Notes

When I first got into the Sentinel fandom over ten years after the show first aired, and I only had access to the DVD of the first season for the longest time. Finally, I got my hands on the never-released-to-DVD seasons 2-4, and in order that my fellow newbie fans might know what was contained in these episodes, I started writing ridiculously detailed recaps. Then I went back and did season 1 for completion. Nowadays, video files of the later seasons are easier to come by online, but hopefully this project will still bring you some entertainment.

I've marked this work as M/M slash since the recaps, while not technically fanfic, do have a strong Jim/Blair bent, and choose to interpret canon as slash wherever possible.

I seem to be taking a long time to post these; if you like them, find the rest at my website.
1x01 The Switchman

Chapter Summary

Detective Jim Ellison has super senses; anthropologist Blair Sandburg explains; terrorist on a bus.

I. The Jungles of Peru

We open at the Pentagon where some government guys are looking at a satellite photo of a downed plane deep in the jungles of Peru. It was carrying a team of anti-insurgence op guys led by Captain James Ellison. It has been missing since March 4, 1988.

A team of army rangers heads into the jungle to investigate the wreck and they find the bodies of all the men except Ellison. Suddenly, they're attacked with arrows!! Which for some reason are really scary to the commandos army with AK-47s. As native warriors come out of the woodwork and surround the team, the head army guy says, "Hold your fire! If they wanted to kill us, they could have already." Way to be, rangers.

From further back in the jungle, we see the aforementioned Ellison, in what we will come to know as his Jungle!Commando!Jim gear: bandanna on his head, war-paint on his arms, giant gun slung on his back. Close-up on his eyes (so blue!) and, across, the jungle, he focuses in on the head army ranger's ID patch. Oh my goodness! How does he do it?

Jim approaches the head ranger. "Are you my relief?" The ranger is confused. Jim explains he has followed his orders, to organize a local militia. "These men and I have been holding the Chopec pass for the last eighteen months." Ranger guy gets a look on his face like, Ha ha, smile and nod, appease
the crazy man! Jim doesn't help his sanity cred when he suddenly jerks his face up without warning. Army guy follows his gaze and sees nothing, but then a few moments later he hears birds and sees them pass overhead. He glances helplessly at the scary singleminded semi-native superpowered commando.

II. Cascade

Fog! Skyline! Title cards: "Cascade, Washington" and "5 Years Later." September '94? But actually I think it's supposed to be late '95 (when the show started IRL). We head over to the Cascade Police Department where Captain Simon Banks of Major Crimes is explaining a serial bombing case to some visiting forensics officers. "Welcome to Cascade; we have seven different kinds of rain here and 42 ways of ordering a coffee," he says. Got it. Cascade = Seattle. Lt. Carolyn Plummer of Technical Support explains that the bomber communicates by email, signing himself "Switchman." The emails are all taunts addressed to James Ellison. The forensics people ask to talk to Jim, but Simon and Carolyn explain vaguely that Jim is off staking something out or something and he'll be back when he feels like it. Because he's a loose cannon, and plays by his own rules, and, for some reason, still has a job! This will set the stage for all of Simon and Jim's boss-employee relations for the rest of the series.

Jim crouches in the woods, peering through binoculars. Don't get used to that sight. He turns back to his little campsight, and suddenly the sound of water boiling in his adorable little mess kit is too loud, and he frowns at it motionlessly for awhile. The sound of another cop calling him over a walkie-talkie eventually snaps him back to reality.

Suspect is entering the building! Jim leads a SWAT team on the old lumber mill. Inside, they can't find the suspect, but they do find a copy of "News Update" magazine, with a big picture of Jim.

That must be either a posed Jungle!Commando!Jim!Re-enactment! shot, or else one of the army rangers brought his professional-quality camera on the rescue mission just in case there were beautiful survivors.

Jim's attitude about the magazine seems to be Resigned Chagrin. Now that sight you can get used to.
Suddenly Jim smells gas which nobody else does. He follows it to a trapdoor; peering into the darkness, his pupils mega-dilate, and he sees a bomb. "Clear the building, NOW!" Jim and the team are just running out when the building explodes. Outside, Jim sees to sense something else, and he's poised, when a motorcycle comes zooming out of a cellar door, to jump onto it. That's one. When the cyclist looks round, Jim is confused and alarmed by his own super-lifelike reflection in the helmet visor, and he lets go and falls off.

Simon's office. Carolyn and Simon talk about the case a bit. As Jim enters, Carolyn takes off, quipping, "Whoof! Stake out a dumpster all night, Jimmy?" Jim sits in a chair and stares wordlessly as Simon chit-chats and pours him a coffee; it's unclear if he's zoning or just being rude. Eventually Jim asks for a leave of absence because he can't do his job properly. Simon thinks he's psyched out by the Switchman's personal vendetta. Jim is more concerned about his recent weird experiences: "I'm losing control of my senses; I don't know how else to describe it!" Simon resists, but Jim grits, "Either you grant me a leave, or I'll take one." So... that's where that gets left.

Next, Carolyn and Jim are at a restaurant together, nicely dressed. Carolyn is yammering on about her sister Wendy's wedding and suddenly Jim says, "Why are we here?" Oooh, screenwriting rookie mistake. He expositos, "I've asked you out before, but you always said no," just narrowly avoiding starting his sentence with "As you know..." Jim suspects she's just here to convince him to go back to work, and Carolyn insists she isn't, but then tries to get him to talk about it:

JIM: I don't want to talk about it.
CAROLYN: But if you did talk about it, maybe I could help you!
JIM (overlapping): So let's just drop it!

Carolyn gives up, saying, "Lights out, nobody home, or if there is, how would I know?" which doesn't really make sense but I guess she's saying Jim is uncommunicative and emotionally unavailable. The funny thing is, take the exact exchange above and replace "Carolyn" with "Blair" and it's a recipe for a swift and thorough Jim soul-bearing. But we're getting there.

Anyway, Carolyn's about to leave when Jim takes his first bite of food and immediately sputters and choke and downs his wine. He makes a big scene, thinking he's being tricked or poisoned or something, but Carolyn tastes his food, and it's fine.

Carolyn is walking away in the rain when Jim runs after her, ducks under her umbrella, and apologizes. Then he kisses her. It's sort of inexplicable.
Remember, for future reference: Jim is heterosexual. Ignore any evidence you may see to the contrary.

They make out for awhile, then, "Maybe if you'd kissed me like that before, we'd still be married," says Carolyn, and walks off. Is that supposed to be a twist?

III. The Hospital

Jim gets up from an MRI machine and we get our first gratuitous Shirtless Jim scene.

But the eye candy doesn't stop there. An adorable little man with a ponytail and a labcoat over his beat-up jeans and Converse sneakers is heading down the hall. I rub my hands together gleefully. He
enters Jim's room as Jim is shirting up, setting an early precedent for semi-nude conversation on this show.

HIM: Detective Ellison! I'm Dr. McKay.
JIM: Your nametag says 'McCoy.'
HIM (looking): Um... yeah! But the correct Gaelic pronunciation of my family name is 'McKay.'

McKay is a squirrelly long-hair who looks and approximately acts like the love child of Noel from Felicity and the cool English teacher from Boy Meets World, if that love child came out really short and spoke with an approximately 1:1 ratio of the word "man" to all other words.

Dr. McKay?

He tells Jim intensely, "You don't need medicine; you need information!" Jim: "What are you, an intern?" Because interns notoriously hate medicine! McKay insists, "Wait a second, hear me out here! Loud noises that shouldn't loud. Smelling things that no one else can smell. Weird visuals. Taste buds off the map, right?" "That's all in my chart," Jim points out. McKay says, "Yeah, but I bet I can add one more. A hyperactive tactile response." Off Jim's confused look, he clarifies, "Extra sensitive touchy-feely lately!" Jim snaps, "That's none of your business! Who are you, anyway?"

McKay: "Hey, I'm no one. But this man, he is." He hands Jim a business card and vanishes into the night. Okay, so he just walks out the door--just as doctor with no name tag enters and introduces himself as the real McCoy. Oh, I just got that! I thought it was just a Star Trek reference. Slash prescient Stargate: Atlantis reference. Which in itself is a Star Trek reference, isn't it? Whoa. I just blew my own mind!

Speaking of which, someone is making a bomb. Tra la growing sense of tension.

IV. The University

Jim wanders around a tidy college campus. We get a close-up of the business card:

RAINIER UNIVERSITY
BLAIR SANDBURG B.A. M.A.
and as Jim lowers it, we see a door marked "ARTIFACT STORAGE ROOM 3," with a handwritten note taped under it reading "BLAIR SANDBURG." He opens the door to find a squirrelly longhair bouncily rocking out from a sitting position to some music with heavy percussion. It's McKay from the hospital, of course; his hair's down now, and he's wearing a funky vest the same round glasses. Seeing Jim, he grins and starts talking about the similarities between jungle rhythms and rock music. "I'm sure your dad used to stay that stuff all the time about the Stones, y'know, 'H-hey, turn that jungle music down!'" It's weird that Blair would assume Jim has a dad since he himself doesn't have one. Anyway, Jim, not amused, asks him to turn it off. You know, if I were Blair, and my one and only chance at an idea subject walked in the door, I'd try harder to keep him. But we're getting to that. This is a vital conversation, so let's just transcribe it.

JIM: Why are you in my face?
BLAIR: Oh, hey, look, I'm really sorry about all that Shakespeare stuff at the hospital, but I just had to find some way to get you into my area here to talk.
JIM: So talk.
BLAIR: Okay, all right, uh, here, please, take a seat here.
Blair nervously flits about, moving a pile of folders off a chair.
BLAIR: Have a seat, man.
Jim sits, still staring warily.
BLAIR: Y'see, uh, there's this nurse I've been... (He grins and pumps his fist.) Y'know... (Jim stares stonily, then looks away in distaste.) Tutoring. At the Med Center. And, she saw your chart and she faxed it over to me, and when I read the thing, man, it was just like, (Blair claps his hands enthusiastically) BANG! Holy Grail Time!
JIM: ... You're losing me, Chief.
ME: Awwwwwwww!
BLAIR: Okay. Um. My name is Blair Sandburg and I'm working on my doctorate in anthropology and you just may be the living embodiment of my field of study. If I'm correct, Detective Ellison, you're a behavioral throwback to a precivilized breed of man!
Jim stares. Blair laughs nervously.
JIM: Are you out of your mind? (stands, getting in Blair's face) You dragged me all the way over here to tell me I'm some sorta caveman?
BLAIR (frightened): Well, maybe I was a little out of line with that caveman remark, but, I mean--Jim shoves Blair roughly against a wall.
JIM: Listen, you neo-hippie witch doctor punk, I could slap you off right now with larceny and false impersonation [Ed. note: Is there any other kind?] and you are heading real quick into harrassing a police officer! And what's more, your behavior is giving me probable cause to shake this place top to bottom for narcotics.

BLAIR: Whoa, hey, Joe Friday, relax! (regaining his courage, though he's still pinned to the wall) Look, you mess with me, man, you're never going to figure out what's up with you! (Jim lets him go, opening and closing his mouth wordlessly.) Now, I know about your time spent in Peru! And it has got to be connected to what's happening to you now.

Let me just show you something here. (Blair walks behind his desk, and Jim looks off into the distance, mouth-breathing. Afterglow?) This is a monograph by Sir Richard Burton--the explorer, not the actor. It's over a hundred years old. [Ed. note: You'd think a hundred years would be a blip on the radar for a scientist... But maybe he's just trying to impress the layman.] Now, the idea goes like this. In all tribal cultures, every village had what Burton named "the Sentinel." [Ed. note: That's right. All of 'em.]

Jim turns the pages and sees an old photograph of a Chopec warrior, presumably a Sentinel.
Well, this proves it! I'm sold!

I'm going to switch to text now, because I don't want to transcribe all the exposition, but basically, Sentinels kept watch over the village using hyperactive senses (Blair calls them a "genetic advantage" this time. Flattery will get you everywhere) which are honed by "solitary time spent in the wild." Adorably, Jim is nodding a lot now, and participating cooperatively in the conversation. For example, when Blair is describing hypersense cases and excitedly interrupts himself, "Oh, and in Vietnam, the army long-range recon units that had to--" Jim finishes his sentence, "Change their diet to fish and rice because the Conga scouts could smell a Westerner by his waste," nodding agreeably. "Right, right, exactly!" Blair beams. "I have hundreds and hundreds of documented cases of one or two hyperactive senses, but not one single subject with all five. You could be the real thing!"

Jim goes all soft and dreamy. "The truth is, I don't remember much of anything about the jungle." Blair suggests traumatic repression. Already, with the repression?! Also, here's my question: Jim knows there's someone on his trail who's been following his career and knows everything there is to know about him; why doesn't he suspect Blair of being the crazy Jim enthusiast/bomber? Oh well, he just doesn't, and as it turns out, he's correct not to. Jim wonders, "Why is this coming back now?" "I don't know, but you need someone who understands your condition," says Blair. "What's the payoff?" "My doctorate!" Blair puts his hands on Jim's shoulders. "I want to write about you! You're my thesis!" Jim shrugs out of Blair's grasp and walks out: "I've had enough." "Just think about it, okay?" Blair calls, and then, at the door, "OH WAIT THERE'S ONE OTHER THING I GOTTA WARN YOU ABOUT!"

Jim walks out into the street and immediately gets mesmerized by a red frisbee some students are throwing around. He doesn't hear the warning honks of an oncoming truck. "Look out!" cries Blair, running up and throwing Jim to the ground.
By the thighs?

They lie flat on the ground as the truck passes harmlessly over them. Blair gets up. "Oh, that really sucked, man!" I get the feeling they haven't really worked the kinks out of his dialogue yet. Or his wardrobe. His jeans have artful patches on the thighs. Blair tells Jim he has just experienced "the zone-out factor." The truck driver stops and Blair assures him on both of their behalf, "We're okay, man, we're all right." Jim, leading Blair by the arm: "Let's get out of here before I have to answer a lot of questions."

Perhaps Jim has been feeling extra-sensitive-touchy-feely lately...

Blair, his eyes lighting up: "'Let's'? As in 'we'? Great! I got some really specific ideas on how we could proceed here." I'll bet. "Come on, let's go, come on!" He pushes Jim bodily along.
...but Blair is just like that. In the background: I sort of want to make an A-Team from the college losers who are standing around being horrified at the truck accident and subsequent man-touching. Guy With Plaid Polo--superpower: wearing backpack on both shoulders for proper lumbar alignment! Jean Jumper Girl--superpower: Frisbee-catching and vague queasiness! Flowered Dress and Clasped Hands Girl--superpower: mousiness and closet slash fandom (before it was cool)! Guy with Mullet and Sunglasses and White Pants After Labor Day and Sweater Tied Over Shoulders--superpower: EVERYTHING.

V. The Wharf

Jim and Blair stroll through a crowded outdoor shopping center. Blair explains the "zone-out factor": "It's suggested by Burton's research that when a Sentinel's working his deal, he gets oblivious to the outside world, sorta like he has the blinders on. He usually had a partner around, someone to watch his back." Jim, drily: "You mean like you?" Blair, purposely ignoring his tone, and clapping him on the back: "Oh, yeah, beautiful, great idea, I'd love to!"
Blair wants to do some tests, and Jim just wants to turn the senses off. Blair puts a hand on Jim's breast, forwardly, and says he doesn't know how. Besides, "you're a detective with hyperactive senses," he points out. "You're a monster, man! A human crime lab with organic surveillance equipment! What more could you want?" "Control," says Jim. Which tells us a lot about Jim's character. Blair says they'll work on that.

Blair asks Jim to smell the roses in a flower booth a ways away. Jim complains that he feels stupid, but then tries. Meanwhile, some girls come up to Blair and one flirts with him a bit. As they walk off, Jim cries, "Hey, I think it's working!" "86 that, 86 that," says Blair. "See that blonde over there? See if you can hear what she's saying about me." "I'm not helping you troll for co-eds, Short Eyes!" cries Jim. "She's a TA, I'm clean, man, now let's go, radar up!" Blair insists, with a cute series of gestures.

Say what you want about this show, comedic chemistry between the leads is apparent from day one.

Jim finally concedes and hears the girl say, "Yeah, I'd go out with him, he's adorable. But he's never asked me!" Blair, boring holes into Jim's chin with his eyes: "Well?" "She thinks you're a dork," Jim reports spitefully, and walks off.

VI. The First Investigation

Simon, Carolyn, and bomb expert Taggart are at a crime scene examining a neutralized bomb they found when there's an explosion! They do not die. That night, at the station, Jim meets up with them with a new Switchman note he found in his "email folder." Simon asks Jim to come back to work, and he nods.

A red Jeep drives up to the old shell of a lumber mill, and Jim and Blair get out. Seeing the woodsy surroundings, Blair suggests that the extended stake-out reinitialized the Sentinel thing. Jim expresses doubt that he can find any clues when forensics didn't (calling Blair "Sandburg" for the first time that we know of, and lending credence to the theory that calling Blair by his last name is a show of cop-partnerly-acceptance). Blair insists he try. "You gotta learn how to turn things on and off. Now, I'm gonna shut up and let you feel it out."
Coincidentally, that's exactly what he said last night! Oh, is it too soon for that?

Jim says he can't, and Blair orders, "Put your hands behind your back." Jim eventually complies, and Blair places some stuff from the ground into Jim's hand. "What's in your hands?" Jim says he can't tell but it doesn't take any further cajoling from Blair before he's identifying them as ashes--wood in one hand, and plastic in the other. Blair is delighted.

As Jim bends to smell some stuff, Blair pulls out a Camcorder. Jim turns and sees it, and he's like, No friggin' way.

A bit later, Jim complains because he can't find anything. You can't win with this guy, eh? Blair points out that his current complaint is a far cry from begging doctors to turn off his senses. Jim hears flapping and looks up to see a bird plucking something out of the beams. "How good are you at climbing trees?" Jim asks Blair.

Not very. Blair struggles up to a nest, complaining, and then throws it down. Jim finds a blue thread and wonders if it belonged to the bomber. Blair remarks, "The nest isn't finished, so the time frame could definitely work there." Off Jim's look, he says, "What? Part of your job is looking at places and trying to figure out what happened there, well, so's mine!" Nice. Jim sniffs the string and smells "jungle plants."

Blair drags a whining Jim into a perfume store. As Blair tries to chat up the girl at the desk, Jim cuts him off, showing his badge and asking to inspect the perfumes. The girl says there are over 365 and suggests he start with what she's wearing. She holds out her wrist. Jim just looks at it and then turns back to Blair, who is scribbling in a notepad. "What are you doing?" "Taking notes!"

Eventually Jim figures out the unique blend which leads them to the client, who is...

**VII. The Switchman**

"Veronica Saris." Jim shows Simon her file. She is the daughter of one of Jim's old ranger team, an ex-Navy munitions expert in her own right. She was discharged for mental instability. Those Navy girls! Simon refuses to give him a warrant for "a perfume a detective smelled on a piece of yarn he pulled out of a bird's nest." Fair enough.
Jim meets Blair in front of the PD building and assures him he's not giving up. He calls the company where Veronica works as a tour guide.

Jim parks in a no-parking zone in front of a tall building with a roof observatory, apparently part of the Cascade tour. Blair wants to go in and film Jim in action, but Jim gives Blair the phone and tells him to stay put and be his backup.

I mean, yes, there is a phone in that hand, but it's at best tangential to the hand-holding.

Jim arrives at the top only to be told by the tour guide there that Veronica has already taken her group down to the bus. Down on the street, Blair looks up from Veronica's file to see her getting the bus boarded only a few meters away. I wonder if there is a reason that she has Blair's exact hair.

Jim rushes back down to the street in time to see the bus leaving and his Jeep getting towed away. He commandeers a taxi and immediately pulls an evil U-turn.

In the bus, Veronica quietly changes the route and pulls a gun on the driver. From a seat, Blair tries to figure out what's going on.

Jim gets out of the taxi on a bridge, peers over the side, and then jumps as the bus passes below, landing on the roof. That's two. Dude, it's like a twenty foot drop. I like how this is just another superpower that he has with nothing to do with his senses.

As Jim struggles to get purchase on the bus roof, a startled Veronica waves her gun at the tourists. Blair looks like, Well, I guess I walked into this one. Veronica makes the driver drive through a roadblock and then stop, whereupon she heads back to where Blair is lying down on his seat calling the police. She sticks her gun in his side and takes his phone.

Simon gets on the line, and Veronica demands to talk to Jim. As Simon dispatches backup, he stalls, "Uh, Detective Ellison will be with you in a moment..." and right on cue, Jim throws himself through the back window, gun drawn on Veronica.

A brief standoff ends when Jim uses his sight to look down the barrel of her gun and then shoot directly into it. So... his senses give him impossibly perfect aim? LAME. She drops her gun and he
lunges at her. Blair gets all up in the situation with a video camera. Veronica has some expository crazy ramblings about how she hates Jim for letting her father die in Peru. He tries to convince her he was her father's friend, but she still won't say where she hid the bomb. "Help me look for it," Jim asks Blair. "Don't look--listen," Blair sages.

Jim shoves past Blair, pushing the gun into his hand, to Blair's butterfingered dismay. Sure enough, when he glances around to see how Jim is doing, Veronica kicks the gun out of his hand. As Veronica beats up on Blair and they struggle for the gun, and Blair shouts, for the only time in his life, "Ellison! Ellison!", Jim obliviously wanders back, focused in on a ticking sound. "Oh, God," Blair moans miserably as he crouches over a struggling Veronica. He punches her in the face and then shakes out his hand, "Ow!" Jim finds the bomb and throws it out the window just in time.

Wrap-up. Firefighters and police surround the semi-charred bus. Simon tells Jim, "I've been worrying about you the past couple of days. Glad you finally came to your senses." Wanh-wannnh! Carolyn flirtily offers to make Jim dinner, but she can't find her watch to determine the time. Jim tells her it's in her car and adds brightly, "I'll see you at eight!" before she can get out her question.

We end happily with our soon-to-be-tradement 30 Seconds With Blair. Jim finds Blair getting his hand bandaged and grudgingly handing over his Camcorder tape to Taggart. "You know this guy?" Taggart asks Jim after Jim calls him "Sandburg" (which Taggart already did; does Taggart know him from before or did he just learn his name? unclear). "Yeah, my new partner," says Jim.

"Partner?" Blair repeats, getting up to follow Jim.

JIM: Every--(snaps his fingers) what-d'you-call-it--Sentinel--needs one. Isn't that what the book said?
BLAIR: Oh, excellent! I thought this was just going to be a thesis paper, but I think we're talking best-seller here!
JIM (stopping him): Whoa, whoa, darlin'-- [Oh, sorry, misheard that--] Whoa, whoa, Darwin, just slow down, here. You're not publishing anything for awhile, okay?
BLAIR: Why not?
JIM (pulling Blair secret-sharing-close): Because, I don't want every lowlife in town knowing I've got an edge! Especially one I can barely control. Now you just keep this between us, you got it?
I'm not sure it will fit.

BLAIR: Hey, do I get a badge?
JIM (appearing to consider this): First I've got to find a way to clear it with the captain. Then you've got to go through the Academy, just like every other cadet. (walks off)
BLAIR: Cadet?! (to Jim's retreating back) Cade--wait a minute, man! I am not cutting my hair! (runs to catch up)

Huh. It's amazing how much of that they came back to in the final episode.

**Bottom Line:** As you can probably tell from the length of this recap, I like the episode. We meet our characters; we get the brunt of the Sentinel mythos info, always good times; Jim uses his senses a lot, and there's lots of other iconic events (see below); and we get a good amount of Jim/Blair bickering, agreeing, assistance, and mutual manhandling, especially considering they only just met.

**The Roundup**

**Senses Used:** Sight (army ranger patch, bomb in basement, gun aim); Hearing (birds in jungle, girls talking, bird at lumber mill, bomb on bus, Carolyn's watch); Smell (gas, rose at shopping center, perfume on yarn); Taste (spicy food); Touch (wood ashes and plastic ashes, the kiss? (possibly))

**Zone-Outs:** 2 (Hearing (boiling water on stakeout); Sight (red Frisbee); Hearing? (looking for bomb. He was oblivious to the other things going on, fitting with the definition of 'zone-out' given in this episode, but he wasn't incapacitated as he generally is during a zone.)

**Near-death Experiences:** Blair saves Jim from being run over by a truck; Jim saves busload (incl. B) from bomb

**Relationship Milestones:** Jim and Blair meet; decide to become "partners"

**Babes of the Week:** Carolyn (Jim)

**Vehicles Jumped Onto:** 2 (motorcycle, bus)

**Evil Turns:** 1

**Phones Given to Blair:** 1

**Guns Given to Blair:** 1
Chapter Summary

Terrorists in the police department; Jim crawls around getting increasingly dirty and shirtless.

As Jim and Blair get out of Jim's truck in the PD parking garage, Jim asks to go over their cover story again. He tells Blair not to use his "thin blue line" speech, although Blair insists it's his best stuff, and he knows thesisspeak. Jim points out it's the police captain they need to convince. "Hell, man, I would dress up in an evening gown like J. Edgar Hoover if you thought it would help," announces Blair. I don't think it will, but feel free to give it a shot. "I want this partnership just as--" "Whoa, whoawhoa. Whoa. Stop right there, Chief," Jim cuts him off. Blair sighs. "Yeah yeah yeah, I know. I know, I know, I know. I'm never to refer to us as partners." This show. I am just saying. It is not that Jim doesn't want Blair to be his partner, he just doesn't want the other cops to find out. Which raises the question: if two men are police partners and the police department doesn't know about it, are they really police partners? Or are they just, you know. Jim and Blair.

Jim pauses suddenly. "I thought I smelled blood." Blair's excited: "Oh, man, you are GOOD! I sliced myself cutting a bagel this morning!" Oh, right, second episode, Blair is still all in mega-wonderment mode. (Not that he ever leaves it...) You would think this would be maybe the kind of thing Jim would want to double-check; but instead, he and Blair walk off, Blair still gushing, "This is GREAT!", as one of the police officers who's milling around opens the trunk of a cruiser and rearranges a blanket on a dead guy.

"The central hypothesis to my dissertation is how the quality of evidence-gathering at the crime scene can affect the capture of a perpetrator and ultimately the outcome of the trial," Blair explains to Simon as Jim stands in the background, chewing on a toothpick and silently judging. Man, that cover story changes. A LOT.
Blair’s wearing cute earrings, FYI. When he starts in on his "thin blue line" spiel, Simon sends him out. "I'll be right out here, man," Blair tells Jim helpfully.

Alone, Simon calls Blair a "neo-hippie flower child," and Jim commiserates, saying this is "a family thing." Blair, he explains, is his cousin’s kid, and his family has been begging him to help him get his doctorate. Working alone? Me? What stuff about working alone? Simon puts on a brief show of objecting but soon enough he's just like "whatever," possibly because Jim was fired years ago and he's just been humoring him ever since.

Daryl, Simon's fourteen-year-old son arrives, and there's some awkward family tension to which Jim remains purposely oblivious. Simon's taking Daryl on fishing trip, and he doesn't really want to go. But first, Simon has a meeting, and Daryl has to hang out alone in the office. To keep himself busy after Simon exits, Daryl examines the desk and picks up a page with one line of writing on it. What's that, Blair's abstract?

In the hall, Blair’s dismayed to learn his speech did more harm than good and that Jim resorted to the cousin story. Jim's just annoyed that Blair didn't listen to him. "From now on, when I tell you to do something, you do it. When I tell you to say something, you say it, how I told you to say it," he scolds. Yes, naughty Blair! You've been bad! Blair holds up his hands in surrender: "Okay, okay, okay!" He then reports that his morning's latte is "banging away at [his] bladder" so Jim leads him by the elbow toward the men's room. "Uh, I think you can trust me to handle this mission on my own, Jim," Blair laughs.
Oh, see, I thought you wanted to go in there for... you know what? Never mind.

"You sure?" asks Jim, seemingly genuine. "Yeah. Thanks for the offer, man." "It's a tough one," mutters Jim in a tone of voice which clearly says: *Damn, I better pretend I'm continuing a really deadpan joke, because what the fuck, did I just offer to help him pee?* Jim, your shame is deserved. Seriously, it's episode two, here, and these guys have already driven straight through Relationship Junction and into So-Intimate-It's-Just-Weird-ville.

The bad cops shoot some good cops.

Jim is working at his desk--how long has Blair been in the can, anyway?--when he sees Carolyn and goes over to ask, "Where's my lunch?" Seems he's won a bet with her on whether her sister would go through with the wedding (she didn't). Wow, that's some continuity. Carolyn suggests Indian, but Jim says "No no, that's too spicy." To the credit of the actress playing Carolyn, she does her best with the awful line, "I seem to recall from our married days that you love tandoori!" Jim says he does but he feels like... "Oh, no, we're NOT going to Wonder Burger," Carolyn groans. Where's Blair? He needs to be taking notes. This is going to be him in like, five minutes.

Taggart comes up and he and Jim exchange a little stilted plot exposition about how two out of three of the "Sunrise Patriots" have been caught, but Garrett Kincaid is still on the loose!

In Personnel, HR person Vera gives Blair a big stack of forms to fill out. "When I'm done with all this I should qualify for a license to kill, huh?" Blair jokes, and Vera looks profoundly uncomfortable. Jim says he's off and will leave Blair "in Vera's capable hands", and she shoots him a look that could kill. Then he comments on her perfume, saying it reminds him of his grandmother, as Blair smirks on. Botched pick-up attempt or pointed dig? You be the judge. When Jim is gone, Vera gives Blair a cup for a drug test.

Jim and Carolyn head out, arguing about Garrett Kincaid. As they exit, we see Kincaid in a truck radioing some instructions to his lackeys. In the building, a bad hacker guy does some computer stuff, and then gets on the intercom telling all available units to head to an emergency crash site immediately. Police rush out of the building. You would think there would be some kind of triage system whereby not EVERY officer would... no? Okay. The bad guys put the station on lockdown and start rounding up the civilian personnel, suspects/witnesses, and remaining officers for hostages.
Daryl sasses, and someone tells him to shut up. Taggart tries to be a hero and gets shot in the leg.

In the bathroom, Blair hears something and goes to peer out the door. He sees what's going on and gets a patented Blair look of OMG. When a bad guy comes and looks in the bathroom, he just glances under the stall doors and sees nothing. From above we see that Blair has sort of suspended himself between the walls.

Bad guys consult. They've got police communication jammed. "Looks like we've got the whole city at our feet."

Carolyn notices the jam when she tries to call her voicemail from Jim's truck. She tries 911 and gets disconnected. "Something's wrong here," says Jim, and he flings around in an evil Uie. You know, Jim, when 911 is down is maybe not the best time to wantonly endanger the lives of your fellow roadway transportation system users.

They arrive at the closed parking lot gate and look around, confused. Jim zooms in on a man in the shadows with a gun trained on them, and he pulls Carolyn down.

The bad guys terrorize the hostages. Kincaid steps on Taggart's wound.

Outside the station, Jim kneels by the truck and listens to the people inside: bad guys consulting, hostages, including Daryl. He's momentarily pained by a horn honking somewhere. In case you wanted to place this episode on a seasonal timeline, it's lightly snowing out. Anyway, Simon arrives and Jim pulls him down behind the truck and catches him up on the situation. Simon immediately wants to charge in, "Daryl's in there!", but Jim holds him back. It's kind of a nice, friendshippy, emotional scene. Jim assures him Daryl is okay. "How do you know?" "I, uh, saw him at the window." Simon calms down a little and asks Jim if he's all right. Jim grunts an affirmation and qualifies it, "Sandburg's in there, too," with this pretty-much-uncalled-for-at-this-point-in-their-relationship look of I'm-not-crying-okay-this-color-hurts-my-eyes.

As a bad guy comes into the bathroom to pee, Blair slips and accidentally flushes the toilet he's poised over. Realizing his cover's blown, he immediately hoists himself up to kick the door into the
bad guy's face as he goes to investigate. Nice thinking, Blair. Blair tiptoes over the unconscious body, leaving behind all the weapons splayed about. Hm. I guess he is kind of a pacifist and doesn't, at this point, know how to use an assault rifle, but I'd probably take them anyway if only to keep them from the guy when he wakes up.

A surveillance camera shows Jim crouching behind his truck outside. "I called you as soon as he showed up," one bad guy as-you-knows to Garrett Kincaid. "Poor guy's got to be worried sick about that boy of his," Kincaid gloats. Okay, who do you think they're talking about? Before you answer, I should assure you that Simon is pretty much obscured on the tape whereas Jim is right there.

Kincaid calls Simon with his demands--he wants his men let out of jail. Simon wants them to release some hostages, so Kincaid says "We're sending one out right now!" Jim hears Daryl screaming before he arrives at the window. The men dangle Daryl 50 feet above the ground. Simon, Jim, and Carolyn approach, horrified. Simon gets back on the phone and agrees, and they bring the struggling Daryl back inside. I think this scene would have worked even without Daryl's constant monologue of "Please don't kill me, please!" Understandable, I guess, but a little wearing.

All the police officers out in the middle of nowhere have no contact with the city but a message saying that attempts to return will result in the death of hostages.

Bad guy goes into the bathroom and sees his fallen comrade. "We got a bogey in the building!" Cut to Blair cowering behind a snack machine, bargaining with God. A bad guy comes up to the machine to buy a bag of chips. I mean, what else are you going to do in a hostage situation? "No change?!" he cries, angry. Because he is BAD! "I've got some CHANGE!" he cries, and he shoots the machine. Blair panics and yells "DON'T SHOOT!" Then, still flailing about in a tizzy, and realizing he has to act fast, Blair tips the machine, trapping the bad guy under it. Blair pants and clutches at his heart and blinks and wanders out. I love Blair's confused, nervous heroism.

Jim and Simon prepare to enter through the sewer. Simon's still fretting about Daryl. "How do you think your buddy Sandburg's doing?" "Hard to say. I don't know him all that well." "Isn't he your cousin's kid?" Simon and Carolyn both stare at Jim. Jim spins some story, "Uh, I didn't see him outside the family all that much," but I'm guessing nothing he says can convince Carolyn who probably knows Jim's family pretty well. They lift the manhole cover, and Jim's upset because it stinks. Oh man, and this being pre-dials and all. He coughs as he descends and finally leans against the entrance ladder, saying "I don't know if I can handle this," which coming from a guy like Jim has got to be serious. Simon brushes him off because he doesn't understand what the big deal is and Jim sucks it up and deals. It's the existence of bad smells in the world that makes me really think I don't want Jim's superpower (unless maybe Blair is a guaranteed part of the package).

Taggart comforts Daryl in the hostage area. That's nice.

Lost in the sewers, Jim smells gasoline and they realize they're under the parking garage. The bad guys monitoring the surveillance cams are almost too busy exclaiming over the fact that the bogey took out one of their men with a vending machine to notice Jim sneaking in, but then they do.
Oh man, I can't fucking believe this. Another basement, another elevator. How can the same thing happen to the same viewer twice?

Jim hears them radioing behind the door and yells just in time to get Simon away. A bad guy bursts out, and he and Jim exchange shots. Jim is shot and so is the surveillance cam. Kincaid gets on the radio and his lackey informs him that they've killed Jim. Kincaid says "Good work," and we cut to Simon on the lackey's radio saying "Thank you, sir." Okay, but that was so not Simon the first time. It turns out Jim has only been shot in the Kevlar and he's fine! And now he has a rifle.

So now Kincaid's a bit pissed because his demands aren't being met so he has his men blow up a building across the street with a rocket launcher kind of thing. I guess the writers figured they could do as much damage as they wanted to the city block as we know it's already been evacuated by the fire department. The most interesting thing about this scene is that Kincaid's man gives the order to the gunner to shoot by patting him on the butt.

Jim and Simon do some super-fun-looking duck-around-corners-gun-drawn stuff on the empty lobby floor. Jim realizes the door to the stairs has been welded shut because it's "still warm" (Simon, feeling it for himself: ":...It's not still warm. Jim!")

Blair does some deep breathing exercises in the stairwell. Then, hearing some men clanking up toward him, he runs inside and down the hall and locks himself in an office. More importantly, I figured out what's wrong with his hair today. It's all slicked back on top. It makes him look like he has a receding hairline or, at the very least, is kind of a sleazeball. It's much better in later episodes when it is allowed to roam free. Instead of being trapped. Trapped in the seige of hair gel. (Like what I did there?)

In their separate locales, each of our intrepid heroes works on a plan. Jim is doing something mechanical in the garage. Blair picks up a chair and, with a mighty yell, throws it at the window. It...bounces off. Ha. Next he picks up a hefty marble ball of unknown origin, and that successfully smashes the glass. There's a window-washing-platform-thingy a floor below. After saying to himself, "I don't believe this. I don't believe this!" and "Just picture yourself there," and doing some quick deep breathing, he drops onto the platform. Above him, a guy with a gun pops his head out and shoots downward. It should be remarkably akin to shooting fish in a barrel, but somehow Blair
doesn't die--his jacket just gets grazed a bit. Instead of, you know, trying again, the sniper shoots the rope holding up the platform, and it shoots down several floors as Blair yells. When it abruptly stops, Blair finds himself facing down two more guys with guns in the window. He sighs and raises his hands in surrender.

Pan over from a boring plaque proclaiming the Cascade Police Mission Statement to Jim and Simon wheeling a police motorcycle over to the welded-shut door. They run wires away from it. Oh, it's a bomb.

Kincaid holds a gun on Blair, who insists he's worth more alive. "Why would you think your sorry ass is worth anything to anybody?" Kincaid asks. Instead of busting out into a Broadway song about the power of love, as seems appropriate here, Blair claims he's an officer ("Lt. Sandburg, Narcotics."). Just then Kincaid gets a call and finds out his demands are being met. When he hangs up he turns back to Blair, grabs him by the front of his coat, and draws him close. "I guess the execution's off," he grit/purrs. Blair blinks nervously into his eyes, lips twitching. Kincaid continues, "I guess I could use a man like you."

On my mouth.

Moving right along, Jim and Simon blow up their bomb and head into the stairwell. Jim stops Simon at the next floor, yanks open the door, and pulls in a bad guy. They strip him of his weapons and radio and cuff him to the bannister. "How did you know he was there?" Simon wonders. "Couldn't you smell him?" Jim asks. Jim... honey... you know you have super senses. There is no excuse for that question. Jim hears the chopper coming, carrying Kincaid's no-longer-jailed mates. Simon: "I still don't hear anything!"

Jim hears Kincaid round up his men for a briefing and, while the way is clear, he and Simon sneak into the control room. Simon issues the order to bring the cops back home. In the meeting, Kincaid congratulates his men on victory. He's about to get on the chopper, bringing "Mr. Natural" (Blair) as "protection." He has two men hang back and tells them to kill the hostages. In the control room, a listening Jim glances at Simon and says neutrally, "Let's move out."

Jim and Simon burst into the room just as the guys are turning their guns on the hostages. Taggart displays some additional heroism, limping forward to jump on a guy when his back is turned. Jim
barely waits to see that things are taken care of before he announces "I'm upstairs" and runs off to save Blair. Simon and Daryl hug.

"I'm not really a cop, I'm an anthropologist!" Blair tries to explain as he's hustled out to the chopper--perhaps believing that nobody will come for him. Kincaid doesn't believe him. Just as the chopper takes off, Jim bursts out onto the roof. Heroic music swells as he runs up and jumps onto the runner. For serious. As far as vehicle jumps go, it is really going to be difficult to beat this one.

Jim clings to the runner of the helicopter for a really long time. Even when they notice he's there and start to swerve, he hangs on. "How many lives does this guy have?" asks Kincaid, but I would be asking, "HOW STRONG ARE HIS HANDS?" I'd like to note for the record that this particular incredible feat has nothing to do with his actual superpowers and everything to do with the sheer awesome power of his manliness.

Simon and the returning cops take care of the bad guys trying to escape the PD.

Kincaid finally gets bored watching Jim cling and he opens the chopper door, gun drawn. Jim reaches up and grabs his hand--he's an expert clinger, man! what were you thinking, putting a gun within his reach?--and Blair does his bit by elbowing Kincaid in the butt, sending him tumbling out. So now not only is Jim clinging to the runner of the copter, but Kincaid is clinging to Jim's leg.

This goes on for quite some time while Blair finds a flare gun in the back of the chopper. He pulls it on the pilot, demanding to have the chopper brought back to the CPD. The pilot points out if Blair kills him, they'll all die, but Blair shouts, "I don't think so, punk!" and claims to have flown Apaches. I think this is supposed to showcase he has expert bullshitting skills which come in useful in tense situations, but with Blair, you never know. Maybe he flew a chopper cross country when he was ten.

So they head all the way back to the CPD with Jim and Kincaid clinging. Swat guys are ready to arrest Kincaid. Being dragged away, he yells at Simon, "This isn't over!" Only it is, until the show realizes it's cancelled and it has only eight more episodes left and it has to quickly tie up some loose ends which were probably better left ravelly. Carolyn runs up and briefly buries her face in Jim's shoulder. SWAT guys start dragging away a protesting Blair, until Simon says, "It's okay, guys. He's
on our team." Blair, excited: "Did you say I was on your team?" Simon: already regretting this.

Simon pulls Jim aside (as Blair asks Carolyn to unbind his hands) and asks, "All right, Jim, what's going on here?" Oh no, it's time for The Talk. "What do you mean?" Jim asks oh-so-innocently. Simon asks about Jim's amazing feats, and Jim admits he has "what can only be described as hyperactive senses." Simon snorts, "You mean like a Superman thing?" "No, no, no," says Jim defensively, "it's all perfectly natural." God made me this way, Simon. WHY CAN'T YOU LOVE ME AS I AM.

As if this conversation wasn't already gay enough, Simon echoes my parents when I came out to them: "And your 'friend' Sandburg...?" (I mean, her name wasn't Sandburg, but it was that exact tone of voice.) Jim explains that Blair is really an anthropologist and that he wants to study Jim and help him figure out how to deal with his senses. Simon holds up a hand. "Too much information right now, all right?" Jeez, Simon, and he didn't even start up on the sexy part. Blair comes up to Jim as Simon leaves.

BLAIR: You told him, didn't you?
JIM: Yeah, I had to.
BLAIR: So what happened, did he, like, freak or what?
JIM: No, I actually think it's all going to turn out to be just fine.

Then he briefly takes Blair's face in both his hands. I will repeat that for those of you who are, understandably, skimming. What Jim does is he puts both his hands on Blair's cheeks for a second, then takes them away again.

Stop looking at me like that, I don't know!

SERIOUSLY WHO DOES THIS

The cup o' gay overrunneth, but we're not quite done yet. Jim tries to go, but Blair holds him back by grabbing onto his tac vest.
"There's just one more question I gotta ask you," Blair says. Pop it, Blair. "This wasn't, like, a typical day for you, was it?" Jim glances into the middle distance and looks back at Blair with a hint of a smile. Blair gives a great WAS IT? face. Jim just chuckles and walks away. Blair runs after him. And, we're out. In all senses of the word.

**Bottom Line:** I think this has got to be the best episode in which the boys are mostly separated. There's just so many good parts--the men's room conversation, the face-touch--and Blair's first introduction to the PD is of historical interest.

**The Roundup**

**Senses used:** Smell (blood, White Shoulders, sewer (problematically), gasoline, Skin Bracer); sight (sniper); hearing (voices in building, car horn (problematically), man behind garage door, chopper blades); touch (warm door)

**Jim says "Blair":** 1 (to Simon)

**Guns given to Blair:** None, but he picks up a flare gun on his own

**Evil turns:** 1

**Vehicles jumped onto:** 1 (helicopter)
Chapter Summary

The younger man Jim *used* to hang around with and indoctrinate into the ways of the cop is killed, and emotional and sensory turmoil ensues.

JIM: All I'm saying is that it would be nice to know that if I got into a jam, that you could cover my back.
BLAIR: Uh-uh, no way, man! I'm not going around packin'! My deal is that I'm here strictly, strictly as an observer.

Give it time, bunny. Jim and Blair are parked in an alley in the dark; a motorcycle comes up. Jim and the cyclist disembark from their vehicles and swagger up to be manly-cold at each other. "Does your mother know you look like that?" asks Jim, which would make sense if the guy's face was all cut up, but it's not, so huh? "Screw you," says the guy. Pause. Then, they laugh and hug!

How ya doin', you old pirate?

The cyclist, Danny, gives some info about some kind of illegal syndicate in which he is a mole, and Jim keeps asking him if he took various safety precautions. I gotta say, large cable-knit turtleneck sweater he's wearing only exacerbates the mother hen vibe. Danny's like, yeah, yeah, and reminds Jim, "You're not my big brother anymore." That's—okay, whatever you want to call it. They hug again and Danny takes off on his bike.
Just then Jim zooms in across the alleyway to a sniper with a laser sight trained on Danny. Jim yells, but it's too late, and Danny is shot off his bike. Jim runs and drags his body behind a dumpster just before the sniper gets a lock on him. Peering out, he sees the laser travelling over to Blair's head, and he yells "BLAIR GET DOWN!", in time this time.

"You're gonna be all right," Jim murmurs, unzipping Danny's jacket as Blair runs up to join him behind the dumpster. Danny's face is still and Jim pulls up his hand covered in blood. "Oh God," says Blair. "Call an ambulance," Jim directs him calmly, pumping Danny's chest. When Blair does nothing, Jim bellows, "CALL AN AMBULANCE!" "It's too late, man." "It's not too late now CALL AN AMBULANCE!" Oh Jim and his refusal to accept that the men he loves are dead. If only his magical livegiving powers worked on anyone besides Blair. "He's gone, he's gone," Blair insists, grabbing Jim's arm.

How do you take a bath? (Sorry, 2% joke.)

Jim shouts an incoherent protest and then, for serious, turns his head toward the heavens and shouts, "NOOOOOOOO!"

That night in the station, Jim gets pissy when Assistant DA Beverly Sanchez is more upset about the setback in the case than Danny's death. Sanchez thinks this guy Tommy Juno shot Danny, and Jim confirms that he can swear it as Tommy. Within hours they're a tuxedoed Tommy from outside a benefit dinner he's attending. He's got a terrible Irish accent. Beverly is excited that they've made the arrest but Jim just walks off. Simon tells Beverly that Jim and Danny were "real close," and Beverly goes to Jim to apologize and offers to buy him a beer. He resists at first, but then agrees. Beverly says, "You pick the place."

Cut to them having beers in the loft. Jim seems to have warmed up considerably; he's now building a fire and chatting amibly, "Sandburg's always trying to get me to take up meditation or some such thing, but with this place, who needs it? Carolyn never liked it, though." So Carolyn did live in the loft. I wondered about that. Beverly asks, "Who's Carolyn?" I feel like she should be asking, "Who's
Sandburg?" They talk about their exes a bit and then Jim stops suddenly. "What's wrong?" "Oh, I was just thinking about Danny..." Face, meet palm. Jim reminisces about sweet Danny and they both look like they'll cry.

Beverly decides to go (makes sense; I'm pretty sure that sad clown that comes to really bad Sims house parties is lurking around somewhere) and Jim walks her to the door, saying, "I'm really glad you came." Watch out, Bev, that's how Jim says "I love you"! They kiss. They're starting to get passionate when Jim stops suddenly. "What's wrong?"

Oh, I was just thinking about Danny...

"It's just--not a great night," says Jim. Beverly finally leaves, and Jim goes to take another sip of his beer, but there's something wrong with it, it doesn't taste right. Beverly comes back in to grab her forgotten coat and she's saying something, but Jim can't hear a word; it's just silence.

As Jim and Blair walk into the station lobby together the next morning, Blair's exclaiming, "You should have called me immediately!" As he's standing there talking--apparently Jim lost his sense of taste and hearing for almost an hour, but he's fine now--Jim holds up the badge around Blair's neck for the guard. Already with the familiar, possessive, wordless-communication kind of gestures like that. Blair wants to investigate, but Jim says he's not "a lab rat for you to prod and probe." The conversation's put on hold when Carolyn comes up, showing Jim a letter from the IRS--they owe a penalty on back taxes. Then that conversation is put on hold when Beverly comes up. She and Jim have the most vacuous, smily, morning-after conversation ever, as Blair and Carolyn both shoot them looks of Oh, god, obvious what's going on HERE.

Once Beverly leaves, Carolyn calls Jim's attention back to the taxes, and he suggests splitting it. Carolyn snaps, "As far as I'm concerned, I'm done paying for your screw-ups," and flounces off. Jim is bewildered and Blair says, "You know, for a guy with hyperactive senses, you can be pretty dense." He explains to Jim that Carolyn is jealous (yes, just Carolyn).
Tommy's arraignment. As Beverly argues that Tommy shot Danny and Tommy's lawyer argues that he did not, Jim and Blair sit side-by-side occasionally giving each other little significant looks. Tommy's lawyer calls Jim and it comes out under cross-examination that according to Jim's description of the scene, the shooter's location was over 200 yards away from Jim's—he couldn't possibly have made a positive ID at that distance.

Coming out of the courthouse, Tommy stands around winking at girls as his lawyer tells reporters it's cops like Jim Ellison who manufacture evidence that give the department a bad name. Tommy swaggers over to Jim and baits him—"Your friend, dyin' in your arms, all you could do was watch" yada yada when-I-stabbed-your-husband-how-long-did-it-take-him-to-die-cakes. Jim lunges at Tommy, but Blair grabs him from behind, all, "Not here! It's not worth it." Blair handsily guides Jim away from the scene.

What gets me is the hand around the waist.

Jim's talking to Simon in his office when Beverly bursts in and chew him out for making up evidence. Thanks to him, they can't touch Tommy now, for fear of being sued for harrassment.

Tommy meets with his boss O'Toole who has an equally execrable Irish accent. We get a confirmation that Tommy killed Danny, which I think is kind of lame, since I'd like it to be ambiguous at least as long as possible. Jim's senses have been acting up, and he didn't even mention Tommy's name until Sanchez did; there's reasonable grounds for doubt despite Jim's certainty, and I'd like the audience to be in on that doubt. But I guess this is an episode about not being able to use sensory knowledge as evidence, not about doubting one's senses. Anyway, Tommy's next assignment is to kill Sanchez.

Jim's in his car with some surveillance equipment when Blair slides into the passenger, "I got your message!" Jim hands him an earbud and Blair hears that Jim has tapped Tommy's phone. I love that Jim calls Blair up to help him with his illegal detective work. I mean, it's a given that he would later in the series, but even now, before Blair has particularly distinguished himself in the police realm.
Blair cries, "This is way over the line, man!" Jim reminds him of Juno's crime and says "Now either you want to be involved, or there's the door." Blair stays (he does want to be involved; he *does*), but he doesn't look happy about it.

Jim and Blair trail Tommy to a warehouse. Inside, it's pitch black, and Blair complains that he can't see. "I can." Jim's pupils dilate until his eyes are like, completely black, and he looks around. Suddenly everything goes white as lights suddenly flash in his face, and he shrinks back like a vampire presented with a cross as reporters gather around him. Tommy's lawyer is there, all, I rest my case!

Simon yells at Jim and Blair in his office. "You violated his civil rights!" Jim tries to take the fall, but Simon punishes them both: taking Jim off the streets pending an IA investigation and revoking Blair's credentials. Forever!

Outside, Jim catches up with Blair, who's leaning dejectedly against the side of the building. "Don't say it," Jim snits as he passes. "Say what? That you're an arrogant, self-destructive schmuck? If I say it to you, I gotta say it to me, too. I went along with you." They have a brief conversation of non-sequiturs ("You're going to have to find another thesis subject." "Says who?" "This thing is not over until I get Tommy Juno locked up." "All right.") and then Jim reaches into his pocket for his keys and immediately drops them. He bends to pick them up but stops. Blair asks what's wrong. Jim: "My hands. I've lost all feeling in my hands!" Warm them on the teapot, darling! (Sorry, another 2% joke.)

Hospital. Jim and Blair have just spent the day getting Jim checked out, but learned nothing--it's not a medical issue. The numbness has gone away so Jim wants to just forget about it. Blair insists, "The only way we are going to figure this out is if we go at it scientifically!" but Jim says, "Not now. Too busy." Yeah, he's too busy to go at it with you now, Blair! *(I'm* not. Shee-yow. He looks scrumptious in this scene.)

**SCRUMPTIOUS I SAY**
Jim and Blair talk to an informant who tips them off that Sanchez is Tommy's next target. They rush to her house where Jim spies the sniper and runs to nab him while Blair shoulders down Beverly's apartment door in order to get to her and pull her down in time. On the sniper's roof, Jim's site start going all funny, but he manages to knock Juno off the roof.

Hospital. Juno is in a coma, not expected to live. Simon tells Jim he is reinstated (Blair is not mentioned, but presumably him too) and Beverly goes to apologize to Jim. But Jim's just like, "It's getting late. We're outta here, Chief." Blair shrugs at Beverly and follows Jim.

Jim goes down to the docks or some shady place and tries to order food from a booth, but his hearing stops working, which makes the transaction considerably more difficult. Suddenly the booth guy ducks down and Jim turns around to see Tommy shooting from a car. Jim pulls his gun and grazes Tommy on the arm.

Jim and Simon go back to the hospital to find out how Tommy got out and find his body. He's dead!

Police breakroom. Jim hands Blair a cup of coffee as Carolyn enters with a forensics report. They have some bloodspatter from the shooter at the docks and they ran it against Tommy's corpse. It matches. They're all, whaaaaa? Jim asks Carolyn to run it again as he and Blair go to the morgue. "Something I'm really looking forward to," Blair jokes to Carolyn. That's a nice little moment of rapport between them. As Jim goes to leave, Carolyn stops him and apologizes for flipping out. Jim asks "Why is it that we're better friends divorced than we were married?" Do you really want me to answer that? Jim gets a call. The morgue ran the fingerprints, and the dead man is not Tommy.

If you guessed Tommy has a twin, you're right. In the office later, Carolyn provides her report on the magical backstory of Tommy and Dylan Juno, which I judge to be both contrived and irrelevant. The important thing is, it was Dylan who died, and "Now Tommy wants to kill the man who killed his brother," observes Blair, with a long, meaningful look at Jim.

Boring scene with Tommy and his boss. Boss tries to double-cross him, so Tommy kills him. Blair catches up with Jim at the station with a new theory for his sensory problems: post-traumatic stress from Danny's death. "Your emotions are all out of whack!" Jim doesn't buy it. "My emotions are just fine!" Blair's gone into no-nonsense Guide mode and he's lecturing Jim, low-voice but hotly insistent, when Simon interrupts--there's been a shooting.
The guide brooks no guff.

As cops rush into the scene of Tommy's boss's shooting, Simon tells Blair not to touch anything. "I know! I'm an anthropologist, I've been on excavations before." "You know what? On second thought, you stay out here." Inside, Jim and Simon are poking around when the victim's phone rings. Jim decides it would be a good idea to answer it. It's Juno. He immediately knows it's Jim and says "Damn you for what you done. Dylan was more than just my brother; he was the other half of my soul." DON'T THINK I NEED TO KNOW ANY MORE ABOUT THAT THANKS. He puts someone else on the phone: Beverly. He's got her hostage.

Tommy wants to meet at the old fairground to exchange Beverly for Jim, but Jim offers him another deal--Beverly for Dylan, whom he says is banged up but not dead. Oh, Jim, that is just CRUEL.

The Old Fairground. In the dark, Tommy can't tell his brother is a corpse in an automatic wheelchair. Before the exchange he calls out, asking Dylan if he is okay, and Blair djs Jim's Tommy-and/or-Dylan-on-the-phone tapes for the responses. They initiate the exchange, but by the time the wheelchair inevitably hits a snag and the corpse slumps over, Beverly is close enough for Jim to pull out of danger.

A shoot-out ensues, ending up in a house of mirrors. Jim's sight is going wonky, and the mirrors are confusing, and he can't find the real Tommy, but when it comes down to it, and he tries very hard to hear, Tommy's heartbeat comes through loud and clear and Jim is able to shoot him. Hooray... death.

I guess he wouldn't have been happy anyway with only half a soul.

Wrap-up. Jim is explaining to Blair, "Well, you were right, it was me. I mean, it was the weirdest thing. I was standing there, and everything was a blur, and it was if I was standing outside myself, looking at myself, and I could make myself move, and see, and hear, but it wasn't me." Oh man, this is exactly the kind of description Blair lives and dies for, and sure enough, when we see his face, he looks--well:
Blair commends Jim for taking control. Seeing Beverly approaching, he adds, "Knowing that the faithful companion's most important role is knowing when to get lost, I'll see you later, man."

Faithful companion. Nice.

Beverly points out it's the second time in two days he's saved her life. "Sandburg's insinuated I have an addictive personality," says Jim. I do not know what that means, but it's adorable that he immediately brings up Blair in every conversation with this girl. Beverly says they should be friends. They shake hands and repeat the word "friends" about eleven times. "With potential," Jim finally adds with a smile.
Noooo potential.

**Bottom Line:** For some reason the only thing I had remembered about this episode was that it had a villain so boring I wanted to cry, but it turns out to be quite a strong entry with lots of good stuff: a sensory problem; Blair doing the guide thing; Jim being totally emotionally wrecked by the death of a male love. I'm glad I watched it again!

**The Roundup**

**Senses used:** Sight (sniper, dark warehouse, sniper again, Tommy at fairground)

**Senses on the fritz:** Taste (beer); Hearing (Beverly's voice); Touch (hands); Sight (sniper at Beverly's, funhouse)

**Babes of the Week:** Beverly (Jim)

**Backstory:** Carolyn and Jim have been divorced over 2 years. Carolyn used to live at the loft.

**Jim says "Blair":** 2 ("Blair, get down!"; to Simon, "It was my fault, sir, Blair had nothing to do with this.")
1x04 The Debt

Chapter Summary

Blair moves in with Jim! Also there are gangs.

Blair is watching an old gangster movie in his giant industrial warehouse apartment, rocking the academic hobo chic in round glasses and fingerless gloves, and talking to a Barbary ape in a cage. The intercom buzzes and Blair answers with a Will Friedle-ish little "Helleooowww!" It's Jim. "Oh, great, man, I'll let you in!" Blair's continued delight at having Jim for a friend is adorable.

Blair's academic hobo chic.

Jim has brought over some video equipment he borrowed from Carolyn's forensics lab. Blair introduces Jim to "Larry," the ape, and Jim is inexplicably confused that Larry is Blair's research subject instead of his pet. Apparently Blair is doing a study on the effects of television violence on a particular monkey. "The behavioral pattern of a Barbary ape is like, remarkably similar to a human being," Blair explains. "Maybe in your family tree," Jim quips smugly. Blair mimics him in adorable kid-sibling fashion.

Meanwhile, in the next industrial warehouse over, some shady guys are running a meth lab. Some unexpected visitors arrive, and the shooting starts.

At Blair's, the violence on TV masks the sound of the violence next door. Larry's all snuggled up with Jim's arm. His behavior pattern is remarkably similar to Blair's! "Hey buddy, how bout a can of beer or somethin'?" asks Jim. "Yeah, sure, they're in the fridge," says Blair. "I'll take one," says Jim. "That's great," says Blair, not taking his eyes off the TV. "They're in the fridge." Ha. You won't get any guest treatment here, Jim. Blair has a "mi casa es su casa" philosophy. But I'm getting ahead of myself.
More violence. Chemicals and equipment get shot up. Jim freezes halfway to the fridge and asks Blair to turn down the TV.

The next-door visitors douse everything with gasoline, take big stacks of money, and run, throwing a bottle containing a lit rag behind them. "Get down!" cries Jim, and leaps over the couch to pull Blair to the ground as the wall explodes behind them.

Police investigate the burned-out drug lab. Taggart does his usual "There was a bomb! I get to have some lines!" Simon and Jim figure that since the lab was run by the gang known as the 357s, the perps must have been their rivals, the Deuces. Gang team rookie Earl insists that the gangs have worked out a truce. He knows the head of the Deuces, and they would never risk the peace. The grown-ups are dubious.

Jim helps Blair load his things into his (Blair's) car. "This is just the worst. Where'm I going to stay?" Blair moans. "I dunno," says Jim, edging back toward his own truck. "I dunno, hotel, hostel? Something?" Blair advances. "That's fine for me, but what about Larry?" "Put him in a kennel! You'll figure it out!" "I can't do that to him! I mean my project's due next Friday." Gazing downward shiftily, Blair adds, "Unless..." Unless what, you get an extension? But Jim seems to understand what he's asking: "Nuh-nuh-no. No. No, forget it. Just forget it." Blair begs, "C'mon, Jim, Jim, please, PLEASE, my back is up against the wall here!" No, Blair, you're thinking of the time Jim pinned you (canon!) Blair assures Jim that Larry is no trouble. Mark these words, folks: "One week, ONE WEEK, and I promise, I promise we'll be out of your hair."

I guess technically that turns out to be true, but only because he said "we."

Blair's undignified begging. Jim: Please let me go home.

"Come on, one week, man," Blair repeats. Jim shifts resignedly. "All right, look. One week. You or the gorilla act up, and you're gone, all right?" "He's not a gorilla. You already hurt his feelings," says Blair. "I'm already beginning to regret this," says Jim. Get used to that feeling, buddy.

Next day at the station Jim tickles Taggart pink by tirading, "He makes all these weird noises, he eats things I can't even look at, he smells funny, and all he does is watch TV all day! The monkey's okay, though." I find it hard to believe that Blair watches that much TV; he has a lot to get done. I'd like to
hear more clarification about the weird noises, though.

Earl is upset because Jim brought in the head of the Deuces (and Earl's personal friend). He predicts, correctly, that Jim's interrogation will reveal nothing. Later, Earl talks to King Deuce (not his real name) casually on the street, as he wanted to from the beginning. King Deuce insists the Deuces didn't do the hit, but the 357s think they did, and are out for blood. He thinks a cop did it, but he doesn't know who. He tells Earl to watch his back and walks away, and is promptly shot by a thug in a ski mask.

Station meeting. Earl gives his info. "A cop?! I don't buy it," says Simon. "Neither do I," says Random Guy I Don't Know Who He Is. Him! He did it! When Simon takes Earl off the case, he snaps, "I expect to be screwed by white folks" (indicating Jim) "but I didn't think I'd get it a couple of brothers! I guess hang with the suits long enough, you forget where you come from!" (leaves in a huff) I wonder how many of the writers on this show were anything but white. Alone with Jim, Simon sulks that that "hit a little close to home." All right.

When Jim arrives home (yaaaaaaaaay!) the place has been ransacked. Jim draws his gun. Hearing someone moving around upstairs, he shouts, "PUT YOUR HANDS WHERE I CAN SEE THEM AND COME OUT!" "Don't shoot, don't shoot, man, it's me!" Blair cries, coming out with his hands up. He explains that Larry "freaked out" during The Wild Bunch and escaped. Jim calls animal control, over Blair's protestations (Jim's defense: "He could be dangerous! If he tried to bite you--!") Daww. Protective five!) Jim sends Blair out to warn the neighbors, and Blair pauses in the door to listen to Jim's end of the conversation, getting a little adoring look when Jim insists, "No, he's not a gorilla, he's an ape." However, when Jim repeats, "Permit?" and looks at Blair, Blair hightails it out of there.

Cut to the kitchen table, nicely set, and Blair's voice calling out, "Come and get it! Eggs are almost done. Scrambled firm, just the way you like 'em, right?" Yeah, Jim likes everything firm. Jim comes downstairs, buttoning his shirt, and wanders into the kitchen where Blair is slaving away over the frying pan. And he says the following:

"If you think this little courtship ritual is going to change my mind about throwing your butt out of here..."

COURTSHIP. RITUAL.

I mean he thinks he's joking but that's so what it is.
"If Larry can survive without a roof over his head, I'm sure I can too," says Blair, but neither man specifies a time or date for Blair's removal. Instead Blair starts talking about how he's thinking of getting a different animal, "something small and sweet. An orangutan, maybe." Science! Don't choose the animal that will give you the most accurate results; choose the one that's easiest to manage! He got an automatic extension due to the department chair being out of town (because that's how that works), so he has plenty of time to ignore his project now!

BLAIR: I'm all yours, little buddy!

JIM: That's a very generous offer, but I think you'd be a little in over your head.

Seriously? Seriously, they--oh, the case. The case, everyone. Blair starts talking about how his tribal culture knowhow is applicable to street gangs, and Jim gets uncomfortable because it smacks of racism. Blair insists it has nothing to do with race: "It's about dominance and submission of subgroups!" Is he trying to hint something? Other things I expect Blair has said today: Man, I can't believe I signed up for this English class; I must be masochistic. Hey, Jim, have you read this book, Of Human Bondage? Cause if you don't have a copy I'll have to go out and buy a brand spanking new one.

"In all male-dominated power-based subgroups," Blair continues, "antagonistic action by one group is usually met with equal to or greater antagonistic action by another." (He hopes!) This reminds me of that scene in Red Dwarf when Holly is playing chess against the other computer and the Cat says "I've been observing his moves and I've figured out a pattern. (conspiratorially) Every time you make a move, he makes one too." Jim plays dumb, possibly because he loves the sound of Blair's geeky nasal voice, and Blair explains that the 357s' "code of honors" (sic) will demand retaliation unless Jim can prove that the Deuces are innocent. So basically he just told Jim exactly what he already knew. Thanks, guy.
So, wave goodbye to Blair for a little while, because the next bunch of scenes are about the plot. Earl tells Jim about his close personal friendship with the dead head of the Deuces, which is such a touching story that Jim decides to believe him. He even defends him when a bunch of evidence points to Earl being the culprit. Jim meets with the head of the 357s, who I guess is a regular secret informant of his, who tells him that the head of the Deuces had met with him after the drug lab hit and insisted it wasn't them and asked for a week to prove it, which King 357 gave him because he didn't want a gang war either. Jim asks for the same thing. Don't fall for it, man, the words "one week" are extremely flexible to this guy! King 357 gives him 48 hours. Earl calls up Jim, and Jim implores him to come in and ask for Simon's protection, but Earl is feeling mistrustful of the force since the cops turned on him and searched his house, so he's disinclined to acquiesce. (I'm paraphrasing.) He does ask Jim for a favor--someone to look after his grandma while he's on the run.

Okay, finally, something for Blair to do! He arrives at Grandma Earl's housing complex in the guise of a social worker, that is, wearing a hideous tweed suit and reading glasses, carrying a briefcase, and with his hair pulled back into his "take me seriously" ponytail.
Which nicely shows off his "just kidding" earrings.

Some thugs hassle him a little, but he talks his way out of it and, anyway, Jim is watching over him from a distance. Up in the apartment, Blair tries to talk Grandma Earl into leaving for her own protection, but she refuses to go. Blair calls up Jim who wants to pull him out: it's too dangerous and "you're not a cop." "I know," says Blair, his voice strangely breaking a bit. But he insists on staying because he met this grandma two minutes ago and now he loves her as his own. Or something. After hanging up, Blair asks Grandma Earl how she can live alone, and she says she isn't--she's friends with all her neighbors. An idea strikes Blair. "Can we call a meeting?" Bougeoisest. Suggestion. Ever.

Meanwhile, in the part of town where it's nighttime, Earl is going renegade and chasing down a 357 he wants to interrogate when said 357 is shot! By who? Gasp! It's the other, less sympathetic cop who was just introduced this episode and whom we have no reason to care about!

357 thugs (I think) go to kidnap Earl's grandma, but when they get there, they're surrounded by building residents! "Meet the Roosevelt Towers Safety Committee," says Blair proudly. Because all the black people needed was a dorky white guy to teach them the values of Community Spirit and What We Can Accomplish If We Just Band Together.

Jim goes to the hospital room of the guy who was shot, and smells the actual culprit's cigarettes. So he's basically on Earl's side when he goes to question him about what happened. Together they figure out the correct culprit, motive, and means (I don't really care to get into it), and his likely next target. Jim calls the station to put out an APB on said target, stays on the line about two seconds, and then hangs up and relays to Earl two minutes' worth of info: the guy is already dead, and the have the murder weapon, and it's a gun licensed to to Earl.
Jim brings Simon to the loft where Earl is waiting. Simon freaks out because Earl's a fugitive, but they quickly win him over, mostly in between cuts. They've figured out the bad guy's likely next move--selling the drugs from the hit. After a brief stakeout, they manage to bust the sale, and of course a chase ensues, during which Jim jumps onto the flatbed of a moving pickup truck and, from there, onto the roof of an SUV driving alongside. He also ends up using his super-sight-means-super-aim powers to shoot a gun out of the bad guy's hand.

For the wrap-up, everyone gathers back at the apartment complex where the grandma invites them all to dinner. Jim gets a phone calls and drags Blair away, informing him very solemnly that Larry has broken back into the loft and animal control has him surrounded. "Did they say what he was doing?" asks Blair. "He was watching TV." Blair, also solemn: "You're kidding me. What program?" Oh that zany Blair! What he doesn't say, ever, ever: "So I guess I'll be moving out of your apartment now."
I am fairly certain that Jim is supposed to be relaying canon fact here, but it's that little half-suppressed adoring smile at the end of the conversation that leads me to believe that Jim has been pulling Blair's leg, and Blair endearing himself to Jim by calmly going along with it.

**Bottom Line:** The gang whatever storyline is at least simple enough for me to understand, but it focuses too much on Earl as the main character. We don't even see enough of Jim, let alone Blair, who plays pretty much of an afterthought role in the A plot. The reason this episode is a classic, though, is that it sets up the living arrangement so very nicely.

**The Roundup**

**Senses used:** Hearing (next-door violence); Sight (Blair as social worker, drug buyer, super-aim); Smell (bad guy's cigs on bedsheets)

**Vehicles Jumped Onto:** 2 (pickup truck, SUV)

**Relationship Milestones:** Jim and Blair move in together
Jim and Blair are sitting in traffic, Jim whining because Blair insisted on staying to the end of the basketball game even though the outcome was clear. Blair takes a break from sitting very prettily still to belt out an enthusiastic, "Who cares, man! We WON!" They get a call on the radio.

They arrive at the darkened and apparently empty apartment and creep around, Jim with gun drawn, Blair following Jim around like a duckling. Jim hears a faucet dripping and they head into the bathroom where Blair immediately falls back against the doorway. Semi-submerged in the tub is a corpse. Quick-flash closeups on the body's pale hands and feet, her artfully yellow-scarf-covered breast, her open-mouthed expressionless face, and back onto Blair, horrified and overwhelmed. Nicely done.

Simon, Jim, and Carolyn discuss the case at the station. The body was at least twelve hours old, so who made the 911 call? That's thing one. Thing two is that they've apparently got a serial killer on their hands--there have been two other murders with the same yellow scarf, the same method (drowning in the tub), and personal items such as photos and clothing taken as trophies. Simon orders a media blackout.

Pan over the skyline and heavy sexy breathing--oh, it's Blair! Sweet. He's lying on the couch making out with a topless girl. They're under a blanket and surrounded by candles, and it looks very cozy. Suddenly Blair gets dead-lady flashbacks and pushes away. He tries to explain, "The other night. There was this woman..." and the girl--her name is Christine--assumes he's got another girlfriend and gets up and puts on her dress. We see that under the blanket, she was wearing only panties, and he an open shirt and nearly matching blue boxers. Now that's just an adorable semi-undressed teenageresque necking session. Blair explains about the body, and Christine comes back and sympathizes.
One of the remarkably few barechest shots of the man who will later be aptly christened by the bad guy "Hairy Blairy." Note the lack of a nipple ring (this will be important later).

Just then the front door opens, or tries to--it's chained. "Sandburg, what the hell's going on?!" Blair gets up and unchains the door, and Jim comes in bitching and interrupts himself when he sees Christine: "I'm Jim Ellison, I," gesturing to Blair, "I live here." Ha. Way to be ambiguous, buddy. Blair clarifies, "Chris, this is Jim, my roommate." Christine says "Things are getting way too complicated here," kisses Blair, and leaves. Alone, Blair snaps at Jim and then immediately apologizes and tells him about his dead-girl problems. All he gets is a lecture about separating your emotions and keeping cool in a crime scene. He sighs and leans his head back against the couch.
Walking up to the station, Jim is hassled by a reporter asking about the serial killer. "So much for the media blackout..."

Forensics lab. Carolyn plays Jim the 911 call and the victim's answering machine tape, complaining that the 911 call is too distorted to tell if it's the same voice. Jim listens again and declares they are two different voices: "I can just tell." He thinks the 911 caller is the killer, therefore the killer is a woman. Simon comes bursting in with a newspaper complaining about the media leak. Blair's the only other one who knows all the details of the case. "He is new at this," says Carolyn. "Maybe he doesn't understand--" "He understands fine," Jim cuts her off.

Day. Jim and Blair get out of the car. "It might be open-casket. Are you going to be all right with that?" "I'm fine," says Blair, not looking that fine. Gesturing against Blair's arm, Jim explains for our benefit that serial killers sometimes like to come to the funeral to admire their own work. Reporters mob the pair. Jim murmurs "Keep moving," so Blair pushes ahead looking miserable.
One of these boys is not dressed for a funeral. I'll give you a hint: it's not Jim. The ankh means LIFE, man!

During the funeral sermon, Blair sits in amongst the crowd while Jim sits alone on the balcony, looking down over everyone. Jim zooms in on a gloved hand fondling a yellow scarf. As people begin to file toward the casket, Blair sees the scarf-bearing woman--black-dressed, with a thick veil covering her face--and he gestures wildly at Jim to point her out. Unfortunately this has the effect of tipping off the suspect and she runs outside. The media guys perk up when they see her, and they follow her asking for comment. Jim runs out after her, runs after her car, looking for all the world like he's gonna jump on it, but I guess he figures he probably shouldn't in front of all those cameras, even though it is his non-secret superpower. Instead he gets in his truck and takes off after her. Blair comes out and declares, "Damn it!" Thank you for waiting until you got steps outside the church.

Car chase. On the one hand, they are a waste of character development time; on the other, they are easy to recap! The chase ends when the suspect finds herself stuck in a traffic jam on the bridge, and she gets out of her car. Jim follows suit, yelling, "Police! Hold it right there!" So the suspect jumps off the bridge. We see her fall about a gajillion feet into the water. Now, she should totally just be dead, but she isn't, and how she survived will never be discussed. It's just as if she eluded chase in a normal, non-death-defying way. This would be a serious weak point in any script, but it's sort of heartbreaking in this, which is actually a decently written episode and easily my favorite crime-solving A-plot.

Station. Simon and Jim waste some words on the ludicrous bridge-jumping thing, with Jim saying she couldn't have survived as he didn't see anyone in the water and the currents are deadly, and Simon saying they dragged the river and didn't find anything. The deeper they dig themselves in, the more definitively they will need to explain it later, and yet they never address it after this! Argh. Okay, enough.

SIMON: What's this I hear about Sandburg tipping off the suspect at the church?
JIM (back to Simon, looks pained): I'm the one who blew it, sir. It was my responsibility.
SIMON: Look. I know the kid helps you with this Sentinel thing, but he is not one of us. Maybe it's time you should think about cutting him loose.
JIM (immediately, turning around): No, sir. I have to disagree with that call. Blair understands what I'm going through.
SIMON: You really trust him?
JIM (quietly): Yes, sir. I do.

And this is why I love this show. Dudes. Fifth episode!

Anyway. Simon says he's had to call in some help on the case, and Jim resists, saying he can handle it, but Simon points out they're hardly serial killer experts. Enter Dr. Anthony (Tony) Bates, a top forensic psychologist from San Francisco. He's got glasses, a funky vest, and long hair (though it's straight and blond), and he immediately starts throwing around jargon. He wants to build a psychological profile of the killer, and he needs to know more about the murder ritual. Rituals! He loves rituals, too! Jim answers his questions curtly but completely, and I'm really not sure what we're supposed to believe Jim feels about him now: is he still annoyed at having to share the case, or is he put at ease by the doctor's knowledgableness and Blairishness?

Speaking of Blair. At the loft, Blair puts a tape they got from one of the reporters in the VCR and sits down on the couch beside Jim. There's a sort of awkward pause and then Jim says, "You know, the captain's pretty worried about this leak," "Yeah," Blair agrees. "He thinks it might be you," Jim adds with a penetrating look. Blair laughs, "You don't believe that, do you?" "All I'm saying is I don't want you to talk about this case with anyone." Blair's eyes go wide. "This is because I screwed up at the church the other day, now you're all pissed off at me?" "I'm not pissed off," says Jim. And he isn't, either, and this is just such an adorable fight. Man, I think everything is cute.

They roll the tape. Jim notes that the suspect has the victim's same hairstyle and drives the same kind of car. He keeps making Blair pause. Maybe, like, he should be controlling the clicker. He points out
that the suspect has an Adam's apple. I'm not sure whether to count this as an example of Sight; it's really more just ordinary awesome-detective observation power. Pointed out, Blair sees it too. So the killer is a transvestite. Great. Just great. Like we they didn't get enough flack from *Silence of the Lambs*.

Jim says his next task is to investigate the other victims. One was a drummer in a band, and he wants to ask around at Club Doom. Blair laughs at him. "The Doom's an underground club and you are like, *clearly* labelled (holds up hands, high voice) 'Cop'!" But Blair thinks he could blend in himself, and he volunteers to go alone. Jim says absolutely no way.

Blair drives up to Club Doom! He's got Chris along as his date. Anybody want to take bets on her being the leak? As he stops the car, there's another awkward pause, and then he looks at her all soulful and apologizes about the other night. "Prove it," she says, and they kiss.

Whoever's doing the camera work has the same priorities I do, because although Blair's face is turned away, his jawline and curls and earring are carefully lit while Chris's face is shrouded in darkness.

Kiss ends (front view of Blair, blue eyes, red lips, very sweet) and Chris says, "From now on, be straight with me, okay?" and I laugh and laugh. Blair agrees, low-voicedly, "Absolutely," and so when Chris asks why he wanted to go to Doom, Blair announces, "I'm investigating a murder!"

"...What?" Blair begins to explain, and I don't know whether the odds on Chris being the leak just went up, as Blair wantonly violates the don't-talk-about-the-case rule, or down, since it's less than halfway through the episode (YES I KNOW 1700 WORDS SHUT UP) and whatever we think at the 20-minute mark must clearly be wrong. Or maybe I've just been watching too much *House*.

Okay, we cut directly from Chris promising ("Scout's honor!") not to repeat what Blair told her to a reporter announcing that the police are now looking for a transvestite, and I think that's pretty much confirmation that they want us to believe Chris is the leak and therefore she can't be. If they'd been just a little more subtle about it, I'd have been taken in, though.
Jim, Simon, and Tony are unhappily watching the newscast at the station conference room when suddenly Blair bursts in. "I have got this whole thing figured OUT!" "Don't you knock?" Simon whines, but Blair's too excited to register insults. He explains just talked to a guy at Club Doom (Jim looks pained) who told him he bought drugs from the previous victim--three weeks after he died. "The murderer changes identities with the victim!" See, now this is a great place for this reveal, because yes, we have already figured it out, but we didn't figure it out that long ago, and we were afraid they would drag it out until the end of the episode. The fact that Blair figures it out now, as soon as enough evidence becomes available to make it conclusive, makes him look smart, and he's supposed to be. So good work.

Ah, the long awaited meeting of Blair and Tony. They manage to get in brief introductions between excited discussion of the case. Tony thinks Blair's idea is great, and Blair chatters about Aztec warriors, and Tony draws up word picture of a loner from a broken home with a weak sense of self. Jim whines, "It's all theory. Nothing but theory! I need some suspects!" Oh, Jim. An S person surrounded by Ns. Also, possibly annoyed at no longer being the only person at the station who respects and gets along with Blair.

Phone call. A prowler at the Maritime museum, female, matching the description of the killer. Jim drives up, accompanied by backup!! There's a brief foot chase through the darkened museum; Jim catches up the with prowler, tackles her, punches her in the face, and sees that she is a man in drag.

Jim and Blair are hounded by media as they stroll into the station the next day. Blair grins as Jim deadpanly teases a reporter, saying since he seems to know more about the case than they do, he's under suspicion.

Ha. My boyfriend rocks.

Inside, Jim says the man they apprehended claimed he was paid to stalk the museum by a "plain-looking lady." Tony thinks that was the killer, and Jim agrees it sure wasn't this guy--he was in a detox tank the night of one of the murders. On the plus side, they found some prints on the victim's
car, which the killer was driving at the funeral; they match a recent mental institution escapee named David Lash. Wow, things are moving along nice and swiftly. Tony agrees with me, saying, "Nice work, detective. You too, Blair. Very impressive fieldwork." I bet he wouldn't mind if Blair wasn't straight with him.

In her lab, Carolyn explains to Jim that the water in the victims' lungs wasn't the same as the water in their tubs, but it was the same as each other--they're all drowned at the same site. The killer subdues them with a drug and then moves them to a kill sight and tortures them with slow drowning. Jim muses that this is all a game to the killer and he needs to figure out the rules.

Jim passes Tony who's on way to the men's room, and tells him the mental institution's faxing over Lash's files; he won't want to miss it. We cut to Simon's office, where Jim and Blair listen as Simon reads out the pages of psychobabble as they come in. He comments that Tony's diagnosis was spot-on. Jim picks up one of the pages. "What the hell is this?" The signature on the bottom reads "Anthony Bates." "Bates was Lash's psychiatrist?" Simon frowns, and Blair cries, "Why wouldn't he let us know that?" Jim gets a sudden look of understanding and I think this moment is really, really cool, because I totally didn't guess the twist until the exact moment that Jim does right here. I love when you only know the answer half a second before the definitive reveal; it was like that for me in *Sixth Sense* which is why I still think that movie is great even though everyone else seems to be kind of off it. Jim picks up the last page as it comes through the fax. There's a photo of Lash--it's the man they know as Dr. Anthony Bates.

(I suppose I probably should have known, since that name is a total tipoff. In my defense, they don't actually use the name that often; most of the time minor characters' names glide right over you, which is why I avoided calling him "Bates" in the recap, since I felt it would be much more obvious in writing. I can't have missed the *Psycho* reference the first time I saw this! But possibly it guided me to the idea that the killer was taking over the identities of the victim, but not necessarily that the doctor was one of them? I don't know. I still wish they had named him something else.)

The boys leap immediately into action. Simon calls for a lockdown on the building. Jim heads for the men's room, gun drawn, Blair as duckling. The stalls are empty but he finds a pile of clothes on the floor. Blair knocks on the mirror. "Jim, look at this." In red lipstick is written, "Who am I now?"

Can I take a moment to observe how cute Blair is in his little blue sweater and ankh? They run down to the front of the station, but the can't find any trace of Lash/Bates. Lates? Bash? I'm just going to call him Lash. Short scene with Simon, Jim, Carolyn and Blair figuring out that Lash was the media leak himself.

In the interrogation room, Lash's father pours out exposition about what a horrible broken home Lash grew up in.
While Jim and Blair stand by the mirror and make eyes at each other.

Bespectacled Blair comes out of a lecture hall with Chris, telling her about the case. He admits that, for awhile there, he thought she was the leak, and she gets insulted and calls as taxi. As she closes the door in his face, Blair sees what looks like his own reflection, but it's just a little off, and it moves away, into the shrubbery behind him. Creepy.

Next we get a long pan over the loft which shows just how much Blair has made himself at home. A bunch of framed photos, including one or two of Blair with a bunch of student-looking types, apparently on an expedition of some kind, and one of a woman who might be Naomi. Some knicknacks; a geode. I'm betting none of this stuff is Jim's. By the door there's a new set of hooks with one jacket which looks from the size to Blair's. Like Blair was like, Look, Jim, coathooks! and Jim was like, I don't know about that... There's also a large framed modern art piece which is so 100% Blair's it's not funny.

Blair enters, telling himself to calm down, but then he sees a figure darting past the skylight. He hits the speed-dial on the kitchen phone. Cut to Jim at the gym (an unnecessarily quick zoom from his tree-trunk arms to his panting face). Loft--Blair waits by the phone when someone kicks in the door. Gym--Jim goes to his locker and finds his pager beeping. Loft--Jim enters, gun drawn, calls out "Blair!" The place is empty and ransacked.

Large, dank warehouse. Blair is lying on the floor, chained at the wrists and ankles and gagged with a yellow scarf.

Carolyn tries to calm Jim down on the phone, saying "It's not your fault!" Jim's in angry-action mode, and says he'll go to the first victim's to see if they missed anything. There he zooms in on the water in the tub and sees floating particles. In the lab, Carolyn looks at the water through a microscope and confirms it's down. Jim tells her to bring him some water they were going to use as evidence, and she doesn't want to break the seal, but he insists, "Sandburg's life is a stake!" He smells bird waste in the water and declares that Lash is drowning his victims in a duck pond. Carolyn
is confused.

While Jim tries to panic his compatriots into ACTION, Lash lays Blair in a chair and talks to him creepily about his previous victims in what is supposed to be a Blair voice; he says "man" a lot, and "dude." Rookie mistake; I'm pretty sure I've never heard Blair say "dude." He manhandles Blair's face. I know Blair has been kidnapped before and will be again, but this episode's particular captive-Blair sequence is sort of the platonic ideal of captive-Blair sequences. It appeals on a deep, collective-myth, Jungian kind of level.

Blair! In! Chains!

Lash puts on a long brown wig which doesn't really look at all like Blair's hair, mainly because it has bangs. Blair mumbles against the gag, and Lash pulls it down because "I need to hear your voice more, anyway." "Progress report, man," says Lash. "Do I make a good you?" I think he's trying too hard. Blair concurs; he cries, "YOU SUCK!" He asks Lash some questions about him--when's my birthday, that sort of thing (when is it, anyway?)--and speechifies, "Only I feel what I feel, think what I think!" Meanwhile, outside, Jim pulls his radio out of his ear so he can listen in to Blair's impassioned philosophizing. Blair uses some of the info he got from the dad to taunt Lash, trying, I guess, to get him to break down all "Does not compute," but although Lash does get visibly upset, he responds by forcing a sedative down Blair's throat.

"POLICE, FREEZE!" Jim has arrived! Somewhat before the nick of time. I could have taken a little more of Blair being tortured. Does that make me a bad person? When Lash looks up his mouth is wet, and I'm not sure if we're supposed to think his nose is running from crying or he kissed Blair.

Jim and Lash scuffle and end up falling through a domino-chain of randomly placed sheets of plate glass and balsawood. Lash's fall is broken by Jim and he gets up first. Jim pulls himself up and runs after, gun drawn. He creeps through a darkened basement, and sees Lash's reflection in a shard of glass in time to turn around. He drops the gun and Lash races down to grab it, but Jim gets there first. He turns with a hard look and quickly shoots Lash three times at close range. Lash falls dead into a
"...in a daring eleventh hour rescue, Detective Jim Ellison saved the life of a police observer..." The TV reporter recaps more succinctly. Pan around from the TV to all the cops in the bullpen smiling and clapping Jim on the back. Jim's sitting on the desk next to Blair, looking a little chagrined when the reporter says "Cascade will sleep easier tonight, because of you, Detective," but Blair turns to him and grins.

But seriously boys, congratulations on the GIANT GAY WEDDING. (Surely I can't be the only one who gets that vibe from this scene?)

When the other cops disperse, Blair looks around to make sure everyone's gone, then leans in close and says lowly, "Hey, Jim. Last night when you said I did everything right, did you mean that?" HA. HAHAHAHAHAHAHA. Ha. HAAAA.

The boys get their coats and walk out.

BLAIR: You know, the Chinese believe that when you save a man's life, you become his Blessed Protector and it's your duty to do that for the rest of your life.
BLAIR: Yeah, I'm pretty good at that, huh?
JIM (cutting him off): But don't ever lie to her. (zealously clenching his fists) Remember: trust! commitment!
BLAIR: Speaking of commitment, I'm thinking about getting a Cascade PD insignia tattooed right on my chest.
JIM: Above the nipple ring?
BLAIR: How'd you know about that?
JIM (grinning): Let me tell you something. You get a tattoo and your Blessed Protector's gonna kick your ass down seven flights to the lobby. Huh? (making a fake-out gonna-getcha move)
BLAIR (dodging, laughing): Whoa, hey, toughguy!
I have nothing to add to that.

**Bottom Line:** A reasonably interesting police A-story AND Blair tied up AND several moments of inexpressible gay? This show has found its A game!

**The Roundup**

**Senses Used:** Hearing (dripping, voices on tape, Blair's voice in warehouse); Sight (scarf at funeral, water in tub, reflection in glass); Smell (water in beaker)

**Babe of the Week:** Christine (Blair)

**Jim says "Blair":** Twice: once in a call-out of concern and once to Simon ("Blair understands what I'm going through!" zomgboyfriends)
1x06 Night Train

Chapter Summary

Jim's senses go haywire from cold medicine. Also we're on a train, for some reason.

We open on Blair dancing around his room playing a little drum. I think this is the first shot which makes it clear that Blair has a window between his room and the kitchen, and that his door is just a curtain. Privacy is unnecessary in the Loft of Love! Jim comes up, sneezing, and Blair asks if his tribal rhythms or whatever are helping his cold. He uncovers a pot on the stove boiling with what looks like pine cone stew, a natural remedy. Man, Jim gets the sniffles and Blair throws all his time and energy into fixing it. It must be nice to have a Guide. Jim chooses to skeptically mock his stew instead of trying it, so all is right with the world.

Simon's sitting at his desk, taking a cigar out of a little sheath and sniffing it ecstatically, when he gets a phone call. He has just the man for the job.

Jim and Blair walk into Major Crimes. Jim sneezes all over Blair, who complains, "You pull me out of bed in the middle of the night, now you gotta get me sick?" You've got no right to bitch, Blair; you insist on walking with your arm pressed up against him, you reap the consequences. Also, can we go back to the pulling out of bed thing? What were you wearing?

Seriously, this is how close they were walking just before the sneeze. NORMAL PEOPLE DON'T DO THIS

Blair fusses and hands Jim tissues from a mini-pack in his pocket. "Sandburg, I'm seeing a whole
new side of you," says Jim. "I didn't realize you were such a hypochondriac." I'd have gone with "mother hen," but whatever.

Blair asks about the assignment, and Jim says "We're picking up a package," but he's under orders not to reveal any more than that. Blair badgers him, finally crying, "Come on, Jim, who'm I gonna tell?" so loudly during a lull in general ambient chatter that everyone milling around the bullpen turns and looks at him. Blair smiles guiltily, waves, murmurs "How ya guys doin', good to see ya," and then swings back to fix his dead-serious gaze on Jim. I bet this is remarkably a common occurrence. Jim coughs and sneezes some more, and Blair pulls out a little packet of leaves, grinning and laughing excitedly in his patented I-made-my-Sentinel-a-pres-ent! way. It's another natural cold remedy. Jim declines to take any, though Blair does put some of the stuff under his tongue to show how easy it is and then talks funny for the rest of the scene. Ladies and gentleman, I believe we may have just seen "comedy"!

Simon's about to sign his divorce papers, but then he doesn't. Ladies and gentleman, I believe we may have just seen "character development"! Jim enters and asks, "Would you mind if I told Sandburg what's going down, get him off my back a little bit?" TOO-- MANY-- JOKES-- DOES -- NOT-- COMPUTE! Simon says he's not allowed to tell Blair anything until they get aboard the train.

JIM (insincerely): Thanks very much for your support.
SIMON: Hey, I don't make the rules.
JIM: That's what I keep telling him!

Did we just get the tail end of the fraternization conversation? Aww, Jim is giving Simon the smile of buck-up-new-divorcee. It's sweet; this is a context in which Jim is the mentor, having gone through it already, and they both seem quite comfortable with switching their usual roles. Simon: "It gets better, right?" Jim: "Yeah. It gets better." Especially around year two when you develop superpowers and an epic gay romance. That's when it really picked up, for me.

As Jim and Blair arrive at the train, Blair is bitching because he thinks himself ill-treated as a non-cop, and Jim mocks him by spinning an elaborate story about the great police cult conspiracy. Once they're on board, Jim stands by and lets Blair jump to a complex web of conclusions about the possibly radioactive substance they're transporting and the mutant babies it will cause, and, when he's done, informs him that the "package" is a man. Derek Wilson was the accountant of a mob bigwig type, and now he's testifying in exchange for witness protection. Jim blows his nose and says "Hold that" and hands Blair his used tissue (I think. We can't see and he seems to have it a moment later. But there's nothing else "Hold that" could refer to.) Gross.

As soon as Jim signs off and takes custody from the previous cop on duty, a MYSTERIOUS MAN!!!! walks through the car accompanied by SINISTER MUSIC. Both Jim and Blair remark on him. I wonder if he will be important later? (Spoiler alert!: Not really.)

In the compartment, Blair is gratified to find that Wilson is sitting across from a lovely lady (his attorney), but as soon as he sits down and starts making with doe-eyes, Jim directs, "Junior, please sit next to the gentleman." Jim handcuffs Wilson and Blair together, citing, "Procedure." I submit that it is not procedure to handcuff witnesses to Blair.
Jim turns to the girl and introduces himself in Gentle Jim voice, but, gratifyingly, eschews the empty seat next to her to instead perch on the arm of Blair's seat. Jim sits and sneezes, Wilson and Lawyergirl look away quietly, and Blair looks from one to the other and remarks brightly, "Hey. It's a party!"

Lawyergirl sympathizes with Poor Sick Jim having to work, and he says "It's my job," and Blair corrects, "It's our job," which I know is directed toward building himself up before Lawyergirl, but which is charmingly what's-mine-is-yours. When Wilson starts piping up apropos of nothing with train fun facts, Jim uncuffs Blair, all, "I need to talk to you." Out in the hall Blair tries to get him to take his remedy again, and feels his forehead. Jim ducks away, annoyed. It's adorable. Jim tells Blair he's going to check out the rest of the train and to hold down the fort. I think any authority Blair might have had as an acting cop was undermined when Jim cuffed him, but whatever. Blair wants to set up a secret password so he knows to let Jim back in, but Jim's not in the mood, and suggests dryly, "How about you say 'Who is it?' and I say 'Ellison'?"

After various attempts to get word to Jim meet with their respective contrived dead ends, Simon decides to drive up the mountain roads to meet the train himself. Carolyn expresses concern for the safety of both Simon and Jim and says "Tell Jim I... never mind." Consider it done.

Jim sits in the lounge car and orders up a bottle of non-drowsy cold medicine. Lawyergirl comes up and sits by him, and Jim indicates the bottle and says "Don't tell Sandburg." He is so whipped. Lawyergirl flirts with him a bit ("A cop, a defense attorney... Would it be unethical for us to be 'friends'?") and he flirts back in disinterested kind of way, and then his vision starts to go wonky. He excuses himself and makes his way to the bathroom; the train whistle thingy goes, and Jim clutches his ears, and the lights going by the window flash too bright in his eyes. In the bathroom he
immediately unscrews the bulbs in the light fixture, pats his face down with water, and winces when he tries to dry it with a paper towel. You'd think his touch would have reacted to the hot bulbs.

He grabs his ears again when the phone rings, but manages to get through a conversation with Simon relaying the danger without alerting him to his weakened state. He manages to get his sunglasses on and stumble back to the compartment. Wilson is kicking Blair's ass at Go when Jim comes back and immediately uncuffs him. "We gotta talk." "Again?" Maybe, Blair, if you refrained from drawing attention to the frequency with which Jim pulls you aside for private conferences, it might be better for both of your sex lives?

Jim and Blair's body language in the hall is as inexplicable as it is delightful--Blair immediately flat against the wall, Jim getting into his space. Jim informs him first of Simon's warning that they're in imminent and constant danger from armed and organized criminals (Blair's concern level: medium) and then of his sense problems (Blair's concern level: off the charts). Jim lists his symptoms, which include uncontrollably heightened sight and hearing, chills, and hot flashes, and Blair says, "Sounds like menopause." Jim flips out and shoves him against the wall! Again.

Jim demands that Blair fix him, and Blair tells him to calm down, reminding him, "This is all new to me, too!" Oh, I bet it is, you saucy--oh. What? Blair asks Jim how his cold is, and Jim admits he "took some stuff." Blair gives him a Look. "What did you take?" Jim tells him and Blair figures it must be the medicine and they just have to wait for it to wear off. "How long is that gonna be?" "Like I have a clue," says Blair. Jim smells gun-cleaning fluid, so he pulls Blair back into the compartment.

Jim uncuffs Wilson and Blair puts a Kevlar vest on him as the bad guys emergency-brake the train. Jim hears heavy footsteps outside the door, and he hands Blair his pistol. "Anyone comes through that door without my face, you shoot him." "Got it," says Blair. Jim pats him on the shoulder and heads into the side door to the next compartment, and Blair nervously trains the pistol on the main door.
Jim tries to surprise the bad guys, but in the ensuing fisticuffs they quickly get the edge because he can't see right. They toss him out the train window. Could this be the end?? But when we pan down Jim is clinging to a chain under the train. Damn, I don't think that counts as a jump.

So there Jim is, clinging to the train as it rushes along, frozen in place because his vision is all confusing shapes and light and he doesn't know what he's doing, and on top of that, his phone rings. He winces and actually pulls it out, like, now is not the time to answer the phone, Jim, but he drops it on the track, so we don't have to bear the ludicrousness of Jim carrying on phone conversation in this position.

The bad guys knock on the compartment door. Blair shifts his hands around the gun and calls, "Who is it?" No answer. Another knock. "Oh man," moans Blair. "I'm gonna have to shoot somebody!"

He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath, and suddenly Wilson lunges at him and disarms him.

Wilson lets the other bad guys in as his lawyer protests, "Derek, what are you doing?! Do you know how long we worked on that plea bargain?" A bad guy informs Wilson that he threw Jim out the window, and Blair yells, "Son of a bitch!" Wilson cuffs him and Lawyergirl to the seat and explains his evil plan which is something with skimming money and not trusting the witness protection program. Blair tries to talk him out of his life of crime, but it doesn't work.

When Wilson leaves them, Blair complains, "I am definitely not having a good time," and Lawyergirl makes fun of his earlier police posturing. Blair confesses he's just along for the ride and "I may be reevaluating my whole situation very soon." "Why, do you think Ellison..." "NO," says Blair. "People can fall offa trains without..." He can't even finish the sentences. "Anyway," he says, "this is not your ordinary guy."

Jim is still hanging off the train, struggling in vain to progress along the chain. Blair's voice echoes from nowhere, "Now remember, you were born with these senses. They're a gift passed onto you by
your ancestors." Fade to Jim and Blair standing in a dark featureless non-place, Blair putting headphones on Jim and putting him into this contraption he built. He flips some Wash-style switches and rotating lights flash in Jim's eyes. Jim shies back, and Blair says, "Relax, man! I've deliberately put your sense of sight on overload. Don't struggle. See if you can separate from it and just hear the music." Oh, so that dreamy Lothlorien music was actually part of the scene, and not just the Theme of Blair is a Freaking Magician? I'm not even going to start in on Blair telling Jim "relax; don't struggle," because then we might be here all day. Jim whines, adorably, "I don't like it," and Blair's like, fine, you don't have to learn to control your senses, so Jim sighs and puts the headphones back on. Blair does his usual steady drone of encouragement ("One step at a time. It's all about breathing and concentration."), and we get a totally ridiculous shot of his face between the flashing light thingies as he demonstrates deep breathing. I love Blair's really conceited/really really gay assumption that keeping his face in Jim's line of sight will help.

Jim gets a glassy, slack-jawed look and Blair's voice says "Yeah, yeah, that's it," (SERIOUSLY) and then we're back under the train, and Jim climbs forward, having gained strength from this memory/fantasy (STILL DEAD SERIOUS).

Meanwhile back in the compartment, we get a little heterosexual palate cleanser as Blair tries to reach his Swiss Army knife (with handy lockpicking tools) out of his backpack on the overhead rack and Lawyergirl crowds up against him to help him get more give from handcuff chain. Blair blinks and swallows as Lawyergirl's legs rub his.

Jim climbs painstakingly along the bottom of the train, finally making it up over a balcony and into a car. He leans back to catch his breath, but suddenly there's a conductor saying "HEY!" and punching him out. Blackout.

After the commercial it's morning, and Blair and Lawyergirl are still having backpack-reaching hijinks. Lawyergirl, the taller of the two, finally manages to get down the bag as Blair crouches by her stomach and inhales creepily.
The train blasts past the police blockade, bad guys shooting automatics. Simon gets in his car.

Jim comes to and immediately swings a right hook (NB: I don't know if it was really a right hook), catching the man he recognized earlier. But he's not a bad guy--he's just a doctor. Jim met him at the hospital when they were running tests on his hearing (NB: no he didn't). Realizing that this red herring serves no useful plot function, Jim gets up and dashes off.

Jim runs down his home car to his compartment, yelling, "Sandburg!" Lawyergirl opens the door but everyone ignores her as Blair's eyes light up at the sight of Jim and he cries, "You're alive!" They do not share a manly hug (if only!) but Blair quickly fills Jim in on the bad guys' actions so far.

The bad guys disconnect the engine from the rest of the train to make their getaway. Jim instructs Blair to stay on the stopped train with Lawyergirl while he disembarks just in time for Simon to drive up. Jim hops in and they take off after the engine. Chase, shots exchanged.

JIM: Lemme have your gun.
SIMON: Where's yours?
JIM: I gave it to Sandburg.
SIMON: YOU WHAT?!

Nice to see some repercussions (however minor and passing) for a cop giving his gun to a civilian. (And/or "giving his gun" to a civilian.)

Jim has Simon drive up to the train, and, yay, he JUMPS himself right onto it! My episode is complete. One of Wilson's men turns on him, and Jim interrupts the scene with Simon's gun drawn, but he's still a bit off with poor vision, and he gets a door opened in his face and gets punched in the face a few times. But he manages to get the upper hand and punches out both bad guys.

Wrap-up at Cascade PD. Lawyergirl is hanging around with Blair, and as Jim enters, she congratulates him mockingly.

LG: You look pretty good for a man who was hanging from a train a couple of hours ago. What are you going to do for an encore, leap tall buildings in a single bound?
BLAIR: No, no, no, don't encourage him.
LG: Oh, you were okay, too.
BLAIR (standing, excited): I was?
JIM: I don't remember you being there.
BLAIR: What about when I was watching your back?
JIM: Watching my back? I was pushed out a window. Where were you then?
BLAIR: Oh, oh, and that's my fault?
LG (slipping her arms through Jim's and Blair's): You know, together, you guys have everything that I've been searching for in a man.

That line would make more sense if she had seemed to like both of them, or to alternately be amused and exasperated with both of them, instead of just appearing to like everything about Jim and nothing about Blair, but I still find it somewhat charming, like something one of us would say to them.
Things Lawyergirl is looking for in a man: * Old married couple bickering * Lack of interest in her

Off Jim's and Blair's eager responses, she rimshots, "Now if I could only find that man," and walks off. Jim and Blair look at each other, as if briefly considering combining to form THE PERFECT MAN. "She wasn't that great anyway," Blair offers. "Nahh," Jim agrees. Simon comes up and raises the question of breakfast, and Jim says, "Who's buying?" and he and Blair simultaneously point at each other, then point at Simon, grinning and giggling at each other. Those boys.

And the wrap-up just keeps on going! Jim reminds Simon about the divorce papers, and Simon has Blair turn around so he can sign them against his back. Just like Jim's divorce, it's all will-I-won't-I until Blair bends over. Hey-ahh! Whilst being thus used, Blair makes conversation.

BLAIR: Jim, what was it like when those things started happening with your senses?
JIM: I don't know. Everything seemed bigger than usual. More intense. Why?
BLAIR: How intense?
JIM (smiling): ...Where are we going with this?
SIMON (sensibly): I'll see you guys in five. (walks off)
BLAIR (conspiratorially): And everything seems to be better now?
JIM: Seems to be.
BLAIR: Damn! I really wanted to get you back to the labs, see if we could study this.

OH I AM SURE. I am sure you want to get Jim "back to the labs" so you could "study" his feelings of "intensity" and everything being "bigger than usual." Jim seems to agree with me; he says, way too knowingly, "Ohhhhh." Blair asks him to take more medicine, and Jim agrees, grabbing Blair as he starts to walk off, "Under one condition. You hang off a train, and I spend the night handcuffed to Isabel." (Oh, ISABEL!) He claps Blair on the face with both hands (again) and walks off, leaving Blair to give a chagrined look around and then follow.
I challenge you to name one thing gayer than this screenshot.

**Bottom Line:** I find this episode's plot fairly boring (not to mention contrived), but it's a vehicle (get it???) for some pretty good moments, notably Jim's second wall-shoving of Blair, Jim's second face-pat of Blair, and Jim's "science Blair" reverie. It's actually kind of hilariously poignant that, while Blair is making fruitless attempts to hit on some lady, Jim is gaining the strength he needs to push forward by daydreaming about (if the semi-soft-focus, dreamy-music, embarrassingly loving shot of Blair's face between the flashing lights is any indication) Blair's beauty.

**The Roundup**

**Sense Problems:** Sight (blurred and fishlensy and light-sensitive starting in lounge car), Hearing (too loud and semi-distorted starting in lounge car), Touch (too sensitive against paper towel)

**Senses Used Effectively:** Smell (Hoppe's no. 9), Hearing (footsteps)

**Babe of the Week:** Isabel (Jim and/or Blair?)

**Guns given to Blair:** 1

**Vehicles jumped onto:** Train
Jim and Blair track down a rogue CIA agent. Also there is a canister of the ebola virus, for some reason.

We open with a top view of the loft kitchen; Jim is standing at the counter, and Blair's behind him, tying a blindfold on him.

"How many fingers am I holding up?" Blair asks, holding up three, one, four, and two and a half in rapid succession. "None, and if you don't move this along I'm going to show you one of my fingers." Blair laughs and explains the test: three cups of water, plus a trace of something else, which Jim has to identify. It's a good thing Blair blindfolded him, because cups of water with miniscule amounts of salt or sugar look so different from each other. Possibly the blindfold is just to remind Jim why he's doing this.

The phone rings and Blair goes into his room to answer it while Jim stands at the counter and completes the test on his own: taste, "Salt," taste, "Sugar," taste, "Vanilla extract; damn kid's making a cake here," taste, FREAK OUT! He runs to spit it out and runs water from the tap into his mouth. "SANDBURG!" Blair runs in and figures out that he drank the bad milk! Wah-wahhh!

