Plan, episodes one, three and four, six, eight and nine, eleven and twelve (The Feast of Steven). The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve (all episodes). The Celestial Toymaker (first three). The Invasion, one and four. The Space Pirates, one, three, four, five, six. History seemed very kind. Fear made us into companions.

*In this episode, the Prince of the Sea
gets hot and bothered by the thigh and knee
of a human being glimpsed through a screen—
as Cathy Wagner might say, “I hate the knee/
am however diligent and strict”—well—
our Herr M___ does not play that kind of
milky martinet so, look, he’s hurling his pitchfork
through aisles of bone and muscle like
a manic angler—oh! Yuck!
I can’t watch--!
Damon Wayons Jr. is back from the dead,
too, for no explicable reason. Only Aubrey
can identify the blankness in his posture.*

I am the most polite person in Kensington
I take a little hammer and plunk away
at the Huntingdon aqueduct I with my camera
containing all of Kensington for history plunk away
I have some big ideas about aqueducts if you'll hear me out,
if you'll please quit bombing the roots of my aqueduct--
meanwhile, on a planet, a tuff stud arrives outside,
honking his horn, shouting *hey, molly, hey molly*
get the fuck outside, quit plunking away in there!
Let's stand atop the aqueduct and record it.
History, ever nice, pours fluid from the grilles.
At the bottom, somebody says ok, give it a rest.
I thought I was giving it a rest? I'm resting. I'm at rest.

This is a good one—the Prince of the Sea
has gotten himself into yet another scrape. What now?
His tank repossessed, he finds his body politic
drying out, rapidly, his skin flaking off, gills clotted,
his eyes becoming stiff in their sockets.
Damon Wayans Jr. can relate, being dead,
and hovers at the bed-side. In the end,
Aubrey Plaza sells her brand-new motorcycle
she brings in a large new tank, with a tiny castle in the sand,
a palm tree, an archaic depth charge.. It says: WE LOVE YOU,
PRINCE OF THE SEA! I cried, did you?
The Prince rolls his eyes, coughs blood (blushing)
says tyyytypical surface-dwellers! They laugh. We laugh.

At an artifact, observing ruined my shirt.
I was a different shirt on a different floor.
When part of one died, another part changed shirts.
For example, I stopped walking along the aqueduct
because nobody I knew walked there anymore
and then I moved. They played Orange Juice from a window
by a different table. There was something reassuring,
also the way people returned to the site of the aqueduct
to relive drinking water and stealing from quarries.
There was a real sense of community, even the machines
blocking the alley and pouring lime in the reservoir.
History, please be nice to me. Let one measley
aqueduct remain. Take pictures of it. Keep them.

*Herr M_____ went on PBS
to talk about the experience.
This is how he became the fish man.
The famous pitchfork really just a replica
made out of trained snakes.
The snakes were real pros every step of the way.
Aubrey Plaza was a delight to work with.
Damon Wayans, Jr., a gentle person,
a mercy. We hope the Prince of the Sea may thrive
on DVD and syndication. I'd like to thank
the crew, our writing staff, uh, all the fans.
Here's Herr M_____ on shaky cam, breaking the surface.
Look for him this Fall on ABC Family's "Bunheads."*

DELETED SCENES

*The Prince of the Sea throws his ice-cream cone in a lake.
The Prince of the Sea is puzzled by a bus schedule.
The Prince walks in on Damon Wayons Jr. in the bath-tub.
The Prince falls in love with the anomalous sound 'Bloop,'
recorded in 1997 by the NOAA.
Aubrey Plaza practices badminton at strange hours.
The Prince investigates a haunted boat-house.
The Prince returns to his home-town and is offended by effigies
of himself on every corner (part of an unsuccessful surprise
party).
The Prince discovers body-surfing.
Damon Wayons Jr. runs for local office and it isn't long until
the Prince has his say about representative democracy!
The Prince attempts to buy a new pitchfork.
A mysterious drifter throws the relationships between the
Prince of the Sea, Aubrey Plaza, and her veterinarian
boyfriend Toddy into disarray.
Aubrey Plaza adopts a dog. The Prince becomes jealous.
The Prince forms a band on Craigslist.
The Prince's old rival, the Bloody Coral shows up to stir
trouble (two parter).
The Prince becomes a libertarian on the internet.
After a rough break-up, Damon Wayons Jr. moves out to live in
a monastery. The heat is on as Aubrey Plaza and the Prince
pull out all the stops to recruit a new room-mate (guest-
starring Wallace Shaun).
Mating season makes The Prince an unbearable bore.
Has the Prince met his match in a new building super?
The Prince gets his driver's license.*

*Aubrey Plaza refuses to vote.
A new face emerges in the person of Bubb Bubblez, the
Prince's adorable nephew and heir.
Damon Wayons Jr. experiences the numinous.
The Prince volunteers at an aqueduct factory, with intent to
sabotage.
The Prince flees to Central Park for spawning season.
When Aubrey Plaza is selected for jury duty, the Prince begins
to stockpile land mines.
The Prince is entranced by whale songs.
When Summer comes, the Prince becomes surly and depressed.
Aubrey Plaza and the Prince get married to gain access to the
Prince's inheritance, but Bubb Bubblez takes the scenario too
seriously.
The Prince inquires about a degree in architecture but is
unwilling to take the subway to campus.
Aubrey Plaza pines in the bushes.
The Prince becomes surly and depressed during a fool moon.
Damon Wayons Jr. experiences a series of Marian apparitions
and begins to build a church.
The Prince wades out into the bay and stands thigh-deep in the
water for several hours before returning home.
Aubrey Plaza senses a pressure in the air.
Damon Wayons Jr. prays for the cast.
Bubb Bubblez makes a joke about prawn.
The Prince returns to the sea.
His wet footprints lead out of the door and into the ocean.
You can follow them down the street and into the wilderness.
Damon Wayons Jr. supervises the cameras.*

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTARY

When I heard that history was a kindness
I ran outside at once with my camera

extremely excited to hold objects in suspension
indefinitely and keep them incorruptible.

I thought about John Berryman and the sun
was perfect. I parked my car in the grass.

Certain ruins began to come together softly.
My camera was re-inventing itself so earnestly.

I thought about Julian of Norwich who said
everything is so damn great, or something,

and I stuck my shovel in the water and I dug