If you're going to throw out bad milk, why pour it into a cup and let it sit around first? The only explanation I can think of is that Blair poured himself a nice glass to drink, tasted it, realized it was bad, and immediately got distracted by something shiny. It's Blair, so that's not out of the question.

Blair apologizes and asks if it's a bad time to ask for a favor. He's been asked to sub a lecture, and he
wonders if Jim could talk about his time in Peru. "Give a speech?" "Yeah!" "I'd rather have root canal," Jim declares. Off Blair's bemused/beseeching reaction, we cut to Jim crossing the campus, telling Simon he'll be in after he helps Blair with a "project at the university" (is that what the kids etc etc). Just once I wish a show would show us what happened between the guy saying "I won't do it" and the guy doing it. But this show is this show, and so I guess it couldn't have shown us the events which changed Jim's mind without losing its PG rating.

"Regardless of how much field work we do, very few of us have the opportunity to visit the subjects of our research let alone live among the indigenous people for any length of time," Blair babbles at a lectern. That makes as little sense as I think it does, right? Because, doesn't field work mean visiting the subjects? He's just finished introducing Jim when Jim walks in, and as they pass at the podium they have a brief lover's spat: "What the hell happened? I thought you blew me off." "Some of us have to work for a living." If Blair thought Jim blew him off, why was he already introducing him before he came in? How was he going to end this speech if Jim didn't walk in? "Five years ago as a member of the United States Army, Detective James Ellison, now with the Cascade Police Department, spent 18 months in a Peruvian forest living among the Aymara Indians. And... that's all I have to say about that. Today's topic... Mummies!"

Don't think the students don't notice this.

Plot things. We see a crowbar being stuck in the doorhandles, and then we see a cyclist in a dorky black spandex suit with decoration in purple and teal--colors you only see in the nineties--approach a building marked "Medical Research." He takes off his aerodynamic helmet (leaving his mirrored wraparound sunglasses) and shakes out his fabulous hair.
Wow, this guy is almost as cool as your brother, Blossom.

Meanwhile, Jim's just starting out his speech: "Six and a half years ago, I undertook a mission that, as it turned out, would profoundly change my perspective on life..." Hey, cool, is this going to be an inspiring This American Life style human interest story? I wonder what other, non-secret-superpower things happened to him in Peru which affected him personally. We will never know what they are, because just then, some flashy fireworks go off in the windows and the room starts to fill with smoke. The students panic, and Jim immediately goes into cop mode, instructing them to calm down.

Intercut scenes of Mr. Nineties entering the medical building, knocking out the doctor on duty there, and using her badge to swipe into a vault; while in the lecture hall, students rush the jammed door, and Jim ties a sweater over his nose and mouth, breaks a window, and kicks out the door. Students rush out. Jim and Blair hang back to make sure everyone gets out okay, and then coughingly bring up the rear with their arms around each other.
"The attack on the lecture hall was just a diversion," Simon explains to Jim and Blair at the medical facility. "While campus security was involved with that building, somebody broke into here and stole a canister of the ebola virus." Wait, what? What was the ebola virus doing in Cascade in the first place? "What was the ebola virus doing in Cascade in the first place?" Jim asks. "It was transported by ship from the Sudan," the bandaged scientist explains. "I came in this morning from our lab to take it back to Atlanta." Oh, well, in that case. If it was transported by ship. That explains everything.

This is about as informative as the time one of my then-girlfriend's friends, fishing for the status of our relationship or lack thereof, asked, gesturing to the gathered friends-of-girlfriend around the table, "And how did you get here?" and I blinked and said, "I walked!"

"Oh, man," says Blair. "Ebola's bad news. It's like the black plague on steroids!" The doctor concurs that if it's released "we are looking at a death toll in the thousands." Only if the population of Cascade is only in the thousands, and Cascade is a walled city, right? I mean, thousands of deaths is nothing to sneeze at or anything, and I appreciate when TV shows take seriously non-insane numbers of deaths and deaths of non-main characters, but they've already established that the MacGuffin is FRIGGIN' EBOLA, so I feel like they could have ramped that estimate up even more. The doctor wants to quarantine the entire city, but Jim and Blair convince her to give them twenty-four hours to find the thief before they risk panicking the populace. The doctor is like, well, okay. If you guys PROMISE to win.

As soon as Jim opens the door to the loft, there's a gun on him. The thief has been lying in wait for them to return. He herds them, hands up, into the middle of the living room, and instructs politely, "Mr. Sandburg, would you mind handing me Detective Ellison's weapon?" Blair looks to Jim for permission, and he says, "Go on." Blair awkwardly reaches under Jim's jacket and plucks the gun from his holster in very nervous don't shoot/no-homo fashion. "Who the hell are you?" Jim grits. "My name's Leigh Brackett," says the thief, "and I've got the virus you're looking for." He grins waggishly.
"Aren't you curious to know why I stole it?" he asks, his eyelids fluttering one after the other like he can only barely hold himself back from winking and winking. Jim says nothing, so Blair says, "Well, I am, if he isn't." Jim gives Blair a Look, and Brackett grins flirtily, "I admire your _insatiable_ curiosity! Without that, who knows. Maybe you wouldn't have uncovered Ellison's Sentinel abilities." Blair turns panickedly to Jim, who barely nods back, like, Keep it cool, boy. Brackett explains he stole the virus "as a bargaining chip": "You're going to help me commit a crime!" Soooooo complicated. I mean. Wouldn't "I will tell everyone about your powers" be enough of a bargaining chip?

After the commercial break we get more exposition. Brackett is a rogue CIA agent. You get the feeling from his performance that the following conversation took place in casting:

CASTING AGENT: You're playing a rogue CI--
ACTOR (overlapping): A rogue?? Finally, the part I was born to play!
CASTING AGENT: A rogue CIA agent.
ACTOR (dreamily): With a heart of gold.

Brackett explains that he debriefed the special forces officer who first pulled Jim out of the jungle. He was fascinated by the report on Jim's abilities, and kept an eye on Jim's future career. He put the pieces together when he read an old paper of Blair's on Sentinels. "I'm glad you two hooked up," he concludes. Aren't we all, buddy. He wants Blair's help, too, since "you're his Guide, so to speak." Wow, Blair sure got a lot of mythos into that early paper.

While Brackett is listening to himself talk, Jim subtly signals Blair to knock over the lamp--distracting and disadvantaging Brackett but not Jim. In the dark, Jim and Brackett scuffle, and Brackett ends things by throwing Jim a time bomb in a fanny pack. It's like he _knows_ his superhero name is Captain Nineties! Brackett beats feet, and Jim just barely disarms the bomb before the timer winds down. "I knew you could get it," says Blair when he's done, clapping him on the arm unconvincingly.

But Jim's not satisfied with his work; he hands Blair the bomb, and Blair, sniffing it, says, "Jim, this is Wacky Dough. You couldn't tell this was a fake?" Jim says he was too focused on disarming it. Oh, man. File away that out, writers, if you ever need Jim not to notice something he would totally
notice: "I was so focused on...!" It's not even that it doesn't make sense, it does; it's just super useful.

"Man, this Brackett guy's a total DICK!" Blair exclaims, using the harshest language we've ever heard on this show. Jim agrees, and wishes he could "get a hook in this guy, something I can work this." I can't tell if this is sexual or violent.

At the station, Blair brings by his friend, Jack Kelso, a foreign affairs professor who blew the whistle on some CIA shenanigans. Kelso calls Brackett a "throwback," a provocative term on this show which is not in this case ever explained to my satisfaction, and gives them a file of information he's gathered on all the CIA agents he ever didn't like. He doesn't want to maybe just take out the parts about the other guys or photocopy the pages about Brackett or something? No? He is ex CIA; maybe he gives copies of this whole file to everybody he meets.

Jim and Blair stand across from each other at the kitchen island, poring over the profile book as dinner simmers. Jim turns a page, and Blair turns it back, annoying him.

The So Boyfriends are on the case!

Blair wonders if Jim could find a clue in the loft that might help them find Brackett. Jim says the lab guys have found nothing, and anyway, "I wouldn't know where to begin." Blair illustrates by taking a deep breath, and Jim says, "Don't patronize me." Blair covers the stir fry and tells him, "I'm talkin' about using your sense of smell." Nice save. I still think they could maybe wait until after the cooking smells have diffused a little.

Jim goes and stands in the middle of the room, his body language screaming, See? See? Not workin', but then he crouches. With Blair's Swiss Army tweezers he extracts a tiny chili pepper from between the floorboards. He tastes it. "Oh, Jim, c'mon, you don't know where that's been," Blair RayVs. Uh, but that is what Jim is trying to figure out, right? As Jim is bagging the pepper, he gets a call down to an emergency.

Hazmat suits trudge into some kind of opera house or something full of inert bodies. Two of the Hazmats are Jim and the medlab doctor, and she bitches at him for demanding twenty-four hours during which all these people died, which she totally okayed for no reason, so, whatever, but Jim begins to hear slow heartbeats, and he realizes nobody's dead--"They're sleeping!" They've all been
knock-out-gassed. The doctor confirms, and Jim, hearing a fast heartbeat, follows it up to the mezzanine where he finds Brackett, wearing a gas mask, in a pile of bodies. "This time it was sleeping gas, next time it'll be the virus!" Brackett cries. There's a brief chase through the auditorium which ends when Brackett threatens to break a girl's neck, and then throws her over the balcony, leaving Jim to grab her and haul her back while Brackett runs off.

Jim and Blair meet with Doctor Lady, Simon, and Carolyn in the Major Crimes conference room. Jim and Blair want to go along with Brackett, at least for the time being, and see what he wants to steal. Carolyn begins reporting her analysis of the chili pepper, and Blair asks, "What about the metallic taste in the mud?" "You tasted it?" Carolyn asks. Jim takes a long, long drink of water and gazes away. "Uh, yeah," Blair covers, grinning sheepishly. "Ah, I mean... I didn't contaminate your sample or anything, did I?" "No, it's just that the iron oxide we found was so minute, it would have been almost impossible for you to--" Jim breaks in there, telling Carolyn to use her analysis to find the originating restaurant and get some clue as to where Brackett lives. So they're okay with people thinking Blair has Sentinel powers? How does this help anyone? I guess it explains why he is even there. Carolyn goes into Q mode, giving the boys a pair of tiny state-of-the-art tracking beacons made from nonmetal nonplastic nonceramic proteins electronically indistinguishable from human flesh. They look like Tic-Tacs. Simon gets a phone call from Brackett summoning Jim.

Jim and Blair truck over to a restaurant which Blair identifies as a Bolivian cafe. They find Brackett alone in the dining room, finishing up a tasty meal. Brackett makes them empty their pockets onto the table, but lets Jim keep his badge after scanning it with a handheld device. "Now the obvious things I'm supposed to find..." Brackett runs the scanner over Blair's body; Blair looks anxiously to Jim as it goes off near his throat.

Brackett yanks off Blair's necklace. "I hope you didn't let them rig a valuable artifact with a mini transmitter." "It's a replica," Blair assures him, but he still winces as Brackett grinds it beneath his boot. Brackett scans Jim next, and his device goes off near Jim's crotch.

I suspect that is in actuality a Sexy Detector!
"I'll take the wire in your pants," he says. Jim just stares at him, unmoving. "Unless you want me to have Mr. Sandburg get it out for you," Brackett adds, fueling the imaginations of fangirls everywhere. Jim sighs and removes the wire. So Brackett totally thinks they're fucking, right? He at least suspects there's something going on there.

Brackett holds the scanner to each of their faces, and demands their protein transmitters. Jim and Blair look at each other, signalling to the audience and to Brackett that that was their last best hope, and drop the transmitters into Brackett's beer. Brackett informs them the detonator is on a timer, and their only option is to do as he says.

Carolyn reports to Simon that the transmitters were found in a Peruvian restaurant. So which was it, Bolivian or Peruvian? She cross-indexed iron ore sources and South American restaurants and narrowed down Brackett's residence. Wait, we know he hangs around South American cafes, and in fact he purposely brought the heroes there, but we're still assuming the chili pepper came from his house?

Brackett has Blair drive him and Jim to a fenced compound, where he pulls a gun on the guard, and Jim knocks out said guard to save his life. "There'll be no murder on my watch." "So far," says Brackett agreeably. We get as close as we'll come to an explanation for Brackett's motivations here:

JIM: This one of your "overthrow the government" scenarios?
BRACKETT: Someone's read my file. That traitorous bastard Jack Kelso bring you up to speed on that?
JIM: You've got a lot of nerve calling anybody a traitor.
BRACKETT: The republic that I swore allegiance to was overthrown years ago. The people in charge today -- they're the traitors. Let's go.
JIM: Just a patriot out to save us from ourselves, huh?
BRACKETT: You have no idea what your government's up to.

And that's it. Only slightly less vague than "It came by ship!" Is he saying that he promised to defend the US of A long ago when he loved it, but then it was secretly taken over by jerks and only he knows? Jim's "patriot" remark seems to support this. But it seems weird to describe the United States
as "the republic I swore allegiance to."

In the compound, they come to a tiled bridge. Brackett explains that there are mines under some of the tiles, and the pattern changes daily, so there's no way to get across without each day's map unless you have Sentinel senses and can hear the buzzing of the live mines. Oh, great, it's one of those government compounds protected by a series of difficult but surpassable puzzles. Brackett yammers on about the virus being attached to a bomb with a timer and he's the only one who can turn it off so don't get any ideas blah blah, and Blair snaps, "Let us work." He tells Jim, "Remember our exercises. Focus, concentrate, and please stay out of your own way." That's a little bitchy, but I guess he's under pressure. And kind of desperate to prove he's useful, I guess? Tight close-up on Jim, and we know his senses are at work because he looks like a big slack-jawed dummy. Jim begins to slowly walk forward, one tile at a time, Blair a few steps behind.

A SWAT team surrounds the suspected site of Brackett's house.

Halfway across the bridge, one foot poised midstep, Jim zones on the bright red tiles. "Jim? Oh man, not now, not now!" Blair hops forward and grips him by the shoulder, holding him up. He snaps an explanation back at Brackett, who I'm pretty sure didn't say anything: "It happens when he focuses so intently on one of his senses he loses all of his others. I thought you read my paper!" Everything was in that paper, huh? It's like he hasn't actually learned anything new at all.

Blair's voice slowly begins to cut through Jim's reverie: "C'mon, Jim. Jim, c'mon. Breathe, buddy, c'mon, that's it. Relax, man, relax." Jim shakes his head and blinks. Just as he's shaking off the zone, Blair stumbles, and Jim grabs him. "Don't move!" Blair clings to Jim like a little monkey.
Cling, my pretties!

Jim grips Blair’s hand, and tells him to step where he steps. Nearing the end, Jim long-strides over the last few rows. Blair follows, and, shorter-legged, jumps into Jim’s waiting arms. Brackett does not receive as much assistance.

Brackett pauses at a console on the far side of the bridge and hits a button. "There, that activates the entire minefield with the systems override. Now there's no safe path across the bridge." Wait, what? The fact that that's an option means there is a special "puzzle version" of the minefield and I have no idea why that's the default setting.

Simon sends the SWAT team into the house. He’s wearing an attractive tight black turtleneck under his tac vest. Has anyone ever noticed that Simon is always wearing turtlenecks or mandarin-collar button-downs? Does he always have a hickey or vampire bite? Because only four people work at Cascade PD, Carolyn and Taggart go in, and immediately find a time bomb. Carolyn stands guard with a gun—she's even a cop? I thought she was a civilian forensics expert--while Joel sits down in front of the bomb, turns his hat around, and sweats.

Puzzle #2. "Any jiggling with the lock will set off the alarm, so you'd better get it right the first time," says Brackett, as Jim and Blair face down a large combination dial below four bars of red light. (Oh dear, more red! That's Jim's secret weakness!) Blair suggests "not reyling on your ears, but your fingertips. Let your sense of touch tell you when the tumbler is in place," because we just need one more sense for a bingo. Jim agrees, closes his eyes, and turns the dial slowly. He might as well have left his eyes open: each time he gets a number right, one of the red lights turns green. I posit that this is poor safe design.

Taggart squeezes his eyes shut and cuts the last wire just as the timer runs down to one second. He's pleased not to explode, but a TV comes on, and on tape, Brackett says, "I've been expecting you. That bomb was a fake. I'd be running if I were you." Joel and Carolyn run outside just before the house explodes.

Jim, Blair, and Brackett enter a hangar. So, just the two puzzles then. They’ve found Brackett's goal: a state of the art stealth jet. Jim realizes he's just broken into a CIA research lab. Brackett climbs into the cockpit and promises to defuse the detonator from the air. He tries to get rid of the boys by telling
them they'd better warn the coming guards about the minefield, but Jim sends Blair to do that (which he does by throwing his shoe) while Jim himself stays behind to... jump onto the jet! Yes. As the jet slowly taxis to the gate, Jim climbs up and pulls a conveniently located external "blow the top off the cockpit" lever. He pulls Brackett out and they hand-to-hand on top of the jet. Brackett's fallen onto the ground and Jim's on top of him, pulling his hair like it's a slumber party catfight, when Brackett pulls out his remote detonator-defuser and cries, "It's broken!" And it's going to blow in five minutes! And it's in the trunk of his car.

The guards run safely across the minefield. "Well, it sure took you guys long enough to override that... override... or whatever it was, I don't..." Blair almost certainly ad-libs. Jim and Brackett arrive just as Blair's surrendering on his knees (ooh) and Jim gets them out of hot water using his conveniently retained badge and the power of yelling sternly.

They get to the bomb with forty-seven seconds to spare. It has "dual triggers," Brackett explains, which means he and Jim have to pull the wires simultaneously. Wait, he wouldn't design the bomb that way--he works alone! He's a rogue! The defusing scene is sort of cute: "Ready and, blue!" They finish with one second on the clock, and take a moment to breathe as police cars begin to round the horizon. Then Jim punches Brackett in the face.

Jim, Simon, Taggart and Carolyn stand around in Simon's office, tying up some expository loose ends to nobody's satisfaction. Jim seems exhilarated now that it's over; he's playing with a ball, and he claps Taggart on the back and laughs joyfully.

As they head out of the office, the medlab doctor comes up to Jim and apologizes for losing her temper with him earlier. "Are your instincts always so on the money?" she asks. "Once in awhile I get lucky," Jim grins, as Carolyn glances up from her desk and glares. Jim asks if she's headed back to Atlanta, and she says she figured she'd "stick around for a few days, decompress." Because if there's one thing we've learned from all this, it's that ebola can waaaaait. Jim says there's lots to see and do, but she cuts him off as Blair walks into the bullpen, turning and crying, "Hiyyyy!" Blair stops and blinks. "Uh, hi." Doctor goes up and asks Blair out on an immediate date to the natural history museum. Blair waves to Jim as he walks out with her, still looking confused. "Okay, ta-ta," says Jim loudly from his perch on Carolyn's desk. "Bye-bye." Carolyn mocks him a little, and then rubs his arm consolingly as he shakes his head and then shrugs. Poor Jim and his very-nearly-textual thwarted gay longing!
All by myself (except for Carolyn)... don't wanna be...

**Bottom Line:** Even though the puzzle-solving adventure heart of this episode contains only two puzzles and neither bears scrutiny, and nor does the rest of the plot, this is a fun episode. Jim and Blair touch gratuitously, and they're sexy-vulnerable with Brackett calling the shots, suggesting they put their hands in each other's pants, etc. I sort of like Brackett, even though he is "a total DICK!!" I am confused, though, about why they made him know about the Sentinel abilities, and then just never had it come up again. Nor was anyone ever worried about an amoral rogue running around with that information. Oh, we can trust him! Remember how he and Jim said color words in unison that time? He really has a heart of gold, you know.

**The Roundup**

**Senses Used:** Taste (blindfold test, chili pepper); Sight (night vision in the loft); Smell (chili pepper); Hearing (minefield); Touch (combo lock)

**Zone-outs:** Red tiles

**Vehicles jumped onto:** Top-secret state-of-the-art government research stealth jet
1x08 Love and Guns

Chapter Summary

Jim tracks down smugglers, and Blair crams a six-month relationship into about thirty-six hours.

Blair’s driving Jim through traffic in a pale blue convertible with the top down, as they have an echt-Jim-and-Blair conversation:

JIM: Why don't we get some pizza?
JIM: All right. How about Mexican?
BLAIR: Why don't you shoot the lard straight into your veins, Jim? Come on.
JIM: Sandburg, have you noticed a sudden dropoff in the amount of people that'll eat with you?

Jim only half-listens as Blair complains about the construction ("Night work only, run by insomniac road crews. I mean, that's the only solution, right?") but becomes suddenly alert when he sees a construction worker pull out a machine gun. His "Oh, shit" is cut off by a worker blowing a rocket launcher. Panic ensues. Jim and Blair crouch behind the convertible, and Jim hands Blair his phone. "Get backup and get your butt off the streets." "It may not be in that order," says Blair, taking the phone and dashing off, hunched over.

Jim pulls out his pistol and stands, yelling "POLICE, DROP YOUR WEAPON!", but the construction guy just fires an automatic round into Blair's car. Jim dashes for cover behind another car, just to maximize the damage. Backup arrives (that Blair is quick), and as the bad guys turn their attention to the other cops, Jim reloads his pistol and spots the leader mirrored in a hubcap. Jim shoots him neatly, but gets into hand-to-hand with another guy. He's gotten to the ever-satisfying "hold him by the collar and punch him repeatedly in the face" stage when Blair gets back in the battle by spraying down the villains with a convenient emergency firehose. This gives the on-duty law enforcement the upper hand. Blair runs to lament his poor shot-up Corvair while Jim compliments him, "Nice hose job." If that line has been used in a sexual context in a fic, I actually don't want to know.

We cross-fade over to the kind of post-adventure, police-car-milling-around wrap-up scene we usually get in the last two minutes of the show. And it doesn't disappoint in terms of 30 Seconds with Blair (TM). Jim goes over to where Blair's sitting on the hood of a police car. "Hey, Chief, look, there's no reason to be ashamed if you're a little queasy," he says kindly, putting both hands on Blair's knees. On his knees, dude. Classic gay chicken move. (That would explain a lot about Jim and Blair's relationship, actually.)
Blair surprises Jim by grinning and chirping about being "ENERGIZED!!" "I just, I got into action! It was just, just, AH! It was SO WILD!" Jim backs away slowly. "Maybe we should get you home." "I mean, now I know what it's like to be you! I mean, not the enhanced senses part, but that reptilian brain, primal man, survival of the fittest, (incoherent squeal of ecstasy)!" Jim asks for the keys. He's going to drive the shot-up Corvair back? Blair makes "blam, blam" gun noises.

It's Simon's office, so it must be time for exposition! Jim has tracked down the guy who sold the construction robbers their weapons, but he's dead. He was employed by one Hector Carusco, a rich Chilean expatriate whom Jim suspects of being a big-time arms smuggler. But when they go to talk to Carusco about his gardener's death, he puts up a good show of innocence.

Jim paces on the Rainier campus, looking adorably old and out of place. Blair runs up to meet him, and Jim tells Blair he has a job for him. Blair is all excited until Jim tells him it's recon on Carusco's daughter, Maya, a Rainier student. Blair wanted something more exciting. He bitches and moans until Maya walks by. She's gorgeous. Blair gets a dopey grin and agrees to take the job: "Jim, Jim, I got this one, I got your back! Can't let my partner down, can I?" Jim watches him scamper off, and shakes his head.

At the station Simon tells Jim he's been assigned to work with a Fed on this case, and Jim is characteristically annoyed. Of course, in the next scene, a lovely lady comes up to Jim while he's got his hand halfway up the vending machine ("Can I help you?" he asks), and anyone who doubts for a second that she's the Fed has never seen TV before. After getting on Jim's bad side by disparaging junk food (which apparently nobody is allowed to do but Blair), she introduces herself as Agent Drennan, ATF, and asks for Det. Ellison. "Ellison, Ellison... I haven't seen him in quite some time. Pardon me," says Jim, pushing past her and right into Simon who says, "Jim! Good. I see you've found Detective Ellison." Now, how long did he expect to be able to keep that up?

Artifact Room B. Blair is busily moving giant piles of papers from one part of the room to another when Maya comes in, annoyed, at first, at "being traded from one professor to another," but Blair smooths things out, apologetically telling her he requested her specially because he knew she was good. Man, he has never looked more beautiful than right now in the cool shafts of light coming in
through the storage room window.

You'll have to ignore the funny mouth position as he would not shut up long enough for me to cap him.

She says she'd like to be asked, but softens toward him when he says, "All right. Then I'm asking. Would you please be my--whooa!" and all of his papers fall to the floor.

Drennan gets on Jim's nerves. Next.

Maya reads from a binder in Blair's office, asking if he really spent three months with the Kombai Tree People. He tells her a story about how he was the first white man they had ever seen and they thought he was an evil spirit, and he freaked out and fell down, defusing their mistrust with his own goofy uncoordination. Hmm, I'm sensing a pattern. Also: Blair has never been more beautiful than right now, blinking his huge giant-pupiled eyes in the soft light of the storage room lamp.
Jim and Drennan go to meet with one of Jim's snitches, who tells them about a gun shipment coming into Cascade. I find it amusing that when Jim's about to pay him he warns, "You be cool. Don't call attention to yourself," while ostentatiously whipping around some paper money. Drennan isn't satisfied with the interview, and runs after him and gives him $500 as a down payment on further information. When she tells Jim what she's done he yells at her--it's too much, he won't know how to spend it, and she's ruined him for Jim. She says he'll just work harder. Oh, this'll turn out well.

Maya brings Blair to her house to meet her father. That was quick; they met, what, this morning? Blair impresses Hector by knowing a lot about South American art. A hired thug type (Vargas, but I'm not sure when we are supposed to learn the name) comes up and tells Hector there's an "insect problem in the greenhouse," which Hector excuses himself to take care of immediately. And that should be Blair's first tip-off that he is a supervillain. Indeed, we see that the "insect problem" is none other than Jim's snitch, gagged and beaten for the trouble he took to find Drennan's information.

Jim and Drennan get called to some rocky ditch where the snitch's machete-maimed body has been found. Drennan apologizes at first, but gets defensive with Jim's relentless told-you-sos, saying she was trying to protect the city. They argue.

Maya and Blair stand in the quad, talking, leaning together to kiss again and again. That was quick; she didn't seem to really like him that much when they met, this morning; but I guess he has already met her father. From a distance, Jim watches, frowning slightly. Go, scorned stalker Jim, go. Maya and Blair make plans to meet up later, and while they're kissing again, Jim comes up and interrupts, "Sandburg." Blair looks up, distinctly not pleased to see him. He introduces "my friend Jim" as "a researcher" whom Blair is helping "with a project on human behavior." Is that what the zzzzz. "Sounds interesting," says Maya. Actually, it sounds vague, but Maya is too late for class to quibble. She leaves with one last lingering caress to Blair's arm. When she walks off, Blair turns to Jim, grinning. "It's not what you think." Jim stares, impassive yet judgmental. "Okay, it is what you think, but I also found out about her father." Blair reports that Hector's just a nice guy! Who loves art! And flowers! Seriously, he bought the "insects in the greenhouse" story? Jim says they have reason to believe Hector was involved in the snitch's murder, and Maya may be involved too. Blair says it's
"impossible" and yells at Jim to "leave it alone!" They part ways in anger.

Blair comes to his office to find Maya lighting candles and pouring out wine. Blair's impressed, and asks why. "Because tonight is special." Yes, it is the first night after they met THIS MORNING. Fade to after dinner, when Maya brings out an absurdly giant pastry. She claims (although later admits she was lying) that the tradition with this pastry is that they have to feed each other. Blair gets an adorable whoa-I'm-in-over-my-head-but-I-kinda-like-it look after she sucks pastry off his finger. Maya talks about how her mother made this pastry for her father. "It's a very special pastry." The word "pastry" has lost all meaning for me. "Like you're very special." I'm inclined to agree that that is exactly how Blair is special.

Special like a pastry.

"You never talk about your mother," Blair says gently. Jeez, Blair, she was in class half the day, there wasn't a lot of time for her to get into it since THIS MORNING. Maya says she died in a riding accident. Blair asks some more questions, getting around to her father and what he does (she says vaguely that he imports and exports tools and machinery). When he asks why they left Chile, she wonders why he's asking so many questions. He says he wants to know everything about her. "Why?" "Because I think I'm falling in love with you." (1) You have to admire his audacity, the apparent guiltless back-and-forth between investigator and lover. Although I guess that's the same thing he does with Jim OHHH. (2) THEY MET. THIS. MORNING. She agrees that she is falling in love with him, and they make out. When Blair brings his hand up to touch her, she stays it, confessing that she is a virgin. Wait, I'm picking something up; is that a unicorn? When she goes to kiss him again, he draws back. "What's wrong?" "Nothing. I just don't think that this is the night for this," says Blair, taking a long drink. I don't either. Because of when they met. Blair continues, haltingly, "Uh. I, ahhh. I'm sorry, I gotta go." And with hilarious suddenness, he's outta there, leaving Maya to put her head in her hands in the universal gesture of Stupid, stupid!. Wow. It's totally not clear if that was his conscience catching up with him, or if he's just an asshole. Or if he's gay.

Okay, so here's the thing: even if they didn't meet this morning--even if there was supposed to be a passage of time I wasn't aware of--there is no way Blair got to the "You never talk about your
mother” stage of the relationship before the first time they even consider having sex. Especially considering Blair's purported smooth operator status. But maybe he holds off on sex in proportion with the amount he loves someone. (That would explain a lot about Jim and Blair's relationship, actually.)

Jim corners Simon and gets his permission to go check out a boat docking from Chile without Drennan. When he gets there, though, he smells Drennan's presence and calls her out. They both independently identified the boat as a likely suspect. Jim cuts open a bag of coffee and finds a gun (dry quip: "Prize in every bag.") He super-hears an ambush and just narrowly knocks Drennan out of the way of gunshot. Of course he pulls her down onto himself missionary-position-style, but neither of them makes an entendre about it. I mean Drennan says "I'll try looping around the back" but I'm pretty sure she is talking about ambushing the shooters. Jim shoots something which explodes, like ya do.

Drennan tells Simon at the station later that even though the mission was successful (and even though, as Jim points out, "I practically saved your life"), she wants to file charges against Jim for allowing key witnesses to escape. Jim says "It's becoming crystal clear to me why you work alone!" and she huffs off. Simon tells Jim that Drennan watched her partner die last year. Ouch, nice work, Jim. I'm not unsympathetic, as this is at least as belligerent as Jim would be if he had to work with someone after Blair died; although, Jim at least would be belligerent and competent.

Henri calls out that Jim's on TV--he apparently granted a brief, not-very-informative interview about the takedown. We cut to Maya doing homework in front of the TV. She looks up and sees Jim.

Maya bursts into the office. "You lied to me!" She says she knows Blair's friend is a policeman, and asks if he's one too. Blair, urgently (and, in a green pullover thingy, looking MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN HE HAS EVER LOOKED): "I'm not a cop, but sometimes I do help Jim out. In a scientific way!

Interestingly, those are the exact same phrases that usually follow "I'm not gay, but..."

Surely I am not alone in my desire to draw hearts and bubbles all around him?

"So what was I, an experiment?" Maya demands. That's what Jim would like to know OHHH. Blair confesses that he was asked to get close to her to find out about her father, but tells her that he
reported that he was a great guy. With a catch in his voice, Blair insists, "Everything that happened between you and me, everything that we shared, that we said, that we felt, that was real! We can work this out!" "No. No we can't." Maya walks out.

Jim, listening to ringing over the phone, turns a weird cube with what looks like a ring in it around and around in his hand. It's really distracting because I cannot for the life of me figure out what it is. In his office Blair picks up the phone, crying eagerly, "Maya?" "It's Ellison." "Heya, Jim. Look, I really don't feel like talking to you right now." Ouch. When he hears about Maya, Jim says, "I'm sorry," but he adds, "But I'm right about her father." He explains how the operation is run, and says they're inches from making their case. Blair doesn't protest their innocence this time, just says, "That's great, but that doesn't help me any. I'm falling in love with her, Jim." Jim abruptly stops turning his ring-thingy, mouth frozen slack. "I've gotta go," says Blair. Jim blinks at the dial tone, puts down the receiver, and slowly rubs the ring-thingy between his hands.

Okay, so it is clearly a symbol of Jim's love, but what is it?

Hector finds Maya crying and asks what's wrong. "It's Blair!" she wails. Oh, God, Blair's life is now forfeit. Maya tells Hector that Blair was working with the police, spying on them. She asks if it's true, what they say about Hector, and Hector assures her it is not, but then goes to take a phone call in the Greenhouse of Evil. After Hector leaves, Vargas tells Maya to be more careful about her friends, and threatens both Blair and her. I am pretty sure the boss would not like him doing that.

Blair comes to Maya's house and, when the housekeeper won't let him in, wanders around back looking for an unguarded entrance. It is while he is thus stalking that he overhears Hector scheming with an associate through the there-is-no-reason-why-it-should-be-open greenhouse window. He runs down the lawn and is amusingly punched in the face by a fist which launches in from off-screen. Now, I know why we didn't see Vargas standing there—he was right next to the camera—but there is zero reason why Blair shouldn't have. There were no obstructions! As Vargas fireman's-lifts Blair's tiny, tiny body, we see Maya watching from a bedroom window.

We come back from commercial on tied-up gagged frightened-looking Blair. Ahhh, I love this show. Hector holds a fake-ass cardboard machete up to his throat, and it's actually Vargas who advocates holding off on killing him right away for strategic purposes. Hector is out for Blair's blood because of
Blair's misuse of his daughter. But he allows himself to be talked down, for the time being.

Seriously. Is it made out of cloth?

In the station breakroom, Jim tells Drennan a story about watching a fellow-rookie die shortly after he left the academy. "I spent the next six months pissed off at the world, angry, confrontation. I did some stupid, seriously stupid things." Possibly this explains the horrible moustache. But, Jim concludes, there was nothing he could have done. "He was my partner. You're supposed to protect your partner," says Drennan. Jim, intensely: "You do your best." By the way, Jim, it's nine o'clock; do you know where your partner is now? "If it all falls apart, hopefully you find some forgiveness, and you move on, cause that's all you can do," says Jim. Right. Tell that to yourself in two years. Jim. Jim gets a call from Maya (where did she get his number?), telling him where the smugglers are meeting (some warehouse) and where Blair is (there). Jim tells her to go to her room and stay there until he gets there.

Maya doesn't go to her room; she goes to the greenhouse, where she starts to untie Blair, feet first, because that's the most useful way. Blair gets a look of fright, and Maya looks around just in time to get punched in the face.

Jim loads guns into various holsters and heads for the elevator, ordering Simon (chain of cowha?) "Nobody move without my word, we spook Vargas, we get Sandburg killed!"

Vargas sketches out evil plan to make Maya's murder look like Blair's fault. "Your father will believe what I tell him to believe, just like he believed your mother died in a fall from a horse!" Blech.

Jim and Drennan arrive at the estate. "Cover me," says Jim. "You sure you trust me?" "Absolutely." She kind of does a shitty job, though, as the housekeeper opens fire and Drennan yells "LOOK OUT!" at the most useless moment, when Jim has no cover.

In the greenhouse, Blair protects Maya, launching himself into Vargas and crashing gracelessly through a tableful of plants. Vargas kneels over him and knocks him out with the heel of his palm (that exists, right? that is a body part that exists?) and then goes after Maya. Meanwhile, outside, Drennan gets shot, and Jim goes to her side, but she insists she's okay and tells him to go ahead. Her
life is forfeit. Vargas chases Maya through the greenhouse and has just got her down when Jim
smashes onto the scene in a shower of plate-glass. Jim and Vargas hand-to-hand, and they smash
through ANOTHER plate-glass window out into the yard. For some reason Vargas is already clearly
dead at this point, but there is a gratuitous and puzzling sound of silenced gunshot. Jim lies on top of
the guard, apparently dead, but then he rolls off with nothing more than an attractive scratch to the
face.

Gun-smugglers meeting in warehouse. Simon interrupts. The police have won.

Loft. Jim is making stir fry. Drennan pops up from under the counter, her arm in a sling. Jim banters
with her a bit. Where's Blair? There's a knock at the door--Maya.

Oh, there's Blair--lying on a giant pile of pillows on the other side of his half-closed curtain about
four feet from where Jim and Drennan were cooking. He sits up when Maya enters. Maya tells him
she's here to say goodbye, as she's going back to Chile. She sits down on the bed beside him and
touches his mouth, which is still a little red from the being-gagged ordeal. "I don' wancha t'go," Blair
says thickly. Oh, Blair. She stands, and he looks up at her, MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN EVER.

I only want to say, if there is a way...

"I love you," he says. "I love you, too," says Maya. "But I hate you, too. I just need time." Blair
stands up, swallows. "I'll be here," he says in a wavery voice. She touches his hair, and they embrace
tightly. Then she kisses his cheek and leaves. He sits back down on the bed and drops his head.

Jim appears at the curtain with a bowl of food. "Have you been talking to Drennan? I'm trying to
have some Chinese food here, and she's telling me MSG is a hallucinogen," he chatters in gentle,
quiet voice. "Would you straighten her out?" Blair looks up briefly, eyes shiny, mouth tight;
meanwhile Jim has the kindest, tenderest expression ever. He holds out the bowl. "Want some
noodles?"
"Want some noodles?" is love

"Not right now, Jim, all right?" Blair barely manages. Jim exits respectfully, and Blair lies back down on his pillows, gasping shakily, and weeping hot, salty, canonical tears.

**Bottom Line:** So, the Drennan plot: can I get a what? I mean, Jim counseling a one-off guest star on moving past a dead partner? Where does he--why--how does this--I don't know. Meanwhile, Blair falling in love was good (even if it wasn't with Jim, and even if it was just for one day). If nothing else, it provided Jim a perfect moment of frozen horror when Blair tells him about it over the phone; and I love that final, sweet attempt at comfort. And, of course, the crying. Blair is very good at crying. His suffering is exquisite.

**The Roundup**

**Senses used:** Sight (hubcap; aim at docks, arguably), Smell (Drennan at dock), Hearing (bad guys at dock)

**Phones handed to Blair:** 1

**Babe of the Week:** Maya (Blair)
1x09 Attraction

Chapter Summary

When Jim becomes uncontrollably attracted to a woman, Blair knows something is wrong.

Three masked thieves swing into a skyscraper office by Tarzanning through the plate-glass window. They use some high-tech acid thingy to burn the locks on the safe and steal a bunch of diamonds.

Next day, Jim tries to get a report out of the jewel owners--two bickering old guys--while Blair looks on fondly. I don't know if that's look of Jim! My hero, doing his job or That'll be us in thirty years!

A car comes to a stop outside. The driver is none other than Marcus from Babylon 5, complete with long hair and wacky moustache/goatee combo. Wait, I'm picking something up again... it's another unicorn!

Jim finishes up with the old guys and says "Let's go, Chief," even though he's only walking about two feet away to investigate the safe. As Blair pushes by to join Jim in his quadrant of the room, one old guy mutters to the other, "What's he, some kind of Indian?" Is that the only meta-comment we've ever gotten on "Chief"?

As Jim crouches by the safe, Blair stands by giving the world at large a nothing-to-see-here-move-right-along smile. Then he bends down and whispers, "You picking up something?" Jim is, but "it's hard to define." Blair urges him to describe it. "My vision's clearer and my hearing's a little better. My skin's tingling like I just finished working out." He got the same feeling at other, similar jewelry robbery sites, but he didn't mention it, which upsets Blair: "You didn't tell me?!" Blair suggests he walk around to see if the intensity level changes in different spots. Jim obligingly wanders around the room, and Blair gives the old guys another tight smile. A distance from the safe, Jim turns to Blair and says at a normal volume, "No." With one more sheepish look at the bystanders, Blair rushes over to stand ridiculously close to Jim and continue their whispered conspiring.
Outside, Blair annoys Jim by pestering him for more specifics. Jim thinks the feeling got more intense around the safe, but he's not sure. As they pass by Marcus's car, Marcus pulls out a normal-sized cell phone (he must be rich) and tells someone, "It's the same cop, Ellison." I admire his commitment to realism in allowing ample time for his unheard correspondent to speak, but I'm also kind of bored.

At the station, Simon, Jim and Blair take turns as-you-knowing that the jewel thieves get past security system with unexpected daredevil acrobatics. Jim reports they're checking out local circuses, and Simon tells him to keep at it. Simon and Jim head for the door, but when Jim tells Blair "Let's go," Blair stays put and points backward, which causes Jim to look at Simon to his left. I kind of love that Jim and Blair's nonverbal communication is so subtle that I, a faithful student of their interactions, do not understand it. "Something else?" Simon asks. Blair grins, "Something new is happening with Jim's senses!" Jim sighs. "I don't think we need to bother the captain with that." Blair reeeeaally wants to get into it, but Simon asks, "Is it going to help me solve this case?" and Blair chatters, "I don't know, I haven't quite figured it out yet," so Simon orders, "Out of my office." Blair looks terrifically hurt.

A hot redheaded girl enters a bar. At nearby table, Jim gets up. We pan out to see that Jim and Blair were sitting with two girls. Blair leaps up to follow Jim. Jim is not enthused about hitting on ladies--"Sandburg, I'm just not really good at this kind of stuff"--and Blair starts to go into Guide mode, telling him to "Just relax, man, take it easy," touching his chest, etc. The redhead brushes by, and she and Jim make brief eye contact, causing Jim to lose his train of thought. Blair watches after her, goofily impressed, and physically pushes Jim to go over and talk to her.

Jim and the girl, Laura, make small talk, and Jim gets this unexpectedly super-tender-sweet smile.
Quick poll: this expression says:
a. Look at the hot lady!
b. Look at the adorable kitten!

We fade to later that night; Laura is sitting on a pool table spilling out the story of her life, and Jim is playing with her hair, totally not listening. She asks him to tell her something about himself, so he leans in to kiss her. She draws back, trying to put him off, saying she's not looking for a relationship, but he just keeps running a finger down her arms, touching her lips—basically being completely unJimlike. It's effectively disturbing. "We could take our time. Get to know each other. Just be friends," Jim murmurs distractedly, his mouth almost touching hers. She gets up and walks out, leaving Jim alone and dazed. When he gets it together enough to follow her, she's already driving off.

Evidence lockup room. Jim stands around while Blair look through some files, saying suggestively, "I didn't hear you come in last night." "It was late," says Jim. Blair's all set to be proud, but Jim admits he was driving around alone. "I guess she wasn't interested." Blair touches his bicep comfortingly. "At least you went down swingin'. Are you going to try to see her again?" "Nah. She didn't even tell me her last name." Jim chuckles to himself. "So what's next, Coach? Twenty laps around the field?" Blair laughs, "Man, you are hopeless!"
They both love it when Jim strikes out!

Jim notices Blair is setting up some objects, and he asks what's up. "Trust me," says Blair. "Coming from you, those are the two scariest words in the English language," says Jim. Blair explains that Jim checked these items from the jewelry crime scenes out of evidence ("I've gotten really good at forging your signature" (whoa, violation! plus, Jim was standing right there, he could have asked.)) He gives Jim a flashlight found at one scene and asks if he's getting any of the feeling, but Jim isn't, and he thinks maybe it was all in his head. Blair doesn't believe that, but Jim loses patience for the project and walks off.

Thieves break into a diamond store across the street from a fancy party at a club. A little later, Taggart fills Jim and Blair in (a guard died, upsetting Blair, which is nice), and Jim goes to investigate the safe. He gets "that sensory thing" again, and Blair excited. "Oh! Okay! Uh.... use it!" "How?" "I don't know. Uh..." I like how Blair is always obviously thinking on his feet, making this up as he goes along; but I think I've complained before about how everything he tries always works the very first time. He asks if Jim can pick up any other hotspots besides by the safe. Jim walks around, then stops and looks up, zooming up through a hole in the ceiling. He grabs Blair by the collar and pulls him close to show him. They got in through the skylight. Blair wonders where the thieves came from, and Jim goes outside and finds a cable from the roof of the club where the party's going on. They tightrope-walked, of course!

Jim and Blair cross to the party. A woman stops them, saying the party is "invitation only"; Jim flashes his badge, but she doesn't care that he's a cop. He goes in anyway, Blair following, snickering. Blair's first priority is to grab some free food; his second is to ask what they're doing. Jim's getting his feeling again. After smoothing things out with the club manager--a guy with a Marcuslike English accent--Jim suddenly sees Laura across the room. Blair grins. "There are no accidents, man. This is a sign from God. You must go. Go forward, man!" Jim doesn't need to be told twice. He's hardly taken a few steps when Simon comes up behind him, yelling, "Jim!" "Oh, hi Simon," Jim murmurs, and then goes on to meet Laura, who puts both hands on his face in the typical The Sentinel sign of affection. Simon, righteously PO'd at being snubbed by one of his detectives, asks Blair what's going on, and Blair's like, "I dunno, he met this girl..." Oh, sure, Simon will be great with that explanation.
In the coatroom, Jim runs his hands up and down Laura's bare thighs, and they sort of gyrate against each other, kissing rapidly on the lips until Jim moves over to her neck. This is getting graphic.

I mean, just look at his closed-eyed ecstasy. Is that allowed on TV?

Laura pulls off Jim's jacket and starts unbuttoning his shirt. So I know that Jim is under the influence of his senses (oh, sorry, was that a spoiler?), but what about Laura? Is she just horny or what? Far be it from me to disparage the notion that any human being would not pounce Jim given half the chance, but she doesn't know him like we do. He could be a total creep. I mean, he's acting like one.

Out in the party, a fight breaks out. Simon tells Blair, "Get Ellison," and goes after the fleeing combatant. He collars him and finds some gold watches and jewelry in his coat.

"Jim," says Blair, coming around the coat rack. He stops short and blinks, taken aback at the sight of Jim holding and making out with Laura straddling his lap. They're both clothed, but about not to be; Jim hastily rearranges Laura's dress to cover her breast. "Um..." says Blair, chuckling nervously, and he points back in the direction in which he came and makes good his escape.

Simon's finishing up his arrest when Blair and Jim re-emerge into the party. "Sorry, sir, I..." "Drop it," snaps Simon. As the watch thief is led away, Marcus comes out of the crowd and gives hard look to disheveled-haired Laura.

After the break, Simon and Jim agree that the pickpocket is not the thief they're looking for (why steal a million dollars in diamonds and then hang around to lift some paltry watches?) Jim wants to stick around, sure the real thieves are still around, but Simon says, "I can't explain away our presence here to the deputy mayor and six members of the damn city council by telling them you had a feeling!" Good for you, Simon. Put your foot down one goddamn time. Blair shoots Jim a somebody's-in-troublelllllle look.

Jim looks back at Laura and sees Marcus grab her by the arm. He super-listens to their argument, with Marcus zealously calling her a tart and a whore. She throws a glass of water in Marcus's face and walks off. Jim meets her, asks if she's okay, and she says "My ex can be a real bastard," and "Want to take me home?" Jim smiles.
Simon and Blair look on, bemused. Blair explains that Jim met Laura the other night, "and he's already totally infatuated." "And now he's acting like some teenager," Simon concludes, case closed in his book. Blair, concerned now: "No, it's more than that. It's like he can't even reason. He's working on pure instinct." After Simon leaves, Blair continues to squint unhappily in Jim and Laura's direction. How much would I love if it actually turned out that Blair just automatically assumed there was a serious problem with Jim's senses every time he liked a girl?

Marcus and the guy with the Marcuslike accent, who I guess is his brother, conspire. We learn sort of offhandy that they're jewel thieves, but most of the scene is spent on Marcus's love life angst. He's dating another girl, Callie, to try to make Laura jealous. His brother makes fun of him, saying Laura's doing the same thing with the police detective, but Marcus says he told her to go after the detective to spy on him. So that explains it, somewhat. She still kind of seems like she's just as primally drawn to him as Jim is to her, though.

Sure enough, we cut to Laura shoving Jim up against a mirror in her bedroom. She cryptically says "If things were different..." "What things?" "Maybe I'll tell you about it some time." Then she takes off her dress, so Jim doesn't ask. Many many shots of them making out in bed in their underwear.

Much of it, happily, shameless armporn. Is he still wearing his watch?

Next morning, Jim comes home. Blair looks up from where he's lying in bed, working on some school stuff, and we get one of the best shots available of the elusive Blair's room. Blair comes out and leans by his doorway while Jim gets some coffee, and they have a mundane conversation about the lack of breakfast options, with Jim grinning and loving life and Blair speaking in a dull, doom-and-gloom voice. It's delightful. "Sorry I ran out on your last night. I guess I got a little preoccupied," Jim beams, heading off toward his bedroom. "Pre-occupied. I think I'd use a different word," Blair mutters to himself. What word?

And we cut straight into Jim's room, Jim gratuitously shirtless, light from the window highlighting the curves of his muscles. He unzips his pants.
This episode is looking up already!

Blair runs up the stairs.

Okay, now this episode is really looking up. Look at how he's smiling! That there in the corner? Jim's naked back. No lie.

BLAIR: Hey, Jim. We gotta talk about something. Um, this woman.
JIM (still wearing pants, even though we totally saw him about to push them off a second ago): Her name is Laura.
BLAIR: Right, Laura, yeah. Don't you think that your attraction to her is just a little bit off-scale? I mean, I've been watching you, and...
JIM (now wearing a tank top--noooo, show! wrong direction!): Whoa, whoa, whoa. I think you just crossed that line. Now, you can study this Sentinel thing all you want, but stay out of my personal life.

On the one hand, that's kind of an ouch line, because Jim placing a boundary between Sentinel project and personal life has got to be detrimental to Blair's getting in his pants; however, the fact that they're having this conversation while Jim gets undressed and re-dressed, and neither of them is fazed by that (it's obviously nothing Blair hasn't seen before), is about as delightfully ludicrous as Jim saying "Let's just be friends" while Laura's lips are close enough for him to taste. I mean: Jim's pants are ALREADY OPEN TO HIM. His pants, his person, his extremest means, lie all unlocked to Blair's occasions, for serious.

BLAIR: I have been studying, Jim, all night long, because I was sure that this thing with Laura somehow factors into the experience you're having at the crime scene. [Ed. note: It's about time.]
JIM: You're nuts!
BLAIR: I just hadn't been able to make the connection yet.
JIM: There is no connection! Just two ordinary human beings that, you know, found each other.
[Swoon.]
BLAIR (taking off his glasses dramatically): There is nothing ordinary about this. [Heterosexuality is unnatural!]
JIM: I don't wanna analyze it, Sandburg, okay?
BLAIR: Think about it, Jim! When you saw her last night, it was like nothing else on the planet existed! [Including me, waaaah!]
JIM: So what? Why do you wanna rain on my parade? [Think about it, Jim!]
BLAIR: Okay, you're gonna have to go with me here, because this is a little bit off the wall, but I think I know what's going on. PHEROMONES.
JIM (dubiously): Pheromones.

Blair gives Jim a mini-lecture on pheromones, concluding with, "It's kinda like, ah, when people say that you got chemistry with somebody? Well, we actually do have chemistry." Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. Ha.

Blair lays out all the pieces for Jim: his senses are exaggerating the effect of pheromones, explaining his attraction; pheromones can stay active in the environment for hours, explaining why he got a funny feeling at the crime scenes, but not from the evidence out of lockup. Jim's not buying it, not about his senses, and not about Laura's involvement in the crimes: "Prove it!" Luckily, Blair has come prepared. He's been waving around a cup wrapped in a napkin, and now he hands it to Jim: "I want you to unwrap that and hold it in your hand." Jim does and immediately gets the feeling. Blair explains he grabbed the glass when Laura put it down at the party last night. "I'm really sorry, man," says Blair. "Maybe I'll tell you about it sometime," Jim muses. "Tell me what?" "Something Laura said last night. Almost like she was trying to confess." Yay, I'm so glad he's immediately convinced! First because we know it's true, so it would be annoying to have to deal with further objections, and second because it shows his immense faith in Blair's analysis skills.

Marcus and Laura plot against Marcus's brother.

Jim and Blair drive in the rain, and--oh my lordgod, they're talking about THEIR FEELINGS and THE NATURE OF LOVE! (!!) !

JIM: Somewhere inside I knew something wasn't right. I just didn't want to accept it.
BLAIR: Well of course you didn't! I mean, hey, man, I still wanna believe in Santa Claus! [Ed. note: isn't Blair Jewish?]
Jim rolls Blair a sidelong look.
BLAIR: What's so different about this? That kinda body chemistry doesn't come along every day and when it does, we have to believe that it's something more to keep ourselves from seeing it for what it really is, which is a purely instinctual reaction to another person's body chemistry. Jim tightens his mouth at the road, clearly not into this explanation.

BLAIR: Jim, I have studied so many cultures and you know what? Nobody's got it figured out. I mean, hell, man, if someone ever did, there would be no art, no poetry, no music...

JIM: I just don't get it. I mean, how can it be chemical when the feelings are real feelings?

BLAIR: They are. That's the paradox. I mean, as a Sentinel, your body chemistry is going wild, but as a man—as a man, it affects your feelings! One's not exclusive to the other, Jim.

The mystery of love! Jim earnestly discussing his feelings! Blair earnestly discussing Jim's feelings! And Blair with his jaded-academic interpretation of love, and Jim wanting to believe that there's something more, something real, and not liking when Blair gets too analytical about it—I mean, that right there is the totally problem between them, isn't it? That's the one place where they don't understand each other, and it comes up again and again. I'm just having such a strong instinctual reaction to this conversation's body chemistry over here.

Stopped at the world's longest red light, Jim identifies Laura's car parked up ahead. Marcus gets out of a car across the street. A woman's ankle swings out of the passenger side door (oddly), sporting, Jim sees, Laura's anklet. Marcus gets into Laura's car on the other side, and it promptly blows up.

At the station, Simon shows Jim a wallet with Laura's ID they found at the explosion site, and says "I'm sorry." So wait, Jim didn't think it was Laura until now? Simon offers, but does not demand, to let Jim off the case, but Jim wants to work on it, surprising exactly no one. Blair comes in with some info on the circus act, so now they've at least ID'd the thieves.

Marcus's brother goes to his safe-deposit box, but finds the jewels missing. Blair and Jim arrive at the hotel, and we get an unnecessarily long shot of them walking in the door and up to the desk, Blair randomly patting Jim on the elbow, just to fill time, I guess. As they're waiting at the desk, they see Marcus's brother pass by, and they chase after him into a garden. Brother pulls a gun and Jim and Blair take cover behind a rock wall. "Stay here!" "You got it," Blair agrees. Wow, he was so
accepting of being left behind in season 1. Jim follows Marcus's brother up to the roof of the hotel, where the brother decides to try tight-roping his way to freedom on a phone wire. This is pretty much the stupidest plan ever, as I'm sure tight-roping takes no less time than running back down to the ground floor and crossing the street. Also, because Jim has just arrived behind him with gun drawn. Jim seems to decide it would be dishonorable to shoot a man on a tightrope, so instead he shoots the rope, making Marcus's brother sway on the ledge, and disrupting phone service for the entire building. Jim pulls the brother off the ledge, declares, "I never did like the circus," and punches him out.

Jim arrives at Laura's hotel room to look around. He's puzzled to see two packed suitcases, and then hears movement, so he draws his gun. It's Laura. He blinks at her, slack-jawed, and then shakes his head, "You're under arrest," and uncertainly, "You have the right--to remain--silent." Laura cuts off his Miranda speech, telling him to stop, taking him by the collars and telling him, "You're the first good man I've met in a long time." He says he wants the truth, and she ties up some expository loose ends, including the identity of the woman who died (Marcus's girlfriend). Between kisses, she outlines a plan whereby Jim takes the diamonds back but lets her go, letting the world think she's dead. "Do you think you could do that? Please say yes." She takes off his jacket, and he kisses her and leans into her crotch-first. "All right," he says. Laura smiles, putting her hands up over her head against the post of her bed. Jim murmurs, "Just think of me from time to time," and, still kissing, handcuffs her to the conveniently ceiling-high bedpost.

I think this story would be fine if that was just it--Laura really did regret stealing the diamonds, and in the end was willing to give them up just to get away--but at the station later, Jim and Blair report to Simon that she masterminded everything and had planned to kill both Marcus and his brother to get all the jewels. Jim is matter-of-fact about the whole thing, and Blair is bouncy and happy (hm, I wonder why). There's a dumb bit where Jim turns sharply when an old lady passes, making Blair think it's happening again, and then says "Just kidding" and walks off, leaving Blair and Simon gazing after the trail of his luscious pheromones.

**Bottom Line:** I'm gonna say it. Jim's uncontrollable lust is kind of great. I mean, yes, it's heterosexual, but there are consolations for the heterosexuality:
1. It's unwilling.
2. He triumphs over it.
3. It's UNWILLING.
4. He clearly likes long hair?

Blair gets to do lots of Guiding this episode, and there are classic scenes of J/B in states of physical and emotional undress. All in all I approve.

The Roundup

**Senses Used:** Sight (skylight at second scene, Laura's anklet), Hearing (Marcus and Laura's argument)

**Sensory Side Effects:** Uncontrollable attraction based on pheromones
Chapter Summary

Blair takes Jim on vacation at a monastery, but a murder interrupts the peace.

Oh, lovely, Jim and Blair are taking vacation together! Somehow Blair got Jim to drive them out to this rural kind of clearing / parking space without knowing in the slightest where they're actually going. Blair backgrounds that Jim hasn't had a day off in over a year (really???) and his skills have been getting a little dull from fatigue. Sentinels of old used to go on a retreat one day a year, and so should Jim. Jim's guesses for where Blair is taking him are first golf course, then spa (? wtf spa?), then solitary communing with nature, all of which he's down with. He's less enthused when a yellow school bus arrives to pick them up: the sign says "ST. SEBASTIAN'S MONASTERY" and the driver is in full monk regalia.

On the bus, Jim leans over Blair's seat and asks him to confirm that that's not really a monk, is it, just a guy in a monk outfit. The monk speaks up to contradict him, referring to Blair as "Brother Blair." Blair puts his head in his hand.

Two monks show Jim and Blair to their cell. (Which they will of course be sharing.) Jim gets a phone call from a girl, and the monks and Blair all look at each other awkwardly while he flirts and makes a date. (There's some priceless RB ad-libbing on the blooper reel where he gets more and more lewd.) The abbot confiscates Jim's phone and also demands his gun; Jim resists, but at Blair's urging, he caves and gives it up. Isn't that illegal? He doesn't even remove the magazine. The abbot leaves, but when Jim puts in headphones while Blair is trying to talk to him, he returns to confiscate the Walkman. Jim looks absolutely violated as he's denuded of his headphones. "Maybe he's a
Sentinel monk," Blair chuckles.

Blair shows up at the woodshop of one Brother Marcus (played by Brandon Maggart, Garett's dad).

MARCUS: I remember you. The young man who promised to write to allow me to vicariously enjoy his exploits in the real world.
BLAIR (sheepishly): Time... gets by you sometimes.
MARCUS: Well, I forgive you. But then...
MARCUS AND BLAIR: [You/I] have to!! (They laugh like it's the greatest joke in the world and hug.)

So we reconcile time in a monastery with Blair's backstory how?

Dinner. The abbot sits at one end of the table, and Jim at the other. Jim just sits, stiff and awkward, when the monks cross themselves; Blair gives a half-hearted one-handed non-cross. Everyone puts their hands together for grace, and Blair keeps Jim from putting his elbows on the table, even though some of the other guys are doing it. The abbot gives some thanks and then asks Jim to "complete the benediction." Jim hems and haws, but Blair nods, encouraging Jim to do it, so he does. "...Thank you, Lord... for all that you do... (long pause) For the great chili... Amen." The others cross themselves again, and Blair slaps Jim on the arm affectionately, which for him comes to much the same thing. (Did I just liken Jim to Blair's messiah? Oh... well... I guess that's apt.)

Jim, Blair, and four monks play basketball. There's some cute byplay as Blair reaches for the ball and Jim pushes him away. "You better be careful or people might think you're having a good time!"
"Yeah, yeah, it's not so bad for one night..." One of the monks goes to ring the bells, and the others explain (off Jim's "Quiet guy") that he's taken a vow of silence (so natch he'll be a witness to a crime presently). Blair gives Jim the most exasperated look when he says "You guys actually do that?" Jim snatches the ball away from where Blair's spinning it on his finger and tosses it off to a monk, telling him to show his jump shot, and when the monk totally misses, Jim says to Blair, "Okay, he's on your team." I love seeing the guys just hang out and have fun together.

Just kiss already.
More basketball as the silent guy rings the bells (which weirdly doesn't bother Jim). When he's done he falls down the stairs like a sack of potatoes. Everyone outside runs in to him, and Jim checks his pulse. "He's dead." Wait. What? What? The vow of silence guy was the victim? And he was killed about two seconds after being introduced? So the vow of silence comes into play in the plot in exactly zero ways? Despite it being the title of the episode? Is that--am I missing something?

Night. Abbot's office. Jim suspects foul play and wants to open an investigation; Blair thinks he's being cynical, but stands up for Jim's right to call the cops when the abbot objects: "A man has died. We're at least obligated to report it." But the phone is dead. Jim asks for his cell phone and gun back, but when the abbot unlocks his drawer, they're gone.

Jim and Blair check out the body and then the stairs where the victim fell. Jim notices a small hole on each side of the step and figures there was a tripwire. So why didn't he trip coming up? No, seriously. I want to know. The best part about this scene is Jim and Blair crowding together in the staircase.

Jim and Blair confront the abbot. Jim confirms that the death was murder, saying the trap had to have been set between the dinner bell and vespers bell. (Actually, it had to have been set between when the victim went upstairs and when he came down, but--okay, okay, letting go of it.) There was nobody on campus then but monks (well--and Jim and Blair). The abbot doesn't want to believe that it's one of his monks. He gets defensive, accusing Jim of thinking the order is anachronistic and useless. Jim's just like, whatever, let me investigate my murder. Blair's all, can't we all just get along?

The monks assemble in the dining hall and Jim announces that they're all going into town for their own safety. "Blair is warming up the bus, so any moment we can..." Just then Blair runs in and announced, "All four tires on the bus have been slashed." Blair grabs Jim by the coat and pulls him close, and they whisper and confer while the monks all stare.
They decide to ask for a volunteer to walk into town, figuring the person most likely to want to get away will be the murderer. All of the monks raise their hands, because they are selfless, and Spartacus, and maybe don't want to get murdered. The abbot recommends one monk for the job, so Jim sends him off to notify the authorities. The abbot instructs the others to lock themselves up in their cells for the night.

Next morning, Jim comes up to Bespectacled Monk and Handsome Monk while they're gardening and starts asking questions, but the monks snub him. But then a bell rings and Handsome Monk runs after him, explaining they were just in a two-hour period of silence, but it's over now. So, second time a vow of silence could have been important but within two seconds is rendered moot. Handsome Monk responds readily but informationlessly to Jim's questions about the victim's background, saying the monks don't really talk about their old lives, so he doesn't really know. Through the conversation, Bespectacled Monk gives them Shifty Glances(TM).

Hands inject a lightbulb with something in a syringe. A monk makes Jim's bed, and finds his phone and gun under the pillow.

Blair walks in a green, green meadow with Marcus. Marcus talks about the victim (he admired his fine eyes, apparently) and the life here generally. He pats Blair on the shoulder paternally and walks off as Jim comes up. "I could never do what these guys do," Blair confides to Jim. "The sacrifice, the commitment..." I think Blair is pretty capable of making a commitment. A monk comes up and tells them the abbot wants to meet them in their cell.

Arriving at their cell, they find the place ransacked. As soon as they walk in, the abbot and another monk lock them in. The abbot shows the phone and gun, which admittedly does make Jim look pretty guilty. That and the fact that the monastery was murder-free until he showed up. Some bossy cynical cop from the city with only flighty ex-whatever-he-was-to-them Blair to vouch for him? I'd suspect him, too. Although he does lack a motive.
Locking them into a room together: not really a big punishment. Also, can I watch that episode?

The abbot leaves and Jim and Blair yell at the other monk to unlock them, but he says he has some new evidence for them and he'll just go to his room to get it. As he walks away, Jim smells kerosene, and sees that the lightbulb in the monk's room is filled with liquid. He yells even more vehemently, trying to get the monk's attention, but it's useless. The monk's room explodes.

Jim and Blair investigate the explosion site. I guess they've been cleared of suspicion since another murder happened while they were locked up. Never mind that the murder was clearly a trap which had been set ahead of time, or that Jim seemed to have preternatural knowledge that it was going to happen! Jim finds a half-burned photo of Jackie Kozinsky, a gangster-turned-federal-witness who disappeared decades ago. Another man (in the missing half) has his arm around Kozinsky; Jim identifies the ring on the hand as the abbot's.

Jim and Blair confront the abbot in the chapel. Jim accuses him of providing refuge for a murderer. He surmises that the victim(s) found out that one of their fellow-monks was Kozinsky, so Kozinsky murdered them. The abbot denies and tells Jim to get out, and just as their getting into shouting (Blair winces), Marcus appears in the doorway and tells them to stop: "I'm Jackie Kozinsky." Blair looks betrayed. Marcus admits to being involved in shady stuff back in the day, but he insists he never murdered anyone. But the mob still wants Kozinsky dead, so maybe one of the other monks is a contract killer.

Coming outside, Jim asks the abbot about the most recent arrivals. Bespectacled Monk was a banker or something (of course), and Handsome Monk was a basketball player. But (gasp) he missed that shot! Why did he do that? Why does the plot hinge on this? Shot of Handsome Monk raking leaves evilly, and then he pulls a gun and says "Looks like you found your man, Detective!" Oh! That was-abrupt.
Handsome Evil Nonmonk Contract Killer corralls Jim, Blair, and the brothers into the bell tower and threatens the abbot at gunpoint, demanding Jackie Kozinsky. Marcus steps forward. "I am Jackie Kozinsky." Just as HENCK is training his gun on Marcus/Jackie, another monk Spartacuses, "I am Jackie Kozinsky," and then all the monks follow suit. As Jim points out, HENCK doesn't have enough rounds to kill everyone, so he dashes out, locking the trapdoor behind him. Jim goes to the lookout and overhears HENCK on a cell with his coconspirators, scheming to set the tower on fire.

As HENCK surrounds the tower with kerosene, Jim hastily makes a climbing rope out of monk belts. He makes it down in time to knock out HENCK and grab the light match on the ground before it makes contact with a puddle of kerosene. The monks cheer!

Wrap-up? Jim is tying HENCK’s arms with one of the belts. So is that it then? There's still ten minutes left in the episode, and I hope it is ALL JIM/BLAIR CAMERADERIE. In fact, I--oh. Bullets tear through robes. A carful of gangsters is driving up. Oh, fine. The monks run for cover; Jim and Blair dash in the front door and cower by a stained-glass window.

JIM: Let's split up.
BLAIR: What?
JIM: It's gonna be safer that way. Come on, just go.
ME: Shut up, Fred!

Jim accosts the abbot with big plans to rally the men to fight back, but the abbot informs him that they are committed to nonviolence. The abbot goes to where some of the monks are tending to Marcus/Jackie's bullet wound, and reaffirms his strong stand against violent retaliation.

Weird techno/chanting song pipes up. Contract killer with machine gun enters a cell. We see Blair round a corner behind him, hefting a walking stick.
Blair's sidekick lessons from Gabrielle: Tread softly and carry a big stick. And be a pretty, pretty girl.

Jim pokes his head outside, and the killer leans out the window to open fire on him. Blair pushes him out the window. I'd really like at least a Jim-to-Blair wave here, like, thanks for saving me, buddy!, but it is not to be. The monks pray.

HENCK creeps up to a door. Abruptly it opens in his face, knocking him down a short flight of stairs. He's unconscious. Jim emerges and bends over him, looking up when he hears a gun cock. Honcho killer. Blair runs out, and Honcho Killer turns to aim at him--no, that's even worse for Jim! But before either of them can do anything about it, the abbot comes up behind the honcho and knocks him out with a shovel. So much for sacred vows! (bats eyelashes winningly) Sorry, God!

Okay, now wrap-up. HENCK and honcho are led away, Jim and Blair finish up giving a statement to a country sheriff, and a body is wheeled out. Blair goes and draws back the sheet; it's Marcus/Jackie. "Got you, Kozinsky, you sonofabitch!" yells the honcho, and Blair begins to stride toward him. Jim has to grab him and hold him back. Blair struggles, his face contorting in pre-tears. "Let it go," says Jim, as the police car drives off with the criminals. Blair turns to the body, reaches out to touch his hair--and Marcus/Jackie wakes up! "No, I got you!" Wide-eyed, Blair turns to Jim, who shrugs, "It's a miracle!" Blair couldn't have been in on this plan? Come on.

Blair apologizes for thinking that Marcus/Jackie was a killer. "I wouldn't blame you if you never spoke to me again," says Marcus/Jackie. "Vow of silence? Me? It's not possible," says Blair, somehow conveying tender emotion in that little joke. Jim wanders off and thanks the monk who walked into town about a million years ago for finally bringing the authorities. Right, that. The abbot expresses guilt at having broken his vow of nonviolence. "Well, if it's any help to you, I forgive you," Jim smiles winningly. Yeah, I'm sure it's a big help that the gun-toting cop who doesn't even understand why a person might not want to be violent forgives him for being violent. Hey, Jim, last time you checked, were you God? I'm just curious. But the abbot smiles, "Thank you, Brother Jim."

30SwB(TM). Jim says, "Next time we go away for a little peace and quiet, I'm gonna choose the place." I love how it's just assumed that there will be a next time. Blair agrees, asking what Jim had
in mind, and Jim says Vegas. "Sin City?" Blair grins, eyes wide, as he undoubtedly considers a future "vow"(!) in the inevitable Elvis wedding that will finally make them partners for real. Jim and Blair walk off into the distance, smiling and laughing and bumping into each other. So ends season one.

**Bottom Line:** Not one of the spectacular classics by any means, but it had its cute moments. Actually, this is pretty exactly typical of an average episode of *Sentinel*, so I guess that's an appropriate note to end on.

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Yes Jim. Smile at him. Soon my plan will be complete.

**The Roundup**

**Senses Used:** Sight (liquid-filled lightbulb); Smell (kerosene); Hearing (phone scheming); arguably more (observations he made while investigating the body and the crime scene might have required supersenses, but we didn't see any special effects to indicate one way or the other).

**Jim says "Blair"**: 2 (To the assembled monks: "Blair is warming up the bus, so any moment we can..."; to Blair, "Blair, check that door.")

**SEASON ONE ROUNDPUP**

**SENSOBABBLE**

**Milestones:** Jim recovers his senses after five years of dormancy; begins to control them, thanks to Blair's guidance

**Zone-Outs:** 2 (red frisbee, red tiles)

**Other Sensory Side Effects:** Loss of supersenses due to emotional turmoil; cold medicine reaction; pheromone lust

**ADVENTURE**
**Guns held by Blair:** 3 (but one of them is a flare gun)
**Vehicles jumped onto by Jim:** 7 (motorcycle, bus, helicopter, pick-up truck, SUV, train, stealth jet)

**BABES**
- **Kissed by Jim:** 3 (Carolyn, Beverly, Laura*)
- **Kissed by Blair:** 2 (Christine, Maya)
*Confirmed sex.

**RELATIONSHIP**
- **Milestones:** Jim and Blair meet; work together on Sentinel project; become unofficial cop partners; move in together; go on vacation together
- **Jim shoves Blair into a wall:** 2
- **Jim says "Blair":** 7 (1 call-out (looking for Blair); 2 directives to Blair ("Blair, get down!" "Blair, check out that door."); 1 to some assembled monks, Blair not present; 3 to Simon, Blair not present.)
2x01 Flight

Chapter Summary

Jungle adventure episode! Jim gets the opportunity to give up his Sentinel status; Blair gets the opportunity to go on the anthropological expedition of lifetime.

We don't open in the jungles of Peru but with Blair talking about them, telling Simon places to visit. Simon expositions that he's going to an anti-narcotics conference in Lima and that his son Daryl will accompany him, visiting educational sites while he's working, and then going on a fishing trip with him. "You're going to a country with all the cultural heritage of Peru and you're going fishing?" Blair demands. "He'll see the sights, then we'll go fishing," says Simon. Jim hits Blair on the head. Blair gives Jim a Look. They're such an old married couple. Blair is very pretty this episode, with lustrous, bouncy hair.

Okay, you hit me upside the head for no discernable reason, but I can't stay mad.

Daryl shows up. He isn't excited about Peru but he's okay with it because it gets him out of class. Simon says he got all of Daryl's homework assignments. "Oh, man," says Daryl. Blair makes an awesome "making fun of Daryl" face. Also, he is holding a box just big enough for an iguana. I'm just saying.

Peru. Grassy knoll. Simon and Daryl's helicopter has broken down. While they wait for it to be fixed, they have a Touching Father Son Moment. Daryl says fishing isn't what he wanted to do, it's what Simon wanted to do. Simon promises that they can spend their last two days doing whatever Daryl wants. He wants to hit the BEACH! They see the helicopter fly away. They're stranded! Then, just for good measure, the helicopter blows up!

Loft. Jim comes in and Blair is on the phone, excitedly thanking someone. He explains that it was not a girl he wants to bone as Jim surmised but a representative Eli Stoddard, "one of the world's greatest living anthropologists and just happens to be my mentor," asking him to join him on a study trip to Borneo.

JIM: Congratulations! You gonna do it?
BLAIR: I told him I'd have to think about it.
JIM: What's to think about? Go!
[Pause. Blair looks nonplussed, bordering on hurt.]
BLAIR: You really think I should?
JIM: Sure. You kidding me? A couple of weeks in Borneo sounds like a blast.
BLAIR: ...Jim... we're not talking like a couple of weeks here. I mean, this kind of study involves a major commitment of time.
[Jim looks wary.]
BLAIR: ... at least... a year.
JIM: A year!
[Blair nods; Jim blinks]
JIM: What about, uh... you know, o-our project? The S-sentinel thing?
BLAIR: Jim, I know, but... but this kind of opportunity...
JIM: Then you should do it.
[Jim walks away abruptly, gets a beer out of the fridge.]
BLAIR: Are you upset?
JIM: No.

Awww, he totally is. THEY BOTH ARE. SO SAD.

The phone rings, and Blair picks it up, but Jim grabs it out of his hand. Blair's like... what. Anyway, the news that Simon's helicopter went down takes their mind off things for the time being. Blair: "What the hell are we going to do?"

Go to Peru, apparently. We cut to them all packed for their trip. Jim doesn't want Blair to go: "The jungle is no place for you." Blair points out he's been to the jungle before, and Simon is his friend too. Jim grudgingly agrees to let him come, but "you do what I tell you, when I tell you. No questions asked." Blair: "So what else is new?" Ha.

Next scene: Simon and Daryl are captured by guerillas. (Yeah, yeah, sorry. It's clear how much more interested I am in the FEELINGS plot than the ACTION plot.)

Simon and Daryl are taken to the camp of some German logger called Karl Reischer. He's all polite, apologizing on behalf of his men, who "didn't understand [their] situation," and offering them hospitality. Well, this is nice.

Jim and Blair in a plane. The pilot doesn't want to land in some valley because it's crawling with guerillas. Jim convinces him to make one pass over it and he will jump. Blair puts on a parachute too, saying he's skydived with a friend before. Jim reminds him "it's the jungle out there," but Blair says "I'll take my chances." I was hoping they would share a parachute, but they don't. Unfortunately for Blair: "Jim! Jim! Jim, where you going? I don't know how to steer this! I've only jumped tandem!... Oh my god! Help me! I don't know how to do this! I was just kidding! Don't leave me!" Ohhhh, Blair. Jim yells instructions at him. It's conceivable that Jim could hear Blair because of his super-
senses, but there's no way Blair could hear Jim. Blair yells at Jim "Don't lose me! Come and get me, please!" as he lands in a tree.

Blair falls to the ground and does a little dance. Jim shows up and says it's time to move out. Blair: "Wait a minute, I got something in my pants." Jim (I swear to God): "How exciting." Blair unzips his pants and pulls out a tiny lizard. "Whoa! Oh my god! Did you see that thing? Look at him!" Aw, Blair thinks the lizard is great. Jim looks on with kind of a bemused, charmed expression. As he's watching Blair do up his pants, Jim zooms in on something over his shoulder: a panther in the jungle.

Karl Reischer dines with Simon and Daryl. Daryl PSAs about the evils of logging. Reischer points out that people say that, but they also don't want to give up paper, wood, or conveniences; besides, his company plants new trees, relocates animals, and doesn't disturb any native people because there aren't any in this area. That night, Daryl's sitting up when he hears something outside his tent. Peeking, he sees some Indians being led by soldiers. Daryl wakes up Simon and insists on leading him to find the Indians. Simon and Daryl sneak over to a trapdoor with boxes glued onto it (that's not suspicious at all); inside, they find Indians being made to make cocaine.

As they turn to go, they're caught by two soldiers. Simon quickly disarms one of the men and holds the gun on them. Daryl grabs a gun from his holster, and Simon exasperatedly takes it from him. Simon orders one of the soldiers to take them in a truck, telling the border guard a specific lie, and that Daryl will know if he's saying it right because he's a top Spanish student. Darly: "Como esta usted, amigo? Se habla espanol? Yeah." What a dork. The soldier seems to be following Simon's orders but, just after the gate, he makes a play for the gun, and there's a struggle. Soldiers start shooting left and right. Simon tries to drive away, but a missile hits the truck, sending it SPINNING
INTO THE AIR AND EXPLODING. Cut to: overturned truck, Simon and Daryl crawling out, PERFECTLY OKAY. Whatever. Simon's stuck. He makes Daryl run for it without him.

**HOW DID THEY SURVIVE THIS?**

Jim's trying to find Simon and Daryl's trail, but his senses are "confused." Blair became really grubby between last scene and this. He goes into Guide mode, but Jim's impatient: "I just don't have time for this, man." "You got to work with me," Blair snaps. "Close your eyes." Jim sighs and does. "Okay. Now don't push it. Just let it happen." Hee hee. He's still not getting anything. Blair rubs a hand through his hair. (His own. Don't get that excited.) "I don't understand this, man. Uh, okay, um..."

This has never happened to me before...

Blair has some theories which are wrong, for once. Jim sees the panther again.

Reispher questions Simon, who claims he's working with the DEA and there's backup coming. Reispher doesn't believe him, but wants the boy found to be sure.

"How are your senses doing, man?"

Jim wakes up a little while later. There's a blue filter, or blue lights on in the studio, or something. He sees the panther. He stands up and looks around for Blair. "Sandburg, Sandburg!" he calls. He walks through the jungle, still looking around. "Sandburg! Sandburg, where the hell are you?" The panther appears and jumps at him, knocking him down.

Jim snaps awake for real. He sees Blair curled up, asleep, a few feet away. He relaxes.

Cut to morning. Jim leads Blair through the jungle. He has a gun. Where did he get a giant gun? They crouch. "Looks like an Indian village," says Blair, brushing his fingertips against Jim's knee. "You stay here," says Jim, going on ahead. The village is abandoned. Suddenly, a blond woman comes out from behind something and slams Jim across the face with a hefty branch.

Blair's face comes into focus. "Jim!" Blair gently sits up him with a hand on the back of his neck. The woman apologizes. She thought Jim was a guerilla. As he inspects Jim's wound and helps him up, Blair explains that the woman is Kimberly Ash, a botanist. Kimberly says all the adults in the village were taken by soldiers and it's only her and the children left. Some children appear.

Jim sits on a rock by a river in a contemplative mood. Blair comes tripping down the rocks asking if Jim is okay. Jim angsts about losing his Sentinel abilities and says he never wanted them in the first place. He gets increasingly agitated, badmouthing the abilities, and Blair gets defensive. Finally Blair cries, "Damn it, Jim, tell me what's going on! I'm your PARTNER." Jim admits he's been seeing a panther. Blair calls it his "animal spirit" and tells him to "quit fighting it and see where it leads you." A child from the village appears and tells Jim a new boy has arrived.

Daryl! He hugs Jim. That's nice. Daryl draws a map of the enemy encampment for Jim and one of the little children comes up and asks Jim to bring back their parents.

Jim prepares for his mission, leaving Blair to protect the village with his gun, which he of course gives him because Jim is always giving Blair a gun. For his own protection, Jim takes a crossbow and paralysis-causing darts. All right then.

JIM: Hey, Chief. I'm glad you came.
BLAIR: Me too.

Running through the jungle, Jim has a vision. The panther morphs into a Chopec chieftain or whatever, who tells him he's been brought back to the jungle, the birthplace of his abilities, to make a choice: "You can go back the way you came and be an ordinary man, or you can go forward, but to do so will require your life and your soul. Are you prepared to make such a journey?" Jim sees himself at the edge of a cliff. "If I go forward, I'll die," he says. "Yes," agrees the chieftain. "Okay,"
He finds himself back in the middle of the jungle, and can now hear voices. The village is in trouble! He runs back. As he's running, he just sort of *develops* a bandanna and face paint. Okay.

Jungle Jim: It just sort of happened.

The village is empty. "Sandburg! Sandburg!" he calls. Oh no!! Blair is missing for reals!!! JUST WHEN HE WAS READY TO GIVE HIS LIFE AND HIS SOUL.

Enemy encampment. Blair and Daryl tied up. Jim sneaks into the camp totally unstealthily, but nobody sees him anyway. He zeroes in on Blair's voice. Cut to inside the tent, where Blair cries in a really high voice, "Jim!" "Shh," says Jim. Blair expositis that the others are in the underground drug lab. Jim tells Daryl to "stay with Blair" and goes off to rescue the others while Daryl and Blair try to steal a truck. "I knew I should have taken auto shop," says Blair. Well, you have to admit, Blair, the cooking skills you learned in home ec have come in handy for various courtship rituals (cf. *The Debt*).

Anyway. Jim finds everyone down in the lab and leads them aboveground, where he somehow sets off a series of non-adjacent explosions. He herds everyone onto Blair and Daryl's truck. Daryl and Simon are reunited and hug. At the last moment, Jim rolls off the truck, to Blair's consternation, and runs back to hit Reischer with his sleepytme arrow. Reischer's holding a bazooka at the time and manages to blow himself up.

Cascade. Blair listens to a message from Eli Stoddard's office. Jim hands Blair a beer.

**JIM:** I guess you should call him back.

[Blair looks up at Jim; Jim drinks.]

**BLAIR:** Well actually I've already decided not to do it.

[Jim stares at Blair.]

**BLAIR:** This S-sentinel thing... Y'know, it's more than just a research project. [blinks] It's about friendship. [Jim continues to stare; Blair smiles] I just didn't get it before.

[A slow, crooked smile spreads over Jim's face. He swallows.]

**JIM:** Okay.
"It's about friendship. I just didn't get it before."

"Okay."

They go out onto their deck (they have a deck?) Blair gazes at Jim and says, "You know, you were really something out there in the jungle, man. I've never seen you so focused, so in control. It was pretty amazing." Jim doesn't "have the energy" to talk about how his powers came back. "We're home," he says. "Let's enjoy it." Oh man. "Welcome back, partner," says Blair. They clink their bottles together. Jim looks over his shoulder and sees the panther standing guard over the upstairs bedroom. HA.

**Bottom line:** This episode rocks. Okay, cocaine guerilla plot is meh, but SO MANY FEELINGS! We hit all the major high notes: Sentinel mysticism; jungle adventures; spirit animals; science vs instinct; Jim/Blair "but what will become of US?" tension (which is totally the best kind of tension for them to have); and a loving, emotional, friendly resolution. It's about friendship, people. He just didn't get it before. They're home now, so let's enjoy it.
Welcome back, partner.
Jim and Blair protect a pop star and her daughter from a crazy stalker. Blair teaches Jim to dial it down.

We open in a music video which would make me wonder if this is really the right show except when else am I in a 1990s time warp? Cut to the song playing over the radio of a crashed prison van. US marshals are slumped over the dash. Weston, a prisoner with longish blond hair, creeps out of the back, takes the keys, a gun, and a cigarette, and leaves, exploding the van as he goes.

In his office, Simon briefs the boys on Weston--he's a psycho with a life sentence who's a "classic profile of a stalker"--in his cell, they found tons of defaced tons of pictures of Angie Ferris, the woman in the music video. Simon likes her; Blair says he digs it when the older generation gets into the new stuff, making Simon give him a look of KILL DEATH NOW.

Jim and Blair go to Angie's apartment to warn and protect her. They're greeted by Pam, Angie's cute but entirely family resemblanceless daughter. Angie comes out and chews out Pam for letting people in; Jim explains that he's a cop and "this is Blair Sandburg." Heh, they always try to get by without explaining Blair. Angie has to ask if he's a cop too, and he says he's a consultant to the police. Well, he's got his explanation down pretty pithy.

Angie sends Pam away and Jim asks if she's ever met Ray Weston. She says no. Jim explains and offers the protection of the Cascade PD. Angie's not interested. Jim urges her to take it. She's still not interested. Lather, rinse, repeat, until Angie gets a telephone call. It's just one of her own songs. Jim hears it outside. He goes to the balcony and sees a cell phone and an album cover on the dash of a car. He gives Blair his giant cell phone: "Call for backup." Jim sends Angie and Pam into a bedroom and heads out all tough-guy-like with his gun.

The guard is dead in the elevator. Jim goes down the stairwell. Weston's waiting for him in the lobby, and surprises him; they get into a hand-to-hand fight, and Weston must be really strong, because he totally beats up the guy who once hung off the rails of a helicopter for, like, an hour. He pushes Jim through a conveniently-placed plate-glass window. It looks like Jim should be down for
the count, but he picks himself up just after Weston escapes.

So that's Injury Set 1. Jim now has a bandage on his hand. Worried that Weston will come back, Jim and Blair try again to get Angie to accept police protection, but she wants to run far, far away from the place where the crazy man killed her security guard. Jim says if she goes elsewhere, "we can't protect you." "Like you protected us today?" Ooh, zing. Angie accuses the police of using her as bait to get Weston. Then for no particular reason that I can tell she decides to accept protection, as long as Jim, specifically, takes the job. That's odd, considering she thought he sucked a minute ago. I guess she must like-like him.

Weston goes to buy a gun, and shoots the clerk.

Blair entertains Pam with stories about how he almost got eaten by a crocodile on the Amazon. I think he's lying, but who knows with Blair. He's got his glasses on his head, which is kind of adorable. Pam complains about how her mom never lets her do anything as Angie brings in a plate of milk and cookies. Only Blair digs in.

Pam gets a page from her friend on her beeper, but Angie says she can't return the call until she does her homework. "But she 911'd me!" Pam cries, making Blair point and laugh to Jim behind her back. Pam asks if Blair can help her with her homework, and he cheerfully agrees. He's a sweet kid, that one. Jim and Angie discuss child-rearing. Jim's all grumbly and old-fashioned about kids having beepers. Angie talks about how she wants to be a super mom and protect Pam from everything.

Phone call. Weston. Angie keeps him on the line, saying nervously that she wants to meet up with him, while Jim calls the station on his cell to get a trace. It doesn't work, but Simon calls about a minute later with a lead: security tapes from the store where he shot the clerk plus witness reports of him checking into a nearby hotel. Jim decides to go help out with the bust, even though there's absolutely no reason he needs to do that and he's kind of committed to this protection gig, as Angie reminds him. Jim thinks this is more important since they could catch Weston and then Angie will be fine, plus, Blair is here! And if there's one thing we know about Blair it's that he's very good at avoiding getting kidnapped or held at gunpoint.

Hotel. Simon's there too. Man, this is the VIP bust. Just as Simon's about to open the door of the hotel room, Jim hears something. He pushes Simon out of the way just a gun rigged inside the door goes off.

Angie's. Blair's reading a book on the couch when Angie comes and asks Blair to help her decide which track to put on her new album. He's excited and agreeably puts on the giant headphones she gives him. Oh, Blair, can't you see a trap?
The hotel room is empty and Jim realizes that it was a trap. Back at Angie's he breaks down the door, scaring Blair. The police look around and find that Angie and Pam are missing. Blair apologizes profusely, but Jim seems pretty willing to chalk it up to experience. Blair deduces from the empty hangers in the closet that they packed and left rather than got snatched (but some people just have empty hangers, don't they?) and remembers that he saw the red light for the phone after Pam went to bed, so Angie must have been making a call. Jim says "I'll make a cop out of you yet." Blair gets Jim to use his sense of touch on pad by the phone instead of making a rubbing like normal detectives do. (Obviously he has not seen as much Ghostwriter as I have.) Jim finds an address.

Another "touching" scene!!! Get it???

Jim and Blair drive out to the address. Jim decides to scope out the premises while Blair waits by the car. "If you see anything, call me." "On what?" "Just call." Heh. By the house, Jim is sneaking around, jumping at shadows, when suddenly, he is shot!! Injury Set 2. Angie rushes out to help him. That's what you get for trespassing, Jim.

After the break, Angie is bandaging Jim's arm and apologizing. She thought she would be safer here at her manager's summer home. Jim says if he could find them, Weston could. Pam and Blair come in, and Pam asks if Blair is lying about the stories he has been telling her about people who eat placenta. I... okay. Jim says "Usually if Blair says something, it's true." Only through sheer luck, I assure you. (But I kid Blair.) Angie starts to organize sleeping arrangements for our intrepid heroes, saying there's one spare bedroom and she can get blankets for the couch, but Jim cuts her off, "We'll manage." Angie says she's glad they're here and exits. Blair asks if there's "something going on between you two." Pause. "No," says Jim lamely.

As Angie puts Pam to bed, Pam asks what's going on. Angie admits that Ray Weston escaped from jail and killed the security guard, and is after them. Pam: "I don't believe you!" Angie tells her not to tell the police that they know Ray. Jim overhears this with his super-senses, and ambushes Angie in the hall: "We need to talk. This time I want the truth."

Angie comes clean: Ray was her boyfriend, and he was really good with Pam. Eventually she came to realize he was crazy. Probably it was the time he held up a grocery store that tipped her off. She was guilty of aiding and abetting, but cut a deal with the police in exchange for testifying against him. She has told Pam that Ray went to jail, but not the details (that he's guilty of multiple murders or that she betrayed him). She says she lied to Jim and Blair to protect Pam.

Outside in a car, Weston calls Pam's beeper.

Later that night. Storm going on outside. Jim is wandering around. Blair comes out of the bedroom to ask if he's okay, and Jim says he's fine. "Talk to me," says Blair, and Jim admits his arm hurts--a lot. Blair hypothesizes that the intensity of the pain has to do with the fact that Jim's senses were on alert
when he received the wound, and Jim's like, whatever, just make it stop. Blair goes into Guide mode and tells Jim to relax, breathe, etc. Blair tells him to picture something he can control, like a dial. To turn down how much he feels, he should picture turning down the dial. It works, like, immediately. Blair's amazed. "This is a major breakthrough!" Jim is also pleased but not so much surprised, which makes sense; as far as he's concerned, his guide did his job, as usual.

"Wow."

Jim sends Blair back to bed while he "keep[s] an eye on things out here." Apparently that means snoozing on the couch while Pam creeps down to take the bullets out of his gun, per instructions from Weston on the phone.

Later. Jim wakes and sees Angie coming down the stairs. She gives him a new shirt to put on. So we get a moment of shirtless Jim. They flirt a bit as Angie apologizes for being untrusting and Jim agrees with her. Angie: "I've been taking care of myself for so long I don't know how to let anybody else in. I don't let people get close." Jim: "I know what you mean. Neither do I." JIM YOU LIAR. New rule: you aren't allowed to make any claims about your own oh-so-guarded lone-wolf status until at least thirty minutes have gone by since you last willingly remitted control of your very senses to another person. Does that sound fair? Let's say sixty minutes if it's someone with whom, in lieu of exceptional pain/watchdog duties, you would currently be sharing a bedroom, and possibly a bed. (The sleeping arrangements were never made entirely clear, but I calls 'em likes I sees 'em.)

Jim gets a call from Simon. Letters from Pam were found in Weston's cell. Jim and Angie go to ask Pam about this. She defends Weston, saying he wants them to be a family again, and Angie and Jim try to argue that he's done bad things. Pam yells "I don't believe you!" again and runs out of the room. She meets Weston at the bottom of the stairs. Lightning crashes as they hug and Weston looks sinister over her shoulder.

Blair wanders out with a candle all "What's going on?" and Weston pops out and slams him in the face, totally knocking him out. Ha. Pam is not too pleased with this, since she, like all right-thinking people, is fond of Blair. Jim and Angie come to confront Weston, and he takes Pam hostage, holding her at gunpoint. Jim threatens Weston with his own gun, but he's not afraid; Pam admits she removed the bullets. Just when things look bad, Blair pops up and attacks Weston, and immediately gets knocked back out. Ha ha. But it was enough of a distraction so that Jim could get Angie away from the scene. I guess they figured Weston didn't really want to kill Pam anyway.

Weston goes looking for them outside, where Jim attacks him, and they brawl in the rain for awhile. Weston ends up getting electrocuted by a giant, uh, electrical, tower, thing, which happens to be there. Pam apologizes to Angie who of course forgives her.
Cascade PD. Are we going to get a 30SwB? Sort of; Blair asks about Jim's arm and he says he's got his pain under control, and Blair's like, "Another chapter for my dissertation!" Thing must be getting pretty long. Blair has a butterfly bandage over his little cut, and Jim has a giant, ugly, gaping uncovered wound. Because he's tough.

![Image](image_url)

**Bandaids are for wusses. No offense.**

Angie arrives and gives Blair an advance copy of her album, and Blair and Simon go off to listen to it together. So it's going to be a Jim/Babe of the Week ending. They do that thing Jim always does with women where he makes vague plans to go out with and possibly have a long-term relationship with them some time in the future, and then never, ever does.

**Bottom Line:** This is a solid, watchable episode. A major pitfall could have been an annoying kid, but I liked Pam. The introduction of the dial metaphor was a nice scene and a classic moment in Sentinel mythos, although I believe it features more prominently in the slash fiction that I read than in actual canon.
2x03 Deep Water

Chapter Summary

Jim is a suspect in a four-year-old murder case involving his ex-partner.

Night. Gray-haired guy in car looks at briefcase full of money and asks the bills, "Who says you guys can't buy happiness?" Another car approaches; the sound of a gunshot.

Title card reads "Four years later." Simon, Jim and Blair are watching an old car being dragged up from the bay. Simon thinks it belongs to Jack, a former cop. While Jim goes to investigate, Simon tells Blair to "cool it with the eyes" on Sheila, a red-haired officer from Internal Affairs. Jim finds a vanity plate reading "Jack's Toy" and smells something weird. He opens the trunk. Blair immediately turns away, so it must be a corpse. Sheila identifies the body as Philip Brackley, and asks Jim, "What's the body of the kidnap victim doing in the trunk of your ex-partner's car?" Simon tells Jim to "stop protecting him," and after Jim leaves in this sort of cold huff, Simon explains that Jim's ex-partner Jack Pendergrast (GOD THAT NAME IS LONG. Can I call him "Pendy"? On second thought, maybe I'll just call him "Jack.") was supposed to deliver ransom money for Phillip Brackley, but disappeared. IA assumes that he took the money, killed the kidnappers and victim, and ran. Jim thinks otherwise.

We flash back to Simon's office four years ago. 1992!Jim has a terrible moustache and is wearing a white baseball cap and a sleeveless plaid shirt. Oh, and a small gold hoop earring. In his left ear. Aw yeah. Anyway, Simon's bitching him out, and Jim's got this "whatever" face on, and whenever Simon turns his back, Jim bounces a ball. Also he says "sir" sarcastically. Man, 1992!Jim is an asshole.

Simon pairs Jim with a new partner: Jack Pendergrast. Jack's kind of an older, cool, big-brother type cop, real laid-back. He advises Jim to fix the attitude. Jim bumps into 1992!Sheila, spilling her coffee on her blouse, and when she complains, he leeringly suggests cold water, "or maybe some happy pills." MAN, 1992!Jim is an asshole. How does this fit into Jim's backstory exactly?
I mean: seriously: military for some undetermined number of years (probably quite a few). Gets stranded in Peru. Hangs out with the Chopec for awhile, palling around with Incacha and having super-senses. Presumably not an asshole at this time. Gets rescued (that was 5 years ago in the beginning of season 1, so we'll say six years ago). Comes home, goes to police academy, works on Vice for a year or two, BECOMES AN ASSHOLE, this, somehow manages to become not an asshole (or at least, not in the same way) in time to meet Blair in season 1. Is that really how it went down? I want answers!

Instead, I get Jack telling Jim to "lose the earring" because he "wouldn't want the bad guys to get the wrong impression" if Jim "know[s] what [he] mean[s]." Oh, yeah. Maybe that's why Jim's going through an identity crisis.

Anyway. Present-day, forensics garage. Sheila reveals that the gun found in the truck--the one that shot Phillip Brackley--was registered to Jim. She advises him to call a lawyer.

After Sheila leaves, Jim explains to Simon that he bought the gun for Jack as a birthday present, but never got around to changing the registration before Jack and the gun disappeared only a few days later. He did report the gun missing, which Blair thinks should clear him, but Jim and Simon say no go. They'll have to reopen the case. Simon still suspects Jack, and Jim defends him. Simon says he knows Jack taught Jim a lot, but Jim is a great cop because of what he's got "up here" (points to head) and "in here" (points to heart). In the background, Blair nods. Simon continues, "If I'm going to keep you on this case, you are going to have to maintain your objectivity." WHAT. JIM SHOULD SO NOT BE ON THIS CASE. HE IS A SUSPECT. Jim makes another coldly dramatic exit, and as Blair scurries off after him, Simon tells him to keep an eye on Jim.

Cut to Blair keeping both eyes on Jim as he rides in the passenger seat of the truck.

JIM: Will you cut that out?
BLAIR: What?
JIM (smiling): Those concerned glances--like somebody's lost puppy-dog.

Blair's lost puppy-dog look.

Jim assures Blair "everything's going to be okay," and begins reminiscing about the past. Oh God, brace yourself for the moustache. And a black Hawaiian shirt. Eugh. The flashback is just after Phillip Brackley disappeared, and his father thinks he has run away and penned the ransom note himself. Phillip's friend Art Landis agrees. Mr. Brackley doesn't want the police to get involved.

Jim and Blair talk to Phillip's mom, Monique. She tells them that Phillip's father died of an illness three months after Phillip disappeared, and bitches them out for not helping her at the time. Art Landis is there, and he tries to protect Monique from questioning. Monique can handle herself; she
tosses our heroes to the curb. On the way out, they pass a Mysterious Stranger(TM)!!!!!!!

Jim decides to go through Jack's storage locker for clues, but first he has to get the key from Emily Carson, Jack's red-headed ex-girlfriend. In a flashback, Jack tries to move into Emily's apartment, but she's like, what the hell, we're broken up, this deal is off. In the next flashback scene, Emily tells Jim that she doesn't love Jack while Jim indecisions, "...he's my partner." (1992! Jim, thinking: Hey, I'm attracted to this woman! Maybe I'm straight enough to abandon this weird San Francisco fun-loving jerk persona!)

Present day. Emily answers the door holding a little boy. Emily says Jim "look[s] good," and he certainly looks better than the last time she saw him. Emily introduces her baby, and Jim his. Blair says "Hey!" in this cute high talking-to-a-kid voice. Emily says her husband will be back soon, and she didn't tell him about any of this business, so she hopes Jim will get lost quickly. As she hands him the key, their hands touch just a little too long.

Storage locker. Jim pokes through Jack's stuff while Blair swings a baseball bat and asks "What's the story between you and Emily?" Jim denies there's a story (Blair doesn't believe him) and shows Blair Jack's datebook. The last entry is for "Dent." Blair suggests "Dentist."

Outside the door, someone sets a fire and stops the doorknob with a 2-by-4 (not that that would really hold it very effectively, particularly with a fire going on, but whatever). Jim quickly realizes what's going on and has Blair help him swing this heavy... thing, suspended on chains from the ceiling, through the door. They sort of step all over each other in a clumsy escape.

Jim is questioned by Sheila in front of an IA panel. She is not impressed with the "The storage locker just spontaneously caught fire! We were lucky to get out alive!" story. She also reports that Jack called Jim's apartment on the night he disappeared-- there's a record of a 22-second connection. Jim says he never spoke to Jack, and that Jack may have left a message, but Jim never got it. Sheila's like, yeah, right. She thinks he and Jack were in on the theft together and that Jim used his portion of the money to invest in real estate: he purchased the loft a month after Jack disappeared. Oh, so he OWNS the loft. That's how come Blair can live there rent-free. Anyway, Jim says lamely that he saved the money, and Sheila looks pretty triumphant. GASP! Was Jim and Blair's love nest purchased with DIRTY MONEY??

No. In Simon's office, Jim secretly confesses to Simon and Blair that the money was back military pay. The thing is, he was involved in covert ops, so there will be no record of the payment. The military would deny the whole thing. Blair says "That sucks!" and the Sci-Fi channel bleeps it, which is odd, since he says it on other episodes with no problem. Simon finally pulls Jim off the case, but conspicuously leaves behind his passcard to the forensics garage.

There, Jim feels the car, then takes Blair's hand and runs it over the spot. Blair doesn't feel anything unusual, because he doesn't have super-senses, Jim. Jim explains that feels little indentations which indicate to him that a gunshot blew out the window. Therefore, he concludes, Jack is dead.
Jim and Blair research records of unidentified bodies. Jim finds one promising candidate; his suspicion that it's Jack is confirmed when he reads that the body was missing its little toe. Cut to the Major Crimes hallway, where Simon reminisces about Jack's embarrassment w/t his missing toe: "He used to wear his socks all the time. Even used to shower in them, remember?" How does Simon know this? How does Simon know that Jim knows this? As they reach Simon's office, Simon tells Blair to wait outside, and then sadly breaks the news that Jim has to be suspended from duty. Jim has to turn over his shield and gun.

Restaurant. It kind of looks like this was shot in someone's refinished basement. Simon and Blair want to know where Jim was on the night in question, and he resists telling them, then admits he's protecting Emily Carson (Jack's ex-girlfriend). In a flashback, we see that Emily came over that night, Jim comforted her, they got drunk and slept together. Blair's all "I knew it!" Jim doesn't want to drag Emily into this after she took pains to keep her husband from knowing about it. Simon asks if Jim heard any of the phone message from the answering machine that night, and Jim says he only heard muffled sounds, wasn't paying attention, and when he went later to check, accidentally deleted
the message without hearing it. (Apparently "it was one of those new digital machines that doesn't have a tape.") Then Jim basically forgot all about it, what with finding out Jack was gone and feeling guilty about Emily. Simon tries to absolve him of his past sins. He's so nice.

Loft. Blair brings Jim a plate of food. Jim's not hungry. He's bugged about the case. He wonders why the kidnappers killed Jack instead of just taking the money; he must have known who they were. Blair suggests Jack was trying to tell Jim in that phone message. "We'll never know," says Jim. "I think there's a way we can find out," says Blair.

Blair's theory is thus: "You see, four years ago you were unaware of your heightened senses, but they were there. I believe that you can reprocess your old memories and separate out everything else and just concentrate on the one sense that you want activated." As much as I love Blair, I feel that now is a good time to suggest that serious research on Jim's abilities should really be performed by a psychobiologist specializing in sensation and perception, not a well-meaning anthropologist. Look, Blair, if it doesn't make it past your attentional filter, it doesn't make it into your long term memory, period, end of story. Considering that and considering the hypnosis-like state Blair will now soothe Jim into for the purpose of recovering this alleged dormant information, anything Jim now "remembers" from that night will be a textbook example of false memory. But it will all turn out okay, because in the context of this show, Blair's crackpot theories are always right. That, or Jim is extremely suggestible (particularly when it comes to Blair) and they're both consistently lucky. But I guess pretty much everything, including most instances of sense use, can be explained that way, and then nothing wonderful can come of this story. All in all, I guess the failings of Blair's explanation of how memory works is a silly detail to get upset about, but it's what I know about, so consider it payback for all the times they messed up how police procedure, guns, and explosions work and I didn't say anything.

Let me repeat what's happening here because I glossed over it in the preceding rant and I don't think I've adequately represented the full weight of its vaguely discomforting eroticism. Blair is talking Jim into a trancelike state so that he can relive, in exhaustive, retroactive-sense-heightened detail, a past sexual experience, while Blair sits by watching attentively and murmuring encouraging words. After a few false starts, Jim allows himself to be overcome with the memory. Blair's monologue: "Close your eyes. Start to breathe. Concentrate. Nothing else exists except for that night with Emily... Come on, come on, come on. It's okay. I know it's hard, but it's... it's safe to remember. Now, breathe... Come on, man. Try it again, Jim. Concentrate. Now, don't give up. Just block out everything else except for that night. It's the only thing that exists."

Well, it and me. Now, think back, what was Emily doing? Where were her hands?

I know it's hard, but it's safe. It's safe to remember. When I say "the slash writes itself," I don't usually mean it literally, but I have it on good authority that whenever this scene is played, six new slash stories spontaneously form in the ether, independent of any author or physical media.
Jim remembers the message. Blair's like "You're kidding." He's always so surprised when his plans work, as well he should be. In the recovered memory message, Jack says he's about to meet the kidnappers, wants Jim to back him up, and met with Sanford Dent this morning. Jim suddenly remembers Sanford Dent, Brackley's lawyer; he was the MYSTERIOUS STRANGER whom Jim didn't recognize, because his hair's gone gray. Whatever Jack found out that got him killed, he learned from Dent. Jim and Blair go to find him.

Dent isn't home, but Jim finds brake fluid on his drive. Oh no, he has no brakes! Chase time! Following the trail of brake fluid, Jim finds the out-of-control car and tries to help it slow down, to not much avail. It ends up careening into a ditch. Jim and Blair get out and head for the ditch. As Blair tries to go forward, Jim grabs him. He can't hear a heartbeat.

But evidently he would like to feel one.

After the commercial break, Jim calls Simon. He found Dent's briefcase, which contained two wills of Mr. Brackley's. The one from before Phillip's disappearance left everything to him, and the one after left everything to his wife Monique, but only if Phillip remained missing for seven years. We cut to Monique's office where Jim is apparently telling the same story. He accuses Monique of killing Jack because he was one of the only ones who knew about the will. I'm not too clear on what the deal is here--was the second will a fake? Or had she presented another fake will at the time of Brackley's death which left everything to her? Whatever. Luckily for Jim, Monique confesses to killing Jack and Phillip (HER OWN SON. Or stepson. Anyway, not cool) and implicates her accomplice Art Landis. Art appears in time to attempt to shoot Monique; Jim throws her to the ground, saving her. He gives his handcuffs to Blair, tells him to call for backup, and runs off after Art. Chase sequence. Art ends up flailing around in some water and Jim saves him. I think that's the way on-foot chases generally end on this show.

They're finally having an official funeral for Jack. Blair's there but not Jim. Sheila tells Blair to tell Jim she's sorry. Up on a hill somewhere, Emily finds Jim watching the funeral. They wonder what would have happened if they'd never done the evil deed.

Hey, wait, CAROLYN! How does Carolyn fit into Jim's backstory? I don't think he would have slept with Emily while he was married. Even when he was a jerk. So--in the four years between then and now, he got married, got divorced, and fell into a more or less amicable friendship with his ex. Did Carolyn live at the loft? Maybe Jim leased it or something and then just moved back in after the divorce. I wonder what he used Blair's room for before Blair moved in. Also, when he did he stop being an asshole? Jim's backstory makes no sense.

**Bottom Line:** Despite several inexplicably intense Jim/Blair moments, this episode is largely unenjoyable.
2x04 Reunion

Chapter Summary

Simon goes to his high school reunion and ends up a murder suspect. It's up to Jim and Blair to save him instead of going kayaking.

The truck is trundling down a country highway. Simon's in shotgun, and Blair's in the backseat looking at Simon's yearbook and reading out his quote in a funny voice: "If not us, who? If not now, when?" They're taking Simon to his 20-year high school reunion. Jim won't let Simon smoke in the car, and Simon can't order him because "we're off duty, sir." Simon tells him not to call him "sir," then. "Yes, sir," says Jim. I kind of love Jim. Simon talks about Peggy, a girl he liked back in high school. Blair finds her picture and declares her a "babe." Of course Blair thinks she's good-looking, she has his hair.

And now here is grown-up Peggy driving along. She is being followed. She stops by the side of the road to make a phone call, and is nearly run down by the pursuing car. She has to climb over her car to get out of its way. She ends up avoiding the car by flattening herself underneath a truck, which seems like kind of a bad idea to me, but gets the job done. Hey, whatever, man, it worked for Jim and Blair in the pilot.

Heroes arrive at the hotel. Simon begs them to come in and join him for a drink before they continue on the kayaking trip they are taking together. I--I mean, I know Jim and Blair love to live, work, and relax together, but I'm still always surprised when they take joint vacations (see also Vow of Silence). Boys never want a break from each other! They're more soulmatey than most soulmates. Anyway, Jim and Blair tease Simon a little, then go in.

Being at the hotel gives Simon bad memories of working there as a teenager. He tries to attach himself to the kayaking trip, but Jim says they only have two tents. Hey, I thought Jim doesn't have a tent? Also, boo for pointedly separate sleeping arrangements.

Simon chats amiably with the hotel manager, his old boss, who is a nice guy. The only name we get for him is "Billy." We also meet Sherriff Becker, a former classmate of Simon's, who is friendly but betrays a small-time-cop chip on his shoulder. After Becker walks off, they all spot Peggy, and Jim
and Blair chorus, "The one that got away!" Blair likes the unison so much he chimes in on the end of Jim's next line, "Maybe we should stick around in case you need some back-up." He's a little out of sync that time, though. Simon declines the offer, to my dismay, and Jim and Blair frolic off chatting about their fun vacation plans. Oh, no, is this going to be a Simon episode? I like Simon, but... Jim! Blair! Can't we go with them? No? No fun stress-free kayaking episode?

Apparently not. Hotel bar. Peggy's conversation with the bartender reveals she's planning to meet up with Kerry Lance, the woman she was trying to call earlier. Hot date? Simon greets her, and she seems surprised but not unpleased to see him. She says she's meeting someone, and hides upon the entrance of a man who she identifies as Art Sturges, the owner of Canyon Lake, the company she works for. She gets up to leave, and Simon wants to know what's going on, but she says "Not here."

They get a room. Peggy is nervous and starts to change her mind about coming. Simon asks if she's mixed up in something illegal. Her answer: "No. Yes. I don't know. I'm doing something important." Okay. Before she can elaborate further, Simon gets a call saying there's an urgent fax for him from the Cascade PD downstairs. He tries to get it sent up, but they give him some excuse. He tells Peggy not to go anywhere and leaves. I'm telling you right now that this will end badly.

Of course when he gets downstairs Billy has never heard of any fax. And when Simon gets back to his hotel room, Peggy's not there. Simon pulls out a gun and goes to look in the bathroom, but the door opens in his face, knocking him out.

Simon wakes up to find his room ransacked and Becker and his deputies checking it out. They heard gunshots. Simon identifies his gun. After looking in the bathroom, Becker flips out and shows Simon what's there: Peggy's body. Saw that one coming.

Becker cuffs Simon to a chair and beats him up a bit until Simon breaks the chair. Brawl. Simon escapes but gets shot in the leg in the process. Becker radios for backup.

Monsieur, le mayor, you'll wear a different cha-ain.

Yay! Jim and Blair. They're looking at a map, trying to figure out how lost they are. Blair was supposed to be navigating. Some guide. (Sorry Blair! You are an excellent EMOTIONAL guide.) Jim gets a call from Simon, summing up his difficulties (shot in the leg, suspected for murder, can't escape hotel because of twisted and multitudinous deputies) and asking Jim and Blair to come back and meet him in a room that's being remodeled. Jim: "We're on our way." Yay! Reunion!

Simon makes his way to the room, dodging bullets, tricking an officer into thinking he got off an elevator at one floor when instead he crawled up to the next floor through the shaft, and stealing a master keyring. That ought to come in useful later.
Jim and Blair arrive at the hotel and are immediately questioned by Becker. Blair manages to sound suspicious even when he is saying perfectly true things ("It's the funniest thing. We were going in the wrong direction. I mean, totally off the mark...") Jim asks what's going on, and they claim not to have heard from Simon. Becker informs them about the murder and says he'll be keeping his eye on them. So now they're under close surveillance. "Now what?" Blair asks Jim. "Follow me," says Jim. And his big plan to escape the tailing deputy is...


When I get up, Jim and Blair are meeting up from opposite doors and running off together. Reunion! It's a theme! A symbol? A motif.

One of Becker's deputies confronts him for using the arrest as an excuse to take out his personal issues with Simon, and suggests that Simon might be innocent. So Becker shoots him. You know, just in case we were in any doubt about who to root for here. Becker radios that Simon Banks has just shot an officer with his own gun.

Jim and Blair have made it to Simon's room and Jim is bandaging the wound. Blair whispers that they need to get Simon help before he bleeds to death, and Simon's like, I'm right here. Simon tells them that Peggy Anderson was waiting for Kerry Lance and that Dave Becker was talking to Art Sturges, and Jim makes Blair write down all these names, cause he can't remember them either. Jim decides to take a look at the crime scene and sends Blair to look for medical supplies. JIM acquires MASTER KEYS!

While Jim checks out Simon's room, finding a button from the killer's clothes, the deputies track down Simon from the trail of blood he carelessly left everywhere. By the time they make it to the room, though, Simon's managed to hide in the air vents.

Jim and Blair meet back up outside the hotel where the dead deputy's body is being carried out to an ambulance. Jim listens to Becker's conversation and hears that Simon is now being accused of cop-killing, and they know he's somewhere in the air ducts. Jim gets a call from Billy, who has Jim's number as an emergency number for Simon, and who is with Kerry Lance. He thinks she should talk to Jim.

Okay, now we find out the McGuffin. Kerry is a reporter. She tells Jim and Blair that Peggy had some information about shady dealings at the Canyon Lake Paper company--birth-defect toxins being dumped in the local water supply, etc.--and she was going to bring some documents before she was killed. She also ran a check on Becker and found out he's also employed part-time as a security consultant by Canyon Lake. Blair perks up, "Security consultant? Isn't that a conflict of interest?" Because "employed part-time," "consultant," and "conflict of interest" are concepts near and dear to Blair's heart.

Becker orders an evacuation of the building. Jim says "He's turning up the heat," and apparently means it literally--they're trying to make the air ducts unendurable. Outside, Jim overhears Becker promising Sturges he'll find the incriminating documents; Jim also sees a missing button on Becker's clothes. Jim give Blair the phone and tells him to call the FBI, which for him speed-dial 4, while he goes in to rescue Simon. Man, taking notes, making phone calls. What is Blair, his secretary?

Billy gets Jim a deputy uniform. Somehow.
Jim uses his hearing to locate Simon while Becker locates the documents in the room where Peggy was killed. In the ducts, Jim meets up with Simon and somehow manages to accidentally knock him through to the room below. Nice play, Shakespeare. Also, ouch.

Meanwhile, outside, Blair sneaks into the ambulance to gather medical supplies, and uses his normal-person hearing to overhear the bad guys plotting to burn down the hotel. In his distress, Blair murmurs "Oh, god," rolls his head against the wall in a vaguely Herbal Essences kind of way, and calls Jim to warn him.

And my thoughts fly apart. Can this man be believed?

With much difficulty, Jim tries to help Simon walk out of the hotel. Blair tries to get in and help, but is prevented by an officer. Luckily, Billy eventually comes to the rescue and helps Jim with Simon.
And if you fall as Lucifer fell, you fall in flame!

Becker tries to shoot them all as they exit the hotel, but they duck, and then Jim and Blair announce the evil guys' plot before Kerry's news crew. Most of Becker's deputies turn against him. Simon collapses into Jim and Blair's arms.

In the traditional post-climax wrap-up, Simon's cigar breaks, and Jim and Blair laugh at him meanly. Jim sarcastically calls the broken cigar "attractive." Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar, you guys.

You are the Sentinel, silent and sure, keeping watch in the night.

**Bottom Line:** Um... it's a good episode if you like Simon. I'm glad it ended up having a lot more Jim and Blair than it threatened to have (none), but I'm not sure this is one I'll really be sitting down to rewatch.
Bikers shoot a bunch of Japanese clubgoers. Oh right, the Yakuza episode.

At the crime scene the next day, an older officer, Hurley of the Gang Unit, teases Jim about having a partner, a circumstance Jim explains by saying "the captain's keeping me on a short leash." Now that is a boldfaced lie. Letting Jim have Blair is like the prime example of Simon's long-leashedness. Jim and Hurley watch surveillance tapes (Jim admires a motorcycle on it, identifying it as a Harley something-or-other with original thing-a-ma-doodle), and figure out that the perp was Race Peters of the Void, a gang of bikers who "worship the ghost of Sid Vicious" as Jim says, making Blair grin in a my-partner-is-so-funny! kind of way.

The police find tattoos on the body which mark him as a member of the Yakuza (Japanese mafia). Blair asks why he's missing a finger, and Jim explains that Yakuza soldiers who dishonor their boss have to offer a part of their body. Simon: "I like that. Take a note of that, Sandburg." Blair: "Duly noted." What part of Blair does Simon want? Jim, Hurley and Simon figure the Yakuza and the Void are fighting over meth-selling rights. Jim: "If they start a gang war this whole city's going to explode."


So now we're at a summit. The Yakuza leader Kenji Kadama, and some guy from the Void are there, as well as Kadama's lawyer, Akiko Keno. Jim is mediating. All right. Hurley, Simon and Blair are sort of standing around. Peters and Kadama yell at each other, with Kadama calling one of the Void men a "piece of DRECK." Whoa, there, buddy. Akiko says some businesslike things and the cops say vaguely threatening things but it's really not clear what this meeting accomplishes except to introduce Jim and Akiko, who have a slightly flirty vibe after the meeting as Akiko accuses Jim of not approving of her, or rather, of her choice to work for a bad guy. She's right, he doesn't. Also after the meeting, the Void leader's brother falls down dead. Poison! I call blowfish poison, since this is a JAPANESE-THEMED episode.

At the police department, Jim tells Simon that the cup the dead Void guy drank from had traces of strychnine and Akiko's were the only set of prints besides his. They decide to bring her in for questioning.

In the truck, Blair is looking morose. Jim--well--I'll just--look, here's the scene.

JIM: All right, I'll bite. What's up?
BLAIR: Nothing.
JIM: Nothing?
BLAIR: Well, all right, there is something. I mean, we work together every day, right? I'm staying at your place, and still you're like this enigma.
JIM: Enigma?
BLAIR: Yeah, an enigma.
JIM: What do you mean?
BLAIR: What do I mean. That thing with the bikes today, the Harleys. You're an expert.
JIM: I was into bikes in high school.
BLAIR: Why didn't you tell me?
JIM: You never asked. I thought this was supposed to be a academic relationship; next thing I know, you're gonna want the pin number to my ATM.
BLAIR: 3840. Your parents' birthdates, remember?
JIM: My point exactly!

Enigma!

JIM: A man's got to have little privacy, okay? I mean, just a little bit.
BLAIR: Look, man, if I'm ever going to construct a valid sensory profile of you, I'm going to need everything, the whole mosaic.
JIM: What did you just say?
BLAIR: I need to know everything.
JIM: Everything.
BLAIR: Yeah. (whipping out a tape recorder) From the moment your mother had the c-section.
JIM: I'll have to give you a rain check on that. Here's the club.

Ha ha. Nice. Okay, back to plot land. Jim calls Akiko to set up a meeting. While trailing her in case she skips town. But Jim tells Blair he doesn't think she will because he doesn't think she did it, and also he knows by "instinct" that she hates Kadama. Meanwhile, about 100 feet away, Akiko raises her voice to Kadama, who demands that she apologize. By kissing him. Blair sees the kiss and declares Jim a poor judge of women.

Jim and Blair drive after the limo carrying Akiko and Kadama, then Akiko gets out and Jim follows her on foot. Back in the truck, Blair sees the limo take off with a biker in pursuit. He tries to call Jim, but Jim, tracking Akiko, turns off his phone. "OK, Blair, make a decision," he tells himself. "Oh, God." He climbs into the driver's seat and joins the chase.

Akiko gets into a car and Jim calls Blair, who tells him where he is. Jim tells him to "stay back--way back--and call for backup." Then he takes a tow truck, citing "police emergency." Does that really work? Jim chases Akiko, and ends up jumping onto a ferry, so we can add that to the list of vehicles Jim's jumped onto. When he accosts Akiko, he finds himself surrounded by guns pointed at his face. A man steps forward identifying himself as an FBI agent. Akiko is one of them! Undercover! The FBI guys don't care about Jim's case, prioritizing taking down Kadama's hierarchy from the inside over cracking down on the Void's meth business. Jim still disapproves of Akiko, asking, "Since when does working undercover include sleeping with your mark?" She can't win! not even by turning out to be law enforcement! risking her life for the GOOD OF ALL. Oh well, one day Jim too will learn the joys of undercover sex. Akiko defends herself, "Bed is the one place where I can control him." Urrrgh. Akiko says Jim is "good," since nobody ever figured out her cover before, and the FBI guy warns Jim to tell no one.

Jim makes it to the docks where the police are fishing a bike out of the water. It belongs to Race Peters, a Void bigwig, but there was no body. Blair is all keyed up. "I'm finally getting some insight
as to why you guys do this stuff. I mean, the adrenaline rush. My endorphins are SPIKING!" Blair loves a natural high. He asks what happened with Akiko, and Jim stammers that he lost her. "So, let me understand this. First, your research assistant is involved in a high-speed chase," Simon begins, and Blair makes a pained face and corrects Simon, "Actually, it's teaching fellow now."

You have to transfer into Sandburg's section for Anthro 150. Class is always cancelled on account of crimefighting.

Simon finishes scolding Jim for losing Akiko just as he gets a phone call. They found Race Peters's body. Blair asks if he can drive to the next crime scene, and Jim says no because "I have a thousand dollar deductible, you left the bathroom a mess, and the Mariners lost to Texas." Oh right, because Blair is from Texas. I know this only from the twang lessons he gave Jim in 3x06 Vendetta, but that's after this. How are we supposed to know? It would be weird if this was the first mention of it. Must be something I'm forgetting in season 1.

At the next crime scene, Jim is just checking out a shoe print when they get ANOTHER call. A bomb went off in some place that was housing a lot of C4. (The C4 didn't go up, but it got stolen.) Third crime scene. Jim and Blair crouch on opposite sides of a wall which has been exploded.

Uh... something about holes.

Jim figures out the bomb was set from the inside, so whoever did it knew the security code but set the bomb in order to make it look like an outside job. Jim finds another shoe print like the one at the last crime scene.

Jim meets with Akiko. He ran Race Peters's prints and found nothing, so he figures he's also an undercover agents, and wants Akiko to confirm. Akiko responds with a non-sequitur about how
much blowfish poison Kadama consumes. Jim tells her the shoe print he found was from a kind of shoe cops wear, and what with the inside job evidence and all, he suspects Akiko's FBI boss of orchestrating the whole gang war for payback against both parties. He tells Akiko to come out from her cover and save herself. She says she has to stay in.

Jim cells his own desk, where Blair answers. Jim tells Blair and Simon to meet him at Hurley's locker with bolt cutters. There, he explains that Hurley wears cop shoes, knew the access codes, and could have poisoned the cup at the summit. It's not proof, but it's probable cause to search the locker. Inside, Jim finds the shoes that match the print, and Blair finds a video with a note reading "Sorry, Jimmy."

On the tape, Hurley says he never had a family except his sister and niece, and he holds up a photo to illustrate their existence. Recently he responded to a call about a dead runaway who had been a Yakuza prostitute and a Void meth consumer. He holds up a photo of the body in her hotel room and identifies her as his niece. He says his "last gift to the department" will be going to the site of the inevitable explosion to "keep damage down." Jim and Blair figure out the location of the hotel room from the letters outside the window in the photograph, and they roll.

Hotel. Hurley has a detonator for the C4. Jim and Blair arrive and Jim tries to talk Hurley out of setting off the explosion, telling him, "You killed an FBI agent and you're about to kill another." After Jim de-undercovers Akiko, Hurley sees a Void guy pull a gun on her, and throws himself heroically in front of the bullets. In so doing, he drops the detonator, and Blair throws himself heroically out to catch it.

Wrap-up. Jim: "Nice catch, Chief. You saved a lot of lives." Blair: "Except for one. I don't know how you guys get used to this stuff, man." Yes, it's all fun and high speed chases until a tortured cop redeems himself for his sins by taking a bullet in a vital organ. We end with Jim and Babe of the Week in a secluded corner or alley type thing. Akiko says she's going back undercover to continue trying to take down Kadama. She and Jim kiss. This seems like a bad idea. The alley isn't that secluded. Jim: "This isn't over." Akiko: "It hasn't even begun." But it is over, and it never will begin, because Jim. Never. CALLS. (sends pointed, burning glances at the phone)

Kiss, dismiss, thank you, miss!

**Bottom Line:** They threw me a bone with the "I need to know EVERYTHING" conversation, but overall I'm not a big fan of this episode. I have a lot of issues every time they try to do an episode about Another Culture.
TV crew tags along as Jim and Blair investigate a rash of bank robberies.

A team of bank robbers expertly carry out their job. Later, Simon shows Jim and Blair the scene, saying the robbers got away with over two million dollars. Blair is impressed: "You know what I could do with two million dollars? The studies..." Jim: "The mind boggles, Chief." These robbers have been pulling remarkably well-timed and well-researched jobs all over town.

As the police exit the bank, they're mobbed by reporters. Jim pushes his way through, responding to questions by snapping, "You know damn well Cascade P.D. is doing everything it can to catch these guys, which we will do if you can stop tripping over your tongues and trying to create a panic. Thank you!" Blair laughs, "Very diplomatic." As they make their way to the truck, a girl reporter takes the camera from her Australian cameraman and focuses it on Jim, saying the camera loves him. Even if he, as the cameraman points out, doesn't love it.

CPD. Blair comes in all happy, and Jim gets him to admit it's because of some girl called Emily. Simon comes in to tell Jim he's in charge of the bank case and that he's going to have to be filmed for True Crime, a police reality show. Jim's like no way, and Blair's like "What if he zones?" but Simon says the orders come above. "Let's just deal with this, all right?" he says, putting a hand on Jim's shoulder before he walks off. Jim looks at Blair, who shrugs. I don't think Jim will probably zone. We haven't seen one all season.

Wendy Hawthorne, Girl Reporter (okay, producer, but whatever), and her cameraman, Connor, meet Jim and Blair. Wendy tries to win Jim over, saying she agrees with him about reporters and she wants to do a real day-in-the-life type documentary about him. He's like, just stay out of my way. Wendy offers to let them go over the bank security tapes with the state-of-the-art equipment in her van, which is already affecting the verisimilitude of the documentary, but whatever. Jim consents and soon sees something on the tape, but gets them to zoom in order not to draw undue attention to his abilities. By the way, both Jim's sense of sight and Wendy's playback equipment are so good, they can significantly improve on the quality of the original tape. The bank robber is wearing a Mickey Mantle watch. Blair, who for the purposes of this episode is interested in sports memorabilia, identifies it as a limited edition collectible which should be easy to trace.

Jim reports to Simon that they called around sports stores and finally found a report of a guy matching the description of the bank robber, who bought the watch and ordered a mantle jersey. His friends called him "Mick." Jim and Blair's plan is to put Blair undercover as a store clerk and wait for the guy to pick up his jersey. Blair explains that some enthusiasts follow a certain player, while others like a certain year--for him, 1961. So. You know. If you ever want to get Blair a present. Simon doesn't like the idea of putting Blair undercover, but Jim and Blair push for it. Simon grudgingly Elizabeth Weirs his approval.

Loft. Early morning. Jim is in bed when he hears noises out in the hall. He gets up, pulling his gun from under his pillow, and creeps down to Blair's bedroom where he claps a hand over Blair's mouth. FYI, this is the best way to wake someone if you want minimal noise and maximal frightening them.
Good morning sunshine.

Jim gestures for Blair to follow. So we've got Jim clad only in a fairly little pair of black boxers and Blair wearing boxers and a gray wifebeater tiptoeing toward the door. Jim throws it open, gun ready, to find—Wendy and Connor, of course! Jim sort of shields his nakedness from the camera. This is great television, people. Wendy makes Connor keep shooting and tries to talk Jim into various sexy poses. Jim makes Blair take his gun because otherwise he might shoot the reporters.

Tonight on True Crime - hot cops hang out in their undies! (beat) Together.

Blair goes to work in the sports store while Jim, Wendy and Connor watch him on surveillance cam from the van. Wendy tries to get Jim to care about his appearance more; Jim says "I'm a cop, not a debutante." So what was with the coming-out party, Detective? Wendy says that this coverage could Jim's career a boost; Jim says his career is doing fine. Wendy: "is it me you hate or what I do for a living?" Jim: "Is there a difference?" Oh Jim. You are so ISTJ.

Mick (who is one of the guys from The Shield) comes in for his jersey. Blair pushes the other clerk aside, making a "drinky drinky" motion to Mick. He hits panic button under the counter and then chats with Mick a bit about the merchandise. Jim tells Wendy and Connor to stay where they are and heads in. Of course Wendy follows, and Mick flips when he sees cameras out the window of the store. He does what every criminal on this show does when cornered: opens random fire regardless of whether or not that is even remotely a good idea. The store clerk gets grazed in the arm, and Blair uses the priceless jersey to stop the bleeding. After ascertaining that Blair is okay, Jim runs out of the store after Mick, with Wendy and Connor hot on his heels. They get some great footage of Jim tackling Mick to the ground and cuffing him. As backup arrives to take away the bad guy, Jim yells at the camera crew, telling them to take a hike. In the confusion, Connor picks up Mick's abandoned cell phone.
Jim tries to question Mick, but he's uncooperative. Amongst Mick's stuff, Blair finds some notes on what collectibles to buy written on the back of a deposit slip from a bank, probably the next one the group meant to hit. Of course, the heist will be off since Mick's been captured. Unlessss...

Wendy bursts into the bullpen, all mad because Jim tried to get her filming rights revoked. She calls him an "arrogant, insecure, misogynist jerk!" Strong words. I'm not sure where she gets "misogynist" from; it's pretty clear to me that he was only less rude to Connor than Wendy because Connor didn't bug him directly. Anyway, Jim surprises everyone with a calm and pretty apology. Wendy accepts, and Jim says he needs a favor. "Of course you do," says Wendy.

Loft. Jim comes in with some info from the FBI--turns out these guys have done bank heists in other towns. Each time, they rob three banks and then disappear. Blair has dug up some info on Wendy. She was fired from her big-time network news job for manipulating a story. Jim admits he has asked her to do just that.

Super Research Blair and his Nancy Drew investigative glasses are on the case.

Criminal Hideout! One of them is Lorne from SGA. They don't know what happened to Mick. They get a call from Mick's cell phone, but when they answer, Connor's on the other end muttering "Uh, sorry, wrong numbeh," all Australian-like. The news comes on; Wendy's voiceover says it's not known what happened to the shooter in the sports store incident and unconfirmed rumors suggest he's been fatally wounded. Since when does the True Crime producer get segments on the news? The robbers decide to go ahead with the heist.

Outside the bank. The police have been staking it out, and now the robbers are there. They've already expertly taken out the alarm. Simon: "This has got to be an inside job." Blair: "They can't all be inside jobs, can they?" Wendy and Connor are filming, and they're upset when Jim makes them stay well back. For some reason which isn't really clear, possibly just to shake things up and make it more exciting, Connor calls the robbers on Mick's cell phone and leaves it open on the hood of the car so the criminals inside can hear everything the police are saying. Jim, listening to the criminals inside, is confused by the "weird echo effect." As the police move forward, the criminals suddenly set off a bunch of explosions, injuring at least one officer. Jim shouts at them to fall back and calls for a medic.

Jim gets his traditional upper arm injury bandaged by a medic and discusses the criminals with Simon--he's thinking they're ex-military. Jim and Blair have their traditional in-the-truck, Jim-in-profile, Blair-looking-at-him conversation. Jim: "It's my operation. It's my fault." Blair: "Don't do this to yourself, man." Blair asks about the echo, and he and Jim figure out that it must have been a phone. Jim remembers Wendy having a cell phone.

CPD. Wendy is upset that her van is being searched. Jim and Simon accuse her of using the phone to
juice up the story, and she denies it.

Jim questions Mick about the whereabouts of his crew, using his senses as a lie detector. Mick lies that they're gone, so Jim figures they're still around. He uses the cell phone to call them, trying to get a trace, but it doesn't work, as usual.

The criminals break into the station holding cell area thing, kidnap Mick, and kill him. Jim and Blair and Simon are all like, Well, NOW WHAT. Simon asks if Jim thinks they'll hit another bank, and Jim says no. "Well, that's something!" says Blair cheerily. Simon glares. Blair's smile fades. "It's not enough, of course. Not nearly enough, Captain. ...Sorry."

Wendy confronts Jim in the hall. Blair gets lost, though I'm not sure if he's thinking "Leave Jim alone with pretty girl!" or "Leave Jim alone with angry lady!" She says she didn't do it. She talks about her Big Mistake years ago, and Jim looks bored. She says she will never cross the line again. Except that she did earlier this episode because Jim was nice to her and then asked her to.

Loft. Blair plays Jim the tape of his phone call to the criminals and tells him to separate out the different sounds.

Also, separate your different legs.

Jim hears a "high pitched, metal against metal" sound in the background. He imitates it for Blair. Blair makes him repeat it. Jim tries again and gets frustrated as Blair laughs at him, saying, "A Sentinel you may be, but Rich Little you are not, my friend." Jim gets up and walks away. "I was just joking!" says Blair to the empty room. Aww.

Wendy confronts Connor, whom she's figured out did the cell phone prank. Connor says he was just "looking for an edge." "That edge cuts both ways," says Wendy. Connor begs Wendy not to turn him in, and gives her some bits of paper he found with the phone. Wendy finds an address.

Jim and Blair sit in their living room looking at the surveillance tapes again. They have one of those awesome figuring-it-out-together scenes, where they both increasingly excitedly contribute to a theory about how the heists work: three of the five guys in the team get jobs as bank guards in three different banks; they learn the bank's routines; they hit all three banks, then they continue to work there for awhile to deflect suspicion. Then they all leave and start again in a new town. "Pretty damn smart," comments Jim. Blair: "Who's that, us or them?" Jim: "Both!"
Wendy and Connor go to the address on the receipt. They're met by one of the criminals, who Tazers them.

Jim and Blair truck over to the address, which I guess they got from the bank's employee records or something. They're surprised to find the True Crime van there. They park and creep out toward the warehouse. Jim tells Blair to stay behind him, and "don't try and turn hero on me." "Me? You must be joking," says Blair. I don't know if he's trying to be sarcastic or not. I think not? Anyway, the boys climb up an elaborate series of pipes into an open window. Jim hears his squeaky metal sound (it's from the air conditioner) and some voices talking about weapons. He has Blair call for backup and they continue forward. Blair takes Jim's "stay behind me" to heart and keeps bumping into him whenever he stops.

JIM: Now, keep your head down and stick with me.
BLAIR (beginning to duck, then shrugging in a "that is not useful advice" sort of way): Thanks Jim.
JIM: That way I can keep my eye on you.
BLAIR: Thanks, Jim.

Wendy and Connor tied up. Criminals threaten them. Wendy keeps her cool. Jim arrives on the scene just as Lorne is about to shoot her. Nice timing as usual. Gunfight. Jim and Blair duck behind various cardboard boxes (NOT GOOD COVER, you guys.) Blair pops out periodically, once to throw a baseball at one of the bad guys and then grin delightedly, and once to check himself for bullet holes. Jim has a climactic gunfight with an escaping bad guy where he's on foot and the guy is in a Jeep, and he still wins. Using good old fashioned PUNCH IN THE FACE technology.

Wrap-up. Wendy comes to the police department and greets "Detective Ellison and Mr. Sandburg." Blair insists on being called "Blair." Wendy gives Jim all the footage she shot of him, "boxer shorts included," which Jim says is "very nice," although it's not clear whether it's supposed to be just a copy of the tape or the originals. Wendy says she got an offer from a news station in New York, but she decided to take a reporting job in Cascade instead. Oh, god. Why do we have to hear that she's sticking around like it's good news, when we'll never hear from her again anyway? She makes a date with Jim, then thanks Blair and kisses him on the cheek. "Oh. Thank you," says Blair. "For saving my life," she adds, kissing Jim on the cheek. "It's what we do," says Jim. We end with Blair and Jim joking and laughing into the fade-out.

Bottom Line: Thumbs up on this one. Even leaving aside the bonus that is the hot shh-Blair-come-with-me scene, it's a solid episode with minimal irritants (Wendy is all right, I guess; anyway, the guys' reactions to her are good) and a number of different, cute Blair comic relief moments.
Chapter Summary

Blair and Jim protect a prostitute. Blair gets shot, kissed (neither by Jim).

A girl at a bar meets up with a German guy (named Klaus, natch, but we'll call him "Iceman" because that's his SUPER SECRET TERRORIST NAME, because it reminds me pleasantly of Val Kilmer, and because otherwise we will forget why this episode is called "Iceman," since it's only mentioned once). They go to a hotel room. Iceman freaks out the prostitute (we'll call her Amber, cause that's her name) by not wanting to have sex at all, but instead showing her a picture of his brother and asking where he is. He's a regular of Amber's, but she doesn't know how to contact him-he always contacts her. Iceman gives Amber his phone number. All the while, they're being secretly filmed by Amber's pimp. When Iceman notices the camera, he flips out, knocking Amber to the ground and shooting the pimp.

Simon, Jim and Blair check out the crime scene. Simon mentions the name of the strip club the pimp managed, and Blair recognizes it. Jim and Simon stare. "I go past there on my way to school," Blair explains, making a "going-past" gesture and accompanying "fwoosh" noise. "Just past it." Jim finds Amber's earring and Encyclopedia Browns that the killer must have knocked down the girl and then gone to check on the stiff, providing her an opportunity of escape.

Jim and Blair go to check out the strip club, and Jim big-brothers Blair a little.

JIM: Are you sure you're ready for this, Chief?
BLAIR: You think I've never been in a strip club before?
JIM: This is a little more than just a strip club. [Ed. note: It isn't.]
BLAIR: I was in Malaysia once, and I spent a month with this tribe that believed that sex was a religious ritual and had be to performed six times every, uh... [staring at a girl's butt, breaking into laughter] Oh. My. God!

Blair gets some amusing if heterosexual comic relief in the strip club. As Jim introduces himself to one of the strippers, Blair's gaze keeps wandering over to the dancers. Jim informs the girl that her boss is dead, and asks her to let them see his records. The stripper finally relents and Jim has to drag Blair, gaze still fixed on unseen fine-lookin' ladies, away by the ear. We cut to the pimp's office, where Blair sits at the computer with Jim leaning behind him. Workin' girl goes back to work, and Blair watches her go until Jim pushes his grinning face back to the computer with his fist. "Right, right, right," says Blair amiably.
Blair finds the personal stats files for the call girls. Blair recognizes Amber. Jim: "You been holding out on me?" Blair explains that he knows Amber from university.

Rainier campus. Jim approaches Amber and tries to question her, accusing her of blackmail and murder accomplice. She's defensive, saying she's done escort work to pay for school, but she doesn't know what he's talking about, and she's late for class. Blair runs after her to do his Dr. Watson calm-down-the-witness-after-the-detective-tramples-their-feelings thing. He tells Amber that if she saw a murder, she could be in danger. Amber again denies seeing anything.

Iceman waits in Amber's apartment with a silenced gun and a pack of chewing gum. Amber returns but fortunately sees her roommate's dead body through the door before she gets into the killer's sights. She runs back outside. Iceman gets a chance to shoot her through the window, but doesn't.

Simon, Jim and Blair check out the crime scene, AGAIN. Jim notices a minty smell. Blair worries about Amber, and Jim gives Blair some grief about like-liking her, and Blair says he doesn't. Blair seems more uncomfortable with her profession than Jim is. You always think Blair is going to be the cool one because he's all treehugging and progressive, but he more than once has seemed to have weirdly conservative attitudes about sex. A case could definitely be made that he'd be the one having the hetero freakout. If, you know, you wanted to write a Jim/Blair hetero freakout story.

Loft. Blair is bringing home groceries like a nice little housewife when Amber shows up at the door. She didn't know where else to turn.

Blair sits on the table facing Amber on the couch and listens to her story. She says she wasn't part of the video blackmail scheme. She is really afraid the murderer is after her now that he has killed her roommate. Blair comforts her, "You came to the right place." He offers to make her a sandwich while she cleans up in the bathroom. What a sweetie.

Of course Jim comes home and launches into the middle of a conversation about what he's been doing (following up on his minty-smell lead, which led him to a nicotine gum wrapper, which led him to a fingerprint). Blair tries to tell him about Amber, but gets caught up in what he's saying. Just when Jim gets to the exciting part, he's like "Why am I smelling perfume here? ...You're supposed to be doing police work and you're dilly-dallying around with some girl?!" Oh Jim, you of all people should know that sometimes those two are one and the same. Amber comes out, and Blair explains, "She came to us for help. Well... to me, actually." Blair gets Jim to finish his story, and he shows them a photo he got from a CIA friend: the suspect is international terrorist Klaus Zeller aka Iceman. Amber says that's not the same guy, and Jim figures he's had his appearance altered, which puts Amber in even more danger for knowing what he looks like now. Amber recognizes the other man in the photo as "Hank," her regular, the brother Iceman was seeking.
Jim and Blair take Amber back to her apartment to retrieve her beeper, in case Hank tries to contact her. This goes down without incident. On the way back, Amber explains that Hank was always really nice to her, and Jim tries to evade a tail with fancy driving. "Okay kids, hang on." "I hate when he does this," frets Blair. Car chase, Amber falls against Blair a lot, and Jim stops just shy of trying to outrun a train, making Blair breathe a relieved "Thanks."

CPD. Jim tells Simon that he learned from his CIA friend that Hank is not actually Iceman's brother but Hans Gruenwald, a Dutch terrorist-service-broker-middleman, who faked his own death and made off with millions, some of which was Iceman's. So now Iceman's after him. That's the ostensible plot. Now, that wasn't so bad, was it? I will attempt not to go into any further detail.

Jim and Blair protect Amber in the loft. Jim gives her rules, like stay away from the windows, no bright colors, be with one of us at all times. She feels like prisoner. Blair reminds her it's only until they catch the Iceman. Jim gets called away and reminds Blair to "keep it professional." "Right," says Blair, turning to go. "Hey, hey," says Jim, grabbing his arm. "I mean in the cop way." Ha ha. Asshole.

Alone with Blair, Amber says she's giving up prostitution. Blair's like, "That's great!" Amber talks about how she wanted to go to med school and to Rome, but she didn't have the money, and then she found out a way to make it. Blair: "I don't judge." Amber: "Sure you do." He really does. Blair thinks she can put herself through med school without--you know. Amber gets kind of fed up with him and goes to bed.

Next morning. Jim, Amber and Blair around the table, drinking coffee. Jim figures out that Iceman had a chance to get the beeper and didn't, which means he needs Amber to set up the appointment. He's probably watching, waiting for her to do so. So he has Amber trick Iceman by pretending to call Hank from a pay phone at the university, and conspicuously set up an appointment in the hotel.

Cut to the hotel, where Amber meets with a bearded man in a hat and dark glasses. The man is so short that it can only be Blair. Jim watches them walk off together and radios for backup. In the elevator, Amber tells Blair that the beard looks good on him.

"Euh... it looks okay."

Jim tries to follow in the next elevator, but a little boy pushes all the buttons, so Jim gets off and takes the stairs.

Blair and Amber saunter to the room arm-in-arm. Blair wonders if Iceman will show; Amber wonders if Jim will. In the room, Blair's just taking off his sunglasses when Iceman bursts in with a gun, shoves Amber onto the bed, and rips off Blair's beard. Blair makes a face of "ruh-roh!" Iceman knocks him down and shoots him twice.
In the stairwell, Jim hears the silenced shots and goes wide-eyed. But not as wide-eyed as you'd think. DON'T WORRY HE JUST KNOWS SOMETHING WE DON'T. If you guessed "bullet-proof vest," you are correct, sir. Jim radios with the news of shots fired.

Jim sneaks up to the room and whips his gun around. No bad guys. He kneels by Blair's still body, listens to his heart, murmurs "Sandburg," opens his jacket--two bullets lodged in the Kevlar. Jim looks really worried now and he cries "Sandburg! Sandburg!", slapping Blair's face in that gentle wake-up wake-up way.

"Sandburg!"

Blair coughs and opens his eyes wide. Ugh, beard and mustache was okay, but just mustache is truly horrible. Jim lets out a sigh of relief: "Thank God for that vest!" "Where's Amber?" asks Blair. Jim does not care: "You're okay, buddy. You're okay. Keep breathing." Blair: "Oh, Jim, I blew it, didn't I?" Jim: "It's all right." Blair: "Ohhh, Jim. Oh, Jim, it hurts." And this is why I watch The Sentinel.

Also, this: we cut to Jim wrapping a bandage around Blair's bare torso. Blair: "Ow, ow, I can't breathe." Jim, shortly: "It's gotta be tight." Hooray for hurt/comfort only not so much comfort as curt, calm, vaguely amused medical competence. I love how quickly Jim relaxes once it's clear Blair's okay--it makes his tender devastation whenever Blair is in real trouble that much more powerful.

Okay, so. Blair wants to find Amber; he thinks Hank may have called by now, and their best bet for
finding Amber is to figure out where she would arrange to meet up with him. (Hasn't Iceman taken her? But of course he'll let her go on the date, since he wants to find Hank.) Jim and Blair figure that Amber will know they're looking for her, and will therefore take Hank somewhere they know about. The only place she knows they know about besides the hotel is the strip club. *Does* she know they know about the strip club? I guess Blair must have filled her in on the investigation that led them to her. Blair starts to put his t-shirt back on, and while there's still bare back left, Jim gives him a little slap. "Ow!"

Strip club. Amber waits at a table. We see Iceman has a gun trained on her from another table. Hank enters, and Amber greets him. Hank gives Amber an envelope, saying he wants her to have it, and it's the only unselfish thing he's ever done. Maybe Amber will get med school out of this after all! She's put it away by the time Iceman comes up and demands that Hank give him his money back. Hank's only concern in the exchange seems to be Amber's safety, and he finally distracts Iceman with a new use for a tea-table and tells Amber to run. Iceman shoots Hank. Jim arrives and runs after Iceman, but Iceman escapes. Crying, Amber holds a dying Hank; just before he dies, he slips a key into her pocket. Blair comes up behind Amber and holds her.

Loft. Jim and Blair are still protecting Amber. Simon arrives and tells Jim that the Feds are taking over the case, including taking custody of Amber. Jim and Blair don't want to give her up (Blair says it will mess up her school, like, being barricaded up in the loft doesn't?), but recognize it's out of their hands. Amber picks this moment to announce she's decided to give up on her med school dream and continue being a prostitute, which upsets Blair so much he has to take a walk. Amber finds the key in her pocket and shows it to Jim. It has a four-leaf clover keychain, and, according to Jim, it smells like talcum powder. Jim puts it down to take a call: the FBI. They want Amber now. When Jim hangs up and turns, Amber and the key are gone. Because it's not like Jim has super senses or anything.

Jim and Blair are very cute in the next scene, where Blair, bespectacled, sits on the couch looking up different places the key might have come from in the phone book, and Jim looks over his shoulder and brainstorms.

**JIM:** Maybe there's some significance to that four-leaf clover.

**BLAIR:** Right. Like some type of Irish organization. You know, like a social club.

**JIM:** What would a guy named Hans Gruenwald be doing in an Irish social club?

**BLAIR:** Jim, I'm just thinking out loud here, okay?

![Brainstorming session](image)

Jim brings up the talcum powder, and Blair rattles off places that might use it (including "baby shop." What?) "It's got have numbered lockers." Blair lists intensely: "Uh, sporting arena! Race track! ... Country club!" That's it! Jim comes round and sits on the arm and turns the pages in Blair's lap. They find an ad for a country club with a four-leaf clover logo. Success. I love when the boys put their
heads together.

Country club locker room. A witness tells them Amber has already been and gone, leaving with a briefcase. Blair knows where she went.

Airport. Flight to Rome. The attendant tells them Amber's booked, but never showed up. Turns out she booked herself on about a dozen different flights, which is actually a really good idea if you have infinite money and want to evade being captured by a team of only two men. So, file that trick away in case you are ever in that situation. Jim and Blair don't know what to do next, but Jim gets a call on his cell phone: Amber. She apologizes, saying she's at the airport but she doesn't really want to run away. Jim asks where exactly she is, but before she can answer, she's captured by the Iceman.

Jim and Blair run around aimlessly until Blair Guides Jim into isolating the smells to find the nicotine gum. Jim finally finds them, and gives Blair his phone to call for backup while he himself runs into danger. Drink! Jim fights with Iceman on some luggage conveyor belts. Eventually he manages to disarm him. We win again!

Wrap-up. CPD. Amber gave up prostitution AND the dirty money, and she's applied for a grant to help with her studies. I bet she doesn't get it. Jim pretends to hear Simon calling to leave Blair alone with Amber. Great. Amber asks if Blair "would consider going out with someone--well, someone with a past." "I don't know." Blair raises his eyebrows. "I'd have to think about it." But he's smiling. "Think about this," she says, and kisses him. She walks off looking all proud of herself for having used her professional kissing skills to totally wow a potential date. Blair grins and looks duly wowed.

I ended an earlier recap with a scene of Jim kissing a Babe of the Week, so, for fairness, here's one of Blair. If I tell you that in that cap Jim is facing the opposite direction and that his face is roughly in the position that Amber's face is in now, it is only an OBSERVATION. It is not a SUGGESTION.

Bottom Line: Any episode with a good Blair-is-hurt, Jim-is-afraid, Jim-bandages-Blair sequence is a strong one in my book.
Chapter Summary

This is a surprisingly uninformative episode title considering it comes in a string of two episodes one of which is about an offshore oil rig, the other about a big rig. This is the former. Jim is at various times nude and covered in oil.

Offshore oil rig establishing shot. Inside, a guy with some kind of vaguely British accent answers the phone, has a lover's spat with whoever's on the other end ("You know how I feel. So, contact the authorities and let them handle it! Look, I've got a job to do.") He goes into a pressure tank to get some kind of readings, and someone outside locks him in, securing the door with a wrench. The pressure dial climbs; guy's attempt to turn it down from inside is fruitless; he bleeds from the nose and ears; classy Titanic-style hand-on-glass-and-slide-down.

Loft. Jim's in the living room, tidying up, when Blair comes home. Jim bitches at him for leaving his papers and tribal masks everywhere. "That's how I work. I go back and forth between things when the muse strikes," says Blair. I can relate to that. (Expect to see these recaps discontinue without warning at any time!) Jim tells Blair to keep his mess in his own room; Blair accuses him of being territorial and whines about Jim's excessive rules, most of which seem to have to do with the noise level, which makes sense considering. Jim has also color-coded the leftovers. This seems odd considering they're always making each other dinner. Besides, I doubt Blair buys his own food. Anyway, the phone rings, and they both reach but Jim gets it as usual. It's Simon.

Cascade PD. I think I just ate a bug. That's not relevant to the recap, I just thought you should know. That raspberry seemed unusually crunchy and proteiny. Okay, so Simon briefs Jim and Blair about the murder on the rig. "Wouldn't that be the coast guard's jurisdiction?" asks Jim. Good point. What about that, Simon? "Normally, but there are a few questions here that they need some answers to."
Not that he's going to say what those questions are or anything. In other words, "Normally, but shut up!" The rig is owned by Cyclops Oil, who will return as the bad guys in 3x01 Warriors. Also, there is a storm coming. I think that's all the exposition we need. Jim asks apprehensively how far out the rig is. "Forty, fifty miles." Blair declares this information "nutty." What? What do you mean?

Chopper. Jim and Blair are in the bright-orange life-jacket type suits they'll have to wear every time they're outside for the rest of the episode. Blair looks excitedly out at the ocean. Jim does not look thrilled. "I love this stuff," Blair chatters. "It's an adventure!" Blair does love adventures. "Men against the sea!" "Just men, huh?" asks the pilot, pulling off her cap to reveal long hair. Long hair! Why she must be a woman! She gives them a You Sexist Pigs look. Oh man, reading the transcript I can see that the Sci-Fi channel has cut a potentially slashy exchange, where the pilot tells Blair to strap in his "tight little butt," calling him "lambchop," and Jim asks him if he needs any help, repeating the endearment. This is also the first time the pilot calls Jim "beefstick." She does that later on in the episode and it's weirder if you don't get this establishing moment.

Okay, they make it to the rig. We get about half a minute of boring chopping landing footage, which the Sci-Fi channel has elected not to cut. Before they go inside, Jim stares at the water for a moment; Blair asks him what's up, and he says nothing. Which of course means "something" in Jimspeak.

In the mess hall, the men are gathered looking surly and dystopian. Blair huddles up to Jim and says
in a low voice, "Maybe there's some kind of protocol involved here. There are certain tribes in the Amazon where newcomers actually have to strip down--" "I'm Detective Ellison," Jim announces, cutting him off. Nice try, Blair.

Don't worry, it's coming. You know that old joke: "If you don't like Jim with his clothes on...

Wait a minute!"

Jim talks to the foreman, who doesn't know anything about any police coming, and directs Jim and Blair to the infirmary. There, the medic describes the cause of death (guy blew up in the pressure tank. What do you want?) but doesn't know who found him or who called the Coast Guard. "I'm just a medic," the medic whines. That's right. He's a medical doctor, Jim, not a damn... I don't even know. Coast Guard-caller-who-knower. He suggests Jim talk to the foreman. Jim is not amused with being jerked around.

Jim and Blair walk down the hall, discussing how unwelcome they feel. "We're invading their territory, Jim," Blair explains. "These guys work out here for weeks at a time. They develop their own society." Jim thinks it's more than that. They inspect the pressure tank. Something on the hatch makes Jim's fingers feel tingly, but Blair doesn't feel it. Jim climbs in. No! Don't do that! Blair joins him. NO, Blair! Jim explains all the safety measures that make it unlikely that this guy died in accidentally. He comes out while Blair stays in the doorway. COME OUT OF THE PRESSURE TANK BLAIR. He does! All is well. Jim finds a wrench with two markings on it which correspond the places where it was shoved into the hatch-unscrewy-wheel. (I am good at technical terminology!) "I think we just blew that accident theory right out of the water."

Jim goes to the comm room to radio for backup. The pilot is there talking to the radio tech, and she informs Jim that the storm is moving in and they're completely cut off.

Night. Windy. Jim and Blair appear to be helping the pilot bolt down the chopper so it doesn't get blown off the hangar in the storm. Jim wanders to the rail and stares out nervously at the ocean, then abruptly walks inside. Blair follows and asks what's wrong. They share a private moment where Jim admits "I've never told you this--hell, I've never told anybody this, but I've always had this thing about open water." "What, like a phobia?" Jim nods. It's starting to get to him. Blair tells him to "take it easy" and seems to be about to do his Guide thing when the pilot interrupts, offering them a cup of coffee.
Does being the first person you ever told about your phobia rate a quick hand round your waist? Yes? No? Yes?

Pilot's "operations room." Blair is impressed with her book collection (Love in the Time of Cholera, Gravity's Rainbow and The Painted Bird). "If you have some time," says Blair, as Jim pokes around the pilot's equipment in the background, "we should get together and talk books over coffee." Count me out, if those are the books. (BURN ON PYNCHON!) She'd like that. Jim wants to move out and do some investigatin'. For some reason he has no problem talking about the case in front of the pilot. I guess her highbrow taste in literature clears her of suspicion. (That and her claim that she was on a supply run when the murder happened, I guess.) Then Jim smells smoke. He finds and puts out the fire, then finds solvent. "This was arson. Someone wanted to destroy these divers' suits."

Walking and wondering about the fire with Blair and the pilot, Jim spots a guy he recognizes--some ex-con he helped put away. The ex-con maintains he's on the up and up these days, but Jim's not so sure. Pilot gets a walkie-talkie call from the tech. Simon's trying to reach Jim. In the radio room, the tech reports the call can't come through because the antenna's disconnected. Jim says he'll check it out.

Outside, it's pouring. Jim and Blair come out in their little orange suits. Blair yells at Jim not to look at the ocean. We see some big clippers cutting a wire. As Jim and Blair approach the antenna tower thing, it comes crashing down on Blair. "SANDBURG!" yells Jim, rushing to Blair's side. He hefts the antenna off Blair and props up his unconscious body. Oh, Blair. You will have permanent brain damage one of these days. (Will?) Jim tries to put his little hood back on his head.

"Hang in there, buddy!"

Infirmary. Blair awake on a bed, blinking into the medic's eye flashlight, fixed up with customary butterfly bandages. "You had me worried, there, Chief." Blair asks what happened, and the pilot
say the cable snapped. Jim holds up a sample of it he took for dramatic purposes and says "This
didn't snap. This has been cut." Jim asks if there's another radio, and the pilot takes him to the
chopper, but the radio's been destroyed. Jim talks to the foreman, complaining that "someone's trying
to kill my partner and me!" and ordering him to shut down the rig. Foreman refuses. Back in the
pilot's operation room, she suggests that Jim and Blair just stop investigating until more cops can
come, but Jim wants to keep going while the trail is fresh. But, "you stay put, Chief. You took a
nasty one to the head and I want you to lay low. And that's an order." Blair tells him to take a radio
so they can maintain their constant communication.

BLAIR (over radio on Jim's belt): Jim, you there?
JIM (creeping around all stealth-macho, answers): Yeah, I'm here.
BLAIR (standing in operations room, grinning at the pilot): I was just checking to see if the radio
worked.
JIM (exasperated): It does.
BLAIR: Jim y'know, I was thinking. Um...
JIM: I'm gonna have to call you back. (turns off radio)

Jim wanders around until he smells, and then night-vision-sees, a corpse. He sees someone running
off and chases them. At one point, he pauses to radio Blair and fill him in, but the signal cuts out.
Blair tells the pilot, "I gotta go find him," and runs off. Well, he wasn't laying low long. Jim gets
knocked into a giant vat of oil.

Blair wanders around, periodically attempting to radio Jim. Jim must hear him coming, because he
gurgles "Sandburg! Help!" but Blair doesn't hear. And Jim drowns. No, Blair finds his radio, and
then sees him struggling in the oil. "Jim!" he cries, racing to the rail, where he hangs off and extends
his hand. Yeah, he's going to pull up Jim with his brute strength. While Jim is covered in oil. Jim
catches his hand a couple of times, but slips off. "Come on, Jim, don't just quit! JIM!" Blair beats on
the side of the vat.

Never let go, Jim!

Jim resurfaces and manages to communicate between bouts of sinking and sputtering that he would
like Blair to lower the mechanical pulley thing. "Right!" Blair runs to the controls. The pulley takes
its time. "Sandbuhghghlghl," Jim cries pathetically as he sinks beneath the depths. "JIM COME
ON!" Blair yells. The oil is still. The pulley sinks below, and Blair watches anxiously as it slowly
makes its way back up. "Jim?" When Jim comes into view, Blair heaves a great sigh of relief.
"Thanks," says Jim in an amusingly normal voice as he hangs, oil-covered, from the pulley. "No
problem," says Blair. "Just uh. Don't touch me."

Cut to Jim towelling off after his Shower of Must Be Able to Touch Blair. He's narrating his chase
adventure. Panning out we see Blair is standing against the open door, facing away as if to give Jim
some slight semblance of privacy. Except that Jim promptly strolls out into the room, towelling off his midriff, and still talking. "That's why you need me to back you up," Blair says as he finishes his story of woe. Jim says he saw some lesions on the hands of the guy who pushed him into the oil which he thinks is a result of chemical weapons. He thinks someone's been storing chemical weapons on the rig and killing the people who find out about/get infected by it. More importantly, we have confirmed Jim nudity, people. Jim is taking the towel he was using to wipe off his arms and chest and wrapping it around his waist, meaning there wasn't one there before. Blair's been facing him for some time with no reaction to his nakedness; but then he's always been comfortable with Jim in any state of undress (since at least 1x08 Attraction). It's as if he's just so used to it that it doesn't even faze him.

"That's why you need me to back you up."

Anyway, just as Jim and Blair are figuring out their ridiculous leap of conclusions, the pilot strolls into the room, all "And I thought cops were supposed to be dumb!" Ah, the old Bad Guy Reveal and Confirm. She holds a gun in the boys' direction and radios to the foreman that she's got the cops. He tells her to bring them to the ready room. The pilot throws Jim some clothes and says "I got two brothers. Don't be shy." Jim gives her a withering stare, pulls off the towel around his waist, and hands it to a chagrined-looking Blair. Pilot takes a good gander at the goods and says "I gotta get off this rig and get me a boyfriend."

Like you've got.

Bad guys lead Blair and Jim off. Typical good-guy bad-guy conversation. On their way to whatever they're going to do to them, the lights go out, and ex-con guy sweeps in to the rescue! Jim also takes advantage of the situation to disarm the pilot. Good guys in control, Blair figures ex-con guy must have called the coast guard. He confirms. But then--oh no! More bad guys show up! Looks like the rig is divided pretty much evenly between good guys and bad guys, and the bad guys have the guns.
So they're back in control. Foreman and Pilot lock the remaining good rig workers in one room and cuff Jim and Blair to pipes in another. Blair: "You don't have to do this you know." Pilot: "Give it all up and go straight for you? (pinches his cheek) You're cute, honey, but you're not that cute."

Left alone, Jim and Blair struggle in their handcuffs. Blair finds that the pipe he's cuffed to is leaking oil, and he goes over to slather it on his wrists. "Ow, ow, ow," he groans as he slides his hand out. Heh. Okay, the pain made that seem much more realistic. "Sandburg, let me have a little bit on my wrists." Oh, it is NOT realistic for Jim to escape the same way—he does not have tiny girlish hands at all! On the other hand, yes, Blair, do. Go rub oil on Jim. Mwa ha ha. All is going according to plan.

The bad guys are escaping to a ship in a life raft. Jim thinks if he can get to the ship, he can stop them. But he has to swim there! Blair offers to go, but Jim wants him to stay and try to radio the local coast guard. Blair: "You sure you want to do this?" Jim: "No." Luckily, Blair has a cunning Guide plan: Jim should try to use the zone-out factor to his advantage by focusing on the goal (the sight of the ship he's swimming to) and blocking out all other senses. I would think twice before encouraging my Sentinel to zone in the middle of open ocean, but that's just the way I was raised. Jim agrees to give it a shot and leaps into the water. Blair watches him swim away.

Blair's plan must work, because next thing we know Jim is at the ship, climbing up a ludicrously large chain. We get a lot of shots of his tightly-wetsuited butt as he creeps around. He overhears the pilot and foreman discussing the time bomb they set on the rig for a murder / faked suicide twofer. There's four minutes left. Jim rushes to the ship's radio room where he quickly incapacitates the tech and radios Blair, telling him to get off the rig immediately. Blair: "What about the rest of the crew?" Jim doesn't care, or rather, doesn't think there's enough time, but tells Blair all he knows about the bomb's location (it's in an oil drum). Blair goes to find it while Jim yells "Sandburg!" into the radio.

Blair looks for the bomb, can't find it. Pilot and foreman count down. Jim counts down on his watch. Blair finds it, pulls out a wire with one second to spare. He braces himself for the explosion, and when it doesn't happen, he sighs relief and falls backward onto the floor. Meanwhile, Jim makes it to a giant mounted machine gun and takes command of the enemy ship just as the coast guard copters arrive.

Wrap-up. Jim apologizes to ex-con guy. Blair comes up to Jim all excited: "So, you must be feeling pretty good about yourself! You did it!"
JIM: Did what?
BLAIR: You conquered your fear of the water!
JIM: Oh yeah, I guess I did.
BLAIR: Yeah!
JIM: Guess now I'm ready for the really big challenge.
BLAIR: What's that?
JIM: Housebreaking you.

Jim lists a bunch of ridiculous new house rules for the apartment while Blair reacts with indignation as if he believes him. Cute scene. We fade out.

**Bottom Line:** Although the framing plot is "meh" / "huh?" as ever, this episode keeps it moving from one danger! Sandburg! JIM! crisis to another. Plus, gratuitous homoerotic nudity. I think this show understands its place in the world.
2x09 Spare Parts

Chapter Summary

This is the one about the big rig, secondarily. Primarily, it is about Blair's mom.

We open with a car chase right up front, which should save us some time later. Jim and Blair try to catch some car thieves who hijack expensive cars and haul them off in a big rig. They get the big rig driver, but the 'jackers get away.

Simon and Jim plot how to best get information out of the captured trucker when Simon gets a phone call. As Jim and Blair converse earnestly in the background, Simon asks if this can wait, sounding annoyed, and then yells at Blair: "Sandburg! Do you know someone named Naomi?" He scolds that Blair should have his "lady friends" contact him at home (Blair does deserve this, since we know he gives out the station address to impress girls). Blair sheepishly takes the phone. "Mom!"

Jim and Blair discuss Naomi in the bullpen. Jim: "Don't you think she'd be happier at a hotel?" Blair: "No." Ha. Jim: "Come on. A couple of guys belching, throwing their underwear on the floor..." Oh, it's just a belch a minute at the loft, all right. And the minute they walk in the door, the underwear hits the floor. (Well. That might actually be true.) Honestly, Jim doesn't have a leg to stand on messy-bachelor-pad-wise. It's only last episode's tag he was talking about putting plastic covers on the furniture. Blair argues that Naomi is "very open, totally new age," and once shacked up with Timothy Leary. "In fact, I always thought he might've been..." "Your father?" Oh yes, they are having a Conversation About Real Issues! Blair says he had a lot of candidates to choose from, since every man seems to fall in love with her. Looks like this is the scene with the outtake where Richard makes Garrett crack up by taking his hand and swinging it back and forth between them as they walk down the hall.

Jim interrogates the trucker who very cooperatively informs him that his boss, Francine, is working for Bill Petrie, a big-deal mob boss type. Jim proposes to Simon a typical Jim plan, which is to nail Petrie by going undercover as the trucker's replacement. Jim assures Simon he can drive a rig, no problem.

Cut to Jim failing at driving a rig. Blair's in the cab with him, wearing a cute little green track jacket, and he starts giving Jim instructions. He once helped his uncle drive a rig cross-country.

BLAIR: You want me to take you through the basics again?
JIM (annoyed): No, I don't want you to run me through basics again! (Blair smiles.) I figured maybe I could tune into it with my hearing, you know, kinda tune into the gears a little bit and, and, listen to them mesh.
BLAIR: Yeah, no. It doesn't work that way, man.

HA. Ha ha ha. I think this is the first time one of them has actually had a crazy idea about the senses run up against a reality check.
Jim gets a cell call and hands it over to Blair, who tells Naomi on the other end to just put her stuff in his room. Jim makes wild "no! no!" gestures, and Blair slaps his hand down while simultaneously chatting nicely with Naomi. "No, no, I don't think that's a such good idea, Mom, I mean it's Jim's place, he's got the furniture arranged the way he likes it." Jim (in gestures, loosely translated): "No! No!" Blair (in gestures, loosely translated): "Step off, bitch!" Nonverbal communication = adorable!

Jim and Blair come home to find a weird smell--Naomi's burning sage. "Oh! I forgot to tell her about your," Blair motions toward his nose, "Sensitive." SENSITIVE. Jim is so sensitive. I think that's my favorite thing about his superpower. Anyway, Naomi comes out of Blair's bedroom all angelic in a gauzy dress with the light streaming behind her. She's well-cast, I think--a very pretty, very young-looking woman with short red hair and something distinctly Blairlike about the face. "Look at this hair, it's so 60s, you look beautiful!" she gushes. You got that right, sister. Didn't Blair have the hair when she last saw him? Sure he did, it was six months ago, and we know what he looked like six months ago. Maybe she's surprised by it every time.

Blair introduces a sneezing Jim, explaining that he's allergic to the sage.

NAOMI: That's awful. How do you stay clean?
JIM: I shower.
NAOMI (gesturing): Oh no, I mean, how do you get rid of the negative energy?
JIM (imitating her gesture): I shower.
NAOMI: I hear that.

Naomi goes to the kitchen to fix Blair his favorite food (tongue, just in case you want to fix him a
special birthday dinner) and Blair explains to Jim, "She's saying she's willing to accept what you say without judgement." He goes to help Naomi, but Jim calls him back to look at the living room. "Oh. Hey. You know, I actually kind of like the couch there," says Blair. Then, "I'll put it back when she's gone," he promises, giving Jim an affectionate pat on the stomach. You know what friends don't ever do? Give each other affectionate pats on the stomach. Just sayin'.

"I'm a vegetarian, unlike him," Naomi tells Jim as she cooks, "but it makes him happy!" Blair grins cutely at Jim. "Blair's been telling me all about the work you've been doing together for his research on local subcultures." Man, I wonder what he said. He's typically so enthusiastic about his work that he must have made up an elaborate fake project to talk about. She continues, "It's so ironic, I've spent so much time demonstrating against the tyranny of the pigs and now... Oh! I'm sorry. No offense intended." Jim: "I—hear that." Heh, nice one, Jim. Naomi's put out when she's told she can't ride along on Jim and Blair's next mission. "Is it dangerous?" "No, no, it's just research," Blair assures her, and Jim rescues him from having make up more excuses by putting his foot down: "Not this time."

Out in the hall, Jim does an unexpected about-face: "You know, Blair, Naomi's a very attractive woman. I never would have guessed it. She's so... young." All true, but... "That's my mom," Blair points out. Dude, it's totally his mom. Whatever Blair is to Jim—roommate, sidekick, colleague, best friend, boyfriend, police partner, domestic partner, researcher, other half of twained soul, mystic spirit guide etc etc--none of these relationships is remotely conducive to hitting on his mom. (Okay, I don't know if it's specifically written anywhere that you don't hit on your mystic spirit guide's mom, but it seems like it should be self-evident.) Especially when Jim has thus far expressed nothing but irritation toward her, and they clearly have very little in common. So where's this coming from, he just thinks she's hot? Well, that makes sense. She does look like Blair.

Note the large, kittenish eyes, round, chipmunkish face, and chagrined, left-out-sidekickish expression.

Jim and Blair head out to meet with Francine's carjacking posse. Naomi secretly follows them. Of course Blair immediately gets a gun held on him, because Jim was told to come alone and interpreted that to mean "bring your buddy!" "I always have someone watching my back," Jim explains. He sooo does. Francine makes him get in the truck and show her how he can drive. Naomi calls the police department on a pay phone (remember, she still thinks, or perhaps hopes, that they didn't expect to be in this much danger), but gets put on hold ("I'm letting this go. I'm letting this go. I'm letting this go. God, why can't they play decent music?!")

Of course Jim sucks at driving, and Francine's all set to tell him to take a hike, when Jim says, no, actually, Blair's the one who can drive! Crazy Gary, Francine's partner (everybody needs a partner!): "So what do we need you for?" Good question. "We're a team. Either you buy both of us or
nothing," says Jim. Well, that line is going directly into my slavefic. Francine says they'll have to split the money, and Blair says "Equal shares or we don't do it." Done. As they walk off, Jim bitches, "You almost got us talked out of the case!" "That was the idea, man," says Blair. For once, Blair doesn't want to go undercover and have adventures (perhaps having his mother visit is making him feel cautious and responsible), and Jim cares more about the case than protecting him! Well, except for the part where he worked in a being-there-by-Blair's-side-at-all-times clause into the contract. As he does with every job.

Simon doesn't like the idea of sending in Blair to do undercover work. (He's gone undercover before, in *True Crime*, but this is admittedly a much more complicated and potentially volatile situation.) Blair doesn't want to go either: "This guy [presumably Crazy Gary] scares me." Jim tries to talk him into it: "I need you on this one!" Simon agrees with Jim that this is a tenuous one-shot chance, but "it's still your choice," he explains as Jim puts a comforting/manipulative arm around Blair's shoulders. Blair, walking away: "Good. I choose to live."

Later, Naomi bitches out the trio in Simon's office. "I saw a woman kidnap you at gunpoint!" Oh, yawn, Naomi.

NAOMI: Clearly there's a lot more going on here than simple observing. Next thing I know you're gonna be parading around in a blue uniform and jackboots!
BLAIR: Well, you know what, Mom? If I do, that's my choice!
NAOMI: Well, make another choice!
Yes. This is a really good scene--I like the juxtaposition of Blair arguing against his doing more hardcore police work to Jim and Simon and then for it to Naomi. Plus, you know, coming out metaphor etc.

Simon jumps awesomely to Blair's defense, saying, "Technically Blair is still an observer, but he's become much more than that... I consider him part of the team." Give 'em an inch and they walk all over you, because when Naomi says Blair is "just not cut out for this kind of work," Blair blinks strickenly and looks to Simon for support. Simon sighs and continues his grudging panegyric. "I've gotten to know Blair over the past few months and though we don't always see eye to see, his enthusiasm is kind of--refreshing! (Reaction shot of Jim blinking, presumably in agreement.) And I trust him. Whether he decides to stay or go, I back him up 100 percent." Blair looks touched. "So what's it going to be?" asks Naomi. With a glance at Jim, Blair says he chooses to stay. Hurt, Naomi claims to hear that, and leaves. Blair calls after her, "Mo-om. Come on, detach with love!" One of 1,000 Jim-handing-Blair-his-little-jacket shots as Jim leaves, and Blair turns to Simon. "I just wanted to say..." Simon: "Please. The memory is already too painful." Instead of getting the hint, Blair tries to give Simon a hug and gets rebuffed. Heh. Add "intervene in an argument between the anthropology student and his mother" to the list of things Simon never signed on for when he agreed to let Jim have a partner-observer.

Jim and Blair at Bad Guy Garage. (When the walls fell!) Blair's surprised to learn that Jim doesn't plan to call for backup (Blair: "you know, sirens, flashing lights, whoo-oo-oo!")--he wants to get in deeper so he can bring down Petrie, so he's going to go ahead and help them hijack someone's car. During the heist, however, the frightened driver of the to-be-stolen vehicle goes into cardiac arrest, and Jim, the boy scout, insists on staying with him and calling an ambulance and giving him pills. Just when we think Francine is going to drive off without him, leaving Blair alone amongst the thieves, he dashes off at the last minute and jumps into her car. *Into*, not *onto*. Later, Crazy Gary complains, and Jim defends that he's in this for car theft, not murder, and he's not about to do life. Nice save, Jim. Francine agrees with him, blowing off Gary's concerns that there's something "not right about that guy."
Next we get a phone call between Francine and Petrie where he warns her to shut down her business before she gets caught, and she changes his mind by planning their biggest caper yet: they're going to steal The Lamborghini. You know. That one. We see that Jim and Blair are eavesdropping. Well, Jim is, at least. Blair's standing in front of him looking up at him expectantly. We get an unnecessarily lengthy shot of Jim and Blair walking to the truck and driving off. Gary follows them!!!

Loft. Jim's putting on his pants while on the phone with Simon. I... okay.

Nothing has ever been more gratuitous.

Simon yells at Jim for maybe letting the guy die (Jim says he was out of danger, supporting his argument with "I've been a medic!" ...Wait, when? My Jim backstory timeline is already pretty cramped, here, guys!) Jim wraps up his call and comes downstairs buttoning his shirt. Blair is making dinner while Naomi finishes up meditating and stretches. Jim checks her out and Blair hits him. Naomi says she's been "processing her feelings" about Blair's police work and she's going to "let it go". Blair thanks her, and they hug.

Knock at the door. When Jim answers, Gary and Francine stalk in with guns at the ready! Naomi tries to step in and smooth things over, and Gary says "Where does she fit in?" "I'm his mom," says Naomi. "Don't be flip with me, lady," Gary begins, so Jim flips him, taking his gun. He removes the cartridge. "He could have just killed you, Gary. What more proof do you need?" asks Francine. Jim to Gary: "What do you say we start fresh, Chief?" WAAAUUUUUGH!

And Naomi looks on, unaware that Jim has just called another man by her son's pet name.

Gary huffs out, Francine apologizes, and Naomi says brightly, "Nice meeting you!" Blair gives her a surprised look. "That was kind of fun!" she says. The tree doesn't grow far from the apple.
The next day as Jim and Blair drive into work Blair gives Francine a little wave, and she waves back. I guess now that she's met his mom it's like they're friends. Blair says she's "not bad for a car thief," and Jim suggests he get to know her better. "Forget it," says Blair. "We've been down that road before, remember? I'm no good at that seduction stuff." Wh...when was this? Who did he try to seduce? I know Jim asked him to get close to Maya in 1x10 Love and Guns, but he was totally fine at that, I mean, they fell in love over the course of one day, what more do you want? Jim chuckles, "No one's asking you to compromise your high level of standards." Asshole.

Blair wanders in and keeps Francine company while she eats a sandwich. She's very open and nice to him, and seems interested. Blair makes up a story about how his father and grandfather were thieves, too. He asks why Francine's in this job, and she says she's an "adrenaline junkie." Sounds familiar. She takes a phone call in front of Blair the upshot of which is Petrie is coming to town tonight.

At Cascade PD, Jim tells Simon he figures Petrie will be in a hurry to unload the car, so all they need to do to get close to him is supply a buyer. Simon: "Who do these guys know besides you two?"

Jim and Blair kidnap Gary and throw him into a van where Naomi is waiting. She and Jim tag-team outline a deal for Gary to offer Petrie. Gary asks about Francine, and is pleased to learn that they're cutting her out. I guess they figured Gary would be easier to buffalo. Although Francine has been more gullible to date.

Loft. Naomi is getting ready to leave. Simon thanks her for her help; she offers to stay and be there for the arrest, but--as Blair shakes his head and Jim smiles indulgently--Simon assures her that won't be necessary. Naomi tells Blair she's proud of him. Simon looks away, pained, as they hug. "Be careful, okay?" says Naomi. "Of course, I will, Mom," says Blair, embarrassed. Jim says he hopes to see Naomi again soon and kisses her cheek while Blair stares. "That's my mom," he reminds. Naomi gazes fondly at Jim. "Aren't you lucky," smirks Jim creepily.

Blair walks Naomi to her car. "Next time you come over, I'm not gonna let you hit on Jim, I'll tell you that much." Naomi squeals a denial. They're still having their playful argument ("Every guy!" "That's not true!") when Francine stops them, asking Blair why they didn't come to her with the deal. "Sorry, sweetie, it was my call," says Naomi. Francine pulls out a gun. "Now it's mine."

Jim gets worried when Blair doesn't show up to the bad guys' lair. Jim calls Simon who tells him to stall Gary. But Gary won't be stalled. Jim chases him. Francine takes Naomi and Blair to the docks where the Lamborghini is being delivered. Blair begs Francine to let Naomi go, but she won't. Gary and Petrie spot Francine and Naomi together. Thinking they're being double-crossed, they take off after the hot car. So we've got Francine and Naomi in the Lamborghini, Petrie in a limo, Jim in his
truck, and Gary and Blair in rigs. Jim ends the chase by pulling his truck in front of Gary, totalling it (he jumps to safety first), shooting Petrie's tire, and standing in front of the Lamborghini, trusting Francine's basic decency not to run him down. She doesn't. Back-up arrives. As Jim is arresting Francine, Blair runs in and helps his mom out of the car. They hug.

Blair comes home to the loft. Candle lit on the table. Naomi's laughter drifts down from Jim's bedroom. I thought she was leaving? Blair calls "Mom? Jim?", pauses at the bottom of the stairs, then goes up. I called it, but it's still awesome when it comes to pass: Naomi is showing Jim photo albums of little Blair.

**Bottom Line:** It's great to learn more about our characters' pasts (when they make sense, unlike certain backstories who know who they are), and the parts of their lives that are not normally show on the show. Naomi's character, while occasionally caricatureish, is on the whole sympathetic and interesting, and I love the interaction between her and Blair. The interaction between her and Jim was a little iffy, but they saved it at the end by transforming their "sexual" "tension" into a prospective-in-laws vibe. I think knowing Naomi adds a lot to our understanding of Blair, and "Let's do an episode about Blair's mother!" was an inspired idea for an episode.

So, when are you two going to make me a grandma?
Chapter Summary

Blair's old flame Maya returns to Cascade. In trouble, natch.

Jim and Blair are spiffed up and walking way too close on the empty street (see fig. 1), discussing the cop retirement party they've just attended, when they see some thugs beating up a woman in front of their building. Jim rushes in to scare away the men while Blair helps the victim. "Are you okay? Take it easy." He sees her face. "Maya?!"

The kettle whistles the song of Blair's broken heart. Blair gives Maya a cup of tea, telling her, "the Brazilian Indians, they use this to--but listen to me, telling you what people in South America like to do." Just because she's Chilean, Blair, it doesn't mean she knows everything about everyone on the entire continent. Getting off the phone with Simon, Jim asks if Maya knows who attacked her or why, and she says she doesn't, but then explains that she came to Cascade in search of her uncle Gustavo (the Only One She Really Trusts) after learning (somehow) that her father's cartel intended to kidnap her. So, I guess she does know. Blair promises she'll be safe there, and Jim, after a pause, insincerely agrees. Blair: "You can stay in my bed." Jim: (glares) Blair, mostly to Jim: "Alone, of course." Maya says the couch is fine.

Maya sleeps on the couch. Blair comes into the living room to pick up what appears to be a little book or a computer disk or something, pauses, and looks at her. As he's turning back to his room, Maya asks, "Am I that interesting?" Blair: "You always were." He wants to know if she still hates him. She asks, "For what?" What do you mean, for what? Your last words to him were "I love you too, and I hate you too." You're the one doing the hating here, you tell him. For what. Honestly. Blair recaps his sins against Maya (lying, using her for info). She says it's her father she hates, but volunteers that she's too confused for romance: "right now, I don't know how I feel about anything or anybody. I'm sorry." "Hey, there's nothing to be sorry about," says Poor Sad Blair, who always makes a mighty if transparent effort to take it well when girls he likes rebuff him.

At the PD, Simon tells Jim and Blair he's arranged a safehouse for Maya with two police protectors. Blair wants to be one of them. Simon refuses. "Why not?" Jim explains he's not a cop and he's personally involved. Blair snorts, "When has that ever stopped you?" Jim imitates his snort, and says
lamely, "This, is-- not about me!" Jim and Blair continue bickering and Simon has to yell to get their attention and put his foot down--"Sandburg, you're out." Then there's a weird bit where Jim asks what kind of danish Simon is eating. Is this really the time? Also, can't he tell?

Jim introduces Maya to her protectors at the safehouse then stands by the door while Blair bids her farewell. He takes their standing around as his cue to leave, and Blair and Maya kiss quickly and awkwardly on the lips. "Don't say it, okay, Jim?" says Blair as he comes out. Jim maintains that he was just going to suggest breakfast.

Jim and Blair walk down a rainy street after a breakfast of Chinese food. Blair wants to talk about Feelings.

BLAIR: I know you're thinking-- she's got me using my heart and not my head, right?
JIM: Actually I'm thinking, "What does it mean when your fortune is blank?"
BLAIR: Whatever feelings I had for Maya in the past, they're just that, man. They are (gesturing emphatically) in the past.
JIM: Uh-huh.
BLAIR: You don't believe me?
JIM: I don't think you believe you.

I don't know if Jim would have used the word "heart."

Then two men come up behind them and stick guns in their sides and lead them off. I wish my conversations about Feelings would end like that.

And now we're in what appears to be a mad scientist's lab. Actually, it's some middle-aged Chilean businessman's ironsmithing workshop. He does the Cultured Bad Guy thing, interrupting his interrogation of Jim re: Maya's whereabouts in order to show him some finely-crafted ironsmithing workmanship on a trivet or something, and says, "Even something as hard as iron will bend like clay when fire is applied." He taps Blair on the chest: "Take that one." Oh yes, Blair is hard as iron. Cultured Bad Guy's burly goons lead a frightened-bunny Blair to a table where they hold his arms down and lift a welding torch toward his hands. "I'll ask again. Where is Maya Carasco?" Yes! I love when people read Jim well enough to threaten him with harm to the thing he loves most in the world. "You touch him, you're a dead man," says Jim evenly. Blair yells at him not to tell them anything. Nice going, Blair, you've tipped them off that you know.
This is not Blair's day.

Jim suddenly attacks the goon to his left, but quickly gets a gun pulled on him. "You want me to kill him now, Senor Gustavo?" Blair: "Uncle Gustavo? The one Maya said she trusts?" Jim makes a face like, Who in the what now? You were there, Jim. I know this episode is kind of boring, but look alive, Ellison. Cultured Bad Guy is indeed Gustavo Alcante, Maya's uncle. He bids his goons let the heroes go.

Blair admits they know where Maya is--they're protecting her. Gustavo wants to see her. Blair looks at Jim. "She did say she wanted to see him." "We're not going to compromise her position." Gustavo pulls a blindfold out of his inside pocket. What an awesome guy.

Jim and Blair drive blindfolded Gustavo to the safehouse. Blair asks him about his relationship to Maya, and he gets pissy: "You Americans think everything is a talk show." As they get out of the car, Jim senses Danger. The door's been broken in. They run in. The cops are dead on the floor. "Oh my God," says Blair. "Maya!" He looks, but can't find her anywhere in the house. Gustavo identifies the killer as warlord Francisco Rivero.

Yolsaffbridge: What did he just say? "The bullet holes through the heads are his signature"?
Yolsaffbridge: Oh. That's more reasonable. I was gonna say. You wanna be the guy who has bullet holes through the heads as his signature.

"I know what's going through your head, Chief," says Jim after the break, leaning against a police car outside next to a swallowing, emotional Blair, "but you're wrong. If you'd stayed with her you'd be dead too." Blair gives him a cold look. "That supposed to make me feel better?" Oooh. I know you're hurting, Blair, but be nice to your Partner. Simon gets a call on his cell and since it's a girl asking for Blair, he's annoyed as he hands it off. His expression changes when Blair cries, "Maya?!" Jim tries to set up a trace (unsuccessfully, as usual) while Blair talks to a crying, panicked Maya. He asks where she is, and before she can answer him, a handsome young warlord takes the phone. (It's Rivero, FYI.) If Blair doesn't follow his instructions, he'll kill the girl etc. He wants the access codes to Maya's father's Swiss bank account.

Since Rivero wants to make the exchange at noon and the banks don't open until 1 AM Cascade time, they decide to provide realistic-seeming but fake access codes. Gustavo comes up with believable fake passwords and he, Jim, and Blair go to the rendezvous point. Gustavo tells Jim how he's reformed in his old age, and Jim isn't convinced. Rivero shows up. First he wants to know which one is Sandburg, and when Blair raises his hand, he says, "You don't look like much." Heh. Maya must have built him up. Of Gustavo, he simply says, "Where did you dig up this old crook?" Rivero takes the codes but won't give up Maya until he checks if they work. After he leaves, Jim tries to follow the car from the sound of music playing on the radio, but it only leads him to an
Rivero returns to his yacht where Maya is reading a magazine on the couch. She stands up and kisses him. GASP! DOUBLE CROSSED! "We got the codes!" says Rivero, in English. And before you say "Maybe they're just translating it for us," typically this show uses subtitles for that. Surely they could have gotten actors who speak Spanish or could at least fake it well enough to fool me. Anyway. "That's wonderful," says Maya calmly. "You don't look very happy." "I don't like to lie to my friends," she explains. "I don't like to use them." BURN ON BLAIR. Rivero asks if she still has feelings for "him," and Maya says she doesn't.

Gustavo flips out about the police's inability to find Maya, then disappears. Simon finds out that Rivero's full name is Francisco Rivero Alcante--Gustavo's son. GASP! COUSINCEST! Also, DOUBLE CROSSED! Maybe. Blair overheard Gustavo talking to his men in Spanish about meeting at the Andes Cafe. So Blair knows Spanish, at least.

Sure enough, Jim and Blair find Gustavo at the cafe, chatting up a young woman. Jim says he's under arrest for aiding and abetting a felon. "When were you going to tell us Francisco's your son?" "Oh," says Gustavo. "That." He says he hates Francisco, he's his son in name only, and may he rot in hell. Jim wants to take him downtown anyway.

Outside the cafe, Gustavo explains that the woman he was talking to was a friend of Maya's and that he has just learned about the relationship between Francisco and Maya. "No way, that'd make them first cousins," says Blair. Because clearly that is the most important thing to be concerned about here. Gustavo carefully explains that Francisco and Maya are related to him by different wives. NO COUSINCEST AFTER ALL GUYS. FALSE ALARM. Gustavo suggests that Francisco and Maya are in this together as a way of getting back at Maya's father. He explains, "Francisco wanted Hector Carasco's money to strengthen his position in the cartel and Maya is very vulnerable. He probably told her he would give all the money to a good cause." Blair cannot believe so basely of his Dulcinea. He mutters, "I gotta," points vaguely behind him, and walks off down the street, where he is promptly accosted by Rivero and one of his goons.

Meanwhile, Gustavo's still blathering on to Jim, blah blah Maya's in danger, blah blah my son's murderous rage, and Jim's like, "Quiet!" Yeah, stuff it, old man! Jim's Internal Blair Danger Alarm tells him something is wrong.

Jim arrives on the scene with gun drawn. "Let him go!" Rivero asks if Jim's a good enough shot to kill him before he kills Blair, and Blair nods. I'm not sure if that's a Yeah he is! or a Do it Jim! "We all know about you and Maya," says Jim. "Then it's lucky we have another hostage," says Rivero. The corners of Jim's mouth tighten. Rivero has his goon put Blair in the car, and Rivero tells Jim to call with the real codes within four hours. We get a pathetic flash of Blair's face as the car drives away.
Please don't take my Sandburg away, just because you can!

Oh it's on now Rivero. You do not mess with The Relationship. Jim was meh about this case before but now he has PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT. And as we all know, that is what makes for great police work.

At the PD, Gustavo suggests they ask Maya's father for the codes. They just have to get in to talk to him in prison. Simon doesn't think they can trust Gustavo, and Jim agrees but says it's their only shot.

Prison. Gustavo is posing as a penologist (ha! ha!) who once guarded Carasco. They run his prints, saying they'll be done in half an hour. Jim mutters he hopes Gustavo doesn't have a record in the States. Gustavo admits there was some little trouble with the FBI.

Maya asks Rivero about the cops. He admits to killing them, saying it was necessary.

While the prints are pending at the prison (Peter Piper is preparing them), the warden agrees to let Gustavo speak to Carasco on a video phone thing. They begin to speak Spanish until the warden tells them to speak English for security reasons (See, THIS makes sense!) Their conversation:

CARASCO: How have you been?
GUSTAVO: Good. But my wife has not been well. You remember her. Maya?
CARASCO: Maya. Yes, I do. Is her condition... serious?
GUSTAVO: I have sent for some specialists. From Switzerland.
CARASCO: Switzerland?
GUSTAVO: Yes. But they are so expensive. It's almost as though you have to ransom back a person's health.
CARASCO (after a pause): I know several doctors in Santiago who are excellent.
GUSTAVO: That would be wonderful. What are their names?

And then he lists the code words. All right, the stuff about ransom was a little suspicious, but all in all a rather enjoyable attempt at espionage.

Jim driving (he's back in the blue SUV, since I guess the truck got totalled last time), on the phone with Rivero. He gives them the first part of the code, saying he'll give the rest when he gets the hostages. Gustavo can't breathe. Jim pulls over. Gustavo gets out of the car and stumbles around sickly. Jim comes over to help him, promising the call an ambulance, when Gustavo reaches round and grabs his gun from his above-the-butt holster. Another car pulls up--Gustavo's henchmen. Gustavo says this is between Rivero and him and he can't risk the police bungling it up, "not with
Maya's life in the balance." Jim: "What about Sandburg's life?!" Oh Jim. Gustavo throws away Jim's car keys; one of the goons knocks Jim out.

Jim's vertical again when we come back from commercial, rubbing his head and looking around. He finds his keys. Jim is on the move!

Gustavo talking to his goons. "Remember, all that matters is that Maya is safe." He cocks his pistol. BUT GUSTAVO, WHAT ABOUT SANDBURG?

What about Sandburg is that he's still tied to a pole in the boiler room or whatever. Maya comes in. "You were right about Francisco." She unties him and leads him out by the arm.

As they come out onto the deck they're immediately caught by Rivero, who leads Maya away at gunpoint while one of his henchman keeps a gun on Blair. Then we're treated to some weird techno music as actiony things start happening, people preparing for battle. Gustavo arrives on the dock, and he and Rivero yell to each other, with Rivero telling him he's outmatched--he's had his goons knock out Gustavo's goons. Jim arrives on the scene to find Gustavo's goons' bodies and calls Simon, but the call is cut short when a Rivero goon finds him and starts shooting at him. Rivero tells Gustavo to give him the codes or he'll kill Maya. Instead, Gustavo starts brawling with the nearest Rivero goons. Not a great idea, really, but Francisco does shoot in Gustavo's direction rather than Maya's, and ends up killing one of his own men. Gunfire as Gustavo runs up the stairs of the yacht toward Rivero.

When the guy holding Blair looks over to see what's going on, Blair punches him in the face with a resounding "zap!" Blair throws him into the wall--yeah, Blair!--but the guy eventually recovers himself, hits Blair in the stomach, and slams him in the face with the butt of the gun. Blair goes down with lips parted and blood trickling from his forehead. Ow. Jim arrives on the scene as Blair's attacker is fleeing, and shoots mercilessly to kill. Uh. Double ow? At any rate, you do not want to get on Jim's bad side. Jim runs up to Blair's still form and leans over him as the Rain of Drama and Emotion begins to fall.

Having verified that Blair is alive, Jim is free to go after Rivero, who is leading Maya away at gunpoint. Jim jumps off the boat (!!!), onto the dock, and gets into a hand-to-hand match with Rivero. Rivero actually delivers a flying kick, and Jim flips him. Rivero pulls out a little switchblade and does some fancypants sword-guy-Indiana-Jones-shot type moves. Jim roundhouse kicks him in the FACE. Don't know why I'm suddenly down with play-by-playing the fight here, since I usually just say "they fight and Jim wins." FYI, that's what happens here, as Rivero launches himself, yelling, at Jim, knife drawn, and Jim clotheslines him and cuffs him.
Wrap-up, by which words it should be clear to you know I mean "cut to some time later, when the scene is crawling with police cars and ambulances." Blair's up and about, though his hair's a little less poofy than usual, and guess what kind of insect his forehead bandage resembles. Simon asks if Jim knew Gustavo had an FBI record. Blair asks if there's anything they can do, since Gustavo helped them and is likeable. Simon's like--no. Gustavo and Maya share a moment, and then Blair walks off with Maya while Jim tells Gustavo about the coming Feds. "As long as Maya's safe, I don't mind a few years in prison. Besides, I could use the rest," says Gustavo. Some Feds come and take him away.

Blair breaks it to Maya that although she won't be arrested, but she will be deported and prevented from ever returning. "So we'll never see each other again?" Blair, smiling though near tears: "I don't know about that." Yeah, Blair's always spending a few months in various South American rainforests, or at least he was before Jim came along. She kisses him; he kisses her; they embrace.

"Take care of him, huh?" says Jim as the Feds drive Gustavo away. Blair kisses Maya on the cheek as she's led away by some...one. The guys meet up in the middle. "You okay, Chief?" "Yeah, I'll be fine." I can't hear what they're muttering as someone drives up, but according to the transcript it's:

BLAIR: It's just that... it hurts a little.
JIM: You'll get over it.

God, I love this show.

Anyway, the guy that drove up identifies himself as the FBI agent who's supposed to take Gustavo. Wan-wannnn! Jim and Blair start giggling and direct him to Simon. Poor Simon.

**Bottom Line:** So... not so much with there being a second chance in this episode. I mean, it's not like Blair got to choose whether to go for Maya again or not and it's not like anything between them was really resolved. I guess they ended on more of a high note than before. Anyway, there was a fair amount of Blair's Broken-Hearted Sadness of Tender Emotion in this episode, but it could have been much more about that and less about the ransom/double-crossing whatever.
2x11 Black or White

Chapter Summary

Gang investigates bombings of black churches. Taggart has shell-shock.

Gospel singers practice at a church. Storm outside. The lights flicker, but the minister tells them to keep going. Prowler outside. As the singers depart, the church explodes.

Police department garage. Blair does that thing he always does where he kind of squashes himself against the doorframe to get through the door at the same time as Jim, as he tries to convince Jim to double-date with him since he accidentally overbooked. Apparently "Jessie" has a 158 IQ and legs "up to here" (Blair indicates about level with his collar bone). In other words, she's average height. OHH I SAID IT BLAIR IS SHORT.

Sci-Fi cut the rest of this scene, but I managed to get my hands on it anyway, so I'll recap it, even though I don't know if it would have made it onto my radar had it not been Forbidden Fruit. Jim surmises Jessie's the type to want to involve Blair in a "weird ceremonial body piercing ritual" (I guess he's still thinking about Blair's alleged nipple ring); he playfully backhands Blair on the cheek. Blair: "That's a bad thing? Come on!"

Come on, Jim, go on a date with me! Wait, that didn't come out right. Wait. Did it?

Oh, God. Investigating the explosion site, the police find evidence of some special explosion called Semtex and a note from some white supremacy group called AWC (Aryan Warriors Cla--I mean, Command). Looks like it's going to be one of the The Sentinel Takes On the Issues episode, taking the daring stance that white supremacy groups are bad. Some white guy called Larson is running field ops now that Taggart is "riding a desk."

A woman leads a protest of the department's handling of the case. Blair watches from Simon's office window. Simon and Jim explain that the protester, Candace, used to be a cop with the department, until she left a year ago to become an activist.

Taggart brings the news that Larson has "downloaded", or "pulled off the web", an "email from the Internet" full of AWC propoganda. Isn't that, like... kind of in his job description? To investigate the perps? Simon says "I know the last few months have been tough on you," but could Taggart take
over the case from Larson? Taggart says, "I just can't."

Just when I'm wondering what the hell happened to Taggart, Blair hypothesizes that he's lost his nerve since almost getting blown up in "the Brackett bomb". It's probably mainly indicative of my seivelike mind and Jim/Blair one-track-ness that I don't even remember Taggart being in "Rogue," but even if I had I doubt I would have pegged that as a particularly nerve-threatening event: I mean, Jim and Blair are in situations like that all the time. It's kind of cool that someone's actually having a normal reaction to being in a high-stakes life-or-death situation. Jim tells Blair that Taggart dropped his therapy because he didn't want to seem weak, and I guess that's legitimate since whether or not he's going to therapy seems to be public information. Blair wonders if he should talk to Taggart, since he's been in and out of therapy his whole life. "Anxiety and panic attacks are a normal state of being for me!" Actually, he seems pretty laid back. I guess he has really excellent treatment because he never seems to have any lasting fallout from his weekly brushes with death (his own or his Sentinel's).

Jim doesn't think Blair talking to Taggart is a great idea and indeed the next scene we see is Taggart storming away from Blair saying "You do NOT know how I feel!" (EXCELLENT), while Jim says, "Joel, will you just listen to him for a second, huh?" It's great that Jim is totally on Blair's side now, in front of Taggart, at least. They can have their private disagreements but they put up a unified front. You know, for the kids. In the class. Anyway, Blair gets Taggart to listen to a story about an anthropology student he knew who froze up on a rope bridge in Nepal. The sherpa came up to him and said "This is not about you." And he made it across. And that student.... was Blair Sandburg. As Jim watches Blair and Taggart walk off together, Simon comes up and announces various pieces of evidence against Larson, including a history of knowledge of Semtex and a large cash deposit made into his bank account, which constitute grounds for a warrant.

At his home, Larson is told to "download the numbers" through a ridiculous chat program which employs what appears to be a giant swastika loading screen. Honestly, if I saw that over his shoulder, I'd probably just think he was playing an Indiana Jones adventure game. Larson prints out a page of about five numbers and then thoughtfully examines the blank back of the sheet. Outside, preparing to bust in, Jim tells Simon and Blair to sit tight while he tries the revolutionary method of Talking. At the door, Larson pretends to agree to talk to Jim, but then runs away. Jim runs after him, at one point Seeing him tuck the paper into his boot. Larson escapes on a motorboat, too far for Jim to jump to.

Next day. Candace leads protesters at the site of a second church bombing. While Jim is talking to Simon, Blair brings him some stuff to smell which confirms Semtex was used. Simon bitches at Jim for not catching Larson, and we get a reaction shot of Blair, because I guess Jim getting bitched out is more emotionally resonant for him? I'm reaching, here, there's not much to work with in this episode. Candace approaches, and Jim offers to talk to her. Because, every scene in this episode, someone has to say "Let ME talk to...." Jim tells Candace that an agent from Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is coming to help them deal with the case, which Candace appreciates. Then Candace tells a story about how a preacher who had been good to her as a child was killed in a church explosion in Alabama. Jim says "I'm sorry. I didn't know," and leaves his hand on her arm too long. So it's not just Blair, then. He asks her to help them work the case as a cop, but she doesn't seem interested.

In the bullpen, Blair's working at his desk (or Jim's? I'm not actually clear on whether Blair has his own) when Henri Brown comes in and actually has a line, calling Blair "Hairboy" and offering to help with his too-many-girls problem. "But they might forget about you!" Jim comes in behind him, chuckling, and Blair says, like he's just had one put over on him, "Thanks a lot. Thanks, Jim." Jim roundaboutly tries to advise Blair on his love life:

JIM: There was this guy on the Ed Sullivan Show, he did this act with plates and sticks? He'd try and keep three or four of these plates spinning on these sticks, then add another plate, then add another
stick. (Blair takes off his glasses in a "this is going to be a long story" kind of way, blinks interestedly up a Jim, and leans back in his chair with his head in his hand)

Go on, I'm listening.

JIM (cont'd): The idea was not to break a plate, right, but eventually one of them always hit the stage. You see where I'm going with this?

BLAIR (nodding seriously, with apparent genuine appreciation for the advice): Yeah, I got you.

Okay, back to the plot. Candace calls. "I came back to the office to do some work. The phone rang and the voice at the other end said that if I hung up this thing [a time bomb at 5:32] would go off." I don't understand. She didn't notice the bomb until the phone rang? How is the bomb connected to the phone? Can't she just drop the receiver and run really fast? How did she call the police? And how do Jim, Blair and Taggart make it to the office quickly enough to spend all this time putting on radio headsets and using bomb-sniffing dogs and (on Jim's part) telling Blair to stay put and (on Blair's part) arguing "I can help him [Taggart] out here!" Oh, great. Guiding one guy isn't enough for you? Jim's concerned about Blair's safety as usual: "That place blows, you're going to end up in another zip code."

In Candace's office, Taggart freezes up, and Candace says "He's more scared than I am!" Jim: "This is not about you. Okay? You must cross that bridge." Oh-ho, take THAT, Blair! You wanna talk someone else through using their abilities, well, two can play at that game! The Sentinel has become the Guide! Jim and Candace have a little conversation about her cop history and we're still only at 1:30 on the bomb timer. So all this has only taken four minutes. Jeez. I think it took that long in SHOW time, and we cut directly from the bullpen to the street outside the office! Anyway, Jim finds a detonator and spots the bomber on a rooftop across the street, and realizes he's going to blow it no matter what they do, but he keeps talking about disarming the bomb for the benefit of the phone as he rushes everyone out of the office. When the bomber realizes what's going on he detonates, but they're already outside. Jim runs after the bomber but loses him, mainly because the bomber gets into a van and Jim is on foot.

Next day, Candace comes into the bullpen all take-charge and policey, wanting to be brought up to speed on the case, but Simon won't tell her anything, because it might end up on the evening news. She storms off, saying she'll talk to the ATF agent herself when he comes. Simon: "I thought you said you'd talk to her?" Jim: "I did. I didn't say I'd convince her." He looks back at Blair in the background all, See what I did there? I AM RECAPPING GLANCES. THAT IS HOW LITTLE JIM/BLAIR THERE IS IN THIS EPISODE.
What he didn't realize was that behind him, Blair had assumed the international "how you doin'" pose.

Oh, that's why there was a weird Significant Look at the end of that scene. Because it's supposed to lead into a little conversation between them, cut by Sci-Fi. According to the transcript:

BLAIR: Hey, Jim... you know, there was this guy on the Sullivan Show-- he did this thing with plates and sticks...
JIM: Don't you have some exams to grade or something?

Precious. Vaguely nonsensical, but precious. Okay, Simon, Taggart, and a cutely glasses-wearing Blair are looking at files in Simon's office. It's always nice but a little strange-feeling when they let Blair work without Jim. Oh, here he is, coming in with a file about some AWC member named Axel Soles, who is Larson's half-brother. From the picture we can see he is the bomber.

Soles pulls up outside a house in his Almond-Colored Van of Escaping from Jim. Larson gets in the van and makes him drive at gunpoint. They go to Soles's bomb workshop where Larson yells at Soles for blowing up churches. Soles informs him that he planted money in his account to make him look like a co-conspirator. A third guy, Randy, shows up. I miss Jim and Blair. Somebody shoots somebody, but we can't tell who.

At the PD, the latest info is: the detonator came from a demolition company, and one of the guys from Larson's old bomb unit is Randy Eccles, an ex-marine who owns a demo company. Jim and Blair drive there and just before they get out of the car Blair gives Jim this quick, inexplicable broad grin, like "We are investigating! We are having fun!"

Aren't we, Jim? Aren't we having fun investigating these church bombings?
They see some guys breaking big bricks into little bricks, and Blair mutters to Jim, "There's a good job for ya--if you were in HELL." Heh. Snob. Randy comes up and tells him not to knock it, and Jim introduces himself as "Detective Ellison (shows badge), this is my partner Blair Sandburg." Ooh, they're getting better at avoiding describing Blair's job or showing his non-badge ID. Randy says he hasn't seen Soles ever or Larson lately.

Simon, Jim and Blair at a new crime scene--Larson's body has been fished out of the water. Jim retrieves the paper from his boot. Taggart says "That thing's waterlogged--you're not going to be able to see anything on that," and Simon significantly pulls him out so the Sentinel can be alone with his Guide. Jim squints at the paper, and Blair says, "Use your fingers." I bet he gets that a lot. He finds the letters and numbers and suggest they may be coordinates, like on a map.

Okay, so we get a meeting with the bad guys where it turns out the fact nobody's died in the church bombings is no coincidence, since Randy was in this to get demo business (free bricks! BRILLIANT PLAN) but Soles wants to turn it into a "skinhead vendetta" and Randy is not cool with it. He draws a gun on Soles but Soles disarms him and shoots him.

Jim explains Randy's scam to Simon, Taggart and Blair. It's a little more complicated than "free bricks," but not really. Then we see Soles trick the newly-arrived ATF agent into meeting with him by posing as an officer on the phone, and then beats him up and takes his creds and meets up with Candace posing as him. When we get back from the break, Soles has got Candace tied up with a bomb in a church.

Simon, Taggart, Jim and Blair at the crime scene of dead Randy. They figure out the next church-target, which is the one where Candace is, and roll.

Church. As usual, Jim tells Blair to stay put and he hangs around outside with Simon while Jim and Taggart creep into the church with manly guns drawn. Jim finds a bunch of Semtex under the altar and hears Candace trying to talk under her duct tape gag in the next room. He leads in Taggart, who describes the bomb over the radio. Blair encourages him ("We can get through this, man.") Jim adds his own competing/tag-team encouragement ("You can do this Joel") then runs off and climbs up some ladders with his cap on backwards while Blair continues to talk Taggart through the bomb disarming. Jim finds Soles (why didn't he just leave?) and he and Simon corner him in the choir balcony. Taggart disarms the bomb. Soles tries to detonate, but fails. Because Soles is so evil he has to die, he steps back, trips on a book, and falls over the rail to the sanctuary below. Pan up from his dead body to a stained-glass window of black Jesus. White supremacy is bad, people. And *The Sentinel* isn't afraid to take a hard line against it.

Wrap-up. Candace thanks Simon. Taggart shows Blair that his hand is "steady as a rock," and Blair pats him on the arm. Taggart asks if Blair wants to help him with something he has to do on the roof (ohhh yeah) and Blair says no because he has "this thing about heights." No, he doesn't. I have seen him enjoy too many chopper rides to believe that for a second. He admits his bridge-in-Nepal story was "an embellishment on the truth." Well, I believe that, for other reasons. He can't have been in every country.

**JIM:** You mean a lie, right? A lie.
**BLAIR:** No, lies, they hurt, man. This... embellishments, they help.
**JIM:** Kinda like the embellishments in your love life, huh?
**BLAIR:** No, no. I would call those more like romantic... obfuscations.
(Everybody laughs, enjoying Blair's antics.)
**SIMON:** I'd call it B.S.
**BLAIR:** Actually, no. Technically [ed. note: technically?], B.S. is, uh, a form of male bonding. (to the retreating backs of everyone but Jim, who have lost interest) It's a ritual, actually.
JIM: What happened to this thing called truth?
BLAIR: Oh, yeah, that. That's, uh... (shakes head earnestly) totally overrated.

Jim laughs as they get into the car, repeating, "Obfuscation."

Ha ha. "Obfuscation." Priceless.

**Bottom Line:** I'm glad that episode's over.
Jim loses his sight, and Blair has to lead him around everywhere. Then, Blair gets drugged and goes nuts.

Jim and Blair order hot dogs from a stand; Jim discusses a girl he wants to ask out, while Blair gets momentarily distracted playing with a laser pointer, because he's a little kitten. "Why don't we try to stick to the subject at hand, huh?" asks Jim. "Now, whose dog is this?" Heh. The dog will not be important. Blair exposit that the girl Jim likes is a friend of his and he's afraid it'll be awkward if it doesn't work out. Besides, they've only ever talked on the phone.

BLAIR: We're male animals, right, Jim? Attraction is partly intellectual. But the visual components are a major aspect to it--without the physical thing, we don't have the whole package.

JIM: What are you saying, Margaret's not attractive?
BLAIR: I'm saying that... she has an inner beauty.

Ha. Jim still wants to meet her. Call from Simon. There's a jumper on a bridge. Since when is Jim the guy you call for this kind of thing?

The girl on the bridge is swaying and dancing and saying "Isn't it BEAUTIFUL?" The view over the rushing dam waterfall is nice and Jim agrees, but then the girl starts talking about a golden castle. She wants to go there. Jim tries to stop her, but she goes forward; he holds her hand, dangling over the side, trying to pull her back up, but she struggles free and falls into the water. Jim looks horrified.

In Simon's office the three credited characters hypothesize that the girl was high on "Golden," a new designer drug which makes people see golden hallucinations. Jim takes Blair to see "Sneaks," a snitch with a fascination with shoes. Over the course of the conversation with him, we learn that the Golden is coming from "Slicks," over at the amateur drag strip, that Slicks wants to make a connection with a big-deal drug distributor called "Cyrus", and that Blair's an "8 1/2" (small feet!) Sneaks walks away with Blair's "sneakers".

I don't understand this Sneaks. What shoe size is he? He seemed willing to take Jim's shoes if he had been wearing a kind that Sneaks wanted, and I guarantee Jim is no 8 1/2. Also, why did Jim wear combat boots to a meeting with an informant whom he knew only exchanged information for sneakers? I'll ignore the obvious question, "why not exchange information for money, and then buy many shoes?" because I already know the answer: "Shut up!"

Anyway, back in the loft, Blair puts on new shoes and Jim explains that Cyrus is a myth created by the DEA. By posing as Cyrus's men, Jim hopes to stop the flow of Golden out of Cascade.

Jim and Blair go down to the amateur drag strip. Blair tries to guess the winner of a race, but Jim correctly calls its opponent and then smirks "Looks can be deceiving, huh, Chief?"

FORESHADOWING. I guess. Jim finds Slicks using his super-eavesdropping skills and approaches him and his two friends, claiming to be a point man for Cyrus. When they don't respond right away, he calls them "three blind mice." This is starting to get to me. Jim gives them his card and starts to
leave, but one of the men says "You dropped something." A bag of Golden. They're in.

As they walk away, Jim plays with the bag, and Blair warns, "You're getting that stuff all over
your hands." Jim sees a man watching them, and Blair doesn't, even when Jim points him out. Then
Jim's sight goes out of control. Car headlights flash to one big field of gold light.

Are you okay? No? Well, you could just like, grab my hands or whatever, I don't know.
Whatever.

Jim collapses to his knees as Blair grabs him steadingly, asking over and over what's wrong.

After commercial, Jim and Blair are in a doctor's office. He says Jim's vision problem is not
caused by anything physical, is most likely neurological, and may or may not go away. He wants Jim
to enter the hospital for tests and treatment. Jim says that won't work for him, thanks the doctor, and
calls for Blair by his first name. "It's all right, buddy," says Blair soothingly, helping him up. This
episode rocks.

Simon's office. Jim fills in Simon on the progress, pretending nothing's wrong. Simon finally
wises up when Jim turns and walks directly into Blair, then opens the door into Blair's head. Blair
cries out. "Oh God, I'm sorry, man," says Jim, reaching out and groping Blair's head. Simon: "All
right, one of you tell me what the hell is going on."

Cut to post-explanation. Simon wants to take Jim off active duty until he's better, arguing
reasonably, "One bullet and I lose you." Jim argues adamantly that he needs to still be on this case;
he's already set up his cover, and he keeps seeing the face of that girl as she slipped off the bridge.
Blair thinks that, with Jim's other senses and some help from him, he can pull it off. Oh, no, boys, I
am totally with Simon on this one. This is not a good idea. For one thing, won't people wonder why
Jim is always staring off into the middle distance instead of looking at them when they're talking? It
was one thing with Simon, who was distracted with looking at the files on his desk and pouring
coffee and so forth, and Jim spends half the time looking over in Blair's direction in meetings
anyway. But undercover? Won't he want to stare at the marks intensely and menacingly?

Anyway, Blair suggests a "trial run" out in the bullpen, and Simon agrees, but "no help from
you." Oh, now, that is just not fair. Help from Blair is the #1 100% bestest-ever thing about Jim
being blind. The trial run consists of Jim accusing Henri of drinking too much cocoa ("it's your
figure") and spending $20 on a muffin (note: when you're blind, it's probably not a good idea to say
"Keep the change.") Then Margaret, Blair's friend, shows up, looking to meet Jim. She's a perfectly
pretty girl. She and Jim agree to get together soon. Even though he seemed unimpressed with the trial
run, Simon agrees to let Jim meet with the contacts again.

Loft. Blair tries to teach Jim to use sonar. Good luck with that one. Blair thinks the blindness
was caused by a "power surge" to his senses but that he can get his vision back through "an act of will." Helpful. Jim gets a call from the contacts.

Blair drives Jim's blue SUV to the contact point. Jim gives Blair a radio transmitter and binoculars and heads off on his own on foot. Blair explains the visuals as Jim meets with two of the contacts and exchanges the suitcase of money for a Thermos full of Golden. After the deal, the third guy arrives and scans Jim for bugs. Of course they find one and hold guns on him. Jim manages to disarm one, and there's a tense standoff until Blair tricks the man holding Jim at gunpoint into thinking he's being targeted by shining the laser pointer on his chest. Jim says of course he's wired, he's backed up by more of Cyrus's men. They buy this and let him go.

Loft. Jim is playing with the salt and pepper shakers, moving them in front of his face and trying to see them, as Blair cleans up from dinner. There is a knock at the door--Margaret! Blair stalls, saying he has to put on a shirt on, while they set up Jim with a towel over his eyes like he has a headache. As soon as Margaret comes in Jim takes it off, so I'm not sure what that was supposed to accomplish. Jim offers her a drink and gets up, walking to the kitchen arm in arm with Blair.

Well, they certainly get along nice-luh? Wait. Huh? Why did Blair have to put on a shirt again?

Whispered conversation in the kitchen: Jim tries to give Blair money for a movie. Blair doesn't want to leave Jim alone with Margaret, but Jim says he may as well get used to being blind. "I'll keep things simple." "Simple for you, maybe," says Blair, and I'm really not sure what that means. Anyway, Blair finally agrees to get lost. He hits Jim in the head with the door as he goes. Now, there was no reason for that to happen. "Great guy," says Jim.

Coffee shop, the next day. Jim is being a weirdo.

JIM: Mmm. I detect glazed buttermilk. (continues to chatter as Blair goes to buy donut; gesturing at his nose) It starts right at the tip and works all its way back. (inaudible as Blair orders) It's an explosion, just an explosion.
BLAIR (grabbing Jim's hand as he starts to gesture): Here's your donut. You got your donut.
You wanna shut up about the damn donut?

Blair can't believe Jim just talked to Margaret last night, and didn't "hit on her". "All I did was whistle," says Jim. "Whistle?" "Yeah." Jim whistles. "Like a bat," he explains. Blair and I both think Jim is crazy. Phone call from contacts.

Simon and Blair watch with binoculars as Jim meets with the dealers. In the middle of the deal, a sniper starts firing at both of them. Jim gets behind the truck and radios Blair, asking him to locate the sniper for him. Blair does (and it's the guy Jim saw right before he went blind). "20 yards to your left" is apparently good enough direction to get Jim within hand-to-hand distance, and there's a clumsy fight. Guy turns out to be the father of the girl who jumped off the bridge. He accuses Jim of killing her with his drug.

Jim and Simon question the dad. He feels pretty bad about lousing up the bust. He gives them a lead to the kid who sold the drugs to his daughter, and Jim reports that that kid could only tell them about a DNA-molecule-looking sticker on the car of his dealer. In the bullpen, Blair tells Jim about a report on the drug (it's made with rare and controlled substances, so should be easy to trace) and Jim goes to meet with Simon in his office. While he's gone, a boy delivers a bunch of pizzas, saying they're paid for: a note says "To the hard-working officers of Major Crime, continued success. Chief of Police Warren." Blair's like, awesome, free pizza. Oh Blair. Can't you tell that these are 100% guaranteed laced with Golden and soon you, too, will be out of commission?

When Jim and Simon emerge, Blair's gone, and Jim confirms my suspicion in re: Golden pizza. There's a piece missing. Jim can't find his backup .38. Where's Sandburg?? Trouble in the garage!

Simon leads Jim to the garage where Blair is standing on the roof of a car, crazed expression, pointing a gun. An officer reports that he has been yelling about demons. Ha ha, of course he has. Blair's shooting randomly, and he hits a gas main. If he shoots again, the whole place could explode. Jim goes to talk to him. "Are you crazy? He won't even recognize you!" says Simon. "I gotta try," says Jim. Don't worry Simon, this is definitely a situation where the purity of their love will save them.

Jim approaches Blair, blinking against the continued shapeless golden light. "What's going on?" Blair seems to remember that Jim is blind, because he explains that the golden fire people are coming through the walls and the floor. Starting to cry, he shoots again. "Blair, listen! Your gun isn't going to work with the golden fire people! They're not going to be afraid of the fire, it's only going to make them stronger," says Jim. Dork. Jim tells Blair to do the "bat-echo" trick: "The one you taught me! Close your eyes and clap your hands!" "No, man, that is not gonna work here, man," says Blair. I agree. The gun thing was at least plausible. We see through Jim's eyes, and he can almost see the outline of Blair's face through the light. "What if it doesn't work here, Jim? I don't think it's gonna
work," says Blair, cocking the gun into Jim's face, and looking insane. "Trust me," says Jim, feeling for and gently taking the gun.

"I don't think it's gonna work."

"Trust me."

At Jim's continued insistence, Blair dubiously claps his hands, like he's not sure whether or not he should believe in fairies. "You did it! You did it!" cries Jim. Aw, now he's just being patronizing. Simon comes up and he and Jim help Blair down from the hood of the car. Blair collapses into Jim's arms, and Jim coos "Hang in there. It's all right," tenderly cradling Blair's head against his chest.

"It's all right."

Oh man, this episode. EPIC ROMANCE. For serious.
Hospital. Blair unconscious, Jim by his side. Simon comes in to ask how they are. Apparently the pizza contained 10-20 times the amount of Golden that would kill a man. So, it was a prohibitively expensive but poetically just assassination attempt. Simon says they haven't had any luck tracking down the ingredients in the drug; Jim remembers the logo the boy saw.

Bio-Helix Labs! The dealers are there and there is already a shootout in progress as the police arrive. Simon tells Jim to sit this one out because of his vision. Come on, Jim, let the purity of your love heal your sight! While the other officers work their way into the lab, Jim hears an engine revving inside. A car breaks through the door, and Jim takes off after it. Driving sightless. Great. The chase takes them through some rough terrain, but Jim is gradually getting his vision back. He manages to force the other car into a ditch. The driver gets out and runs into a construction site. Jim can see well enough to follow him, surprises him with a gun pointed at his head. Yay! We win!

Loft. Jim is lying on the couch and Blair standing behind. He is well! Jim reports his vision is fine except for "residual kind of--" "Glow," chimes in Blair. Ha ha, they are both high. Knock at the door. Margaret. "What's she doing here?" cries Jim. Blair: "I realized it's crazy for me to try to keep you guys apart. I'm giving you both my blessing." "Wait wait wait wait," says Jim, grabbing Blair before he can answer the door. Blair wonders if Jim's worried Margaret won't be beautiful enough, but Jim says he is worried because he lied to her. "So make it up to her," says Blair, hand on Jim's shoulder. Jim nervously asks how unattractive she is. "No, forget it, forget it. I don't care. Should I?" "No. You shouldn't," confirms Blair. Heh, Jim is cute when he's nervous. Blair finally opens the door. Cue music as we see Margaret through Jim's eyes: clear, beautiful, with a golden glow around her. Blair takes off. "Hi," says Jim. THE SENTINEL!

"Wait wait wait wait!"

**Bottom Line:** I would like to find the man who came to the sweeps storyboard meeting and said "Why don't we incapacitate both Jim and Blair in ways which maximize the motive and opportunity for abundant physical touching?" and shake his hand.
Chapter Summary

Jim goes to the doctor and gets his ears cleaned, and his hearing is too good!

Two guys grapple. A third man shows up and helps the first man. They drag the second man into a helicopter.

CPD. Jim comes out of the men's room. I'm hoping Blair will be in there with him, but no, it's Simon. At least he wasn't alone. Simon tells Jim to report to his mandatory physical. Jim's worried they'll figure out about his abilities. Not if you don't tell them, Jim. My doctor thinks I'm healthy and you know why? I just say I am. No complaints! Nothing unusual! It's not like you have to fake not having a heart murmur or something. Just don't read the last line on the eye chart. Simon asks, "Isn't this the whole reason why you have to put up with Sandburg? Let him figure out how to deal with it." Oh, Simon, even you know "whole reason" is going a bit far there. Also: Jim, I think this means you and Blair need to play doctor. Again.

Jim and Blair squeezing through another door. "You knew this day was coming, you put it off as long as you could. We'll just have to do the best we can." Jim: "What do you mean by 'we'?" Blair is taking Jim to the doctor! I hope he goes in the exam room! Also, I hope this takes up the whole episode and that teaser with the men beating each other up was just a red herring. Blair: "I got something at stake here, too. What if the world finds out about your Sentinel abilities prematurely? There goes my thesis, my book... the movie rights alone..." Jim: "You're kidding." Blair: "It could happen!" Yes, and imagine if there were some kind of, oh, I don't know, weekly one-hour television programme! Naaaahh... it would never work.

Doctor's office. Jim gets a form to fill out and he and Blair sit down in little side-by-side chairs.

JIM (speaking low, so as not to alarm the elderly couple waiting): What am I going to do?
BLAIR (fidgeting leg nervously as Jim fills out form): Just stay calm. Your body should respond normally to the tests as long your senses don't get over...
JIM: Stimulated.
BLAIR: Right!

OVER. STIMULATED. I love this show, and it only gets better. Okay. Blair tells Jim to have a "mantra." He hops into a cross-legged pose on the chair.

BLAIR: Meditation is not only about spirituality. It affects the body in many different ways, including the senses. All right? Now don't fight me on this one. Just work with me, I'm trying to help you. Now first off take a deep, cleansing breath. (does so)
JIM: He's here for ongoing therapy.
ELDERLY COUPLE: Mm.
BLAIR (eyes closed): Come on. Repeat after me. (inhales) I am...
JIM (closes his eyes; inhales): I am...
BLAIR (exhales): Relaxed.
JIM (exhales; quietly): Relaxed.
BLAIR (opening his eyes slowly): Yeah. Is it working?
JIM (breathes, opens his eyes, meets Blair's, almost whispering): Yeah.
BLAIR (almost whispering): Yeah.

"Yeah."

The serene moment is broken when Blair suddenly shouts "Blah!!" Jim starts, and Blair cracks up giggling. HA. Blair is awesome.

"Blah!"

"Relaxed," Jim finishes, now in a gown in the exam room. Blair isn't there, except in SPIRIT. In Jim's MIND. "I am... relaxed. I am... freezing!" Jim goes to adjust the thermostat, but is stopped when Dr Grant, a pretty redhead, enters. We get a hilarious Montage of Jim Gets A Checkup And Maybe Flirts, The Way You'd Flirt If You Were A Cheerful Muppet. Getting a Checkup. "Your eyes match your dress!" "Ahhhhhhhh!" Finally, about the hernia test: "This is my favorite part!" He gives a great "Yowza" look before he coughs. In the end, she says he's fine except for one thing: his ears are full of wax! "I'm surprised you can hear anything at all!" He's hesitant to let her clean them out, but she says "You don't hear a difference, I'll owe you dinner." NOT ETHICAL. "Easy, easy," he says nervously as she approaches with a cleaning syringe thing. Commercial! WHAT A CLIFFHANGER!

Jim is in bed and, even though he has earplugs in, we hear all these loud noises: a drippy sink, a truck in the street. An annoying, continuous, skitchy-scratchy sound. Cut to a close-up of Blair's pen against his notebook. Jim climbs over the back of the couch in only his boxers and steals Blair's pen. "Do you have to write so damn loud??" He throws down the pen, and the sound makes him
Yoink!

Blair speaks to him in a sweetly quiet and gentle voice: "Jim, you suffered from impacted wax. It's no big deal. So do a lot of other people." Yeah, this is the part Jim needs comforting about at this time. Also: thanks for the PSA. I hope there's an impacted wax hotline to call at the end of this episode.

BLAIR: In your case, your Sentinel hearing compensated and we never knew how powerful it actually was. We're just gonna have to start at the beginning again.
JIM: Oh, that's great, that's really encouraging.
BLAIR: Come on, Jim. It'll be fun. I mean, your hearing is one of your greatest assets. And if you've only been using it at half speed? Think about what you could do.
JIM (clapping throw pillows over his ears): Spend the rest of my life being tortured by dog whistles.

Jim goes back to bed and we cut between scenes of him writhing in inability to sleep and the guys from the beginning in their chopper. One pushes the other one out. Jim runs to the door, buckling his pants. Blair asks what's up, and Jim says he heard screams. He runs outside, jacket in hand, still shirtless. A moment later, Blair catches up with him wearing a scarf and gloves, so it must be pretty cold. Good thing Jim doesn't have super skin sensitivity OR ANYTHING. Jim leads Blair on a quick run to the edge of the bay. He sees a police chopper dropping a body into the bay, but Blair doesn't. I'm not sure how he could miss something like that. "The body was here," he says, indicating the ground. He finds a glove with blood on it. Blair: "Son of a bitch."

Crime scene, next day. Simon calls to Jim, but Jim doesn't turn around. He has in new earplugs. Blair explains, "He hasn't taken his eyes off the recovery operation. He's totally zoned out." Simon goes up to Jim and gets his attention. Jim says he saw a police chopper drop the body, and Simon says it's a heavy accusation--a cop killing another cop--and there's no record of a police chopper in the area. Jim knows what he saw. Victim's wife arrives on the scene, for Pathos.

CPD. Jim is going nuts with the deafening sounds of the office: Simon on the phone, asking his ex for another day with Daryl because it's his birthday (awwwww); high heels clacking; ticking clock; writing, stamping, flirting, stirring. Blair comes up to his desk and wordlessly drops a device in front of him. He bounces on his heels. Jim looks at him. "Well?" asks Blair. "Does it work?" "Yeah, I'm all ready to wax my board and hit the surf," says Jim, which remark I don't understand. Does it look like something...surfer...y? "You're kidding me with this, right? What is this?" Blair tells him to listen, and he does--things are at normal volume! "Yes! It works!" Blair's so excited. I love it. He explains it's a white noise generator, and pops open a little box.
It's a new pair of earplugs, each with a mini white noise generator built in. Aww, Blair went all out! Jim calls them "attractive" (I don't know if he's being sarcastic) and Blair says "Aren't they?" (I don't know if he's being sarcastic).

BLAIR (as Jim puts on the earplugs): Yeah, just put those on in there.
JIM: Nice!
BLAIR (grinning, patting Jim on the shoulder): Uh-huh!
JIM: Not bad. Now I can get some work done. Were you able to contact Marten's wife?
BLAIR: ... You know, a thank you would be nice.
JIM: Thank you. I'll remember to send you a card, okay? Anything?
JIM: Well, keep trying.

Oh, Jim takes his Guide for granted. I really love how excited Blair is in this scene--his enthusiasm about his project, and about making Jim happy, is adorable. And Jim does really appreciate the result, in that, at least, it brings him up to normal from miserable. It's nothing less than he expects, though, because he's used to having the world's most awesome Guide. Well, I'll say it without prompting: thank you, Blair. Thank you for being you.

Time to get down to business, as signified by Blair putting on his glasses. Jim explains that the blood on the glove was O+, the deceased was A, so it's probably the killer's blood, but the DNA typing won't help if they don't have someone to compare it to. What cop would want to kill Marten?

Jim sits across from Simon's desk, playing with what appear to be father and child figurines, while Simon talks on the phone. Hanging up, he tells Jim that Marten's captain will neither confirm nor deny that he was involved in an IA investigation. Jim says they'll have to contact IA themselves.

Simon: "You want me to make that call?" Jim: "No, I can handle it."

Jim goes to see red-headed IA officer Sheila, known to us from 2x03 Deep Water. She can neither confirm nor deny what cases are open, and she's also mad at Jim for not returning the calls she made to apologize to him after he was cleared. She says she can't give Jim access to her files on Marten (NOT THAT SHE NECESSARILY HAS ANY) unless he provides compelling evidence that the cases are related. His claim that he saw a police chopper from half a mile away in the dark? Doesn't count.

Jim watches Marten's team--an elite force calling themselves The Crew, according to Jim--load up their giant guns through a window, as Blair stands on his tippy-toes to peek over his shoulder. The Crew is totally led by Dr Wen from Scrubs. Dr Wen (not his real name) gives his men an
inspirational speech ending with "Let's get out there and do it!" to which the men chant "DO IT! DO IT! DO IT!" Outside the door, Blair looks queasy. (Come on, do it, Blair. You know you want to.) He says they remind him of a warrior tribe that "used to get so pumped up, they'd kill everything on the way to a battle. And on the way home."

Jim decides it's a good time to enter the room, announcing, "Jim Ellison, Major Crimes. This is Blair Sandburg." No explanation, but, midway through the ensuing frigid and uninformative conversation, Dr Wen asks, "What did you say his name was?" "Blair Sandburg," Blair repeats meekly. "He's an aide to the department," Jim explains. Wen preps to go on his bust, calling after Jim as he leads Blair out of the room, "Call me when you find out who killed Marten."

Also, call me when you get copies of those prom pictures.

Jim and Blair try to (undoubtedly illegally) observe and record the bust. Blair has a video camera, but he can't see inside the dark garage. "I can!" says Jim, as if he's just realizing it. But, I mean, if the point is to gather evidence that Sheila will consider admissible, it doesn't matter, right? If the video camera can't get it, it's worthless. But, whatever. Jim peers in and watches some drug dealers loading heroin for a second before the garage door comes down, and the light reflecting off it makes Jim wince. Blair holds his arm while Jim explains that the light "whacked out my senses for a moment." But he can't use hearing, because he needs the white noise generators. Blair wants to try an experiment: "When you take out your white noise generators and see if you can consciously make your hearing piggyback on your sight into the warehouse. See if you can get the two to link up. Let your eyes guide your ears." Jim tries this and it works until the approaching police cars distract him. "All right, we're learning something!" says Blair. Cool. Learning is awesome! Jim wants to leave out his earplugs, but Blair isn't sure "cold turkey" is a good idea.

A limo which Jim saw loaded up with heroin leaves the scene. Jim and Blair follow. At a bridge, a man gets out and dumps a duffel bag over the overpass. A chopper approaches. The sound of the blades overwhelms Jim, and he's so distracted looking for his earplugs (while Blair keeps asking if he's all right) that he doesn't see the police chopper touch down and get the bag. Blair gets it on tape, though, so it doesn't matter.

Jim and Blair show the tape to Sheila. She agrees it's compelling evidence but can't give out information to a non-cop. "Jim, it's all right, man. I got some papers I can grade; I'll catch up with you later."
Hint: Sheila: Jim is going to share everything with him anyway. I mean, seriously. The man has his hand on Jim's breast.

Now he's outta the picture, see, time for some heterosexual innuendo. Sheila asks if we can "do this thing" without "coming to blows," and concludes that it will be possible "as long as you stay on your side of the desk."

Sheila tells Jim there's allegations that the Crew has been skimming drugs and cash from busts. "We just have to prove it," Sheila concludes. "'We'?

"asks Jim, recalling an earlier moment in this very episode. Sheila says she wants to run the cases concurrently. Jim: "And what about Sandburg?"

Is that all you ever think about, Jim? Sheesh. (Oh, I know I love it.) Sheila says he's in. They agree to discuss the details over Thai food.

Cut to home cooking... not Thai food at all, but scrambled eggs, and we all know that that means on this show. Blair comes out of his room, doing up his pants, and is surprised to see Sheila making breakfast. He goes over to Jim, who is putting on shoes on the stairs, and continues messing with his fly and belt while he murmurs sidelong, "You didn't come home last night..." Jim insists nothing happened, they went out then talked, Jim fell asleep on the sofa, Sheila came over early to work on the case. Wait, he fell asleep on which sofa? Because if it was her sofa, and then they both just came over together and he... changed... his shoes? That's one thing, but if it's his sofa, then he did come home last night and what Blair means is that he didn't come to bed. But I guess it's unlikely he would have been too tired or drunk to make it from the sofa to the bed, so it must have been hers.

"You didn't come home last night."

Anyway, Blair's delighted that Sheila will share the information with both Jim and him. She makes a "if you talk I'll kill you" joke. As they sit down to breakfast, Blair leans into Jim's ear and
mutters, "What did you do the real Sheila?" Doesn't Sheila wonder what they're constantly gossiping about that they can't share with the rest of the class?

Probably not the best episode to be whispering sweet nothings into his shell-like, but whatever.

"Thank you for putting this together, this is very nice," says Jim, and it is--scones and bacon and all--but, Jim. The hell. This gets a thanks, but no love for the tiny white noise generators? Come on now.

The big information revealed at breakfast is that the guy Jim saw place the duffel bag--his name is Brooks--is Marten's wife's ex-husband. The trio goes to Marten's wife's cabin the woods to question her, and finds her dead. Jim sends Blair off to search for a town or cell service and call the local authorities. He hears digging in the woods, goes to check it out, and gets a shovel to the head for his trouble. While he's gone, Brooks and Dr Wen pop out and abduct Sheila. Jim wakes up in time to apprehend Brooks, but drops and breaks one of his earplugs in the shuffle. Dr Wen gets away with Sheila in a chopper.

Simon shows up to the cabin. He, Jim, and Blair find a list of names--mostly Crew people, presumably people who were in on the conspiracy--and figure Marten's wife told him about what was going on and got them both killed. Blair says the Crew must have had a "code of silence", which makes sense for a "tightly knit unit": "They're constantly in dangerous situations. They depend on each other to stay alive." Simon asks, "Jim, you been teaching the kid all our secrets?" Yes, teaching him the ways of depending on each other and being tightly knit. I think Blair's been contributing at least as much of that, though. Jim hears a helicopter, and Blair's psyched that he can control his hearing. They do a little excited slappy-hands dance.

While Simon tries desperately to go to his happy place.
"Chief," Jim says warmly, "good job." Yes! Finally some recognition for the Guide.

The chopper is come to take them back to Cascade. They run out and get in. Blair looks a little green, and Jim asks if he's all right. He says yes. What happened between now and The Rig, when he was all "Whooo, look at that ocean" through the chooper window? Oh, right, he remembered he had a fear of heights.

Dr Wen threatens/plans to drop Sheila out of the chopper.

Simon's got a laptop in the chopper and he's looking up one of the names from the list in the cabin, the civilian helicopter pilot. Jim asks for his blood type--it's O+. (Also, he's allergic to penicillin, just like me! Remember that, guys. That's one of the things my doctor doesn't know.) The pilot of this chopper says the polcie choppers all have tracking devices so they're on the right track for finding the rogue, but too far away for visual range. Sounds like a job for the Sentinel! Over the din of the blades, Blair talks into Jim's uncovered ear, gesturing with one arm round his shoulder. He tells Jim to do the piggybacking trick to locate the rogue chopper. The blades, Blair explains, are like white noise--he can cut through it. Jim agrees to try.

Dear show: Stop having great visuals for me to cap and recap, or this review will NEVER END.

Except for a brief moment where Jim gets fixated on his watch, it works, and he directs the pilot to the chopper. "How did you see that?" "Uh, he eats a lot of carrots," offers Blair. There is a chopper chase which I don't think I could recap if I tried. It's just a chase over the water, and Jim can hear the people in the other chopper so there's this constant narration of "Faster!" "Easy, easy!" "I got it!" At one point, Jim asks Blair if he's okay again. That's all I got. Just as Dr Wen is about to drop Sheila, Jim gets a clear line of sight and shoots him in the back. Sheila then takes his gun and tells the pilot to land at gunpoint. In the Good Guy Chopper, the good guys all laugh with relief and delight. Jim says "I hate carrots."

All this, and 30SwB too? Jim and Blair lean on opposite sides of the doorway to Simon's office (NB: the doorway to Simon's office is not that wide) and Jim explains the crooked cops' scam to Blair. They make adorable unison gestures. Simon leads the boys out into the hall, where he asks if Jim and Sheila are doing a little "internal investigating." EWWWWW. Sheila comes up, trailing a tall, silent man, thanks Jim for saving her life, and hugs him. Simon is about to hand over a $1 bill to Blair when Sheila introduces her companion as her fiance, and Simon takes his dollar back. "You just cost me a buck," Blair tells the fiance. He looks at Simon. "I need those for books, you know." Blair, did you ever know that you're my hero?
Bottom Line: *Blind Man's Bluff* was good. Why not make an episode about Jim's, oh, hearing? And instead of losing it, it's too good? Sounds good to me! For sheer volume of tiny J/B moments, this is the best episode so far that doesn't take Jim and Blair's relationship as a fundamental aspect of its main premise. (I'm counting BMB in that group since Jim got his vision back only when prompted by Blair's accident.) Not every episode can be *about* Jim and Blair's deep and abiding love, but this is a prime example of how to make an episode that isn't: fill it with sense issues, Guiding, random touches, and various shots of both main characters zipping up their pants.
2x14 Light My Fire

Chapter Summary

The Lost Recap

Okay. Summer 2007. I was blasting through seasons 2 and 3 at the rate of about one recap a day and I was getting a little bored and silly, and so I decided to do one recap as an epic poem in the style of Venus and Adonis (?? why?? it seemed like a good idea at the time). I got maybe ten minutes into the episode when I lost my drive to spend so much time on an episode which, quite frankly, sucked. Since the episode didn't contain any important Jim/Blair milestones, I never found it necessary to go back and do a traditional recap of it, either.

Cleaning out my gmail drafts I found the recap in progress. Here's as far as I got, in case you're interested.

Even as this guard with purple-colored suit
Shines his torch as if in search of clues,
Rose-hued jars of liquid stand off his route,
An unseen hand alights the waxy fuse.
Quick-burning fire makes the jars explode.
This building's so not up to fire code.

Jim and Blair drive round in search of food.
Blair knows a place that's great, but knows not where.
Jim rolls his eyes and starts to cop a 'tude,
Then gets a whiff of smoke upon the air.
It's hero time! Jim makes an evil turn.
They reach the warehouse quick and feel the burn!

Outside the blaze Jim hears a beating heart
Worse luck, it isn't Blair, it's just the guard.
Jim walks inside, which doesn't seem that smart
But for Jim, to walk through flame is not that hard.
The jars explode against Jim's back a lot.
I guess this kind of fire isn't hot.

Jim fireman's-lifts the guard away from harm;
Blair runs to help him heft the victim's weight.
Next day, the fire chief is oozing charm
And Deb the arson cop is oozing hate.
Jim says, "She's cute, in a pit bull sort of way."
You see, I told you, guys, he isn't gay.

The station. Blair asks sweetly if Jim's hurt.
The flame doth burn his lungs; he must remove.
Inspector Deb shows up to dish the dirt:
The arson is for sure, the fraud they've got to prove.
The blaze was super hot, five thou degrees.
Which Jim just sauntered through with greatest ease!

To Gershwin's Furniture, them Simon sends,
To find the guy who owns the fire site.
There Blair and Jim do chat him up like friends,
Till Deb jumps in, accusing him outright.
Well, Gershwin takes offense, and throws them out,
And Jim and Blair are all, Nice going, lout.

(A quick aside: this guy remembered Jim;
He met him and his wife two years ago.
Jim tells him Caro's fine since divorcing him,
And moving off to lovely San Francisco.
So recently he enjoyed the married state?!
Sure didn't take him long to stop being--someone who doesn't have a roommate.)

Outside the shop they bump into Deb's dad.
A former fireman, and not a grouch--
Unlike his kid, his manners are not bad.
Deb sends him off to buy his stupid couch.
Jim says, "Happy shopping." Dude, no lie.
Okay, okay, but he still might just be bi.

...And that's all she wrote. I also have some notes on lines from "Venus and Adonis" I wanted to mimic:

The heat I have from thence doth little harm,
Thine eye darts forth the fire that burneth me;
(Stuff about fire. Fine.)

Though neither eyes nor ears, to hear nor see,
Yet should I be in love by touching thee.
(Stuff about senses. Fine.)

Love is a spirit all compact of fire,
Not gross to sink, but light, and will aspire.
(More about fire)

Or, like a nymph, with long dishevell'd hair,
(Stuff about Blair, OMG)

Her two blue windows faintly she up-heaveth,
(Blair TOTALLY has blue windows and he is ALWAYS upheavething them TO JIM)

For on the grass she lies as she were slain,
Till his breath breatheth life in her again.
(I think this is the point at which I realized I was doing the wrooooooong episode.)
Chapter Summary

Jim captured.

Middle of the night. Jim comes downstairs and watches part of a news report that's playing on TV about Ben Chavez, a DEA agent who has gone missing. Blair comes in with a Cree fishing spear—they're preparing for another one of their little outdoorsy vacations. Blair says "traditional methods are more satisfying," making a crazed violence-against-the-fishes face. Easy there, tiger. Jim teases him a bit, then rubs his (own) arm. He pulled a muscle and none of the pain medications he's tried have worked. Haven't we been over this? Dialing it down? Blair flips a bit. "Why didn't you tell me? This is exactly the kind of thing I need to know!" He worries that novocaine and anaesthetic might not work on Jim—what if he ever needs surgery? Jim: "Don't you think you're overreacting a little?" Blair: "No, I don't think I'm overreacting. We've got to do some research. We need to prepare for stuff like this!" I think this is sweet, because it's clearly not about the research—it's about taking care of Jim, looking out for him—his future, his times of need. Jim as usual is not appreciative. "If you want to do pain research, you experiment on yourself, all right?" No, Jim, that wouldn't—that's not—Blair isn't—sigh.

They're interrupted by a phone call from one of Jim's old army buddies, Sam. Sam's desperate to meet Jim right away, saying, "It's about the colonel." Worried that his friend is in trouble, Jim agrees to meet him. Blair: "Just remember, 3 AM, you and I, we're on the road, man."

Jim meets Sam at a garage somewhere and Sam's about to tell him some important secret when the gunshots start. Ambush! Jim is tranq'd, and Sam is pushed off the top level of the garage in his car, crash-landing fatally on the street.

Simon and Taggart are finishing up a marathon work session when Simon's work phone rings. He groans, and groans again when Sandburg starts chattering a mile a minute on the other end. Jim hasn't come back, and he's worried. Simon: "Did it ever occur to you that Jim might just be knocking back a few and reminiscing with an old army buddy? I mean, he doesn't have to report in to you."

Ooh, cold. Blair insists that Jim wouldn't just disappear on him like that. While they're talking, the door opens, and Blair expects it to be Jim, but it's a couple of guys in suits who raise their guns at him. Blair drops the phone, ducks out of the way of the shots, and runs into his room. Simon and Taggart hear the "fwoop!" of silenced shots over the phone.

Blair makes it to the street and tries to use a pay phone, but it's busted. He sees the bad guys' van, and he ducks into what must be an all-night bakery. As the car passes, he lifts his little head over the curtain and peers out. Poor Blair.

He sees a bus across the street, and runs over, just catching it. The driver gives him a hard time—he's kind of a wise guy, and says things like "Feed the kitty or hit the bricks." (He refrains, however, from adding "Out you go, pixie, 'rough the door or out the window!") To be fair, Blair does come off black-helicopters-paranoid, begging to use the radio equipment because he's being followed. Finally Blair gives up and just pays the fare (with a wrinkled, undoubtedly sweaty bill he pulls out of his waistband like a jogger or stripper). He stands in the aisle and calls out, "Hey, does anybody have a cell phone? I will trade this handmade Bantu bracelet for two minutes on somebody's cell phone!"
The driver yells at him to sit down, then quietly calls the police: "I have a disruptive passenger. Possible substance abuse."

Simon and Taggart check out the loft. It's trashed, and no sign of Blair or Jim.

Blair sees the bad guys board the bus and sit down near him. He's frightened, but at the same stop, a police officer boards. The driver points out Blair. Blair is happy to be arrested, and he mouths off to the officer. (I kind of love this suspense-thriller gimmick--it takes a bit of thinking outside the box to realize you don't not want to get arrested.) Blair also tells the police to "arrest those guys in black suits too," but when he looks back, they're gone, and he looks crazier than ever. So... were they just figments of his imagination? I guess they could have quietly gotten off, since the bus was stopped, and it was pretty clear they weren't going to get their hands on Blair while he was in police custody. It would be cool if this was the episode where Blair finally succumbed to madness, though.

Behind bars, Blair gives a little smile to the criminal standing next to him.

Make new friends, but keep the old.

Simon arrives to sign him out, clearly irritated with Sandburg's antics. Taggart comes in and reports that Jim's truck was found in a parking garage near a smashed sedan with a body inside. Simon gets a dead serious look and asks quietly, "Jim?" Taggart says no. We didn't see a oh-no-Jim-might-be-dead Blair reaction shot, but he gets a little sigh of relief now. Simon says "Thank God." Blair pretty immediately goes from relieved to annoyed/concerned/confused: "That's great, but if it's not Jim, where the hell is he?"

In a cage, that's where. Cut to Jim lying, tied to a fallen chair, on the concrete floor of a basement or something, with a dirty-faced woman peering at him through chain-link fence. Jim asks who she is, how she got here, how long she's been here, who the bad guys are, and what they want. She says her name is Tanya.

At the station, Blair bemoans his fate ("I'm supposed to be fishing this weekend and instead I've been shot at, I've been on the skid row express all night long, and then thrown in jail!"). Taggart comes in to report that the body in the car had a tattoo, but that's all they have to go on for ID. Blair begs Simon to let him work on the case: "I know I'm not a cop, but Jim and I -- we're a pretty good team." Doesn't Blair work on every one of Jim's cases by default, despite not being a cop? And doesn't Simon know this? You would think his helping to find Jim would be default, especially considering Simon's established pro-personal-interest stance on police work. But no, Simon refuses, telling Blair he's going to be a protected witness, and he's got to go back home and let Taggart bodyguard him.

This is as good a place as any, I think, to place my rant about this episode in general, which is
that I think it would have worked better earlier in the chronology. All of these character and relationship battles (Blair's relationship with Simon, and with Danger) have been fought many times over before. Simon has already consented to let Blair do an awful lot, including multiple undercover missions, and on top of that he's told Naomi that he considers Blair "part of the team." Why draw the line at letting him help here, when his life and Jim's are at stake? Sure, it's a little unusual to be working with just Blair and not Jim-and-Blair, but we've seen snatches of it happening before--Blair following orders direct from Simon, or doing research with Simon and Taggart while Jim is off doing something else. It's also odd, at this point, that Blair is as freaked out as he is about being shot at, etc.-he's had a difficult night, to be sure, but he's been in equal danger on many prior occasions. If I were him I would be more worried about Jim. He's either dead or trapped without access to the outside world somewhere, Guideless.

Anyway, at the apartment, Blair and Taggart find Jim's army ranger unit's yearbook photo or whatever, and one of the guys' tattoos matches the one on the body.

I've said it before and I'll say it again: Jim can't pull off hats.

Blair calls Simon who tells him they've already ID'd the dead guy from his prints, and he's Sam Holland, an employee of Graf Technologies. I don't know why Simon's freely divulging info to Blair; maybe it's reflex. He lets Blair go when he's interrupted by an FBI agent who wants Holland's body, saying it's evidence in a matter of national security, so Simon and his petty concerns about his missing officer can suck on it (I may have paraphrased). Blair calls back, one step behind as usual, to float his theory that Holland must have been involved in covert ops somehow.

Since we're in classified, "cloak and dagger" territory now, Blair decides to call up his old friend Jack Kelso, whom Joel identifies as "the CIA whistleblower in the Brackett case." Man, Joel's involvement in that case gets him a lot of mileage. A bit later, Blair is feeding Taggart lunch (what a sweet protected witness he makes) when Kelso calls back with some info too sensitive to discuss over the phone. Blair nervously agrees to meet him on campus. Luckily, Taggart chooses that moment to get indigestion and head for the bathroom, and Blair grabs his coat and escapes. I suspect there was more than ostrich in that chili.

On some quad, Blair and Kelso are watched from afar by badguys. Kelso explains to Blair that Graf Technologies is a CIA front and the boss, Colonel Normal Oliver, was Jim's unit's contact for the Peru mission which ended up so disastrously. Jim apparently placed the blame on Oliver. We also learn that Oliver was an excellent sniper. Cut to a bad guy (not Oliver) lifting his gun. When the shooting starts, Blair pushes Kelso out of his wheelchair and behind a wall, but he's a little late--when he turns Kelso's body, his face is streaked with blood. Blair calls for an ambulance. Not with his phone, he just calls.

Hospital. Blair and Taggart watch Kelso sleep through a window into his room. Simon comes
up and exposits that Kelso will be okay, but Blair is in trouble. Blair objects, "I was worried about Jim!", and starts to fill in Simon when some CIA guys come up intending to take custody of Kelso. Simon stands up to them, saying he'll need to see a federal order, which they don't have. Grumbling, they leave. Simon thinks Blair is onto something.

In the doggie cage, Jim scoots over to the chainlink gate separating him and Tanya and asks her to try to loose his bonds. He's got on one of those unbreakable twist-tie things, and she says it needs to be cut. The player checks the inventory, but there is nothing there, and then hovers the mouse around until it lights up on a nearby red lightbulb. "If only I could break the housing on that light," says Jim. Ah! Hint! (The player clicks on the light and then on the gate lock. "I can't use those two things together.") Jim uses his supersense-related combination-hearing skills to unlock the gate, bringing Tanya into his cell. He dreams up a plan whereby Tanya gets on his shoulders, but Tanya, the more practical of the two, demurs. She takes off Jim's belt, assuring him, "It's not what you think," and uses it as a whip. Then she uses a shard to cut Jim's bonds. Puzzle 1, solved!

While all this is going on, Tanya finally decides to tell Jim who she is and what's going on. She says she's a secretary for Graf Technologies and that all this started when Sam Holland caught Colonel Oliver with a classified file on DEA agent Ben Chavez, and two days later Chavez's cover was broken and now he's on the run.

Blair and Simon go to Kelso's office to try and find the info that he was going to give to Blair. When they get to his computer, the files are slowly disappearing from some elaborate GUI representation. "Someone must be sucking them out by modem!" Blair cries. I love 1997. Blair unplugs the modem and tries to copy the remaining files onto a disk, but they start disappearing again--Blair calls this a virus. They get some of it, but they'll need a "monster anti-virus program"!

Driving back, Simon is snappy with Blair, and Blair pretends to endorse a paranoid CIA assassination theory to annoy him. Their rapport is kind of fun. Simon notices they have a tail, and Blair looks back and IDs the guy as one of his pursuers. Simon calls for backup and they lure the guy into a trap. Simon gets out, telling Blair to stay down, and holds his gun on the guy: "Cascade PD! Freeze!" The bad guy shoots in Blair's general direction. Simon shoots him dead, looks badass-ly over his gun, then turns to ask Blair if he's all right. Simon is the new Jim.

A guard comes into Jim and Tanya's cell area with a tray of food, and Jim surprise attacks him. Tanya leads Jim out into the hall, and while Jim's working the next combo lock, she karate chops him and pulls a gun on him. Double crossed! "Get up," she says. As Jim obeys, she secretly palms a nail.

Tanya and two bad guys chain Jim up to some pipes. He repeatedly makes quips along the lines of, "And we were just getting along so well," to all of them, regardless of whether he's seen them before or not. They don't seem that interested in interrogating him at the moment and leave. Jim tries to pick the lock of his handcuffs with his nail.

At the station computer lab, Serena says she'll do her best with the disk, but warns that the information is pretty trashed and could be useless. Simon flips out, saying the disk is the only lead and failure is not an option. Blair gives a "I don't like it when Daddy yells" face. Simon storms out, and Blair tries to smooth things over, telling Serena, "We're counting on your legendary expertise." Blair's a sweetie.

Out in the hall, Blair and Simon commiserate about the lack of leads. They agree guy who shot at Blair was a kamikaze. Blair taps Simon on the arm, and Simon snaps, "WHAT?" Blair: "Simon, I didn't say anything before, but... you don't think..." Simon, gently: "You're wondering if Jim is already dead." Blair swallows and nods. Simon thinks if they wanted Jim dead, they'd have killed...
him in the garage. Blair sighs and generally looks verklempt and Simon pats him on the back.

Blair contemplating Jim's death.

In the bullpen, Taggart has an ID on the dead shooter, and a map found in his possessions. It's marked: "Olympia 3300," "Chavez 714," "Federal Building." Blair recalls Ben Chavez. Simon tells Taggart to do more research and says "Sandburg, you're with me." Yes! Blair is On the Team!

Federal building. Simon tries to meet with Agent Cameron, the guy who called for Holland's body, but when he bursts by the secretary to find Cameron, it's not the same guy. Anyone who called "not a real FBI agent" way back in act 1 can collect their prizes now. At the station, Serena has managed to recover a file with a photo and dossier on Colonel Oliver--Simon IDs him as the man he thought was Agent Cameron. Simon and Blair thank Serena for her hard work. Just then, Simon gets a call that Kelso has regained consciousness.

In a rare bit of realism, Jim's not making much progress with his lockpicking. He hides the nails as Tanya re-enters and they exchange thin banter for a bit before Colonel Oliver comes in, putting his arms all over Tanya because of course they're together. Except Oliver has more chemistry with Jim:

OLIVER: Hello, Jim. What's it been, seven years? Given the situation, you look pretty good.

He does!

JIM: I knew you would eventually show up, Colonel.
OLIVER: Nice to know I never left your thoughts.

Jim asks what all this is about, and Oliver says, "Ben Chavez."
Aaand we're back at the hospital. Kelso tells Simon and Blair that Chavez ratted out a group of rogue CIA agents working for some cartel, and they ordered him killed. They figure Oliver must be one of the rogues, and Chavez is coming in tonight at 7:14 or on flight 714. Kelso reminds them Oliver is an expert sniper: "Sounds like a classic assassination scenario to me." Kelso's still raspy and hooked up to machines but you can tell he loves this.

Oliver tells Jim his evil plan is to frame Jim for Chavez's murder and sticks him with a hypodermic needle as Jim grits it-will-never-work-isms. (Of course it won't! What they need to do is train Jim to kill every time he sees the queen of hearts or something.) Considerately, just in case we forgot the beginning of this episode because two weeks elapsed between the time we watched the beginning and the end, as it did for me, we get a remindy Blair voiceover: "I mean, if pain relievers don't work, what about novocaine at the dentist? Or, for crying out loud, you're having surgery -- what about anesthetics?" Jim slumps down, or pretends to.

Chavez's motorcade sets off from the airport. Meanwhile Oliver and his team push Jim down a hallway in a wheelchair. Meanwhile Blair, in Simon's car, gets a call from Taggart explaining the building meant by "Olympia 3300." They figure the sniper will be waiting on the building. Simon radios for backup and puts the red light on his dash: "To hell with the Feds!" "Yeah-hah," Blair laughs.

A man brings a supposedly-unconscious Jim up to the roof. Jim uses his nail in the least expected way: he drops it to distract the guard and, while the guard is looking down, Jim attacks him with his bare hands. Up on the roof, Oliver is preparing to shoot when Jim arrives with his latest victim's gun. There's a moment of doubt where his sight unfocuses, but then Jim delivers a speech ("I always wondered why I survived the jungle. Now I know," which seems to give Oliver more importance than he deserves, and all of Jim's other conquests--Blair included--less) and uses his supersense-related aiming skills to shoot him off the building. The bodie lands on Tanya and the other bad guy's car and they start to drive away, but Jim shoots the tire. Blair and Simon show up; Simon pulls Tanya out of the car and demands to know where Jim is. "Simon!" Blair calls. Simon looks up to where Blair is looking, and sees the tiny silhouette of Jim outlined against the sky. Cut to Jim who is looking down grimly at them. He raises a "just a moment" finger even though they can't possibly see. That's it? That's our reunion?

Wrap-up in the bullpen. Jim is sitting at his desk reading, and Blair is sitting on top of the desk with his hair down and his butt about six inches from Jim's magazine. Simon's cheerful because he finally got a good night's sleep. Taggart comes by and to tell Jim he's wanted for more statements, which Jim bitches about. Yeah, I'm sure it's a lot less important than that magazine you're reading, buddy. Taggart: "They love you over there." Jim: "It's nice to be loved." He would know. Taggart says Jim he should have seen Blair and Simon working together: "They really make a great team." Simon and Blair glance at each other. "Does this mean I should be looking for a new partner?" Jim asks. Immediately Blair and Simon both cry, "No!" Blair and Simon start bickering and Jim slips out to make "statements. Lotsa statements."
No! Hell no! We don't swing that way!

**Line of the Episode:** Blair to Simon, after Simon yells at Serena: "Whoo hoo Captain, you really know how to massage your staff!"

**Bottom Line:** Even though Jim and Blair are apart for pretty much all of this episode, it wasn't as bad as it could have been. As far as apart-ness goes, there's a difference between "wrenched apart by cruel fate, trying to make it back to each other" and "just doing different things," with the former being superior in that it allows for plenty of separation anxiety, longing, what-if-he's-dead angst, etc. That said, there wasn't *that* much of that in this episode (just snatches here and there), but the interaction between Blair and Simon was very good, and I enjoyed the sort of *39 Steps*-ode escape sequence in the first act. Accepting that Jim/Blair togetherness is not an option, I guess my only request is that I would have liked to see Jim being tortured in more psychologically complex ways.

And, I'll reiterate my previous complaint, that I think this episode retreaded some of the same ground as previous episodes, and backtracked to before some of the milestones that we've passed. I suppose it's a failing of this show in general that what seems to be major character/relationship development often ends up having not much of an impact on future episodes.
Chapter Summary

Blair trapped in an elevator.

Blair comes out of an antique shop into the 40th floor lobby of a highrise building and waits for the elevator. Waiting with him are a woman in a nice jacket, a tall guy with dreads and a flannel coat, and an impatient businessman with a briefcase. Oh, no! People from all walks of life! This elevator's fucked! A model runs in at the last moment, dropping her head shots everywhere. Blair helps her pick them up while the impatient businessman, in surprising move, holds the door. Oh, no! Dramatic irony! We're so boned! Blair, wait! Blair! BLAIR TROUBLE SANDBURG, I FORBID YOU TO SET FOOT IN ANY SOON-TO-BE-CUT-OFF-FROM-THE-REST-OF-THE-WORLD ENCLOSED SPACE WITHOUT JIM!

BLAIR!

Oh, well. I wonder if Blair will have puppies on the elevator.

At the police station, Simon asks Jim out to lunch, but Jim turns him down because he has a date with Blair. (Well, he does.) Blair's late, though. Jim tries to call his cell, but he doesn't answer (why not, I wonder?). Jim changes his mind and says he'll just go with Simon and Blair can catch up with them.

On the elevator, Blair mutters some incoherent nonsense, and the businessman gets out, leaving behind his briefcase. The elevator stops and hovers between the 30th and 31st floors.

Just as Jim and Simon are getting ready to go, Taggart brings the news that there's a call from a guy calling himself Galileo and making an extortion attempt. Simon starts a trace (save your breath, Banks, it never works) and talks to Galileo, who informs him that he has hostages in the elevator at Wilkinson Tower. Jim scribbles on a pad and then holds it up: "SANDBURG IS THERE!" (This has to be a psychic premonition, because later, on the phone, Blair will tell him that he was in the building getting something appraised for the university, unnecessary exposition if Jim knows his schedule by heart.) Galileo says he wants $5 million wired to his bank account within the hour, and to show he means business, he drops the elevator five floors. All this for five measly million?

Whooooo! Blam. Passengers hit the floor. Sitting on the ground, Blair asks if everyone is all right, then pulls out his cell phone. He gets reception in the elevator? His call is, of course, to Jim, and he's all Captain Scott stoic: "Doesn't look like I'm going to make it to lunch."
Jim fills him in on the situation. "Well, that's, uh," says Blair, calmly, "that's interesting. I assume that, ah, (tremor enters his voice) you're on top of this. I mean, you're on top of this, right Jim?" Jim tells him to sit tight. "Jim!" Blair calls into the phone, but it's too late. He closes the phone and smiles pleasantly out at the other passengers.

Simon, Jim and Taggart arrive at Wilkinson Tower. We learn that it's Taggart's day off but he wants to help Sandburg. That's sweet. As they enter the lobby, Jim laments, "I can't believe Sandburg's in the middle of this. Before he started tagging around with me, the worst that could happen to him at the university was a paper cut." That's kind of sweet, too, but Jim, for once, you had nothing to do with the danger Blair's in. He was on an errand for school. His role in this is purely innocent civilian victim. Now, get out there and make up for all the times you have put his life in jeopardy by throwing yourself passionately into the rescue operation, okay, big guy? I think we understand each other.

Security suite. Presumably, they took the stairs. Galileo calls up and explains that, until/unless his money is wired, he'll drop the elevator five floors every ten minutes and then the remaining 15 floors at 1:00 (it's 12:16 now). Is this episode going to be in realtime? Simon asks how he expects them to get the money, and Galileo suggests they go to the owner of Wilkinson Towers, whose name is... wait for it... Wilkinson.

The good news is that one of the trapped party is Caitlin Wilkinson, the daughter of the building owner. The bad news is that Mr. Wilkinson is notorious for not negotiating with terrorists. He must be pretty damn rich to have had the opportunity to craft such a reputation. And all this guys wants is five million? I'm sure there are other ways to get it if they really can't go to Wilkinson. Besides, can't they just give the guy the money so he'll let the prisoners go, then, you know. Find and arrest him? When it's safe? The security chief tells a story about how Wilkinson didn't even pay up to save his own life one time, and Jim says, grimly, "His neck's not on the block-- we got an elevator car full of innocent people, including my partner." Yeah, Jim, I'm sure it's your feelings for Blair that are going to get him to pay up in the end. Priceless.

Wilkinson shows up to the security suite and confirms that he doesn't submit to extortion attempts, even when he hears about his daughter. He gives a little speech with some poker metaphor ("Do you think I built this tower by folding every time somebody called my hand?") and then leaves. Simon says, "That guy has some set of stones." Jim: "Yeah. Only stones are like elevators -- you drop them, and they fall." I... I. Huh? I mean, I guess that's true enough of actual stones, but Simon was clearly talking about testicles. TESTICLES, JIM. And, I mean, I guess testicles drop? But I still don't think the metaphor works. Sorry, Jim, but thanks for playing.

Jim briefly briefs Blair on the phone and then comes onto the loudspeaker in the elevator with a
soothing message for the hostages. Doesn't help much; the natives are restless. Caitlin explains to the group that she doesn't have a good relationship with her father because she married someone he didn't like.

Galileo phones back up and Simon lies that they haven't yet gotten in touch with Wilkinson, but Galileo says that's strange considering he's standing right next to you wearing (list of all the things he's wearing). Galileo's tapped into the building security! That means he must be on th premises. They put tape over the cameras and shut off the microphones so they can talk in private. Jim sums up Galileo's profile (good with electronics, etc.) and Wilkinson asserts he won't murder four people because he's "not a closer." As if in answer, Galileo phones, informs them their first ten-minute deadline is up, and drops the car five floors. The passengers go screaming and crashing to the ground, AGAIN!

Jim immediately yanks the microphone and demands, "Blair, are you okay?--Sandburg, can you hear me?!" The best thing about this episode is the outtake where Jim/Richard says "Blair, honey, are you okay? I don't care about the rest of those people, I hope they all die. Crushed like little ants or whatever they do. Are you okay?" It's funny because it's so, so true.

In the elevator, Blair eventually calls out, "Yeah, I'm all right." Meanwhile, Katie moans, "My ankle!", from beneath the dogpile. Blair stands up and yells at Wilkinson to do something, if he has "one ounce of human compassion or feeling." Oh, sweetie. He also yells at the madman, "Come on, quit messing around! Come on, this isn't funny any more!" Long pause, then he adds, "You broke her ankle!", with strangely excellent comedic timing.

Jim tells Wilkinson in his coolest, grittiest, Clint Eastwoodiest voice that they're going to try and get those people out, and he better come up with the money. He storms out, and Wilkinson bitches, "What's his problem?" What do you mean what is his problem! He is a cop trying to rescue innocent people! Simon tells Wilkinson that Jim's problem is that "that's his friend in there, and if you cared half as much about your daughter, maybe this whole thing would be over." I have several reactions to this. (1) Half as much as infinity is still infinity, and that's IMPOSSIBLE. (2) Why is a personal interest in one of the party the only legitimate reason for saving hostages? (3) I can't believe the elevator episode turned into a LOVE CONTEST episode. I can, however, believe that Team Partners (Go Jags!) is KICKING ASS.

Jim comes up with a rescue plan. Details not important.

"Yeah, so how come we gotta pay the price?" asks Dreads Guy. "I got a wife and four kids!" Nice Suit Woman concurs, "Yeah, and I have a twelve year old daughter!" Blair, silently: I have a
love I have a love, it's all I have / I love him; I'm his / And everything he is / I am, too! Caitlin says the man she married was fired by her father, and now they're broke. Is the twist that the killer is her husband? Because that's stupid. If she's in on this, it's double stupid, because she so wouldn't be dropping hints like this. Caitlin says she's in real trouble now, because she's pregnant. Like a jackass, Blair yells "YOU HEAR THAT? SHE'S PREGNANT!" Pause. "You're a GRANDFATHER." Simon puts more pressure on Wilkinson to cave. Aren't there more productive things the police could be doing?

Yes. Jim is riding up to the halted car on top of another car (not in it; that would be too easy). He calls Blair to let him know they'll be doing some work on the car, trying to weld it to the line so it can't drop. The other passengers are staring at Blair as he hangs up. He just shrugs. I understand that he knows or suspects that the Galileo can hear what he says, but it's still kind of unfair of him to have extra information, especially when the other passengers start getting nervous, hearing noises above the car. Jim calls Blair and tells him to make some noise to mask the sound. Next thing we know Blair is leading his fellow-passengers in a rousing Macarena. Unclear how he got them to do that.

Takes ya back, doesn't it?

Galileo figures out anyway that a rescue attempt is in the works and tells Simon to have the rescuers check the roof of the car. Jim finds C4. Galileo has Simon order Blair to open the briefcase he left behind—it's a time bomb display, ticking down from 20 minutes. Blair clutches his head in dismay. Galileo makes lame pun about "the gravity of the situation." On top of the car, Jim and his pretty blue eyes know what's coming, and he mutters, "Oh, God." Fwoom! Car go down. Jim hurtles down with them, with ridiculous special effects. Car stops, and they're all moaning and writhing inside, but Jim is FINE.

Instead of climbing down to give Blair a hug or something, which is what I would have done, Jim climbs onto another elevator and rides down to the next floor, where he joins Simon. They're discussing their options when Jim hears someone using a power tool on an upper floor. He tells security to cut power, and they do; in the elevator, it goes dark, and the hostages freak out. Jim heads for the stairwell. Blair checks his watch and tells everyone to brace themselves for the next drop—but it never comes. Dreads Guy is excited that cutting the power affected the brakes, and thinks they therefore might get out of this. But, as Blair points out, there's still, you know. A BOMB.

Jim, running up endless stairs, pauses to radio Simon, "I don't like this." Nobody likes running up stairs, Jim. But he means Galileo. Jim thinks he has something else up his sleeve or something.

Simon is giving Wilkinson parenting advice (Wilk: "She never listens to me!") Simon, through his teeth: "Maybe she needs you to listen to her.") when Taggart comes in with an ID from some prints Henri found earlier and I forgot to recap. Galileo is, of course, Caitlin's husband. Simon asks
how they can "get to" Galileo, and Wilkinson suggests through his little brother, who still works in the building.

Galileo and his little brother, who has shown up at some point to do some accomplice, have an expository conversation written by middle-schoolers, the upshot of which is that the elevator jacking was just a ruse to get them to cut the power so that the alarm system would be disabled so that they could hit up the vault. There's a vault? Galileo still plans to kill the hostages, though, including Caitlin. Little Brother: "She's your wife!" Galileo: "You should have thought of that before you two did the deed." THE. DEED. So Caitlin isn't carrying an Evil!Baby, just an Evil'sLittleBrother!Baby. Galileo shoots brother.

Jim hears the scream and continues running up the stairs. Simon radios him the info about the suspect. In the elevator, Blair describes the bomb to Taggart on the phone. Simon takes the phone and tells him the suspect is Caitlin's husband. "Wh-what do you want me to do?" Blair asks. Simon tells him to pump Caitlin for info. In ship news, Nice Jacket Woman is clinging fearfully to Dreads Man. Blair stares at Caitlin in the torchlight for a moment, and she looks creeped out. Then Blair asks, "When is he going to let you off?" Caitlin denies her husband's involvement at first, then caves and says he promised he would shut off the bomb. The other passengers are like, The hell, Caitlin. Blair gets a call from Wilkinson, and hands it off to Caitlin. There's a father-daughter mutual apology, until Blair awesomely says, "Yeah, yeah, this is all great, Caitlin, but we don't have time for this. Where is he?!" Caitlin says he's in "the exchange." Apparently the vault is part of the 37th floor bullion exchange. Of course. Simon radios Jim the info.

In the elevator, the bomb counts down from 4:00. Blair starts using the workman's tools to pull up the carpet. The floor's metal. He asks for a blowtorch. The workman has one, because, sure. Blair wants to cut a hole in the floor and drop the bomb, "boom!" He's seriously insane in this scene. Dreads Workman starts work on the floor, but Blair snatches the blowtorch, "Here, let me have that. Two summers at a sheet metal plant -- fastest torch in my crew." Of course. He sends an unnerving, darting look at the workman. "Nothing personal." If I were on that elevator I'd add "anthropology student killing spree" to the list of things to be worried about.

Alternating shots of Blair torching and Jim reaching the roof, strapping himself to a cable, scaling down the side of the building, and kicking through the plate glass window into the exchange. Finding the bad guy, he quips, "My history's a little rusty, but wasn't Galileo known for, uh, dropping the ball?" Again with the dropping balls. Hand to hand; Galileo ends up holding a gun to Jim and quipping, "There's more than one way to get a divorce!", while holding out a detonator. Luckily, Little Brother wakes up from being dead long enough to shoot Galileo in the leg. Jim and Galileo struggle for the detonator, and Galileo pushes the button just as the bomb is falling through.

**Did I ever tell you about the Fire People?**

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the shaft. Jim: OH NO MY GUPPY!!! Of course Blair's fine--we cut to the elevator people cheering for him as they pointedly fail to die--but Jim doesn't know that. He tells Galileo he's going to drop him off the building, and there is no evidence that he doesn't, in fact, do this.

Firemen gets the hostages out. Blair is the last to be pulled out, by Taggart. He tells Caitlin to take care of herself and her baby, and gives her a random Meaningful Look. He and Jim walk off toward the exit together bantering slightly about Blair's good-luck charm needing reappraisal. "Only this time..." "Take the stairs," Blair finishes his sentence.

Reunited!

Bottom Line: Don't put Blair in a box. Just don't. On the plus side, this may be the only episode in television history to feature a pregnant woman trapped on an elevator who doesn't give birth.
Okay, here's the deal. Some Russian girl Katrina is having a birthday party when the restaurant gets shot up. They're involved somehow—they know all the major players—but when Jim and Blair question them later, they pretend to be clueless. Blair thinks they have to "break down some barriers." I guess Jim's hottness does okay at that, as Katrina's sister Micki gives Jim her card. Jim finds a bracelet which makes his fingers tingle—radioactive.

Jim and Blair go to Micki's newspaper, which is called the "Rumor" (or rather, some Russian word which translates to "rumor" according to Blair), where she is apparently the only staff member, and she and Blair alternately speechify about secrets, rumors, shadow governments, KGB, police, trying to help, etc. She eventually relents and gives them the address of the bracelet owner, Katrina's friend Sergei Tomsk.

The scene at Tomsk's apartment is kind of cute. Blair does his usual Guide thing to help Jim find which apartment is Sergei's by feeling for radiation heat on the mailboxes. The apartment door is unlocked, and Sergei is blasting music which makes Jim wince and Blair nod his head along cutely. They wander into Sergei's bedroom, where he and Katrina are naked under blankets making out and completely oblivious to the two strangers who just stroll by the bed until Jim turns off the music. After some informal introductions, Jim tells them to get dressed because they need to go to the hospital—they're in danger because radioactive. So Katrina gets up, pulling all the sheets around her, and revealing Sergei's naked—oh, wait, he's wearing boxers. Huh. Blair, who never made the slightest pretense of turning away, gazes steadily at Sergei and asks about his awesome music.

Sergei's excited to meet another fan and starts playing him a record. Blair grins broadly and nods his head along, and Sergei does a dorky dance in his boxers. I kind of love him. Jim taps Blair, "Sandburg, this is getting a little painful." Whether he's referring to his senses or watching Blair flirt is unclear. Blair just-one-more-minutes him. Katrina comes back in a dress, and Sergei goes off to dress. A moment later, Jim looks for him in the bathroom and he's gone, window open.
Okay, so at the hospital, the doctor says Katrina needs to be held for observation, and nobody can see her. Micki, who's kind of shaken, reveals some more info: Sergei brought a briefcase the night of the shooting to be given to some guy called Mayakovsky. Jim asks where to find him.

Cut to Jim and Blair driving. Blair is wondering where to find Sergei; he gets an idea and asks to be let off at home. He's pretty cute in the car, as always in these Jim-driving-in-profile, Blair-in-shotgun-looking-at-him shots we get every episode. He asks to be let off at home to follow up on something. Jim tells him to be careful even though he's the one who's going to find some crazy guy whose idea of fun is to fight barehanded in a boxing ring with a guy with a knife. Yep, that's what Mayakovsky is doing when we cut over to him. Mayakovsky bests his challenger and tells him, "Never let your opponent dictate your emotions." "Easier said than done," comes a voice, and we pan over to see a silhouette of Jim leaning against something in a John Sheppard kind of way. Yes, I'm sure it is easier said than done, for you, Officer McFeely. Jim threatens Mayakovsky vaguely and then leaves.

**Hero Lessons from Det. Jim Ellison and Col. John Sheppard:** A hero goes to the gym to lean against stuff and watch other men spar.

Blair's big revelation, that he was working on, is "Sergei likes this band." Jim and Blair go to a concert for this kind of faux-80s who sings in German, which makes this scene kind of a nice contrast with Nick Cave in *Wings of Desire*, you know, and anyway, Jim absolutely hates it, but Blair's grinning and dancing. Jim eventually spots Sergei and they run after him (Blair runs like a dork.) Outside the club, Sergei hops on the back of someone's motorcycle, and someone else shoots at the boys. As usual Jim throws himself on Blair to protect him. The rest of the scene is also typical: Jim jumps up, aims, shoots, misses, turns, "You okay?" "Yeah, I'm fine."

Jim and Blair swing by the Rumor office the next day and Jim sees Micki meeting with Mayakovsky in a car. He tells her to find the briefcase. She exits the car and Jim approaches her, offering his help/protection, but she says they both know it won't help. Jim's wearing a snowflake sweater, as is his wont in Russian-themed episodes. Jim heads back to the car where the cell phone rings and Jim snatches it out of Blair's hand (another go-to move for the Ellster). They're called to...

The hospital! They found... someone. Someone sick. I don't know. Jim suits up and goes into a clean room to talk to him, but he dies. Out in the hall, Blair does his coatrack act while Jim talks to Simon, telling him he needs more time. Simon says he doesn't have time, the Feds are coming to take over the case because of the danger posed by the radioactive people. "My hands are tied," says Simon. "Mine aren't," says Jim. He pats Simon on the belly. SIMON. SIMON, he pats.

Simon's in his office when some Fed comes and asks to talk to Jim. Simon quips, "He went out for a newspaper." Cut to Micki coming into the darkened Rumor office. Is Jim going to jump her?
Pan over to--Jim leaning against the wall in John Sheppard style, *again*. Did he take gay lessons for this episode?

**Hero Lessons from Det. Jim Ellison and Col. John Sheppard:** A hero poses with his hips thrust out and his legs shyly crossed.

Jim exposit that Katrina has leukemia and Micki has known it all along. Micki admits that needing the money for the bone marrow transplant is the reason they're mixed up in all of this: Sergei, Katrina's boyfriend, has a plan for getting the money. Apparently a plan involving transport of radioactive goods.

Out in the car, Blair puts on his glasses and sees someone running down the alley. He calls Jim, who tells him to stay put, but "No time," says Blair. Mayakovsky is driving up and shooting at the runner--Sergei. Blair drives closer, opens the door, and yells at Sergei to get in. Mayakovsky shoots Sergei and takes his briefcase and runs, and Sergei collapses by the car door. Blair runs to his side. Jim and Micki come out, and with his last breath, Sergei tells Jim the location of his next plutonium-selling rendezvous. Blair's still holding onto him, looking stricken, as he dies.

At the station, there's some exposition and plans to use Micki as a decoy or something, but I can't pay attention because I'm trying to figure out what Blair's long-sleeved T-shirt says down the sleeves--"SEA" something. Sea World? There's a fish on the front. It's kind of ridiculous. We go to the rendezvous point, which devolves into a shootout between plutonium sellers, buyers, and SWAT team. Micki and Katrina are there. Blair saves Katrina; Simon saves Blair; Jim ends up being towed by a rope behind a boat. All right. I'm officially no longer interested in this episode. Suffice it to say it ends with bare-knuckle boxing between Jim and Mayakovsky, and even though Mayakovsky has a knife, Jim wins, because he doesn't let his opponent dictate his emotions, and also because he slams Mayakovsky across the face with a fire extinguisher. Then Jim has to steer the boat back to shore, which he does by sitting in the pilot's chair and pulling on a lot of levers between his legs.
Freudian.

Wrap-up at the bullpen. Micki thanks Jim, saying that the government is paying for Katrina's hospital expenses as thanks for her participating in the bust. "It would be nice, someday, to see you again," says Micki, with a lack of conviction appropriate for the chances of that happening, and Jim says, "That would be nice," with a lack of specificity appropriate for his lack of conviction. (Oddly, Micki is the one woman we do see again, in 3x09 Red Ice.) Micki kisses him on the cheek and leaves. Blair comes up behind Jim and mocks the way Micki says "Myister Elleeson," which is kind of insensitive for an anthropologist. "You wanted to break down some barriers, man; I think you just did." "Yeah, we'll see," Jim mutters. Man, he hates women. So much!

**Non J/B Pairing of the Episode:** Blair/Sergei. Oh Sergei, your radioactive effervescence left a tingly residue on Blair's heart.

I'll sleep in your embrace at last!

**Bottom Line:** At least Jim and Blair were together for once, and there were a plethora of super-typical moments--in the car, get down, are you okay?, etc--but nothing new or special. There's no real reason to watch this episode again.
2x18 Smart Alec

Chapter Summary

Blair has to advise a teen prodigy. There are spiders.

Some maintenance guy is poking around some basement when some unseen person grabs him and holds his head in some tank of poisonous spiders.

"Look at her shapes, look at her curves," Blair is saying, gazing lovingly at an 8x10 photograph as he and Jim walk into the bullpen. Turns out he's talking about a 12th century Mayan urn. He explains that it was designed for "the king's watcher," maybe a Mayan Sentinel (good to know he's still working on the Sentinel project). He's expecting it to arrive for him at the university any day now. "I'm sure you two will be very happy together," says Jim. Heh.

I'm looking at her shapes and curves, Blair, and I'm not sure you should be calling her "her."

Simon interrupts to tell Jim to head down the university and check out a body. Blair hopefully suggests Jim was chosen because he knows Blair and Blair knows the uni, but Simon says dryly that Jim was next on the roster. Poor useless Blair.

At the crime scene, Jim meets up with Suzanne, chief of campus security, and an ex-cop. Jim sees evidence that the body was dragged and suggests foul play, but Suzanne is reluctant to jump to such a conclusion. She says it's a peaceful campus. While they're talking, a boy in a giant bike helmet watches with interest.

Later, still on campus, Blair approaches one Professor Buckner in search of his precious urn, which he understood was delivered to him by mistake. Buckner says he hasn't seen it. Blair is all woobie-disappointed. Buckner asks Blair for a favor: a difficult genius from Canada (!!!) needs a faculty advisor. He's a fourteen-year-old prodigy called Alec Summers, and his fields of study are physics, architecture, neurolinguistics, and anthropology; but despite his high IQ, nothing holds his interest, and he's in danger of flunking out. (Actually, that all sounds like a great combination of fields to prepare him for Stargate travel. Just sayin'.) Buckner wants Blair to be his faculty advisor (is Blair really faculty? I guess he's a teaching fellow) because Alec reminds Buckner of Blair when he first came to college. Blair's like, Oh, God.
At the station, Jim and Suzanne compare notes. Jim found out that the kind of spider that bit the victim is only found in Australia. Suzanne has the janitor's to-do list, so they can figure out where he may have been attacked. Jim zeroes in on an off-site farm facility connected with the university.

Meanwhile, in his office, Blair is kissing some chick. It's one of the rare Blair Has An Actual Girlfriend episodes! Alec--who, like all classic Alec's, is young and blond--comes in and mouths off at them for awhile, which I feel is deserved. Making out in your office while you wait for your young advisee is not really professional. Jim enters and beelines for the coffee machine, and it's nice to see he's as comfortable in Blair's office as Blair is in his. Blair says, "Hey, Jim, you remember Molly." "Sure," says Jim, who totally doesn't. Blair introduces Alec, who tries to get Jim to talk about the case, and says he studied arachnids on a research grant at age 12. "If you fill me in, I'll help you solve the case." Jim blows him off. Alec asserts, "I bet my IQ's bigger than yours and his put together." Hee hee. Blair puts his hands up in a surrender gesture, and Jim agrees, "No doubt," but he's pretty much the master at putting his foot down, so Alec doesn't get his way. He huffs off. So, Alec was bratty, but I'd be kind of pissed, too, if everything I said made the adults glance at each other and chuckle.

Jim and Suzanne check out the farm facility. Jim asks about insect research and the head guy says they do some, and shows him the lab where two grad students are working. One of them is Lacey from Corner Gas. They claim none of the insects they work with are poisonous to humans, but Jim hears Lacey's heartbeat speed up, and he has his doubts. After Suzanne and Jim leave, Lacey freaks out--blah blah, "A man is dead!", blah blah--and her boss comes in and holds her hand into a scorpion tank until she promises not to say anything.

At the university, Blair has lured Alec back with the promise of a driving lesson. In Blair's classic car (what do I know about cars? It's old and green and it has an open top), Alec refuses directions, saying he wrote a computer driving simulation at age 10, and proceeds to joyride over campus roads and sidewalks in a way that puts pedestrians and parked cars at risk and makes Blair yell and moan and look through his hands. Blair finally grabs the wheel to pull him over and kicks him out of the car.

Blair complains to Buckner about Alec. Buckner says that Alec's in a difficult position, being smarter than most of his peers but emotionally young. Blair should be able to relate, "because you were taking college courses at 16." Ah, I thought that was just fanon. I guess, technically, I was taking college courses at 16, too, if you count taking psych at the community college for high school credit. Buckner takes a call and pointedly stares until Blair leaves. On the phone, Buckner tells the caller in no uncertain terms to take the shipment and leave him alone.

At the bullpen, Jim gives some instructions to Rafe--is this the first time we've seen Rafe? he's kind of cute--when Suzanne bursts in to scold Jim a bit for conducting his investigation too harshly. It's a delicate situation because of funding issues related to the farm facility. They don't want to alienate them. Suzanne insists on joining Jim in his investigation, and he seems perfectly happy to have her along.
Rafe! He doesn't get a line per se but he gets to nod a lot.

Blair comes into his office and finds Alec at his computer. Alec says he's just correcting some of Blair's work. "You're what?" Alec also says the urn in Blair's photo is a fake, a Mexican counterfeit from the 1930s. Blair tells Alec to focus on his own work, Alec smarts off and leaves. Blair sits down at his computer and frowns at Alec's work. "How did I miss that?" Ha ha! Blair is bad at anthropology.

Alec goes to Buckner's office to complain about Blair and finds it empty with the door open. Blair's precious fake urn is on the table; Alec goes over to examine it and accidentally drops it. It shatters, and there's a metal cylinder inside. Alec picks it up. A guy appears in the doorway. Alec tries to talk his way out of the situation, but the guy tries to attack him, and he runs away, down the hall, outside. He jumps into Blair's car, finds a spare key somewhere (glove box?) and drives off, considerably less ridiculously than before.

Jim and Blair are driving--I don't know where they're going, out to dinner, maybe--and Blair's complaining about Alec while Jim laughs at him. A reckless driver warning comes in over the police radio, IDing "a gray '62 Corvair, plate number 743 SFU." (I really don't know anything about cars; I even got the color wrong!) Jim automatically recognizes the description and is already altering his course when Blair says, "Jim, that's my car!" "Yeah," says Jim. He knows, Blair!

Alec in Blair's car is being chased, and does things like say out loud, "Force equals mass times acceleration, so..." because he is smart. Alec tries to shake him by driving into a construction site and ends up crashing the car. The pursuer abandons his quarry as the police begin to arrive.

After commercial there's police all around the site and Alec is out of the car, wearing a blanket, to signify that he has received medical attention and will be A-OK. Only a cup of cocoa could further seal the deal. Blair yells at Alec, upset about his car. He refuses to believe any of Alec's story. Jim tries half-heartedly to calm Blair down. Blair wildly tells Alec that "Ellison is putting you under arrest for auto theft."

Cut to Jim and Blair walking down the university hall, Jim explaining to Blair why he didn't put Alec under arrest for auto theft. Witnesses reported seeing a second car, and he believes Alec's chase story. "Why are you letting this kid get under your skin like this?" "Because he stole my car. Why didn't you arrest him?" "That's not what this is about." "Jim, that's exactly what this is about." I don't know what Jim thinks this is about.
As they reach Buckner's office, Jim makes a helpless "Will you believe this guy?" gesture to the
world at large. Then Blair puts a hand on Jim's chest--Something is Wrong. Well, Buckner's not
there and he left the door open. There's no sign of the urn, which Blair thinks is confirmation that
Alec was lying, but Jim finds a shard under a table. Blair can't figure out why Buckner lied about
having the urn all along. Jim gets a call.

Alec sits on the steps playing with the cylinder, which looks kind of like a space-ace
toothbrush holder, but when he gets it open, it contains one of those glass cylinder things with a bug
in it.

Buckner's body has been found in a car in the parking garage--it looks like a carbon monoxide
suicide. Jim points out that the body is too tense and stiff for such a death, and spots a hypodermic
needle mark in Buckner's neck. Suzanne wonders if the deaths are related. "All I know is you've got
two deaths in four days on your peaceful campus here," says Jim coolly. "Let's go, Chief."

Station. Blair thinks the bad guys will be after Alec and his cylinder (I guess he believes Alec's
story now). After Blair leaves to find Alec, Simon recaps the ridiculousness of the plot points: "So
far, we have two murders, poisonous spiders, a Mayan urn, a mysterious cylinder, and a teenage
genius. I mean, this whole thing is really beginning to bug me." Jim: "You didn't just say that, sir, did
you?" Wanh-wannnnh!

Alec uses Blair's office phone to social engineer the address of the urn's sender. He calls the
boss at the farm facility and arranges to meet with him. At the rendezvous, in a public quad on
campus, Alec tries to negotiate, and the boss and his thug try to intimidate him. Alec tells them they
can't try anything in public, and they're like, "Oh, yeah?" and hypodermic needle his FACE.

Elsewhere in the quad, Blair runs into Molly. She's all, "Hey, stranger!" Blair, have you been
taking Not Calling lessons from Jim? Blair apologizes for being busy and says he's looking for Alec.
Just then he spots him being loaded into a car and dashes off to rescue him. That's what happens
when you get involved with a man on this show, Molly: they're always running off to rescue other
men. And you'll just have to be okay with that. As Blair approaches, the boss guy says loudly that
Alec passed out and they're taking him to the clinic, and then he sticks and gun in Blair's side and
guides him into the car. None of the bystanders seem to be watching too closely... except Molly.

Alec and Blair tied up somewhere on the farm complex. Alec is smartmouthed as usual, telling
the bad guys they can't kill him or they won't get their cylinder, and Blair tries to get him to back off,
to no avail. The bad boss threatens Alec with a poisonous spider, and Alec reveals he's
arachnophobic (his explanation for why an arachnophobic did an arachnid study: "My psychologist
Jim is talking to Suzanne at the station when he gets a call from Molly. He relays to Suzanne what Molly (whom he refers to as "Sandburg's girlfriend"—whoa, the "g" word! I don't think I've ever seen Blair so serious about any woman!) saw. Suzanne IDs the farm boss from Jim's description of Molly's description of his car.

Back in Spider Central, Alec figures out that the bad guys' plan is to develop a superbreed of crop-killing bugs that only they have the technology to destroy. He muses all this aloud in front of the bad guys so they know just exactly how dead he has to be in order for all this to work. For a genius, he's kind of stupid.

On the way to the farm, Jim tries to give Suzanne a gun, and she reminisces about the time she put down her gun in an attempt to protect the life of a hostage, only to have the hostage-holder kill the hostage and himself with her gun. That was why she left the force. Jim tells her "The only way to deal with your past is to face it," so she takes the gun. That was easy.

At the farm, Jim and Suzanne split up. Jim turns on his Hearing (Blair's Voice) skill, and hears Blair arguing for his life, unsuccessfully, with the boss guy. Just then someone comes up behind Jim and sticks a gun in his neck. Suzanne to the rescue: she arrives with Jim's gun drawn, telling the attacker to put down his weapon. Instead, bad-guy cocks the gun and says, "Drop it, or he dies." Gasp! It's just like that other time we just heard about just now! After the commercial, Suzanne shoots the bad guy, and Jim says, "Nice shot." Phew! I think we've all just learned a little lesson about facing your fears. And how you should do it. Jim. Jim. Listen to me, Jim. Come out of the closet, Jim.

Inside, boss guy hears gunshots. Blair says the police are here and he should just give himself up, but he says, sensibly, that he should, in that case, leave. He leaves Blair and Alec tied up with spiders crawling toward them. Alec identifies them as poisonous, and starts to panic. Blair tries to talk Alec into calming down so he won't get bitten once the spiders start crawling on him. I love when Blair's Guide skills come in handy. Blair eventually saves the day by telling Alec to back his head against the wall suddenly—there's a button behind him which turns on a showerhead. It washes the spiders away. Once Blair and Alec are nice and wet Jim comes in to rescue them. "Get me out of here, Officer," Alec begs as Jim enters and makes a beeline for Blair.

Whatever, kid. Maybe I'll untie you after I free my partner here. Maybe.

Sunshine! Campus! Alec is trying to teach a very dorky looking helmeted Blair to Rollerblade. Molly arrives and kisses Blair, elbow pads and all. This must be love, people. Alec tells Blair he's going back home to be a kid for awhile before he continues with college. Jim and Suzanne show up;
Jim asks Suzanne to join the CPD, and she says no: "This place needs cops, too." I actually kind of love that they had a new-character-of-the-week plot, that Jim interacted with her, that she was a girl, and that they didn't try to impose an awkward romance: they just interacted like a pair of professionals. Anyway, they part, and Jim wanders over to ask Blair to lunch. Alec invites himself along.

Note to self: Blair/Alec slash would be very bad and wrong. POSSIBLE EXCEPTION: Blades of Glory AU.

**Bottom Line:** I like university episodes; I like to see as much of Blair's world as of Jim's. There wasn't anything exquisitely slashy, but more of a baseline established-relationship level of interaction, which is perfectly fine. My main problem with this episode is that, for a "facing your fears" theme, we saw pretty much exactly zero of Jim or Blair facing their fears. What's the good of a theme if it doesn't affect either of the characters we'll see again? I mean, as far as I'm concerned, the plot of any episode of anything is just an excuse to do something cool with the characters/relationships, but I suppose, for that, I'm probably watching the wrong show.
2x19 Private Eyes

Chapter Summary

Naomi's psychic friend helps Blair and Jim on a kidnapping case.

A teacher is guiding some elementary school kids around an art museum. The credits say "and Leigh Taylor-Young as Naomi Sandburg," and I rejoice a little bit, because I love Naomi. A creepy lady in sunglasses approaches a little girl (who's hanging back for snarking purposes, because she's Spunky) with a clearly false story about how her mom is sick and they need to go to her right now. The kid, Gwen, seems to wise up when the woman throws her into a truck: "Hey!" she cries.

Cut to Jim and Blair getting out of the blue SUV and crouch-running over to hide behind a cop car. Police are exchanging gunfire with some criminals in a cabin. Blair kind of cowers as Jim answers his cell phone. "What? ...Yeah, he's fine, Naomi!" Blair looks up at his mother's name; Jim passes him the phone. As action erupts around them, including a biker bursting through the wall of the cabin and Jim shooting out his tire, Blair tries to convince Naomi that the noise is just Jim watching TV. This is an adorable scene, none the less because the show seems to be parodying itself.

Jim and Blair are talking to Simon in his office when Naomi bursts in all "I was so worried!" and hugging Blair. Apologizing, Blair takes her out into the bullpen where she introduces him to Charlie Spring, the friend with whom she drove up from Big Sur (where she apparently lives?), who knew Blair was in danger because he is a psychic. He's kind of a short, repugnant fellow. Dare I say Penguinesque? Jim comes out and loudly doesn't believe in psychics. Simon calls him over to inform him about the kidnapping, and Jim heads out, tapping both Simon and Blair in gestures of farewell and come-along, respectively.

Jim oversees some police guys setting up trace equipment in Gwen's father's home. Father and mother, separated, bitch at each other. The mother sets up some tarot cards, apropos of which Blair mentions that his mom knows Charlie Spring. Mother, excited, wants to ask him about Gwen, but Jim says, "He's a charlatan!" Call comes in from the kidnappers, who name their price. At Jim's encouragement, the father asks to speak to Gwen, who tells them she doesn't like it there because the kidnappers are stupid, and kicks the male kidnapper in the nuts when he tries to take the phone away.
Is this going to be like "The Ransom of Red Chief"?

For once on this show, a trace worked, but all they know is that the call came from a cell phone somewhere in the area of the Cascade National Forest. Blair plays Jim the tape of the call, Guiding him through using his sense of hearing to isolate the sounds. Blair helps Jim put together the sounds and figure out they were calling from inside a trailer. Frustrated, Jim asks how that will help. Charlie Spring pops up telling him his thinking is limited. Naomi follows onscreen and hugs Blair. (For those of you wondering how they got here, it's because, if you were watching closely, you'll notice that Blair gave Gwen's mom the copy of Charlie's book in which he was using Charlie's business card as a bookmark. I know! They actually explained something, and they did it subtly! I'm just as surprised as you are!) Naomi says brightly that she and Blair will be working on another case together. Blair smiles at her, and Jim rubs his head. Let the good times roll.

Charlie runs his hands ostentatiously over Gwen's stuff while her mom weeps, Jim rolls his eyes, and Naomi clasps her hands and grins. Blair sorta stands around.

Who to side with...

Charlie says Gwen is scared, but okay, that he senses something about a kitty (her kitty sweater, the mother explains) and that Gwen was wearing a tiny silver locket. The mother confirms. Blair: "We didn't know about the locket, Jim."

Female kidnapper--we'll eventually find out her name is Stevie--looks in on Gwen. Male kidnapper says he's surprised her dad isn't making them pay to bring her back, so, there's my Red Chief reference. The male kidnapper is totally J.D.'s brother from Scrubs, so I'll call him Dan. The kidnappers have a stilted conversation where we learn that they owe money to some kind of scary crime boss named Tom... something. They bicker, then Dan realizes he forgot the passports! Then he tries to get up off the couch, but can't! Worst. Kidnappers. Ever.

Stevie calls to give the family the instructions for dropping off the ransom money. Simon tells Jim to handle the dropoff, saying he can take "the kid" (Blair). Charlie shows up wanting to be taken along; he saw something about a black car and a dog, but he doesn't know what it means yet, and he thinks he could be of use. Jim and Simon say no way. Once Charlie backs off, Blair steps in, quietly lecturing, "Throughout recorded history there have been documented cases of psychic phenomenon that can't be explained. Primitive people also believe in the powers of the Sentinels. Now, you can't tell me that those powers don't exist." Oooh, good argument, Blair. Defeated, Simon says, "...OK." I still think he's a giant pushover.

By the way, I just looked up Leigh Taylor-Young's website (the amazing domain of lty.com), and she is Naomi. She talks about her "spiritual journey" and she has photos of herself in the 60s.
with (a) iconic male figures like Peter Sellers and Andy Warhol and (b) her little son, about whom she writes:

By 1970, Patrick and I were on our own and we became deeply bonded by all the experiences that can happen between a working single mother and a little boy. The "normal" family structure was not to be ours. We had to become very flexible and adventurous to make our special journey together work for the highest possible good.

Freaky, huh? (About working on TS, she writes, "Richard Burgi and Garrett are so funny together on and off camera. There is an energy from them that extends and completely lightens the work environment of a set." That's nice. It's good to know they had fun with this.)

Anyway, Charlie, waiting in the car while Jim and Blair bring the duffel bag of money up into the hotel, sees a black car with the license plate "T Dog," and tries to call Jim, but he's on the phone with Simon. From the parking garage in the basement, Dan pulls out the giantest cell phone I've ever seen and calls upstairs. Jim answers, and Dan instructs him to drop the money down the laundry chute. Jim tells Blair to wait until the last second to make the drop, while he tries to get down in the elevator and get a look at the kidnappers. (Blair doesn't have a watch, so he has to count, "One Mississippi...")

Tom Whatsisface confronts Dan in the lot, holding a gun in his face and demanding his money. Dan says he has it. "What'd you do?" asks Tom. Dan kind of grins and says, "...Kidnapped a kid." Heh. He's so entertaining that I almost don't mind that Jim and Blair are not in this scene. Tom asks for, and receives, the location of the trailer containing Gwen, and then shoots Dan dead. Nooo, Dan! Tom walks off with some new nefarious plan which I'm not sure I understand, while meanwhile Jim hears the shot and Charlie senses it or whatever. They meet up at Dan's body.

At the station, Charlie and Jim discuss the case, and Charlie corners Jim into admitting he's giving the psychic stuff the benefit of the doubt now. Jim: "Listen, Charlie, the only reason I'm keeping an open mind about this is because I need all the help I can get on this case. I don't have to go throwing you a bone every time you're right about something, okay?" That sounds kind of like how he feels about Blair, except for the part about not throwing him a bone. OHHH.

Simon gives Jim some files, then Blair calls, telling Jim to get down to the parents' house right away. Turns out there's news crews swarming around; someone leaked about the case. We don't have to wait long to see who it is: in Gwen's room, Charlie tries to get a reading off a teddy bear, then thanks it, and calls the news. Down in the kitchen, he tells Jim, Blair and the parents that he knows where Gwen is.

Blair drives, and Charlie confidently directs him through some winding paths in the forest. They come to a dead end. I thought you should know that Blair's looking cute in his glasses and a pair of largeish hoops on his left ear. Jim starts getting suspicious as reporters arrive.

Finally, we're at the loft! Jim and Blair bring Charlie home; Naomi is already there, bustling around the kitchen. Jim starts hurling accusations, suggesting Charlie is trying to create a media circus to boost sales of his new book, and bringing up some indictment charges he learned about from Simon's files. Naomi defends him, saying he's trying to give of himself, and we all have money problems. There's some chaotic bickering for a moment, then Blair jumps in, silencing everyone with, "He broke a cardinal rule!" (dramatic pause) "He believed he was infallible." Also, he stood on the shoulders of giants, and what he did took no discipline. Blair makes a passionate speech about how Charlie's powers are a gift, etc. Blair loves a superpower! Charlie admits he was the leak--he was just so confident about his own abilities and wanted to show off--and Naomi admonishes, "Charlie," seeming genuinely disappointed in him.
Tom arrives at the trailer and takes over. He holds Stevie at gunpoint and makes her call the parents demanding more money. The new drop-off point is a locker at the bus station. Jim drives the father there and keen-eyesights through the window, seeing the father find a note and bus ticket in the locker.

Blair pops his head into his bedroom and finds Naomi meditating with incense smoking all around. He doesn't disturb her, just gives this lovely, deeply affectionate half-smile and closes the door.

Out in the dining area, Charlie is focusing on a teddy bear of Gwen's; Blair flips, taking it away, saying, "You're off the case! This is theft!" He continues that Charlie totally snowed Naomi and now she's hurting, and "I got a real problem with people who hurt my mom." Blair is adorable when he's angry and I love how stern he is with this guy whom he was defending earlier--probably all the more because he was defending him earlier. Charlie begs to be allowed to help, and Blair refuses at first, but seems to be weakening when Charlie gives up his phone and asks to be allowed to make amends.

Jim watches carefully as Gwen's dad transfers the money into a bag he found in the locker, gets on a bus with his ticket, puts the bag in an overhead compartment, asks the driver about a stop, claims to have gotten on the wrong bus, takes down an almost-identical bag from next to his, and leaves. Another passenger then gets up and takes the bag full of money. Jim stands under the window and listens as the passenger talks to Tom on the phone, saying, "She's just a little kid. You really have to whack 'em both?" Guy has no sense of secure communication. He's not only on a public phone, he's on a PUBLIC BUS. Jim boards, grabs the guy, demands to know where Gwen is. They grapple off the bus, and Jim actually sustains some damage, getting himself slammed into the side of the bus over and over, before vanquishing (knocking out) his opponent.

Back at the station, Simon is actually the one to suggest asking Charlie for help. Jim calls home, and Naomi answers; she doesn't know where Charlie and Blair went, but she gives Jim Charlie's cell number. Why doesn't Jim call Blair's cell? I think he has one. Does he? Sometimes it seems like they share one between them, but sometimes it seems like they have two--like in the elevator episode, when Jim kept calling Blair from various places. Maybe then Blair had their phone and Jim borrowed a different one, I don't know.

Anyway, Blair picks up Charlie's cell, and tells Jim where they are (down at the pier). Jim drives down to join them and asks Charlie what he's got. Charlie is pleased to have won over Jim and says he has a name, Rob M. Blair and Jim, doing their usual tagteam-mindmeld-soulmates-brainstorm thing, figure out that could be Roberts Marina. They all run to Jim's car, with Blair
hustling particularly, I think because he wants to be sure to grab shotgun.

They get to the marina but don't know what to do next. There's too many boats to check them all. Charlie tries to think while Jim and Blair helpfully yell, "Come on, Charlie!" "Charlie, come on!" over and over. Jeez, guys, since when did Charlie become your only asset? Can't you, you know, detect something? Charlie gets the slip number of the boat, but when they get there, it's gone. Jim spots it zooming off. Jim and Blair commandeer a boat, leaving Charlie on the dock, and motor off after the bad guys. Blair drives, Jim shoots.

That's what I call riding shotgun.

Jim shoots Tom after Gwen creeps up and provides a well-timed distraction by kicking his henchman off his feet. Jim instructs Blair to drive up alongside the other boat and then he sort of hops over onto it, which I guess counts as jumping onto a vehicle. There's one last suspenseful moment when Gwen unexpectedly pulls a gun on Jim, and he talks her down, explaining that he's one of the good guys and he's here to take her home. She finally lets him take the gun and clamps onto his arm. So, kind of a sweet scene there.

At the station, Gwen wears Jim's leather jacket and drinks cocoa until her parents show up. The entire station claps as the parents and child are reunited and walk out together. Naomi notes that it looks like the parents are going to give their marriage another shot, and Blair says, "I hope it works out. Especially for the little girl, cause it's not too often that parents stay together, especially these days." Naomi gives him a sidelong look, as well she should. Jim very kindly apologizes to Charlie for doubting him. Charlie stares a moment and then suddenly clamps his arms around Jim, who stiffens up (not THAT way!!!), absolutely hating to be hugged. Off-camera we can hear Naomi laugh, "Isn't that cute?" as Jim desperately tries to free himself.
I have never been more unhappy.

**Bottom Line:** I'm not really a fan of Charlie, but I liked this episode anyway, because it had Naomi, and it had some good moments for both Jim and Blair, although not really together. I was also oddly touched by Gwen's tough-but-vulnerable moment of almost-killing-Jim and, of course, amused by Dan Dorian.
2x20 Vanishing Act

Chapter Summary

Some guy is thought dead but isn't or something. I don't know, Jim keeps touching Blair.

A shifty-looking guy is hanging around a flower shop. Jim and Blair's blue SUV parks across the street, and our heroes get out and stroll down the street. Blair is looking for a birthday present for Sam, the lab tech, whom he's dating again. Not sure why Jim's along for the ride, except that he needs Blair's company for sustenance. Blair explains that, although he missed Sam's birthday, he still has until the end of the 48-hour window to make it up to her, but as time passes, the magnitude and expense of any potential present must increase. Jim: "Is there some sort of handbook where this stuff is written down?" Blair: "No, that's the interesting part about this type of cultural rule, Jim. It's not written down anywhere. Everybody just knows." Jim spots the shifty-looking guy across the street. SLG sees him, too, and starts running. Jim runs after him, causing cars to stop short and honk.

Jim chases the guy into a side street, but then can't find him. Blair comes up behind Jim and asks what's going on; Jim hears a car coming, turns, and throws his arms around Blair, pinning him to the ground.

Gayest. Lifesaving throwdown. Ever.

Seriously, the only way this lifesaving throwdown could be gayer is if Jim lingered, looking down at Blair and blushing, and Blair made a quip about how he usually likes to be on top. Or started glowing. Possibly both would be required. But it's not to be. Without a second glance at Blair, Jim gets to his feet, looking around in vain for his vanished quarry.

In Simon's office, Jim and Simon exposit for the benefit of Blair and the audience that the man Jim was chasing was Gordon Abbott, a former accountant for a mob business and witness in a federal crime, to whom protection was promised, but who got thrown in prison anyway. He was supposedly killed in prison and his wife and kid were supposedly killed in a car bombing. But Jim knows what he saw!

At Simon's advice, Jim goes to talk to Dan Singleton, the [guy] in charge of the case. He and
Jim spend so long giving each other the silent evil eye that Blair has to introduce himself. Singleton accuses Jim of thinking he saw Abbott because he wanted to, and tells him he (Jim) may have Abbott's death on his conscience, but he shouldn't drag Singleton into it. In the car on the way back, Blair asks Jim what's up, and Jim admits that he was the one who promised Abbott protection, even though he wasn't sure he could ensure it. Now he feels guilt.

In a part we didn't see, Jim apparently searched the hotel room owned by whoever registered the license number of the car that almost ran over Blair, and there he has found a tape recorded hockey game cued up to a shot of the audience showing Abbott's wife and kid. So their deaths were faked, too. Jim and Blair head over to Sam's lab, needing the picture enhanced so they can read the aisle number and find out what seats the non-dead family was in; in sight of Sam's door, Blair says, "I think you can handle this one on your own," and ducks forward, walking bent-over to hide behind a cart someone's wheeling past. When Jim enters the lab, Sam asks, "Where's your friend?" and Jim pretends not to know. That'll never be convincing, Jim. Sam enhances the picture, Jim gets his info, and heads back into the hall. Blair cutely pokes his head out from a drink machine and asks with his eyes if the coast is clear. He ducks back when Sam appears in the doorway, telling Jim to tell Blair she doesn't like cowards.

Armed with his knowledge of the seat number, Jim finds out the tickets were bought by Gordon's friend. He and Blair head over to the house and find the friend's mangled body. Blair looks ill as usual and Jim touches him on the shoulder and tells him to wait outside. I think what I like best about Blair's corpse aversion, besides that it's a perfectly realistic aspect of Blair as a civilian doing police work, is that it's the one thing in this show they seem to manage to handle with continuity and consistence. Jim finds a flower petal on the body.

In the forensics lab, Sam IDs Jim's flower petal, and they discuss the case until Blair comes in with a big jauntily-wrapped present, which he deposits on Sam's bench. Sam frowns. "I can't accept this. It's not a birthday gift. It's a guilt gift." Blair tries to argue his case, but Sam just turns to Jim, promising she'll try and track down the store the flower came from. Jim says he thinks he knows where to start and heads for the door, tapping Blair, he of the hurt puppydog expression, to follow him. In the doorway, they put their arms around each other, and oh my god this is so gay I have to pause and catch my breath. Jim rubs Blair's arm and says "Come on. You'll live to fight another day."
Yeah, and I bet Jim has some ideas for your comeback, Blair.

Cut back to an incredulous-looking Sam so we're perfectly aware of how very much in her presence they're discussing her. And cuddling. To Jim's dismay, Blair turns back into the room, heading for Sam, but all he does is snatch up his present and leave. Rock on! Whatever it is, give it to Jim.

Jim runs into Abbott's wife near the flower shop from the beginning and tries to ask her questions, but she's understandably still pissed at him about the whole getting her husband killed thing. Also, he keeps calling her "Mrs Abbott," even after she says her name is Morgan now. (Her first name is Elise, so I'll just call her that.) She drives off, and Jim returns to his car, where Blair was just kind of hanging out, I guess.

Elise Morgan/Abbott goes to pick up her son, Joey, and in a huge fake-out, we see him standing waiting for her, and we see her pull up across the street--hey! it's going to be fine! Nope, because a big black car with tinted windows comes driving in the opposite direction, closer to his side of the street, and steals him. Jim and Blair drive along and find Elise hysterical in the street. When he finds out what happened, Jim does the evilest of evil turns, and careens off into a car chase sequence. His driving is particular reckless today, and Blair keeps grabbing the side or the dash; during one skid-turn, Jim actually throws an arm out across Blair protectively.

He's... he's wearing a seatbelt, dude, it'll be okay.
They lose the car, but almost run over Joey, who is suddenly just standing there in the middle of the road looking scared. Next thing, everyone--Jim, Blair, Elise, Joey--are back at Elise's house. Jim wants to talk to Elise, but, in a realistic touch, Joey's still shaken and doesn't want to leave his mother's side, so Blair steps in and makes friends with Joey and diverts his attention (another nice piece of continuity, since it's exactly what he did in 2x02 Out of the Past). "Your friend has quite a way with kids," says Elise. "He's not so far removed," says Jim, fondly.

After getting a threatening call from the mob boss guy, Elise admits to Jim that she and her husband arranged to meet in the park later that day. Jim finds a bug in a lamp and hastily calls down Blair, telling him to stay with Elise and her son and call for backup while he goes to the park. He finds Gordon, but so do the bad guys; Gordon disappears after getting grazed with a bullet.

Back at the house, Sam finds a kind of bug that only Feds have, and Jim thinks Singleton may be behind this. Joey is being taken into protective custody. Blair tries to help Sam carry something, and she shuts a door in his face. To Jim, Blair laughs, heartily, "I guess we're just gonna be friends, man." Simon gets a call, a tip from a pharmacist who saw Abbott buying first aid supplies. Jim and Blair go to the area and Jim spots Abbott trying to tend to his wounds in a parked car.

In an interrogation room, Jim talks to Abbott, trying to get him to testify against Singleton. (For something. As carefully as I've been trying to watch, I think there's some important points I missed, probably when I was musing about what could be in that gift box of Blair's. Toaster? Foot massager? Bottle city of Kandor?) Understandably, Abbott is not interested in Jim's promises of protection. The best part about this scene is how it's all about feelings. Jim: "I know how you must feel." Abbott: "You have no idea how I feel!" Jim: "All right, I don't know how you feel." Abbott: "Damn right you don't know how I feel!"

Singleton shows up at the police station, asking to talk to Abbott; Jim isn't going to let him, but Abbott sees Singleton playing with his wife's keychain, and he demands to talk to him. Jim tries to eavesdrop on the conversation through Simon's office door but Singleton eyes him suspiciously and turns on the radio. Jim winces and declares he can't hear, but Blair's like, "What are you talking about? You can filter that out."

But all Jim knows when Singleton leaves and Abbott demands to be let go--which Simon okays--is that Singleton was saying something about Elise. Simon informs Jim that Elise is gone, the officers watching her killed. "You think he's going to try and trade himself for his wife?" "I would," says Simon, full of compassion and gravitas.

Jim and Blair tail Abbott and find him pushing a gun into Singleton's face. They collaboratively
talk him down. Cut to Singleton handcuffed to a Dumpster while Jim and Blair run off on part 2 of their adventure, trying to save Elise, I guess. Abbott goes to a junkyard meet with the mob boss, who gives a bad guy speech with an accounting theme ("One thing I learned: You gotta make the books balance.") We end up with a junkyard fight; Gordon and Elise Abbott reunite and run away fairly early after Jim starts shooting, and he continues dealing with the mob boss's men, protecting the couple, and dodging cars being thrown at him by a henchman operating a crane as Blair gets a rare chance to shine in the fight when he knocks out the crane operator with a wrench and then uses the crane to pick up the mob boss's getaway car, with him in it. Pan Pipes of Blair is a Badass.

Station wrap-up! Abbott thanks Jim and leaves. Sam comes in, says she's willing to accept her present back--her 48 hour grovelling window is closed--and kisses Blair. As soon as she leaves, Blair goes to Henri all "I need to buy my present back," but Henri needs it for his own 48 hour window. Blair gives his apologies to Jim and Simon and runs off, presumably to the mall. Simon: "What's up with him?" Jim, philosophically: "Sandburg inhabits a rather strange and confusing world."

**Bottom Line:** Your typical Sentinel A-plot--neither particularly offensive nor particularly interesting--is spiced up somewhat by a Lothario Blair B-story and several inexplicably great J/B touches.

Liiiiike this.
Jim and Blair try to recover lost money from the poor people amongst which it was distributed. Good luck with that.

Weird music montage of homeless people and beggars. High school kid, Marcus, walks with his friend; friend wants to play video games, but Marcus wants to study for his history test. Nerd. Suspicious looking guy is alternately watching them and the overpass, using binoculars. An armored car driving across the bridge suddenly blows a tire and skids; the back opens, and money flutters down over the huddled masses. People grab the cash as the music pipes back in, something about rain. Artsy.

Jim is driving, roommate-scolding passenger Blair to use the air freshener after he goes to the bathroom. Ew. (a) I know it's obnoxious of me to pretend that Blair Sandburg's shit don't stick like everybody else's, but, can't I? (b) Doesn't the air freshener bother Jim? Radio reports a "major disturbance" at the overpass and Jim alters his course. "Oh God, Jim, that's--that's money!" "It's a free-for-all," Jim agrees. Jim asks some older men what happened, and they deny seeing anything (or taking anything), but describe a kid holding a basketball and wearing a Jags sweatshirt--pretty terrible distinguishing features--as a possible witness.

At the station, Blair suggests this is a "finders keepers" situation. Jim: "I agree in theory, and it's an interesting moral dilemma, but bottom line, you take what isn't yours, it's stealing." Oh Jim. You're so lawful. Blair asks, practically, "So what're you gonna do? You going to arrest the whole community?" But they won't worry about that yet, because, as Simon explains, the next week is an amnesty period; anyone can return money, no questions asked. Blair: "Guys, this is a fascinating experiment in social behavioral science." Simon stares at him for a moment, then turns to Jim, asking him to investigate the possibility this wasn't an accident.

Jim questions the guards from the armored car--Trout, Marshall, and Lone--but they're unhelpful. He notes Marshall's marine corps insignia ring.

Rafe is manning a turn-in-money booth and reports no recovery yet. Walking away, Jim hears a basketball bouncing and turns to see a kid in a Jags sweatshirt. Wearing the same sweatshirt as the witness those guys described! Why, it must be him! Jim puts on his Jags cap obsequiously and strikes up a conversation. Marcus is of course unhelpful. Jim: "Some of the people that picked up that money might think of it as a gift from God, but in reality, it belongs to the U.S. government." Jim, you know this is a lost cause, right? You can talk about "doing the right thing" all you want, but you're asking people to give up boatloads of free money--money that doesn't really belong to anyone else--for some abstract notion of Right. I'm just saying, you may as well just give a speech about the killers of your father while you're at it.
I first moved in with Blair on the trail of the killers of his apartment, and for reasons that
don't need exploring at this juncture, I have allowed him to remain, attached as a liaison, to
me.

Marcus goes inside where his father is arguing with the rent collector, Ungar, the shifty guy
who was watching the armored car crash. Dad is leading a rent strike. Marcus is afraid the building
owner will send thugs to kick them out; dad assures him they're on the right side of the law, but
Marcus isn't so trustful of legal protection.

Some people actually return some money! Jim asks Blair for a $100 bill for comparison.

BLAIR: What do I look like?!
JIM: You look like the type of guy that would carry around a c-note just to impress women. Come
on.
BLAIR (looking around shiftily): For your information, it's for emergencies.
JIM: Emergencies. Earthquakes, floods... stranded co-eds?
BLAIR: Why you got to hurt me like that? ...Come on.
JIM (shrugging): You bring it upon yourself.

Oh man. Blair actually looks hurt, too. Clearly this is an old wound. I guess Jim has his own reasons
for bitching about Blair's Casanova tendencies. The money's counterfeit, if you were wondering.

"Why you got to hurt me like that?"

In the office, Simon figures someone replaced the money going to the treasury with counterfeit
bills, then staged the accident to explain where it went/divert suspicion--the treasury would have
noticed the counterfeit. "What do you think, inside job, Jim?" Jim gets a call. Over his shoulder, Blair
points at his coffee cup, as if asking America for permission to grab a refill. Call is from Lone, one of the treasury guards with a conspiracy theory. The guard who was originally supposed to be on the truck couldn't go because he got food poisoning after eating dinner with the driver. Jim arranges to meet up with him and hangs up. "Definitely an inside job."

Marcus tries to secretly pay the rent, but Ungar informs him the money is counterfeit, and also, not suspiciously at all, he adds that if Marcus tells anyone he was at the bridge, he'll kill him.

The other two treasury guys, Trout and Marshall, log onto "Chatter Net" to talk to their boss-in-crime, who goes by the handle MrJones. A chat website? Jeez. Least secure communication ever. MrJones arranges a rendezvous and asks if they took care of Lone yet. Trout and Marshall glance at each other, their faces close. Oh, Lord.

Everyone on this show has a partner!

Jim and Blair arrive at Jim's meeting with Lone in some kind of office/lockerroom thing, but he's not there. Jim smells blood and finds Lone's body in a locker. Later, when the coroners are loading the body into a bag, Jim makes them pause, and gently strokes Lone's face; Serena asks if he found something, and he says no, and asks to see Blair outside. You know, Jim, you could just walk outside, and Blair will follow you anyway. Jim says he saw an impression of a marine corps insignia ring.

They go to check out the tire from the armored car. Blair remembers he never got his hundred bucks back from Jim. Jim, unconcerned, examines the tire and says it probably got logged in with the evidence. He seems to take perverse pleasure in announcing the money's on its way to Washington to be examined.

BLAIR: Ah, Jim!
JIM: Don't worry about it. The department will make good on it.
BLAIR: The department won't make good on it! My hundred bucks is lost in some bureaucratic abyss. (put-upon, long-suffering martyr voice) That's okay...

Man, Jim, you're an asshole! What are you trying to do, keep Blair poor so he'll always depend on you? Hey, why don't you just mix Pine-Sol into his soup so he'll be nice and sickly too?

Jim figures out there has to have been a third man involved in the scheme since the charge on the tire was blown remotely, and there was no triggering device on the truck--and since, as he tells Simon later, Marshall and Trout are idiots. "So who else are we looking for?" asks Blair. Jim, testily: "I don't know, Chief, what do you got?" Is Jim on the rag or something this week? Blair shrugs elaborately, and Simon tells Jim to question the crash witness--"Use some of that Ellison charm."
Blair gives the Half Grin of I Know That Charm!

Awww, yeah.

While Jim and Blair go and have a chat with to Marcus's dad, Marshall and Trout go to their rendezvous in a condemned building to pick up their cut of the money. As soon as they open the door to the designated apartment, a giant explosion engulfs them. Later, at the crime scene, Taggart tells our heroes there was a gas leak, any kind of spark would have sent it up. The victims were ID'd by Dental. "There go your murder suspects," says Blair helpfully.

Jim checks out the toasted-out apartment. He notes a sulphur smell, and asks to use Blair's Swiss Army knife. Don't give it to him, Blair, you'll never see it again! Jim lifts the bottom of the doorframe with the knift, and finds parraffin and sandpaper. Someone engineered a giant match-striking scenario that would spark as soon as the door opened. Jim gives back Blair's knife. I guess he only takes things worth $50 or more.

Marcus's dad talks to Marcus; he's sullen. The dad believes for some reason that returning the money is the right thing to do, though, and he convinces Marcus to do it. At the money-returning-station, Jim asks if he saw anything again, and I'm not sure why Jim is so sure he did, but he says no. "Marcus, this isn't about the money anymore," says Blair, doing his gentle calm-down-the-witness thing. "The three guys in the armored truck -- they're dead." "No, they're not just dead, they were murdered," Jim corrects impatiently. I think he got that, dude, chill. Marcus waffles a bit more and then tells on Ungar.

Jim and Blair find Ungar getting into his car outside his hideout. Jim comes forward with gun drawn and yelling arresty type stuff; Ungar just zooms his car forward, sending Jim tumbling over the hood. I'm pleased to report that, although things like getting run over don't generally faze Jim, he's actually limping once he struggles to his feet. Blair rushes over and puts his arms around him: "We gotta get you to the hospital!" "No, let's just go," Jim insists. Blair hops into the driver's seat and Jim limps around to shotgun, where he radios an APB.
"We gotta get you to hospital!"

Jim limps into the station, Blair tailgating; Blair trips, falling into Jim, who snaps at him. Normally I'd cut him some slack here since he was injured, but he's been like this all episode.

Simon exposits that Jim has, indeed, been to the hospital, in case we were worried, and some info about the case: Ungar works for a property company owned by Adam Latham, who is the owner of the building where the two guys were exploded, and who, it turns out, owes millions of dollars in back taxes.

Jim and Blair check out another of Latham's properties. "You should be home in bed," Blair says, patting a still-limping Jim on the back. "I may walk like Walter Brennan, here, Chief, but duty calls," and I'm excited because I actually know who he's referencing. Figures Jim would like old Westerns. I bet he thinks he's John Wayne. You can forget what I said about buying a gun, Chief, you ain't exactly the type.
"You should be home in bed."

They banter a bit while Jim breaks in, and then Blair asks if this is legal, to which Jim assures him they have a warrant. "Well, let's go!" says Blair brightly. Inside, they find the counterfeiters' printing press.

Marcus sees Ungar. He runs to a pay phone to call Jim, who's driving with Blair. In the car, Jim hands Blair an envelope; he got the reimbursement. Blair's disappointed that it's five twenties instead of a hundred-dollar bill, and Jim rolls his eyes and tells him to go to a bank and get over it. Okay, that's justified, I think. Jim gets the call from Marcus, getting the location info just as Latham grabs Marcus and shoves a gun in his back. Jim and Blair drive up as Latham tries to get Marcus into a car with Ungar, explaining that a hostage could give them "leverage". Jim comes out guns blazing, Latham runs away, and Jim stops to cuff Ungar and tell Blair to watch him before tearing off on foot after Latham and his briefcase full of money.

Chaseity chase, through a trainyard, up some steps, onto the roof of a building. I'm thinking about how Latham pronounced "leverage" the English way, with the long "e", and I'm wondering if it would sound affected to start doing that with my American accent, and how it's probably already affected that I said "nyews" and "herb" (with a fucking "h" in it) and I wonder who pronounces it "basil" and who pronounces it "baysil" and before I know it Jim is hanging off the roof with Latham about to step on his fingers or whatever. Jim manages to grab onto Latham's leg and throw him off balance, and he falls four stories down onto the roof of a car, and looks pretty damn dead. His briefcase has come open where he dropped it and the wind blows a rain of money down over Jim and to the corpse and wreck below. Jim flips himself onto the roof. One more pathetic shot of HE GOT HIS MONEY NOW AND LOOK WHAT GOOD IT DID HIM!

Jim and Blair come by the apartment building where Marcus's dad and the other tenants are painting. Dad explains, "With the owner's death the building fell into receivership. The mayor needs to score some inner city points so he sells the building to the tenants for a dollar." Yeah, right. Blair's excited: "Look at this! The community coming together, this is great." Blair's kind of patronizing. Jim tries to talk Marcus into joining the police force, but he doesn't want to deal with any more "punk ass fools" than necessary. Jim and Blair chuckle and head back to the car; Jim's limping. "You still hurting from the accident?" Jim says no, he's got a splinter from the red cedar Blair sprinkled on the bathroom floor as a "natural deoderizer." Jim tells him, "Use the spray." Oh, good. I'm glad it all came back to poo.

**Bottom Line:** Some bickering/bitchiness between Jim and Blair, which I like all right, but not as much as I like the affection. And mostly the episode was about the plot. Meh.
Jim and Blair discuss Blair's love life as they walk into the bullpen. "What were you thinking of, letting her read all that stuff?" Jim asks, slapping Blair on the head. Blair: "I actually thought that honesty would strengthen our relationship. I'm stupid, I'm stupid," and he knocks himself on the forehead with a gratuitous "knock on wood" sound effect. "Just how detailed were these diaries?" asks Jim, and Blair sends him a look. "I'm an anthropologist." Heh. Cute. Simon calls over Jim, interrupting his big-brotherly advice/sympathy.

Simon asks Jim to ride along as the police escort in a prison vehicle that's transporting this criminal, Quinn. Jim gets all tight-lipped and silent; Simon says he knows Jim hates Quinn, but he's the only one available on the roster. Jim acquiesces curtsy. Simon sighs and says, fine, he'll ride with Quinn, if Jim will bring up the rear of the convoy. "You can bring the kid along," says Simon, like a bribe. Since when is it Simon's job to make sure Jim enjoys his orders anyway? Jim doesn't want to bring Blair (what?!) but Simon says, "Humor me, okay?" So, does Jim think Blair is going to be in danger, even though Simon calls this a routine "milk run"? (From past experience, he'd be perfectly justified.) Does Simon suspect Jim's senses will be needed? Does... does Simon love Blair?

On the drive, Jim tells Blair the story of Quinn--how he masterminded a heist; how Jim was supposed to go in and negotiate with him; how his new rookie partner insisted on going instead to prove something to his dad; how Quinn killed the boy, and now Jim feels guilty. Amazing how easily he let Simon go in his place this morning, then. (But it does explain his reluctance to let a young guy under his protection come on this trip.)

The convoy is, of course, ambushed by Quinn's semi-automatic-armed men--or rather, one man, who I think ends up getting killed by the police because we never see him again, and one woman, whom I'll call the Quinnette even though her name is Lisa. Simon is briefly knocked out in the crash, and while Jim and another police officer are having a firefight with Quinn's man,
Quinnette helps free Quinn, who takes Simon hostage. There's an ambiguous moment where two things happen at once--the non-Jim officer goes forward and Blair creeps out of the car--and Jim yells something which sounds suspiciously like "Blair!", but then the other officer gets shot and Jim runs to him, so maybe it was "No!" The fact that I can't tell the difference just goes to show how bad the sound is on my AVIs. Jim trains his gun on Quinn, but Quinn's holding Simon and he's got backup so he's only going to end up dead--him or Simon or both--if he shoots. Then there's a helicopter there for some reason, and Quinn, Simon and Quinnette get away in that. As they're flying off, Jim zooms in on the chopper and sees it's leaking fuel.

After commercial we're in a clearing in the woods. Some Feds, including a woman who flirts with Jim and gives all the earmarks of being a babe of the week but we never see her again, show Jim the crashed chopper. Its occupants have fled. The Feds say it's a hostage/kidnapping situation and it's now their jurisdiction, but Jim thinks it should be his because Simon is his captain. At any rate, the Feds think Quinn will have headed east and they're going to send their search party out that way, but Jim can tell they went north using his keen sense of smell. He covers, "It's, uh, a hunch." The head Fed is not impressed, and calls for a rescue party to stand by for when Jim gets hopelessly lost on his wild goose chase. Nice. Blair grabs two giant fully equipped hiking backpacks from a big pile of giant fully equipped hiking backpacks that I guess the Feds have brought and gives one to Jim. "Chief, I think I want you to take a squad car back into town, okay?" Blair reminds Jim that he (Jim) needs him (Blair) for backup, and that he's hardly a novice at wilderness stuff. Yes, yes, we've all seen Flight. I guess Jim remembers, because he doesn't put up much of a fight.

Quinn and the Quinnette find a cabin in the woods and they bust in and steal stuff. When its owners get back, some crazy gunloving get-off-my-property types, they go nuts. A news report about Quinn explaining how he's looking for money he hid in the woods only solidifies their plan: they head out with their semi-automatic hunting rifles (which Quinn didn't steal) to track down the culprits. So, to recap, in the woods, we've got: the Quinn group, including Hostage!Simon, whom they're slapping in the face and causing to put on looks of Quiet Smoldering Rage; the Hunters, as aforedescribed, on their trail for revenge/moneymaking purposes; and Jim and Blair, on that same trail, for justice purposes.

Jim and Blair come to a cliff above a rushing stream. Oh, right, Blair's fake acrophobia. He keeps peering over the edge of the cliff, wincing at the river below, and basically having exactly the level of anxiety any normal, rational civilian would have to the real danger posed here. Maybe he only thinks he has a fear of heights because he does in comparison to Jim "Death Wish" Ellison.

Across the brush, the hunters recognize them as "the cops from the news broadcast," and decide to kill them for some reason. Shots ring out, and Jim does his customary pull-Blair-to-the-ground move. The hunters have more firepower and higher ground, so Jim announces that they'll have to jump. Over the cliff. Into the water. Uh, sure, Jim. Hope you've repented for all your sins recently. Blair, of course, refuses, but he requires a surprising little amount of convincing for someone with a crippling fear of heights, or a BRAIN. They jump together, not, unfortunately, holding hands.
Almost, though.

"Ohhhh myyyyy Goooooooodddd!" screams Blair as they descend. They hit the water, float downstream a bit, and climb out on some rocks, unrealistically unharmed. I think this shot--wet, bedraggled, climbing out of the stream--is one of the many associated with a kissing blooper. No such luck in a canon, though.

Blair's dizzy and exhausted as they traipse through the woods into nightfall; he collapses at the foot of a tree. Jim checks him out, agrees he got "pretty well banged up," and declares this good shelter. Blair can stay put, and Jim will continue searching and then double back around for him. Oh, this won't end well. Blair asks, "Are you going to think less of me if I actually take you up on that offer?" "I'll probably think of you as a spineless, self-serving goober," Jim assures him with a smile. Oh, they're so manly and cute. Jim heads off, tossing back a final warning to Blair to stay awake and not light a fire. Great, he has a concussion. Way to leave him for the bears to eat, Jim. Blair mutters to himself, "Campfire, right. What am I gonna burn? Cold and wet is my world."

The bad guys do some bad things to Simon. They refuse to let him eat soup and they smoke his cigars and throw away the cigar case his son gave to him. (Honestly, Daryl? That was the best you could come up with?) Later, Jim finds the cup and the case. On the trail! Meanwhile, Blair hears noises and he lights a lighter and calls for Jim. "I really hope that's you, Jim!" Of course it's not; it's the hunters. They knock him out.

Blair wakes up looking like hell--wiping his mouth, bleeding from his forehead. The hunters ask him about "your buddy," and Blair says he drowned. The hunters are about to shoot Blair dead (again, motives unclear) when they get into an argument. They wrestle a bit, and then one shoots the other and gets all weepy about it.
Blair's running, jumping, looking over his shoulder like a frightened gazelle when he slams full-force into Jim's chest. He freaks out like a frightened gazelle with a head injury (or a boy recently turned human from stag) and Jim has to hold him steady and say, "Whoa, easy, Chief. Chief, it's me," until he calms down a bit. Blair, fisting Jim's coat collars, babbles out his story.

When he gets to "they knocked me out, man, they were gonna kill me," Jim puts a hand on Blair's hair briefly, checking out the ugly bruise on his cheek. "Whoa, whoa, shh," he says, but, worse luck, it's not a comforting "hush, darling, don't cry" shh, it's more of "shut up so I can listen" shh. "They're moving away," says Jim, to transition us to a scene of Quinn's group. Well... but Jim comforted Blair after the cut, right?
Quinn's group ends up at the old mine shaft where Quinn has hidden the money. They lower Simon down and he gets the duffel o’ cash. They're about to grab the money and let him fall when Jim arrives, gun outstretched, ordering them to pull Simon out. Simon's on solid ground, still holding the duffel, when the hunter shows up, gun blasting. Blair gets shot in the leg and falls to the ground, and Simon and Jim put his arms over their shoulders and drag him into the mine... cave... thing. Area. Outside, the firefight continues. Jim talks to Simon--asking if he's all right ("Never better") and sizing up the situation--as they both calmly and efficiently tear up bits of their clothing for bandages. Jim tells Blair to breathe and relax. Blair grits his teeth and grunts in pain. Pretty nice pain acting on Garrett's part.

Outside, the bad guys make a truce in the interest of getting the money back from Simon. Jim hears them plotting to go in after the good guys. Also, Jim only has one bullet left. Also, Blair is still shot. ("I can't believe I got shot!" he cries. Dude, I can't believe you can't believe that. You've been caught in how many crossfires since you took up with Jim?) So, yeah, they're pretty much screwed. Jim asks Blair if he can move, and Blair says, "Yeah, just give me your shoulder." So Jim loads Blair up onto Simon's shoulder and they head further down into the mine, with Jim hanging back for surveillance. They take cover behind a cart or something and Jim starts grabbing wads of cash, igniting them with a lighter, and throwing them out toward the bad guys. Blair groans. "Come on, baby," Jim murmurs, lighting another wad. I think it's supposed to be just a general "Come on, baby," but it was pretty hard on the heels of a Blair pain noise, so... I hear what I want to hear. Jim threatens to bonfire the whole mess of cash.
While the bad guys go regroup, Jim feels an air current, and Simon tells him to check it out alone, since Blair shouldn't be moved. We get a nice little scene of Blair/Simon bonding. "How did it feel when you got shot?" Blair asks, and Simon admits "it hurt like hell." When the bad guys decide to smoke 'em out, lighting a fire in the mine entrance, and sending smoke billowing down the corridor, Simon pulls Blair low to the ground. As Jim finds the back exit, Simon and Blair decide they can't take any more smoke inhalation, and Simon gets Blair's arm around his shoulder again and they make their way back toward the entrance. "We're coming out, Quinn!" Simon calls. The hunter's all glee and we're going to be rich! and Quinn, of course, shoots him.

Simon and Blair come out and drop the money at Quinn's feet. Jim watches from a distance. Quinn raises his gun. Jim aims carefully and shoots into a building which explodes. I guess he saw that there were explosives in there? For mining? It kind of makes sense? But you'd think an explosion would put his friends in just as much danger as his enemies. At any rate, it provides a distraction. Simon grabs the Quinnette, Jim runs in and grabs Quinn, and Blair sort of props himself up with the hunter's abandoned gun.

Jim holds Quinn over the mine shaft, gritting out, "It would be so easy..." Blair covers the Quinnette, now cuffed, with his gun, while Simon goes over to the shaft and says, simply, "Jim." One more moment of will-he-or-won't-he and then Jim pulls Quinn back to safety and cuffs him.

Wrap-up. As Blair is wheeled by on a gurney, chatting up the girl Fed from waaaaay earlier, Simon assures Jim he would have done the right thing even has not Simon been there. Jim: "I don't know about that." Simon: "I do." Meaningful look. Jim gives Simon his son's cigar case. That's nice.

I'm happy to report that Jim now goes over and talks to Blair. Jim tells Blair not to let this new girl see his diaries. "No more diaries for me, man, I'll wait until I'm old enough and write my memoirs." Jim: "I can't wait for the movie to come out." On signal from Jim, Blair's gurney is slowly raised up toward the rescue chopper. He panics, "Jim, I'm afraid of heights, man, help me!" Jim: "Aw, you're gonna be all right." "I'm not afraid, I'm not afraid," Blair tells himself. We close on a ridiculously long shot of the chopper swinging Blair's gurney from a ridiculously long harness, and Blair calling, "Jim! Jim, get me doooooown!" You know, although I think Blair's acrophobia, if it indeed exists, must be extremely mild, I still don't think it's right to make fun of it in this way.

Non J/B Pairing of the Week: This is an excellent episode if you like Blair/Simon; there's a lot of the kind of wounded-arm-over-shoulder-slinging and heat-of-danger protecting/falling into each other that's usually reserved for Blair and Jim. Jim and Simon also get their share of intense/emotional moments.

Bottom Line: Considering the title and set-up--the partners must depend on each other for survival!-I was expecting a lot more, so I can't help but feel disappointed. Still, it's a reasonable episode, with plenty of Hurt! Messed-up! Blair!
2x23 His Brother's Keeper

Chapter Summary

Jim's brother is a suspect in a crime; racetrack; Officer of the Year.

Horses speed by on a racetrack. The camera stays way too long on an unnecessary sign explaining that the races start tomorrow. Simon's watching the horses and talking to two old men, one of whom is talking about kids who are "destined for Harvard from the day they were born," although the first time I hear it as, "destined for Harvard and to date a boy." Apparently Simon is sponsoring a horse which he has some family connection to (well, I mean, he's related to the previous owner of the horse, not to the animal itself).

Blair and Jim enter; Jim is complaining that about cruelty to animals while Blair defends the "sport of kings" (I thought that was curling?), which is surprising if you consider that Blair is the one who's generally pro-liberal-environmenty things, but not if you consider that Jim is the one who's a giant grumblepants. He might as well just get a T-shirt that says "I'd rather be watching the Jags." Blair says these horses have it made: "the best food, the best medical care, and then they get to stud!" He confirms Jim's assessment that he's jealous. You heard it here first, folks: Blair's desires, in this order: food, medical care, sex. This is perfectly reasonable considering Blair's lifestyle. He's probably barely out of the hospital from his bullet wound last week. Anyway, the rest of this scene is Jim hearing an unidentified Rice Krispie-like noise and Simon informing Jim, to his dismay, that he's been volunteered to head up a special security detail for the mayor at a racetrack-related benefit dinner thing tonight. Blair looks on, smiling. "You knew about this?" Jim asks him, betrayed. Blair's all, hey, look! Horsies!

And we're at the benefit. The owner of the racetrack, Ben Prince, and his cronies are joking and laughing. "In this world, some people take, and other people get took," Prince Shirley MacLaines, inappropriately cheery considering he's lifting Miss Kubelik's post-suicide-attempt sentiment. Over by some fairy-light-adorned shrubbery, Blair chats up a lady, trying to explain the thrill of the racetrack. "I know, I used to be a jockey," she says. It's worth noting that she's exactly Blair's height. The potted plants tower over them both. She is now "vice president of a corporation" (any corporation!), which news causes Blair to take a desperate drink. Luckily, Jim comes up behind him then, takes his arm, and leans down to ask to talk to him privately. Ooh, privately!
Oh, Jim just wants to bitch him out. And wear a matching green vest and bowtie at him. And it's not private at all, because Simon is there. Jim whines that this is a PD event, it's crawling with cops, and there's no security detail needed. He's sniping at Blair for knowing about it and not saying anything when an emcee up on stage announces that someone present (!!) is going to be recognized as Officer of the Year! "I could be home watching basketball," says Jim, and too bad this is a formal event or he could have worn his new T-shirt. Also: how does he not realize what's going on? Simon's been grinning at him like a loon. Or maybe he got it and he just didn't care, because when the emcee declares "this year's honoree will be Detective James Ellison," Jim just stares at Blair for a moment, and then trudges toward the stage, telling him, Simon, and the rest of his brothers-in-arms, "I'm gonna get you guys; all of you." Blair and Simon grin at each other and high-five cutely.

Another clear shot of the formalwear. Guys, I hear Ellison totally rented a hotel room. For afterward.

Prince steps out onto a balcony for a smoke and gets grabbed from behind. Jim hears something as Simon is apologizing for the deception ("We just wanted it to be a surprise!" Blair at least ought to know by now that Jim hate surprises). By the time they get out there, Prince is lying dead ten stories down.

Ground floor. The body's being zipped up. Jim thinks he was pushed. Simon tells him to keep it quiet until he has real evidence, and Jim agrees distractedly; he's spotted a face across the crowd. Tender piano music plays as the recognizee cries, "Jim!" Jim: "Stephen!" Blair, silently: Shit.

"It's amazing how two guys can live in the same town and never run into each other," says Stephen. I mean, I guess that's what he says. I kind of tuned out after "two guys." Jim's face is expressionless as he asks, "You were at this thing?" Pat, the jockey Blair was chatting up earlier, comes up and explains that she and Stephen have some financial deal with the racetrack. Jim nods and turns back to his party, bidding Simon and the cops farewell, and steering Blair away with him with a hand on his arm. Blair: "Who was that guy?" Jim: "My brother." Blair, silently: GOD IS REAL!

Forensics! On the surveillance footage from the building, Jim sees what could be the reflection of the killer in a glass door, and asks Serena to enhance it.

Racetrack. Blair puts money on a horse that isn't Simon's, and the ensuing race is actually kind of exciting, because I don't know who the show wants to hurt more: Blair or Simon. I'm pretty sure it's Blair but no! His horse wins! During the race Blair, looking like a misfit in his civvies amongst a row cops in identical red racetrack jackets, cheers and grins and puts on his reading glasses to see the
track better and is generally adorable in all ways.

**Anthropologist among cops**

Serena emails Jim the photo on his laptop which he has. It's Stephen, of course.

Jim talks to Stephen in his office, which is I guess on the premises. Jim asks what Stephen was doing on the balcony before the murder, and Stephen says Prince was threatening him with a lawsuit against his company. Stephen's understandably upset that his relationship with his brother consists of several years of ignoring followed by a murder accusation, and he coldly denigrates Jim's career choice.

Blair collects his cool $80 and ostenatiously counts the four bills in front of Jim. Simon and the rest of the cops come up in their identical jackets, and they may as well just be snapping their fingers and singing "When you're a cop you're a cop all the way from your first syndicate to your last haul-away!" (I know, I know, lame.) Blair hilariously and very transparently scrambles to hide behind Jim.

**You can't seeee meee!**

"All the kid did was put a bet on horse," Jim attempts to defend. "Yeah, the right horse," Blair pipes up from behind him, laughing. Jim raises his hand semi-off-camera, and I'm not sure if he's saying "hold on" to the cops in front of him or if he's about to hit Blair. He snarks and walks off, and the cops surround Blair, taking his money and his betting book. Bullies.

Blair wanders up behind Jim, who's staring off, hearing the noise again. He watches where the sound's coming from--piggybacking?--and suddenly giant cracks spring up in a pillar before his eyes.
Oh no, Jim's going nuts. No, it's just totally unrealistic. Jim pushes the crowd away and a slab of concrete falls off the pillar, revealing a body encased in the cement.

Quick investigation after the body's pried out. Simon briefly questions Stephen, who IDs the victim as the construction foreman and promises to look into it. "So, Jim, that's your brother, huh?" Simon asks. Blair smiles affectionately, "I could sorta see the family resemblance." They have a similar sort of thin-lipped grimace, it's true. "I never could," says Jim shortly, and walks off. Woobie! Blair blinks up at Simon, who gives a look like, AWKWARD.

In their office, jockey-turned-VP Pat tells Stephen to resign: he oversaw the construction, and the taint of death could "jeopardize the merger." Stephen leaves and Pat makes a MYSTERIOUS SECRET PHONE CALL.

Jim briefs Simon on his investigation so far, handing him a photo of "the suspect." Simon's like... dude, this is your brother. "It's a long story, but I don't actually know him all that well. The truth is, he's just another suspect to me," says Jim, and Blair gives a Concerned Look of Wow Jim, Way To Harsh On Someone You're Supposed to Love (What Does This Mean For Me?) Simon says "If this gets serious, I'm going to have to pull you off the case." *If*. *Going to.*

In a super-shady parking garage, Pat gives an envelope of money to a guy with confusing patchy facial hair. "Get rid of Stephen Ellison."

Loft! Yay! "People change. Look at your experience in Peru, it changed you," Blair is saying, defending Stephen, and I'm just noticing that Jim and Blair have really cute bookshelves built into the end of their kitchen island. Blair encourages Jim to open up. (Just like he does every n--okay, poor taste.) Jim puts a little tender light jazz onto the stereo and gazes soulfully out the window. "My dad raised us. Mom was gone." Oh, this is going to be good.

Tell us, Jim! Tell us about your tortured past!

"He was always pitting us against each other," Jim continues, and Blair stands very, very still, like he's trying not to scare a deer. Jim tells Papa Ellison vs. Stephen vs. Jim stories, like: "He [father] was going to go on this business trip. Japan, Australia -- I don't know where it was, but he had promised Steven that he was going to take him on this trip if he kept his grades up. One day Steven comes home with a B--a B. The old man says 'Stephen, sorry, the deal's off. Jimmy, pack your bags.'" Blair, empathetically: "So he punishes him by rewarding you." In the end, if you're curious, Stephen framed Jim for joyriding in the dad's car and got to go on the trip after all, and Jim joined the army. Guys, I just want to say that I love this.

Ooh, now we get a Blair Youth story! "Once when I was fourteen, I went to this store and I
stole this microscope, right? (Yes, a microscope, Jim, I was a science nerd.) Anyway, um, the cops caught me and I swore up and down that I'd paid for the thing and I kept lying and getting in deeper and deeper. And finally I just couldn't take it anymore, and I had to come out and tell the truth. But by that time, nobody was listening." Blair thinks Jim has "stopped listening" to Stephen. Really? Really, Blair? That's a pretty tenuous friggin' metaphor, but I'll let it go, because that story rocked. And because it's pretty clear you were really hinting at something else. I think you both should just "come out and tell the truth" before you start "getting in deeper and deeper." (Okay, okay, poor taste!)

Jim's not interested in Blair's stories of childhood science nerd woe, because he sucks at everything. He's about to take a walk when the phone rings. It's Stephen, saying he found a bunch of false evidence about himself at work, and he needs Jim to meet him. Jim reluctantly agrees. After they hang up, we see the silhouette of a gun against the window of Stephen's office. Oh noes!

At the rendezvous (a parking garage, natch), Jim is shot at by an unknown assailant. Jim looks for the shooter, but he disappears before Jim can find him. In a car, he finds Stephen slumped over a seat, bleeding from the head. I seriously think they've killed off Stephen as Jim pulls up his body, but then he turns, conscious. His head's just been grazed. Jim calls for an ambulance, then sees the attacker in the shadows just in time to duck another shot.

At the station, Stephen explains his theory, speaking very slowly and carefully because I guess he thinks Jim's dumb. That or the actor has some line memory problems. The upshot is he thinks Pat was behind all this, because she's been skimming money, requisitioning cheap building materials (which explains why the building keeps falling apart), and the foreman knew about it. She's taking out whoever stands in the way of the company's progress, particularly the merger. Prince's lawsuit could have held that up. Jim points out that all this evidence implicates Stephen just as much.

After Stephen leaves, Simon asks if Jim believes him. "What does your heart tell you?" he actually asks. This is just stellar police work, here, Captain. Let's all just listen to our hearts and maybe the magic of love and the power of friendship will incarcerate the criminals and maintain law and order for us! That's kind of the motto of this show, actually. Jim admits the guy's his brother and he doesn't think he's capable of murder. Simon: "If you want me to take you off the case, just say the word." SIMON, GIVE AN ORDER, FOR GOD'S SAKE. Last time I checked, captain outranked detective. Also: you are a cop, and this is ILLEGAL. Jim says, "No, no, I'm fine." No, really, I'm so full, I couldn't arrest another brother if I tried.

Herman, Prince's oldest friend, whom he met in a foxhole in France--because everybody on this show has a partner--was feeding horses at the stable when the shooting went down, and he IDs the shooter. For some reason, it's Blair who suggests using Herman as bait to nab the guy (after all, he knows Herman saw him). Simon's like, Uh, no, but Herman insists, because he wants to die heroically for his friend. See? Magic of love!

Racetrack. The police put Herman in kevlar, hoping the shooter will make an attempt on his life at the big race. The police are still wearing their red gang jackets and this time Blair's looking more coordinated in his old red plaid. Jim spots the shooter and attacks him hand-to-hand; from a rooftop, Pat fires into the brawl. The distraction's enough to get the bad guy an escape, but as soon as he meets up with Pat in a dark room somewhere, Pat shoots him down. Jim and Blair find him a moment later. Jim sends Blair for an ambulance.

"Now what?" Simon wonders as they watch the attacker being medicaled away. Blair has an idea, but he admits, "it's a little crazy; we've never tried anything like it before." "This oughta be good," Simon mutters, but Jim says, loyally, "I'm open to anything as long as it works." I hope he keeps that attitude up in the--laboratory. Blair's idea isn't that off-the-wall: he asks Jim to trying
tracking the gun from the smell of the gunpowder.

Jim wanders into the grandstand with Simon and Blair at his heels, but he's distracted by the building falling apart again. Simon gets an evacuation announcement made. Jim and Blair follow the exiting crowd, still on the trail of the gunpowder. Pat throws away the gun, but it's too late: Jim's seen her. He tells Blair to get the gun (trash-picker!!!) while he chases after her. Of course they run onto the track and Pat grabs one of the horses. Yes, right, her jockey history! Glad that's coming into play here. Jim grabs a horse, too. Okay, there's no WAY Jim on a racehorse would catch up with an actual jockey on a racehorse. I guess this scene was probably fun to film, except that Richard Burgi is clearly on a soundstage about a thousand miles from an actual horse. Anyway, Jim doesn't disappoint: he catches up with her, *jumps onto her running horse* (does that count as a vehicle?), tumbles her off, and cuffs her. Another win for Team Law.

A crowd of men in tuxedos--Blair and, I think, all the named tertiary cops: Brown, Rafe, Taggart--stumble down the track singing "A Horse is a Horse (Of Course, Of Course)." Oh, no fair. You know I swoon for fictional classy drunks! So I guess it's the night of the actual OotY banquet, not just the announcement pre-banquet thingy? Jim gives his plaque to the horse he rode, which I guess is Simon's pet. The cops laugh about Jim's riding antics. "Jim's been holding out on us. Born with a silver spoon in his mouth. They kept horses, you know,“ says Simon, in an English accent. Oh my god, I was *sure* the "Jim can ride" thing wasn't going to be explained. But yeah, I mean, Jim's entire childhood story--season Jags tickets, classic cars, trips to the Pacific--did sort of paint a picture of wealth. Simon's excited because his horse has been doing well, and Blair, smoking a cigar, shrugs. I boggle.

Cigar + cute = does not compute!!!

Stephen's standing off by himself, and Jim goes over to end the episode with him, which I *guess* is fitting, I *guess*. Stephen thanks Jim for figuring out his building was about to go before anyone got hurt so they could make the repairs. So I guess this is some time later. Jim thanks Stephen for coming to his awards banquet. They apologize to each other for the past. The other men in the background burst into song again and start tramping off, Simon motioning for Jim and Stephen to come with. The brothers put their arms around each other and follow.

**Bottom Line:** I love character dev, backstories and families, and so this, like the enlightening first Naomi episode, gets a solid 4/5. Even though from the way it was described to me, I thought we would get more banquet scenes, with an obvious Blair-is-Jim's-date vibe. Still, there's no counterevidence, and we get to see them hanging around together in tuxes.
2x24 Sleeping Beauty

Chapter Summary

Girl wakes up after an eight-year coma with emotional IQ of a 12-year-old. Luckily, Jim likes 'em young.

Night, in the stuffed-tody filled bedroom of a twelve-year-old girl. Her mother enters and shakes her: "Stacey, Stacey, we have to go." Downstairs, Stacey's father is burning papers in the fireplace. "Where are we going?" Stacey asks sleepily. "I don't know yet," says the mother. They pile into the family car. Stacey's mother makes a special point of handing her a toy dog. Oh, great, it probably has diamonds in it or something. As soon as they drive off, a big semi truck parked behind turns on and follows. On a country backround, the truck edges them through the rail and into a ditch. Screams.

An early-twentiesish woman wakes up in a hospital room, screaming and clawing at the electrodes on her head. She knocks a tray onto the floor, catches sight of herself in a metal dish, and looks horrified. She runs.

Cut to Blair driving at night, singing along to Angie Ferris: "...This masquerade... Will I ever learn?" Apt. Blair screeches to a halt as the young hospital-gown clad woman--it's Stacey, I think you've probably guessed, so I'll just call her that--dashes in front of his car. He gets out and finds her cowering behind some trash cans. "Hey," he says gently. "Need some help?"

Jim is just settling down to the table for dinner when Blair enters. "I thought you were going to the movies," says Jim, who clearly wanted some Jim Time tonight.


He goes all passive-aggressive when Blair leads in Stacey, asking bitchily, "Is this your date for the evening?" Blair hushedly explains the situation. Jim surmises from Stacey's gown that she's an escapee from the psych ward at Engleman Hospital, and he calls to ask while Blair quietly explains to Stacey the cultural significance of a doll she pulled off his native art shelf. The hospital doesn't know anything about her, and Jim wants to take her down to the police station, but Blair refuses: "The station will terrify her!"
Jim gets called in to take over on a stakeout for a sick cop. As he's heading out, Blair asks to let Stacey stay for the night. Jim argues quite reasonably that they don't know anything about her, and what if she needs medication? But she's snuggled down on the couch with her doll, and Blair thinks she looks angelic, and of course he gets his way because it's Blair. Heading out (and taking his sandwich with him), Jim tells Blair to call Missing Persons, and he at least does that.

Morning. Blair apparently spent the whole night draped awkwardly over the chair across from the couch with Jim's paperback. There's a knock, and Blair lets in two guys from Somerset Hospital. Down on the street, he tries to relax Stacey "Hey, hey, take it easy!" as she struggles against the men trying to load her into a van. She's wearing an oversized gray robe over her gown--Jim's, I think. Was Blair just going to give it to the hospital?

"Don't be so rough with her!" Blair scolds after they load her into the van, and the second time he says it one of the men pulls a gun on him. Seems like a rookie mistake there. As soon as they drive off and Blair is wondering what to do, Jim drives up, and Blair hops in and quickly outlines the situation. Jim doesn't require much exposition: when Blair says Chase, Jim chases.

Jim gets on the trail by using his super-senses to hear Stacey's cries. A bit of luck is that Stacey manages to escape the truck just at the right time, so that Jim drives up when the men are struggling to get her back inside. When they hear the sirens, they drop her and run. Jim and Blair arrive at Stacey's side, and she faints. Jim carries her back to the car.

After the commercial, Jim and Simon have somehow managed to track down Stacey's doctor, because he's in the loft checking her out. As Blair plays dolls with Stacey, the doctor explains that Stacey was in an accident eight years ago, and only emerged from the resulting coma a few months ago. She's undergone a lot of physical therapy since then (so at least they attempt to explain away her having working legs, etc), but despite having a woman's body she is emotionally twelve. The doctor wants to get Stacey back to the hospital, but Simon says she needs twenty-four hour surveillance until they at least figure out why the bad guys wanted her. Jim volunteers to arrange a safehouse, but Simon wants her to stay at the loft because "the less exposure, the better," or in other words, "shut up!" Simon, I know how you like to advance the plot by insisting that Jim and Blair jump through various hoops, but this is totally the worst place for her to be! The bad guys have been here!

Station. Jim has detected, and found that Stacey's parents were run off the road by an unknown vehicular assailant, and that her father was an amazingly skilled auto mechanic. A notebook full of high-level-looking science was found in his possessions.

Jim and Blair take Stacey to her old house to see if it will dredge up any memories. Stacey goes up to her room and sees some girls playing through the window. She heads outside and joins them, silently picking up a Barbie and brushing her hair as the children whisper to each other, clearly confused by the strange lady, and Jim and Blair look on. I don't think a twelve-year-old would just randomly start playing with another kid's toys like that.
They grow up so fast.

Jim spots someone watching them with binoculars a ways away. He tells Blair to stay with Stacey and takes off. The children take what I think is under the circumstances a perfectly logical course of action: they ask for and then take their doll back from Stacey, and leave. Stacey looks sad for a moment, and Blair looks Concerned. I'm so glad he hasn't tried to get into her pants (yet?) Meanwhile, Jim chases the watcher through some streets. In an unexpected twist, the watcher is run over by a car!

Next Stacey turns her childlike wonder and wist to an ice cream truck, with children lining up outside it. "Can I have some ice cream?" she asks Blair. Blair stares because, holy crap, she just spoke! Stacey, misunderstanding his look: "Please?" Blair grins and gives her some money.

Stacey's doctor asks her what she remembers (nothing about the accident, a little about her mother, nothing about her father) while Jim talks on the phone. He reports to Blair that the now-dead watcher had a record, but they still have no idea what his connection is to Stacey.

Walking through the halls, Jim asks the doctor who's paying Stacey's medical bills as behind them, Blair and Stacey converse silently but intently. The doctor says Stacey is being paid for and researched by the Chadway Foundation because of the interesting rarity of her condition. The doctor takes off, and Blair and Jim hustle Stacey away from a nosy reporter.

Back at the loft, Stacey opens a box containing a spaghetti-strap dress with flowers on it. (She's currently wearing a plaid flannel shirt which is probably one of Blair's.) She exclaims that it's beautiful: "How did you know I'd like it?" Oh God, Blair has commenced being creepy--but no! Jim responds, "Lucky guess." Jim bought her a dress! This is turning into a strange sort of *My Fair Lady* situation. Next Blair's going to be saying "Oh, Jim, be reasonable" as Jim tries to teach Stacey how to disassemble and reassemble a gun in eight seconds in time for the next Cop of the Year Banquet.

BLAIR: Jim Ellison in a dress shop. I would have loved to have seen that. Oh, to be a fly on the wall.
JIM: Come on. I was married once.

Stacey gives Jim a long hug, and Blair looks up at them, wide-eyed.
Whoa, hey, hi!  

Stacey leaves, and Blair says, "Uh-oh..."

JIM: All right, Chief. You got anything to say, just come out with it.
BLAIR: I don't have anything to say. I think she said it all.

What? All she said was "I'm going to go try these on." Also: it's amazing how quickly they come to the point when it comes to the squicky sexual tension between a forty-year-old cop and an emotionally twelve coma victim, and yet the gay shit is all taboo.

Simon calls. They've ID'd the parents as physics profs at Pacific Tech University who disappeared nine years ago. Jim, Blair, and Stacey take a drive down to the university. Jim bids Blair and Stacey walk around campus and see if anything jogs her memory while he goes to talk to some of the parents' colleagues. Blair nods and gives him a little swat on the shoulder as he walks off.

A colleague of the parents tells Jim they were working on "eneration of light energy from sound - called sonor luminescence." He keeps popping Vicodin or something. Jim shows him Stacey's dad's notebook, and the colleague, looking disappointed, informs him it's just notes on a combustion engine. As the colleague leaves, they shake hands, and Jim feels his fast pulse. Jim asks who funded the parents' grant, and the professor says he thinks it was the Chadway Foundation.

Blair and Stacey approach a statue; Stacey remembers being there with her mother. As Jim walks up, Stacey's face lights up into a grin and she runs to him, crying, "Jim! I remembered being here!" Oh man. She's totally imprinted on him. Jim calls for the address of the Chadway Foundation.

It's a warehouse with a high-tech security system. Jim starts to climb the fence. "Hey. What are you doing?" Blair asks, his hand apparently on the small of Jim's back.
"This oughta get their attention," says Jim, swiping a credit card or something in the swipey thingy, and punching in a lengthy fake access code. "Access denied" signs and sirens flash, and a bunch of guys drive up in a minivan and pull Blair and Stacey out of the car at gunpoint. Nice going, Jim. The nosy reporter from before comes out and informs Jim he's just broken into a military intelligence facility and is in danger of going to jail. Finally someone calls him on his vigilanteness. Honestly, Jim, how many times have I explained to you about warrants?

Nosy non-reporter--named Sullivan--interrogates our three intrepid heroes. Well, not so much intrepid as nervous (Blair), blubbering (Stacey) and petulant (Jim). When Jim gets tired of slouching and whining, he attacks a guard and pulls his own gun on him; before retaliatory measures are taken against him or his friends, the cavalry arrives, in the form of Simon and a bunch of Cascade police, to rescue them.

Jim corners the parents' colleague who fills in the gaps. The parents were peacenik fuel researchers who needed money. The colleague hooked them up with Chadway, who turned out to be a military front. When the parents found out how their research would be used, they refused to continue working. Sullivan thought they had turned their allegiance to a foreign government, and shortly thereafter they quietly disappeared. The colleague thinks they would not have destroyed their life's work, only hid it. Jim figures the Foundation has been waiting for Stacey to wake up, hoping she'd have a clue. (If they wanted it that badly, why did they kill the parents instead of capturing them alive? Oh, whatever.)

Boxes stacked up at the loft. Jim explains to Blair and Stacey that he had her parents' stuff shipped over from storage, hoping it would jog her memory. Oh, Jim! Keeping secrets from even Blair? Maybe he's in on it. The first object Stacey finds is her toy dog. Okay, definitely the McGuffin is in the dog. They also find a photo album.

BLAIR (guilelessly): Ha-aww, what a cute baby!
JIM (creepily): Is that your mom? She's pretty. You look a lot like her.

Stacey grows increasingly upset at the happy pictures of her dead parents and eventually drops the book and runs into Blair's room. Jim asks Blair to talk to her, but Blair says, "Right about now, I think you're the one she's closest to." "Me?" cries Jim, as if he hasn't been encouraging it. Blair reports that he found something on the floor last night: he hands over a pink construction paper heart reading "Stacey Loves Jim."
Oh my God, I can't BELIEVE the clip of Blair solemnly handing Jim a Valentine hasn't been used out of context in vids from here to ya-ya.

Jim protests that Stacy's just a kid, and Blair says, "Jim, when you're twelve years old, your feelings--they may be immature, but they're still real, man," and he gives Jim a Long Hard Penetrating Look as if to say "I Should Know!"

Jim goes into Blair's room. Twinkly emotional music. Jim says he knows it's confusing right now, but "things will change." "Maybe I don't want things to change," says Stacey, "maybe if things change too much, you won't be around anymore." Jim smiles broadly. He's loving this attention, which is awful, because he's so not going to form any kind of lasting bond with this kid. He'll drop her just like she's one of his hot potato babes. "We'll always be able to be friends," he lies. "What if I want you to be more than just my friend?" Jim immediately goes into stammer mode, but I feel like he should at least find out whether she means "boyfriend" or "father" before he starts making assumptions. He says her emotions are "confused," and that her feelings "aren't what they seem to be." She gets upset and kicks him out, as any right-thinking person would. Jim goes out to the kitchen to lick his wounds with Blair, but soon feels a draft and goes to check on Stacey. She's escaped.

Wow, Stacey went to her doctor. Surprisingly good move, but the way that he smiles as we cut to commercial suggests he's working for the bad guys. Meanwhile, Jim and Blair report to Simon that Stacey's not at any of the places from her past. "What if it's a place from her present?" Blair I-totally-just-blew-my-own-minds. "The only new place she knows is the loft," says Jim. "And the hospital," says Blair in a "no, duh!" tone of voice. You just figured it out yourself, Blair, there's no need for that.

The doctor gets off the phone with "a friend" and goes to his trunk ostensibly to get Stacy a blanket, but instead he soaks a handkerchief with some convenient ether and knocks her out. Sigh. Next, Jim and Blair arrive at the hospital and find the doctor shot in his car. The plot is maybe a little too thick now?

On the scene, Simon and Sullivan of Chadwell bitch at each other, and Jim finds one of the mints the colleague guy is always popping.

In Stacey's old house, the colleague guy, who I now wish I'd named, hands a coming-to Stacey her toy dog. Oh, yay, he's introducing himself! I can call him Van Zandt from now on. He tells Stacey she needs to remember where her parents hid her research in order to clear their names, which is actually true, right? He gives Stacey a drug to help her memory. I don't know what kind of drug this is. She recounts the night they ran away as we saw it in the opening scene. Then she remembers her father had her toy dog, and Van Zandt rips it open and finds a roll of microfilm. But Stacey remembers something else: Van Zandt getting out of the truck that killed them. She accuses him, and
he speechifies, explaining why he's the bad guy or whatever. It's not important (to me).

As Van Zandt exits the house, Jim pulls a gun on him. A henchman holds Stacey at gunpoint until she elbows him. Stacey wins! Van Zandt gets away with the microfilm in his station wagon, and Jim commandeers some passer-by's motorcycle to chase him tediously. The chase ends with Van Zandt careening into a gas pump and exploding, research and all, while Jim watches.

At the loft, Simon delightedly reports to Jim that Sullivan's been reprimanded by her superiors. Blair comes out of his room with suitcases, Stacey trailing behind, wearing a black lycra bodysuit/tights thing and a long dark-pink jacket (something Stacey McGill of The Baby-Sitters Club would have worn, I think. Come to think of it, Stacey's handwriting is pretty reminiscent of Stacey McGill's.) Jim: "Don't you look great! So grown up! Heh, heh." Simon does that super-obvious "Hey Blair, come look at this thing over here" thing, and Simon, WHY ARE YOU ENCOURAGING THIS. SIMON. WHAT. Jim expositions that Stacey's going to school in Portland to catch up on the education she's missed. She says she's scared, and Jim tells her to call anytime. She thanks him. He hugs her, sweetly, actually, like she's his niece or something.

See, that's how their relationship should be.

It's kind of long hug, though, and Blair thankfully interrupts it, saying they have to get to the airport. Jim tells him to drive safe and thank God they are out of there and Jim did not kiss her. Show ending quip happens between Simon and Jim as Simon offers to buy Jim a coffee and Jim says "Better make it a double; if I fall asleep now, I don't know when I'd wake up."

He adds, extraneously, "I don't think I'd make a very good sleeping beauty."

**Bottom Line:** Jim's relationship with Stacey makes me so uncomfortable. Between that and Jim and Blair's usual rapport, I'm thinking the writers are incapable of writing a conversation free of sexual undertones. On the other hand, there was disappointingly little Jim/Blair in this episode. Considering that this is a season finale, it's also kind of disappointing that it was very much a one-shot, with no particular relationship to the overall arc or themes of the show (such as they are).
3x01 Warriors

Chapter Summary

Jim loses his senses; Chopec warriors visit Cascade on a mission of justice.

We open in Peru, because that's what happens in season premieres. Some Big Bad Logging or something is going on.

In Cascade, Jim tries to catch some thieves in a store at night. He gets confused by a weird smell. Seeing a gun, Jim shoots—but it turns out to be a cop!

Jim comes home and snipes at Blair about his annoying meditation music, then explains that he is upset about the accident. The guy didn't die, but he's still in the hospital. Blair calls it an "honest mistake." Jim is not convinced.

The next morning, Jim comes out of the shower (shirtless, natch) to find smoke billowing out of the toaster. When Blair comes in with the paper, Jim yells at him, then apologizes and admits he couldn't smell the smoke. He's lost his Sentinel abilities.

And he is good with it. When Blair protests that his Sentinel senses help him save lives, Jim responds that the moment they led him to nearly kill someone, they became not worth it. Blair gives a despondent "But Jim WHAT ABOUT US" face which is interrupted by a call from Simon--crime scene; Blair was specially requested. So I guess he's not totally useless. Yet.

What about us?

A man was killed by a Chopec dart. Jim is able to identify the killer from the markings on the weapon, because it happens to be somebody he knows: Incacha, the shaman who guided him when he first became a Sentinel in Peru. Uh-oh, old boyfriend in town!

Jim and Blair go to the big evil corporation where the victim was a bigshot. Jim questions the CEO guy, who is a total duuude, while Blair, waiting outside, runs into an old friend named Janet who is now overseeing the company's environmental policies. Despite Blair's explanation for his presence starting with "My partner, he's a detective," Janet figures out that Blair is involved with the police. Blair hits on her until she announces she's engaged, which state of affairs Blair describes as
"terrible." Eventually Blair asks Janet to keep an eye out for any shady dealings in Peru. Jim emerges
as they're hugging and grumbles something about Blair humping a table leg.

Incacha shows up at Jim and Blair's apartment! Blair doesn't know the language for some
reason, and Jim sucks as a translater, letting Blair's explanation that he and Jim are "partners" (which
Blair mimes by clapping his two hands together) go entirely untranslated so that Blair and Incacha
just have to laugh nervously at each other. Incacha admits to killing the dead guy, but it was in self
defense. Then Jim and Incacha have an argument: Incacha wants to capture and possibly kill the
people who are in charge of the company destroying his homeland, and Jim wants him to not. Do
that. Jim also confesses that he lost his Sentinel abilities, and Incacha says "A Sentinel will always be
a Sentinel--if he chooses to be." Retardedly, the word "Sentinel" is in English, or else it's
coincidentally the same in both languages LAME.

While Incacha pokes amusingly at things in the fridge, Jim and Blair discuss Jim's conflicting
duties to the tribe and to the law. They're interrupted by a phone call from Janet, who is printing out
some awesome evidence she found after social engineering her way onto the boss's login. Blair
agrees to meet her in the garage of her building (WORST RENDEZVOUS POINT EVER) and
suddenly Jim and Blair realize Incacha is gone.

In the car looking for Incacha, Blair bitches, "I really wish you had your Sentinel abilities" and
Jim bitches "Well I don't" and they snap at each other until Blair finally brings up the point we've
been waiting for: "Do you think Banks is going to let me be your partner if there's no legitimate
reason for me to be here?" Jim weakly protests Simon has developed an "abiding tolerance" for
Blair, and wonders bitterly if Blair's upset because he won't be able to finish his dissertation. Blair
has to confess that he could have finished his dissertation months ago. "You've been stalling?"
"...Yeah." Dawwwww. Blair says that continuing his life in academia would be like a merry-go-
round after a roller coaster.

"You've been stalling?"
Although they haven't found Incacha, they're getting late, so they go to meet Janet. Of COURSE she is dead in the parking lot. She has Incacha's arrow in her back, but Jim immediately (correctly) assumes she was killed by her employers for knowing too much, because the Chopec wouldn't shoot an unarmed woman in the back.

CEO Dudeface and Some Other CEO Type argue; SOCT doesn't want to be implicated in killing; Dudeface points out he doesn't mind killing anyone "with brown skin who lives in a hut," and, wow, seriously, bravo, Dude, for playing the racism card to justify murder. I'm actually legitimately impressed. As they're walking into the Parking Garage of Doom, Chopec warriors jump out and attack them. Dudeface shoots Incacha and runs away, and the rest of the warriors capture the other white guy.

Blair pacing in his apartment (we see that it's #307) saying "I'm so stupid! I'm so stupid! Why'd I let her get involved!" to nobody in particular when he hears a noise in the hall and finds Incacha bleeding on the doorstep.

He calls Jim (he must sound pretty distraught on the phone, because Jim calls him "Blair") who rushes over in time to translate his dying words: Incacha says the others took the CEO-type to a "forest in the sky." Also, he wants Blair to guide Jim to his spirit animal. Blair freaks, "I don't know how to do that!" Incacha dies.

Jim totally flips the hell out when the paramedics arrive, ranting and raving about proper Chopec burial rituals. Blair and Jim have a loud, dramatic argument in front of everyone in which they make no bones about yelling about Sentinel-related topics. So that's their deal now? They just
want people to know? Blair refutes Jim's accusation that he's trying to get him to calm down: "I need your emotions up and I need them open! You've gotta get your senses back! ...Become the Sentinel to save the tribe!" He pushes Jim bodily out the door.

On the roof, Blair makes Jim listen to his meditation music and talks him into finding his spirit animal. Jim has a vision where he finds his panther, who morphs into Peruvian!Commando!Jim, and tells him basically to suck it up and be a Sentinel again. He'll be responsible for his actions whether he has superpowers or not so he may as well have them. Peruvian!Commando!Jim morphs back into the panther and leaps into Jim's chest. Jim returns to the present with abilities intact and zooms in on a roof garden across town.

There's various fighting in and around the roof garden. I'm on line 95 of this summary, so I will not elaborate. Also, I was thinking about what I was going to write in earlier parts of this, so I wasn't paying that close attention. Jim gets the once-and-future-captive CEO cuffed first and then tracks down Dudeface, stopping his escape, not by jumping on his car as you might expect, but by shooting his tire with an arrow. Also, Blair hits a bad guy over the head at one point. The Chopec creep up and have a conversation with Jim, but disappear mysteriously when his back is turned. Jim tells Blair the Chopec told him he's not the Sentinel of the tribe anymore. Blair: "After all we went through?!" Jim: "I'm the Sentinel of the Great City." Fade out on Blair chattering that that makes him the Shaman of the Great City.

Best Moments: Jim and Blair's argument in the car about what would happen if Jim continued to not be a Sentinel was particularly satisfying because this show often ignores issues like that (I thought they might just pull a "one week!") and not explain why Jim and Blair expect never to be parted).
Also, it read just like a slash story, teasing us by coming 95% of the way to a mutual declaration of devotion. I also quite like the screaming match in front of the paramedics--very emotional and full of Jim's special brand of rough and manly yet entirely gratuitous touching.

Also, there is a funny part at the station where Jim holds out the phone toward Blair and Simon and says "It's for you, Chief," and Blair has to be like, "I think he means me."
Chapter Summary

Blair's favorite basketball player is under investigation for murder.

On the way to the basketball arena, Jim and Blair have a boring conversation about insurance which may qualify as foreshadowing? or a theme? or something? since players' insurance policies are discussed later. Anyway, the point is, Jim has a new truck from '69.

BLAIR: I never would have pegged you for a retro man.
JIM: Are you kidding? '69 was a very good year for me.
BLAIR: Yeah, yeah. I was born.
JIM: Except for that.

Simon, who is friends with the Cascade Jaguars' manager, has gotten Jim and Blair visitor access to a practice. Blair is really excited. Security head Ray Krause (whose name I remember because it reminds me of Ray Kowalski and Peter Krause) tries to introduce Jim and Blair to one of the star players, Dwight Roshman (whose name I remember because I looked it up), but he rudely blows them off. It's made up for by the polite chitchat of a kind aging player, who turns out to be Blair's junior-high hero Orvelle Wallace (who is clearly played by a real basketball player). During practice, Blair and Jim commiserate about rumors that the team is moving, and the camera does a weird thing where it periodically goes to black and white during filler shots of play. Roshman and Wallace get into an argument on the court, and Krause apologizes to Jim and Blair and says practice is closed.

In the locker room after practice, Roshman gets his assistant to walk to his car dressed as him and bring it around. In the garage, the assistant is shot and the car stolen.

Even though it seems like a "basic carjacking," Jim and Blair investigate. Learning from Krause that Roshman has gotten some threatening letters, they go to his house to ask about them. His girlfriend, Shelley, shows them to the court in the back. Roshman says he threw away his letters and doesn't want to talk. Blair wants to play against Roshman, because even though he is little (Roshman calls him "Tiny Tim"), he was all city point guard, whatever that means. Blair offers two-on-one, to Jim's dismay. The camera does its cool-awesome-basketball-black-and-white thing, which is kind of funny now that Jim and Blair are getting totally crucified. Blair pulls Jim aside to tell him to use his senses. After that, they are more competitive; Jim makes a long shot ("What kinda shot is that?" cries Roshman, to which Blair crows, "A three point shot!") and Blair even gets a basket.
Use your senses, dumbass.

The fun times end when the hoop comes crashing down. Jim finds that the bolt was scored through, and Roshman suspects Wallace. Apparently he is Shelley's uncle and he disapproves of the way Roshman treats her. But does he disapprove enough... TO KILL???

Blair and Jim question Wallace at the arena. He's getting treated for his old injuries (Okay, Jim tries to question him, and Blair interrupts, gushing, "You're like a Viking! You've got battle scars! You must have an incredible threshold for pain!" Blair is so cute when he interested in things.) Wallace has a muscle spasm and Blair offers him a ride home, which he accepts. On the way out to the car, he and Blair chat about his trip to Africa and the Tanzanian bracelet he wears.

An APB interrupts the drive--they've found Roshman's stolen car. Despite Blair's protests that "this is not a pursuit vehicle!" they join the chase. Blair loves his car too much to test her, and Jim steps on his foot to make him speed up. Blair wasn't expecting that (because it's insane) and swerves out, but the car is still caught by a bunch of police. Some kids get out. They found it dumped somewhere. Whoever killed Roshman doesn't care about the car.

The plot having thickened, Simon has tickets to a dinner/banquet/party/thing being held by his manager friend, and he wants Jim to go.

JIM: Huh. I guess Sanburg's gonna have to press his tie.
SIMON (sadly): Guess that means you'll be needing both tickets.

At the event, Blair ogles cheerleaders. He also discusses placing bets with his cousin Robert the bookie, and Jim's like, "You know I could bust you for that." Roshman and Wallace get into another fight about Shelley. Wallace's bracelet breaks and Krause returns it to him.
Impressive.

Shortly thereafter, Roshman is found dead. Jim finds a little pebble at the site, but can't ID the material. More investigation and elimination of various leads occurs before Blair finally admits that he knew immediately it was part of the bracelet.

JIM: Do you know what you've done?!
BLAIR: Withheld evidence vital to an ongoing investigation...
JIM: Simon's gonna kick your ass. I should kick your ass!

Come on, Blair. Submit to Jim's moral authority.

The pebble provides the grounds for a search warrant. Jim goes off to get it and Blair goes on an errand of his own: a meeting with a bigwig in his cousin's gambling ring. He learns that Krause had major debts. Meanwhile, irrefutable evidence is found at Wallace's house. Simon seems genuinely upset: "This is gonna kill Sanburg." Aw, Simon's a sweetie.

Big Game. The announcers are convincing in that they have the right kind of voices and say some boring stuff which I tune out, but they also describe the ball as "the basketball" and the game as "the basketball game," which makes me think the writers may know as little about basketball as they know about being a police officer, a grad student, or a heterosexual. Anyway, Jim and Simon show up to arrest Wallace, and the manager guy convinces them to wait until the game is over. Blair shows up with his crazy theories and anonymous sources, and nobody believes him until Jim overhears a phone conversation in which Krause tells Wallace to throw the game or he'll kill Shelley, whom he is holding hostage in the rafters. Jim goes to rescue Shelley while Blair tries to Simon, who waves him off with a "Not now, Sandburg," and you get the feeling this happens a lot. Once he's told Simon Blair runs off to tell Wallace that Shelley's rescued, which earns him a hug from his hero.

The climactic scene involves Jim vs. Krause hand-to-hand in the catwalks while Wallace jumps back into the game with less than a minute left to go and three points behind. Even though we have been carefully introduced to the concept of a three point shot, the Jags make up the difference in a series of one- and two-point shots. As they win the scoreboard comes crashing down, of course. Jim dangles from a rope, Krause clinging to his legs (this always happens to Jim) and asks "Did we win??" Wallace nods at Blair from across the floor, and Blair grins. Karate-Kid-esque freeze-frame and SCENE!
Yo Adrienne!
Blair's new lust-object is a criminal.

Blair calls Jim from his giant cell phone while driving painfully in a clunky, backfiring car. The mechanics couldn't fix it, but he won't junk it because it's a "classic" (that will be repeated so often you will think Blair is the valet from *On the Razzle*). He promises to be home within minutes, but Jim callously insists on leaving for a stake-out without him, even though it's broad daylight. After he leaves, a girl fights with her boyfriend in the parking lot.

Blair arrives in time to release the girl, Iris, from the trunk of her own car. Blair tries to call the police, but Iris stops him. Blair is impressed by her "my parents were counterculture" story, and mentions Naomi. Iris asks to take a shower at Blair's because of some water issue in her new apartment. He laughs and raises his eyebrows as if she has just asked him to be present in said shower.

The next day Jim is awakened by the sound of Iris playing Blair's electric guitar "signed" "by" "Jimi Hendrix". Blair must have warned her about his partn-uhhhh-roommate, because all she says when he comes down to yell at her "You must be Jim. Nice boxers."

They are pretty nice.

Blair comes in from fetching the paper or something (he is always fetching the paper) and explains that Jim needs to get his sleep because he was up all night doing, uh, road maintenance. Iris and Blair agree to meet for dinner and she leaves. Jim complains about her while Blair rifles the cabinets for the ingredients for a seven-course meal that is supposed to be "this AMAZING aphrodisiac."

At the station, Taggart finally gets his big chance to join the stake-out party because Blair is busy chasing girls. Wow, Taggart ranks low. Jim complains about Iris. Simon thinks he is taking his "big brother" role too far. Sure, Simon, that's what's happening. Jim proceeds to spend the next indefinite number of hours poring through girls' mug shots (isn't there, like, a stakeout or something tonight?) until he finally finds Iris's record. She is mixed up in heroin dealings.

Iris gets a call from Chance, then calls Blair to cancel dinner because she's stranded downtown. Blair gallantly comes to pick her up. Iris tells him to make a stop and while Blair waits in
the car, he's briefly accosted by a guy with a gun, who thought he was someone else (Chance also has long curly hair and is weirdly short). Gun Guy goes inside and a moment later all three come running out, there is a brief skirmish, and Iris and Chance jump into Blair's car and make him drive at gunpoint.

The police recover security footage from the incident which shows Chance from the back completely convinces Simon that Blair is working with Iris to STEAL HEROIN AND SHOOT PEOPLE. Jim is more doubtful, and yet somehow his Sentinel sight which was able to spot an Adam's apple from fifty feet on a blurry tape in season 1 (Cypher) cannot detect that that guy is not his best friend in the world. JIM. COME ON NOW. YOU KNOW WHAT BLAIR LOOKS LIKE FROM BEHIND. "Sandburg doesn't own a jacket like that," Jim offers. Okay, good enough.

The police respond to an APB on Blair's car, which is currently being driven by Chance--right through a flaming accident. "THOSE WERE SCHOOLKIDS, MAN!" Blair screams. "THEY NEED OUR HELP." "You're joking, right?" Chance and I chorus. Man, a schoolbus accident must be like the best thing ever to happen to fugitives in a car chase. Sure enough, the police stop to help and they get away; whereupon Chance dumps Blair unceremoniously by the side of the road. A moment later Guy with Gun arrives and rekidnaps him. Poor Blair. All he wanted was some pussy. Maybe this will learn him.

Iris and Chance meet up with Iris's heroin kingpin / mechanic brother, who excitedly starts working on the "classic". Well, maybe Blair will eventually get a fixed car out of this.

Guy with Gun takes Blair to an abandoned gas station, and shoves him roughly into the men's room. I am nervous. But he just locks Blair in and calls Iris, who tells him, sorry, but she doesn't care what happens to Blair. Resourceful Blair makes a makeshift weapon from the mirror frame and attacks Guy with Gun when he comes back, and makes good his escape. Run, tiny man!

Jim and Simon arrive at Rob's garage. Jim smells Blair's oil (the oil of his CAR). Chance crawls out of the woodwork and Jim yells "WHERE'S BLAIR SANDBURG?" Chance is unhelpful, probably because I doubt he knows the name of Iris's stooge. Sentinel music plays as Jim spots a trail of oil, even though it is clearly visible.

Blair tries to hail a truck to no avail; the next car that comes along is his Classic, helmed by Rob and Iris. They re-re-kidnap him and take him to the international train depot, where Iris leads him around with her arm around his and a gun concealed in an oven mitt, which looks ridiculous. In a closet, Iris holds the gun while Rob and Blair strip their shirts and tape heroin to their stomachs. ("I thought you wanted to get naked with me," Iris teases a protesting Blair.) While she and Rob, total amateurs, are trying to figure out a way to repackage the heroin so it's less conspicuous, Blair manages to disarm Iris and knock out Rob. Go Blair. In a desperate moment, Iris offers to split the money three ways, but Blair says "I'm not into threesomes." I glumly delete my directory of Blair/Jim/Catwoman fic.
It really is packaged poorly.

Gun Guy is back! Will he ever stop boring me? He and Iris team up against Blair after Iris uses her feminine wiles. They're just about to shoot him when Jim shows up and shoots the gun out of Iris's hand. The bad guys disperse and Jim and Blair have a surprisingly bland reunion. (Only an arm touch!) Oh well, as Jim points out, there's still work to be done. Jim goes after Gun Guy, following him through a parked train where Gun Guy briefly takes a chef hostage. This doesn't deter Super Action Jim from shooting at him but it does lead to a carton of cayenne pepper being used as a shield. It doesn't work out as badly as you'd think. Eventually they continue the chase on dirt bikes (Jim doesn't jump on, sadly) and Gun Guy trips himself up in a pile of luggage like a big dumb idiot.

The actiony chase is contrasted with the more suspenseful (that is to say, slow) scenes of Iris sauntering casually away and Blair following her at a reasonable pace with a dark expression. She reaches the classic; he reaches her; taps her on the shoulder, gets kissing-close, and... grins. IS HE BAD AFTER ALL??????

No. He drives up (yay he did get the car back!) to Jim and Simon and show them Iris... in the trunk of his car! She looks chagrined.

What! Blair served Jim, Simon and Taggart the aphrodisiac meal! But I thought he didn't like threesomes...? Maybe only to watch. Playing his "Jimi Hendrix" guitar, he complains about having had to be booked in re: the heroin thing. (Iris corroborated his story, so he got off.) He gets back at the officers by telling them their dessert is moldy. ALSO, presumably, making them hot for each other. The end!

Notice how Blair's not partaking.

Would have liked to see: Less of boring Iris and her boring criminal friends, and more Jim angst.
Sure, he's vocally annoyed with Blair's interest in Iris (it's kind of sadly poignant how he hates when Blair gets involved with other girls but Blair is all "Woo hoo!" when he does), but we don't see much of his reaction to learning that Blair is missing, mixed up with criminals, and possibly criminal himself.

**Non-J/B Pairing of the Week:** Between Rob smiling indulgently as Iris made sexual remarks to Gun Guy and Iris telling Blair "don't knock it till you've tried it" regarding a potential B/I/R threeway, the incestuous chemistry was on this week.
**3x04 Poachers**

Chapter Summary

Jim and Blair team up with some Fish and Game feds to catch some big-deal poachers.

Simon, Jim, and Blair are out on a fun day of fishing! Blair is wearing a ridiculous denim hat and tiny round sunglasses. Simon moves down-river with some excuse, and Jim says (and I quote) "All right my little guppy, ready for your first fly casting lesson?"

Some guys watch them with binoculars. One, Marshall, gets a cell phone call in which he and some guy called Tommy discuss "merchandise" which Tommy wants in 24 hours. Tommy says (and I quote) "Don't misinterpret the concept of loyalty. It cuts both ways." Don’t worry, it didn’t make sense in context either. Marshall and his friend load up with major gunnage.

Simon takes a cute picture of Jim and Blair with Blair’s big fish, then Jim releases it. For a nature guy Blair is strangely distraught to learn about conservation measures.

**Hey Blair, Blossom called, and she wants her hat back.**

Marshall is attacked by a bear and mauled to death. The end.

Okay, not quite. Jim hears weapon fire and arrives to find Marshall's body, giant gun, and walkie-talkie. He spots Marshall's friend across the woods and chases him, jumping on his car (drink!) but falling off (spit out your drink?)

At the office, Simon gives Jim and Blair the info that Marshall's friend is named Sid and has a hunting lodge. Jim and Simon agree to bring in the guy first and then tell the Fish and Wildlife people, whose jurisdiction this really is. So the boys go stand in some leaves and observe at the lodge, which is really more of a clearing (there's a cute moment where Blair offers Jim binoculars, and he says "I got it covered.") A man and a woman (Number One from Babylon 5) come to do business and Sid is too distraught about the death of his partner (because all the men on this show have partners). As soon as the woman convinces Sid to take her money Jim calls in his units to arrest the three of them. The woman demands Jim's info. Jim: "James Ellison, badge number 733. If you want to send flowers you can't go wrong with roses."
Jim's eating his sarcasm the next day when Number One and her partner show up at the station. They're from the Fish and Wildlife Commission! D'oh! And their real names are Walters and Rafferty. Walters is hot-tempered and outspoken and Rafferty sort of hangs around in the background looking cool in his tight black T-shirt and goatee and occasionally saying soothing things like "Tempers are all high here..." Walters delivers a poaching PSA and Simon agrees to help fix/continue their case and gives them the resources of Jim and Blair.

In the hall Jim and Walters butt heads about how to go about the case, and it's more entertaining to watch Blair and Rafferty in the background. Rafferty is trying to show Blair some files or something, but Blair keeps looking over at Jim and Walters and then back at Rafferty as if to ask "Is that okay, what's going on over there?" The scene ends with Jim and Walters agreeing snippily to split up and Jim whistling to get Blair to follow him like a little puppy.

As the two walk back to the lodge to look for more clues they discuss their new friends.

JIM: Well, Rafferty's not so bad, but I could do without what's-her-name. Walters?
BLAIR: Yeah, right. You know what I think? I think there's a definite attraction between you two.
JIM: Yeah, I think you've been chewing peyote buttons again.
BLAIR: Yeah. It's inevitable. You guys are too much alike.
JIM: You're forgetting your physics, Chief. Opposites attract. Like forces repel. And I am definitely repelled.
BLAIR: Whatever.

Jim holds Blair back suddenly, sensing danger, just before a guy randomly opens fire on Jim and Blair with a semi-automatic weapon. Jim shoots him in self-defense.

Forensics found the number of a Chinese herb store on the body. Walters and Rafferty got the same store from their informants, but they don't know how to get in with the people there. Jim asks what's the most expensive item a store like that could carry, and Walters says narwhal tusk. Blair helpfully explains what a narwhal is, and Walters confirms that the tusk is very expensive. Blair continues under his breath, "It has other special powers, I'll tell you about them later. Unicorn of the sea, th-- Narwhal." Ignoring him, Jim calls the store and leaves a message offering a source of narwhal tusk.

Apartment. Jim ties on an apron as Walters and Rafferty show off a tusk from their confiscation locker. Blair says it's an aphrodisiac; Jim says "Keep it away from the kid, he's liable to field test it." While Walters complains and Jim cooks, Rafferty plays with the tusk and tells Blair the story of how he started out as a poacher and then became a fed. Blair seriously looks like he wants to eat Rafferty up with a spoon.

That's great. Tell me more about your fascinating life while I imagine that tusk in your hand is
me.

Blair goes over to lean in Jim's personal space and tease him.

BLAIR: You know, if you didn't like her, you would have sent out for Thai noodles.
JIM (whispering): Why don't you close it and get me a bay leaf.
BLAIR (laughs): Maybe you should put the tusk in there, Jim.
JIM: Maybe I should put you in here.

Don't mind my chest in the way of your elbow.

Blair takes over stirring as Jim answers his phone, then taps Blair on the chest excitedly to show that this is the important call they have been waiting for!

Blair and Rafferty watch from a car as Jim and Walters, tusk in hand, meet with the suspects and drive off in their limo. Rafferty tries to tracks them with an FBI GPS but the bad guys jam the signal. "Beautiful. That's a nice piece of machinery you got there," Blair snipes.

Jim and Walters are meeting with Tommy from the beginning. Jim convinces Tommy they're not Feds by quoting Sun Tzu or something. Walters follows up by offering references. For some reason Jim volunteers that he and Walters are "partners," and Walters says "We're more than partners, we're married." For some reason.

After they're home and safe, Walters and Jim yell at each other, but then they go out to dinner to try to smoothe things over. Jim mentions that Sandburg thinks that "we have a thing for each other," and they both kind of giggle, and he says "I think we could be friends." Then he takes a call from Tommy. New rendezvous: the docks!

They meet Tommy on his boat, which begins to sail away, to their dismay and to the dismay of Blair and Rafferty, who are watching from nearby, and Simon, who is doing his usual "This investigation is going down the tubes FAST SHIT SHIT SHIT" routine. Blair and Rafferty get instructions to go north with the goods (there's goods? besides the tusk?) and they feel they have to follow them for their friends' sake.

On the boat Tommy feeds Jim and Walters rare dead things and quizzes Jim about Musashi Miyamoto. Jim knows all about it and so do I because I totally friggin watched the Samurai Trilogy. Jim quotes Ghandi and explains "In life I'm a pragmatist; in my heart, an idealist." Oh Jim.

As night falls, Jim and Walters face a "one bed??!!!" situation. Jim's willing to give it up, Walters insists on flipping for it and loses, and Jim makes her stick with the way the coin went. Ha ha.
Blair stands at the helm of the motorboat heading to Canada while Rafferty sits on the tarp-covered goods, suggestively rubbing the spot next to him. Blair is about to call Simon when he gets a call from Tommy arranging a rendezvous point. After he fills in Rafferty but before he can call Simon, Rafferty pulls a gun on him. Well, we all saw that coming, but we didn't want to believe. Blair makes his usual "I am about to be shot" face but instead of waiting for Jim to rescue him, this time he throws the boat into a spin, knocking Rafferty off his feet. Blair grabs the gun from the floor and holds it on Rafferty, saying, "Don't kid yourself, I've shot more guys than John Wesley Harding." I don't know who that is, but it seems to work.

Jim and Walter's Sleepover of Fun. From the floor, Walters says she's been "thinking about what you said... or what you said Sandburg said." Jim: "I smell smoke." Jim saves an engineer from a fire and Tommy is impressed.

Blair abandons Rafferty on a rock, then joins the big boat. Tommy's boss comes in another motorboat and, after checking out the merch, blows the heroes' cover. He learned their identities from Rafferty, whom he then killed, because "he wanted to be my partner; but that was one too many." Tommy's boss wants to kill the cops, but Tommy still kinda seems to like them. "There will be no killing aboard my ship!" So Tommy's boss ties up Jim, Walters, Blair and Tommy in the hold. Blair distracts Tommy with a discussion of culture vs ecosystem while Jim and Walters escape. Hee. Not that it matters since they also untie Tommy. They take out a bunch of the guards, and then there is a personal motorized watercraft chase (are the writers trying to hit every form of transit?) set to ridiculous rock music. Tommy's boss is caught but Tommy gets away, which we are all good with because he is kind of likeable.

Police station. Blair wants to perform chemical analysis on the narwhal tusk. Walters tells Jim she knows a place for good fishing but she can't tell him where it is; "you need a guide." Good one, Walters, Jim is a sucker for guides. Jim agrees to go and sleep in her two-man tent. As she leaves, Blair comes up and asks in innuendo-voice if the fishing spot is "catch and release," and I'm not sure what that means. Still joking into the end music, Jim and Blair walk off with their arms around each other.

We are friends!

Best moments: The "opposites attract" conversation (Jim and Blair are opposites!!) The scene in the boys' apartment, when each flirts with their own favorite member of the other Fed team, and then they meet up at the stove for teasing and cooking (their open marriage is so pleasant). Of course, the final shot at the end of them walking off together, which makes it into so many vids because it is World's Gayest.
Jim goes undercover in a mob household. Blair... gets some time to catch up on his reading or something.

An old guy walks his grandson peacefully down the docks, giving him life advice. We cut to black-and-white, and it turns out the grandpa is Dominik Lazar, a mob boss, under police surveillance, currently being watched by Jim, Blair and a third officer named Frank. "If only there was a way to get close to him," says Jim. If only!

Jim walks Blair to his car, holding an umbrella over both their heads. Blair notes that Jim seems particularly interested in this case. "Pretty savvy, kemosabe," says Jim. He tells Blair to ask him about Jimmy Fanetti sometime. "Hey, Jim," says Blair immediately, "who's Jimmy Fanetti?" It doesn't work.

After Blair drives off (to do... what? his other job? for once?) Jim sticks around to get something to eat from a street vendor, and his enhanced Spidey sense informs him that a rope holding a heavy thing above the grandson's head is about to snap. He runs through the crowd and rescues the boy. The mother suddenly appears and thanks Jim for saving her son's life with not so much relief as bedroom eyes. Jim resists, then finally consents to be bought dinner.

At a restaurant, the mom, Michelle, attempts to flirt until Dominik shows up all "What can I give you as payment" and without missing a beat Jim says "A job." Dominik decides to make Jim Edward's new personal bodyguard. After Dominik leaves, Michelle warns Jim against getting involved in the family.

Simon's office. Simon is pissed that Jim just decided to go undercover without consulting anyone, but, as Jim protests, the opportunity just fell into his lap. (Simon seems pretty OK with Jim doing fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants police work in general, anyway.) Frank leaps to Jim's defense. Jim asks him to come up with some good background for him--criminal record, dishonorable discharge, whatever. (That last shouldn't be too much of a stretch.)
At Jim's desk, Blair asks again about Jimmy Fanetti. Jim explains that he's an old cop friend who disappeared mysteriously while undercover in the Lazar family/company. I will gain a modicum of respect for this show if it turns out he's dead. "You know," says Blair, "I've always wanted to do a study on a family like the Lazars. How they interact..." Jim and I call bullshit, and Blair says, "Come on, you need me in their to watch your back." PLEASE SAY YES JIM. Awww, stupid protectiveness. Damn, I hope this isn't Garett's week off.

When Jim arrives at the Lazar estate he's patted down by a guard, who says he'll stop when he's "good and ready," causing Jim to slam him against the car and say "I don't like being handled." Ha! Jim's so cute when he doesn't like stuff. The encounter ends with the arrival of Erika, Dominik's daughter, who is Miss Calendar from Buffy.

Jim walks down the street with Edward, being the bestest big brother ever. He convinces the quiet, serious child to play football with some neighborhood kids. Michelle arrives and panics, but Jim convinces her not to intervene. Edward scores touchdown (goal? basket?), and Michelle claps and laughs and leans into Jim. Edward and I glare.

Erika gives her father some medicine and tries to convince him to let her take over the family business, but he just wants her to find a MAN. Jim overhears some of this by standing extra-close to the door rather than using his superpower.

For some reason Jim is sitting down to dinner with Dominik, Erika, Michelle, and Edward. There's a squabble, and Michelle leaves the table in anger. Edward chooses to stay. Jim looks duly uncomfortable. Later, Jim catches up with Michelle and makes vague promises of help/protection. Also, he kisses her, even though he has shown negative interest in her up until this point.

The next day, there is an attack on the compound, and Jim only barely yells "Get down!" soon enough to protect Dominik and Edward. Jim fails at using his tiny gun to intimidate the guys with big machine guns. He tries to shoot them, but his vision goes blurry. While he's trying to figure things out, Erika neatly shoots the bad guys from the balcony.

Jim reports to Simon and Blair, who jumps up at the mention of sense problems and insists that he needs to get onto the grounds to help Jim. Simon: "Over my dead body."

"What are you talking about? When did this happen?"

Night is time for implied sex! Jim and Michelle make out. Sunrise. Michelle wrapped in blankets on Jim's bed. "I wanted last night to last forever."

Jim finds Edward on a swingset and tells him he's arranged for a new tutor (what? he can do that, as bodyguard? I guess he just had to suggest it to Michelle before/during/after their Intimate
Tryst) and that he's a "fun guy" and "really smart." HOORAY, BLAIR! Edward leaves as soon as Blair arrives, giving the boys a chance to conspire. Jim has dutifully made a list of everything he came into contact with so Blair can pinpoint his allergy. Blair asks about "the lovely widow" in his usual way-to-go-Jim! fashion, and Jim refuses to discuss it.

The handsy guard tries to stop Jim from leaving the compound. Jim gets dizzy again, and Blair tries to run to his rescue, but is thrown easily away. Jim manages to punch out the guard, assures Blair he's fine, and goes to meet Simon and Frank. Frank has a picture of Erika meeting with the would-be assassins from earlier. Intrigue! Simon wants to pull Jim out (I guess they wisely didn't tell him about Blair), but Jim resists. Simon makes the most delightful oh-SHIT face when he realizes Jim's doing the widow.

Jim returns to the compound where Erika yells at him and confines him to quarters. Blair's hanging out in the room and tells Jim he figured out that the allergy is from the magnesium in the spring water. At the moment, Jim's more concerned with the international panel of crime lords assembling downstairs. He gets Blair to help him pull up floorboards so he can escape the room.

Jim sneaks over to spy on the conference. Dominik makes a big reveal: his syndicate's heir is... Vincent, his own son, Edward's dad! He was alive all along. Erika is pissed.

Jim's next stop is Michelle's room where he tells her and Edward that he is a cop and he can get them out if they trust him. Michelle says "yes," Edward hesitates. The door opens--Dominik and Vincent. Edward immediately runs to his father and wastes no time in announcing "He's a cop. He asked us to go with him and Mom said she would." Kid knows where his loyalties lie. Jim is sent back to his room where Blair still is. Not *that* much a punishment, that.

Okay, Vincent comes back armed when he's done locking Michelle in a poolhouse or somewhere. Dominik, Edward and Erika join him. Jim fast-talks, and the Erika-put-a-contract-on-her-father's-head reveal distracts them for awhile. Erika announces (unwisely, I think) that she was trying to kill Edward in order to be the heir herself, so Vincent shoots her. Jim then disarms Vincent, but Edward gets the gun. Vincent orders him to kill Jim, but Jim manages to do the "Give me the gun. Give me the gun" thing that cops do on TV, and eventually takes it by the barrel from his limp hands.

Blair watches the proceedings with silent interest.

The cops surround the house.

Vincent pulls Michelle out of the poolhouse and holds her hostage with a knife before the police. For some reason, Jim tells Michelle "I can't help you. It's up to you," which instantly gives her the confidence/skill/strength to wrench out of her husband's grasp and send him into the pool. Jim fights with him in the pool and knocks him out, but pulls him out before he drowns. Michelle kisses Wet!Jim and touches his face in a weird way.
Michelle has been taking correspondence classes at the Jim Ellison School of Face Handling.

The police take away the bad guys. Jim, wrapped in a blanket, assured Edward that everything will work out. Then he talks to Michelle: she's moving (Witness Protection, presumably). Jim gives her the "maybe someday we can pick up where we left off" line, like, that's so his modus operandi, isn't it? Wham, bam, amorphous hypothetical suggestion, ma'am. Anyway, the show ends on a kiss and parting, and no 30 Seconds with Blair.

**What I would have liked to see:** Considerably more than 30 seconds with Blair.
3x06 Vendetta

Chapter Summary

Jim gets into a fight with a psychologically disturbed man, which turns out to be a bad idea. Blair has theories about SOCIETY.

A woman leads a team of thieves breaking into a high-rise.

Jim and Blair stalk down the street to the truck, arguing. "I'm not in the mood for one your touchy-feely lectures," Jim snaps. "Look, just because the DA's not going to press charges, do not take it out on me!" Blair yells back. Apparently Jim is upset because he eyewitnessed a woman being robbed, but his testimonial will never be accepted because it relies on his super-senses. As he pulls out of a parking spot, he nearly runs a couple of cars off the road. Still angry, he accuses the other cars of going too fast.

One of the wronged drivers follows Jim, yelling and honking his horn. Blair notes that Jim's senses seemed to be suppressed because of his anger, and wants to study further. Jim is not interested. The wronged driver now gets out of his car and comes up to bang on the window and yell, scaring Blair. Jim gets out and puts the guy against the hood and makes fun of his cologne ("It's imported!") shouts the guy) and the guy continues ranting and threatening a harassment suit. He also calls Blair a wannabe hippie. "Hey, man," says Blair. Did I mention that Blair has pointy sideburns this week? Because he does. They're kind of silly.

Jim and Wronged Driver are still yelling at each other when Simon calls Jim's cell to inform him about the high-rise theft. As our heroes fly to the scene of the crime, Wronged Driver--whose name is Freeman, so I'm just going to call him that--gets Jim's license number. (For those of you playing at home, it's 804 GDT.) We follow Freeman back to his apartment where he has finds a notice to vacate and a message from his psychiatrist on his phone, imploring him to come back to counseling. Freeman mutters that "nobody really cares" and "you're all the same" and takes a gun and shoots the notebook with Jim's name and license number. Great, our bad guy has debilitating psychological problems. This makes him much less fun to root against.

Freeman hacks into the motor vehicle registry site using some kind of program that gives him
the password ("intersection") and finds out Jim's address. FYI, you can all send your love notes to:

James J. Ellison
852 Prospect Ave
Cascade, WA 98765

Note the lack of an apartment number. I would surmise that Jim, like Blair, gives out the station as his address to impress girls (and/or DMV employees), but it becomes plot-important that this is actually Jim's correct address, so. Maybe there is only one apartment? But then why do Jim and Blair have to get there by elevator? [ETA: Also, why does it say "307" on the door?] God, show, you only had to make up one little address--one! both of the main characters live in the same apartment!--and you couldn't get that right!

No, come back, show, I love you. I'm sorry.

Jim investigates the broken-into safe while Blair despairs for humanity to Simon.

BLAIR: As an anthropologist, I have to wonder what it is about our culture that breeds these type of criminals.
SIMON: I think it's the money.

Jim finds a partial print. Blair continues to have silly sideburns.

Elevator to Jim and Blair's numberless apartment. Jim sniffs the air while Blair theorizes about lack of control and need to vent frustrations as a cause of crime, complying with Jim's request to see the bottom of his shoes without slowing his motormouth. Blair can't find the key he leaves above the door, and Jim gives him his. They find a giant pile of horse manure in their living room.

At the station, Simon laughs at them and gives them a lead, an Australian jeweler. They go to question him and Blair gets distracted by his aboriginal jewelery. When they emerge, they find Jim's car about to be towed: someone reported it stolen. Jim spots Freeman's car down the street and gets the license number.

After learning about Freeman from his own legal access to the registry, Jim bitches about him to Simon at the station.

SIMON: Did you provoke this guy?
JIM: I got a little ticked off...
BLAIR: Yeah, well you've been getting a little too ticked off, too easily lately.
JIM: Was I talking to you?!
BLAIR (wide-eyed enthusiasm): See, that it's right there!

The conversation is sidetracked when Simon gets a call identifying the partial print Jim found as the jeweler's.

Somehow the jeweler's information leads to a chance for Jim to pose undercover as a Texan safe expert. Blair and his silly sideburns excitedly push the idea to Simon, explaining how Jim's Sentinel abilities will allow him to crack safes, and Simon finally relents. Alone with Jim, Blair admits to misgivings, since the gang will kill Jim if they find out he's a plant. Jim tells him not to worry. Then he notices they're being trailed by Freeman. He swerves off the road as Blair cries "What are you, nuts?", gets out, and hauls Freeman out of his car to yell at him. Blair has to drag him away.
...by the waist.

Adorable scene where Jim is trying to learn a Texas accent by watching episode after episode of Bonanza ("Did you know each of the sons had a different mother?") and Blair rants "Lorne Green is about as old west as William Shatner, which is fitting, since they're both CANADIAN, JIM." Then he schools Jim on lilt vs. twang. NOTHING HAS EVER BEEN CUTER.

Blair doing his Texan lilt, with a basket of kittens for comparison.

Jim meets Melanie, the woman thief from the beginning, and the rest of the thieves. Jim's accent is pretty awful, and he seems to be confusing "Southern" with "flamer." He keeps doing these weird hand motions. He proves himself by unlocking a safe.

At the station, everyone thanks Jim for buying them expensive watches. Oh no! Freeman maxed out Jim's credit! Blair tells Simon that, as an ex-hacker, Freeman does have the expertise. "What else did you two find out?" asks Simon thinly, and OH MY GOD WHY DID WE NOT SEE JIM & BLAIR RESEARCH PARTY FUN. Jim receives a letter: Freeman has filed a restraining order.

Freeman is in the lobby of the thieves' favorite hotel, and he and Jim exchange some more words before Jim goes to meet with Melanie. He is expecting business, but it turns out that Melanie, like all the beautiful women on this show, just wants a chance at Jim's junk. Jim reacts, as he always does, by feigning ignorance and then outright resisting. "My wife wouldn't understand, you see," he explains finally, as his cell phone rings.

BLAIR [on the phone]: Hi Jim, it's me.
JIM: Hi honey!
BLAIR: Huh?
[Melanie strokes Jim's face, winks, and leaves.]
BLAIR: Jim... yo, Jim.
JIM: Yeah, sugar.


Out in front, Melanie steals a kiss, and Jim wipes his mouth. On her way home, Melanie is almost run down by Freeman. He gets out of his car and apologizes and flirts. They end up at Make-Out Point.

Caper time! Simon organizes a SWAT team as Jim helps the thieves bust into a safe. But during the heist Freeman, who has followed Melanie, informs her that Jim is a cop. Blair and Simon, watching with binoculars, are alarmed when the thieves walk Jim out with a gun to his back. To Blair's alarm, Simon orders the sharpshooters to go. The resulting confusion allows Jim to get the upper hand. As the thieves are busted, Jim goes after Freeman.

Blair catches up with Jim just as he loses sight of Freeman and finally does a guide task, telling him to use his sense of smell. Freeman has accidentally made the incredibly strategic move of going into the sewer. Blair's encouragement allows Jim to isolate Freeman's cologne even there. There is a climactic scene where Jim has to prevent Freeman from firing a gun in the sewer, and then catches his arm right before he falls into a rushing river of some kind. Freeman dangles for awhile, with Blair repeating "You cannot let him go!" to Jim, until Jim finally hauls him up. Blair contributes by clinging to Jim's arm unhelpfully.

30SwB in the truck. "You all right?" Jim admits there was a moment where he was willing to let Freeman die. "Yeah, I know," says Blair softly. Blair generalizes about stress and anger and TODAY'S SOCIETY some more. "From now on," says Jim, PSA-ishly but slightly nonsensically, "I'm paying attention." It's kind of more of a "...huh" lead-in to the goofy end music/greenscreen/THE SENTINEL than we're used to.

Best moments: Blair making fun of Jim's Bonanza marathon and then being adorable; Jim greeting Blair on the phone with "Hi honey!" Even as a ruse, it's just what the doctor ordered.
Chapter Summary

Blair romances a dignitary. Jim... uh, well, he gets hit in the head a couple of times.

A man is stabbed in the street. Later, Jim and Blair interview a witness who heard the man's dying words, which were something like "Benet shouldn't come here." Blair suggests that's Genevieve Benet, some kind of peace dignitary from the fictional country of St. Germaine (god, I hope it's fictional, or I'll look like an idiot) who's coming for the Amnesty International conference. Oh my GOD, Blair's sideburns are getting POINTIER. I cannot handle it.

While Jim, Blair and Simon are reviewing some evidence, including a pin Jim found at the scene, Genevieve Benet bursts in and yells at them for giving her an armed escort. Simon apologizes, calling her Dr. Benet. Genevieve can't identify the dead man or the pin. Blair asks her out, respectlessly calling her Miss Benet. She's snippy at first but then agrees to get something to eat with him.

The president of St. Germaine, Lemecc, whom Blair described as a thug who stole the last election, plots to kill Benet and make it look like a terrorist attack so he can justify his policies or something. He tells a mercenary to get him a missile. For some reason he feels he needs a giant missile to take out a medium-sized lady.

Jim pours coffee for Blair and quizzes him about his activities last night (talking to Genevieve for hours). He asks if Blair got her to accept police protection, and Blair says "My interest in her is not about that." "Oh really?" says Jim, sounding for all the world like his next words are going involve the phrase "j'accuse!" in some way. "Well, what is it about, Chief, huh?" Blair enthusiastically describes her "moral certainty" and how he could listen to her talk for hours. Jim doesn't trust her. Blair thinks he's wrong. Jim gets out of the conversation with the old "What's that smell? ... Oh, it's gone."

Blair and Genevieve bond, and then Blair carefully re-asks if she knew the dead guy. She says she didn't. "Okay," Blair accepts. Later, at Make-Out Point, she thanks him for helping her forget all the demands on her, for awhile. Blair kisses her, but after a moment she pulls away: "I can't do this. I can't let myself get involved. It has nothing to do you, Blair." What she doesn't say is it has everything to do with those ridiculous points on the sides of his face, but really, how can it not? (I promised myself I would stop complaining about the sideburns, but it's hard when other characters on screen are just going around taking Blair seriously, as though they are not even there!) Blair puts on a smile and says "No big deal."
They point at his mouth as if to say "Plant one right here, baby."

Responding to a call about a break-in in Genevieve's hotel, Jim finds a suspicious guy on the hotel roof. He jumps off rather than be caught. Later Jim tells Simon what he's found out—the jumper is one of Lemecc's personal hitmen. What was he after, Genevieve or something she had??

Genevieve stands in front of what appears to be a giant barrel which says "RCMP." She meets with the dead guy's mother, Clarice, who gives her an envelope.

Jim and Simon put pressure on Blair to put pressure on Genevieve, so he goes to her hotel room and begs her not to go to the ceremony. She refuses to be bullied by Lemecc. Blair protests, "Two people are dead, and we don't even know who one of them is!" Genevieve finally provides Dead Guy 1's name. She knew him. Blair rubs his face wearily.

Genevieve shows him the contents of the envelope: photographs taken by refugees showing the real conditions in Lemecc's St. Germaine. She thinks when she shows the photographs at her speech, the US will withdraw its trade agreements and that will topple Lemecc's regime (aw!) Blair worries about her safety, but understands the importance of her task.

Meanwhile, Jim is involved in a subplot about a crooked cop and the whereabouts of the famed missile. It's not really clear what the deal is. He gets hit over the head at one point, though. And he lets a criminal who helps him go.

Okay, I went back and checked 3x05, and Blair's sideburns were slightly pointy. Not enough to cause alarm, but definitely trending. It is a steady progression. Of ridiculousness.
The 'burns in 3x05: Little did we know

So Genevieve is getting ready to give her speech and there's a guy with a missile trained on the site. Oh, I see. Genevieve lights ceremonial torch, and the heat-seeking missile is supposed to go toward it. But we've seen this shot of the gunman about to squeeze the trigger about eleven times, and it hasn't happened yet. Oh, there it goes. Jim figures out what's going on using his super...speedy... brain? Sense? and shoots a random offshore gas tank thing in order to create a new target for the missile. Thus he minimized casualties but destroys lots of property and lets us see a big explosion. Jim spots the gunman and takes off after him in his helicopter which he has.

At the world's most exciting torch-lighting ceremony, Lemecc gives Genevieve a gun and tells her to shoot him now if she can. She holds it to him for a really long time while reporters who can't believe their luck snap photos. Blair gently talks her out of pulling the trigger and then takes away the gun. But her reputation for professionalism and high-roadiness is still totally shot (ha! ha!)

Jim confronts the gunman, but gets a faceful of car door. The criminal that Jim let go arrives in time to save him. Then he lets Jim arrest him. Well, that's nice.

Blair bids Genevieve goodbye. "If you're ever up in Cascade again, I'm one hell of a tour guide." "You're much more than that," she says, which is sweet, I think, because he IS a guide-and-yet-more. She kisses him under his ridiculous facial point. He sadly watches her go. No 30SwJ.

SO SAD!

What I would have liked to see: Regular characters interacting with each other. I mean, obviously Jim/Blair, but I also would have accepted more Jim and Simon or something. Blair episodes are marginally better than Jim episodes, but either one is totally boring compared to Blair-and-Jim episodes. Even leaving slashiness aside (but really, why would you), the best dialogue, the most
jokes, and the nicest moments are always between Jim and Blair, and if they're not in the same room we don't get any of that.
Jim and Blair go to a lighthouse to visit Jim's coast guard cousin and end up trying to protect the mistress of a Mexican heroin kingpin. As usual.

Jim and Blair are visiting Jim's cousin Rucker, a Coast Guard lighthouse station operator, for his birthday. Rucker isn't thrilled that Jim brought his partner, but Jim says he figured Rucker could use some extra people around with Andy, his "first mate," away. EVERYONE ON THIS SHOW HAS A PARTNER. A storm is coming. We get to look at ominous clouds. I should probably warn you right now that the storm has pretty much zero impact on the plot.

In the lighthouse Jim gives Rucker a present "from me and Sandburg." Calling your partner by his last name as you hand off a joint gift from the two of you doesn't make you any less of a couple, Jim. It's an "extendo-flexo fishing rod," which Blair describes as "as seen on TV!" He's disappointed to learn that Rucker doesn't have a TV. Or internet. Also, all of his books on tape are in Chinese. (Blair has two full-time jobs. When does he get all this time to watch TV and surf the web?) Jim suggests poker. Just then, Rucker notices a boat driving all fast and crazy on the radar.

Boat chase! Oh yeah, Jim has super senses:

JIM: There's nobody at the helm.
RUCKER: How can you tell without glasses?
JIM: Uh... just a guess.
RUCKER (looking through binoculars): You're right!

For the record, here's how that would have gone had Jim lacked superpowers:

RUCKER (looking through binoculars): There's nobody at the helm!

Jim has Rucker pull alongside the renegade boat and jumps onto it. That's it, right? We're done? Jim has now jumped onto every vehicle? Jim slows the boat so that Rucker can dock with it. Blair cries "Jim! Jim!" and looks so distraught with his hair falling out of his ponytail. Jim emerges carrying an unconscious woman.
"Jim! Jim!"

In the lighthouse, the woman is awake and wrapped in blankets. Jim and Blair gently question her. She says her name is Monique and she was running away from her boyfriend, Enrique, an "investment banker" who drunkenly threatened her, so she stole his boat and ran away, then passed out from lack of food and sleep. Also, she is out of cigarettes. Man, nothing is going right! Blair offers to teach her meditation techniques that helped his mom quit smoking. So, there's that. Also, she gets to wear Blair's clothes, including some fruity Alaskan boots he brought for some reason. (Blair says he spent a couple of months in an igloo. Between this and his three months with the Kombai Tree people (Love and Guns) and God knows how many other places Blair claims to have lived, he must be beginning to run out of months. Also: did they have TV and internet there, smartguy?) Just when things are looking up for Monique, though, Jim arrests her! Rucker found heroin on her boat.

Storm. Lightning. Jim tries to question Monique, but she freaks out. Blair is kind to her, and she tells him Enrique's real full name; Jim identifies him as the "Mexican heroin czar." Monique responds to all further questions semi-non-sequitur defensiveness: "I am his mistress and he threatened to kill me! Would you like to see what a BELT BUCKLE does to a WOMAN'S BACK?" Jim says "That won't be necessary." He uncuffs Monique and tells her she will be "well taken care of," as a witness, I guess.

By the way, Blair's sideburns are still L-shaped points, but I give up. Actually, they're... they're kind of growing on me. (NOT LITERALLY) So, yeah, you can go ahead and add "Stockholm syndrome" to my list of ailments that afflict me, right alongside housemaid's knee, Dutch elm disease and sticker shock. The thing about the sideburns is, okay, yes, they're inherently evil, but they're also really sweet, and they only hurt me because I make them so crazy.

Uh. Anyway. The next day dawns sunny and clear. Jim goes back to the boat and finds a transmitter. Before they can devise a way to get Monique out before Enrique comes, Jim hears a helicopter. Too late! Bad guys are storming the island. Time to barricade the doors. Rucker announces that the bad guys have blown the comm link: "We're cut off!" Monique panics wordlessly. Man, she's annoying.

Jim and Rucker arm themselves with the station's two M16s as one of Enrique's men, Raoul, yells at them through a bullhorn to send out the woman. Blair stops her from going. The bad guys further cut off the team by blowing up their boat. Rucker's plan is to sneak through the crawlspace to the woods, make his way to the lighthouse, and use the radio there. Meantime, Jim must create a diversion. He lowers a sign out the window reading "DRUGS FOR MONIQUE" and Raoul calls that they are willing to negotiate with anyone who has the "cojones" ("That's be you, boss," says...
Rucker to Jim). "I don't know about this, Jim," says Blair. "Take it," says Jim, holding out M16. Blair stares for like ten minutes and then finally takes it. He's so cute with his giant gun he's too afraid/principled to use or look at directly.

Blair watches from the window as Jim is led out to meet Enrique. He tells them half the Cascade PD is headed out. "How did you call them? We knocked down your radio tower," says Raoul. Jim just nods. When Jim gets sassy in re: Enrique's purported battery of Monique, Raoul totally slams in the face with an M16. In the window, Blair reacts as if he's been hit, then puts a protective arm around Monique and says soothingly, "It's all right. He's gonna be okay." Weirdo. Enrique throws the briefcase of heroin into the water, saying he doesn't care about the dope, he wants his book. Jim: "What book?"

Back at the station, Jim goes through Monique's purse. He asks her about the book. She confirms Enrique writes everything (names, numbers; she didn't understand what, exactly) in little books, but she doesn't have one.

Bad guys notice Rucker in the lighthouse. Enrique orders Raoul to find the book then burn everything down.

Jim shows Blair how to use an M16. Blair doesn't want to kill anyone; Jim tells him he just has to shoot a burst over their heads to keep them back.

In the lighthouse, Rucker hails the police. He's interrupted when men storm into the room and start shooting.

Jim and Blair are standing by the station windows with their giant guns when the bad guys release a rain of bullets and they drop to the floor.

I only find guns sexy when held by 5'5" anthropologists.

BLAIR: Hey, Jim!
JIM: Yeah?
BLAIR: I just want you to know that this doesn't change my opinion on gun control!
JIM: I'll keep that in mind!

They both shoot out the windows until they run out of ammo. When Raoul and the others come to check out the damage, they're gone.

Jim, Blair and Monique make their way through the woods. I guess they go out through the crawlspace. It's raining, sort of. More misting, really. Just enough to make them all sort of sexily damp. IT'S THE PERFECT STORM. Blair notices that Monique has been shot. Jim goes to see if they've been followed while Blair binds the wound with a bandanna. Monique looks like she might
hit on Blair, but she doesn't, exactly. Jim comes back and tells them to head for the lighthouse; once Monique starts walking, Jim pulls Blair aside to tell him to be careful with Monique.

BLAIR: What? Oh, come on, you still think she's trying to scam us, Jim?
JIM: Wouldn't be the first time one of us got hung with a good line.

You would think Blair would have learned by now that an underlying theme of this show is "Women can't be trusted."

Jim goes up against some guards at the lighthouse and Monique helps out by holding a flare gun to one of their necks. The lighthouse is empty by Jim hears a heartbeat and finds and injured Rucker nearby. Seeing a helicopter, Monique releases a flare. Jim's like THE HELL and she's all "I was scared!!" The helicopter is driven by Enrique and Raoul, who follow the team into the woods.

Rucker thinks they should abandon his injured self and save themselves. Monique says they should stay with him. Jim accuses Monique of trying to prevent them from getting off the island. Blair argues at first, but begins to believe Jim as he deconstructs Monique's lies. Jim holds up a tape which he got out of her walkman, theorizing that it contains the information from the stolen book. Monique confirms this by holding a gun on Rucker and demanding the tape back. Jim gives her what cannot be anything other than a Mandarin book on tape. Raoul and Enrique show up; Raoul kills Enrique, and Monique runs to him. With Monique's help, Jim explains Monique and Raoul's evil to take over the drug... selling... organization... thing. They're about to shoot the good guys when helicopters arrive.

In the confusion (Jim is ALWAYS taking advantage of confusion) Jim punches Raoul in the face. They fight while Blair runs through the woods after Monique. Blair pins and straddles her. Noticing the tape on the ground, Blair goes for it; Monique takes the opportunity to elbow him hard in the face, knocking him away, and giving him an ugly-looking bloody nose. Ouch. They scrabble for the tape. Blair manages to straddle her again from behind. Jim shows up. "I got everything under control," says Blair as he struggles to hold her down, blood streaming from his nose. "Wanna give me a hand?"

Got it covered!

Cops leading the bad guys away as Blair and Jim stand around (in other words, business as usual for the last minute of the show). Mandarin David Copperfield reveal. Rucker gets a call from Andy while in the background Jim tries to look at Blair's injury and Blair swats him away.
"Love you too, bye," says Rucker as Jim mimes "keep your head back" to Blair. For some reason, Blair says, "That explains a lot," which I guess means "The fact that you are gay explains a lot"? Which is weird, because it totally doesn't. Anyway, that's what Rucker understands it to mean, because he's like "Sandburg. Andy is my fiancee. Short for Andrea!!" Jim gives him a little tap on the head. "I knew that," says Blair. Jim pats Blair affectionately on the stomach as they all turn to go.

So like... they must want us to think Jim and Blair are gay. Right? I mean... seriously.
Did you know that Russia is one giant gulag? Neither did I till I watched this episode.

Blair, Jim and Micki Kamarev (someone from a previous episode?) are going to see a Nobel-winning Russian poet speak. Blair's really excited about it. "His gulag diaries are a primary source on neo-tribal adaptation!" At the talk, the poet is just inviting Micki to the front to thank her for some work she's done or something when he is shot. Blair says he didn't see or hear anything, did Jim? Jim says... NO! DUH DUH DUH!

Station. No leads. Jim suggests the motive for the killing was to prevent the poet from talking, but Blair says "I don't think so. Corruption in Russia is no secret. I mean, everyone knows who's involved there." I don't know anything about Russia in '98, but I still cringe every time they make such a generalization. Just as Simon is dreading the Feds, Frank Mulroney of the FBI arrives. He doesn't take over the case, but he does want the department to work with Inspector Major Katrina Vaslova of the Moscow Metro Militia, liaison to the FBI. She's basically your stereotypical cold, suspicious, stereotypical Russian officer lady type. Sort of like Ninotchka without the fun.

Micki shows up with a priest, saying she needs her poet friend's body to honor his religion. Vaslova forbids it. Micki calls her a KGB agent. Meow, hiss.

Jim and Blair investigate the site. Jim finds a cloth tie thing to show which way the wind is going. He and Blair follow a trail of them half a mile away from the site. They end up in a tower room which is full of padding and mattresses. "This is like a padded cell," says Blair. "Or a big silencer," says Jim. They find two Russian coins, which Jim says is the calling card of a sniper called Yuri. "You know this guy?" "Yeah. We tried to kill each other in Peru." Duh duh duh! (Sorry. I'm really trying to make this episode more exciting for you.)

Station. Diamonds were found in the poet's digestive tract. He was a diamond smuggler! Vaslova suspected it all along, but didn't say anything because she is Untrustworthy. They decide to spread the word they're shipping the body back to Moscow and see who shows up at the shipping warehouse to grab the diamonds.

Stakeout. Jim and Blair sit in a darkened car. "Jim, you've been putting me off all day, man. You going to tell me about Yuri?" Jim tells a story about how Yuri killed his friend in Peru. Blair gets a Stricken Look of Empathy. Simon calls them into the warehouse. They've apprehended Micki. Jim: "I thought I was your friend!" Micki: "You are, but you are also a policeman." Vaslova leads Micki away, omenously saying, "Don't worry, you can talk to me. Won't that be nice, huh?"

Yuri is watching this go down from a rooftop. He spots Jim through his crosshairs and spits "Elyasyan!" Jim hears him with his gun and tries to get everyone down; Yuri shoots a redshirt. Jim spots him and runs over to the building where he is, only to find a bomb. But it doesn't go off. The display just says "Ellison."

Yuri uses the Internet, and the show continues on its crusade to give us as much personal information about Jim as possible. His screen flashes:
Vaslova questions Micki as Simon, Jim and Blair watch from behind the mirror. Micki insists on speaking in English because "Russian in a police station brings back bad memories." They argue and Vaslova bitch-slaps Micki, who bitch-slaps her back. Jim runs in and yells at Vaslova "You, out, now!" In the hall he gives her a talking-to. She's like, whatever, in my country, blah blah fake Russia.

Jim and Blair talk outside. Blair likens Yuri to a Sentinel, except his super-senses come from technology. Also, as Jim points out, he is bad instead of good. Jim gets a phone call from Yuri, who just wants to chit-chat. (Guys, he's lonely! just wants a friend!) "I didn't recognize you at first but then, a man in jungle fatigues looks very different from one in a stylish leather coat," he says. Whuh-oh. Jim looks around, spots Yuri on a rooftop sniping distance away, and hustles Blair inside to tell Simon.

A man in jungle fatigues looks very different from one in a kicky snowflake sweater.

Jim asks Yuri what he wants and he gets down to business, saying Jim may as well let Micki go since her death is inevitable, and also "the next time we meet, I will kill you." So, that's pleasant.

Micki makes bail. Jim and Blair try to convince her to stay in the station where it's safe, but she won't. Suddenly, they are all kidnapped!!!

They're taken to some lodge in the woods. Mulroney and Vaslova are there. Apparently this is now a joint FBI-CIA operation and that somehow explains why there was a bunch of kidnapping. Shows from the point of view of cops hate the FBI. It's like they think the FBI is part of some kind of Fake-Russia-esque shadow government. Meanwhile, in X-Files, local cops are all bumbling idiots. Anyway, the plan is I guess to draw Yuri out using Micki as bait.

JIM: And how do I figure into this?
MULRONEY: Well, given your history with Yuri, we felt that your continued involvement might
prove useful.
JIM: What makes you think I want to stay?
MULRONEY: Because you want to protect Miss Kamarev and you want Yuri just as badly as we do.

Okay, I guess. We cut to the next scene without any further explanation, which I sort of feel is required. For example, here's a conversation which does not happen:

BLAIR: And how do I figure into this?
MULRONEY: Well, given your extensive knowledge of neo-tribal adaptation, we felt that your continued involvement might prove useful.
BLAIR: What makes you think I want to stay?
MULRONEY: Because you want to protect Mr. Ellison. And uh. You want him just as badly as Yuri does?

Anyway, back in real reality, an agent shows the gang all this security technology in the lodge, which Blair says is "very cool." Then Mulroney sends off most of the feds, saying Yuri won't move with so many people around, and promising they'll send in a team as soon as there's any sign of him. Jim is like, this is not very cool. Sure enough, Yuri taps into the security system and gets a clear view of where everyone is. He picks off the two Feds, leaving only named characters.

As they cower behind the couch, Jim argues with Mulroney over the walkie-talkie. He won't send in more men; they're on their own. Jim declares Vaslova is in a charge and says he's going to go find Yuri. The blocking in this scene makes it look like Jim and Blair are about to kiss, but that's about it for slash this episode, I think. Oh, and Vaslova has her arm around Micki for no reason whatsoever. So, there's that.

Slash...

Femslash.
Um, I'm kind of bored so I'll just wrap it up. Jim goes out and he and Yuri play hide and seek. Vaslova loses patience, thinks Jim is dead or abandoned them (despite Blair's adamant faith in him) and goes out to look. Yuri shoots her non-fatally. She falls back into the house and tells Blair and Micki to run. Jim and Yuri eventually find each other and grapple over a waterfall, Sherlock-Holmes-like. In continuing *Vendetta* parallels Jim ends up holding Yuri dangling over the rushing river. He asks why Jim doesn't let him drop and Jim goody-goody, "You're going to stand trial!" Instead, though, Yuri is shot by a Fed sniper. Jim is displeased.

Paramedics, cops, feds, Jim and Blair standing around, etc. Vaslova is wheeled away on a gurney. She and Micki agree that they were wrong about each other. She tells Jim and Blair, "If you are ever in Moscow, I know many good restaurants. There is one I like especially... Burger King?" Ugh. I hate this fucking culture. Micki apologizes for lying to her "guardian angels." Simon thinks Yuri couldn't have survived the shot and fall into the waterfall, but Jim, who has a better understanding of this show's physics, isn't so sure. Duh-duh-duh!! shot of waterfall.

**Would have liked to see:** Less ignorant neo-Cold War propaganda and MORE FEELINGS, DAMMIT.

**Non J/B Pairing of the Week:** Micki and Vaslova have kind of a Valjean/Javert or possibly Krycek/Mulder thing going.

**Sideburn Update:** Blair wears his hair down for most of the episode, so it's hard to say for sure, but they appear to be normal. At any rate, they're much subdued from last week.
3x10 Dead Certain

Chapter Summary

Jim gets territorial when the new forensics chief thinks she's a detective.

A dead man falls on a woman's car. She screams. Cut to someone taking pictures at the crime scene. Henri leads Jim and Blair to the body, saying "I hope Sandburg didn't just eat." Jim stands up for him, saying "He knows the drill, H." Blair looks queasy as he sees the body, and Jim soothes, "Breathe deep. Breathe slow. You'll get used to it." Instead, Blair walks away as the new forensics chief, Cassie Wells, approaches. She's bubbly and enthusiastic, and explains her theory that this was a murder. Jim pokes holes in it (why didn't the workmen on the bridge see the body being thrown?) and Blair pipes up to defend it (maybe they were on break). "Your theory has all the pieces, but it doesn't make sense," says Jim. Kind of like every episode of this show. As they walk off, Jim teases "The workmen were on break, huh? How could she resist that?", smiling indulgently and apparently with his arm around Blair.

Almost as good a line as "I don't have a tent."

Station. Medical examiner Dan Wolfe is showing the autopsied body to Cassie, Jim and Blair. Dan reminds Blair of the time he passed out. "I was new back then," says Blair uncertainly, swinging on his heels. "I'm thinking that maybe I can handle it now." As Dan shows and describes the major trauma to the body, Blair leaves the room. Dan thinks the body suffered more damage than a fall from a bridge could account for.

In front of the elevator, Jim tries to diplomatically tell Cassie to stop overstepping her bounds--she's a forensics chief, not a detective. She argues that she thought this job was about SOLVING CRIMES, not EGOS. I'm gonna say it right now, I like Cassie. Unlike most of the women on this show, she's neither a victim nor a villain; and unlike the female officer-types Jim usually clashes with, she's not a mean, corrupt, or mean and corrupt. I mean, for real: a woman who's personable and competent. That never happens. At the same time, I see how Jim, without my feminist characterization issues, would find her annoying, because she is awfully perky and she doesn't do what he expects or fit neatly into her forensics pigeonhole.

In Simon's office, Jim complains about Cassie. Simon tells him to give her a chance, since she's new and supposedly good. Blair says "She's smart, she's aggressive, she knows what she
wants. Personally, I kind of like her." Heh. Blair is me. Jim tells Blair to back off, calling him "D'artagnan" and saying he's dated enough women in the department. Blair makes a "blah blah blah" gesture.

Blah blah blah.

Cassie enters to show them a computer program she's "beta-testing" which extrapolates the appearance of a person's face from the measurements of their skull. Oh, sure, she just threw that together in her spare time. Blair's impressed: "I've seen computer modeling used to reconstruct early hominids based on skull fragments, but man, never with this level of sophistication!" Simon tells Jim and Blair to bring Dan the picture. Because an image based on a program in beta is totally admissible evidence in a murder investigation. Here at Cascade PD, our motto is "Good Enough!"

Dan's office is empty, but Jim hears something. He opens one of the drawers in the morgue and finds Dan with duct tape over his mouth. Classic. Jim ungags him and he says some people came and took the John Doe's body and the fingerprints Dan had made of it. Jim and Blair run out and find two men running away. As a distraction, one of them detonates a bomb in a station wagon. Jim turns to protect Blair and when he looks back, they're gone.

Must protect the pretty!

Jim, Blair and Simon walk to Simon's office. Simon says someone's going to a lot of trouble to protect John Doe's identity, and Blair thinks it's because his ID will lead them to the killers. Simon: "You know, there are times when the kid actually sounds like a cop." Jim and Blair both shake their heads and grumble identically. As they leave to restart their investigation from square 1, Simon tells them to be careful: "I don't think they'd hesitate to kill a cop"--Blair looks at Jim--"or an anthropologist." Blair continues to look at Jim.
I'm still stuck on that "cop" part.

At the bridge, Jim pulls a Holmes-talking-to-Watson what-do-you-observe you're-looking-but-you're-not-seeing with Blair, then zooms in on something in a tree a quarter mile away. He makes Blair climb the tree because that is his job (cf. Switchman). Blair finds the object, a man's jacket matching John Doe's pants (Blair must be kind of a clotheshorse to be able to say that definitively), and throws it to Jim, who searches the pockets while Blair climbs down. Once Blair confirms he's okay, Jim shows him the French passport he found IDing the man as Jean Duval (for all you non-French speakers out there, that roughly translates to "John Doe").

Simon's office. Jim and Blair present their theory that Jean Duval fell out of an airplane. They seem to have worked it out pretty thoroughly together. Simon tells them Cassie found soil samples on the dead man's shoe from the Watumsa Basin. Blair corrects his pronunciation and says he spent time there studying some Indians. Of course he did, because he's Blair. "The breadth of your knowledge never ceases to amaze me," says Simon testily. Heh. Simon is me. Jim: "Time for a road trip, Chief."

Pinecrest, a small town in the Watumsa basin. Blair says not much has changed since he was last there, and jokingly describes the sherriff as a fat guy who "looked like an extra from Deliverance." They're greeted by... a pretty woman!!! Score one for the "Blair was never actually there" theory. Sherriff McNeil says someone from the Cascade PD is already there, and out comes Cassie Wells.

Outside, Jim chews out Cassie for overstepping her bounds to confer with local law enforcement. When she walks off, Blair's all, "She was just trying to help." Jim goes back to talk to her, asking why she didn't go the Academy if she wants to be a detective so badly. She wheezes that she tried and pulls out her inhaler. As Jim is apologizing, he sees one of the men from the station wagon explosion and runs after him. They end up in hand-to-hand combat, struggling for possession of Jim's gun, and the guy ends up getting impaled on a shovel.

Sherriff McNeil takes Jim and Cassie to the coroner's office (Blair elects to stay behind). The amiable county doc agrees with Jim that the dead guy had extensive plastic surgery. Cassie impresses the sheriff by taking pictures with a Digital Camera (It Doesn't Use Any Film!) Oh, 1998. Jim feels a tattoo removal scar with his bare fingers and is able to sense that it is a particular prison gang tattoo, confusing Cassie. After they leave, Doc Morrow has a sinister conversation with a bad guy.

Cassie shows Jim and Blair her shagwagon full of forensic equipment. Simon calls to inform Jim that Jean Duval was an Interpol agent trailing a French terrorist. On her computer, Cassie backwards-reconstructs the dead guy's face to see how it looked before plastic surgery, and offers to "modem" it to local prisons. Jim is impressed and agrees to let her continue to stay and help as long as she doesn't get in the way.
Jim sees a plane and asks a local woman about it, who informs him about Bob Leland's crop-dusting service. Jim and Blair head out to Bob Leland's where Blair is impressed with the tiny prop planes: "That's when flying was flying. Wind in your hair, heart in your throat..." "Bugs in your teeth," Jim Negative Nancys. Heh. Jim is me. Bob Leland comes out and Jim pretends to be looking for discreet plane service to Cascade. Suspicious, Leland turns him down and goes inside. Blair notes to Jim that the runway is awfully long for these planes. Jim sees tracks from a larger craft.

Cassie's Mystery Machine. Jim asks her to research Leland. She has meanwhile found out that the plastic surgery stiff did time for stealing foreigners' kidneys to sell on the black market. Blair remembers reading about that (probably on snopes.com). Jim asks her to call up the records on other people involved in the scheme, and they find one with a picture of the good county doctor.

Sherriff McNeil doesn't want to believe ill of Dr Morrow. She shows them the doc's fingerprints, and they don't match the prison record. Jim decides that he and Blair will talk to Morrow again, and Cassie volunteers to go check out Leland's airfield. Jim tells her to go home: "I got a funny feeling about this place and if something gets weird around here, I don't want you to get hurt." He should have said "...I want them to know what we were up to" or something. She'd have probably gone to save their skins, but he should know she won't go to save her own. She says she has a .357 and she can shoot better than most of the SFPD cops. Jim: "Cassie, our agreement was if you got in the way you would head home, and I think it's time you head home." Cassie looks to Blair, who looks like a guy watching two people argue always looks, and then stalks off.

Alone with Jim, Blair opines that he was being harsh: "I understand you're trying to protect your territorial imperative here, but come on." Jim says he's trying to protect her. How can Jim send someone away from an investigation for not being a cop and then turn to Blair all Follow me to DANGER, my little doctoral candidate!? I guarantee Cassie would kick Blair's ass in a sharpshooting match and possibly in general. It's funny that nobody brings this up, ever. Blair kind of looks like he might, a couple of times, but it's probably best for him that he doesn't.

Sherriff McNeil confronts Dr. Morrow. He admits to paying off her deputies to switch the fingerprints. She holds a gun on him and declares she'll arrest him; he says "I may have lied about who I was, but I never lied about my feelings for you," and shoots her from behind a folder.

Jim and Blair are in the parking lot when Jim smells blood. Blair pops the trunk on the police car and they find the sherriff's body in the trunk. As they're leaning over it, the deputies drive up and arrest them.

Cassie investigates the airfield. In the barn, she finds an operating table.

Jim and Blair share a cell. This is like a dream come true for me.
Cassie witnesses the arrival of the French terrorist that was mentioned earlier. Dr. Morrow gives him some fake documents and promises to make him over into a new man. Cassie finds herself staring down the barrel of a gun.

Jim watches the deputy on guard listen to music while Blair sits on the cell cot. Jim asks for Blair's glasses and then proceeds to unscrew one of the arms while Blair hisses "Hey! Those cost $150!" Oh, 1998. Jim uses the glasses to pick the lock, somehow, and then as the deputy turns to see him emerge from his cell, Jim punches him out. This can't be legal.

Cassie gets Dr. Morrow to speechify on his master plan. He explains some of the plot loose ends which I don't care about.

Blair's on the phone with Simon, in case we had any lingering doubts about Jim and Blair being renegades. I guess it's okay to break out of jail and punch out officers if they are working for evil plastic surgeons. Jim tells Simon to send backup. A call comes on the office phone from one of Morrow's redshirts, wanting the deputies to bring Jim and Blair to the airfield. Posing as a deputy, Jim agrees.

Jim and Blair hide in a prop plane and then attack the bad guys in a cloud of pesticide. Morrow and some others try to escape in a plane with Cassie. Backup arrives; Jim tells Blair to stay put and grabs a ride with a police chopper, from which he jumps onto the escaping plane. Nice. Jim messes with the tailfin to make the plane run in circles while inside the cabin, Cassie sprays her inhaler into Morrow's face and grabs his gun. She gets him to land the plane. She cements her role as action hero by making a terrible quip about frequent flier miles as Jim arrests Morrow.

In his office, Simon is excited about having recovered Morrow's patient files, which will lead them to important arrests. Jim doesn't care: he has a date. "That's great, man, me too," says Blair, shaking his hand or giving him five or something below frame.

Restaurant. Jim asks for reservations in the name of Wells. He's led to a table where someone sits holding a giant menu... Blair! "What are you doing here?" "What are YOU doing here?" Didn't they notice each other dressing up in the same apartment and then driving to the same place? Cassie arrives. Apparently they both asked her out, so she arranged this. She says, "I think you're both great. You're both smart and funny", camera on Jim, "and good-looking," camera on Blair. "But I have this rule that I don't date anyone I work with under any circumstances." The boys are all "whoa, hey," in unison, denying that this was a date. Cassie says she's relieved because they're too competitive for it ever to work out with either one of them. Jim and Blair deny that they are competitive, because they aren't. I don't think I've ever seen them compete for anything. I was afraid they'd make them competitive after that just to make the joke, but instead, when Cassie is momentarily called away for a page, Jim and Blair conspire together:

JIM: You know Chief, I think the only way to show her we aren't competitive is to not fight and have her pay the check.
BLAIR: I am down with that, my friend. I am down with that.
[High five or fist-five or something, semi-off-camera]
BLAIR: I wonder if the lobster's fresh.
JIM: Have two.

Fade out on Jim and Blair smiling in their little suits at their little table with a romantic candle.
Just like every Friday night.

**Best moments:** Not many specifically, poignantly gay moments outside of that last, but Jim and Blair were together through the whole thing, investigating and joking and shining in each other's company, and I've mentioned how I actually liked the semi-love-interest of the week. All in all a solid episode.

**Sideburn update:** Once they reach Pinecrest and Blair's hair is pulled back, you can see his sideburns end in worryingly pointy nubs. Just when you thought they were dead...

They're baaaack!
3x11 Breaking Ground

Chapter Summary

Rainier student killed at dig site. Jim/Blair/Cassie tension continues.

At a construction site, a boy with orange glasses drowns another boy in a pool of mud.

Jim is watching the news with the volume turned way down when Blair looks up from his book (wow, Blair actually doing schoolwork. This is a first.) and sees one of his professors, Emily Watson, on TV (ah, it's a university-themed episode--that explains it.)

BLAIR: Hey, turn this up.
JIM: Why?
BLAIR: Why? Because I can't hear it. There's some definite drawbacks to living with you.

Ha. Jim is such a jackass. "Why?"

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Extra, extra! Blair cracks book!

Anyway, the newscast is about the death of Martin Gilman, one of the students working on an archaeological dig downtown. Sure. They see Cassie in the background, using her cell phone, and their phone rings. "Oh, that'd be strange," says Blair. Of course it is Cassie, and she thinks Gillman was murdered.

At the site, Dr. Watson (hee) argues with Mark Cantor, the guy who wants to develop the land the dig is on. He wants to shut down the dig. Blair introduces "my friend, Jim" to the professor, and she lets them go into the dig site. Blair's really interested: "I've been dying to look at this place for months now... Watson invited me once, but I couldn't come cause I was working on a case." He's offhand about it, of course, but it's interesting to see a rare moment of wistfulness about the priority choices he's making lately. As embodied by Jim:

CASSIE EXPOSITION: When they were digging the foundations for the new building, they discovered Cascade's old waterfront.
JIM: Yeah, so?
BLAIR (annoyed): So, it has historical value.
Gillman appears to have died in an accidental cave-in, but Cassie's suspicious because his car was broken into—she thinks he was murdered for something he had. Jim thinks it could have been a random burglary, but Blair is more open to her ideas, "probably because I'm not a cop either," he admits, and if I were Cassie I'd be more "....heyyy!" about that. Blair asks Cassie out to lunch, she reminds him of her no-dating-coworkers rule, and he says it wouldn't be a date. I thought we were done with this.

Rainier University. Blair drops in on Dr. Watson on his way to "[his] lab." Blair ranks a lab? I bet it's covered with about six feet of dust. Blair does a sort of commiserate/question thing that feeling people can pull off, and finds out that Cantor forced Watson to include Gillman on her team.

Cassie has the medical examiner's report for Gillman: he drowned. He had cement in his lungs, and Cassie theorizes that he was killed at Cantor's construction site. Jim thinks her theory sounds plausible; "we just have to prove it."

CASSIE: Great. When do we start?
JIM: We're not starting anything. I meant me and Sandburg.

HA. Ha ha ha. Why does Cassie never call them on the Blair-not-a-cop thing? Blair shows up and Cassie gives him a murderous look. Blair is like, huh? and Jim is like, Mwahaha, my plan is complete.

Night. Jim and Blair talk to Cantor briefly (he says he's shutting down Watson's dig, to Blair's dismay), then examine the construction site. Jim sees glowy footprints. Blair's hypothesis is that "maybe the moonlight's working on your senses, sort of like a blacklight effect." Blair is so making this shit up as he goes along. Suddenly Jim hears something, and shouts "SANDBURG!" just as the ground beneath Blair collapses! "SANDBURG! SANDBURG!" Jim shouts, running to peer down the hole. Man, he looks like he's about to cry.

He lowers down a ladder and rushes to Blair's side, where he proceeds to gingerly help him up and ask him if he's okay about eleven times. Blair assures him he's fine.

Now that they're in a secret room, Blair wants to look around. They find some cast-iron doors with writing in a language Blair doesn't recognize. He starts to take a rubbing to take to Watson, figuring this discovery could help the dig stay open, and then winces in pain. Jim asks him again if he's all right and he says yes. This foreshadowing that Blair is not actually okay will come to nothing, you guys, he's fine. DO NOT WORRY.

Morning at the loft. Jim comes down in his bathrobe as Blair pores over books. He tells Jim
he's been up all night, trying unsuccessfully to decipher the writing from the doors, and trying unsuccessfully to call Emily. As Jim makes him coffee, Blair explains that the writing is probably some kind of 19th century code.

Blair liked the first book so much, he went on to a second!

Knock at the door. Cassie. She's come to help Blair crack his code with her computer. She can't stop staring at Jim. Did she not know they lived together or something? But she doesn't seem that surprised. Maybe she just didn't realize it was that kind of living together. Or maybe she's just animal-magnetized to Jim in his sexy gray terry-cloth housecoat. Jim heads upstairs, presumably to put on clothes, as Cassie settles in, drinks out of Blair's coffee cup, and proclaims the code "very cool." Blair wearily says it's "very, very frustrating."

NOOO! NOT THE COFFEE JIM MADE HIM! /weeps

Station. Jim's there even though it's his day off. Blair and Cassie enter with books. Jim passive-aggressively badgers Cassie into letting him look at Gillman's car, then asks Blair "Enjoying your day, Chief?" which is kind of odd since it isn't Blair's day off. Blair is enjoying his day, because he and Cassie figured out that the secret room was part of an old Masonic lodge and the code they're trying to decipher is connected with the Illuminati. Because it wouldn't be great television without an Illuminati episode. Cassie's waiting for her friend to send her a code-breaking computer program in the mail. She goes to check for it, and Blair proclaims to Jim that she is "pretty great." Jim gets a call and tells Blair to come on.

Emily Watson is dead on the floor of her office. Blair is clearly disturbed and Simon asks if he's okay. "Yeah," he mutters. "I can't just leave. She was a friend." "Nobody's asking you to do that, Chief," says Jim gently. It looks like she was giving herself insulin and had a reaction. For once, Cassie buys the simple explanation, and Jim thinks it was murder. Cassie bitches at him not letting
the "other team kick a field goal," whatever that means, and Blair flips out: "There's somebody dead
here! This isn't some sporting event, all right?" Jim puts a hand on Blair's shoulder and pats him on
the back as he turns away, saying he's going to his lab. Cassie starts to say she's sorry, and Jim gives
her "drop it" motion.

Jim takes a closer look at the body, and sees a second needle injection over the first. He
confuses Cassie by leaving the room ("The evidence is all right here! Where is he going?!") Outside
in a vent, he finds a second hypodermic needle.

Forensics. Jim says he just got lucky. Cassie says it's nice working with him. She goes to do
fingerprints and we fall into an interminable "Jim checks the car" montage. Usually he finds
whatever he's looking for instantly, so as we see him start over and over, I'm sure he's not going to
find anything, but eventually he figures out that the glove box has a secret compartment containing a
weird-shaped gold bar with secret writing on it and a 3 1/2 inch floppy.

Cassie examines the gold through a microscope. It's worth a few thousand, but not worth
killing over. She says the disk is encrypted and will only work on the computer that made it. Right.
Blair thinks the gold looks like a puzzle piece.

That night, Cassie is working on the computer when Blair comes in. She has her computer
program all set up to crack the code. She explains, "It's based on the alphabetical system so whatever
you feed into it automatically translates." I silently scream. Blair takes out Chinese food. He assures
her it's a working dinner. Simon comes by, asks Blair where Jim is (Blair: "I don't know. Maybe a
date"), and tells him to tell him that the warrant for Gillman's apartment came through. Then he does
kind of a hilarious double-take and calls Blair out into the hall to tell him "if there's anything going
on here" to "keep it off the premises." Blair's heard this speech before.

The program cracks the code from the door: "Beware! There is no escaping the maze of the
sacred chamber." Sigh. The puzzle piece looks to have directions on it. Cassie thinks the info from
the other pieces might be on Gillman's diskette. Since they have the warrant, she's psyched to go to
Gillman's apartment and use his computer. Blair's all, I don't know about this Tommy, but goes with
her.

On the phone, Blair parks his car in front of Gillman's. He's trying Jim for the fourth time. This
time, Jim picks up ("Where you been, man?" "I took a friend to dinner." Aw, Jim is so discreet.)
Blair explains the situation and Jim asks him to put Cassie on. He tells her very sternly to wait until
he gets there to go in. Cassie decides to go inside anyway. Blair: "You're putting me in a weird spot!
I'm Jim's partner!" Cassie says she works alone and goes inside. See, this is Cassie's problem. She
doesn't have a partner! She's all out of balance! She needs to team up with Dan Wolfe or something.
Actually, that would be great. A forensics chief and a medical examiner! Jim would be leading Blair
on wild goose chases all over Washington, and they'd just sit and solve all the crimes without ever
leaving the police department.

Anyway, Blair decides to stay put as Jim asked, and says in hilarious Ted Raimi-esque voice,
"Well... good! Cause I'm gonna stay here!" Oh Blair.
"Well... good!"

On the one hand, I'm glad you're following Jim's directives because clearly that is the right thing to do. On the other hand, what's going to happen when he shows up? "Cassie went in, but I stayed!" you'll say proudly. "You let her go in alone?" he'll cry. There's really no way to win points with Jim here.

Except if, as happens here, your choice to do the safe thing ironically gets you abducted by the evil orange glasses guy from the beginning, who can see you playing with the code-cracking program from outside because of its unnecessarily huge GUI. Then, of course, you'll get Victim Points. Jim loves a nice rescue!

So, Jim arrives at the apartment and finds Cassie and asks "Where's Sandburg?" She thinks he went for coffee and tells some lengthy story about some old Mason and some golden keys fantastic treasure secret maze blah blah. "Where's Sandburg?" Jim asks again, and they go to the car. Cassie's computer's gone and she thinks Blair left the door open and it got stolen. Jim knows better. He has a "hunch" that Blair was kidnapped and taken to the construction/maze site. Well, okay, the construction site is a logical place to assume Blair is, because that's where all of this brouhaha centers, and if they're going to make a play for the treasure in the maze they'll have to go there. And it's logical to assume that Blair has been kidnapped because that is ALWAYS TRUE.

Orange Glasses Guy and Cantor try to get Blair to decipher the rest of the puzzle pieces. He stalls. Orange Glasses Guy is armed and threatening, and starts to be mean to Cantor, too. They get to the maze, and OGG makes Blair go in first and lead the way. It's a really dark scene and my AVI of it is basically frame after frame of solid black. They get near the site where the treasure's supposed to be, but it's blocked. OGG tells Blair and Cantor to dig. Blair refuses on the grounds that the whole place could collapse, and OGG is about to shoot him when Jim appears and shoots the gun out of his hand. Blair doesn't even look surprised. He asks Blair if he's all right, and Blair says he is (HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I WRITTEN THAT SENTENCE).

Jim hears the telltale sounds of the place beginning to collapse, and he herds everyone back into the maze. He even tries to pull OGG out, but he insists on running back for the treasure and gets buried in rubble for this trouble. Jim rushes Blair and Cantor through the maze (a feat they will later explain to Cassie with "a good sense of direction" and "luck"; presumably, Jim used his actual senses in some way, but we don't see it). They escape just as the entire site collapses.

Station. Simon says the treasure's lost because it wouldn't cost effective to dig it out. Blair seems put out. Simon commends Wells, then gives Blair "two words of advice: DON'T FRATERNIZE." Barn door, Simon. Jim knits his brow as Cassie thanks him for giving her credit on the case. "You deserved it," he says, looking at Blair. Ten minute awkward pause. Jim: "I think it's time we had a little talk." He adds "I think we all know what's going on here," and opines that they
need to set "ground rules." Okay, no eye contact and no kissing above the neck. Blair, you can do whatever you want.

JIM: I think we should-- decide to be just friends. All of us. And stick to it.  
CASSIE: You think you guys can handle that?

Jim and Blair's cute little look-at-each-other-and-shrug reaction confirms that they so, so can't. Cassie says "All right, uh-huh," and saunters off in the elevator. "I think we should just be friends," Blair mimics Jim.

JIM: You want some of this?  
BLAIR: Yeah. Hey.  
JIM: Bring it on!

Then they bump chests. It's really, really gay.

Best Moments: Visceral Jim angst when Blair falls into a hole. Good character moments for Blair, including a bit of a clashing-of-worlds with his academic and police lives, particularly exemplified when he freaks out at the scene of Dr Watson's murder. Also, he wears his glasses a lot.

One thing that I liked about this episode was that it was very "homey"--lots of scenes in the apartment, at the station, at the university, all home bases for our characters.

I'm not sure how to feel about that threesome-tensiony tag there. It seems to have at once several and zero layers of meaning.
3x12 Prisoner X

Chapter Summary

Jim goes undercover in jail.

Jim is exclaiming over a football game on TV. "It's just a game, Jim," says Blair, who's making coffee in the kitchen. Also he's barefoot and pregnant. Jim, channelling Blair, explains how the football stadium is the modern gladatorial arena, when there's a knock at the door. Blair opens it to a pretty, unfamiliar woman. He looks concerned when she enters and Jim cries "Kelly!" and hugs her. Kelly tells Jim that her brother Matt just died in prison.

At the station, Jim tells Blair that Matt was a friend of his from high school who was arrested for harvesting weed to pay for his gambling debts. Jim and Blair meet with Simon and a woman from Corrections, who agrees with Jim that it's fishy that Matt should have been shot in an escape attempt when he was a model prisoner with just three months to go. She thinks this may be the "tip of the iceberg" in regard corruption. As usual Jim is ready and raring to go undercover and Simon is against it at first but quickly doormats.

Walking through the bullpen, Blair requests to go in as Jim's backup, but Jim says it's too dangerous. Besides, he is being given backup: some new cop from Detroit is going to teach a creative writing class at the prison which Jim is going to take. Wow, really? That sounds like a role tailor made for Blair. This cop must be a real pansy. Uh, sorry, Blair. Jim tells Blair, "You go anywhere near that place, I'm going to use your head for a football."

Hooray for gruff protectiveness.

Jim goes to prison. It looks unpleasant. He immediately gets picked on by his cellmate who yells at him for choosing the wrong bunk, calling him "punk." "Name's Curtis," Jim volunteers, all pleased with himself for having actually picked out a name other than "Jim Ellison" this time. "You get a name when I give you one," says his cellmate. It's interesting seeing the usually in-control Jim in this situation: you can see he's struggling to maintain his pride and dignity, qualities which, in him, were already immense to the point of structural instability.

Lying in his bunk at night, Jim uses his hearing. A prisoner is dragged, yelling, from his cell.
In the weightroom, Jim gets in trouble with a working-out prisoner for staring. Of course he does. That night his cellmate tells him to "watch his back." I'm not sure I like where this is going. (But I'm not sure I don't.)

Jim tries to question some prisoners, but they keep getting suspicious and asking him why he wants to know. He does find evidence of some corruption in the form of the guards selling things made by the prisoners for profit, and he uses his sight to see the access code of some storeroom. He also finds out that the mean guy who yelled at him for staring has it in for a little guy with glasses, for whom Jim seems to feel a natural protectiveness.

Cut to--Blair! Hooray. "Good morning, gentlemen," he says, making his way to the front of a classroom with his little leather satchel. Jim looks up from his notebook, surprised and concerned. Blair says that writers tell stories and asks someone to tell him a story, and when nobody volunteers, he calls on Jim. Don't put him in this position, Blair. Jim says, "I was born, I killed a cop, I went to prison. The end." The other prisoners clap and cheer and Blair gives a nonplussed smile.

I would have liked to see the rest of the class, but next thing we know the prisoners are filing out. Jim hangs back and Blair quietly explains that the guy from Detroit had an emergency appendectomy, Blair volunteered, Banks said no, Corrections lady talked him into it. Jim wisely opts to use his precious time on the case instead of getting bent out of shape; he tells Blair, "Look for the laundry bag from cell block B marked 'Curtis.'" Blair nods his acknowledgement. A guard comes in and they both look up guiltily. "Thanks for the tip," says Jim. "No problem," says Blair, looking disappointed, as Jim exits. The guard fixes Blair with a suspicious look.

There goes my hero.

Jim writes his love letter and sticks it in his laundry bag. Meanwhile, Blair asks the prison doctor out for coffee: "You could, show me the ropes?" Dr. Wilder catches sight of a guard watching them and declines abruptly.

Blair finds Jim's letter in the laundry and calls Simon from his car to report Jim's findings about the guard's sideline businesses. He offers to check up on the delivery routes, but Simon tells him no--he's not a detective. As soon as he hangs up Blair follows the truck anyway. At the endpoint, he watches the product and money change hands, and catches sight of Dr. Wilder passing by.

Blair follows Dr. Wilder into a restaurant and pretends to bump into her by chance. "Sandburg, right?" "Yeah! I prefer Blair, though," says Blair, and that's adorable, but so sad, because Jim usually says "Sandburg." Dr. Wilder quickly moves from friendly to anxious as Blair sits with her and makes conversation. She apologizes for being "jumpy." "Sounds like you need someone to talk to," Blair sensitive-guys. The doctor confides that she treats some suspicious injuries. Blair asks if she keeps records, and she twigs, asking, "Who are you?" "A friend. Someone you can talk to," says Blair.
mysteriously, and like that, the doctor is on his side. Outside, she IDs the truck driver as a prison guard and mentions some other suspicious stuff she's seen. Blair gives her his cell number. I love Blair acting as a badass detective type in his own right.

In prison, the big mean guy somehow gets a knife and goes after the little bespectacled guy. Jim goes to rescue him, but gets sidetracked in a fight with a henchman and arrives too late. Sad music as Jim sees the little guy lying there, glasses fallen to his neck. "You don't wanna be part of this," an inmate whispers to Jim as he checks the dead guy's pulse. "I know who you are. Cop." Commercial!

Turns out this new guy secretly witnessed Jim busting his brother (anyone actually busted by Jim has been transferred in prep for his coming). He'll tell everyone Jim's identity unless Jim promises to help lift his charges. Meanwhile, Blair meets with Dr. Wilder, who gives him some files and reports others missing. Blair calls Simon with Wilder's info.

Incidentally, I have to ask: is Blair aging backwards?

At night, Jim successfully zooms his sight into the window of a room across the courtyard, and there we see a big crowd waving money around a chain-linked arena containing battling inmates. Gladiators! This has turned into an episode about gladiators!

Jim's writing in his creative writing notebook when the Guy Who Knows Jim is a Cop brings up the laundry cart. Jim stuffs the letter into his laundry bag and GWKJIAC tells Jim, "You got till tomorrow." Down in the laundry room, GWKJIAC retrieves and reads the note: "BEEN ID'D. PULL ME ASAP." When Blair sneaks down to get the note, it's been switched: "MAKING PROGRESS. STAY TUNED. P.S. THE FOOD SUCKS HERE." Blair chuckles a little. Pathos! It's both adorable and inexplicable that GWKJIAC knew to sneak in a little joke for versimilitude. Why doesn't Blair know Jim's handwriting?

Prison courtyard. Jim talks to his cellmate, who says he's willing to answer questions--but only if Jim is really a cop, and has the power to put in a good word for him with the parole board. Jim, figuring he's going to get pulled anyway, admits it.

Simon and Blair meet. Blair shows him the note, but he's concerned because today's creative writing class has been cancelled. Not having visual contact makes both Blair and Simon nervous. Blair suggests that if Dr. Wilder can get the files they need for evidence, maybe they can just pull Jim. Simon decides to give Jim another 24 hours since he said he was okay.

Meanwhile Jim is getting antsy and wondering why he hasn't been pulled. Zoom in on Jim's left ear--complete with earring hole--as he hears the big murderous prisoner and the GWKJIAC talking: "He doesn't leave the yard alive." Jim begins to walk away and the bad guys follow him. Just as a confrontation becomes necessary, Jim is surrounded by friends of his cellmate who walk him inside.
The cellmate gives him some info, including helping him figure out how to escape. ESCAPE. Seems like kind of a bad idea. It will involve getting past the access code door to a series of tunnels which, for some reason, exist.

As Jim is leaving GWKJIAC catches him and threatens to rat him out unless Jim takes him along. So Jim ends up with a partner (albeit an untrustworthy, non-Blair one). All too soon, though, the pair is caught by some corrupt guards hanging out in the tunnels. It looks like they will let GWKJIAC go, but as he's running off, they shoot him in the back.

Jim's locked in the Hole or something and his cellmate is thrown in with him. The cellmate tells Jim they're next in the gladiator fights. Oh, rock.

Blair and Simon meet. Blair's class has been cancelled permanently--he thinks they figured out about his scheming with the doctor, because she's gone missing. Simon calls the Corrections lady to start the process of pulling Jim, but she's unreachable. "No, tomorrow will not do. A policeman's life is at stake!"

Sure enough, Jim is fighting in the gladiator arena. It's pretty awesome.

He gets pretty well beat up by the big mean guy, but a well-timed high-kick gets him back in the game. Then Mean Guy fights dirty and sprays something in his eyes which momentarily blinds him. But Jim uses his other senses and realizes he's about to be kicked in the face. He dodges and comes back, knocking the surprised mean guy to the ground. He punches him while he's down, and the guards, who are in cahoots with Mean Guy, pull out the downed fighter before Jim can seal the deal on the whole fight to the death thing. (Would he have? He seems pretty mad.) Next they bring in Jim's cellmate and arm them both with knives. The cellmate starts circling and swinging, but Jim says, "I'm not going to fight you," and tosses away his knife. The cellmate raises his knife menacingly, but throws it away at the last moment.

The guards don't like that, but Simon arrives in the nick of time with a search warrant and a SWAT team. Jim and Cellmate do a close manful handshake thing. Episode ends with Jim wondering at himself for unleashing his hatred on the mean guy, and telling Simon he's going to go take a walk, "somewhere out in the open... anyplace without walls." So much love for messed-up Jim.

Would have liked to see: More than one session of the creative writing class. More Jim and Blair together, even (especially?) in restricted, tense, fleeting contact. This situation had the potential to be interesting for their relationship, but as usual the writers were more interested in the damn gladiatorial arena.
The only witness to a murder was being inhabited by a goddess at the time.

We open a purportedly Cuban dancing ritual in a warehouse full of Buffy candles while on the roof, two guys argue about some kind of illegal deal from which one of them wants out. The eviller guy pushes the less evil guy through the plate-glass skylight and the dancers below disperse. Less evil guy is injured but not dead, so eviller guy comes and, apologetically, shoots him. The main dancer (Corinna) emerges and seems to cause the evil guy's gun to jam by telekinesis. Evil guy and dancer both run away in different directions.

Later, cops milling around. Jim and Blair inspect the crime scene. Blair: "Looks like it was a santeria ceremony. Whoever put together this altar really knew what they were doing." Hey, Blair is useful! The victim was a cop. Simon thinks the murder might be payback for Mendola, a Cuban law student who accused the police of corruption and then was killed, presumably by a cop.

Outside, Blair talks about a santeria ceremony he saw in New York, and Jim smells something. They follow the scent and find a gold cloth we saw Corinna wearing earlier. Cut to Corinna going to a friend and saying she witnessed the crime. Her friend doesn't want her to go to the police. "What will you tell them? That you were practicing some ancient religion and fell into a trance and now a man is dead? All you will do is jeopardize everything you have worked for." And that is the dialogue on this show.

In the car, Blair explains that whoever wore the gold shawl was probably a priestess of Oshun, "the African goddess of love and beauty, sort of like Venus." Blair rhapsodized about priestesses of Oshun, saying they are beautiful women who have "this way of moving--ah--it's sort of like a--sort of like sensual rhythm, y'know?" He demonstrates with a little wiggly dance move in his seat, and Jim makes a face like, Fair enough! "This is an academic discussion only," Blair qualifies, "I was strictly an observer," which I guess is supposed to mean that he didn't sleep with any of the priestesses. Except he's currently strictly observing Jim, so that doesn't exactly inspire confidence.

What happens next is great. Jim says "Do that move again," and Blair does his little dance for Jim again, and Jim grins all broadly and laughs, "Yeah-heah-heah! You got all the moves, babe." BABE HE SAYS. I AM PRETTY SURE. They're both laughing. These guys have such great chemistry.
Yes Blair, you're very cute, HOWEVER, if you don't stop dancing for Jim, he is going to drive you both into a tree.

Jim and Blair are heading to the store where Blair happens to know the priestess shawl originated, and at which Corinna's friend works. (Got that?) Friend hides Corinna in the back room when Jim and Blair arrive. For those of you keeping track at home, Jim introduces Blair as "Mr. Sandburg" this time. Corinna's friend claims not to know anything. Blair makes anthropologetic conversation about the ceremony. Corinna says the murder could not have taken place at the ceremony because weapons aren't allowed. Jim says, "I never said the murder happened at the ceremony."

Station. Jim is sure the shopkeeper is sitting on information, but Simon wants to ease off in the interest of PR. Jim decides to question the dead cop's partner, Murphy. He and Blair ("Blair Sandburg" this time) find Murphy at the shooting range. Murphy seconds Simon's opinion that this is about Mendola. Blair pipes up, "You were the arresting officers on that case, right?" Hey, Blair knows things! Murphy explains that they arrested Mendola on legitimate drug charges. Blair says, "From what I know about that case, none of that can be proved yet," and Murphy flips out on him, questioning the legitimacy of his consultant status, and telling him he doesn't know what he's talking about. "I lost a partner!" "We understand," Jim smooths things over. He promises they'll catch the killer, and Murphy says, "If you don't, I will."

In the car, Blair apologizes for messing things up with Murphy.

BLAIR: I should have realized I was trading upon sacred ground and that the department has its own social structure and its own taboos--

JIM (long-suffering): Whoa, whoa, Chief. Don't think this into a term paper. Do me that favor, all right?
BLAIR: I'm not. I'm just letting you know. I understand.
JIM: I don't think you do understand.
Blair's mouth forms a perfect "o" of shock.
BLAIR (snapping): I may not be a cop, but I know what it's like to lose somebody, all right?
How dare he imply my knowledge of the partnership bond is less thorough and intense than his! Well, I never!

Jim apologizes: "I know you do." Wait, are they talking about someone specific here? Who has Blair lost? Nobody in his family--his mother's alive, he never knew his father's identity, and he's an only child. Someone during the run of the show? Has a girl of the week died on him? Have we seen this? I'm pretty sure the greatest depth of emotion we've seen from him is when Maya left the country and again when she was subsequently deported, but that's not at all the same thing as losing a partner.

We cut to Murphy talking to some guy called Cortez who was the subject of conversation on the roof when--OH. Murphy killed his own partner. I think I was supposed to know this already, but honestly, I wasn't paying that close attention to the teaser. I still don't know what Cortez has to do with all of this. He seems to be Murphy's boss in some way. He tells Murphy to get rid of the witness.

Jim goes to Cortez's club/restaurant/thing to question Cortez, who--because he only wants to talk to Jim? I guess?--has his cook make Blair lunch. Jim's questions don't get him anywhere, so he sort of threatens Cortez vaguely. Jim and Blair are leaving the restaurant in their typical fashion (squeezing together so they can both fit through the door at once), Jim making fun of Blair for taking the food, when Jim gets a call. Forensics ID'd the murder gun.

Jim and Blair find the kid who owned the gun, and he tells them that he hasn't seen it in weeks--not since he was picked up for possession and it was confiscated. By--duh duh duh--the dead cop! (Well, he wasn't dead at the time. That would have been a real twist.)

Simon's office. Jim reports that the kid's story checks out; the killer must have gotten the gun out of the evidence locker. All signs point to "cop." Simon tells Jim and Blair in confidence that IA released a list of cops suspected of being "in Cortez's pocket," and the victim was one of them. Also, Cortez has filed charges of police harrassment against Jim. Blair's incensed, and Jim has to wave him down. The upshot is they have to work with the community liaison. It's Corinna! Jim recognizes her priestess scent.

After a meeting in which Jim and Blair and Corinna agree to disagree on this issue of Cortez: Pure Evil or Good for the Community?, Jim questions Corinna about her priestess shawl, but doesn't get anything from her. That night, while Jim is asking Simon for permission to put the old pressure on her, Blair calls to report that he's taken the liberty of following the storekeeper to a cafe, and that she's meeting with Corinna right now. Moments later, Murphy drives by and shoots up the place with a machine gun. Blair watches, horrified, then runs into the cafe and finds Corinna weeping over her friend's body.
EVERYBODY ON THIS SHOW HAS A PARTNER.

When Jim arrives, Corinna finally tells everything she knows: first she was mid-ceremony, then she was standing over the detective's dead body. She doesn't remember anything in between because she was in a trance. Blair backs her up on the existence of trances.

JIM: Why didn't you tell me all this before?
CORINNA: I work for the mayor and I practice an African religion where a god inhabits your body. I live in two worlds.
JIM: A lot of us walk in different worlds, Corinna.

Nice interweaving of the Sentinel mysticism, here. Often it seems like they've forgotten about it. I'm glad Jim immediately accepts the story; he really has no grounds to be skeptical, and it's good he's not a hypocrite about it. It also shows his trust in Blair's knowledge. Jim tells Corinna that whoever's after her thinks she's a witness and doesn't know she was in a trance.

Jim tells Simon that he's got Corinna staying with Blair in the loft under guard, and that he suspects Murphy. Simon agrees it fits and hopes he's wrong. Meanwhile, Blair asks Corinna to go into another trance and channel Oshun--the real witness of the murder. Oh, this is going to be good.

At the ceremonial-things shop, Blair helps Corinna prepare the altar. Meanwhile, Jim ambushes Cortez's main henchman--at his club? I think?--and holds him at gunpoint in a men's bathroom. Jim's kind of a real bastard about it, but it's effective; he gets confirmation that Murphy did the crime under Cortez's orders. On the phone to Simon, Jim says he can't reach Sandburg. Blair meanwhile is watching Corinna dance, while we see that outside, Cortez and Murphy have stormed up and shot the uniformed guards. Suspense!

Corinna turns into Oshun and puts her gold shawl sensuously around Blair. Blair swallows. Then he sees bad guys storming into the next room, and he pulls Corinna out the back way. They run out into a crazy parade that's going on. As they try to blend into the crowd, Jim finds the dead guards.

Blair loses Corinna in the crowd. So we have Blair, Corinna/Oshun, Cortez and Murphy, and Simon and Jim all wandering around looking for each other. We see the bad guys looking menacing. We see Blair trying to hide. Then a hand claps on Blair's shoulder, and he looks around in fear--and sighs, "Man, am I glad to see you!" He looks like he's going to hug Jim, but he doesn't. Blair instructs Jim to locate Corinna by scent, but Jim says he can't with all these people. Blair thinks he can and I tend to agree. It's established that Corinna has a distinctive scent, and Jim has already found someone (1) in an airport, by their chewing gum and (2) in a sewer, by no particular unusual smell.

It's moot: Jim locates Corinna by sight after Murphy and Cortez cause a ruckus by pulling their guns on her. When Jim and Simon pull their guns, Murphy relinquishes his weapon, but Cortez runs. Jim
goes after him. Cortez takes a hostage in the parade and Jim drops his weapon. But then he smiles. "Go ahead, kill her. Kill me. They'll still know what you're all about." Cortez looks like a cornered animal, realizing Jim's right—he's outing himself as a bad guy. He makes a last-ditch effort to accuse Jim of Mendola's murder, hoping the crowd will turn on him, but Jim is all, I am rubber, you are glue, and in a sort of horrifying moment, Cortez is set upon by the mob. Yikes.

I guess it wasn't a bloodthirsty mob, only a justicethirsty mob, because next thing we know we're at the station and Simon's telling Jim that Cortez confessed and is going to jail. So they won't need Oshun's testimony after all. So... that plot point was entirely inconsequential, then. Blair walks up with Corinna, leaving her with Jim. They have this exchange, which, while admittedly not the Jim and Blair Moment o' Fun you typically want in your tag, nonetheless hurts so good:

JIM: I don't see it serving any purpose to expose your personal life and hold your beliefs up to scrutiny.
CORINNA: You seem to understand a lot.
JIM (glancing back in the general direction in which Blair just exited): Well, let's... Let's just say I know a few things about secrets.

**Best Moments:** Blair's "sensual" dance for Jim—he knows *all* the right moves!; the certainty that must exist in Corinna's mind about what kind of "secrets" Jim and his sweet-faced little partner are hiding.

**What I would have liked to see more of:** The actual, you know, TRANCE PLOT. Negotiating the logistics of presenting mystically-obtained evidence for public consumption would have been cool, particularly when you consider the special interest it must hold for Jim and Blair, but even without going there, it would have been neat to see more of Corinna as Oshun. I mean: imagine Blair interacting with an African love goddess! Imagine Jim interacting with an African love goddess! Imagine Jim watching Blair interact with an African love goddess! Who's with me?
3x14 Mirror Image

Chapter Summary

Cassie has uneasy rapport with dangerous madman; Blair briefly feigns antic disposition.

Guy is shot, la la la.

Crime scene. Dan Wolf investigates the body as Jim, Blair and Cassie look on. Whoa, this episode is going to have secondary characters! Dan explains that the victim was both strangled to death and shot, and Cassie's all, "Uh, gotta go!"

Cassie goes through security at a prison. Whoa, this episode is going to have secondary characters in scenes without Jim and/or Blair! I'm not sure if I like this development. She's led into a room where a prisoner sits on the other side of a glass divider. He's all "Hello, Clarice," I mean, "Cassie." He starts to make creepy small talk, but she comes right to the point: someone is killing using his signature. "How do you think I'm doing it?" Cassie's like, no, duh, you're in jail, it's a copycat. Not! Hannibal tells her some details about the murder which he couldn't possibly know, and tells her to be worried about 9:00 tonight.

Jim and Blair are working side-by-side behind the same desk, because they're afuckingdorable. Jim's pissed because Cassie's missing, but then she shows up, all, "I know who killed [name of unimportant victim guy]!"

They used to be even more space-efficient, but then Simon issued the departmentwide "one butt per chair" rule.

We cut into Simon's office where Cassie relates the conversation we just saw her have. Oh. For some reason I thought she would try to hide the source of her information in order to conceal her creepy-close association with a serial murderer. But she very candidly explains who he is (Warren Chapel, a killer known as the "avenging angel" because he ritually tortured, then shot, criminals who had gotten off on technicalities), and adds, "Oh yeah. I worked on the case." Oh. That's... nice and simple, then. Simon doubts that Chapel could have gotten out of a maximum-security mental institution to kill someone, but Jim would rather be safe than sorry. He has identified a likely victim. Blair hands Jim the file, and Jim says, "Thanks, very much." So polite! Simon agrees to let Jim and
Blair do a stakeout.

Car, night. Blair: "I hate stakeouts." Jim, drily: "You're not having fun?" We get some banal Jim and Blair conversation ("Think of it as meditation!") voiceovered over shots of a ninja-like assassin crawling into position, unnoticed, which is kind of cool. Then Blair says Simon's probably right--"You don't just walk out of Conover." Jim: "And how do you know that?" He looks so serious and suspicious--of Blair!--that I don't blame Blair for saying, quite deadpan, "Well, I got some history there." Then he breaks the ruse by grinning and waggling his eyebrows. Jim smiles, "I'm sure you do," all relieved, and Blair laughs, "It's not what you think." Jim looks at him expectantly, but before he can tell the story the phone rings.

It's Simon. The guy they're surveilling--the one who, like all Chapel's victims, walked on a technicality, remember?--has served them with a cease and desist, feeling his privacy is being violated. Makes sense. It's nearly 9, but Simon has to pull the plug on the operation. "I got a bad feeling about this," says Blair as they drive away. "Yeah, well tell your rabbi," says Jim, inexplicably.

Jim and Blair stop the car and get out when they see Cassie's Mystery Machine (she is, as usual, snooping illicitly), and Jim hears goings-on in the house. He runs in, gun drawn, only to find the guy they were supposed to protect dead on the ground. Blair and then Cassie follow and both look suitable horrified.

Cassie pays Chapel another visit, wearing a short skirt and tall boots and taking off her jacket like a stripper, while Jim and Blair watch the conversation on closed-circuit TV. Cassie asks, "Will there be more?" and Chapel says there will, and Jim and Blair look at each other all excited and possibly clutch each other's knees below camera. "Who?" Of course Chapel won't tell. Cassie says he will eventually because he likes these conversations, and he should send for her when he's ready to talk. Before she leaves, Chapel tells Cassie he blames her for his arrest and they'll have to settle that score someday.

I forgot to mention that Cassie's been having these flashbacks of memory where she sees herself staring down the barrel of a gun. Anyway, she has another one now, and she comes into the office clearly upset. Jim super-listens to Cassie's totally audible wheezing for no discernable reason. Cassie apologizes for not being able to get more out of Chapel. Jim says they need to get someone close to him. Slow closeup on a nervously swallowing Blair, who says: "I could do it."

In his office Simon says "No way", and this time Blair calls him on it: "Why is that always your first reaction?" Jim talks Simon into at least hearing Blair's proposal, and Simon gives him "one shot," even though once he's that far, you know he's doomed to cave. Blair prefaces his proposal with a cutely nervous fasttalk explanation about how, as an undergraduate, he studied institutional social hierarchies and pecking orders. Jim rolls his eyes, but when Simon looks at him like, What the hell is this?, Jim holds out his hand, like, I know, but give him a chance. Kind of love Jim. The upshot of Blair's speech is that he worked for a semester at Conover for research and he knows the place inside and out, and now he wants to go undercover--as a patient. Oh, lovely: Prisoner X Blair-style--now, with Madness!

Chapel's accomplice, an institution guard, lets him out of his room. Cut to Cassie working in her lab. This time we actually see a masked man enter the lab and point a gun at her, the most realistic gun flashback yet. But we snap back to reality, and it turns out just to be Jim coming in. He found out that Chapel once tried to kill Cassie, and he's pissed. Serious as hell, he says, "Sandburg is risking his life here. I need to know these things." Oh, you do not want to mess with Jim when Blair is in danger. I wouldn't even want to mess with Jim when Blair is on an airplane or at a party with drinking or five minutes late coming home for supper. There's another odd but kind of effective
directorial choice as we focus on Cassie's hands making coffee while she tells the story of how she found herself facing down Chapel and took a bullet in the shoulder. Her wrap-up about how she was rescued by the rest of the team is weak and she seems to still be holding something back. But Jim doesn't call her on it, and instead responds surprisingly sweetly: "Know what I think? I think we're pretty damn lucky to have you."

Chapel sneaks into a room and messes with some phone-related tech and makes a call. "How did it feel? I want every last detail... Mmm." He's very creepy.

Psychologist introduces "the new member of our group, Blair Sandburg." Now, why not make up a fake name for this assignment? At first it seems like Blair's pretending to be OCD, as he chatters a bit about germs. Then he does this kind of delightful bit where he responds to questions by talking about his "higher power," the goddess with whom he has "a convenant," as if it's the most obvious thing in the world. His madness persona mostly involves speaking quickly in a deeper voice than normal, and fondling his own lips. It's kind of yummy.

Huh, those are some short institution-jumpsuit sleeves. You know, Blair is really not that unmuscular.

Another patient flips out, refusing to accept Blair's chosen-one status, but Chapel declares that what Blair says is probably true, because (meaningful look) "Why would he lie?" Blair strokes his lip nervously.

Another crime scene. Cassie, panicked, tells Jim to pull Blair immediately. At first Jim seems happy enough to agree no questions asked, but he can hardly let Cassie's current level of freaking out go unnoticed. She admits she's seeing her nightmare every time she turns around. Jim tells her not to let fear control her, but Cassie is beyond reason. I think she should be in Conover.

A buff woman lifts weights and talks on the phone about how gratifying it was for her to kill some criminal, to give him release from his pain, etc etc creepy. Over at Conover, Blair creeps up and witnesses Chapel's half of this conversation. He runs to a pay phone, desperately beseeching the operator to make an emergency collect call, but a hand comes up and presses the cradle. Chapel shoves Blair into a wall. "Who sent you?" "Nobody." "Who were you calling?" "My higher power," Blair declares. "That's how we communicate. She let's me call collect!" Oh, that Blair is a cute one, all right, and none the less when Chapel presses him to the wall with a hand around his throat and he gags terrifiedly. Blair manages to grab the phone reciever and brain Chapel with it, and there's a chase through the halls of the institution. Blair tears round a corner and--

Runs into Jim! "Oh Jim! Jim! Oh my God!" Blair grabs hold of Jim's jacket in his tight little fists and yanks him toward himself against the wall. Jim holds him by the arms, all, "What? What?" Blair pantingly explains that he's being chased, and he and Jim creep forward, repeatedly reaching for each
other's hands. Blair finally sends his hero forth to look around the door, but Jim doesn't see or hear any sign of Chapel.

Yup.

Finally Blair asks what Jim's doing here. Jim says "Consensus was you're in over your head," and Blair says, "I am down with that majority. Oh, God, get me out of here," which pathos makes Jim take Blair again by the arms comfortably, as it would any right-thinking person. Blair relates the phone conversation he overheard, sounding pretty legitimately crazy as he does so, but Jim believes him. "Come on," says Blair, and they run down the hall together, Jim clapping Blair encouragingly on the shoulder.

Jim pays Chapel a little visit in his cell, telling him there are witnesses to his temporary escapes. When Chapel asks if he means Sandburg, Jim pretends (somewhat ineffectively) not to know who that is.

Loft. Jim brings a coffee to Blair, who's sitting on the couch with his laptop and a stack of files on the Conover guards. Knock at the door. Jim opens it to Cassie. She asks Blair how he is, and when Blair sort of punches the air in a "fine" gesture, Cassie catches and strokes it gently. So Jim's not the only one. Blair is uninterested in her sympathy and goes back to his research. Suddenly Cassie recognizes one of the pictures in the files. It's Janine Carpenter, the sister of one of Chapel's victims. Later, Jim briefs Simon that Carpenter was discharged from the Army for psychological problems, but not before she learned communications techniques like tapping into phone lines.

Chapel's guard accomplice corners him on the way to group therapy. He found out Chapel's been killing and he's upset that he's an accessory to murder. Chapel convinces the guard to help him further.

Just as Jim is leading a SWAT team in a raid on Carpenter's house, Simon gets a call from Chapel's doctor warning him that Chapel has escaped. The team trips a bunch of landmines around the house and a car comes tearing through the door of the garage. A well-timed gunshot from Jim sets off an explosion which sends the car spinning. Then the car erupts in flames, for good measure.

In his office, Simon gives Jim an impossibly tiny cup of coffee, and Jim explains that although there was definitely a man and woman in the car, the explosion damage made a positive ID on the bodies nearly impossible. Jim invites Simon for some "late night chow" with him, Blair, and Cassie, but Simon has work to do.
Possibly plotting more ways to make Jim feel like a giant.

Before heading out to dinner, Jim goes to the lab to check out some metal fragments from the explosion. He smells metal (titanium has a distinctive scent?) and calls the Conover doctor. The doctor reports that Chapel didn't have any titanium surgical pins, but his guard did; and what's more, the guard is missing.

Loft. Cassie and Blair are waiting for Jim to pick them up, both dressed up to the nines.

I'm not sure Jim realizes it's that kind of date.

Cassie's getting antsy, so Blair tries to call Jim, but the phone is dead. Then the power cuts off briefly. Cassie: "You have to cut the power to disarm the security system!" Also, the call is coming from inside the house!

A black-clad figure emerges from the shadows with gun drawn. "Hello, Cassie," he honestly says.

In the truck, Jim--nervously after a failed attempt to call home--hurts loftward and radios for backup.

Chapel has wasted no time in getting Cassie and Blair tied to chairs. Chapel accuses Cassie of killing "someone I cared about; she was an extension of me, and you tore her away." Captenter? The one that died in the explosion? Because Jim killed her, right? Cut to sad-faced-looking Blair. Oh yeah, he lost someone, right? "Your friend killed herself," says Blair. Okay, canonical use of "friend" to mean "lover". Just keep that in mind for the next five seconds, as Chapel says to Blair, "I was right about you--you are Cassie's little 'friend,'" and Blair says to Chapel, "You remember my 'friend,' don't you? He's coming here."

Here comes Jim to justify Blair's faith in his white knight. He climbs on top of his truck and up the
fire escape so he can enter secretly through the upstairs bedroom. Cassie buys some time by chatting up Chapel.

Meanwhile, Blair makes unnecessary and dangerous eye contact with Jim. Hello, Friend!

Jim catches sight of Chapel in the tea kettle and realizes Chapel has his gun raised to the ceiling. He ducks back into the bedroom, dropping his gun down the stairs like a big butterfingers as he does so, and shots ring up through the floor, his bed pillows bearing the brunt of the attack (feathers everywhere!). Jim cowers in a corner. Chapel creeps up the stairs. Blair looks freaking terrified.

As soon as Chapel reaches the top of the stairs, Jim shoves a bureau into him and leaps into a flying attack, like a big awesome bat. Chapel's disarmed and the two grapple. Some shelves are wiped out, lamps crash to the floor, and even the apples on the coffee table go flying. I think this is the most destruction of the loft we've ever seen. Jim's room got ransacked once, but that was off camera. Unbelievably, Jim, who just won in a GLADIATOR FIGHT two weeks ago, doesn't just destroy Chapel! Chapel picks up a gun and is about to shoot him when Cassie throws herself back in her chair and knocks him off balance. Jim knocks him out and goes to untie Cassie. I repeat! Of two people who are tied up, one of whom is Blair, Jim unties the other one first! This has never happened. I guess Cassie earned the right by saving the day when Blair was just sitting there uselessly.

Wrap-up. Chapel is led away. Simon promises he won't get out again, but Cassie isn't so sure. Jim asks if the department will pick up the tab on the damage done to the loft, and Simon says, "You're joking, right?" Cassie says she knows a great interior designer, and Blair volunteers that he took interior design classes as an undergraduate. Beautiful. (Also, for all the classes and internships and independent studies Blair's done, he must have been taking 40-credit courseloads every semester.) Cassie says, "So did I!" Jim bitches, "Well, good. Why don't you two start up a business. This'll be your first job." This is all in fun, however, as I know, and you know, and Blair knows, and Jim knows, that Jim is a complete control freak when it comes to way things look in his apartment and he totally arranged it all himself in the first place.

Best Moments: Jim's rescue of Blair at Conover--they're all over each other. And the Chapel/Cassie dynamic, while unnecessarily derivative (and not particularly explained), was reasonably well done for this show.

Would have liked to see more of: Blair's stay at Conover, the most interesting gimmick of this episode, was actually really quite short and incidental to the plot. I know I whined and moaned when Jim was in prison because we didn't see enough of him and Blair together, but I actually don't mind the enforced separation thing as long as we see the effect it's having on both of them and the relief of the reunion (which we saw here, albeit in the form of "Thank god you're here so you can RESCUE ME").
It also would have been nice to see a reason why this episode was called "Mirror Image." My suspicion is that the episode, in an earlier draft, focused more on comparing Chapel with Cassie. All the elements were there: Chapel was "the Avenging Angel", only punishing criminals; Cassie is a cop, and therefore interested in punishing criminals; Cassie has an established rapport with Chapel; Cassie is reticent about describing her past experience with Chapel; Chapel is known for forming close relationships with psychologically imbalanced women whom he trains to kill for him; Cassie has a minor freak-out in which she believes herself to be insane.

But somehow the whole never came together. The implication that Cassie was once a lover/protogee of Chapel's is left as subtext. (Subtext which is hurt somewhat by the fact that Chapel is neither attractive nor appealing. For my reading to work, he should really be creepily sexy, like Dexter or Mr. Rochester or John Sheppard.) We never see if Cassie ever came close to believing in Chapel's take-the-law-into-your-own-hands ethos. It would be interesting if Cassie's gun flashbacks turned out to be related to an episode where she herself held a gun on a technicality-cleared criminal. At the very least, she could have had one of those moments Jim always has where she had the chance to kill Chapel but didn't, because she's not like him. Any number of things could have complicated and unified the elements introduced here, but the episode just didn't go with any of them. Perhaps things had to be cut for time or to make sure Cassie didn't become too interesting of a character, even in her last episode. Yep, folks, that's it for Cassie. But, honestly, this being the Jim and Blair show, I'm kind of amazed she made it into a third episode at all.
3x15 Finkelman's Folly

Chapter Summary

Simon, recovering from a gunshot wound, solves a hospital crime; substitute captain separates Jim and Blair.

Simon is at the bank trying to get a mortgage from a condescending milquetoast account manager, running into divorce- and debt-related problems, when the bank is robbed. Simon gets shot in the side trying to rescue a security guard.

Station. Joel and Rafe (who has more lines here than ever and turns out to be Australian--who knew?) complain about the substitute captain, who's issuing all kinds of new rules, including making the detectives wear jackets and ties. We zoom in on Jim and his look of, No! But What About My Leather Jacket? If I were Jim I'd be more worried about my fake partner.

Jim and Blair confer at Jim's desk. Jim leans back with his feet on the desk and bounces a tennis ball off the wall; man, the merest mention of an authority figure he might clash with and he's in hotshot from Vice mode. "I wonder if she's gonna be giving out spankings," quips Jim. "Oh, yeah," purrs Blair. "This is gonna be fun." It is honestly unclear whether or not he is being sarcastic. So this is where spanking!fic inspiration is born.

The captain calls in Jim and he brings Blair. Once in the office, Jim starts sneezing because of the captain's flowers. She likes flowers! We must hate her! The captain introduces herself as Sarah Finkelman, and Jim introduces himself and Blair. Finkelman: "Blair Sandburg. I've heard a lot of good things about you." (to Jim) "I'm pulling his ridealong authorization effective immediately." And there it is.

Finkelman wants Jim to partner up with Taggart, who's recently rejoined the ranks, and reacquaint him. "He can ride along with the both of us!" Nice try, Jim. "Jim and I, we kind of have this partnership." Nice try, Blair. "Normally a ridealong authorization is good for 90 days. Yours has been outdated for at least 19 months," Finkelman informs Blair. HA. Ha ha. It's about time someone called him on that. With liberal claps on the shoulder and loving "Chief"s, Jim sends Blair out the door. Alone with Finkelman, Jim argues that anyone in the division she cares to talk to would agree
that Blair is "an asset," but Finkelman says he has been here two years (the implication being, I suppose, that he should be done with whatever it is he's doing, which--yeah), and she needs Jim with Taggart now. Jim challenges, "If I say no?" Oh, no, Jim. Your career? Really? You can still see Blair at home. Finkelman says she'll have no problem suspending Jim.

A pretty nurse called Amy checks on a delirious Simon, who confuses her for his ex-wife and snaps at her, then grabs her hand before she leaves. "We should've tried," he says wistfully. Aw, poor freaking Simon. That night, while dozing fitfully, he accidentally turns on an intercom to the nurse's station. He semi-consciously overhears a doctor and nurse whispering frantically, plotting to kill some powerful person who is blackmailing them. Suddenly the doctor sees the intercom light.

Joel is sitting in the passenger seat of Jim's truck; Jim is driving, and Blair is squeezed in between them, wearing a grey knit beanie which I guess symbolizes the illegality of his presence on whatever mission they're on now. Joel protests that none of this was his idea and he never wanted to replace Blair. "We know, Joel," Jim and Blair chorus. Jim's phone rings. Cut to Simon, letting the phone drop to his chest. Jim hears only a heartbeat. "Hello?... That's weird."

The doctor creeps into Simon's room and tries to take the phone reciever away from him. He snaps awake and mumbles, "No! Gotta... tell Jim..." "Tell him what?" "There's gonna be a murder," Simon slurs. "He doesn't know about it yet?" "No, no... call my office, Cascade PD..." Amy comes in, and the doctor leaves and grabs her accomplice nurse by the arm. "We have a big problem." Maybe... if they don't commit murder... that will solve all their problems.

Bullpen. Jim is conscientiously checking some fingerprint records, dressed in a jacket and tie. When Finkelman passes, Jim stands and asks politely, "May I have a private word with you?" "If it's about Blair Sandburg, the answer's still no." Man, she reads him like a book.
Jim's Tie of Obedience

As Finkelman walks into her office to make a phone call, Jim petulantly throws away his clip-on tie, dons his baseball cap, puts his hands on his hips, and glares. That's when his super-hearing picks up her end of the conversation: "Tonight? When? Five thousand cash. Right." Jim is Suspicious.

Amy fixes Simon's IV meds. As she's walking out the room, she examines his chart more carefully. She turns and runs back into the room: Simon is seizing. After the break, Simon's cute young doctor has stabilized him, and Amy chews him out for writing a bad medication order. The doctor says he didn't do it; it must have been another doctor writing in the wrong chart. Amy is Suspicious.

Jim and Blair sit in the truck in the dark, staking out a meatpacking plant where they've apparently followed Finkelman. Blair's still wearing the Grey Beanie of Exile. Blair thinks there must be some logical explanation for all this. Jim shushes him and zooms in on Finkelman meeting with two thugs (whom we later learn are the Brock brothers) who give her an envelope full of cash. Jim reports what we just saw him see to Blair and they exchange a Meaningful Look.

Jim and Blair trace Finkelman to a house where he super-witnesses her dealing with some new thugs. The head thug (whom we later learn is Sabin) refuses to do business with a woman and when she sasses, he has a henchman hold her immobile. Jim goes in to save her, posing as Joe Brock, the man she claimed was her boss, and helps her complete the deal.

After driving a slight distance from the scene, Jim and Blair and Finkelman get out of their cars and start yelling at each other. Finkelman: "You barge in on an undercover operation without authorization, and you bring him along to enjoy the show!" Blair flips out, ignoring Jim's entreaty to "Let me handle this, Chief": "This is his personal car. It's his personal time." We all wait on tentertooks to see how Blair finishes the statement "I'm his personal ______", but he opts instead for, "We're friends. If he invites me along, guess what, lady, I'm going!" Yeah! I still find Jim and Blair's emotional investment in their professional relationship a little worrying, and I can't say I'd take a different stance on it if I were their boss. However, that's not really the issue here, and Jim brings it back round to the point: off-the-books undercover operations with no backup? Pretty illegal.

Cut to the station. Finkelman confesses she had the opportunity to involve herself in this--some kind of cartel, I don't know; they're dealing in black market freon--kind of drop into her lap: the real Joe Brock took a liking to her. She decided to go ahead with the deal alone as a way of proving herself to the macho department. I... okay. But presumably she's not like, a rookie cop, right? I mean... she's legitimately a captain, so she's done her fair share of... oh, whatever. Blair says some anthropologist stuff about social structures and respect. Jim offers to help Finkelman bring down Sabin, but only if Blair can keep riding along. Jim has got a bit of a one-track mind. Anyway, Finkelman agrees.

Jim and Blair are in Finkelman's office the next day when Joel reports that Simon is missing from the
And now they're both in ties. I like to imagine that Blair tied Jim's for him.

At the hospital, Jim sends Blair and Joel to look in one wing while he looks in the other. He super-hears Simon babbling and follows the noise to an OR, where Simon is being anaesthetized. Jim bangs on the window and shows his badge, and the surgeon emerges. She reports Simon is getting a brain tumor removed. Jim insists she has the wrong man. Eventually the surgeon goes and checks just to appease him, and is alarmed to discover he's right.

Simon wakes up to see Blair, Jim, and Joel by his bed. They're moving him to a different hospital. Good idea. Simon starts to tell Jim about the murder plot, but Jim gets a phone call from Finkelman. She's arranged to meet up with her contacts and they are insisting that Joe Brock be there. Jim motions Blair over: "We gotta go." Does Blair really need to go? I guess now that Jim's won his presence he'll look silly if he doesn't use it. And, I guess, the ostensible in-show reason for Blair to be anywhere Jim is--in case his senses start acting up--still applies, although we haven't seen anything of that nature in awhile.

The real Joe Brock gets a phone call from Sabin's guys: it was nice meeting him last night, they say, and they want to make sure he'll be at the sale today. Joe Brock is Suspicious.

Simon, feeling much more alert, gets out of Joel and Amy that someone is trying to kill him, and he figures it has to be the people he semi-overheard. He refuses to be moved until he can solve the case. Dude... you may want to move to a different hospital and send some healthy officers to take care of the case. Just a thought.

Jim, Blair, and Finkelman go down to the... airport?... or whatever... where the deal is going down.

And now they're both in beanies! I like to imagine that Jim knit Blair's for him.
Jim and Finkelman see the Brock brothers. She sends Jim to make contact with Sabin while she and Blair talk to the Brocks. Her: "I hope you learned something in those two years with Ellison." Oh, Blair learned lots of things... most of which will, I hope, be of no consequence here. Blair says he hopes Finkelman has a plan, and she says she does: "We improvise." "Great Plan," Blair and I chorus.

Blair and Finkelman meet the Brock brothers. Finkelman introduces Blair as Sabin. Blair nods, draws himself to his full 5'7", and starts speaking in a slightly ridiculous faux-slang: "It's about time you two showed up. I was getting ready to tell your girl here to go fish. Now, come on." He leads them off down the hall... to... somewhere? He hopes?

Jim meets with Sabin: "Where's the freon?" "Where's the cash?" Touche. Jim says the cash is downstairs, safe, and he'd like to see the freon first. Sabin asks Jim to give him a moment, and Jim sing-songs a delightfully cheerful "Sure!" He super-listens to Sabin whispering to his thug to find Trudy (Finkelman) and the cash. Then he leads Jim off to... wherever the freon is? Jim hopes?

Simon remembers the killers discussing some kind of board. Amy says the medical review board meets today. Simon sends Joel to get a list of attendees.

Sabin shows Jim the freon. Jim tries to call Finkelman to get the money, but the call doesn't go through. Sabin is Suspicious. He has his thug hold Jim at gunpoint while he himself goes to find Finkelman. As soon as Sabin is gone Jim beats up the thug and handcuffs him to the freon truck.

Man, this recap is long. That's what comes from having two (2!) plotlines. The bad doctor and nurse meet with the surgeon who was about to operate on Simon. "If that man Banks had died, you could have blamed every unnecessary surgery that you've performed on my inaccurate pathology reports!" Oh. I guess I'm wrong and the doctor and nurse are both surgeons and the surgeon is a pathologist. Anyway, wouldn't she have noticed the problem when she opened Simon's skull and found no tumor? I mean, yeah, it's good that Jim stopped the unnecessary skull-opening, but you'd think... well, what do I know about medicine. Anyway, this surgeon, or pathologist, or whatever, Quint, is the person the bad docs wanted to murder, and that's all I know.

Jim calls Blair to tell him where he (and the freon) is. Blair, still trying to maintain his charade for the Brocks: "You've got some explaining to do, pal. You want to work for Arthur Sabin, you've got to quit screwing around!" Jim: "Listen, Bogie. Are you doing okay up there?" Blair, angrily: "Fine! We'll be right there!" Heh.

Amy and Simon flirt a bit as Amy loads Simon into a wheelchair. Joel enters; he's somehow dug up the names of the three principle actors in the hospital drama. The surgeons (bad guys) were unable to be reached because in surgery, but our heroic trio heads to lab to question Dr. Quint. They find her lying on the floor of her office, a syringe nearby. Amy has Joel summon a crash cart.

Simon wheels up to the bad surgeons as they're leaving for the board? thingy? (they're in civvies, anyway) and holds up his badge. Arrested!

Blair strides up with Finkelman and the Brocks in tow and has some fun treating Jim like his henchman, ordering him to open the truck, and to hold the money suitcase for him when Brock hands it over.
Blair will be paying for this later.

Just as they're completing the deal, the real Sabin shows up. Some embarrassing mistaken identity antics ensue. Jim, who has jumped behind the truck, emerges armed just as Sabin's drawing a gun on Blair; he announces he's a cop and orders Sabin to put the gun down. Sabin does and runs off. Finkelman: "Go get him, detective. Sandburg and I are fine." This shows Personal Growth because before she was intent on collaring Sabin herself and also because she is acknowledging the God-given right of the fake detective to do his fake detective work. Jim gives Blair a gun (eeee!) and runs after Sabin. He catches him on a boat (so I guess they're at a boat... port?) and holds fire hose on him, knocking him over the side. So... case closed, I guess.

Wrap-up is Simon's triumphant return to the station. Finkelman is getting a promotion even though she seems to be pretty bad at her job: I mean, she implicated Jim and Blair in a ridiculous train wreck of an I don't even know what kind of deal, and they just had to do their best at damage control. She is gracious enough to say "I wouldn't have gotten it without Ellison... and Sandburg. They make a great team." "Don't I know it," Simon groans, long-suffering. Simon receives a bouquet of flowers from Amy and Jim sneezes. Finkelman comments that it really is flowers Jim is allergic to, and not her. "It's captains in general," says Jim, clapping Simon on the back. Simon looks truly hurt. The end!

Would have liked to see more of: Erm. I guess the hospital plot was the better of the two, in my opinion--I like the idea of having to solve a case from a hospital bed, using mainly your BRAIN!, and recovering fuzzy info etc.--but the "Simon has to save himself from people trying to kill him, and also he is wounded" plot is a little too Reunion for me. Meanwhile, Jim and Blair did exactly the right amount of whinging about being separated, I thought: any more and they would have crossed irretrievably into annoyingly whiny instead of endearingly attached to one another. Still, I didn't really like the episode much, probably because I found both intrigue plots boring and unnecessarily complex.
Blair helps out an old boxer "friend."

Oh, great, boxing is happening. Jim and Blair are in the audience. After the match, Blair brings Jim backstage (?) to see the winner, Sweet Roy Williams. Jim's all smiles and charm meeting him, and he asks, oh-so-innocently, "How'd you two hook up?" Sweet Roy surprises him by saying, "Street fight." Blair grins. Roy explains that he was getting beat up by a bunch of guys, until Blair came up and tried to talk everyone down. When it didn't go so well, Blair threw a brick through a store window in order to set off the alarm and summon the cops. Jim looks impressed hearing the story ("Pretty creative, Chief"), even when Roy and Blair admit they got their asses kicked waiting for the cops. (Throwing in a beat-up Blair improves any story, in my experience.) When Blair reminisces that the store owner was cool and didn't press charges, but did charge him $400 for the store window, Roy says "That reminds me" and gives Blair two cool hundred dollar bills for his half. "I really appreciate you being there for me when I needed you, man." Aw, Sweet Roy is aptly named! Gratuitously touching Jim's shoulder, Sweet Roy invites them both to a party. He hugs Blair goodbye and Jim takes over to guide Blair out the door.

You may be the one he hooked up with, Sweet, but Jim's the one he's goin' home with.

Party. After greeting our newly-arrived heroes, Roy goes off to mingle, telling Blair, "If I don't get back with you tonight, don't let it be two damn years before I see you again!" Blair says it won't, repeating "I promise!" about four times. Alone, Jim and Blair bask in Roy's palpable pheromone trail.

JIM: Good guy, man.
BLAIR: He's a great guy.
JIM: Who'd figure you with him?
BLAIR: I know.

Blair asks Jim what he wants to do next, and they look at each other and chorus, "Buffet."

For some reason they split up and take different routes to the buffet table, giving Blair the opportunity, on the way, to awkwardly impose himself on a private, tension-filled conversation.
between Roy's brother Jamie and Jamie's girlfriend Shairta. Sharita politely excuses herself, and Blair, oblivious to Jamie's bad mood, is all, "Hey man, remember me?!" Jamie: "Yeah, I remember you. You're that rich white dude that came around slumming on my brother back in the day."

(Becky's transcript has "with" but-- dude-- I am pretty sure "on" is the preposition he uses. ON. ON.) Blair's all, Yikes! Meanwhile at the buffet table, Jim eats strawberries and watches Roy argue with a boxing manager who once wronged him.

Station. Jim's at his desk when Blair comes in and does a playful fake-boxing move with a passing cop who smiles nervously and hopes to get away soon. "Whoa, yeah, yeah, yeah," Jim encourages. 

"Sup, Tiger?" YES! I thought last week Jim called Blair "tiger" but upon closer inspection he was just calling Taggart "Taggart" but now the moment has finally arrived! JIM IS M.J.! Oh god, more dialogue I just have to transcribe verbatim, because, seriously.

BLAIR: That fight last night must have touched something primal in me. I had this dream last night I was a boxer.

JIM (apparently desperate to work in the episode title): You, involved in the sweet science? I have a hard time picturing that. I mean, the flowing silk robes and the goofy shorts I can see, but I thought you were a lover, not a fighter.

BLAIR: Yeah, you're right. It was fun for a little while, though, you know. Although, the Maoris staged hand-to-hand fights to purify themselves for sexual encounters.

JIM (perhaps feeling that this conversation has gone far enough in the gay department): Got a particular female in mind?

BLAIR (perhaps feeling that it has not gone far enough): No. Not at all. But it's always good to be prepared, you know.

Jim gets a call, and Blair pretends to punch his head while he answers. Then it's "Let's go, Chief" time before Blair even gets off his coat.

Our heroes head to a culvert where a body has been found, yet to be ID'd. Jim turns over the corpse and says, "Oh no." Turning to Blair: "Chief, I'm... sorry." Blair looks. It's Roy. Holy crap! I didn't see that coming. I guess Sweet Roy was just too sweet for this world.

Jim and Blair talk to brother Jamie, who's angry and weepy, and who suggests Atlas, the guy Roy was arguing with last night, as suspect. Blair seems okay and businesslike here, but when Jim and Blair stop in Simon's office to report, Blair's all swallowy and near-tears. SAD BLAIR!

Jim reports that Roy was killed with a blunt object which left an ivory fragment, and Blair points out that Atlas has an ivory cane and they should go pick him up right now. He gets mad when Jim and Simon want to review Roy's juvenile offenses. "We're just trying to cover all the angles, here,
Chief," says Jim. "Well those angles suck, Jim!" Simon kicks Blair out and asks Jim "What's wrong with the kid? I've never seen him so cranked up." You know, those references to Blair losing someone close to him would have worked better after this episode. Jim promises to keep Blair in line.

At his desk, Jim questions Atlas while Blair watches. Atlas points out he has no motive (he wanted to make money off Roy, not kill him) and he has an alibi. He obnoxiously casts suspicion on Jamie and then Sharita: "The way I hear it, the Williams brothers shared a lot more than their... name." Blair flips out, yells at Atlas, and storms off. Jim excuses himself and follows. Blair backs away yelling, "There is no way there was anything going on between Roy and Sharita!" Taking that particular accusation a little personally, Blair? Jim calmly contradicts that last night he caught "eyeplay" between them. I guess Jim is the expert.

From the first five minutes of this episode alone:
EYEPLAY.
Blair backs into the elevator and Jim enters with him and pushes the convenient "Hold the doors shut and go nowhere so I can have a private moment in an enclosed space with my partner" button. "I'm just so damn mad, you know?" Blair shouts, and punches the wall. "I mean, all that time we're growing up he's got in all these fights and nobody's believing in him and things start to happen for him and then this." Jim watches solemnly and then tells Blair to calm down. "You let your anger run away with you, you got no business being on the case." Blair nods unconvincingly.

Jim and Blair find Jamie working out at a boxing training thingy and ask him about Sharita. He says that whatever Roy wanted, he got: "I saw the way they acted around each other, all right?" Jim gazes at Blair as Jamie continues, "The looks, the whispers. I'm not stupid."

Jim checks out Jamie's car. Blair thinks he's wasting his time: "They were brothers!" "Cain and Abel ring a bell?" Interesting that this is coming from the one of them who actually has a brother. Jim super-finds a bit of dried blood in the trunk.

Loft. Blair is sitting on the floor, back against the couch, meditating before semi-circle of candles, when Jim comes in. He sits down on the couch behind Blair and gently breaks it to him that the blood in Jamie's car checks out as Roy's. Blair says he needs to get out for some air. Jim offers to take him out to eat, but Blair wants to be alone.

So, is there a protocol for this kind of thing, or...?

Cut to later that night. Jim's asleep on the couch in front of the glow of TV snow when the phone rings. It's Blair. "Chief, it's two o'clock in the morning. What's going on?" Aw! Jim tried to wait up! Blair apologetically asks to be picked up. He's being detained at the federal building.

Simon's office. Federal Guy is dropping the charges of counterfeit against Blair because Simon can vouch for him (hero perks!), but he explains that they're especially interested in these bills because they're printed on a kind of paper that only the U.S. Government is supposed to be able to get ahold of. Simon suggests a next step in the investigation, but Federal Guy says this is a U.S. Federal Government issue. Yeah, right. The way he says "I'm sorry, but we prefer to work alone" is the most Canadian thing ever. He asks Blair where he got the bill, and Blair says Chinatown, or maybe the marina. Jim's face remains impassive, but as soon as Federal Guy leaves, Jim says "Nice bit of footwork, there, Chief." He tells Simon that's the bill Blair got from Roy.

Jim and Blair go to Jamie's gym. Jamie doesn't know anything about Roy's possible involvement in counterfeit, so they decide to talk to Rock, Roy's manager, who, along with a totally fake English guy called Collins, is creepily trying to pressure some boxer into taking a not-great contract. Jim asks to talk to Rock alone, but Rock says, "Me and Collins got no secrets. We're partners." EVERYONE ON THIS SHOW. "All right," says Jim, instantly accepting because he knows how it is. He asks about the counterfeit thing, and Rock says, "Give me a break. Roy was straight as an arrow." Blair:
wibble! Jim tells Rock to keep his eyes open.

Jim and Blair get hot dogs from a vendor and discuss the case. Blair thinks the blood may have gotten in Jamie's car from a towel or equipment or something; they were boxers and sparring partners. Blair asks Jim to keep an open mind. Jim asks Blair to keep an open mind. Touche. They get a call from Simon: there was an explosion behind the gym.

Jim finds counterfeit money residue at the explosion. Later at the station, Jim and Blair tell Simon what else they've uncovered: Rock had IRS debts and money-printing ink. Simon: "Bring the bozo in."

Heading to the gym, Blair wonders why Rock would kill a guy who would in all likelihood have made him more money. Jim suggests he might have had plans to sign with someone else, but Blair insists, "Loyalty was really important to Roy." They enter the gym and it's dark and empty. Jim hears a heartbeat and panting, and suddenly Jamie tears past them and escapes through a back way. Jim smells blood and they find Rock's dead body.

Simon's office. Simon and Jim discuss the evidence against Jamie in both cases, and Blair argues passionately (yells) in Jamie's favor. Simon tells Jim to pick Jamie up before any more bodies show up, and Blair cries, "Why the hell doesn't anybody listen to me?" Simon sends Jim a Look, then asks Blair to stay and shut the door. Uh-oh. Simon asks Blair what's going on. Blair complains that he's helped a lot but all he ever hears is, "Hey Sandburg, get out of the way. Hey Sandburg, you're not a cop." Simon points out that Blair isn't a cop, and Blair argues a bit more but seems defeated. Before he leaves, though, Simon stops him and says, "If for any reason I have given you the impression that I do not appreciate and value the contribution that you give to this department—I apologize." Blair, looking up with big, blue, blue eyes: "You mean that?" Simon does. Blair: "Well, thank you. That means a lot to me." Awwww. I love nice moments between Blair and Simon. Simon: "Now get out of here. He needs you." He. Needs you.

"You mean that?"

Blair meets Jim, who has just gotten a call from Rafe, who's tailing Sharita. She withdrew a bunch of money and may be going to meet Jamie. They head out.

Sharita meets up with Jamie and gives him the money. She tells him not to run, because it will make him look guilty, and suggests he call Roy's friend Sandburg, but Jamie doesn't trust him--he's with the cops. Jamie accuses Sharita of sleeping with Roy, and Sharita tearfully explains that all the sneaking off and secrets between them were because they were planning a birthday surprise for Jamie! Seriously. Seriously, that is what it is. Roy wanted to buy Jamie a house for his birthday. I guess this is a cautionary tale about how you shouldn't use circumstantial loving-look-and-whisper evidence to draw the conclusion that two people are in a sexual relationship. FAIR ENOUGH
WRITERS. Jamie apologizes and hugs Sharita and mid-embrace, Jim and Blair arrive. Jamie immediately pulls a gun on them.

Jim and Blair put up their hands and try to talk Jamie down. The place is surrounded, they say, Jamie has no chance, no chance at all; give up his guns or die. They promise to help him if he's innocent, but Jamie isn't buying it. Blair steps forward: "You got to trust me, all right? I'll go out with you. If I go out with you, they'll have to shoot me, too, all right?"

Well, someone may shoot you if you go out with him.

As Jim reaches to pull Blair back from the armed man, Jamie makes a break for it. Sounds of gunshot. Sharita runs after him and cradles Jamie's body.

Hospital. Jamie is recovering from his gunshot wounds; Sharita is feeding him soup. Het H/C! Jim and Blair come in, and Jamie's still uncooperative until Jim reminds him that Blair was ready to lay his life on the line for him. Jamie confesses that he was helping Rock with the counterfeit operation, but he was feeling guilty about it and told Roy the night of the party. Roy confronted Rock and wound up dead. Jamie said nothing because Rock threatened to bring him down for counterfeiting and to go after Sharita. Jamie doesn't know who killed Rock.

Jim and Blair must have had a late-night research party because next thing we know they're presenting Simon with stuff they dug up on Collins, Rock's partner, and his connections to the company that makes cotton paper for the U.S. Government. They theorize that Collins killed Rock to keep him from talking.

Squad cars containing Jim/Blair and Rafe/some hot driver coordinate to surround Collins. But Collins and his guys tractor right through the roadblock, shooting at the police with automatic rifles, and Rafe radios Jim to go after them. A car chase with lots of shooting and ordering of Blair to get down ensues. The truck gets riddled with holes, rammed into the side of the tractor, and splashed through a lake. Destruction to Jim and Blair's property is in these days! The truck stalls near a cliffside, and the tractor positions itself to ram them. "Come on, Jim," Blair urges, and Jim coaxes the truck, calling it "sweetheart." At the last moment it clears the tractor's path and the tractor goes sailing over the edge of the cliff. Jim and Blair get out and gaze at the carnage.

Jim comes into Simon's office and they do a little plotline wrap-up. Simon put in a good word for Jamie and he's getting probation. Ooh, a 30 Seconds with Blair! We haven't seen one of those in awhile. As Jim and Blair get their coats and head for the elevator, Blair reminds Jim of his promise to buy him dinner. Jim pretends not to remember. They enter the elevator and get into playful boxing stance. "This one's for Roy," says Blair, and the elevator doors close just as the first punch is thrown.
And as they reached for each other...

**Non J/B Pairing of the Week:** So when do you think Blair and Roy's relationship was? Roy says he hasn't seen Blair for two years, so we know it was before he met Jim. Blair talks about "growing up" together, so it's possible they had a fairly long-term thing in their youth. On the other hand, in the story about how they met, Roy said he was in the neighborhood to buy a car, so he must have been late teens at least. So, assuming he and Blair are about the same age, it can't have been before Blair was an undergraduate, since he started university at age 16.

I like to imagine Blair was a fresh-faced undergraduate--maybe around junior year or so--when he had his rescuing-Roy adventure, and the two became fast friends. Blair liked Roy and found his world interesting because he's interested in different social classes and structures, and because likes to imagine himself a champion of the working classes, even though he himself, while not exactly rich with his single-mom/commune upbringing, is pretty firmly grounded in middle-class liberal intellectualism. He also probably admired Roy's maturity and dadlikeness, as an orphan bringing up his brother by himself. Blair does like a good mentor/father figure. At the same time, Roy was his age and sexy and not as book-learned, so Blair felt like he had something to teach him, found him equalish and attainable and attractive. Blair spent as much time with Roy as he could get away from his studies and projects. They became close best friends and then lovers. They were down-low about it, but Jamie saw the way they acted around each other-- the looks, the whispers. He's not stupid. And he's never trusted Blair since.

Whoops! Did I just write some slash?

**Best Moments:** Jim and Blair companionably hero-worshiping Sweet Roy. Jim's ability to picture Blair in a silk robe and shorts. Sad!Blair lolling his head *near* Jim's lap.
3x17 Remembrance

Chapter Summary

Jim recovers repressed childhood memories.

The music sounds like a techno remix of the X-Files theme music as we see a field from the point of view of someone running through it. Flash to a creepy overexposed shot of a child's eyes, which will be used as a scene transition several more times.

Jim and Blair arrive at a crime scene at Rainier. Blair knows the victim, a psych professor, although not well. Blair is getting a lot better at looking at bodies. He still looks disturbed and vaguely queasy, but he's not walking away. Dan Wolf reports that the victim was strangled with piano wire and then shot post-mortem. Dude, so like, the killer is Chapel, right? Because that was totally his super-unique signature, right?

Oh, there was a wallet placed on the wound. That makes things totally different. The wallet was empty except for a snapshot of a little boy. Simon asks if the victim had a son, Blair says no, and Jim, looking at the photo, says, "This is me." Legitimate whoa!

Kid Jim runs through the forest.

Present day, Simon's office. Jim has no idea why this guy he's never met would have a photo of him as a kid. Blair enters with some info he dug up at the university on the victim's research: he was studying serial killers, particularly the "Country Club Strangler" who ritually strangled and then shot well-to-do businessmen. An arrest was made, but the suspect killed himself before it went to trial. After that, there were no more murders, so the case was closed. Simon: "So what am I missing here?" Blair glances at Jim, who says grimly, "Tell him the rest." It was Jim who found the body of the last victim.

Simon asks Jim why didn't he say, and Jim says he didn't remember until Blair mentioned the Strangler. "I was ten years old. It was a long time ago." Wait. Simon said that the Country Club Strangler had "a three-year spree in the early 70s," so assuming he started in 1970 at the earliest, Jim found his last victim in or near '73. That would put Jim's birth date around '63, but we know from
3x09 Red Ice that Jim's date of birth is 1957. So either Jim was actually about 16 when he found the body (clearly wrong, as he's certainly no more than 12 in the flashbacks), or Simon's wrong and the killings happened in the mid-60s (but Jim later describes the event as "twenty-five years ago", which would seem to confirm the 70s dates from the point of view of a 1997 show), or this show has continuity issues. No de-aging Jim, guys! He lost 5 years in 8 episodes! Is this to soften the age difference between him and Blair? Because I liked that. (For these thoughts and more: Jim's timeline.)

Jim believes this is not a copycat but the real, original killer, since, come to think of it, he smelled a scent at the crime scene which reminds him of the night he found the body of the last victim. Blair's super excited because this indicates that Jim had his Sentinel abilities as a kid. Simon's all, Uh, so not interested in that right now.

Jim talks to Dan Wolf in the morgue. He's surprised when Dan mentions the angle of the shot was left-to-right, so the killer must have been left-handed. While Dan's chattering cheerily about how the clothing was stained with the victim's blood, Jim has another brief Kid Flashback: he's running through the forest, clutching a football, when he trips and Finds Something Horrible (off-camera).

Loft. Jim's standing at the window, watching the rain come down, clutching a football and looking melancholy.

It's so emo, you guys.

Blair comes in, and seeing the football, grins, "Nice! Want me to go long?" Jim just turns away. Blair jokes, "I feel like I'm interrupting a romantic interlude here between you and your football." Ha ha. That's so what it looks like, too; I think it must be the mood lighting and the fire crackling in the background. Blair asks Jim what's wrong a couple of times, but Jim insists he's fine. Blair suggests that this case might be "bringing some stuff up," and Jim responds uncomfortably that "it's nothing [he] can't handle." (Oh wow, that came across as less dirty in context.) "Of course," says Blair, sounding like he's heard it all before. He ribs Jim about the football a little more, and when no soul-bearing is forthcoming, he declares firmly, "Jim, I'm a friend. All right? Friends help each other. That's what we do."

Okay, that does the trick: Jim lets him in, saying he's frustrated because he's a cop working on a case that involves him (hey, why is that, anyway? shouldn't he--not?) and he can't remember his own past. Hey, what time is it? Must be Guide o'Clock, because Blair's telling Jim to relax; focus on the smell.

Looks like it worked, cause we go to Kid Jim flashback. He's tossing around a football with a grown-up man. They discuss the game Jim's going to be in on Sunday, and Jim says his dad won't be able to make it because of business, so I guess this isn't his dad. (We could have assumed that anyway since we know from 2x23 His Brother's Keeper that Jim didn't exactly have a tossin'-round-
the-old-pigskin relationship with his dad.) Jim calls him "Bud" and Bud calls him "Jimmy" and, sometimes, "Chief." Waugh! Creepy. Jim asks if he might be good enough to play football professionally someday. Bud says he can do anything he wants to do, "but, uh..." "But what?"
"Sometimes you hold back. It's as though you're afraid to trust yourself." You know... I don't know what that is supposed to mean... but it's not exactly helping my growing sense of unease with this whole situation, with the repressed trauma memories and the random men having Jim's childhood photograph. Yikes.

We get a Sentinel focus on Child Jim's ear as he hears his brother Stephen leave the house. He impresses Bud by knowing that Stephen is coming (he doesn't know how, he just knows, he says, which is kind of cool--that he had the senses, but they were working on an unconscious level). Bud asks if he knows what he's having for dinner, and Jim sniffs the air and says roast beef. Bud laughs, thinking he's joking. "Trust your instincts," Bud bids him farewell. Weird.

"That's it, I'm pretty tapped out," Jim tells Blair. Blair asks who Bud is, and Jim says he was a businessman who lived down the street. "A--friend," says Jim, now that he has learned this human concept from Blair. "Kind of like my mentor." Blair knows how that is. He asks if Jim has a photo, and Jim says he wouldn't have anything like that here, and Blair asks, "What about at your old man's house?" Jim: "I don't want to deal with my old man." Blair presses, and Jim doesn't want to hear it.

Kid Jim flashback of Jim standing outside his house, super-watching through the window as his father fights with his mother on the phone. Little Stephen asks Jim what he's looking at, and Jim distracts him by asking who would win, Spiderman or the Hulk. I say Hulk! Wait, in a physical fight, or a verbal argument? Present-day Jim wakes up, his hair a ridiculous mess.

Morning, Simon's office. There's a front-page story about the case in the paper, much to Simon's dismay. A call comes through for Jim, and it's a creepy voice saying "I saw you in the paper, Jimmy." "Who is this?" "I think you know. Take a trip to the Cascade Dump and don't forget to check the pockets." Everyone has a serial killer friend except me!

Of course there's a body at the dump. This morning's paper headline ("Strangler's Back!") is in his pocket, which means (since Dan puts the time of death last night) the killer must have returned this morning to leave the note. Simon asks why he would do that, and Jim says expressionlessly that the killer's "trying to make it personal" and "mess with [his] head." He excuses himself and walks off, and Blair follows, pestering him about the scent. Jim confirms it's there, but he doesn't remember anything else. Blair thinks they have to go back to Jim's old house to dredge up more memories. Oh, whatever, Blair's just angling to meet the folks already. Blair: "Look, this isn't just about the case anymore--it's about you and whatever baggage you're dragging around." Opposite argument might have worked better for this audience, I'm thinking. Jim pauses, at a loss for words for a moment, and
then says, sarcastically, "I'm warm and tingly with tenderness here, Chief." "Oh, yeah, that's good," says Blair, exasperated.

Jim walks off, pushing through reporters all "No comment" until one gets up in his face and he gets angry (you wouldn't like Jim when he's angry). He shoves the guy away, yelling at him, and pushes to his car. Simon takes over to deal with the reporters, and Blair trails after Jim, asking what his problem is. Jim's not in the mood and tells Blair to ride back with Simon. Oh, hell no! He did not just revoke Blair's shotgun rights! Not after the passenger seat has undoubtedly shaped itself to the exact dimensions of Blair's ass. "That's good, Jim. Keep running. Sooner or later this is going to catch up with you!" shouts Blair. Jim leans his head on the side mirror and sighs. "Chief, I'm going to see my father right now. Are you satisfied?" "Yes," says Blair quietly. Awwww.

Jim arrives at the old mansion and we get a flashback of Jim, Stephen and Jim's dad eating breakfast the morning of the big game. The dad's new wife or the housekeeper or somebody (her name is Sally) comes in and reminds Jim that winning isn't everything, and Jim's dad says, "It's the only thing." Yikes. Present-day Jim knocks on the door. His dad is surprised to see him but lets him in. The house is big and still and museum-like, full of Oriental rugs and heavy, dark furniture and random Ming vases on Grecian columns. "Place hasn't changed much," says Jim. Wow, his childhood must have been full of rooms he wasn't allowed to go in. Awkward pause. Jim asks about Sally, and Dad says she's fine. Awkward pause. Jim says he's working on a case, and the dad says he read about the Strangler in the paper. "I thought you only read the business section," Jim snits. Loooong awkward pause. Jim finally asks his dad if he has any stuff--pictures, clippings, whatever--from the original Strangler case.

Upstairs Jim and his dad go through some old boxes. "We had some good times," says the dad fondly, looking at souvenirs. "Did we? It seems to me that Stephen and I don't remember it that way." Low, Jim. The dad makes some flustered excuses about work and Jim looks at a picture of kid football players labelled "1973 CHAMPIONSHIP" and gets a flashback of the day the picture was taken. Some kid from the other team calls him "rich kid" and is obnoxious to him. Then the longhair hippie photographer tells the winners to gather round and encourages the proud fathers to stand next to their sons: close up on Jim standing alone. Present-day Jim hands off the photo to his dad and says "What's wrong with this picture?" We get it, Jim. Cat's in the cradle with the silver spoon.

At Major Crimes, Simon bitches out Jim for shoving a member of the press. Jim protests it was just a little shove, and then mutters "I'll practice self-restraint, sir," but Simon won't let him off that easy: he's finally got the idea that maybe he should pull Jim off this case. Blair points out that the killer is contacting Jim, and he's involved whether they like it or not. Simon relents and gives them a new lead, some video store owner who was dubbing videos for the victim.
When they get there the sign says "closed" but the bolts are gone from the door. "Stay behind me," Jim murmurs as they head inside. I should just have a macro for that. The store's empty and the victim's tape has been erased. Jim sniffs the air, tells Blair, "Call for backup; stay alert," and runs out. Maybe I need two macros. Jim runs out to a train track where he suddenly gets a memory of running after his football, looking up, finding the body: it's Bud.

While he's semi-zoning, a train approaches, and Jim is suddenly attacked by a masked man who says, "The score needs to be settled. It's payback time," and then chooses to knee Jim in the stomach repeatedly even though he has a knife. Jim's zoning and being beaten and the train is rushing closer; you know, this is exactly the kind of situation Jim needs Blair actually with him for. Just in the nick of time, the grapplers break and roll off the tracks in opposite directions.

Loft. Comfort! Blair gets a bag of frozen vegetables for Jim's sore shoulder and says "You're lucky that guy didn't kill you." Jim says he didn't want to kill him; he wanted to mess with him. I guess Jim has already opened up about his latest memory, because Blair talks about how, with the trauma of finding his father figure dead, it's no wonder he repressed it. "I wonder what the hell else I'm repressing," Jim grumbles. We all do, Jim.

Jim's still thinking aloud about the killer--how he acted like they knew each other--when he gets a flash of memory. He's facing off against the boy who called him "rich boy," Aaron. Jim makes the gamewinning tackle, throwing Aaron to the ground. After the game, Aaron snatches the winning football from Stephen and kicks it deep into the woods.

Major Crimes. Simon tells Jim and Blair that they got a fingerprint from the knife, and it belongs to some Army guy called Jeffries who went AWOL thirty years ago--disappeared along with his five-year-old son. A fax of Jeffries' photo arrives and, upon seeing it, Jim gets a memory: just after he found the body, he zoomed in across the woods and saw a man with a knife getting away.

At Jim's dad's house, Jim asks for any memories his dad may have about the other parents in the league. After insisting he doesn't know anything, he didn't get involved with those parents, the dad does remember one thing--a phone call from one Mick Foster, a dad who wanted his help forming a new league, and who yelled at him when he said he didn't have time. Before Jim leaves, his dad apologizes for not being there for him like the other dads. Jim's still kind of a dick about it. "I'm not the man I was," says the dad. Jim gets a memory: he's standing with his dad, telling the cops what he saw. The cops are skeptical that he could have seen someone 75 yards away. The dad brings Jim to the car and then goes back to the cops and quietly (but not quietly enough for Jim) apologizes for his son's overactive imagination. The cops recommend that Jim get counseling. Oh, that child actor has Jim's eyebrow-raise-and-frown down pat.

Though I think you would need eyebrow video to truly appreciate it.
We cut to later that day, with Jim's dad yelling at him for telling lies: "Now you got to stop pretending or people are going to think you're a freak! Is that what you want? For people to think there's something wrong with you?!" "No," says Jimmy tearfully. Oh, eh! It's kind of awesome that they're finally explaining all those years of dormant senses. And it allll goes back to daddy issues. "I was telling the truth!" modern-day Jim realizes. He speechifies:

"I held back; I didn't follow my instincts. But all I ever got from you was that there was something wrong with me. I stuffed who I was--who I am--down inside of me. See, I have a gift, Dad. Now, it can be a burden sometimes, but it's a gift. It's just who I am."

Jim's dad surprises him by revealing that he knew, all along, that he was telling the truth; but he encouraged Jim to repress his abilities because he didn't want him to get hurt for being different. "You--you knew?" Jim stutters, betrayed. OH MY GOD JIM'S FATHER ALWAYS KNEW HE WAS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER LITTLE BOYS BUT MADE HIM MAN UP AND REPRESS HIS SENSITIVE NATURE AND JIM HAD TO GO THROUGH THE PAINFUL PROCESS OF LEARNING ABOUT HIMSELF ANEW WHEN IN HIS LATE THIRTIES SHORTLY AFTER A FAILED MARRIAGE HE MET A STRANGE AND WONDERFUL YOUNGER MAN WHO SHOWED HIM THE WAY.

THIS SHOW IS AMAZING STOP.

Hath not a Sentinel eyes? Hath not a Sentinel hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Well, obviously, yes on the senses. BUT YOU TAKE MY MEANING. DAD. DAD. LET ME BE WHO I AM, DAD.

Jim's dad goes to get a glass of water, while Jim looks at a photo album about himself, including recent clippings of his commendations and his wedding. Then he calls Simon and tells him to check up on Mick Foster and his son Aaron. His dad returns as he's leaving and remarks that it's ironic: "Now you're the one with the business to take care of." Jim's like, Yup. Pause. Jim heads out. "It's good to see you, Jimmy." "You too," says Jim, already out the door. Jim's dad stands there sadly for a long moment.

"CASCADE PD!" A SWAT team is storming into a house. Simon finds a body and Jim IDs Mick Foster / Jeffries / Bud's killer. As the coroners gurney out the body, Blair looks at a file: Aaron Foster was an abused child, in and out of social services, eventually diagnosed as schizophrenic. "He never had a chance." The trio talk a bit about father issues generally and then the victim's phone rings. Jim answers, "Hello, Aaron." Jim tries to get him to talk and when Aaron says "What do you want to talk about? Your medals? Your wedding? Love the bride, too bad it didn't work out," Jim gets an idea, and dials up his dad on his cell phone. Aaron: "Hold on, I'm getting another call. Oh, hi, Jimmy." "You hurt my father, I swear to God, I'll kill you." Suspense!
Truck. Jim speeds around corners so fast Blair hits his head on the window. The whole SWAT team arrives at the house, and Jim makes Blair wait outside while he and Simon search the house with guns drawn. Jim hears something in the kitchen and finds Sally crying in the closet. He hugs her until she calms down and it's still not clear if she's his stepmother or his housekeeper. In a study, Jim finds photos arranged in the message "TOO LATE" and "14, 13," which, as Jim explains to Simon, is a football score.

Blair shows up all "What's goin' on?" Jim runs out and Blair runs after him, "Wait up!" Oh, Blair. Running down the front walk, Blair says "I'm coming!" and Jim says "All right, stay close!" Yay, Jim's letting him come! But it's all for naught, because as soon as they get to the football field, Jim realizes the killer actually wants him in the woods, where he found the body, and he tells Blair to stay put while he runs off. Intercut scenes of Little and Big Jim running through the woods. Sure enough, where Bud's body was, now is Jim's father lying facedown--but when Jim turns him over, he comes to. "Thank God," murmurs Jim. Aaron comes up behind them with a knife and whines, "You had everything! I had nothing!" That's about the size of it, yep. They fight hand-to-hand and then Aaron runs away. Blair pops up just as Jim's leaving once again, but this time he gets an assignment, to take care of Jim's dad. Okay, finally, each has met the other's parent! I wonder if Blair will get to look at those photo albums later.

Intercut scenes of Big and Little Jims running across the field after Big and Little Aarons. Jim tackles Aaron to the ground, and, in the present day, handcuffs him. Cops gather round. "Where's my father?" Being led out of the woods on Blair's arm. Blair brings Dad to Jim, cuffs Jim on the arm manfully, and walks off to give them a private moment. Jim and his dad stand wordlessly for a moment, then hug. They walk off arm in arm. We exit on a shot of Blair trying to walk off with his arm around Simon's shoulder: "Isn't that beautiful?" Simon shrugs him off. "Come on, a little brotherly love!" Blair wheedles. "Do I look like your brother?" Simon snaps. "From a different mother," Blair suggests. Fade out on Blair still trying to get his arm around Simon.

Love Me

Best Moments: Jim comes out to his dad. There's also a sort of baseline Blair-concern that's very evident throughout the episode.
Chapter Summary

Jim's femme fatale girlfriend gives him sensory spikes. Haven't we done this before?

Lots of things happen in this first scene in Cascade's Chinatown. Two Buddhist monks get out of a car and walk away; from a distance, Dr. Beckett from *Stargate: Atlantis*, looking all Daniel Jackson in glasses, watches, intrigued. A truck passes between the monks and their car and when it clears and they look back, a third monk still in the car is slumped down. They run back and find he is dead, a puncture wound on his neck. Vampires! Day vampires! The scene catches the eye of some police officers, and when they jog over to check it out, the two monks run away.

Next we see Jim and Blair coming out of a restaurant. "You will love and be loved by many," Blair reads his fortune. "Mine's right; how about yours?" "Your partner puts the 'dim' in 'dim sum,'" says Jim. Blair laughs and starts to tell a story about a friend of his who always made decisions based on fortunes, but before he gets through it, Jim bumps into a dark-haired woman. "Lila!" he cries. "I'm sorry, I think you've got me confused with someone else," she says, and rushes off to get a taxi. Jim zooms in on the license number. Then they see the crime scene and go over to check it out. Blair's confused and dismayed to learn that the Buddhist monks ran from the Law.

Bullpen. Jim's on the phone making inquiries about the taxi when he becomes aware of Blair hovering. "What do you need, Chief?" "Nothing. I'm not saying anything," says Blair. "You don't need to say anything," says Jim, with what I can only describe as an expression halfway between an exasperated grimace and a fond smile. Blair makes a series of adorable facial expressions, insisting, "I'm good," and I'm not really sure what's going on here until Jim sighs and says "Her name was Lila Hobson. I met her in Bali after they pulled me out of Peru." Ohhhh, Blair wanted the ex story.

"I was on R&R, we stayed at the same hotel, we got involved, end of story," says Jim. "How involved? Not end of story," says Blair. I love that he (and Jim) just assumes he has a right to know all the details. Jim says they had a week together, and then she disappeared. His phone correspondent comes back from hold and tells him the name of Lila's hotel. Jim hangs up and stands to leave. "You need some moral support?" Blair asks, but Jim just takes off. "Guess that's a no," says Blair, taking a

Adorable facial expressions all round, let's face it.

"I was on R&R, we stayed at the same hotel, we got involved, end of story," says Jim. "How involved? Not end of story," says Blair. I love that he (and Jim) just assumes he has a right to know all the details. Jim says they had a week together, and then she disappeared. His phone correspondent comes back from hold and tells him the name of Lila's hotel. Jim hangs up and stands to leave. "You need some moral support?" Blair asks, but Jim just takes off. "Guess that's a no," says Blair, taking a
Hotel lobby. Jim sees Lila. She isn't Seven of Nine, but she kinda looks like her. Foreshadowing? "Lila," he says, and this time she says, "Hello Jim."

Hotel bar. Lila says she pretended not to know Jim because she "wasn't prepared to see him." Weak, writers. Weak. She apologizes for disappearing all those years ago, saying it wasn't about Jim, but not explaining what it was about, then. Jim's too distracted to ask the natural question as the picture and sound goes all funny for a moment--he's having some kind of sensory spike. He tries to get back on track, offering to show her around while she's here. She admits she's meeting her fiance here in town. "Congratulations," says Jim, trying to cover up his disappointment with a fake smile. He gets another spike and starts getting distracted by loud background noises, like ice in cups and someone striking a match. Lila asks what's wrong, and he mutters that he has a migraine and gets up to leave. See, this is why he should always take Blair everywhere.

I mean more so.

Jim tells Blair about his sensory spike as they walk through the bullpen. Jim pauses to ask Henri for a florist recommendation, and Henri kids around with him, asking if anyone died, and laughing incredulously, "Jimmy has a date?" Jim says it's "an apology thing": "The girl must have thought I was nuts." Blair is for once not interested in hearing about Jim's love life--there's sensory stuff to think about! "Now, you're sure that's all?" Jim gets wistful and says "Ever have one of those times where--with a woman, you know--if things had turned out differently, she could have been the one?" "Not really," says Blair. "But it sounds special." Ha!

Simon comes up to tell them the monks were spotted in Chinatown, so they head off to try and track them down. In the truck, Blair admires of the sensory spike, "I hope for your sake it doesn't happen again, but for me, I'd like to study it, I wouldn't mind having it again." "All for the sake of science," Jim mutters, and spots the monk sitting on a park bench through some trees. They head over to him, and he's dead. Same puncture wound. There's a key in his hand labelled "1714." Well, that's handy. Are they playing on easy mode? Blair points out a string of beads on the ground: "Sandalwood beads. This guy was a Tibetan lama." Jim examines the beads and sniffs a strange dark one. "Chief, you know what this is?" he says, then sways and faints. "Jim, oh my god! Jim!" cries Blair, rushing to his side.

Jim wakes up in a hospital bed. Blair's at his side, wearing glasses and writing in a notebook.

So boyfriends.

After putting on a Look of Concern as he watches Jim blink awake, Blair smiles, "Welcome back to the land of the living," and informs Jim that the bead he sniffed was pure opium paste. He theorizes
that with Jim's senses in a heightened state from the spikes, "sniffing that stuff was like mainlining." Simon enters and exposits that the Buddhist monk clothes were just disguises for drug smugglers. He orders Jim to go home and rest: "The doctor wants you off your feet for 24 hours." Is it sad that I wouldn't mind watching an episode about 24 hours of trouble-free non-adventure?

Lila comes into her hotel and the desk guy gives her a flower box with a note: "Sorry I left so suddenly. Can we have dinner? Jim 555-4167." I have two thoughts about this. (1) Jim, asking out a girl who's engaged? Really? (2) Jim's handwriting is mega-girly. The picture quality on my AVIs is not really good enough to tell for sure, but I can't guarantee that "i" in "Jim" is not dotted with a heart. Lila looks charmed and takes her flowers into the elevator. A man slips in after her; he seems to be her boss in the illegal dealings she's undoubtedly doing. He looks askance at her flowers and starts saying vaguely threatening things.

Jim and Blair walk down the hall to their apartment. Blair's hand hovers behind Jim's back protectively as he apologizes for having a date with Sam tonight. Sam, still? Or a different Sam? (Don't get too excited; he uses a female pronoun.) Jim finds a box by the door: "These are the flowers I sent Lila." He hands the box over to Blair, who suggests that he and Sam just come back and watch a movie at the loft tonight, but Jim tells him to go out and have fun and give Sam the flowers.

Jim's asleep when there's a knock at the door. He answers it in his robe: Lila. Great. Where the hell is Dr. Beckett already? Lila asks him why he came after her, protesting, "I'm engaged!" and Jim points out, "You're here." Point. Jim says he can't get their tryst out of his head, and she says "We barely know each other; what if you don't like what you find?" and Jim says "I'll take that chance," and takes her coat off. She walks to the window. "My parents died when I was ten..." Oh, jeez. I don't think that's the kind of "getting to know each other" Jim had in mind. Lila describes her Troubled Street Kid Past. She's done Things She's Not Proud Of. Jim says he doesn't care and leans in to kiss her, but gets a sensory spike. What, does she reek of opium?

Cut to maybe ten minutes later, after Jim has had a nice cup of tea. This time when Lila kisses him, he's okay. But he stops her: "What about your engagement?" She just kisses him again. Artsy pan up, shots of them presumably naked under blankets and making out in bed, then cuddled up together in the morning. So, no plausible deniability, then.

Lila wakes up and checks the clock and rushes out. Jim follows her, hopping into his pants, offering a ride, and that's when Blair walks in. "Hi, Chief," says Jim. "Morning," Blair responds casually. Jim tries to introduce Blair, but Lila's not interested, and she rushes out the door. Blair closes it after her and turns to Jim with a big grin. "So I guess the orchids worked!" "Yeah. For you?" "Oh, yeah." I think when you're each scoring sex with the same bouquet of flowers, you may be too close.

Jim mentions he had another sensory spike last night, and Blair suggests it's linked to Lila: "Maybe you're in love." Jim is not amused. Blair asks, "Were your senses still heightened when... y'know..." He pumps his fist slightly. Jim glares. "No, I'm serious! Give me details and be specific," urges Blair. "It's for my book!" Oh, Blair's active in fandom? "Photos?" suggests Jim. Blair gets all wide-eyed and hopeful. "You took pictures?" PEOPLE. THIS IS OUR CANON.
Jim, Blair and Simon search through luggage found in the room that goes with the "monk key", as Simon designates it (to nobody's amusement). Simon finds a condom ("Didn't anybody tell these guys that monks are supposed to be celibate?") and Jim finds a computer game called "Useless Information." Blair says he's played it and it's cool, and he gives a mini-bio of the local programmer who designed it. Jim brings said designer into the station and it's Dr. Beckett! Oh my god, it's so weird to hear him speak in an American accent. He sounds so nasal and... unScottish. He denies having seen either of the dead non-monks, but he's clearly nervous and exits as soon as possible. Jim tells Blair he exuded a chemical odor.

Jim goes to meet Lila at her hotel, but she evades him. He follows her to a stairwell, and gets disoriented by a sensory spike just as Lila's boss guy from before comes up behind him and starts beating him up. Lila saves him by yelling at boss-guy in Chinese. They have a conversation and walk off together, leaving Jim rubbing his head on the stairwell floor.

Simon and the boys do a little irrelevant briefing in his office and when Jim, whose face is a little messed up, leaves, Simon makes Blair stay behind and tell him "What's going on with Jim?" Blair admits he's having sense problems and seeing a new woman and maybe they're related. Out in the hall, Lila calls Jim and arranges to meet him at a Chinese garden.

Chinese garden. Lila tells Jim that her bodyguard attacked him, thinking he was a kidnapper, because her fiance is very wealthy. Jim says, look, she's engaged, maybe they should just not do this. First sensible thing he's said all episode. (Actually, the look he gave Blair when Blair asked for photos was pretty sensible, too.) He leaves, and Lila looks heartbroken.

Outside an interrogation room, Simon tells Jim and Blair that the third not-monk has turned himself in, looking for protection. He says three of them defected to start their own business and their syndicate has been killing them. Jim enters and has the interpreter ask if Beckett is the distributor, and the not-monk says yes. Later, after they've done a bust of Beckett's operation and he wasn't there, Jim reports a forger friend has tipped him off that someone's meeting him in an alley tonight to pick up fake papers to leave the country. That forger is not going to stay in business long.

Jim and Blair sit in the alley dressed as hoboes. Blair thinks there's something moving in his pants (as usual) and Jim says drily, "It'll help you get into character." "My character dresses better," says Blair, probably because he's dressed pretty much as he normally does anyway--shabby jacket, grey knit hat, fingerless gloves--and Jim's wearing a ridiculous moth eaten fedora straight out of a Depression-era talkie.
Heelots, the lot of 'em!

They see Beckett arrive. Jim looks up to a balcony and gets a sensory spike. The figure in the balcony jumps down and stabs Beckett in the neck and runs away before Jim can get it together. Jim runs, still dizzy, down the alley after the assailant, while Blair stays with Beckett and calls for an ambulance.

Jim's desk. Blair gives him some aspirin, and Jim, in post-spike hangover mode, complains that the rattling is too noisy. I don't know how Blair puts up with him sometimes. Henri comes over all cheery with the good news that he got fingerprints off the jacket Jim was wearing when he was attacked at the hotel; he keeps making Jim high-five him, and Jim's all serious about it, and Blair just watches, chuckling to himself. Henri reports that the guy that beat Jim up was Lo Minh, part of the syndicate that's killing the not-monks. Jim informs Simon that Lila and Lo Minh are connected somehow, and Simon suggests she's a "high-priced mistress," making Blair and Jim both wince.

The plan is to draw out the syndicate by leaking the time and route that they're using to take the third not-monk to lockup, thereby giving the assassins a chance at him. But we see that Minh is listening in on their walkies, and then they're stopped by a truck roadblocking their way. Jim gets out to investigate and is attacked by a Mysterious Figure in Black who gives Jim a sensory spike. Also, the Mysterious Figure is woman-shaped, but nobody seems to notice that, since next seen Jim and Simon are wondering if it was Minh and if so, why didn't he kill Jim.

Minh threateningly holds Lila by the neck and yells at her for not killing Jim. He says she now must kill him to prove her loyalty.

At the loft, Blair provides Jim and Simon with some info he dug up on the special kind of triangular dagger which caused the puncture wounds in all the victims. He shows a picture, and the picture causes Jim a sensory spike. Blair talks Jim through his relax-and-breathe.
Oh Blair; in front of Simon?

Of course Jim recovers some memories, because, at latest conservative estimate, about 50% of his memories were repressed. Jim recalls fooling around with Lila in Bali, and Blair of course has him continue the exercise, because he hasn't got to the good bit yet. Then Jim remembers finding a triangular knife in her stuff. She joked that it was for protecting her "from men like you" and he forgot about it.

Blair's current working explanation for the sensory spikes is that they're a "warning signal" and that, knowing that a triangular-knifed killer was out there and linking the knife with Lila, his mind/senses/subconscious/whatever started sending off warning flares whenever she was around. I have several issues with that. (1) I'm pretty sure that would require more sophisticated reasoning than the subconscious is capable of without accessing the conscious. (2) If it's based on sight and recognition and memory and logic, and not like smell or pheromones or something, why, oh why, did Jim get a spike from the Mysterious Figure whom he did not know was Lila? I ask you.

Phone. It's Lila. Jim urges her to give herself up to the police, promising she'll be safe. "All right. But I'll only turn myself in to you," she says. Oh, sorry, that was "I'll only turn myself into you." She gives a time and place for Jim to meet her, Alone. Simon wants Jim to bring backup anyway, but Jim says it will scare her off. "What about those spikes? You'll be completely helpless," says Simon. "Not necessarily," says Blair. Yes, Blair! This is exactly what you're here for! "We're talking about your senses here. They're to protect you and the tribe, and you can dial them back," says Blair, bringing us up to a total of 2 mentions of "dialing" in canon to approximately eight gajillion in fanon. "And I can help." YES BLAIR, DO.

Blair drives Jim to the meeting location. It's a nice touch that Blair always wears his glasses when he's driving. Looks like Jim brought backup after all; Simon, Henri and two other cops are waiting out of sight for his signal. Jim puts in an earpiece so Blair can communicate with him from afar. That probably comes in pretty useful for grocery shopping. But if Blair only needs to talk to him and not vice versa, why not just have him speak at normal volume? Jim's the one with super hearing. Oh well. Jim goes to meet Lila, and Blair joins Simon and the others in watching with binoculars. Lila goes on for a bit about her Terrible Upbringing, and Jim gets a sensory spike when he sees the triangular knife in her waistband. While he's rubbing his head, she pulls out the knife, and Blair cries, "Dial it back! Dial it back!" Such a good thing you're here, Blair. Jim manages it just as Lila throws the knife away, declaring, "I can't." Jim starts to handcuff her when he hears Minh cocking a gun at them from a ways away. Sniping! Jim pulls Lila behind a column and tries to shoot around at Minh, but he can't get a decent line of sight. Lila kisses Jim and then runs out into the open. "Lila!" Jim gets a shot off and hits Minh, but it's too late: Lila's been shot.

The bodies fall. Jim runs to Lila and cradles her body, rocking it gently, as he is wont to do. Slow pan up and fade out just as the other police arrive and Blair starts running to Jim. Well, that was a
downer of an ending.

**Best Moments:** Blair at Jim's side in the hospital; Blair pesters Jim for specific and detailed ex stories and sex stories, and, if possible, pictures.
Jim's solo fishing trip is interrupted by Simon, Blair, and a highly contagious epidemic.

>Blair is helping Simon with his computer when Jim comes in and quips, "Lounging around in the adult chat room, boys?" Blair's immediate smile at Jim's presence is kind of heartbreaking, considering what happens next. Jim's come to request a week off. Blair turns to gape, and Simon's just like, Okay, okay, whatev--whaaa? Jim explains he's accumulated a lot of time off and he has a great little peaceful fishing spot in mind. Blair and Simon start chattering excitedly about their new tackles and flies, and Jim complains, "This is not a group activity!" "What are you talking about--you want to be alone?" asks Poor Sad Blair. They're starting to argue about it when Simon's computer BSODs and Jim takes advantage of the distraction to escape.

Jim drives to a cover of "Crossroads." He arrives at a tiny town--a junction, really (a crossroads?!). The gas station attendant admonishes him for bringing his own water to a natural spring; the inn is renovating, so he agrees to crash on the lobby couch; and the diner is closing for the night as he reaches it, so he eats jerky out of a bag. So far, this is a great vacation.

A tech support guy leaves Simon's office, making "tsk, tsk" noises at Blair as he goes. Simon asks Blair what's up with Jim. He thinks Jim is holding out on them, fishing-spot-wise, and he suggests they go down there. Blair's eyes light up. Oh, no, boys, as much as I want you in the episode, I think if Jim says he wants to be alone, he wants to be alone. "But what if he does want to be alone?" asks Poor Sweet Blair. They're starting to argue about it when Simon's computer BSODs and Jim takes advantage of the distraction to escape.

Jim gets off the couch and lets them in, grudgingly: "What the hell are you guys doing here? How did you even find me?" Guys, I told you! Abort! Abort! Simon's like, duh, detective work. "We wanted to surprise you," Poor Sweet Blair explains tentatively. "You're not mad, are you?" Jim: "There was a time I lived alone. Worked on my own, too." Wow, it's taken actually a surprisingly long time for the honeymoon to end and for Jim to realize he's an introvert. Blair asks if Jim wants him to move out. That's not what Jim means at all, of course: "You've made this Sentinel thing work and I appreciate that. I wouldn't change a minute of it, but--you're always there, in my face, observing." Simon hits
Blair with his hat. Jim: "Simon, this is no different from being your full-time pit bull." Blair hits Simon with his hat. Jim assures Simon he does want the tough assignments, but he needed a break. Fair enough. Blair and Simon seem to agree, because they both turn to go, but Jim grabs them by the arms and tells them, in a voice so manly it borders on a New York accent, "I love you. I don't want you to go away mad." Awwwww.

| The manful shrug of "I love you"

Jim continues, "Let's just have a bite to eat, talk about it, and then..." And then what, Jim?

While Jim goes to change (into something more comfortable?), we're treated to a little comedic bit where Blair makes fun of what he thinks will be the "country cooking" at the diner: "What are we gonna eat, possum on a stick or something?" Simon, dead serious: "My mother made possum." Blair, without missing a beat: "I got no problem with that. I could eat." As well-delivered as this bit is, isn't it a bit out of character for Blair to make fun of what other people eat?

Diner. Blair sits down, Simon sits across from him, and Jim slides in next to Blair. All is right with the world. The waitress is sort of charming in a down-to-earth-girl way; Jim orders coffee for the table. Simon leans over. "Could you be a little more obvious?" What, we're going there already? Oh, he thinks Blair was flirting with the waitress. I guess Blair smiled at her, but they all did, and Jim was the only one who talked. Jim explains in his best anthropologist voice, "He's just observing the indigenous customs before he launches into his own mating cha-cha." He briefly demonstrates what appears to be the "sensual rhythm" dance from 3x13 The Trance, and Blair laugh.

| "Mating cha-cha"

Another brief Simon and Blair Comedy Duo moment as Blair crunches on ice annoyingly and Simon tells him to cut it out. "I'm hungry!" Does Jim have to turn this diner around?
Just as the waitress is setting down the coffee pot, she stops short, drops her empty tray, and slumps to the ground, clutching her stomach. Jim kneels to help her, and a man at the bar suddenly gets the same symptoms. Simon goes over to help him. A curly-haired woman conveniently pulls out a stethoscope and checks them out, but then says, "These people have to get to a doctor." She's just the veterinarian. The nearest hospital's an hour away, they're out of cell range, and Blair can't even get a dial tone on the diner phone. Jim: "What the hell is going on here?" Good question.

The boys are driving the diner patients to the hospital when they round a corner and find themselves bumper-to-bumper with military humvees. Oh, great, they're in a plague quarantine or possibly *Truman Show* type scenario. Oh, the head army guy is confirming it's a "hot zone" and that "You are all under military control." Well, this should come as nothing new to Jim, given his army experience, or Blair, given his rich fantasy life.

The town, such as it is, is now crawling with guys in fatigues and gas masks, and it's all very *Restoration*. The colonel doesn't really want to deal with the know-it-all cops, but he does explain finally that the outbreak started with a runaway monkey, *as usual*. Blair starts rambling conspiracy theories until Simon shushes him. They talk to a CDC doctor who says they're working on an anti-serum but it'll take time. Jim asks for a worst-case scenario, so the doctor tells him "The virus could kill everything in its path." Great! Piano of Emotion as we pan in on Jim's impassive face. It's so impassive that I don't know whether to read into it "After all our adventures, this is what brings us down: a virus" or "I'm glad my friends came after all so we can face this together" or "If only my damn friends hadn't come they would be safe" or "Fuck 'preserving our friendship', I'm so getting laid."

Simon talks to the vet, who explains that even though there's not much call for her practice around here, it's her home and she doesn't want to move. Jim and Blair creep around from behind a truck. Wow, that didn't take long.

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The walk of shame

Jim says some important businesslike cop things about communications and law and order, and Blair hangs back until the vet asks, "You all right? You look a little flushed." Well, yeah, he's just had a bit of an experience, here. He rambles some distracted conspiracy theories.

The innkeeper comes up and tells them he thinks he has a short-wave radio stashed away somewhere, so Jim and Blair go to help him find it. While they're poking through the boxes the innkeeper quips, "The human race began with apes, now it ends with one," and Blair corrects him that humans and apes are descended from a common simian ancestor. "Go easy on the seminar," says Jim. "Sorry, I'm an anthropologist," Blair explains. "I'm just attached to the police department." To part of it, anyway. They find the radio. Blair looks inside, and all the tubes are gone. Oh, great, now they're going to have to all around town picking up tubes and solving puzzles. Weird film effect
for a second as Blair leans dizzily on a shelf, all pale and sweaty. Well, we saw this coming. Jim supports Blair and walks him outside.

Next thing we know Blair's being gurneyed into a tent. Jim pesters the army guys for info, saying, "This has become very personal to me." I like how it wasn't before, back when possibly he and everyone else in the world was going to die.

![POOR SAD JIM](image)

Simon and Jim walk off, talking about how worried they are about Blair, until Jim pauses to zoom in on a soldier on break. He's smoking, not wearing a gas mask. Another soldier comes up and snipes at him. Jim tells Simon, "A private just gave orders to a lieutenant. That's not the army I know." They begin to suspect this is an elaborate hoax. Oh no! First stage of the illness is paranoia! Next they'll be lecturing about evolution and it's all downhill from there!

Meanwhile, in the tent, Blair looks fairly okay, and the doctor's giving him a cup of medicine. When the doctor is called away, Blair pours it back into the bottle.

Outside the tent, Jim, Simon and the vet gather. Nobody's heard anything about Blair's condition. Jim asks if either of them has drunk the local water; Jim, Simon and Blair have been drinking bottled water, and the vet has her own well. The vet runs tests on a local spring water sample in her lab until the not-army guys bust in. Jim is no longer folding under their moral authority, but they still have giant guns, so Jim and Simon have to give up their weapons.

Confined to the inn, Jim and Simon theorize more. They figure out Blair was affected by the drugged water because he was chewing on ice at breakfast. Wow, nice call, guys; I didn't remember that. But they still don't know why any of this is going on in the first place. Jim's priority is, of course, rescuing Blair. The innkeeper offers to show Jim and Simon a way out through the cellar, and the three of them head up to creep around outside. Jim spots a spare hazmat suit and puts it on to sneak into the tent, where he leans over Blair's stretcher as tenderly as a hazmat suit will allow and helps him up.
I've come to rescue you.

Blair's a little dizzy and stumbly, but seems overall better. Blair overheard something about a train shipment, and the innkeeper volunteers there's a disused track north through the woods. He wants to come on the train-spyin' mission, but Jim says firmly that they've got it covered.

Train job. Not-army guys use their big guns to overpower the skeleton crew and stop the train. They blow up the doors and begin unloading the boxes--ohhh, I see, they're from the treasury. Okay, big payoff, but still: most elaborate caper EVER. Any plan that involves putting together a fake army and putting a town under martial law possibly needs to be brought back to the drawing board. Jim, Blair and Simon appear over the ridge and see what's going on, and then of course the innkeeper shows up and double-crosses them.

Back at the town, the innkeeper (who turns out to be the ringleader) explains the whole evil plan and then puts Jim, Blair, Simon and the vet in a big freezer, latching the door with a screwdriver. Before it becomes necessary to huddle for warmth, though, Jim masterminds a solution. For some reason he knows there's a powerful magnet in the fan in the air vent. Jim uses Simon's coat to jam the fan ("Why can't we use your coat?"), then takes it apart and pulls out the magnet. He holds the magnet up to the door behind the screwdriver, looking through the window at the reflection of the latch in the toaster or something across the room so he can see what he's doing, and after a false start or two, lifts it out. That was easy. I think it would have been more realistic with a few minutes of Jim walking randomly into different corners and saying "I can't use those two things together".

They emerge to find that the bad guys are all pretty much fled out of the town. Simon announces he's going to look for comm gear to warn the feds. Jim agrees and tells the vet to stay and tend to the doped-up townsfolk. "Chief, you're with me." Surprise surprise. Simon asks, "What are you going to do?" "Head 'em off at the crossroads."

Jim and Blair board the stopped train and Jim starts fiddling with the controls. Blair: "Have you ever driven a train before?" Jim: "Sure. I had a Lionel set when I was ten." Blair: "Oh, god."
What's the matter, Blair, didn't you drive a train cross-country when you were in high school?

"Crossroads" comes back on as the little engine that could catches up with a cash-laden humvee. Innkeeper shoots at them, but they're a *train*. We get to the actual crossroads, and the truck tries to cross the tracks, but Jim keeps the engine hurtling along and it knocks the Jeep off course, because it's a *train*. The Jeep explodes, because why not.

Wrap-up. Exposition amounting to "everything will be all right." Jim still wants to go fishing. The vet's in! Simon prefers the "mayhem of the city." After a moment of consideration, Blair, still looking a little green around the gills, heads off with Simon. Jim, wonderingly, to the vet: "I finally shook 'em!" And all it took was an Ebola scare, a hostage situation, a drugging, captivity in a meat locker, and an explosive amateur train chase.

**Best Moments:** The scene in which we finally explore Jim's independence-vs-togetherness tension--it's been a long time in coming since we're told over and over that Jim was so self-sufficient, even cold, until now, and yet he's always, always, always with Blair. Jim's Blair Mating Ritual dance. The ease with which I was able to construct an "apocalypse sex" scenario.

**What I would have liked to see more of:** Honest reactions of Jim, Blair and the others when they believe they're staring death in the face (I mean, besides what I made up). Some kind of relationship between the emotional and action arcs. A metaphorical crossroads! Anybody? Yes?
Jim and Blair get a new partner.

Outside the airport, Jim teases Simon about his new car, pretending to see a ding. Blair emerges and reports, "I told them to tell her that there were three handsome guys waiting by a silver car." "I only see two," says Simon, and Jim, grinning, agrees. I guess this is supposed to be a Burn on Blair, but it's hampered by the fact that (1) nobody ever specifies which two; Blair could be among them and (2) in any group of three men, each individual man will only ever see two. We learn that they're waiting for a new officer from the foreign exchange program (wonder who they exchanged? Cassie?). Jim is ethnocentric, "The last thing I need are tips from some female Crocodile Dundee out to bust beer-soaked kangaroos," when the new officer comes up behind him in this fabulous pink fur coat and skewers his witticism: "The only crocs I've seen are at the Sydney Zoo, and the 'roos I know prefer vodka." I know, I know, you're imagining that said in the classic "G'day, mate" accent, but really, I would describe her manner of speaking as "recieved pronunciation with mild Australian twinge."

Introductions all around. The new officer is Megan Connor. To Blair she says, "You must work narcotics." Yawn, people have said that before. Blair says he's a consultant to the department. Megan: "On what?" HA! Nobody has ever asked that before! Blair just freezes up. Long pause. Ha ha ha. "I suppose we'll find out," Megan rescues him lamely.

Action! Jim sees a car heist in progress and speeds off after the thieves in Simon's car. Citing a police emergency, Megan commandeers a taxicab. "Come on, Sandy!" Megan drives like freakin' maniac, even after Blair points out that they drive on the right side of the road here. There's a lengthy chase the upshots of which are (1) Jim messes up Simon's car and (2) Megan finally roadblocks the bad guys, saving the day.

Also she cuffs her bad guy faster than Jim cuffs his. Just sayin'.

Simon's office. For some reason Simon isn't happy with what he describes as Megan's "stunt" and he assigns her for the time being to observer status (armed, though, because she's trained. Not that Blair's lack of training has ever stopped Jim from handing him all kinds of guns.) He assigns Jim to supervise her. But he's already got a Blair! Jim's not so much a cop as a field trip chaperone at this
Megan goes to an Indian restaurant and asks in an American Southern accent if they’ve seen this man (shows photograph). She's a Terminator!

Jim and Blair wait for Megan by a hot dog stand. Jim complains that she's late. Blair: "I was thinking, if we're going to be working so closely with her, we're going to have to really be conscious of keeping your Sentinel abilities quiet." Aaaand we're back to the Sentinel-as-invisible-minority thing. Jim touches his arm and says "I'll leave that up to you, Sandy." Blair objects to the name. He wants "Chief" from you, Jim! "Let's go, Chief" is like, your "As you wish"! Megan arrives and greets, "G'day!" She can say that all she wants, but she's still not going to have a Paul Hogan accent. Ordering from the stand, Jim and Blair do a little old-married-couple bickering about food. Jim tells Megan he opened the fridge one time and found a jar of locusts. Blair: "I like to experiment in pan-cultural cuisine, all right?" Instead of being like, So--you guys--live together, too? Huh, Megan asks Blair if he's ever tried some Australian bug delicacy, and they bond a bit over it. Jim is not amused.

Jim suddenly sees a guy whom he busted, but who got off. He's telling Megan and Blair about it, and Blair is making No! Nyet! motions with his hands, and Megan asks, "How can you recognize him from here?" They run off after him. Later, in Simon's office, Jim explains that they followed the criminal to his hotel and found him meeting with a bunch of other criminals. Jim shows photos. "Who took these?" Simon asks appreciatively. "I did!" Blair declares with massive pride. "With a disposable camera from the hotel shop. Pretty good, huh?" How did he turn off the flash? Simon authorizes them to put the whole group under surveillance.

Squeezed into the front of the truck, Jim, Megan and Blair tail one of the criminals to the Indian restaurant. Blair snaps photos of the meeting, this time with an actual camera with a long-distance lens. Jim starts listening in (one of them has a noticeable [perhaps put-on] Australian accent) and Megan's like, uh, shouldn't one of us go in? Jim says it's too dangerous. Megan gets out, claiming she's going to "the ladies' at the petrol station," but instead she goes across and enters the restaurant. The boys, because they have eyes and they are looking, see her, and run to back her up. Australian Guy immediately starts shooting when he sees Megan, and there's a lengthy shoot-out in the restaurant.

Later, Simon pulls up in a hot pink car (it was the only one left in the motor pool; Blair thinks it's great) to find Jim yelling at Megan for moving in--and breaking out the artillery--without his authorization. Simon orders them to take it up in his office, and he and Megan leave. Jim dials information for the international area code for Australia. Blair: "What are you going to do, call her mom?" Jim: "That's not a bad idea."

Megan and Simon are in the office when Jim and Blair arrive. Simon reports Megan's side of the story--that the criminals realized they were being tailed and recognized her, and that's why they started shooting--but Jim and Blair have more info they've gotten from Megan's police department. The Australian criminal is Scott Brunell, whom she once investigated for a theft (with collateral damage death), and who subsequently sent her death threats and made attempts on her life. He got off, and she never let it go. She admits she volunteered for the exchange program so that she could follow him. Simon takes her off the case. OMG HE HAS NEVER DONE THAT BEFORE. I'd make more points, but Blair makes them for me after Megan leaves: "So she made it personal. So what? Jim, how many times have you done that?" Thank you. Blair points out she knows the most about this guy. "I'm not a cop or anything, but if you ask me, she's our best bet to catch him." "The kid's got a point," Jim concedes. Simon appears to be thinking it over and tells them to take her to her hotel and tell her to wait for his call.

Jim, Blair and Megan get out of the truck at the hotel. Megan puts a hand on Blair's shoulder, making
Blair look at the hand nervously and Jim raise his eyebrows, and thanks Blair for standing up for her, and calling him "Sandy." Blair asks her not to do that: "Nobody calls me 'Sandy.'" "As you like it, Chief," she says. Blair shoots Jim a desperate look, and Megan strides inside.

**Cop touching me gratuitously and calling me 'Chief' not Jim! WHAT DO I DO**

Trucks pulls up on the other side of the hotel. "What are we doing?" Blair asks. "Just playing the odds," says Jim, and sure enough, Megan comes out and calls for a taxi. Jim sees Brunell in a car with an automatic weapon a little ways away, and he gets out and shouts "CONNOR! LOOK OUT!" Megan ducks behind a tree as Brunell passes, shooting. Jim and Blair run across the street to Megan, and there's this brief moment where it looks like Blair was hanging onto Jim's belt or his hip or something. Megan thanks Jim, genuinely. It looks like Megan is finally seeing the value in Jim: he's an obnoxious jerk to strangers (especially women), but he's a useful ally if you're going to be doing action heroics.

Simon has decided to give Megan full credentials. (It must have been based on introspection, because the only thing that happened since he was undecided is that she disobeyed him.) He presents her with her badge and her cell phone. Rafe comes in and gives Simon a pile of files on Brunell and his men, and I still think he's Australian. Blair complains that it's an awful lot to pick through, and isn't he the grad student? You'd think he'd be the most at home (and the most useful) in the research aspect of detection.

Poring over the files, Jim, Blair, and Megan compare notes about the large scale and audacity of the crimes committed by their targets. Blair suggests a break for food, as he seems to do about every five minutes in research mode (yep, he's a student). Megan volunteers to treat them if they don't talk about work and let her pick the restaurant. She chooses a fancy place, the kind with cloth napkins and candles. Oh, great, is this going to be another threesome date a la Cassie? Jim and Blair talk about how you never see the tourist spots when you live in a place. "Although on our first case we did go to the Cascade Panoramic Tower," Blair reminds Jim. Is it coincidence that "case" sounds an awful lot like "date"? "This was a great idea, Megan. Thank you very much. It's very nice," says Jim in his quiet, earnest nice-guy voice. Megan just stares. She's never seen the softer side of Jim! Blair looks at Jim, too, and Jim's like, What? Megan recovers and thanks him for his thanks. Blair: "Wow, that was... really special." Nervous chuckle. "You two are gettin' along." Oh Blair.

I should probably mention that we've been seeing scenes of Brunell and his men breaking into a big power station--killing the guard, replacing him with one of their own, doing various other tasks. I only mention it now because while Megan is talking about her background (her father was a professional bookie--legal in Australia--and she "can't imagine not being a cop anymore, can you?" to which Jim just sort of shrugs), the power goes out. Through the high tourist-friendly window, they can see it's a 10x18 block grid. What could he want to steal from that grid? Blair mentions banks and jewelry stores. Megan say it'll be something bigger to black out half the city. Jim: "The mint!"
There's a mint? And you didn't think of that first?

The trio reach the mint after abandoning the truck in the middle of gridlock. First they question the getaway driver and cuff him to the van. Next they creep around the door inside, Jim saying, "Stay behind me," but Megan intercepts him, "Stay behind me." Girl power? They find a knocked-out body, one of the actual guards. Jim has Blair stay behind and--keep him company? I don't know--while Jim and Megan proceed (Jim gets in front after all) and creep up on the vault where two bad guys are loading money by the light of a generator. Just at the wrong moment, Megan's cell phone rings. Their hand forced, Jim yells "CASCADE POLICE DROP YOUR WEAPONS!" The bad guys turn off the generator and put on their night-vision goggles, but Jim also has night vision, and he gets off a solid round, incapacitating both criminals. Megan's like, Whoa.

The power is restored as Megan and Jim enter and question the men about Brunell's whereabouts. Jim gets a call from Simon and orders an ambulance; Blair comes up with the guard. Oh, I guess he was reviving him? But how? The guard says Brunell might have been after the money-printing plates. His cohorts thought they were after cash. Bastard!

Our heroic trio leaves the guard in charge of the wounded men and walks off trying to figure out where Brunell might have gone. Jim suddenly says "He's up on the roof." "He says that like he actually knows!" says Megan as they enter the elevator. "He... gets really good hunches," Blair explains. On the roof, Jim and Megan draw their guns and Blair hangs back. Jim spots Brunell running for the edge of the roof. Jim gives chase. Then Brunell jumps! He... he has a hang glider. Ridiculous.

Outside Jim sends Megan to uncuff the driver so they can take the getaway van while he and Blair secretly confer. Jim doesn't see the glider so Blair tells him to listen. He concentrates and hears Brunell, somewhere above them, talking into his walkie-talkie, arranging to meet a co-conspirator at Chandler's Point. Jim runs to the van, calling to Blair to arrange for backup at said Point. "Another hunch?" cries Megan.

At Chandler's Point Jim gets involved in a shoot-out with some guys in boats while Megan goes after Brunell and has a fairly awesome hand-to-hand battle with him. As she smashes his face against the van, knocking him out, we see Jim standing there. "Nice moves!" Backup arrives, as it always does, just in time to deal with the boring aftermath. Megan's looking a little shaky, and Jim puts a hand on her back and leads her away.

Cute but brave curly-haired sidekick type making me proud in action situation not Blair!

WHAT DO I DO

Jim and Blair enter what I guess must be the police department gym and find Megan exercise-biking. Jim ribs her gently because he likes her now, and Blair gives her a letter--due to her awesomeness in
the recent case, the officer exchange program is extended, and she's been invited to stay on for longer. Everybody just kind of takes it as a given that she's going to accept, including her. What's so great about palling around with Jim and Blair? Blair's talking about Simon's newest car now: "Simon really doesn't look too good in radioactive--" Blair and Jim look at each other and chorus, "Lime." THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND IN UNISON SAID A NON-BASIC COLOUR WORD. I mean—okay, yes, I would stay to watch that. But Megan doesn't strike me particularly as a shipper.

End-of-show joking. Megan tells Jim to do 20 a day (20 what?) on the bike to "help head off that middle-age spread." Blair laughs delightedly and pats Jim's stomach. "And it wouldn't hurt you to keep him company, Sandburg," says Megan, and Jim pats Blair's stomach. Maybe I was wrong about Megan. She goes off doing kicking and punching moves, and Jim says, "Okay, here's what we do. Scour the zoos to find a demented kangaroo." Blair: "Good." Jim: "Teach him to box." Blair: "Good." Jim: "Toss the two in a ring together." They congratulate themselves on what a good plan this is until Blair asks, "Isn't that cruelty to animals, though?" Jim concedes that point, and Blair crows, "WHICH ONE!!!" and they both laugh.
Undercover as homeowners in a cul-de-sac, Megan, Jim, and Blair pose as a happy family.

In the truck, Blair reads aloud to Jim from a letter from Naomi, in which she describes learning to levitate from a swami in India. Jim notices a tail and drives in a roundabout route to a secluded pier. Sure enough, the other car follows, and Jim gets out with gun drawn. The other driver emerges with his hands up, and Jim recognizes him as a marshall friend who once saved his life. The marshall says he's uncovered corruption and needs Jim's help. He goes to his trunk to get his evidence. Jim sees a bomb and yells to warn him, but it's too late. The marshall is blown away as Jim holds Blair to the hood of the truck.

Crime scene. Simon brings Megan, who wanders off to investigate. Jim asks if she's Simon's partner now. Simon: "Somebody has to show her the ropes, since I can't trust you." Weren't they working together pretty well at the end of last episode?

At the station, the boys complain that they don't have any evidence since it all blew up and/or was taken by the Feds because, technically, the murder of a U.S. Marshall falls under their jurisdiction. Maybe you should, um, let them handle it, then? Okay, okay! It was just a suggestion! Megan reveals that she took something from the crime scene: keys. "They were outside the taped-off area!" Jim takes the baggie, sniffs it, and declares evidence of C4. Megan: "How does he do that?" Jim and Megan start yelling at each other about whose case this is, and Simon ushers them into the office. He invites Blair in, but Blair declines, saying, "I'll hear about it later." All right then. In the office, Simon tells Megan to work on other files while Jim continues on this case, and scolds them, "No more public displays in the bullpen." Possibly not the first time he's had to give Jim that lecture.

At a table, Jim feels the tag on the key and reads off tiny letters while Blair gives suggestions. Megan comes up, observes them for a moment, and then asks to work on the case. Jim goody-two-shoeses that Simon instructed them otherwise. Trying a different tack, Megan asks Jim to show her "that thing you do." "What thing is this?" Jim asks innocently. Megan lists amazing things Jim has done.
and asks if he's "some kind of psychic." Jim and Blair glance at each other, shrug, and go with it, telling her not to tell anyone. Wait. What exactly is the point of this charade? Sure, she still technically doesn't know the truth and so the secret is still technically between Jim, Blair, and Simon. And Jim's dad, maybe. And that guy from Rogue. But the whole ostensible point of keeping the Sentinel thing quiet was so that the bad guys wouldn't know Jim had an edge. So what is the advantage of leading Megan to believe he has a different edge?

In the truck on the way to the address on the key, Jim and Blair laugh a little about Megan's misconception. Blair says to be careful, because the psychic thing can't explain everything Jim does. Actually, I think it can. Jim's actual abilities are less powerful than ESP. So not only is the psychic thing for that reason relatively difficult to fake, but it more than completely defeats the purpose of lying in the first place! If Megan keeps this fake secret, they may as well have told her the real one, and if she proves herself unworthy by leaking it, Jim is in more trouble than if the actual truth got out! I think Jim and Blair just like to keep secrets. Explains a lot about them, really.

In the house, Jim and Blair find surveillance photos of all the neighbours. They surmise that the marshall must have known that the witness to the corruption was living in this cul-de-sac, but didn't know which neighbour it was. Jim hears a noise downstairs and goes to check it out. He finds a prowler... Megan! He's just scolding her when he hears a gun being cocked, zooms in on a sniper across the street, and pulls her out of the way. Leaving Megan, Jim and Blair go find the sniper. Jim flashes his badge, but the armed gentleman doubts his credentials; sarcastically, "Oh, yeah, I guess your little hippie friend here is your partner, right?" Megan, appearing behind him with gun drawn: "One of them."

Station. Jim snaps at Megan, "We are not now, nor do I forsee us being, partners!" Jim's a monopartnerist, I guess. The trio books the would-be sniper. His name is Bud and he was just trying to protect the neighbourhood from burglars. In the office, Jim and Blair show Simon the photographs and fill him in on their thinking, and Simon calls in Megan and tells them his plan, straight out of fanfic: Jim and Megan have to move into the housing development masquerading as a couple.

JIM (glancing at Blair): A couple of what?
SIMON (narrowing his eyes): Newlyweds!
JIM: (turns away with an "oh, boy" look)
MEGAN: You have a problem with intimacy, Detective?
JIM: I'm familiar with the concept.

Simon says Blair's in too and he asks "What do I get to be, their son?" Simon: "You expect me to think of everything? You come up with a cover." Uh... but... when you said he was in, we all thought... Also, maybe Jim and Blair would have liked it if you had said all three of them were going before you assigned who was married to who. Jim suggests nephew, because he likes to go for roles of authority. Blair says he's too old, because he's maybe not so into that. "You think anybody would buy us as brothers?" asks Jim. Blair puts on an Australian accent and says he'll go as Megan's brother. Megan has two problems with that: (1) Blair's accent sucks (but she says she'll put on an American one, so that doesn't really matter), and (2) he's not tall enough. She does tower over him. The only remaining issue is that Bud knows they're cops, but Simon figures but he won't mind them being there if he's so interested in keeping law and order that he's resorted to vigilanteism. So the awful plan is on!

The trio arrives at the cul-de-sac and Bud introduces his friend Tom to "my buddy Jim, his lovely wife Megan, and Jim's nephew Blair." So they went with the nephew thing. Creepy. Why would a newlywed couple be living with the thirty-year-old nephew anyway? Though I can't actually think of any relationship which would adequately explain two men and a woman of approximately the same age setting up household together, other than "polyamorous life partners." (Author remembers that
Bud invites Jim and Blair to hang out with the guys over at his place, apologizing to Megan that "it's kind of a stag." Maybe Jim and Blair should have pretended to be the couple. Megan says it's fine, kisses Jim's closed mouth, and flounces inside to "do some woman things." Ha. I love that Megan is just as hilariously clueless as Jim and Blair undoubtedly are about what women do. And I love that Blair goes with her.

If I don't... move... she can't... hurt me.

Jim stays outside to try to get out of his social engagement, because that's what he does. They see a pair of neighbors of which the wife is hot, and Bud passes on the rumour that they're swingers.

Inside the Connor-Ellison-Sandburg Household Official Semi-finished Attic of Neighbourhood Surveillance, Megan asks Jim how long they've been married. Jim: "Long enough for me to get the seven-year itch, dear." She accuses him of not liking her kiss, and he says "It was good for me," like it was medicine or something. We get Blair's watching-with-interest reaction shot as Jim drily expounds, "A symphony played. The earth moved." "It's just a job," says Megan. He asks how far they're going to take it--share a bed?--and she says "Whatever it takes, honey." He informs her, "We won't even be sharing a room." I wonder what point they're going for with Jim's resistance here--I mean, what point they're going for. He doesn't like her? But she dislikes him just as much and she's willing to go for it. He's honorable? But he's acting like a whiny ass, not like an uptight paladin. (Yes, there is a difference!) I also wonder what are the actual sleeping arrangements.

Crossing to the stag party, Blair wonders, "Should we bring cookies?" A woman with a young daughter drives by the gathering, sees the men playing with firearms, and gets out to yell and Jim and Blair, "Tell your friends if they start waving their guns around again, I'm calling the cops!" Jim calmly introduces himself ("I'm Jim Ellison, this is my nephew, Blair Sandburg"--WHY DO THEY NEVER PICK FAKE NAMES) and says they just moved in. The woman, Katie, apologizes and says she's afraid to let her daughter play outside with all the guns. Jim goes over to talk to the men and Blair stays behind, calling, "You know how I feel about guns." "You're his... 'nephew'?" Katie clarifies when Jim's gone, and Blair says, "By a second marriage," so, what does that clarify, that it's okay for them to sleep together? Blair is charming to Katie and to her daughter Rachel, and gets invited inside for iced tea. He's so in.

Morning in the Bungalow of Love. Blair makes an algae shake for breakfast! Megan: "How do you get used to the smell?" Jim: "You don't." Jim and Blair calmly sit at the table together in their bathrobes and eat breakfast and read the paper as one must imagine they do every morning.
And it's adorable.

Megan tries to find something to eat, but the steak is Jim's and the whole pineapple is Blair's lunch. (Blair, you're a man after my own heart.) When they ask why she doesn't buy her own food she complains that she spent all her allowance on floor wax and nine-millimeter shells.

The swingers come by with a fruit basket, and Jim introduces the family. Of Blair, Mrs. Swinger says, "He's adorable! I'd like to have one at our house!" "We rent him out on weekends," says Jim. Every time he says that, a dozen rentboy fics get their wings. Blair looks extremely uncomfortable and when they leave, with Mr. Swinger giving the wink-and-gun, he says, "I feel violated." Angsty rentboy fics.

Blair watches Katie wash her car through the window. "Maybe I should go over there and find out some more stuff about her," Blair suggests. They give each other affectionate hits as each tries to convince the other not to go, and then Blair says plaintively "She makes me feel good," melting everyone's heart. Jim finally flips a coin and says Blair won. I wonder if he's telling the truth.

Surveillance attic. Nice moment between Megan and Jim as Megan asks what it was like being married for real. "Great, for the most part," says Jim. "I'll probably never get married," says Megan. "I couldn't stand it if things went wrong." Jim tells her there's always problems, but that he wouldn't trade in any of the good times. That's sweet, that he loved being married, and very much explains his relationship with Blair. No, I mean, really. Even if they're just friends (okay, but just supposing), he encourages a marriagelike status quo between them, what with their constant togetherness and extreme domesticity. Blair does it, too, I think more because he's never really had the stable family thing. But that's just my psychoanalysis of them. As far as Megan is concerned, I think her statement
gives us a lot to work with, but I'll hold off on any lengthy discussion until we know her better.

We do learn now that Megan's open to psychics because her father believes in ESP and the paranormal, and Jim suggests getting him together with Blair's mom.

Megan sees Jim in the window at Katie's, playing with Rachel, of course, because Blair is good with kids, and scolds Jim for letting him go over there alone--what if she's the witness? what if he slips up? Jim's like, nag, nag. We go over to Katie's where Blair tells her how much he admires her single motherhood, and says it reminds him of his own mother, which, creepy, if you think about it, but he manages it pretty smoothly. He does want a family, doesn't he?

Some important-looking man examines a picture of Rachel and says something about giving her a new life. So she's the witness?

Surveillance attic. Blair's going on about how much he likes Katie, and he actually sounds pretty down to earth about it: he knows his history with women "is what it is," but he likes her, and he likes the kid, and he's okay with not being #1 in her affections because of said kid. Too bad about witness protection!

Simon calls Jim to tell the marshalls have informed him they are on top of things, they're about to move the witness (who it is is classified), and Jim, Megan and Blair are out of there. At the same time, Blair, listening on the equipment, hears Katie gets a phone call from a marshall, informing her that she and Rachel are being moved. As the trio move out of their house, the Swingers come up and flash U.S. Marshall badges, saying the case is in good hands.

Station. Simon can't get a hold of the marshall he talked to this morning, and Jim points out the Feds claimed to have moved out of the neighborhood months ago. Megan comes up and reports they got fingerprints off the fruit basket--the Swingers are known hitmen! So Bud's doubt about the veracity of Jim's badge was foreshadowing. Nicely done. Blair can't get a hold of Katie.

Mr. Swinger gets a call from his boss and we find out the real story: Katie's the witness, the guy who wants her dead is her ex-husband, and Rachel's "new life" is going to be with him.

The gun club is playing with some new guns, including a black market AK-47 Bud has gotten his hands on, while next door the Swingers turn bad and hold Katie and Rachel at gunpoint and Mr. Katie's Evil Husband arrives. Just at a tense moment, a careless gun club member accidentally sprays bullets through the window. The gun club comes out to apologize and ends up in shoot-out with Mr. Evil's bodyguard and the Swingers. Jim and co. arrive in time to see Mr. Evil drive through the garage door (drink!) and, I don't know, maybe Jim shoots the tire or something, because the car ends up crashed into a fire hydrant. The Swingers run away and Megan goes after them while Jim arrests Mr. Evil and Blair takes care of Rachel and Katie.

Wrap-up. Katie asks Blair if he still wants to go out with her after all this. Blair: ".........uhhhh... Sure... if I can track you down!" Katie says now that her husband is in jail they are done with running. Blair: Oh. No. "I guess I'll be seeing you soon, then!" Yeah, that'll go about as well as well Jim's relationship with the young mom who was vaguely in witness protection. Megan and Jim officially request a divorce, and Simon asks Blair, 'Is it my imagination, or are those two still not getting along?' They maybe bicker a bit, but do they work together effectively, so I don't know why Simon wants any more than that. "I put you here to keep an eye on them!" Simon scolds Blair. "Wro-ong!" Blair valley-girls. "You put me here so they wouldn't kill each other." Same thing, isn't it? Blair says he's not a therapist and Simon tells him to go to night school, then. It's kind of weird.

Best Moments: Blair, Jim, and Megan breakfast scene. Megan asks Jim about marriage.
Would have liked to see more of: Since they went to the trouble of setting up the fanfic-style you-must-pretend-you're-married, it would have been nice if they did more with it--not in the sense necessarily of forcing romance or sexual tension between Jim and Megan, because Lord knows I don't want to go there, but with more of the kinds of scenes mentioned above--quiet, domestic or conversational moments within the trio. Or if we saw a painful emotional toll being taken on Blair and/or Jim because of the strain the ruse put on their intimacy, I WOULD HAVE BEEN COOL WITH THAT TOO.
Chapter Summary

During a crazy night at the station, Jim sneaks a peek at Blair's dissertation and almost breaks up with him.

This is the episode that I claim is reminiscent of Hitchcock's *Rope*, because it takes place all in one night, and I claim that anything that preserves the unity of time is reminiscent of Hitchcock's *Rope*. It actually doesn't have much in common with *Rope* except that somebody gets garrotted at the beginning. Oh, and that it's really, really gay.

So the garrotting, which appears to be a mob hit, is witnessed by two people: a homeless man, whom the killers don't notice, and a teenager in a red car who comes tearing through the scene, whom they do. They give chase and the teenager, Johnny, ends up crashing head-on into the ground floor of the Cascade Police Department.

Completely disorienting spinny-wipe to Major Crimes, complete with wacky music. The hell? Jim hauls in Johnny and an annoying speed user. Major Crimes is hectic, because office services is on strike along with a number of other city departments. At Jim's desk, Blair is working away, his mind elsewhere.

Simon comes up and sends Jim out to help Megan on her first homicide. Blair must have selective hearing for "Let's go, Chief" because he gathers up his Necronomicon Trapper-Keeper and follows.

In the truck, Blair continues to work, occasionally chuckling. Jim tries to sneak a look at his papers, but it's just a full page of double-spaced type covered in pencil notes and he can't read it while he's driving. Jim tells Blair to take a break or he'll drain the battery, but Blair says he's on deadline: "If I don't get this introductory chapter in to my dissertation committee tomorrow, I could lose all my grants!" Eleventh-hour writing does lend an air of authenticity to whole grad student storyline, doesn't it? Also: AWESOME. It's been awhile since we had anything to do with Blair's diss, and since it's a major arc through the whole of the series (and since it never fails to bring up Feelings Best Left Unsaid), I love to see it. Jim says he thought he got to see the ms before Blair published, but
Blair assures him he's not publishing yet--just peer-reviewing the intro. Jim asks to read the intro, then, and Blair says, "Jim, you're the subject of an ongoing study. If you were to read this before we finished, it would invalidate all our research." Some of it, he says, is actually funny. He wishes he could tell Jim about it, but he can't.

Crime scene. Megan thinks it's a mugging. Jim thinks it's a mob hit. Jim sees some paint on the Dumpster where a red car hit it.

Jim and Blair go to leave, but Jim's car won't start. Jim blames Blair for killing the battery. Blair says "I'll check it out," and Jim and I chorus "What are you going to do?" as Blair raises the hood. He's startled by a homeless guy who comes up behind him rambling about being an angel. Jim wisecracks, "Your wings are looking a little ragged." Angel Gabe quotes Biblical passages and says, "I come to bear witness." Blair figures this may mean he witnessed the crime. Then Gabe totally heals the battery. LAME. (Get it?)

Things are even more chaotic at Major Crimes when they arrive, because social services has walked, and there's homeless and needy people everywhere. In another in a long list of department rules Simon never thought he'd have to actually specify, he tells one guy, "No foraging!" In Simon's office, Jim and Megan describe the murder, and Jim mentions Blair has a witness. Simon agrees with Jim that the murder sounds like a hit, and puts him in charge. When Megan objects, he tells her her last few cases have been too "improvised." The hell? She's hardly worse than Jim. But I guess you have to earn the right to improvise. Megan describes Simon's rules as "Rafferty's rules," an Australianism which is nicely untranslated, and huffs out.

Looking for Blair's witness, Megan runs into Brown and Rafe who are unloading a truck. Full of stolen goods, I guess. Brown freaks out when he finds--a live alligator! Wacky music abounds. While Brown, Rafe, and Megan are panicking, it escapes into the ducts.

Jim and Simon are looking over Johnny's file when Megan comes up to report on the alligator situation, which Simon puts her in charge of after she admits she used to go croc spotting with her brother and uncle. I thought the only crocs she'd ever seen were in the Sydney Zoo? Maybe they were just highly unsuccessful.

Jim talks to Johnny in an interrogation room. He's a remarkably gentle questioner, nothing at all like the RayK I'm used to. Johnny wants to call his mother, whom he says works in the hospital, and Jim warns him that if his mother's sick he'll have to get social services involved. Johnny is against that.

Blair tells Simon some food is being donated for the refugees, and Simon puts him in charge of setting it up. Blair also gives Simon the witness report the Angel Gabe wrote up. It's in Aramaic.

Out in the bullpen, Jim sneaks a look inside Blair's Trapper Keeper and finds a report in a black cardboard cover labelled "The Sentinel: Genetics, Mythology, and Ontology of our Tribal Protectors by Blair Sandburg." Jim slips the report under his coat and sneaks it into the men's bathroom with it.
What? This? Oh, it's nothing. Just something Blair wrote about me. Excuse me for ten to forty minutes, will you?

Blair goes nuts looking for his missing diss.

A news team demands to report on the alligator. Simon relents.

Jim emerges from the bathroom, his face an inscrutable mask. He throws the dissertation into a drawer and gets to work at his desk.

The news team films as Megan tries to track the alligator through the vents with a bomb squad robot. The alligator eats it.

The owner of the car Johnny was driving arrives. It's Charles Kaplan, a successful defense attorney whom Jim hates. In fact, he's representing Johnny! Simon thinks that's a little weird. Kaplan talks to Johnny, promising to get him off and to pay him $75,000 if he doesn't testify about the murder.

Kaplan meets with the murderer and arranges to have Johnny killed while he's in the police department, which the murderer thinks is a bit of a challenging prospect, until he sees the news, in which the reporter announces that Animal Control will be called in to take care of the alligator.

Okay, here we come up to the Scene of the Episode. Jim and Blair are examining Kaplan's car in the garage. Blair tries to make light conversation but Jim ignores him. Blair: "Is something bugging you?" Jim: "Should something be bugging me, Chief?" Oh, he such a bitchy boyfriend. Blair honestly has no idea what's wrong. Jim notices the paint on the car matches the paint on the dumpster at the crime scene, and Blair's all interested, but Jim goes back to ignoring him as he sends off a paint sample and a bullet from the car. When he turns around, he walks right into Blair. He snaps, "Come on, Chief, can I get a little space here!" And here's where I start transcribing verbatim.

BLAIR: Jim, what's the matter with you?
JIM: I don't know, maybe I'm feeling a little, how did you say it: "territorially threatened to the point of paranoia"? I mean, what the hell is that?
BLAIR: You read my dissertation. Jim, I don't believe you. I asked you not to do that!
JIM: After I let you stay at my place, I get you a job at the department! I mean, and you don't have enough data, you gotta go digging into my ex-wife's life?
BLAIR: The only reason that I talked to Carolyn is 'cause she's the only one that knows you better than I do.
JIM: What has my sex life got to do with your--project?
BLAIR: Sex life? What are you talk-- She said you had a fear of intimacy, Jim. Intimacy and sex are two different issues!
JIM: Maybe to you they are, Chief, but my personal life and those that are involved is
intimate to me!
BLAIR: Look, we have three years of our lives invested in this thing and I'm not going to start shading any of it because you're starting to feel a little threatened!
JIM: Threatened by you? I don't think so, Chief.
BLAIR: Well, what else do you call it?
JIM: I call it a violation of friendship and trust!

Eeee! There's so much to unpack in this argument, I don't even know where to begin. Oh, what the hell. We don't get a chance to do this too often; let's go through it line-by-line!

Later in the conversation, Jim's main argument is that Blair dug up and exposed things about him which he'd prefer to remain private, but it's telling that *this* is the line he first quotes. Blair is not spilling his secrets here, but criticizing him. Jim's *initial* feelings of betrayal happened upon discovering that Blair, whom he thought admired him, has really been noting (and presumably judging) his faults.

Jim is also alarmed by the emotional distance with which Blair treats him in this line, an in the document as a whole. It's not clear how he expected to be written about in a scientific context, but he seems to feel that the language Blair uses is unnecessarily cold. Forced to see himself purely as Blair's subject, he has to wonder if Blair sees him as anything else.

Perhaps Jim changes tack to the privacy thing feeling it's a point he's better equipped to articulate and defend.

One final point here, and that's: Blair, what? I don't think Jim is territorially threatened to the point of paranoia. I mean, every time we've seen him feel threatened, he really was being threatened. But I guess on this show they focus on the action and they don't show us times when Jim shushes Blair mid-sentence, crawls stealthily onto the roof, and finds nothing but a couple of pigeons.

The betrayal in Blair's voice, particularly on the first statement (after which there is a pause to let it sink in), is evident here. Each participant in this argument is now on the defensive.

It's a low blow playing the ingrate card when Jim never complained about doing these things (okay, he grumbled, but it was good-natured grumbling) and in fact fought for them. This shows just how deeply Jim now feels he's been duped, that this friendship has been a sham all along (see comments for line 1).

I suspect also that Jim is falling back on pointing out the things he's done for Blair, the ways he's acted as a benefactor or father-figure, because he's incensed by the authoritative condescension inherent in Blair's experimenter/author voice.
JIM

I mean, and you don't have enough data, you gotta go digging into my ex-wife's life?

It seems from the way Blair discusses it that Carolyn spoke to him willingly. That probably just makes it worse.

BLAIR

The only reason that I talked to Carolyn is 'cause she's the only one that knows you better than I do.

Do I detect some pain in this admission from Blair?

And I know, I know, these guys are, canonically, supposed to be very good friends and roommates, but how gay is it that it's just factual and accepted by both of them Blair knows Jim almost as well as a spouse.

JIM

What has my sex life got to do with your--

What has my sex life got to do with your-- project?

Jim's general feelings of that his privacy has been violated become especially evident here, but I think he is also bothered by the aforementioned air of condescension. It comes across like Blair is looking down his nose at Jim when he writes about his relationship issues. Whether Blair is his lover or a girlfriend-a-day Energizer Bunny boy who lives at his house (or both), it's easy to see how this could make Jim feel insecure and angry.

BLAIR

Sex life? What are you talk-- She said you had a fear of intimacy, Jim.

For the moment I'll limit myself to asking, When did the subject of Jim's fear of intimacy according to Carolyn come up in the introduction? You'd think he'd save that for the chapter on Sentinel relationships. Maybe it was just a passing mention, like "...problems including a 'fear of intimacy' according to his ex-wife (see chapter 4)".

BLAIR

Intimacy and sex are two different issues!

Blair is slipping into lecture mode here, yet more reason for Jim to feel that Blair is obnoxiously declaring himself the World's Foremost Expert on Everything (Especially Sex).

Note also that this is a particularly poignant point for Blair to be making if he and Jim are not having sex--especially if at least one of them wants to. Is Blair bitter about the intimacy/sex separation in his relationship with Jim? Is he in favor of it (the one enforcing it)? Vocal inflection seems to favor the latter reading.
9 Maybe to you they are, Chief, JIM

Seems to support the reading the Blair is the one keeping intimacy separate from sex in their case, which is an interesting idea. It's easy to see Jim as the one who maintains the status quo (he clearly dislikes change and it is not a stretch to see him as somewhat homophobic or at least repressed; hell, we KNOW he's repressed) but of course Blair has his own reasons for not wanting to become involved. Particularly salient to this discussion, Jim is his test subject. Could this be another reason Jim dislikes having that role emphasized?

JIM

but my personal life and those that are involved is intimate to me!

Besides the surface meaning, Jim may be subconsciously reminding Blair here that their shared intimacy (even if nonsexual) holds him to certain responsibilities.

BLAIR

Look, we have three years of our lives invested in this thing. Interesting, considering the rest of his statement (see lines 12 & 13), that Blair says "we" here and not "I". His later reference to "this thing" as "it" confirms he's talking about the dissertation, but at this point it could equally refer to the project or the relationship.

BLAIR

and I'm not going to start shading any of it. Blair's assertion here that any change to his work to suit Jim's needs would reduce its truthfulness or legitimacy is an overreaction; surely he could change the wording, for example, or leave out certain topics which Jim felt uncomfortable sharing. Indeed, this was his original agreement with Jim. My feeling is that Blair has known all along that some of what we wrote would come across to Jim as offensive or overly personal, and he has already gone through the work of convincing himself that he is justified in leaving it in for the sake of Science.

BLAIR

because you're starting to feel a little threatened! Blair's choice to describe Jim's concerns about privacy as "feeling threatened" recalls his quoted description of Jim as territorial, animalistic. Casting Jim as the dumb Sentinel-creature is Blair's way of trying to gain the upper hand in the argument; but considering that this is what upset Jim in the first place, it's a detrimental strategy in the long run.

JIM

Threatened by you? I don't think comparative physical weakness. so, Chief.
BLAIR

Well, what else do you call it?

JIM

I call it a violation of friendship and trust!

Jim's statement nicely sums up his feelings. I find it interesting that it is the very closeness which Jim now feels is being denied that permitted Blair to feel justified in exploring so deeply, and describing so comprehensively. Jim's private life. Surely Blair knows that subjects of case studies have rights, but he feels that his friendship with Jim gives him more leeway to examine his secrets; whereas Jim feels it gives him less. A fascinating emotional conundrum! I love this show!

I don't actually have a citation for this.

Uhhhhhh ANYWAY. The murderer knocks out the Animal Control guy, steals his uniform, and strolls into Major Crimes.

Blair must have run upstairs as soon as Jim stormed off, because he positions himself by the elevator just to snap off a new parting shot at Jim exits into the bullpen: "You also got a fear of courtesy!" Jim doesn't dignify that with an answer. Simon comes up to Blair as Jim walks off and gives him the ID on Angel Gabe: an ancient history professor, which explains the Aramaic. He went missing two years ago.

Jim enters Johnny's interrogation room. Is Jim going to go all RayK on his ass because he's upset about Blair? I can only hope! But Jim starts out quite businesslike, saying brusquely he can place Johnny's car at the scene of a murder. But he's getting colder and darker by the second, and it's not hot impassioned violence, it's like serial-murderer EVILNESS. Johnny says "You don't scare me," and Jim says in an obviously fake kind voice, "I hope I don't scare you! Do I look like I could scare you?" He goes over to stand by Johnny and murmurs, "I'll tell you what I would think would scare a very nice-looking kid like you: being the new fresh meat on the cell block." Yikes! He slams Johnny down suddenly on the table and holds him there as he hisses emotionally manipulative stuff about his probably dying mom. I've never seen Jim be so entirely awful to anybody, AND IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF BLAIR. This makes me happy.

Worse than RayK!

Blair sits with Gabe eating donated sandwiches. Gabe does some Bible quotes about food while angelic music plays in the background.
Simon and Jim bring Kaplan into the office, cuffed, and as far as I can tell their only evidence against him the bullet in his headlight, but wasn't Johnny driving the car? I guess the fact that Johnny is his client is enough to make it look weird. Simon sends him away after he leers at Jim, "Just what exactly is your relationship with my client?" and tells Simon, "I hope you haven't been letting them spend too much time alone together." Jim's having such a gay day!

Out in the hall, Jim catches sight through an office window of Blair looking sweet and virtuous as he passes out sandwiches. He enters the office. Tense! Blair advises Jim on what sandwich to take. Jim follows his advice and then, hesitantly: "I, uh... Chief... I... maybe I overreacted." Blair, bitchily: "Maybe?" Oh, shut up, Blair.

Awkward!

Jim apologizes for reading the diss, but adds, softly: "But I'm... you know... I thought we were friends." Wibble! The diss "doesn't read that way." Blair tries to convince Jim that what he said wasn't that bad. For example, he said that Jim's choices were "fear-based," which Jim read as Blair calling him a coward, but Blair says it can be a good thing: "Fear can be one of your greatest allies." Whatever, Blair.

He continues, "You can choose to bottle it up inside, or we can work on it." Jim: "Wh--After this?" Blair asks if he wants to "call it quits." Waugh! The break-up talk! Jim shrugs. Blair, with a sort of dull, exasperated resignation: "Maybe you're right. Maybe I've lost my objectivity." I think Jim's argument is that you've lost your subjectivity (or that he's afraid you never had it), but whatever. Blair, with a catch in his voice: "I'll tell you what, I'd rather just be friends. So why don't I go destroy my notes? How about that?" He exits, angry.

BLAIR WOULD RATHER BE FRIENDS! This is such an amazing about-face--I mean, this whole argument, Blair has come off as kind of unsympathetic because he's so married to the dissertation and the particular way that he wrote it that he refuses to budge for the sake of friendship. But now he says he's willing to completely give up the whole thing just to keep being Jim's friend! That would convince me if I were Jim.

Gabe comes up behind Jim and, with angelic background music, says, "You didn't answer him." (I think? Actually it sounds more like "You didn't ask him," which raises the exciting question: ASK HIM WHAT?!) Then Gabe utters the following:

"What good does it do for a man to have ears that will hear a thousand miles if he cannot listen to the whispers of his own heart?"

OH MY GOD I LOVE THIS SHOW. Jim's like, "What?" and Gabe advises him, "You should
listen to the hearts of others," and then starts chanting in Aramaic.

Jim brings Johnny a sandwich, determined, I guess, to be a Nicer Gentler Jim. He tells Johnny he's found out his mother is a patient in the AIDS wing. Johnny says he's got the money to take care of her, and the Nicer Gentler Jim says she doesn't need money as much as she needs him. He asks point-blank if Johnny is the murderer, and Johnny says no. Jim listens to his heartbeat. It's steady.

Jim brings Johnny into Simon's office where Kaplan is waiting. Johnny IDs him as one of the murderers and adds that he offered to pay Johnny to keep quiet. Jim drags off a protesting Kaplan. "You did good, kid," Awesome Simon tells Johnny, who smiles.

Megan brings Simon and Jim a fax of the file for a known associate of Kaplan's. Jim recognizes the animal control guy.

Blair tries to get Gabe to say something coherent when shown a photo of Kaplan. I guess he doesn't know they already got a witness. Gabe just keeps muttering about fire and darkness across the land.

Explosion in a shaft somewhere! Jim smells it. Simon sends him to protect Johnny.

Murderer finds Johnny. Brief scuffle with folding chair, and Johnny runs. Murderer runs after him with gun.

Confusion as Rafe tries to evacuate the refugees. Blair looks for Gabe.

Jim arrives with gun drawn as Gabe leaps in front of the murderer, taking a bullet for Johnny. Blair jumps on the murderer, making him drop his gun, but the murderer grabs Blair with an arm around his neck, one hand behind his head, and tells Jim, "Don't shoot or I'll snap!" Oh noes, hostage! Blair! Jim holds up his hands in surrender, and the murderer drags Blair to the doorway, then drops him and runs off. Jim leans over Gabe, and Blair runs, slip-sliding his shoes, over to them. "He's still got a pulse but he needs medical attention, fast!" Jim tells Blair, and runs off after the murderer.

Okay, I know Jim has just got his hand on Blair's back here to push past him so he can go after the bad guy, but my question is this: what is Blair doing with his elbow?

Gabe: "Do you know the hard part of a miracle?" Blair: "No. What's that, Gabe?" Gabe: "Making it look like an accident." That's pretty apt for the Sentinel. Gabe falls unconscious, and Blair calls out for an ambulance, looking like he's about to cry.

Jim chases the murderer onto the roof and they scuffle and run away and scuffle and run away a bit, and then the alligator shows up and bites the murderer on the butt. All right.
Wrap-up outside the station, sunrise. The news reports on the heroic alligator. Jim asks Blair if he can still get his intro in on time. "Aside from the stuff about me, I...I thought, I thought it was pretty good. Really good." Blair: "Jim... it's all about you." It's all about Jim all right. Megan shows up and reports that Gabe made it alive to the ER, but when the orderly turned his back, he'd just gone. Vanished into thin air. She also found out that Harold Blake, the professor whom Gabe was ID'd as, died last year! Simon marvels that Johnny was saved by a dead man. As they all walk inside and we pan up, Jim says, "It's like that Jimmy Stewart movie, It's A Wonderful Life." It's not really that much like that. It's kind of more like that ghost story where she's been dead for thirty years! You know the one. In the background we hear a church bell ringing as Blair says "Whenever a bell rings, an angel gets his wings."

**Best Moments:** Academic! Blair! So many relationship discussions!! *Feelings, nothing more than feelings...*

**Things I feel I should have an opinion about but, strangely, don't:** The alligator.
3x23 Sentinel, Too - Part 1

Chapter Summary

Blair finds a second Sentinel, and conceals her existence from Jim; Jim kicks out Blair and also breaks up with him for real; the second Sentinel kills Blair. I'm telling you it's not Blair's week.

Here we have an absolute classic episode for Sentinel mythos; Jim/Blair conflict, tension, and devotion; and surprisingly awesome dramatics. Hold on to your goggles, everybody.

We open on action! Some crazy criminal is holding a woman at gunpoint in a convenience store, and Jim is trying to talk him down from the next aisle. Outside by the truck, Blair calls for backup. Jim hears animal growling, creeps forward, and opens a door. In a back office, a spotted jaguar is standing on a desk. Jim backs out again. So that was weird.

Jim finds the criminal and his hostage, and they exchange shots. The criminal goes sailing through the plate-glass window. Blair runs inside, looks around--no Jim! Finally, rounding down an aisle, Blair finds Jim sitting on the floor, bleeding from the arm. Blair runs to kneel by his side and pulls out his phone.

Hospital. Simon, Blair, and Megan stand around Jim's bed. It's just a flesh wound and he'll be back to work in a week. Jim asks Megan to handle his cases and then asks for a private moment with Simon and Blair. In other words, everyone but you, Megan! Jim tells them about the jaguar, and Blair gets excited, asking him questions, until Simon reminds him Jim needs his rest. Simon and Blair leave, Blair patting Jim's foot through the blankets as he goes.

Blair does schoolwork at the bullpen. He tells Henri his office at the university is being fumigated and he can't work at home with Jim snapping at him: "I swear, it's like living with an evil stepfather. 'Turn down that music!' 'Get your feet off the couch!'" So don't want to go there. Blair notices that Megan is questioning Seven of Nine from Star Trek: Voyager, who kind of gives Blair the eye. He asks Henri about her, and Henri says she was picked up after a car accident: "The girl was like yelling and screaming that the lights were killing her eyes and then she started bugging out about how the noise was getting to her." Blair approaches the desk and hears Seven--okay, her name is Alex here--telling Megan that the only reason she took her clothes off was because her skin hurt. Megan double-checks that she's drug-free and tells her to see a doctor. Blair intercepts Alex on her way out and tells her he thinks he knows what's happening to her. He gives her his card. At least he didn't pull any Shakespeare stuff this time.

Jim's cooking dinner, his arm in a sling, when he hears a noise and pulls a gun out of the kitchen drawer. Holding it out, he opens the door to--just Blair!
Blair starts to tell Jim, "I met this woman," but Jim snaps, "Look, Chief, why don't you spare me the details?" Blair mumbles that he'll tell him later, then.

In his now-presumably-vermin-free office, Blair shows Alex the Burton book. Alex tells Blair that she was recently lost in the woods for a week, and Blair says her senses came online as a survival response. I'm a little unclear as to why Alex's senses would also be dormant prior to her isolation experience since we just established that Jim's would have been available all along had he not specifically repressed them, but maybe Alex also had an overbearing parent, who knows.

Blair walks through the quad, talking not-that-quietly into a tape recorder about the Sentinel project. He tells the recorder that, unsure what would happen if two Sentinels met, he wants to control Jim and Alex's first meeting, and until then, he will not tell them about each other. Oh, Blair, have you learned nothing? Even should--as is highly unlikely--the "controlled meeting" come off as you plan, do you know how betrayed that is going to make Jim feel? What happened to "It's about friendship"? I ask you.

A Mysterious Figure in Black sneaks into some kind of compound. The security guys notice the intruder and set off the alarm, making the Mysterious Figure fall to the ground, clutching her ears. Yes, we now know it's got to be Alex, although I have to give them props (this time) for dressing the Mysterious Figure in a parka and ski mask instead of a skintight catsuit or something so there's at least a moment of reasonable doubt as to the gender. Alex-in-Black gets back her composure and manages to get away after shooting a security guard.

Sci-Fi cut out the totally awesome (and totally plot-relevant, jeez) dream sequence here in which Jungle Jim kills a wolf, and the wolf morphs into Blair. OMG Symbolism!

Blair visits Alex's apartment and is amazed by her Sentinel-symbolism-rife artwork. (These... are for you!) Alex thanks Blair for all his help and kisses him on the cheek. Blair seems taken aback and uncomfortable.
It feels like a betrayal, somehow...

Blair gets down to business, asking Alex to tell him about the accident again. She runs through it, and says she gets headaches every time she uses her senses. Blair assures her they'll work that out: "It's nothing to worry about. It's all good!" Oh, Blair, this is why all of your Sentinels love you.

Jim returns to work. Simon asks "Where's your shadow?" Jim: "He begged off. He's working on some big project at the university. I haven't seen him all week really." Jim, Simon and Megan go over the security tapes of the break-in. When Alex collapses, Megan remarks, "That must be one hell of a loud alarm," and Jim looks Thoughtful.

In her apartment Alex has a conversation with her crime partner (EVERYONE ON THIS SHOW). He knows about her abilities (in fact, it's her senses that have made her such an effective thief), and scolds that her headaches are making her careless. Alex says she met someone who can help. Partner is concerned to learn that she told someone else about her senses, but Alex promises ominously, "After I get what I want, I will deal with him." Alex kisses her partner like a good Sentinel should.

Blair's office. Alex tells Blair about a Peruvian temple dream. Then Blair goes to take care of some unrelated grad-student business, and Alex, left alone, snoops through his things. Jim approaches from the hallway and sees Alex through the elaborately-decorated window. He has a vision of Alex morphing into a spotted jaguar and attacking him. Alex comes to the door and the two Sentinels make brief eye contact. Then Jim turns and walks away.

Blair comes home to find Jim throwing his stuff into boxes. "It's just getting a little too claustrophobic around here for me, Chief. I'm sorry." Blair: "Are you kicking me out?" Jim: "I just can't have anybody here right now." It's not you, it's me. Blair asks to talk. Strangely heartbreaking pan to Blair's powerless outstretched hand as Jim says "I don't want to talk about it, I don't want to analyze it, I just want you gone by the time I get back." Jim exits and we get a long shot of Lonely Blair standing in the middle of the loft surrounded by boxes.
Quick poll, friends: was Jim going to Blair's office to ask him to move out (perhaps discuss it calmly before dumping it on him in that panicky fashion)? Or was he going because he missed him, and the feelings of claustrophobia (and perhaps betrayal, a wrong-ness associated with Blair) only struck him after he encountered Alex?

Next day Blair meets up with Alex by the fountain at the university. He yawns and apologizes, "My roommate freaked last night and kicked me out. I spent the night in a motel. It's no biggie, though." He turns the focus to Alex and sensory tests, his very favorite thing. He tries to talk her through her headaches, but his "Concentrate, focus" routine doesn't work the way it always does (immediately!) with Jim. Still, he leads her away with a hand on the back, because that always works with Jim.

Jim walks into the bullpen to find Megan talking on his phone. She hangs up and reports that the ex-employees of the broken-into facility checked out clean. Instead of following up on the case discussion as Megan expects, Jim flips out on her about sitting at his desk. Then Jim yells at Henri for leaving papers on top of his computer, and makes a general announcement: "Everybody, that is my desk! I do not want you to put anything on it or take anything from it!" And Blair was writing about his territorial paranoia last week? Simon calls Jim into his office.

Megan meets with Blair at the university and tells him about Jim's weird behavior. Suddenly she asks, "Sandy, how did an anthropologist get hooked up with a detective?" Nice choice of verb. Blair's evasive and Megan says she'll "coerce a confession" someday. That'll be fun. She asks Blair to talk to Jim with her.

Megan and Blair arrive at the loft to find it dark and completely empty, by which I don't just mean that Jim isn't there, but that none of his furniture or anything is there, either. "What do you want?" Jim calls from the balcony, where he's staring out over the city like Batman. "Where is everything, man?" Blair asks cautiously. Jim says he put it in the basement because there were "too many distractions": "Something's going on out there. Something very wrong. I've never felt anything like this before." It must be, for you to abandon your kicky style sense! Blair gently asks Jim to come inside. Jim murmurs "Sirens," and dashes to the door. Okay! Jim's officially gone off the deep end!

Jim drives to an alleyway where Alex-in-Black is escaping after a theft. He has just spotted her when Megan and Blair arrive in pursuit of Jim. Blair shines a flashlight and Jim loses sight for a moment, giving Alex the chance to get away. Jim snaps, "Sandburg! Idiot!" I weep quietly into an embroidered handkerchief.

Jim's in the conference room watching the security tape again when Blair enters. Jim told Brown he wanted to see him. "I hope this has something to do with why you kicked me out," says Blair. "Uh. Probably," says Jim. He's still acting a little nuts as he explains excitedly about the evidence he's put
together: "There's another one out there like me!" He starts describing a dream, and Blair says, "You're having the same dreams." Not aloud, Sandburg! Idiot. "The same dreams as who?" Blair admits there's another Sentinel. "Why didn't you tell me this?" Jim demands angrily, and Blair bumbles about trying to set up a controlled environment. "What the hell did you do," Jim mutters.

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Blair brings Jim to Alex's apartment. Jim starts to question Alex about the thefts, but she denies knowing anything. He presses, and she gets angry and kicks them both out. "I know exactly what you are," Jim tells her at the door. "I know what you are, too," says Alex. "Welcome to the jungle." I--what am I sitting on, it's--OH, it's the edge of my seat! I am not accustomed to this.

Station. Blair explains why Jim has been freaking out: "You probably sensed another Sentinel which threatened your territorial imperative." You're only just figuring this out? Henri brings them the file on Alex: she's a wanted ex-con. "Looks like she played you pretty good, man," Jim tells Blair.

Jim and Blair examine the alley for clues.

BLAIR: Hey, Jim, look, I know you're still mad at me about not telling you about Alex, but--

JIM: Let's just drop that, okay? I'm trying to get by it.

All in all it's probably good Jim stopped him there, as I suspect that Blair was going to try to defend his behavior instead of manning up with an apology. Jim wonders, "What are the chances of two Sentinels appearing in Cascade, right, at this time, and falling in with you?" Jim, did you miss a word? Blair goes off an increasingly excited tangent about fate and the space-time continuum. Jim's not listening. He's looking: he finds one of Alex's hairs.

Jim, Blair, and Megan arrive at Alex's apartment. Jim knocks, but immediately knows she's not there. He's ready to go look elsewhere, but Megan wants to at least check the place out since they've got a warrant. She fiddles with the door and prepares to kick it in when Jim smells plastique and grabs her out of the way just as it explodes.

Consulting at the explosion site with Simon and Jim, Blair theorizes that this was a Sentinel-to-Sentinel challenge. Megan finds a disk in the apartment.

The disk contains plans for Rainier's now-super-secure top-secret dangerous-disease vault. Alex stole a deadly disease. A second incident of an insane terrorist threatening mankind with biological weapons stolen from Rainier? The department head is going to have some explaining to do. At the station, Simon gets word that Alex boarded a plane to Bogota. He's arranged to have the feds meet her when she lands. Case closed?

Megan asks Jim and Blair out for food, but Blair says he and Jim have things to "go over." Megan
leaves, and I break out the Fritos and turn up the volume, 'cause it's time for some good solid emotions! Let's save time and cut right to the annotated version, shall we?

BLAIR: Look, Jim... I just wanted you to know I realize I was wrong for not telling you about Alex. I was only thinking about myself, about my work, and somewhere along the line, I lost track of my friend.

JIM: Well, Chief, I don't know what you want me to say.

Blair nods.

JIM: I don't know if I can get past this.

Blair looks at him, thunderstruck.

JIM: To me, it was a real breach of trust. And (puts hand over his heart) that struck really deep with me.

BLAIR: Give me a break here. How was I supposed to know she was a criminal?

JIM: Chief, this isn't about her being a criminal. Simon emerges from his office and observes.

JIM: I've got to have a partner I can trust. Have you ever stopped to think what good all this research is doing anyway?

BLAIR: Yeah, Jim, I think about it every day. For one thing, it's helped you figure out who you are.

JIM: Wait, whoa, whoa, whoa. I know who I am, okay? I don't need you or anybody else to help me define that. Is that clear?

Pause.

JIM: Maybe it's just better if you finish your dissertation or doctorate writing about somebody else. I don't know.

BLAIR: That's crazy! I know I made a mistake, but I'm willing to do whatever it takes to get past this, but if you'd rather hang onto it... You know where to find me.

Beautiful. This is the apology Blair should have been giving last week. Yes, Jim is somewhat enslaved to primal Sentinel forces at the moment, but it's really the events of Night Shift that set the stage for his reaction.

Kind of amazing to see Jim being so emotionally straightforward.

JIM: Maybe it's just better if you finish your dissertation or doctorate writing about somebody else. I don't know.

BLAIR: That's crazy! I know I made a mistake, but I'm willing to do whatever it takes to get past this, but if you'd rather hang onto it... You know where to find me.

It certainly must seem to Jim at the moment that the project has done nothing but drive a wedge between them (cf. the annotated conversation in Night Shift).

I'm reminded of Jim's Who I Am speech to his father. He said then that the Sentinel abilities were a part of who he was; is he denying that now, or just denying that he needs any help? Slash reading presents another reason why Jim might resent Blair for causing him to change his self-identity.

A new musical theme, the Piano of Jim and Blair's Relationship, starts up here. If you ever see this episode a second time, you'll notice you start shivering uncontrollably about now. That is normal.
Blair leaves, and Jim watches, over continuing heavy Piano of J/B. Simon asks Jim if he wasn't a little harsh. Jim just holds up a hand and rubs his eyes, a little verklempt. Simon, gently but pointedly: "Do you think you could handle this Sentinel thing on your own?"

Loft kitchen. Jim seems to have gotten at least some of his stuff back. Phone rings; it's Alex. She's all, Join me, and we can rule the galaxy as Sentinel and other Sentinel! She tells him to come and find her and leaves the phone out. Cut to Jim driving. Simon calls his cell--the woman who got off the plane wasn't Alex. Jim tells Simon where the real Alex is (some factory). Simon asks if he wants backup and Jim just hangs up.

Jim tracks Alex through the factory. A random swinging grate knocks him down an elevator shaft. He's dazed, incapacitated, and has an elevator slowly descending toward him. Alex approaches. Could this be the end for our hero? Just then, Megan arrives! Shoot-out. Alex evades her briefly, but they end up facing off in hand-to-hand and Alex has no particular advantage there. Megan knocks her out and then runs to help Jim out of his jam. Wow, she totally freaking just saved the day. Way to go, Megan.

Megan leads Jim back to where she left Alex, but she's gone. Jim gets a sudden flashback memory of his dream: dying, whimpering wolf morphing into Blair. "We gotta find Sandburg. Come on!"

Alex comes into Blair's office and pulls a gun. She informs him that her real sense-triggering experience was solitary confinement in prison. Blair calls her pro-evil use of the senses "a waste." She cocks her gun.

Truck tears onto campus. Piano of J/B starts up strong here and continues through till the end of the episode. Jim, Megan, Simon, Henri and Rafe run up to a building, but just before they reach the door, Jim turns and sees a body lying facedown in the fountain. "Oh, my God!" Jim runs over, followed closely by Henri, who helps him haul Blair out of the water. He's unconscious and vaguely blue. Sweetly, Simon is freaking out. "I don't hear a heartbeat! Do you? Do you hear a heartbeat? Jim! JIM!" Jim doesn't. "Get his airway open. Here we go." Okay, now look close, because this is as lip-inky as Jim and Blair will ever get.

We see one clear shot, and henceforth it's always kind of off-camera. Is it wrong that I have started thinking of footage of one man performing emergency mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on another as the "money shot"?
Is it further wrong that I spent some time trying to find the prettiest shot of Dead Blair?

Simon and Jim perform round after round of CPR, with Jim occasionally uttering such encouragements as "Come on, Chief!" and "Breathe, dammit!" Megan and Rafe exchange these heartbroken looks, like they know Simon and Jim are fooling themselves.

Ambulance arrives. As the EMTs kneel over Blair, Jim stands back and repeats, "This can't be happening, this can't be happening, this can't be happening." The EMTs intubate Blair and pump that inflatey thing into him, and Jim encourages, "Come on, Sandburg! Come on!" and, more softly, "Come on, Chief." Waaugh. Finally the EMT removes the equipment and says, "I'm sorry, guys." Megan and Simon look sad; Jim just looks angry. "What do you mean, 'sorry'?!" He kneels to perform more desperate CPR.

"Come on, come on, come on, Sandburg! Come on, dammit!"

Simon: "Jim, he's gone. Let him go." Everyone pulls Jim off Blair. Jim struggles against them, shouting, "No! No! He's alive!" This has got to be the most heartrending scene of anything ever. I am impressed. "Let it go, let it go," the others tell Jim, as we fade to green and TO BE CONTINUED. Blink.

**Best Moments:** whimper
In the part of this episode I like to call "the end of the previous episode," we open with the EMT saying "I'm sorry, guys" as he gives up on reviving drowned Blair. Jim objects and goes to give Blair another round of CPR, and we get some clear Jim's-mouth-to-Blair's shots which were OC last time. From then on it's a bit retconned: Simon is the only one to pull Jim off Blair, and Jim shouts "Don't you go! No! He's alive!" and Simon says, "He's gone!" "Oh, God, no," Jim murmurs. But then Blair's face goes all glowy. Jim sees visions of a wolf's face appearing over Blair's, of a wolf turning away from him, and then of Incacha, who says in a deep, cheesy English language voice, "Use the power of your animal spirit."

Jim pushes Simon aside and kneels next to Blair, caressing his face. The wolf and the panther run toward each other and then leap into each other, becoming one in a flash of light. SERIOUSLY. I COULDN'T MAKE THIS UP.

Flashy-lighty heartbeat image. In the moment we've been waiting for since day one, Jim finally listens to Blair's heartbeat. He recommences pumping Blair's chest. "Come on, Sandburg," Simon cries reverently. Blair spits out water. Jim calls the EMTs back. He props Blair up on his side until the EMT takes over, and then he stands with Simon and Henri, and everyone looks like they're about to cry.

Let's review what just happened before we go on to the next gay, shall we? Jim and Blair's spirit animals entered one another and unified. Jim and Blair are officially, canonically, soulmates. Literally, their souls mated. It's already been established that they are mentally, physically*, and emotionally** gay for each other, they are now spiritually gay for each other. I just wanted to make sure I had that perfectly str--well--clear. Okay. Let's continue.

* Okay, there's no canonical sex, but they're always touching.
** OH MAN DEFINITELY.
Hospital. Jim enters Blair's room, joking that there are easier ways to meet nurses. Blair thanks him, and Jim says "I couldn't let you die. You owe last month's rent." So he does pay rent, then? I was never sure about that. Blair describes the image he saw while he was out: he was a wolf, and he was "colliding" with a jaguar. Jim says he saw the same thing. Blair, laughing amazedly: "Einstein said the greatest experiences we can have are the ones with the mysterious. We are definitely there, my brother." He stares intensely at Jim and waggles his oxygen-thingy-equipped fingers. "Come on in, man. The water's nice."

Jim: "Chief, I don't know if I'm ready to take that trip with you."

"The water's nice."

Chief. I DON'T KNOW. IF I'M READY. TO TAKE THAT TRIP. WITH YOU. I--I mean--I mean--I--their spirit animals just melded! Honestly the only judgment call here is whether Jim is talking about sex or marriage, right? And I'm not talking whether yes-or-no, I mean whether which-one. I mean: correct me if I'm wrong, but this is the appropriate subtext-to-text translation of that dialogue, no?:

**BLAIR:** Einstein said the greatest experiences we can have are the ones that involve sexing each other up. I'm here; you're here; our inexplicable attraction is mandated by the gods. Let's go for it, man.

**JIM:** Chief, I don't know if I'm ready to take that trip with you.

Because Jim's line REQUIRES NO TRANSLATION.

HOLY LORD.

AN-yway, unpreparedness for trip-taking into the mysterious aside, Jim goes to Alex's former apartment (now a bombed-out ruin!) and lays his hands on stuff to get psychic visions. (See, Megan isn't wrong.) He sees Alex and her partner.

At the station, Jim shows Simon a file on the partner (Carl), which he tracked down using a combination of research and hunches. He knows (he just knows!) where to find Alex and Carl. He explains to Simon about his visions, and Simon is basically just like, Okay! Magic policework-- I am on board with that.

We get a vision-scene of Alex and Jim morphing from their jaguar forms and then making out. I'm pleased to report this is Alex's vision, as she kisses Carl in Sierra Verde, Mexico. (I'm a little confused to learn that this episode takes place in Mexico, but I'll go with it.) Alex tells Carl she wants to go with him to make the sale--presumably of the Highly Deadly Disease!™--stating, "I'm your partner." Is there a reason they're emphatically mirroring the Alex and Carl's relationship with Jim
and Blair's (partners! partners! we're partners!), and then showing lots and lots of Alex and Carl making out? No? Maybe? Yes? Carl says he'll handle it and then they can go out and celebrate, and Alex says "Why don't we stay in and celebrate." I mean, yes, right?

Alex uses her super-eavesdropping skills to observe Carl's meeting with his buyer, and she hears him talking the buyer into paying more money than they'd agreed on. Later, when Carl meets up with Alex, he doesn't tell her about the extra money. She proposes a toast "to equal partners." The irony is lost on him.

Jim and Simon arrive at the local police department at Sierra Verde. Police chief Captain Ortega hasn't seen Alex, but he knows where to find Carl: he leads them to the morgue! Okay, that was a legitimately surprising way to get the Carl-is-dead reveal. Jim gets some more flashes of vision, and notices evidence on the body to explain what happened: Alex kissed Carl, then snapped his neck.

They go to bring their evidence to Captain Ortega, who tells them in low voice that it's not safe to talk there, and he'll meet them at a cafe. Then, unbeknownst to our heroes, he goes straight to some drug lord bad guy thing to inform him about the meeting. While he's there, Alex calls the drug lord to set up a deal.

Jim goes back to the hotel room, pauses before the door--he hears a heartbeat inside. He draws his gun and kicks down the door, only to find: Blair! He's lying on the bed, with Megan standing over him. Hooray, I was afraid this episode was going to be largely Blair-free. Blair asks about Alex, and Jim privately recalls a vision of himself and Alex at the Temple of the Sentinels. Jim reports that he has to meet Simon at the cafe. Blair--still feeling a little shaky after his death, I guess--volunteers to stay behind, but Jim grabs him by the hand and drags him off the bed. (Just like every morning?)

Jim, Blair, Megan and Simon hang out at the cafe until a police officer comes to give them a list of suspects. Just then, a giant tank rumbles up, and the guys therein start shooting everyone! The Fantastic Four duck and cover and run for awhile, finally losing the tank by going to a party.

That night they sleep on pews at a church, figuring it's the safest place to stay. Blair tosses uncomfortably for awhile ("We obviously must have sinned to have deserved this"), then sits up, leaning over the back of Jim's pew, peering over at his wife-beatered muscliness, and asking him questions about the case. Jim keeps trying to send him back to bed with gentle pushes to the forehead.

Would you stop worshiping? We're in a church, for god's sake.

Finally he sits up resignedly when Blair starts talking about Alex: "She already tried to kill me. Well, actually, I guess she did, huh?" Pathos! Jim says he's not getting the sense that Alex wants to kill him from his visions. Blair realizes the visions are their only edge, and he pushes Jim back down to a
lying position: "You should be asleep, man. Something might come to you. What are you doing messing around with me?" Oh, what indeed.

Asleep, Jim and Alex both have visions of meeting on a beach for Rocky Horror-style elbow sex and kissing. So then they actually in real life meet on a beach for Rocky Horror-style elbow sex and kissing. Real life deviates from the vision when Blair interrupts, all, "Jim! What's going on?!" Alex takes Jim's gun out of his holster and points it at Blair, but Jim stays her hand. Blair runs up to join them, and Alex runs away. "Stop her!" Blair cries, but Jim finds himself unable to point the gun at her.

As Jim and Blair walk down the beach, Jim explains that, when they were kissing, it was as if he and Alex were being controlled by some external force! Oh, that's what he always says.

Blair suggests it's a Sentinel mating ritual. Jim, gesturing vaguely at his crotch: "What are you saying, I'm being controlled by some primitive sexual desire or instinct?" Still gesturing vaguely downward, he urges Blair, "You gotta help me get ahold of it!" Oh, Lord. Blair shrugs violently. "This is beyond my area of research!" So stuck in the gutter right now, and never coming back. Anyway, Blair thinks Jim and Alex are being drawn "back home." He spouts some new/old Sentinel mythos about a Temple of Light and magical waters which you bathe in and see the Eye of God. Magic bathhouse what?

Jim sneaks to the Bad Evil Drug Lord's compound and overhears a phone conversation in which he and Alex arrange to meet.

Megan's gathering up everyone's stuff from the church when she happens upon The Sentinels of Paraguay, Blair's Burton book, and that same tired old daguerrotype of the 19th century Sentinel that seems to be so informative to everyone.

All four Bobbsey Twins creep through the jungle to the rendezvous point. Alex arrives by helicopter. Suddenly Jim leaps out from his hiding place to warn Alex that this is a trap. Everyone's like, What the hell, Jim. A bunch of guys with rifles jump out of the brush and start shooting at Alex, who makes it away in the semi-damaged helicopter. Jim & co. shoot at the assailants from their hiding place. When it's all over, Jim asks Blair, "Are you all right?" and Blair says "I'm fine, but what's the matter with YOU?" Point.

Jim is busily Sentinel-tracking Alex from the taste of the petrol her helicopter is leaking when Simon pulls Blair and Megan aside and tells them he's going for help and they should keep a close eye on Jim. First sensible thing anyone's said on this show, ever. But shouldn't Megan go since she's ostensibly the one who doesn't know about the Sentinel thing? Not like Jim is making any effort to
hide it, since he's gone into "*sniffs the air* - This way!" mode. Blair lamely tries to explain away his abilities by saying he was totally like the super-best in his ranger unit, but Megan's not buying it.

Alex finds the Temple of Light! Jim has a vision of it. That night, by the campfire, Megan feigns sleep and listens to Jim telling Blair about the vision. Blair asks, "How are you feeling about Alex?" Jim says he wants to stop her, but he also wants to protect her.

God, look at them with their little blankets and their coffee cups; even in the wilderness they're domestic.

Cut to Badass Simon badassly ambushing Captain Ortega in his office and hitting him with some moral and physical authority!

Jim dreams of Incacha, who tells him, "The danger you face is not to be shared by your friends." Wait, it isn't? Isn't that kind of antithetical to the theme of this entire show? Jim sneaks off alone in the middle of the night. As Blair and Megan prepare to go after him the next morning, Megan asks point-blank, "Is Jim a Sentinel?" Blair doesn't respond.

When Jim arrives at the temple, Alex totally blow-darts him in the neck. Man down!

Jim wakes up lying in a shallow stone basin of water. He can't move. Alex sits on the edge of his basin and tells him he's still drugged, and that she found carvings on the wall, which she magically understood, indicating that early Sentinels used to achieve isolation in the pools to heighten their senses. They also drank this concoction. Jim, who can apparently still move his mouth, moralizes vaguely, "Alex, you're moving way too fast. This knowledge has to come from understanding, not in some kind of drink!" Really? What's the point of the ancient mixology lesson on the wall, then? Alex says her sense powers have doubled, and she wants Jim to join her. Peer pressure! She pours the drink into Jim's mouth; he resists at first, then succumbs. It looks nasty, like one of Blair's alfalfa shakes.

Psychedelic Jim time! Visions of Peru, Ranger Jim. "My obligation is to help people." "You could be the real thing!" "Are you prepared to make such a journey?" Jim screams.

Blair and Megan find the wreckage of Alex's helicopter. When they turn from it, they're surrounded by guys with guns.

Jim in the Superspiritual Sentinel Temple Pool of Seeing the Eye of God Thinkin' About Blair.

Jim yells, "THIS IS NOT ME!" And then... the spell is broken. Or the drug wears off, suddenly. Jim can move again. All thanks to him exploring his One True Fear: losing Blair! I love this show.

Jim gets up and finds Alex in a nearby water basin. He tries to wake her, but stops, hearing voices outside.

The drug lord's men have tracked Alex to the temple. They still have Blair and Megan hostage. Two of the men creep inside—oh, come on, now. Like the Sentinels aren't going to defend their temple. Sure enough, Jim ambushes them and knocks them out. A third man tries to use Blair and Megan for cover, pushing them inside the temple on their knees ahead of him, but Jim has some kind of trap set up with a vine. He knocks the guy off his feet and then jumps out and punches him out. As he's going to untie Blair and Megan (DON'T WORRY YOU GUYS, BLAIR IS ALL RIGHT, JIM ASKED), Alex wakes up.

Alex marvels in the intensity of her senses: "I can feel the vibrations of the earth itself. I can hear the clouds moving in the sky. I can see the molecules in a drop of water." For some reason which isn't super explained Alex wants to open the canister of death, and Jim tries to talk her down: "This isn't the way of the Sentinel. We have to watch over and protect people." Jim finally distracts her by taking her hand and slowly kissing her. While they make out, Alex sees an explosion that nobody else sees, and then starts freaking out: her skin! her ears! her eyes! Jim holds her while she cries. Vision of Alex saying "We were one" as she fades into flames. Alex passes out.

Wrap-up. Catatonic Alex is led away on stretcher by police officers. Blair's explaining what happened to Simon, and Megan comes up and adds helpfully, "She put her Sentinel senses on overload." Megan asks Simon how much of this to put in her report ("That's up to you, Inspector"). Blair goes over to Jim, who confesses he felt he had all the answers after his little dip in the Pool of Answers, but he forgot. I'll give you a quick refresher: "Blair." Jim says he wanted badly to return, but he didn't. Blair says of Alex, "That's the difference between you two. She lost her way." Earlier today the moral of the story was, for Jim, "Trust your visions," like before he'd been holding himself back from the Sentinel tradition too much, but now Alex was giving in too much? I'm not entirely sure how you're supposed to know where the line is. Anyway, that's that.
Bottom Line: This is a great episode for Sentinel mythos and, with the first scene in particular, for Jim/Blair OTPness, marred only by Jim's insistence on making out with Blair's murderer.
Chapter Summary

Blair's obsession with bringing down a student guilty of plagiary and rape costs him his job at the university. I think?

Two youths sneak into a highly protected mansion, and we get the obligatory "girl in tight spandex pants squeezes butt past laser thingies" shot. As they're downloading (or, as the screen reads, "offloading") data from the computer onto their laptop, the owner of the mansion comes home and finds them. So the obnoxious-sunglassed boy burglar (Brad) shoots him. The girl burglar panics a bit, but agrees to continue the digital heist.

Crime scene. Serena and Jim find the girl's blonde hairs. Where's Blair?

Oh, he's actually doing a class! The snatch of his lecture we see manages to be both judgemental and uninformative:

"Today, children are sacrificed on the altar of neglect and abuse, but in ancient tribal customs it was a matter of solemnity. Ritual sacrifice, by definition, means surrendering of value [sic] of something that was physically, morally, and sexually uncorrupted; which means that everyone in this room would have been safe, right?"

This gets a general nervous titter from the class.

Oh, well, what he lacks in speech skills he makes up for in chalk colors.

The burglars enter, late. Brad is still wearing obnoxious sunglasses. Blair and Brad have some annoyed professor/smartass student byplay. Brad sits down next to a shy-body-languageed, mousy girl, caressing her leg. She immediately gets up and moves, leaving behind a folder which Brad takes. Girl burglar looks on disapprovingly.

At the end of class the kids turn in their papers, and Brad hands in the folder. Morbidly curious, Blair opens it and finds a post-it reading "This is finishes it. So stick to the deal. -Rick"

Blair catches up with Brad and his partner in crime on the quad and tells him he knows the Rick of the note (another grad student) and that buying a term paper earns him an immediate F. Brad says he didn't buy it and they argue a bit, and Brad (who expositioned at one point that he has a rich dad,
Jim and Taggart head to a rendez-vous point where Blair was supposed to meet them, but he's not there. "Looks like it's just going to be you and me," says Jim mildly. "So, we're, um...," Taggart blinks nervously. Ha ha ha! Pinch-hitting for Blair and he has no idea what's expected of him. Does Blair usually start out with a little foreplay, or...? Jim exposits that they're breaking it to/checking out the victim's girlfriend. So, straight to business, then.

Taggart is very kind and Dr. Watson-y to the girlfriend, who tells them she doesn't know anything about the victim's clients (he was a sort of cyber P.I.), because he never violated confidentiality and told her: "He's proud of doing what's right. Kind of straitlaced. You should see his sock drawer... and the way he folds..." She breaks down. This scene is so affecting because I imagine it's exactly what Blair would be like if Jim died in the line of duty.

Blair talks to the head of his department, who tells him that if the girl doesn't report the rape, there's nothing the university can do, "nor, I imagine, your police department!" Aw, Blair's little police department. He reminds Blair of all the money Brad's family has donated and encourages him to "give him a C and forget about it."

At the station, Taggart asks to stay on the case, and Jim agrees and tells he did good work with the girlfriend. Aw, that's sweet. Jim finds Blair at his desk, going through police records. He tells Jim about Brad's plagiarism and then adds, outraged, that he also drugged and raped a student. But the kid's rap sheet is clean. Jim kicks him off the computer so he can work on his, you know, MURDER CASE, and Blair huffs off. Simon comes by all "What was that all about?" "Something at school," says Jim dismissively. Ha ha, Jim is an asshole. Simon tells Jim they found info on Connie Roberts, a possible client of the victim's whose name Jim found imprinted on his legal pad. When Jim and Taggart go to talk to her, she claims not to know the victim, but Jim senses she is lying.

Blair talks to Shy Jennifer, telling her he wants to "nail" Brad. but Jennifer says anything he does to Brad will only end up getting taken out on her. She explains that when she originally reported the rape, her dad was fired, and when she changed her statement to say that she was high at the time and couldn't be sure what happened, her dad was rehired with back pay. Brad watches the conference from afar.

Blair's walking home, reading a book, totally oblivious to his surroundings, when a bunch of guys get out of a car and start beating him up! Somewhere, Jim, carrying a classic grocery bag with a baguette sticking out the top, gets his internal Sandburg in Trouble Alarm. He arrives to Blair's rescue just as one of the thugs is about to take a baseball bat to his prone body. One of the thugs draws a gun and they all get away. Jim helps Blair up, gently saying "Let me see" and tilting his head to see his gashed-up eye area.
Jim gets a call from the victim's girlfriend and brings Blair along to see her fresh from the beating, with the limited first aid treatment of putting a bag of frozen peas from the groceries on his eye briefly, and then telling him to wear sunglasses. (It looks like the little sunglasses he was wearing with his Blossom hat in Poachers must have been hanging around the car.) Girlfriend is happy to meet Blair: "Detective Ellison told me about you when I said Dennis had an interest in anthropology." Huh, really? I imagine that conversation went something like this:

GIRLFRIEND: You must think me silly for going on like this, but the truth is, I was rather attached to my boyfriend. I will miss the little things... the way he separated his whites and colors... his keen interest in anthropology...
JIM: Your boyfriend's into anthropology? You're kidding! My boyfriend is an anthropologist!
GIRLFRIEND: It warms my heart to know that, Detective. It sounds as though our boyfriends have a lot in common.
JIM: Yeah, except mine is alive.
TAGGART: What Detective Ellison means to say is that he is very sorry for your loss.
GIRLFRIEND: I understand.

Tenuous anthropology connection aside, Blair is pretty distant and uninterested in the case, but perks up a bit when the girlfriend hands over a camera with a zoom lens, saying her boyfriend liked to take pictures (another thing he and Blair have in common!) and maybe they can make something of the film. At the station, Jim, Blair, Simon and Taggart pore over photos of the girlfriend and Connie (who was apparently under the P.I.'s surveillance). In one, she's meeting with a guy whom Blair IDs as Brad.

Jim questions Brad, who is as besunglassed and obnoxious as ever, implying that he and Connie were sleeping together and saying, "Been awhile for you, huh?" Twice since this morning, I'd wager. Watching through the two-way mirror, Blair rages, "When he's gonna NAIL him!" and Simon, annoyed, asks Blair, "Why don't you just shoot him?" Ha. Simon is awesome. Jim goes into the usual creepster mode he puts on for interrogations with young men, massaging Brad's neck and giving him "friendly advice". Man, the lawyer's sitting right there and he does nothing.
I'm not sure Jim and Blair have in mind the same definition of the world "nail."

Brad and his girlfriend do some hacking. Girlfriend exposits that if they get married, their fathers, competing CEOs, will cut them off. Aww, Brad's just hacking into corporations to steal and sell multimillion dollar patented code so he can get married!

Jim and Blair talk to Brad's and his girlfriend's dads. Brad's dad accuses Blair of having a personal agenda against Brad. Jim remarks to Blair as they leave that he's really endearing himself to this family. "What's not like?" says Blair. "Your face is pretty scary," says Jim. Cute.

Station. Jim proposes, correctly, that the kids just wanted to steal the software and only killed in the heat of the moment when cornered. Blair blusters and shouts, and Simon suggests Prozac and tells the team to go easy on the families since he's been getting calls about their handling of the case. When Blair admits he filed a code violation against Brad at school, Simon snaps, and yells at Blair that if he doesn't back off, "the brass" is going to take away the case and Simon will have to fire Blair. Yikes!

Chancellor's office. Brad sits there smiling obnoxiously as his lawyer responds to Blair's charges by bringing up Blair's own record: he has missed more teaching days than any other TA, including an unannounced trip to Peru, and nobody has seen a draft of his alleged thesis. HA! About time. And it looks like Blair actually did destroy the intro that offended Jim. The chancellor urges Blair to compromise with the Bradster, but Blair won't budge on his Principles, so the chancellor tells Blair his absenteeism has been documented and he is henceforth terminated permanently. YIKES AND A HALF!! She totally just went quality-of-mercy-is-not-strained on his ass!

So, wait, I mean, is Blair still a student? Was he just fired from the TA job, or is he expelled from his program? If it was just the job, is it his stipend that depends on that or his very scholarship? I mean, is he just without cash flow now, or is he going to have to fork up tens of thousands of dollars if he wants to stay in school? None of this is explained to my satisfaction.

Taggart brings in some evidence from a search of Brad's girlfriend's house--blonde hair, an electromagnet on which Jim finds a fiber from the victim's carpet. All signs point to yes, in other words. Blair comes in and announces that he was fired. Jim asks what he'll do and Blair says he talked to a lawyer and he may have a case, but it'll cost him. We get some key info as he asks Simon for money and Simon says "Sandburg, you know we don't pay observers, but if I'm still here next week I'll see if we can invent a job." The reason he doubts his permanence is they're bringing in Brad. "Yes!" cries Blair.

In keeping with the "move carefully" ethos, Simon and Jim meet with the kids' dads to give them a chance to have the kids turn themselves in. As they walk back to meet Blair and Taggart they have a cute exchange:

JIM: Did his "I pray you're wrong" sound like "I'm going to sue your ass"?
SIMON: No more than having to "do what's right" meant "cut and run."
JIM: Are we cynical?

Jim listens carefully and hears the dads talking to their kids (who were waiting nearby the whole time). The kids fess up to the whole scheme and the dads decide to get them out of the country by helicopter immediately. Simon radios for a cop copter, and he sends Blair to go with Jim in it. Unfortunately, Blair has decided that this is going to be one of his randomly chosen "fear of heights" episodes. So he gets to make some uncomfortable faces during the lengthy ensuing helicopter chase. At one point he grabs the back of Jim's seat and Jim shouts "Chief, get a grip! On something other than me!" "All right, I'm good. I'm cool," Blair mutters.

So they lose the helicopter for awhile and when they find it the kids are gone; they've been transferred to a boat. They find the boat and of course Jim is going to jump onto it. I mean there was never any question of that. Still, Blair expresses surprise at Jim's plan.

BLAIR: How are we going to stop them?
JIM: Like a runaway stagecoach.
BLAIR: What are you talking about?! That means jumping!
JIM: Right.
BLAIR: That's crazy!
JIM: Right.
BLAIR: What if they swerve and you miss? That leaves me!
JIM: Right.
BLAIR: ... Don't miss!

Jim doesn't miss, so we can all drink. Brad tries to attack him with a harpoon while he hangs onto the rail, but Jim grabs the harpoon and flings Brad into the water. Figuring, I guess, that that takes care of that!, Jim progresses forward onto the boat to get the girlfriend. She's about to take a page out of Jim's book and hit him with a fire extinguisher, but he talks her down and takes it like it's a gun. Meanwhile, Blair has their copter trail the boy, who is swimming for CANADA! and FREEDOM! Blair repeatedly asks the pilot to go as low as possible, whereupon he takes a small but, to him, terrifying leap into the water to swim after his mark. He catches him and yells "Hey, if you noticed, I'm not in class today! I hope you don't file a grievance!"

Bullpen, later. Blair comes in with his hair down for the first time all ep and his eye a little less swollen, customary butterfly still in place, and moralizes a little about how you can't always get what you want, and he and Jim call each other "Wally" and "Beav". Jim asks about school and Blair (possibly still in Beaver Cleaver mode) says "The principal and I worked things out," which I'm not sure if that's supposed to mean he actually made some kind of a deal with the university, because if so I need to know what it was. Come on, guys, I'm in this show for three things, here--the gay, the mythos, and the academic politics-- and I know you just served me up the first two last week but now you're letting me down on number 3! Jim actually gets off a cute line undercutting the wholesome Beaver game [that phrase has never been uttered] with the horrors of police work: "Hey, that's pretty keen, Beav. Well, Dad called, said we've got a body down at Miller's Pond." They punch each other playfully on the chin and walk off.
Acceptable manly expressions of affection, figs. 297-298.

**Bottom Line:** I like Blair-at-school episodes, and this one served the awesome bad-times-for-Blair scene of actually *firing* him (and right after Simon threatened to, too!) The drawback is that, of course, we never really see the consequences and/or possible resolution of said termination, and his status at the university and at the station is left very much up in the air at the end of the episode.

Speaking of bad times for Blair, his savage beating was also kind of a delight to watch (sorry, Blair). I find his anger interesting, also, but I'd have liked to see its roots more carefully explored. Why this case, this kid, in particular? It started before the beating, so I don't think it's that. We could conjecture that the academic honesty angle bothers because he's so pure and defensive about his own work, or the rape outrages him because of his love of womankind, but neither of these motivations is specifically laid out. He seems to have a particular hatred of Brad; did someone like Brad once screw him over? (Perhaps literally?) It's not really explained, and I think, if Blair's going to have *Roy's death* levels of anger, it needs to be.
4x03 Four Point Shot

Chapter Summary

More like BORE point shot!

Oh, lovely, another basketball episode.

In the unaudenced arena, the Jags are playing the Cascade PD. The actual gameplay is fairly informal for the moment, and there's some trash-talk. We learn they're staging this for some kind of commercial. Blair shows up late, looking particularly tiny next to the seven-foot basketball players.

![Image of basketball players](image1.jpg)

**Look how tiny!**

He says he had to do a lecture, so I guess there were no ramifications from last week's firing? Blair is upset to learn he's not allowed to be in the commercial. He complains about it, pointing out the things he's done for the department. At least Jim gives him a compensatory high five.

![Image of Blair and Jim](image2.jpg)

**I was going to say something here about how it's really more like a low five, and I was going to see if I could work in some kind of sexual innuendo there, but I got distracted because Jim tucked in his pinny. Look! Priceless dorkosity!**

On the sidelines, Blair talks to Daryl, who asks him to convince his dad to let him join the Police Academy. Daryl has apparently scored a scholarship to Duke and Simon wants him to go there and be all academic and safe. Blair thinks Daryl should do what he is most passionate about.

Simon has to cut short the game when he gets word of the prison escape of Garrett Kincaid, the guy...
who led the siege on the police station in which Daryl was shot at and dangled out of the window. Daryl is visibly nervous to learn his attacker is on the loose.

A couple of basketball players come by the station to ask Jim and Blair to find their missing scorekeeper and to give them tickets to the next game. When they leave Jim takes the tickets from Blair (like they're not just planning to go together anyway), and then Simon takes them from Jim as he sends the boys off to check out a body.

At the crime scene, Jim super-sees Kincaid's dogtag. At the station, Taggart gives Jim the report on the dead guy—he worked for city records—and Jim sends Taggart to look for the players' missing person while he and Blair follow up on the victim. Blair's disappointed about missing the game and Jim says grudgingly that he can do this legwork on his own. Blair says he couldn't let Jim do that because he'd feel too guilty, but just as the elevator doors are closing he adds "But if you insist!" and slips out. Ha ha asshole.

At the hall of records, Jim finds out that the victim was a member of Kincaid's group of gun nuts, and that just before he disappeared and died he pulled the blueprints of the sports arena. Taggart calls from the missing scorekeeper's home, reporting it's a shrine to Kincaid. He actually uses the word "fandom." We intercut scenes of the siege guys dragging guards into closets; Blair, Simon, and Daryl enjoying the game; and Jim calling up to warn the arena. But before he can reach security, the phone line cuts out. He turns to the records lady with a hard expression of I Am Bruce Willis. "I'm gonna need a hard copy of those plans."

Blair and Daryl are just coming back into the arena with hotdogs when the power shorts. As people start to panic and question, Kincaid comes in and randomly shoots a basketball player. Kincaid's ability to hold an entire arena hostage being due, mainly, it seems, to his gun, Simon creeps forward and draws his own cop gun on Kincaid, only to be captured by some henchmen. When some other men get the broadcasting equipment back up, Kindcaid sends out this lengthy speech about freedom to bear arms, the cleansing of the world that will happen in the upcoming Millenium disaster, and other craziness. Then he makes the cheerleaders dance. Diabolical!

As Jim secretly enters by way of some ducts, Blair and Daryl sneak off into the halls to do some recon and have a little conversation about whether Daryl really wants to be a cop.

Blair and Daryl share a moment... at least, I think it's Blair and Daryl. This episode is so damn dark, it could be anyone.

Meanwhile, Simon and a henchman exchange the dialogue, "Do you really think you're going to get away with this?" "We already have."

Anyway so what Kincaid wants is money from some millionaire in the audience, and when he's conferring with the guy and getting him to transfer the funds, it seems like they're in on this together, for some reason (the millionaire's motivations are unclear), but instead of letting everyone go as per
the agreement, Kincaid lets everyone go except the team and Simon. He announces that anyone left inside will be shot. Jim gets a head start on the danger by falling down a straight shaft. Don’t worry guys, he’ll be okay. In fact, this plot thread will never get taken up again.

Two armed and dangerous henchmen, including the former missing person, lead Simon to join the rest of the hostage team, and a tense argument is interrupted by Blair running a hotdog stand into the scene. The team, Blair, and Simon punch the henchman manlyly, and Daryl gets off a blow to the back of the head with a snack tray as one of them is about to go for Simon. Just as the good guys gain control, Kincaid and a bunch of his cavalry arrive. They march the hostages to a truck; loading, Simon gets in some "If you hurt my boy...!" scenery chewing.

On the truck, Simon and Daryl hug. They stop at some kind of inspection point, and the basketball players agree they have "a bad feeling about this." Where's Jim?

Oh... jumping in through the roof. Where the hell did he come from?

Bad guys open up the truck, armed, ready to kill the hostages, but instead Jim, Simon, and a basketball player are ready, and leap out all combattily and punching. Blair and Daryl lead the other players out quietly through the roof. Bad guys knocked out, Jim hands Blair a gun and has Simon arm the rest of the party, and they head out after Kincaid.

"The docks." A Jim-sneaks-around-Blair-close-behind sequence, rare only in that Blair is actually armed.

That or they are both grabbing their crotches. Again, dark.

Long story short, there is a climactic shoot-out between an entire basketball team and a Russian sub. (It's short story short, really. Nothing is really explained.) One of the players uses his skills to throw a canister of tear gas, which he found lying around somewhere or something, into the hatch of the submarine, and Jim closes it, trapping the bad guys inside, because he is into cruel and unusual punishment. A little banter about four-point shots, Jim gets called "coach," the actual coach and a player do a chest-bump, Blair high-fives Daryl, and... that's it? No resolution of the Daryl plot? No cut to forty minutes later, with everyone bad being put into police cars and everyone good wrapped in blankets and drinking cocoa? No back at the station, Jim and Blair joke around and touch each other gratuitously and push real close together to get through the office door at the same time and mock each other on through to the elevator? THAT IS THE WHOLE POINT OF THIS SHOW WHERE IS IT
Will this slightly off-putting shot of Blair doing up his ponytail help?

**Bottom Line:** I have been watching this episode since the beginning of time.
4x04 Dead End on Blank Street

Chapter Summary

Noir. Very noir.

We open on various artsy close-ups: a cigarette being lit, a ticking watch. A voiceover: "I don't have to tell you how it goes. You know better than anyone." Ah, the clipped, meaningful-voiced, stiltedly colloquial sentences of the Tribute to Noir episode. Pan back and around and we see a young IA guy is interrogating a sullen Jim. I like how even though we have an IA person already set up in the show, that red-headed woman, we get this young buck instead. His name is Ray Aldo, but I'll call him Ray because Jim does and because I like when people named Ray are questioning people. He urges Jim, "If you're not going to come clean for yourself, do it for the people who still care about you."

On cue, we cut to Blair watching from outside the two-way mirror. Simon comes in and reports, "Veronica is sticking to her story. Doesn't look good."

RAY: Tell me about the money.
JIM: That's just the punchline. You gotta hear the setup to get the joke.
RAY: Tell me from the setup. From the first line.
JIM: The first line, huh? All right, but you've got to pay attention cause I can only do this once.

Two questions. 1. How come Ray's so on board with hearing the long drawn-out story, instead of saying, as I would, "Give me the Cliff's Notes, will you? I haven't got all day." 2. Why can he only do this once?

Anyway, this leads into a flash-back in black-and-white. Jim and Blair are driving in the truck from a crime scene. "As usual, my partner was getting sociological on me," Present-Day Jim VOs, but inside the truck he's getting just as into the conversation, arguing against Blair's proposition that gang warfare has been the same since caveman days by claiming it's become more trivial since it's no longer about the necessities of survival--as he lists them, "food, water, women." Blair points to the Crusades as an example of politically motivated warfare which is, I guess, old, though I think he is getting just a smidge out of his original time period of prehistory. Jim says a "true warrior" would never betray a brother-in-arms for money, and Blair informs Jim he "borrowed" some cash. "The defense rests," says Jim, but I'm not sure what point was just proved--is he saying that Blair isn't a true warrior, or that Jim is because Jim hasn't killed him?

Moving the plot along, Jim pulls over a reckless driver who turns out to be a friend of his from Special Ops, Archer. Archer hugs him tight and Blair, obviously feeling left out, quips, "Either my lessons on road rage are working or you two have met before." Nice try, Blair, but Jim still agrees to go on a date with Archer.
One of the few uses of deep focus of which I approve: highlighting Blair's isolation.

There's another vaguely flirty exchange with present-day Jim and Ray and then we cut to b&w of Ray talking to Simon with Jim not present, so I guess they're telling this story collaboratively? Ray tells Simon there's drugs missing from the evidence locker. Simon says he trusts Jim and "his team", and Ray says they'll be doing an investigation anyway. Jim and Blair enter, and Ray tells Blair to "keep [his] calendar clear." Yeah, you freakin' longhair. Blair does a fake-scared shudder "ooh," and says, "If that man's ass were any tighter, it'd be inside out." I find it hilarious that Jim is now relating that to Ray. Possibly as a compliment.

Simon says the drugs are missing and someone will have to take the fall, and as Jim goes to his date, we get a VO, "I'd had any idea the poor sap about to take the high dive was me, I'd never have walked into Riley's Grill." Of all the grills in all the world, Jim has to walk into Riley's. Extra points to the authors, here, for reminding us of one of the greatest romances of all time as Jim goes to meet Archer at a fancy restaurant. They're both in snazzy suits, which I guess is supposed to invoke the 40s, but it does make it look more like a date.

After some barely-disguised pipe about how Archer has a perfect internal chronometer, though, they are joined by a woman. It's Katie Hitchcock from SeaQuest: DSV. I think she has been in other episodes, playing different characters, or maybe that was Due South. Anyway, in this her name is Veronica. She is Archer's wife now, and Jim says "I guess the best man won," which is such a brief and tight way to completely lay out all of the backstory we need about their dynamic that I would sit back and marvel at it had they not ruined it by adding a completely unnecessary flashback within a flashback: scenes of Jim, Archer, and Veronica at a bar; Jim and Veronica having sex; Jim in his ranger uniform and beret carrying big bouquet, seeing Archer and Veronica kissing, and walking away sadly. I guess Jim's tour of duty took place in Canada because there's a conspicuous Canada Post mailbox behind him.

In the--okay, not the present day, but the original flashback, the three head out of the restaurant as Jim VOs, "After dinner I let them talk me into coffee back at their place. Maybe I was too numb to say no. Or maybe I was just enjoying the pain." Oh, angst, angst. You're so getting a threesome tonight so don't even complain. On the way out Archer is stopped by a man who seems to want something from him, but backs off when Archer introduces his companion, the cop. So that's a little suspicious. Then when they get back to the house, it's been totally ransacked. I guess there will be no "coffee" tonight.

Things are getting cozy in the interrogation room as Ray brings Jim (actual, not metaphorical) coffee and asks after his suspicions about the B&E. Then Ray suddenly non-sequiturs, "Would it be fair to say that you fell in love with Veronica the first time you met?" Oh, Ray, of course he did. Where have you been? She is the love of Jim's life that got away; a new one surfaces nearly every week, you know. Jim is totally the Tenchi Muyo of Cascade, cosmically fated to ultimate, epic romance
with every woman he meets. Jim stiffens and mutters "Something like that."

Ray, smoking: "And this relationship was intimate? By that, I mean physical." **Intimacy and sex are two totally different issues, Ray!** But, more relevantly: Seriously? Jim says it was more than that and asks what he's driving at, and Ray asks quietly, "Why didn't you?" Awww, this isn't even about the interrogation anymore; he's just a kid looking for a nice romance story. Jim softens a bit--"Sandburg asked me the same question"--and lists some reasons for not going after Veronica: work, Carolyn (whom he refers to as "some lady"). I just want to take a moment to silently savor the fact that Jim is thoughtfully deconstructing his love life while his interrogator looks on with interest and sympathy, because the show sure does.

![Jim and Ray](image)

**Tenderest. Interrogation. Ever.**

Next Jim segues into the next part of the flashback, in which Veronica arranges to meet him privately at a beach. She wants Jim to keep an eye on Archer because she's afraid he's involved in something bad. Oh, no, Jim! **Rule #1 of noir detective fiction: never trust the client!** She thanks him and kisses the side of his mouth, and they lean their heads together, and Jim is just opening his mouth for more when he runs his hand over her engagement ring and breaks it off.

Jim and Ray's next scene is short so here it is directly:

JIM: Looking back I can see that's where she first set the hook... but for some reason, I didn't fight it.
RAY: Well, she's an attractive woman. You had feelings for her and you wanted to believe everything she said.
JIM: Careful, Ray. You're almost sounding like a human being. You might've shown that when you char-broiled Sandburg.

Which leads us nicely into Ray questioning Blair, also in b&w, although it must have been, like, yesterday. Ray pulls out his cigarettes and Blair goodies at him about second-hand smoke, so he doesn't light up. Well, that's nice. "You and Ellison are friends," says Ray. "You hang out together, you go to crime scenes together..." Is that what the kids are calling it? (Oh man, I wish.) "I'm working on my thesis," says Blair defensively. "That's why we stay so close." Ray: "It's okay! I think it's great." Ha! He soooooo knows. Blair gets annoyed and says some rah-rah pro-Jim summing up. Gloriously, the climax of their argument is:

BLAIR: I know him.
RAY: You think you know him.
BLAIR: Wrong. I **know** him.

Brown is giving Jim some info on the driver of the Caddie that stopped Archer earlier--he's some
kind of loan shark type called Lovejoy—when Blair comes up complaining that his interrogation was as frustrated as "trying to teach a card trick to a monkey." Let me just restate how cute it is that Jim faithfully and passive-aggressively recounts all of Blair's jabs at Ray in this narrative for his benefit.

Jim goes and talks to Archer, who gets pissed and tells him to stay out of his business, and then Jim and Blair go find Lovejoy in a quaint bar playing some kind of Warner Brothers-esque background tune. Lovejoy knows about the IAD investigation of Jim and accuses him of being a smack dealer and having his "hands in Archer's pockets", which earns him a defiant "Are you for real, man?" from Blair. Lovejoy tells Jim to tell Archer he's running out of time. Lovejoy leaves and Blair urges Jim to get someone else to take over the case. Jim insists that he has to do it because Archer is his friend, and Blair gets all blinky and look-away-y and says "Wrong friend." "What?" Blair says "You think I'm blind, Jim? The one you're trying to protect here is Veronica," but personally I think that's an ass-covering save.

Speaking of Veronica, Jim gets a phone call from her, worrying about Archer. Suddenly, outside her window, Archer's car explodes! The explosion and fire are orange and give off orange light in the black-and-white world. In the present day, Ray lights up asks Jim if it bothered him that Veronica was the only witness.

Looks like our shots are getting artsier and artsier: we see Jim and Simon interrogating Lovejoy about Archer's death, with a superimposed reflection of Blair's face to show he's watching through the mirror. The light and mirror or window give off overexposed light against which Simon is silhouetted. Pattern in the window looks like chain-link, I guess a version of the old blinds-as-bars trick. I catalogue the visual effects so lovingly I don't pay attention to what goes on in the scene. Okay, so Lovejoy says he and Archer were involved in a money laundering scheme together but Archer was screwing him over and "skipped town with five hundred large," whatever that means. Lovejoy says Veronica called and told him Archer would pay back the money that night at the restaurant. Jim gets up and leaves abruptly.

Jim angrily questions Veronica in her home. She knew about all this?! She's resistant at first, but when pressed for the truth tells a story about how Archer did tell her, drunkenly, about the crimes, but made her run away with him, threatening her and beating her. Jim gives her a sympathetic hug.

Simon and Blair's faces reflect, in color this time, against the present-day interrogation, as Ray scolds Jim for not bringing in accessory-after-the-fact Veronica for questioning. Jim says, staunchly, "She was a victim," with Protect the Victims face.

Continuing the story, Jim timeskips ahead one month: "We started seeing more of each other." I'll bet. They meet on the beach. (I wonder if it's the shore of Veronica Lake?) Veronica tells him she just found out she's getting three million from Archer's life insurance. Man, if only she and Archer
had made it look like an accident, they'd be getting six, right? Oh, sorry, I mean, Veronica doesn't care about the money, she loves Jim! They make out.

LoftYay! Blair comes in with groceries and says "Long time no see." He asks about the case, and Jim says they're no closer to finding Archer's murderer. Blair suggests that Veronica had motive and opportunity, and Jim gets angry and says she couldn't have planted the highly technical bomb and anyway shut up and he's going to bed!

**BRIEF INTERLUDE:** Let's enjoy some shots of the boys' faces in black and white photography, shall we?

*elevator music*

Aaaand, back to the story.

Jim walks on the beach by a boat with a yellow light, which is odd, since it's neither exploding nor significant, looking for a prowler that (he VOs) Veronica reported hearing. He catches up with the prowler and finds that it is Archer.

After the commercial Jim pieces together the plan while Archer stands by indulgently. Archer offers Jim one million dollars to walk away, but Jim refuses, angry at Archer for using his "love and friendship" against him. They hear sirens. Archer snaps at Jim for calling backup, saying, "You never did like the solo missions, did you?" NO JIM LIKES A *PARTNER*. Jim says, "I didn't call for backup." Archer: "...That bitch."

Archer starts to walk away, but Jim calls him back, and they draw guns on each other. Jim shoots. Archer gets a sort of pathosy death scene, and we cut to ambulance guys zipping him into a body bag, so I guess he's really dead now. Jim tells Simon about the insurance scam, but Ray walks up with Veronica, informing him of her story: it was Jim and Archer who were in on the scam, but Jim
killed Archer to get Veronica.

Once Jim finishes telling his story, Ray turns off the recorder and tries to get Jim to confess to Veronica's version: "You were in love. Hey, it happens all the time." He leans forward and tells Jim he believes Veronica, and Jim is going down.

Jim leaves and, going to his car, meets Veronica, who emerges from the shadows to tell him it's over and he can't win. She gives him a chance to run away, offering him money, and he refuses. She leaves as Blair comes up and asks Jim what he'll do now. "Start acting like a cop."

Simon finds something at an explosion site and tells some cop minion to bring in Ellison.

Ray and Simon question Jim, Blair present. An order for a chemical explosive in Jim's name. Jim says Archer forged his signature, something he learned to do in ops, but Simon still asks for his badge and gun, against Blair's protestations. Jim gives them up and leaves.

Blair catches up with him outside, and asks what's next. (I submit that the "acting like a cop" line would be more powerful here, after he's lost his badge and gun.) Jim wants to check out the chemical warehouse explosion site for more clues. He stops Blair before he turns to get on that, saying, "Whoa Chief, uh... I'm sorry. I was wrong about her, you were right." Dawwww. Blair doesn't seem to know what to say to that; he gentles, "Well, that's all right. I mean, come on, we all make mistakes, right?" Jim says it was a "good-sized" mistake, and Blair adds, "It was huge." "All right, enough," says Jim, leading Blair off with a hand on the back of his neck.

In their investigation Jim and Blair find some semi-melted security tapes, which they bring back to Serena for analysis. She can't do assignments for Jim since he's suspended; she needs authorization. From the background, Simon badasses, "I'll authorize it." He did a background check on Veronica and found a chemical explosives link.

Jim does his usual identifying-the-important-frame-before-the-resolution-is-good-enough-to-see-what's-going-on SENTINEL SENSES TO THE RESCUE thing. Veronica and Ray are on the tape. Oh noes! Ray was behind the WHOLE THING and trying to frame Jim! If only we hadn't been so focused on reading Ray's bizarre lines about love as hitting on Jim we might have seen them for the anvils about being attracted to Veronica they really were! Unless we did see that. Still, I choose to believe that Ray is an incorrigible gossip.

Jim goes to Veronica's and tells her she is under arrest. She tries to bargain with him, and when he refuses, she pulls a tiny gun on him. Jim super-hears the ticking of Ray's watch and realizes he is nearby, listening in. Jim navigates the conversation with Veronica, asking her who she intended to shoot at the door, and getting her to admit to him that she was planning on killing Ray and running with all the cash. Ray rushes in and Jim ducks out of the crossfire just in time for Ray and Veronica to shoot each other.

Sirens as Jim leans over Veronica's body, going into the Gentle Jim mode he pulls out whenever anyone is seconds from death, "shh"ing and "breathe"ing. She murmurs, "If you loved me, you would have let me walk away." Ouch.
This is just like the two guys at the end of *Double Indemnity* only more romantic less romantic.

Backup including Simon and Blair arrive just as she dies. "Jim, are you okay?" Well, he's crouched over a dead woman, Blair, what do you think? But Jim says, gruffly, "Yeah."

Standing outside the house, Blair asks Jim if Veronica was shooting at him or Ray, and Jim doesn't know. Simon and Blair decide leave Jim alone for awhile. "He'll get over it," Blair assures Simon as they head back inside. "Maybe not today, but soon." And for the rest of his life. Simon lampshades that Blair sounds "like an old movie". Fade to b&w on Jim staring meaningfully out into the middle distance.

**Non-J/B Pairing of the Week:** Although Jim/Veronica/Archer gave off something of an OT3 vibe, especially at the beginning, I was just waiting for Jim and Ray to start making out in that interrogation room. It's just that Jim is an attractive man, Ray had feelings for him and wanted to believe everything he said.

**Bottom Line:** It's probably clear from the level of minute detail and direct quoting that I enjoyed this episode. The Tribute to Noir thing is gimmicky, but gimmicky isn't always bad, especially in a long-running genre show where episodes can tend to repeat the same formula. The unusually framed shots, black-and-white photography, and movie-score style music give the episode a fresh and memorable feel.

Given the interrogation framing story, I do have some issues with the POV. It's a Jim flashback complete with occasional present-day-Jim voiceovering; no matter how much enjoyable the byplay between Ray and Blair, it needs to go unless Jim saw it. Admittedly, the writers did manage to limit themselves in the flashbacks to scenes where either Jim or Ray was present, but I just don't buy that Ray is providing Jim with completely accurate and detailed accounts of his own experiences at appropriate chronological moments in his narrative. Nobody's that cooperative a questioner, not even Ray "Tell Me More, Tell Me More, Did You Get Very Far" Aldo.
Blair's driving in the middle of the night, listening to a talk radio show ask callers what they are afraid of when his car stalls out and some thugs come up and start hassling him. Blair dials his phone and says, rather calmly, that there's a 604 in progress. After some more attempts with the ignition he gets the car started, sending a carjacker tumbling over his hood, and proceeds to drive straight into a fence. He clambers out and runs into an abandoned building to hide. Running terrifiedly, he trips over a severely injured man. He frantically tries to help stop the bleeding.

Jim and the police to the rescue, arresting the carjackers. Later we see Jim and Simon comforting a traumatized Blair as the man he was unable to save is carted away. Jim sees a shimmery figure in the window of the abandoned house. When they go upstairs to investigate, Jim reports feeling intense cold, and Simon suggests maybe he has the flu that's going around. Then he smells something sweet, which the others can't sense. He--and we--see a cheesy special effect of a silhouette made all of light.

At the station Jim is reaching for tissues as he works, so I guess he really is sick. Simon comes up to bitch at him for coming in to work, and then hands him a bottle of medicine. Jim mutters that last time he took that stuff he fell off a train, but I submit that it was climbing on the outside of the train that caused him to fall off the train. Jim throws the medicine in the trash.

Blair, of course, comes up with his little leaf pouch native remedy thing, and Jim, though he sniffs it and makes a face, obligingly puts it under his tongue as Blair tells him to. Within moments Jim is making a hilarious rubberface "eeeuuuuggh!" motion, which he leads into pumping his fist and saying "MAN, I feel like a million bucks!" Blair tells him to give it some time, and Jim thanks him absently. Blair continues to hover. After a moment Jim turns to him: "What?"

BLAIR: We need to talk, Jim.
JIM: Look, if it's about last night--it was no big deal! Let's just... let it be.
BLAIR: You can't just ignore this, man.

I... I just... I have no... whoever is responsible for this conversation... Thank you.

Once I come back down to Earth, Jim is talking about how he's sure there's a logical explanation for
his sensory experiences. Blair continues to press, and Jim gets up and grits, "Chief. I have had about as much as I can take with this Sentinel stuff." It's interesting to see him fed up with his Sentinel-ness as a whole, but Blair, perhaps wisely, chooses not to pursue the larger issue, and instead says of the paranormal experiences (and/or subtext), "You can't just shut this door after it's been opened!" He starts jabbering about ghosts, and Jim makes oh-no faces as Simon and Taggart stroll up behind him and burst out laughing. "Ghosts?!” Blair staunchly defends his open-mind stance, and Jim buries his face in his hands. Blair turns back to Jim as the mean kids walk away making "wooooo" gestures. "Don't pay attention to them." Jim, dryly; "You've been a big help, thanks."

Loft. Jim comes down into the living room in his bathrobe, and thanks Blair for the remedy--it worked! Blair is putting together a bunch of X-Files type equipment, like an EMF detector, and Jim makes fun of him a little. He says he was tired last night and the light he saw might have been a reflection of some of the crime scene equipment. "I'm sorry, I disagree," says Blair. "You're entitled to," says Jim respectfully. So polite! They get a call--there's something going down at the old apartment.

Taggart, Jim, and Blair head down the hall of the old building. Blair's clutching his equipment box. Creepy choral/theremin music. The door at the end of the hall opens by itself, and wafts of smoke emerge. Blair's expression changes. "Okay, guys, you can come on out." Rafe and Brown emerge, laughing and smoking cigars. Brown laughs, "Someone needs to make him a detective!"

Jim and Blair head back to the car, the others still joking around behind them. "Loosen up, Sandburg!" Always the goody two shoes, Taggart says maybe the joke wasn't so funny, and asks Jim if he really believes in this stuff. Jim: "What I believe or don't believe is irrelevant. I'm working a homicide here." Good answer, Jim; noncommittal and yet on Blair's side. The others drive off, and as Jim starts to get in the truck, he turns back and sees something in the window of the house. He tells Blair, "Hey, Chief, get your stuff." Blair protests that he's sick of the jokes, but Jim's serious. They head back in.

In the house Blair's all, "You don't have to humor me; I really don't care," but Jim is too busy reacting to various sensations to pay much attention. Blair starts filming, but he doesn't see anything unusual. Jim does: he sees a woman in the mirror. (He's also in the mirror, so it's not him that's the woman, worse luck.) The woman reaches out to him, and he meets her hand with his. He gets a flash of images and the mirror seems to shatter. When he blinks back into reality, the woman is gone and the mirror is fine.

Next day Jim and Blair are at the station looking through photos when Simon comes in with the ID of the murder victim and the name of his partner (EVERYONE). Simon starts to tease Blair, "I hear you had a run-in with your ghosts last night," and Blair very seriously says, "Yeah, I did. Lucky for us the guys didn't drive it away." Simon scoffs, and Jim takes up Blair's cause, confirming that they did see the ghost it's trying to contact him. He explains they're trying to match a photo to the composite he saw in the vision she gave him. Simon flips out, "I have stood behind you on the Sentinel thing, but as far as ghosts go, you can't ask me--!!" Jim just looks all earnest and blue-eyed at Simon cause he knows it's only a matter of time before he caves, and there it is. "Put the picture out on the street. See if the guy is even real." He leaves, and Blair says proudly, "I can't believe you told Simon all that!"
And Jim's all, Yeah, well. *cough cough carburetors*

Jim and Blair meet up with the victim's partner, who shows them some threatening letters he and the victim got as a result of preparing to knock down the building. Then they head over to a soup kitchen where Taggart has found the guy in Jim's composite sometimes goes. He's a schizophrenic homeless man named is Dunlop. Jim and Blair check out his stuff, left with the shelter: a suitcase of all women's clothes. Jim says they smell like the ghost. There's also some photographs of the ghost woman and a diary.

That night at the ghostly apartment, Blair looks over a police file on the ghost—her name's Molly and she was murdered in 1953. Jim learns from the diary that, at age eight, Dunlop witnessed the murder and saw "a man with stained fingers" bury the gun in the park. Jim wonders how he ended up totally obsessed with the woman and in possession of her stuff, and Blair suggests he can sense the ghost too. "There's a line of my research I've never told you about because I thought you might get upset..." Jim, warily: "And what would that be?" Blair: "One of the symptoms of mental disorder is heightened senses." Jim considers this, and then says, "Well, I know I'm crazy for putting up with you." Blair laughs, probably relieved that there wasn't another Night Shift-style research backlash.

Jim asks Blair what's all the equipment he's got, and Blair shows him some stuff he borrowed from the uni to record Jim's reactions to the ghost: heart rate, respiration, and--he holds up a long thermometer and laughs evilly, "Body temperature." Jim's eyes widen.

Cut to later that night. Jim dozes with the diary in his lap. The ghost appears in the mirror. Jim calls for "Chief" and then "Blair," but Blair is busily working and listening to his headphones. Jim approaches and Molly gives him another vision. We see the apartment as it was in the 50s, when Molly was living there. She pours herself a glass of wine, glances out the window, and then goes to the mirror to toast herself, "Mrs. Sam Bromley." Then the mirror shatters as a bullet hits it--through her. The vision fades, and Blair finally notices Jim standing at the mirror. "Your respiration's showing like you just ran a three-minute mile!" He does not mention temperature. Jim explains what
he saw.

Loft. Blair's going through Molly's suitcase and Jim's watching the useless video Blair shot. Blair posits that if they solve Molly's murder she'll be able to pass on to the afterlife, because that is the way these things work on TV. I'm sure Blair's seen enough to know. Jim says if there is a next life, she deserves to go there. Before they can get too philosophical, they get a call from the shelter.

Dunlop is holding the nice shelter worker at knifepoint because he wants his suitcase back. Well, maybe Jim and Blair shouldn't have taken it! Jim tries to talk him down, and Blair offers up the case. He snatches it and runs off. Jim chases him, but he goes out a window. Jim figures he's gone...

...to the old apartment! He finds Dunlop in front of the mirror. Dunlop is mistrustful, but Jim gently explains he can see Molly, too. He puts his arm around Dunlop as he falls to his knees, and tenderly wrests away the knife; suddenly they both see Molly in the mirror. She shows Jim a vision of the original murder this episode was about, the body Blair found. The guy's partner did it! Blair comes in and finds Jim zoned on the mirror and Dunlop gone.

Station. Blair asks why Molly led them to Dunlop if the partner is the murderer, and Jim says maybe she knew Dunlop would give them info about her murder, but it doesn't really matter because nobody cares about this murder anyway. Taggart gives Jim a file on Sam Bromley, but says he's probably not a suspect as he's 80 years old.

Jim and Blair go to an art studio where a nurse is helping Sam Bromley work on a painting. She meets them and tells them Bromley won't be able to tell them much except about his current artwork, as he's got Alzheimer's. Jim and Blair have a little conversation about art--Blair suddenly remembers having heard of Bromley's work, and Jim says he doesn't understand this modern art yada yada that's not a painting, it's a blank canvas!!! Jim shows Bromley a photograph of Molly, and he says "My Venus!", but that's all they get out of him. The nurse says he has spoken of Molly before, but not in detail, and the memory seemed to be a sad one.

At the loft, Blair shows Jim a modern art book. There's a picture of a statue Sam Bromley sculpted--of Molly. It's supposed to be in a park near her house, but neither of them remembers seeing it. They get a call from Dunlop: he wants to meet them in half an hour to turn himself in.

Jim and Blair swing by the park on the way to meet Dunlop. There's no statue, just a pedestal with a plaque saying the date the statue was erected, two days after Molly's death. They're distracted by the sight of Dunlop heading toward the apartment. Jim draws his gun and runs in, telling Blair to stay behind him. Next we get a sort of action scene in the apartment: Dunlop is meeting with the partner/murderer, for some reason, and the partner pulls a gun and Dunlop pulls his knife, and Jim arrives with his gun, and Blair weilds the power of the phone. Partner runs away from Jim, pausing near a doorway with a beaded curtain to aim his gun. The beads wrap themselves around his wrist, making him miss. Jim shoots him down.

So that's that. Dunlop helps Jim wrap up some loose ends with some evidence he had about that murder, and then Jim asks about Molly's murder, specifically, where did the man with the stained fingers bury the gun. Dunlop says the man told him not to tell. Molly appears and gives Jim a vision. It's an extra detail from the vision where she toasted herself and then died, the view out the window: workers are preparing to put up the statue of her.

Back in the park, where the statue isn't, Jim taps the base while Blair holds his flashlight.
We get a refreshingly realistic set of time-is-passing-this-is-boring slow montage-wipes before Jim finds the part that sounds different. One equally length chiselling-open-the-cement sequence later, he retrieves the gun.

So the next day Jim stages this sort of awful re-enactment, having the nurse drag Bromley over to the apartment with Dunlop and some police officers present, putting the gun in Bromley's hand, and encouraging Dunlop to recall the day he was threatened by Bromley. Jim gets what he wants, which is Bromley spontaneously re-enacting the threat, and then speaking lucidly about the murder and his reasons for it (he was married, and he'd lied to Molly that he'd divorce for her, but the wife and Molly would certainly meet at the statue dedication, and it would be so awful that he just murdered Molly instead. Okay.) Simon's satisfied with the confession and orders Bromley to be taken in. Blair protests passionately--the guy's 85! he's got Alzheimer's!--but Jim says they have to follow procedure. This is just like at the end of all those Lord Peter books when solving the mystery results in worse consequences than leaving it alone would have, and he feels bad. Let's rob an distinguished yet senile octogenarian artist of the few remaining shreds of dignity he possesses! Why? To make the GHOST HAPPY.

Well, I guess the ghost is happy, because Dunlop and Jim both sense that she has gone from this place. Simon tries to establish a logical explanation for everything that happened, but it's pretty weak and I think we just have to accept that ghosts are a part of the Sentinel universe. But only in the Halloween episodes. I mean, he's not going to become one of those people like the Sixth Sense kid or Tru Calling or whatever who have ghosts help them solve their own murders or anything.

Anyway, Simon's explanation for the visions is that Dunlop is crazy, one, and two, he analyzed the cold remedy Blair gave Jim and found traces of peyote. Satisfied, he exits, and Jim goes over to Blair. "Peyote," Jim repeats, and Blair defends, "Just traces," and there's still like twenty seconds left in the episode! Yes! I wonder what Jim-and-Blair antics they're going to fill it with and NOOOOO! Molly's ghost reappears! She becomes weirdly solid and holds out her hand, and Jim touches it, and instead of getting a vision he intertwines his fingers with hers, and she leans forward and kisses him on the cheek.
Why? Why? Why?

Why? Why? Why? Molly disappears and we pan out and it's maybe a three-quarters of a second from the end and I frown and then Jim puts his hand on Blair's shoulder so I guess that's okay.

I guess.

Bottom line: I'm normally kind of annoyed by Halloween episodes that violate the hitherto established rules of the universe to introduce some new supernatural element, but Sentinel has so much unexplained mysticism anyway that it's not too jarring, and we got some choice moments between Jim and Blair with the new ghost-seeing secret standing in for their usual secret-identity-as-illicit-affair metaphor. "We have to talk about what happened last night!" Oh, for fun. Plus we have strong evidence that Blair inserts something in Jim's ass, and what more can we really ask for?
Jim, Blair, and Megan are "helped" by the washed-up star of a 60s action show.

Some guy is watching *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* when someone comes up, turns off the TV, and looms, poised to attack.

On the phone at his desk, Jim tries to get out of a meeting, fails, and comes out to the coffee service to tell Blair in a long-suffering tone that Vince Deal is coming up. Blair's excited because he's "a character," and Jim calls him a "caricature." He's an old actor from a show called *Braddock's Way* who doesn't seem to realize life is not a TV show. They talk about what cop shows they liked as a kid; Jim liked *Banacek*, and Blair scoffs because he was an insurance investigator. Jim amends to *Mannix* ("good with his fists, dry sense of humor"); sounds familiar, which Blair grants. Himself, he liked *Starsky and Hutch*. (He says it's for the car, but I think it's for the slash.) Jim adjusts Blair's collars, saying his fashion sense is inspired by Huggy Bear. The question posed to Simon wins them a little *Shaft* byplay: "That cat Shaft was one bad mother--" "Watch your mouth," says Jim primly.

There, now you look presentable.

A *Shaft*-ish baseline kicks in in time for Vince's entrance. He's Robert Vaughan wearing large sunglasses and a long black coat with a rose pinned to it. (So I guess that was supposed to be *Braddock's Way* on TV in the beginning.) The music record-scratches as Megan (Megan! I was beginning to think she'd gone back to Australia) emerges from an office and catches sight of Vince. She interrupts Simon and Jim giving Vince a hard time about his last lame tip to gush about the show, which is apparently popular in Australia. She volunteers to take down Vince's tip while Jim announces he and Sandburg are going for lunch.

In the truck, Jim and Blair argue about where to eat. This episode is A-OK by me so far. I don't understand why they always eat together when they never want to go to the same place, but it makes me glad. More please. They get talking about Vince, and Jim says he doesn't get it; *Braddock's Way* was doing so well when it was canned! Considering this is two shows from the end of a truncated final season, I'm thinking this might just be meta. He gets a phone call from Megan--a body. No lunch for the boys!

Jim, Blair, and Megan check out the body: a "well-dressed young woman," according to Jim,
covered in blood (we don't see her, but we see Blair's look-away-look-away reaction shot). It looks like she was shot elsewhere and brought here, but Megan points out the empty purse suggests a botched robbery. Jim catches sight of the woman's wallet off in the brush and goes to get a closer look. Megan sidelong to Blair, "Is he doing his Sentinel thing?" Blair makes hasty shut-up! motions. "I can't believe I told you that," he moans. Megan promises "It'll be our secret." Oh, poor Blair wanted it to be his and Jim's secret. Jim gets the ID from the wallet--the victim was a reporter for the Daily Herald. Megan gets excited because Vince's tip was about a friend of his who was found dead-apparent suicide, but he thinks it's murder--after writing an expose for the Herald.

Exposition time! Simon, Jim, Blair, Megan and Vince meet in a conference room at the station; over a funky bassline, Vince examines the crime scene photographs and wonders pointedly, if his friend was supposed to have gassed himself, who turned off the oven? The officers decide to take a closer look. Simon eventually gets out of Vince (who admits he was "a little smashed" when he talked to his friend) that the reporters were going after a company called Hydra. Megan shows Vince out, and Blair laughs, "You gotta love him," and Simon deadpans, awesomely, "No I don't."

Megan promises to keep Vince up-to-date on the case and he asks her out for dinner. She says she has night watch, but another time. She seems to genuinely mean it. Vince gets in the elevator, and Blair comes up and warns Megan that Vince is old enough to be her father. Megan accuses him of being jealous. Blair says he doesn't want Megan to "fall for an image." "At least he has one," says Megan, and that doesn't make that much sense, but it seems to hurt Blair as she sweeps off, bumping into Jim. Jim's all "Let's go, Romeo," clapping both hands on Blair's shoulders as he turns him toward the elevator, and Blair asks, "Hey, what do you think of my image?" Jim: "Your image." Blair: "Yeah. Be gentle." Dawwww, poor Blair. Jim, with dismissive affection: "I d'know, cut your hair and run for president, I'll vote for you, I'n't care." Blair grins all proud. Oh, Jim and Blair, I love you both.

In the truck on the way to the dead reporter's house we get some Blair-giving-Jim-directions banter and some exposition about Hydra--it's a new security firm. A call comes through on the radio--a 211 in progress at their very destination! They arrive, and Jim goes in with his gun, and we get an unnecessary but very cute shot of Blair sitting in the car watching intently. Shots fire through the door. Jim braces himself and enters firing, managing to knock the prowler off balance and knock him out. Vince stumbles in from the shadows, bleeding from the head, and collapses.

Outside later, surrounded by distractingly flashing cop cars, Jim yells at Vince for interfering in the investigation. Vince tells him to "dial it back" (unintentional Blairism?) and Megan and Blair take over to perform a more gentle questioning. Vince and Blair think the prowler was after the same thing Vince was, info for the expose, but Megan suggests that Vince is in danger because he was the last one to talk to the victim. Blair says he needs protection. "A safehouse?" Blair: "Not exactly. I'll
be right back, unless you hear some gunfire."

Cut to a plateful of pancakes. Blair courtship-ritualling Jim into taking in another stray? No, Vince is already there, serving up the breakfast. Jim doesn't want any--he's "an eggs and coffee man" (Blair's speciality!). Blair makes faces at the burnt pancakes.

Dear Jim and Blair, how do always make breakfast so adorable?

Vince compliments the apartment, so much nicer than his, and Jim asks for the story on how the show ended. Turns out a close friend of Vince's was fired from the show and he got a bit too mouthy with the press.

Simon's office. Simon and Megan exposit about Hydra--it's run by ex-feds and hit men--to Jim and Blair as Blair annoys Simon by taking down a statue from his shelf and examining it. Still carrying on the conversation about Hydra, Simon gets up and takes the statue away, only to have Blair immediately pick up a souvenir coffee mug. Still holding the statue in both hands, Simon just boggles at the mug in Blair's hand. Heh. Anyway, the upshot of the conversation is Jim is going undercover at Hydra.

At the interview, Jim explains what ended his job as a police officer--he got too rough with a questionee--and they hire him. Jim's being shown around the complex when he hears Vince's voice. He sees Vince up through an office window, reading a script for a radio commercial. Ha! That's kind of a nice meta, too, since Robert Vaughan did all those personal injury lawyer commercials. You remember those: "You need to show the insurance companies you mean business."

Simon's office. Jim wants Vince out, Vince has Hydra computer access codes and a sob story about his friendship with the victim (EVERYONE), Simon caves.

Hydra computer lab. The logo is remarkably similar to the U.N.C.L.E. logo, and we get a sort of U.N.C.L.E./Mission Impossible theme music as Jim and Vince break in. Jim copies some info onto a disk and they're about to leave when the boss walks in. Guilty schoolboy looks abound. Vince starts babbling about method acting and Jim recovers enough to say he's escorting Vince out of the restricted area. The boss frowns but buys it, and while Vince is there, confirms the time of his commercial shoot. Vince says he had a thought: he wants a uniform there as set dressing. Jim!

Out in the hall Jim exclaims "I can't be in a commercial!" and Vince points out he's supposed to stay close and promises to teach him some breathing exercises.
Uh, I already *have* someone to tell me to breathe, old man.

Distracting back-and-forth lightning cut from Jim looking disbelieving to Megan in the loft giving everyone some info she I guess got off the disk about Hydra's shady bookkeeping practices. Jim says they need to "bait the hook."

Megan, dressed up like an upper-class lady, meets with the Hydra boss types. Convincingly acting nervous, she says her husband will be coming back from a business trip any day, and she has a situation she needs "handled" before then: she's being stalked by her ex-lover, a young artist. Oh, now why would you put Blair in that kind of danger? The bosses call in a female bodyguard, Marika, saying they like to assign her to the female clients: "It's more discreet." Marika gives Megan the eye and Megan smiles, "A lady with a gun; imagine that."

When Megan leaves, the boss types go over their security tapes and find Jim and Vince talking in the hall--confirming that Jim's not what he claims to be and Vince knows nothing.Shortly thereafter, Jim and Vince arrive at the soundstage and are accosted by men with guns. Oh noes!

After the commercial Jim very quickly dispenses with the attackers by kicking them in the head and crotch. Some damage is done to the soundstage and Jim emerges with the guys cuffed. Vince pops his head out from a mailbox (American!!!) behind which he was hiding.

In a posh apartment, Megan frets about the pros and cons of her husband and her lover. Marika tells her, "You can have it both ways." Megan stammers a bit, and Marika steps closer and says a line about how the husband is usually unfaithful too, which shouldn't sound seductive, but it *does*, and she adds, looking Megan up and down, "Just think about what you need."

A knock at the door. Blair's voice on the other side. I'd like to note my satisfaction that everyone is using fake names this time; Jim's "Carl McQueen", Blair's "Anthony Drake," and Megan's "Olivia

And what *I* need.
Somerset." Yeah, they sound fake, but at least they're trying. Anyway, Megan tells Marika to let Anthony in.

Blair's wearing a kind of a newsboy hat and a silk scarf because he's an Artist. He delivers some rather unconvincingly acted lines: "I was out of my mind when I wrote those letters. Don't you know that I love you?" Megan puts a hand on Marika's shoulder, bidding her lower her gun, and then steps forward and starts making out with Blair in front of her. So, Megan has now kissed both Jim and Blair unnecessarily while undercover. Blair's considerably more passionate reaction (he actually moans a little), for the record, puts Jim several points ahead in the Gay Grand Prix. (That and his code-name. I know it's a Steve McQueen reference, but still.)

Megan leads Blair into the bedroom, and he starts to chat genially--"What do you think of my outfit?" (point for Blair)--but Megan's intent on doing the juvenile thing of pretending to make sex noises. Or... something. She throws a lamp on the ground and cries "Oh, Anthony, you beast!" Blair grins and makes a ridiculous sort of elephantine beast noise. Listening at the door, Marika hears, "Naughty boy! Look what you've done!" and "I broke it!", followed by another elephant noise. She smiles and opens a magazine.

Station. Jim and Simon walk down the hall, talking. Jim's cover's blown, but at least they've still got Megan. And... Blair. "You must explain to me why Sandburg was necessary," says Simon, and I am on board with that, but as soon as Jim starts, "Captain," Simon doesn't want to hear it.

Bosses at Hydra get the results of their background check on Olivia Somerset. There's a picture--and it's not of Megan. Maybe it was a bad idea to accost the expert security agency with one shoddily-put-together fake identity after another?

Simon tries to comfort Vince, who is upset at himself for running away in the face of danger.

Megan and Blair sit on the bed. "We've been quiet for awhile. Maybe you should scream or something." "What makes you think Anthony's that talented? I think you should scream." "Me? I definitely think Anthony can make you scream." I think Blair is probably a screamer. They're still debating strategy when Marika and the male boss partner burst in with guns drawn. Marika finds Megan's gun, and they lead our heroes out.

Jim's taking Vince home when Vince reminds Jim of the last episode of his show--a cliffhanger which was supposed to be continued next season, but never was. Now that's definitely meta, as this show was apparently very nearly cancelled after Blair's death. Jim can't reach Blair and Megan's backup and gets nervous, so he heads to the fake Somerset apartment. He leaves Vince calling 911 for some guy who's been sapped, who is around, for some reason; and he heads up with gun drawn. The place is empty of course, but Jim finds a tape recorder which I guess Megan or someone left and

The vaguely Sex and the City outfit earns Blair some points, though.

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rewinds just long enough to hear the bad guys leading Blair and Megan out and arranging to meet up with the big boss. What I would like to see is when Jim inevitably rewinds further and hears Blair making his animal-sex noises.

The... hell?

At the crime scene--of the guy being sapped--Vince commandeers a police vehicle, posing as Jim's partner. He wishes!

The bosses interrogate Blair and Megan. They pathetically try to hold onto their cover, even though it's way past blown. "I'm an artist!" Blair protests weakly. "She's--*Valley girl gasp*--she's an unhappy wife married to a man that--doesn't have time for her anymore. WHERE'S THE CRIME IN THAT, MAN?" The real kicker there is the pretentious-drama-club-kid pronunciation of the first (but not second!) "man." The male boss shoots gunshots over their shoulders threateningly. Outside, Jim hears and goes into Action Mode.

Cut back to the male boss, who wants to know who the "artist"'s influences are, asking about Van Gogh as he holds the gun to Blair's ear. Megan, who's been apparently learning American policework skills from Jim, snaps and promises to tell them everything if they let civilian Blair go. Blair one-ups her by claiming to be Detective Jim Ellison, saying she is a civilian actress and he'll talk if they let her go. Oh, those crazy kids. The boss is understandably confused and says "I happen to know the real Jim Ellison is--" "Right behind you," Jim cuts in smoothly. Aw, yeah.

Marika appears from the shadows and attacks Jim, and while they're fighting, the bosses get away. Jim knocks out Marika and unties his buddies, bidding Blair come with him and Megan guard "Mrs. Peel," another nice reference. The bosses run out into a slick black car, and Vince arrives to take up the chase. Jim and Blair join in the truck, and we've got ourselves a convoy. Well, a car chase, anyway. I don't have to like it, but it does fit with the theme of "things that happened in old cop shows." When Jim and Blair identify Vince in the next car, Blair yells at him to get off the road, but it's Vince's fancy driving that ends up corralling the bad guys into the plate-glass window of a TV shop where the TVs are playing a commercial for daily syndicated reruns of *Braddock's Way*. 
I wish!

Wrap-up at the station. All this publicity got Vince a TV movie! Right. Vince shows Jim the script, saying he had the writers put in a small role for him: "Detective Madison" is described as "gruff, belligerent, head hard as a rock." Freeze-frame on Vince winking as we head to credits with funky bassline and Blair and Simon complaining that they're not in the script.

**Non-J/B Pairing of the Week:** It's Megan week. Encouraging sexual tension on undercover missions seems to be a hobby of hers; this episode, she was reasonably successful in getting Blair to participate (where Jim was a total non-starter in *Neighborhood Watch*). And Megan seemed, if not really interested, genuinely mildly charmed by Vince. But the main point I need to make here is that Marika so desperately wants Megan's junk.

**Bottom Line:** While Robert Vaughan plays a somewhat annoying character with a tendency to mumble his lines, he kind of always has, and I like *Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (another slash classic, by the way) and many of the other shows they're homaging. Blair and Megan had some fun scenes, and I liked it when Jim noncommittally agreed to vote for Blair for president. All in all a fun episode.
4x07 Most Wanted

Chapter Summary

Jim and Blair help a woman who is being stalked by her cuddly criminal dad.

A guy goes to what appears to be a really shady job interview in a dank basement. The interviewer is obscured by shadows and his voice is disguised by a device which makes him incomprehensible.

A woman pushing a stroller is frightened by a stalker. This is what happens when you take your baby for a walk at, judging by the level of darkness and the number of people on the streets, about three o'clock in the morning. By the time she gets the attention of a police officer, the guy is gone.

Same woman--her name's Lindsay--reports her experience to Jim and Blair and Simon the next day. She gets an awful long way into her story before offhandedly mentioning that she in fact knows the identity of the stalker and that it is her estranged father, a notorious bank robber. This is maybe the kind of information you want to lead with, lady. Simon is all for helping her for the shot at busting a most-wanted criminal.

Jim and Blair stake out Lindsay's apartment from a conveniently located vacant place across the street. Blair's preparing a lecture, and Jim mocks him. I love these cozy domestic scenes. Blair doesn't think Lindsay is in much danger: "I mean, why would a father want to hurt his own child?" Even Jim's dad, he points out, would never want to kill Jim. Jim isn't so sure about that. This is maybe the kind of comment I might choose to follow up on, but Blair's caught sight of Lindsay undressing through the binoculars and he is officially distracted.

After the boys are relieved, they continue their Deep and Meaningful Conversation in the truck. Blair: "Maybe I was lucky not knowing who my real father was." I sort of love the rampant father issues in this show. At any rate, it's always nice when they bother to connect the characters' personal lives with the case.

And in a slight variation from the usual boys-in-profile-in-the-truck shots, we get a close look at an inexplicably pensive Jim.

Blair can't find his lecture notes. "Jim, we gotta go back!" Jim grumbles and remarks, "Of all the partners, I get the nutty professor," which seems to genuinely hurt Blair. Jim caves and turns around.
At the stakeout apartment, Jim and Blair knock and knock, but there's no answer. Jim hears slow heartbeats. He kicks down the door, and they find the other cops out cold. Jim leaves Blair calling an ambulance and runs across to Lindsay's. She and the baby are gone.

Lindsay and her baby meet with her criminal dad, whose name is Harry, in a car. He tries to give her money, but she refuses it. She calls him a bank robber and cop killer, and he admits to the former charge but insists he is innocent of the latter. She's all, whatever, can I go now?

There's evidence that Harry is gearing up for another big heist, so Simon gives the department one morning before he has to call the FBI to help with the collar. With rental car info from Lindsay, the PD tracks him to a hotel room, a feat which Jim suspiciously describes as "too easy." He's gone by the time they get there, but Jim catches sight of him nearby, and he and Blair ("get behind me, Chief; stay close") chase him into an old warehouse where Harry drops them through a trapdoor into a hole! Sure enough, Harry left a trail of breadcrumbs on purpose so he could get a chance to reason with his pursuers. He says a copycat is the killer--not him. He asks for charges dropped and help for his family if he turns himself in, and Jim refuses. Harry tries the "I have cancer" card. Jim's like, not my call, dude, so Harry leaves Jim and Blair to languish together in the hole. Which I hope they do, for the rest of the episode.

Nope, I guess they got out, because after the commercial they're in Simon's office, getting totally chewed out. Jim and Blair try to defend themselves, but Simon says "You don't talk now, I talk!" Oh, now daddy's all maaaad. He threatens to turn the reins over to the Feds--horror of horrors! Blair argues in Harry's favor, looking fruitlessly to a silent Jim for support, and Simon basically calls him a sucker. Blair points out that the guy "actually went to a hell of a lot of trouble not to kill us," and Jim pipes up, "Good point." Simon sends them off, telling Jim to do some "good police work." Ouch.
Out in the hall Blair snits, "You could have backed me up in there," and Jim says "Chief, you saw Simon's mood. I wasn't going to get anywhere with that." Blair thinks Jim believes in Harry: "I could see it in your face." How much do I love that Blair has gotten to the point where he can read complex thoughts in Jim's expression. Jim: "Right now, I don't know what to believe." He says odds are Harry is lying.

After another incomprehensible interview scene (during which it is now clear that the computerized voice guy is looking for people to help him with a bank heist), Harry sees his daughter being loaded into an ambulance. Hmmm, surely the fact that the last line Jim said is "let's see if we can beat him at his own game" has nothing to do with this! Harry goes to the hospital and sneaks into Lindsay's room, touches her hair, and calls her "sunshine" (as the audience all gets flashbacks of Jim over Blair's hospital bed [and vice versa]) whereupon Jim bursts out from behind a camera and holds Harry at gunpoint. Lindsay sits up. You're on Candid Camera!

As Jim leads CD out he gets a call from Simon--another bank has just been robbed, Harry's MO. Jim: "It can't be Harry because he's with us!" Jim sends Blair to drive Lindsay home while he and Harry go off on the trail of the robber in the truck. They came in separate cars?

While Jim and Harry talk bank robbery, Blair stays at Lindsay's (even though Jim told him where to meet up with him and Harry) and does his usual earnest-caring-big-eyed-kind-to-children chat-up of the single mom. Oh, Blair. He wants so desperately to have a family that he's always sort of inserting himself into the ready-made dad role in various broken homes, but his tragic inability to commit (slash undeclared prior commitment) ensures he'll always abandon them just as did his father before him! Blair and Lindsay have a conversation about fathers, with Lindsay saying she felt something of her father's childhood affection for her when he called her "sunshine" but she doesn't believe he can change. Blair brightly says "There's still plenty of time, right?" and then immediately hates himself for it. He apologizes, and Lindsay doesn't know what he's so upset about. Blair haltingly reveals that Harry's dying. Lindsay suggests, reasonably, that Harry may have been lying when he told them that, but Blair, grand high authority on honesty that he is, disagrees. He tells Lindsay it's not a chance he would take, getting all afterschool special about how he never knew his father. I love it.

Jim and Harry get their own precious moment when they're staking out some C4 plant or something (Harry is still cuffed) and Jim asks Harry if his bank robbery run was "worth it." Harry says he finally realized it wasn't, and Jim cynically suggests, "Let me guess. It was about the time you went to see your doctor last." Harry, to his credit, admits to that. He despairs a bit about missing the chance to be Lindsay's father. Jim says "You never stop being a parent." What would you know, Jim? Seriously, I want to know where that came from.

A guy comes out of the plant and Jim goes up to greet him. Guy is all friendly but then suddenly runs away. Jim chases him, catches him, and brings him back to the truck. Jim expressed pleased surprise that Harry didn't take the opportunity to run away, and adds, "I think I'm going to need your handcuffs." Heh, that's kinda badass.

On the way to the station, Jim brings Harry by Lindsay's. Blair immediately pulls Jim into the hall with an "I gotta talk to you," leaving a nonplussed Lindsay and child alone with Criminal Dad.
Blair explains to Jim apologetically that he accidentally told Lindsay about Harry dying, and he figures they need a moment alone. I like how now they trust Harry completely and absolutely, and they don't care whether or not Lindsay feels comfortable with this arrangement.

At the station Jim tells Simon he got more info out of the guy he captured but Simon says it doesn't matter, as the Feds are on the case now, which is always the worst news ever on this or any cop show. Jim heads back to Lindsay's and smells gas, again! He runs inside and finds a plainclothes officer unconscious on the floor. He checks his pulse briefly and continues looking around. I think that's just to highlight the contrast when he sees Blair, drops to his knees, and immediately begins crying "Chief, Chief!" and trying to wake him with little slaps on the face.

As Blair snaps awake suddenly, Lindsay enters from... somewhere... and panics: she can't find her baby!

Jim and Simon meet with the Fed on the case, all confused, "Why would a man kidnap his own grandson?" Uh... why not? I mean, that's really the most logical explanation and I'm kind of hoping at this point that it's true and Jim and Blair's automatic faith in the man is proved wrong and we learn that even people who have or claim to have cancer can be bad, but there's still time for plenty of twists. Rafe comes in to call Jim to the phone. After talking briefly Jim leaves, telling Rafe he's going on a job interview.

Incomprehensible robot voice guy interviews Jim! Of course his standing-in-the-dark disguise is no match for Jim's vision, and when his eyes adjust to the dark, Jim sees it's Harry.

Back at the station Jim steps off the hallway and finds Blair. He takes him by the arm, walks real close, looks around shiftily, and then reveals that he just got recruited as a getaway driver for the next
Sometimes I really wonder what their co-workers must think of them.

Jim figures (correctly, as it turns out) that the copycat guy stole the baby in order to force Harry to help him run the next job. Jim plans to go along with it, not telling anyone because the Feds would never allow it, and tells Blair, "I'll need your help on this one." Blair nods: "Just let me know what I gotta do."

There is a bank heist, and Jim is indeed the getaway driver. (Sorry, that's all the detail I do on action sequences.) Jim drops the different participants off at prearranged dropoff points; just after he drives away, each criminal is surrounded by police. So what was Blair's role, arranging that? Harry and the copycat guy have a showdown in a warehouse where Harry gets shot and Jim arrives in the nick of time to shoot the real bad guy. The cutest thing about the scene is that the baby is there and when Jim goes to pick him up, he coos, "Hi, sweetheart!"

In the wrap-up, Jim, Blair, and Simon hang around in Harry's hospital room and Harry and Lindsay bond over the baby.

**Bottom Line:** For the second-to-last episode of the entire series, it would have been nice to see more major character stuff, but that's my complaint about every episode. I should just face that this is not really a character development show. We did get some conversation about fathers, which is actually kind of a big-ish theme of the show, so that was nice. All in all, a solid episode adhering to standard Sentinel formula.
Chapter Summary

Blair finally completes his thesis, and Naomi sends it to a publisher without his permission. Jim's secret is out, destroying his ability to do his job, his trust in Blair, and perhaps the partnership of a lifetime. Oh, noes! What will Blair do? Only the most awesome thing possible!

Well, here we are: the final episode. Look, listen, I'm not too good at emotional stuff, but you and I, Reader, we've been through a lot together over these last four seasons, and I--well, I don't know how I would have dealt with this Sentinel thing without you. And I... well... oh, you know. Let's just get to the recap.

Act I: Revelation

Over a reverent theme, we pan in through the loft window where Blair is typing the following (according to his voiceover and the snatch we see on the screen):

Humanity has long dug into its past in the hope that it will shed light on its future. Perhaps what this reveals is that it is the best of ourselves that will survive and lead us through the next millennium. Watching our every step will be our tribal protectors, The Sentinels, and their insight will further illuminate the spiritual connection of all things.

Caps his. The video isn't quite clear enough for me to make out the rest of the text on the screen; I can only catch enough of what's written above the final paragraph to verify that it is more or less gibberish:

...need to allow us that inner glimpse which... integral part of the new the millennium [sic]. Perhaps... we will then grasp a better understanding of... more like humans and less like the primitive monkey.... which was become our legacy.

With flourish and gusto (and some unnecessary Powerpoint-esque sound effects from the bored foley guy), he types, "THE END." Just a killer ending for your academic opus there, Perrault. Incidentally,
I have it on good authority that Blair's is the first doctoral thesis to be set "once upon a time, in a faraway land..."

Intercut scenes of hands putting together a rifle with Blair formatting his title page. Suddenly someone grabs Blair around the neck from behind! He gasps! "Sweetheart!" It's just Naomi, giving him a hug. She emailed him to say she'd be by, but he didn't see; he turned off the phone (oh, dial-up!) to finish his thesis. She's excited that he's done, even though he stresses that it's just a draft, and asks to read it. Blair emphatically refuses, insisting it's "not good enough," and "I want you to be really proud." He takes off to meet Jim. Naomi asks if it will be dangerous, and Blair reminds her, "I'm just an observer, remember?" Someone truly on the ball might wonder what he's observing if he's already got a complete draft of his paper done, but whatever.

When Blair is gone, Naomi calls up an editor ex, Sid, and tells him she's promised not to read her son's thesis, but that's no reason a complete stranger to Blair shouldn't read it and offer constructive criticism! Oh, Naomi. I know a lot of fans dislike her for this, but she really does have Blair's interests at heart, as wrong-headedly as she goes about this. After all, the only reason he offers for not letting her read the thing is that he doesn't think it's good, and as she says to Blair, somewhat intriguingly, "You've always been your own worst critic." In hindsight it's clear that Blair should have given her some version of the truth—that he's promised to let the subject read it first as there could be privacy concerns—but what do you want, he was cornered. I also get the feeling Naomi's going out of her way to interfere positively in his life in any way that occurs to her because she feels guilty for not being there for him in the past. Not that I think she was in any way a neglectful parent—I'm sure she and Blair were quite close as he grew up—but even the most attentive working mothers can have that kind of guilt, and Blair is always off in the path of bullets now, and she may feel that by making sure his academic career's on track she can steer him away from that.

Speaking of bullets, the rifleman whose hands we saw now has his sights trained on a strike mob down at the docks. Blair arrives late to meet up with Jim and Megan, who exposit that they're here to provide security to the union leader. He's kind of a frattish jackass (Jim dryly calls him "a prince") named Bartley. He anti-endears himself to Megan by immediately asking "Got any more babes on this detail?" He calls Blair a hippie and tell him to stay off the TV coverage, "unless you want to shave your legs." Blair gives him a big insincere mimed laugh which appears to be the gestural equivalent of a rimshot. Jim looks thoroughly unamused and grits thinly, "Could we do this?" Jim doesn't like when people insinuate his boy looks like a girl! A hairy girl!

Bartley prepares to speak to the assembled crowd, but just in time Jim sees the rifleman and shoots out his sight. Sentinel aim! Megan hussles Bartley into a van as things get chaotic. We cut to later in Simon's office with Simon telling all the named officers except Rafe, "We're dealing with our old friend Klaus Zeller, aka the The Iceman." Huh, I thought he looked vaguely familiar, but I didn't expect a callback to a previous episode! Not that the backstory is remotely relevant. Simon fills us in that after Jim--"Ahem!" Blair coughs--Jim and Blair caught him, he broke out of prison. Simon warns, "He has a nasty habit of targeting his pursuers. Jim."

Rafe comes in and calls Blair out to the phone. Blair answers out in the hall and it's Sid, offering him a book deal: "The Sentinel is going to be the next Celestine Prophecy." I'd never heard of that, but apparently it's a huge bestseller about some guy who uncovers ancient manuscripts which lead to spiritual enlightenment—where? Oh yes, in the jungles of Peru. Blair just stands there, broken, for a moment, and then covers his face with his hand. "What did she do?" "She emailed me your thesis." Why did Blair write his thesis like a bestseller, anyway?
Blair stutteringly and intensely tells Sid not to publish it, not to show it to anybody, to just destroy it, it was never meant to be seen. "That's all I have to say about it, thank you, goodbye." He hangs up as Megan and Jim come over, Megan wearing cunning eyeglasses, and ask him what's up. Blair says it was his mom. "How is Naomi?" asks Jim pleasantly. Aw, it's nice that he and Blair's mom get along. Blair, with a forced smile: "Just fine, until I get ahold of her."

Zeller orders a special gun to be built.

When Blair and Jim come home Naomi is in the apartment, on the phone with Sid. She passes off the phone to Blair and goes to accept a genuinely friendly greeting from Jim. She hugs him twice, because he's been working out. Okay, now it's getting a little creepy.

Blair accuses Naomi of not listening to him, and she says, "I'm listening with my heart," and even though she doesn't seem to understand why Blair is mad, she apologizes. Blair tells her, "there's stuff in there that could get me in a lot of serious trouble." "What kind of trouble?" "I can't tell you that. It's between me and Jim." I think he speaks of country matters. Blair tells Naomi not to do anything else. Naomi thinks. "Well, suppose that I--" Blair cuts her off by waving his hands and saying

"Did you know my son is brilliant?" Naomi brags. "He works pretty hard at keeping that from me, Naomi," says Jim, earning a laugh a swat. She's giving him a taste of the stew she's making when Blair comes back and asks to talk to Naomi confidentially. Jim says he'll be upstairs. "Confidentially," Blair repeats meaningfully, and Jim, looking a little hurt that there's something Blair can't say in front of him, agrees.

Next we see him sitting on the couch wearing headphones as Naomi and Blair talk in Blair's room. Blair accuses Naomi of not listening to him, and she says, "I'm listening with my heart," and even though she doesn't seem to understand why Blair is mad, she apologizes. Blair tells her, "there's stuff in there that could get me in a lot of serious trouble." "What kind of trouble?" "I can't tell you that. It's between me and Jim." I think he speaks of country matters. Blair tells Naomi not to do anything else. Naomi thinks. "Well, suppose that I--" Blair cuts her off by waving his hands and saying
serenely, "Nnnooo."

Day. Jim and Blair head out to the truck doing a Vaudeville routine about Bartley:

    BLAIR: You know what's funny about him leading the dockworkers is?
    JIM: No, why don't you hum a few bars.
    BLAIR: He's more like a "short"-shoreman!
    JIM: Ohh, a "short"-shoreman...

You should talk, Blair, he's your height at least. As they get into the truck, they're mobbed by reporters. "Can you tell us why you chose to reveal your abilities at this time?" "How will the publication of Mr. Sandburg's manuscript affect your work with the police department?"

Dumbfounded, Jim repeats, "My abilities...?" and turns to Blair, shocked and betrayed. "Chief, tell me you didn't--!

Betrayed!

"I didn't do anything," cries Blair, wracked with horror and misery. "Let's hear from the Sentinel himself!" one of the reporters nails in the coffin. Jim insists he doesn't know anything and rolls up the windows, gearing up the truck. "Jim, I can explain," says Blair, but Jim says, barely controlled, "Chief, do not say anything right now." What? No, I'm okay. This color hurts my eyes, is all.

**Act II: Reaction**

Jim and Blair walk down the docks together silently, having evaded the reporters, I guess. Blair: "Why aren't you saying anything?" It seems they've already hashed out the facts, because Jim responds, "There's nothing to say, Chief. It's all been said. It's out. It's over. There's no going back."
Jim continues, "I just thought we had an agreement that I was going to read your thesis first." Blair reminds Jim that he didn't do this and that he was planning on changing names to protect the innocent, but "I hadn't figured a way to do that without compromising the documentation!" You know, I'm pretty sure the documentation is just Blair's chickenscratch on the back of various napkins.

Jim insinuates that Blair knows more than he's letting on, which Blair of course finds offensive. "How long have we known each other that you think that's what I'm about?" Jim asks why he didn't mention this earlier. Personally, I kind of wondered myself why Blair didn't at least warn Jim that this might be an issue--he did kind of have a right to be included on that "confidential" conversation with Naomi--but I think Blair was scared that, you know, this might happen. Blair explains, "I thought it was over. My mom was doing what she thought was right. She didn't know what it was about." A pretty apt summing-up of Naomi's role there, much more concise than mine. Jim asks if the thesis was just lying around, then, and Blair snaps, "Don't try to run some interrogation on me, you're not going to find some weak spot in me! I'm not a perp! I'm your friend!"

Jim gives him an insincere pat on the shoulder and tells him sarcastically that this is a great opportunity and he should go for it, and walks off.

Simon, Megan, and Jim meet with Bartley while Blair hangs around in the background on his cell. Bartley refuses to be protected, insisting that the deal he's making for the union workers needs to go through. He offers himself up as bait to draw out the assassin. Simon: "It's not our policy to endanger the people we're trying to protect," COULD HAVE FOOLED ME. Just as they are deciding, of course, to go through with it, Blair pokes his head in the inner circle sheepishly: "I think there's something you should know, I tried to put a stop to it, but, uh... the noon news is going to run a story about Jim and me." Simon looks at Jim, who turns and walks off. Simon, gently but firmly: "What is this all about, Sandburg?"

Cut to a reporter who recites the exact opening credits monologue all the way through. The newscast plays in the gun shop as Zeller looks over his masterpiece gun.

Blair meets with some university people. "I know this situation with my thesis has to be really embarrassing for the university," he begins to apologize, but no, they think it's great! Uh... huh. You would think they would at least be confused and dismayed at the academic lightweightness of his bestseller-style thesis, but no. They call in the others, some reporters and Sid and an apologetic Naomi. It's just an increasing parade of ridiculousness as Sid offers Blair a million dollars and talks about movie rights, and a reporter informs Blair that the Nobel committee is considering his research for the science prize. At this point you will be fooled into thinking this is a dream, but you are wrong.

Also, you just won the lottery and the gold medal for competitive sexual intercourse. How do you feel?
Squeezing in his writing between adventures, Blair has managed to produce a document which is simultaneously a viable bestseller and Nobel-quality scholarship. And of course it's going to be made into a movie just like Blair said. It is Blair's exact best daydream gone horribly horribly wrong. A reporter asks Blair for a comment, but after ascertaining he's not on live TV, Blair just leaves. I wonder what he would have done at this point if it had been live.

At the station Brown and Rafe crack jokes about Jim, asking him to use his senses to pick up gossip and to wear a superhero costume. Taggart asks Jim when he'll have a sense of humor about this, which I think is a little unwarranted, considering that it's so soon, and anyway, what was he supposed to say? Jim already did riposte pretty wittily to the guys. His tone betrayed his extreme weariness. Jim tries to get to work as Blair comes out, and the guys start ribbing him. Rafe mentions the Nobel prize, and everyone starts bowing and crying, "We're not worthy!" Poor Blair and Jim. Blair runs off and Simon comes out to get everyone back to work. "The official line is this is not true. There is absolutely no proof!" He goes over to Jim to quietly ask if that's really what the official line should be. Can they deny it? Jim doesn't think so: "There's documented evidence. It's all written down." Damn Blair and his magic truth pen! Jim tells Simon he's already risked too much for Jim and it's his own problem. "What are you going to do?" "I'm going to do the only thing I know how to do, Captain. I'm going to do my job." Simon nods, and Jim pats his shoulder with grateful affection.

Hanging out with his protection in his office, Bartley asks Jim about his Sentinel senses. Jim snits, "Ask Sandburg. He's the expert." Cut to Blair walking down in the street with Megan, complaining that Jim doesn't trust him anymore, and meanwhile the advance is up to three million. He echoes my words from earlier (I should really write these after a complete viewing of the episode), "It's like my best dream--but also my worst nightmare." Megan says, "It's an extraordinary accomplishment, but I hate to see what it's doing to you and Jim." Megan is a sla-sher. She very sagely advises him to do what he knows is right so that his and Jim's consciences will both be clear.

Upstairs, Jim cynicals that the reporters are probably just waiting for someone to shoot Bartley so they get a prizewinning photograph. It's kind of cool to see Jim's attitudes about media from the A plot informing and being informed by the B plot here. Blair and Megan arrive just as Jim is heading out. Simon: "What are you doing? Go with him, Sandburg!" Blair: "He doesn't want me with him." Oh, just pump Blair's exquisite suffering into my veins already. Simon: "I need you with him." Simon is a sla-sher!

Simon tells Blair to "help him focus," so outside with Jim Blair starts telling Jim to isolate sounds. Jim: "I know what to do, Chief, all right? I know the drill. You don't have to quote me chapter and verse. Why don't you save that for your interviews?" Ohhh, Jim, so harsh and so eloquent. Jim hears the rifle being put together and loaded, and he tries to track the sound, but he has a hard time with all the clicking-equipment sounds of the reporters putting together their cameras and so forth. He wanders away, looking for Zeller, but is mobbed by reporters who pepper him with questions and flash bulbs in his poor blinking face. Blair sees what's going on and pushes over to Jim's rescue.
Back! Back, you fiends!

But it's too late. Zeller shoots through the window, and Bartley goes down.

**Act III: Retreat**

Later in Bartler's office, a very much alive Bartley examines the dummy with a bullet hole in his head. Oh, phew, aren't you glad that charming dude is still around? They're going to pretend he's dead while he waits at a safehouse, but he warns them they have 24 hours before he goes ahead and does his deal thingy regardless.

Out in front of the station, Megan complains about all the evidence they have to go through as Jim and Blair send each other furtive little hurt looks. Megan: "It might go quicker if you two would talk to each other." Jim insists there's nothing to say, but then demands to know how Blair intended to keep Jim's identity a secret and maintain the validity of his research. "You couldn't have! You knew that! But you went ahead and wrote it down anyway!" Blair: "If I was going to help you understand your abilities, I had to chart your development in a scientific manner and you know that, man!" I still don't know what the problem is. Couldn't Blair refer to Jim as "J.E."? I mean... I don't know all the details, myself, but I know that protecting the identities of case study subjects isn't exactly novel territory in the social sciences. Anyway, it's momentarily forgotten as Jim zooms in on a robbery in progress across the street. He and Megan ambush the thief as he leaves the jewelry store; he recognizes Jim and starts jabbering about how neat it is to be taken down by the Sentinel himself. Jim is so not amused.

Loft. Jim paces. Naomi comes up and gives him some tea, as we pan out we see Blair is standing right there, off behind Jim, watching expressionlessly. Naomi feels terrible. "I know you were just trying to help Blair," Jim assures her, resigned. She begs the boys not to let this tear apart their friendship. Jim says "Things happen. People change," which, *ohhh, ouch*. He rends all our hearts as he declares plainly, "I can't take this attention. That's not me. I just want to go back to the way things were," which I interpret to mean before the secret got out, but Blair interprets to mean before he had his senses, and Jim goes with it. "There's got to be some way to let them go dormant. Some meditation you can give me," Jim suggests, looking at Naomi, but of course meaning Blair, and Blair responds, saying, "That's not who you are." Jim never reacts well to being told who he is, and this is no different. He finally turns to face Blair.
Jim complains that people see him as a goofy comic book hero now. He just wants to "[be] a good cop and live a simple life." Oh, he does, he does, poor thing. He leaves with the parting shot, "Your research is done, Chief. Why don't you let it go?" Blair looks at the closed door where Jim used to be, then looks to his mother.

Jim arrives in Simon's office to see the tail end of Simon apologetically backpedalling with his boss. "He thinks I kept the Sentinel thing from him," Simon explains to Jim, who says, "Well, captain, in actuality, you did." Ha! Simon: "You're not helping." He gloom and dooms that he has no idea what to put in his report, that IA will get involved and all of the cases Jim has worked on will be up for enquiry. Jim requests to "go back to way things were... before Sandburg. When I worked alone." Ohhh SNAP. Surprised, Simon asks if Jim's talked to Blair, and Jim says it's not his call, beginning to panic: "I want to go back to being a cop, just a regular cop, and with this Sentinel thing hanging over us, it's always right there and I, and I'm tired of it! I just want out." Simon, sadly: "Maybe it's for the best." Noooooo Simon! Not you too!

What I do find intriguing about Jim's little outburst there is that phrase, "it's always there." I think it's more than the project that's always hanging over him when he's with Blair.

But the project itself has been bothering him increasingly as it nears completion. The thesis/observation project is of course the ostensible reason that Blair and Jim do anything together, but Jim has come to really love Blair, while he's still at best ambivalent about his abilities. The only way for their relationship to move forward is in a post-Sentinel-project state, with both of them admitting that they don't stay together for the project but because they simply want to be together; unfortunately, it seems that the publicity which forces Jim's hand has come at a time when he is not comfortable doing that, and he still thinks that renouncing his abilities, or finishing the project, necessarily means the end of his partnership with Blair.

So is that what Blair intended to wait for? Really, I'm not sure Blair ever did really believe he could move forward with his project. I think he wrote it for his own satisfaction, just so that it was out of him. I think he always had in his mind, at least from Night Shift, that he might very well end up destroying it. But he needed to see it realized before he gave it up.

Right. Now I've dwelt on that as long as I can, and we really must move on. Are you ready?

Simon gets up to show Jim a photograph of the night Bartley was shot at--Jim was inches from Zeller when the paparazzi mobbed him. Speaking of Zeller, let's watch a bullet sailing from a rooftop, through the sky, through the window, through Simon's gut, through the wall, through Megan's shoulder, and into the doorway, narrowly missing Blair's head. Close-up on Simon's gasping face as the audience cries out with a collective "Holy crap!" Zeller smiles to himself over his rifle. Jim rushes...
to Simon and Blair rushes to Megan, who whispers a pathetic, "Sandy...!"

**Act IV: Redemption**

Jim and Blair stand and stare mournfully into the window of Simon's ICU roomlet and finally have a conversation.

BLAIR: No one was expecting this.
JIM: I should have been. I'm so off my game, Chief, with all this media crap. That bullet was meant for me.
BLAIR: Don't... don't block out your senses. This is when you need them most. And I can help you.
JIM: Take a look at that man. That happened because of me. I don't think it's a good idea to be around me right now. The only chance I got of getting Zeller is if I'm on my own.

The guilt (both sides)! The separation-for-your-own-protection (which despite Jim's holding Blair at arm's length anyway, certainly seems genuine)! I love it!

What could be sadder than Jim's sad?

A: Blair's sad.

Zeller finds out that Bartley is still alive.

In the loft, Blair goes through his papers, and Naomi, all choked up, asks if Blair still loves her, even after all this. Awww!
Some lovely sunlight illuminating Blair's Adam's apple. Which, in this episode, deserves to be a credited co-star.

Blair hugs her and very gently and lovingly reassures her: "We are all doing what we thought was right. Right?" Naomi nods, swallowing back tears. Blair continues a nice little speech: "Nothing happens in this universe randomly. It's all for a reason. And that's part of what I was writing about! You know, I always wondered if my work would ever amount to anything, and if it's taught me one thing, it's taught me that Jim is right." Pretty much, yeah. "I got it all. I got it all right here. [gestures around--at the documents, and/or Naomi, and/or the loft.] The brass ring. And now I know what to do." He asks Naomi to call Sid, and she agrees and kisses his cheek.

Jim and Taggart get a tip about Zeller's gun-maker and head to his shop. They're just heading across the street, cocking their guns badassly (well, Jim is), when the store explodes!!

Back at the station, they theorize about What This Means, when Rafe calls, "Hey, guys, Sandburg's on TV! Giving some kind of press conference!" We see Blair approach a podium, Naomi and Sid standing by, and Jim's intense face as he stands about an inch away from a giant TV displaying Blair, who's adjusting his papers and saying, "Hi. Thank you all for coming. I just have a short speech prepared here..." Here it is, burthened with photos and meticulous stage directions:

[close-up on Blair's profile, his voice dull with tear-nearness] In our media-informed culture, a scientist receives validation by having his or her work published and after years of research there is great personal satisfaction when that goal is reached. [voice quavering] However, my desire to impress both my peers and the world at large drove me to an immoral and unethical act. [looking down at this papers] My thesis, *The Sentinel*, is, is a fraud. [pan close on Jim's disbelieving parted lips]
While my paper does quote ancient source material, the documentation proving that James Ellison... [long pause]

... actually possesses hyper senses, is fraudulent. [quickly, wiping his nose] Looking back, I can say that it's a good piece of fiction. [profile again]

I apologize for this deception and my only hope is that I can be forgiven [Naomi, looking compassionate] for the pain that I've caused those that are close to me [Jim's back, watching; he turns away]. Thank you. [flees podium]

I knew this was coming, so I can't react to it with as much pure genuine wonder and adoration as I did when I first learned about it, but let's all just take a moment to reflect on what a lovely and touching plot development this is. For the entire run of the show Blair has been working for this goal, his thesis, and when he finally accomplishes it after more than three years of work, and we learn that it is this unbelievably (really) magnificent achievement of literary and scientific value, he sacrifices it all--for Jim. I know I make a big deal about how every little shoulder-touch means they want to bone each other and I guess that probably cheapens this, but, and I am having a fleeting moment of seriousness here, whether you believe their relationship is sexual in nature or not, you have to admire the bond of love between them. Here we have the proof that it's unbreakably strong, surpassingly important, and entirely unselfish. For me, the depth of that bond is the perpetually-surprising quality which takes this lame semi-supernatural cop show with problematic plots and makes it something more, something worth devoting time and thought and creative energy to.

That and Blair's mouth.

Okay, I think I lost the strand of seriousness somewhere, there.
As Blair leaves the room, he barely seems to register the chancellor running after him, crying, "You've embarrassed this university for the last time! I want your office cleared out by Friday!" Well, yes.

Bartley refuses to stay in the safehouse; as Zeller has apparently died in the explosion, that's good enough for him, and he's ready to have his press conference and rally. Radio news reports on the rally, and we see Zeller listening. Oh, yawn, of course. So not the right place for this act break.

**Act V: Resolution**

In the hospital, Blair's talking to a doctor as Jim enters, and our boys meet up in the hall. Blair tells Jim Simon and Megan will be okay. Even in the finale, they didn't want to kill either of them off. Well, I'm okay with that. Blair heard they got Zeller, and Jim shrugs it off, not ready to commit one way or another on that. Pause.

JIM: I saw your press conference.
BLAIR [looks up briefly, then feigns casualness ineffectively]: Oh, yeah, you saw that? [shrugs and pauses in shrugged state] It's just a book.
JIM: It was your life.
BLAIR: Yeah, it was.

BLAIR: You know, you were right, I mean... I don't know what I was expecting to do with it. And, uh... I mean, where do I get off following you around for three years pretending I was a cop, right?
JIM: This self-deprecation don't suit you, you know. You might have been just an observer, but you're the best cop I've ever met. [Blair looks up and blinks] And you're the best partner I could have ever asked for.
JIM: You've been a great friend, and you've pulled me through some pretty weird stuff.
BLAIR [swallowing]: Thanks.
[Pause; Jim looks away, and then back to Blair, opens his mouth, knits his brow]
JIM: Are you ready to get busy?
ME: [coughs violently]

Our happily reunited Jim and Blair hang around the department with the rest of the non-critically-injured guys, making fun of Bartley, who's taken over Simon's office to arrange his press conference. Suddenly Zeller bursts in and starts shooting the place up, crying, "I want Bartley! I want Bartley!"
Does it reflect poorly on me or the show that at this point in the episode I have absolutely no idea why? Jim throws down Bartley, and Blair heroically rescues Taggart. It looks like Rafe is shot several times in the general area of the brains, and I'm not too broken up about it, but we see later that he's alive and conscious, albeit with blood dripping down his face. Jim manages to get a round off into Zeller's gut from the other side of one of those large windows between the bullpen and the hall. He's just begun to relax when he Sentinel-hears the clicking of the gun reloading and realizes Zeller's not dead--just lying on the floor with bullets in his Kevlar. Jim ducks in the nick of time, but takes a bullet in the leg.

Jim manages to trail Zeller to the roof anyway, and sees him escape over the side on a rope. While he's crouching behind some kind of obstruction trying to decide what to do, Blair joins him, and we get a nice final action-togetherness moment as Blair helps him up and, supporting each other, they make it to the edge of the roof.

I like to think they'd have done this anyway even if Jim's leg wasn't shot.

They peer down at the escaping Zeller. "Do we help him up or push him over?" Blair wonders. Generally the answer to that question on this show is "help him up," but Zeller answers it for them
by pulling out his guns and shooting (they duck) and then promptly falling several stories to the ground like a big stupid idiot. Jim and Blair poke their heads over and watch and make faces as he hits bottom.

United they huddle.

Fade over to Blair, looking pretty with his hair down and longer, perhaps, than ever, looking around the bullpen, wandering into Simon's empty office. Taggart asks him what's up, and Blair says he's taking a last look around: "I cleaned out my desk over at Rainier. I thought I'd do the same thing here. I'm a fraud, man. I don't think Simon's going to want me hanging around." On cue, Simon booms, "Sandburg, that is not your office!" He's being wheeled up by Rafe (bandaged); with them are Jim (with a cane), Megan (with her arm in a sling), Henri (unscathed), and Naomi, whom Blair is just as puzzled to see as we are. "I'd never miss this occasion, honey!" Simon says he understands Blair was fired from the university, and Jim tells Blair, "You're finished in this department, Chief," and I'm sure Blair thinks it's just lovely that his mother has come to support him while he's officially fired. "I-I kind of figured that," Blair stammers.

"As an observer," Jim amends, throwing Blair a detective's badge. Blair: "I don't deserve this!" Well, no. Simon says it's his provided he goes through police academy and firearms training. "And if you do, Detective Ellison is looking for a permanent, official partner." I'll bet. Jim ducks his head and limps over to Blair, who asks, "Yeah?" Jim just grins all broad. "What do you say?" "Say something, Sandy," says Megan. Blair says, "I'm still not cutting my hair."

"That's what you think," says Jim, pulling him into a headlock with his cane, holding his head and playing with his hair with his free hand. "They're gonna love you at the academy, huh? Captain, I'm gonna make a little Blairskin rug for you here." "What are you talking about! Ow!" Blair cries semi-incomprehensibly as we fade to green and "THE SENTINEL" for the last time.
Because this is how they say "I love you," folks.

**Bottom Line:** It's an emotionally draining episode but a great one, sending the boys through the ringer and ending on a high note. (The fact that the last words uttered in the show are essentially "Blairskin rug" is a little odd, but whatever!) The serieslong dissertation plot wraps up with a bang, and we get our fill of angst, sacrifice, affection, and good old friendly kidding-around between the guys. Speaking as someone whose typical reaction to episodes is "if only they had done this or this or this," I really don't think I could have asked for a more satisfying resolution. And so, much like the primitive monkey that is our legacy, Jim and Blair's purest love lives on forever to illuminate the spiritual connection of all things.

THE END
Appendix: Fact Sheet

Chapter Summary

A compendium of character facts and backstory timelines for The Sentinel, for the purposes of quick fic reference.

Character Info

Jim Facts

**Full name:** James J. Ellison (Concensus seems to be that the "J" stands for "Joseph," although I can't find a specific episode citation.)

**Date of birth:** September 14, 1957 ([3x9 Red Ice](#); but there is contention about this. See timeline.)

**Height:** 183cm (6 feet even. See [3x9 Red Ice](#). Actor Richard Burgi's height according to [IMDB](#) is actually 187cm or 6'1 1/2".)

**Weight:** 90 kg (198 lb. [3x9 Red Ice](#).)

**Eyes:** Blue (Well, yes, it also says that on the form in [3x9 Red Ice](#). But it is possible to independently verify this.)

**S.I.N.:** 014-405-89 ([3x9 Red Ice](#))

**ATM PIN:** 3840 (his parents' birthdates; [2x5 Payback](#))

**Shoe Size:** Unknown!!

**Occupation:** Detective, Cascade Police Department, Major Crimes department

**Badge Number:** 733 ([3x4 Poachers](#))

**Address:** 852 Prospect Ave., Apt. 307, Cascade, WA 98765, USA (see [3x6 Vendetta](#) for street address; several episodes show apartment number on the door), aka "the loft" (cf. all the time)

**Phone Number:** 555-4167 ([3x18 Love Kills](#); not clear whether this is the loft line or the cell.)

**Family:** Raised by affluent workaholic single father, William Ellison, after his parents divorced. One younger brother, Stephen Ellison, who now owns companies? or something? ([2x23 His Brother's Keeper](#)). Other childhood parent figures include housekeeper Sally and late mentor Bud ([3x17 Remembrance](#)). Formerly married to Carolyn Plummer, CPD.

**Place of origin:** Grew up in big mansionlike estate in or near Cascade ([3x17 Remembrance](#))

**Living arrangement:** Owns apartment listed above (paid for in lump sum from covert ops back pay,
cf. *2x3 Deep Water*. Possibly lived there with Carolyn when they were married (?). Lived there alone post-divorce until allowed Blair Sandburg to move in (*1x4 The Debt*).

Likes:

- Outdoor recreations (fishing, camping, kayaking, etc.: *2x4 Reunion, 2x15 Secret, 3x4 Poachers, 3x19 Crossroads*).
- The Jags.
- Golf (*1x10 Vow of Silence*).
- Fast food ("Wonderburger" *1x2 The Siege*; pizza *1x8 Love and Guns*; probably more).
- Claims to like being alone.

Dislikes:

- Open water (*2x9 The Rig*).
- Feds (*1x8 Love and Guns*).

**Blair Facts**

**Full name:** Blair Sandburg (Middle name nonexistent or not given. I choose to believe it is "Sunflower.").

**Date of birth:** 1969.

**Height:** Not given in the show; actor Garett Maggart's height according to IMDB is 5'7" (171cm).

**Weight:** Not given. I'd say maybe like around 160 as a rule. He's weedier at the beginning of the series, understandably.

**Eyes:** Blue.

**S.I.N.:** Unknown!!

**Shoe Size:** 8 1/2 (*2x12 Blind Man's Bluff*).

**Occupation:** Anthropology doctoral candidate, Rainier University (exact position changes; in *2x5 Payback*, Blair tells Simon he is no longer a research assistant but now a teaching fellow); semi-unofficial (unpaid) observer, Cascade Police Department.

**Address:** 852 Prospect Ave., Apt. 307, Cascade, WA 98765, USA (*1x4 The Debt* onwards).

**Family:** Raised by single mother, Naomi Sandburg. Father unknown (*2x9 Spare Parts*). Only child.

**Place of origin:** Certain evidence points to Texas (Jim implies his baseball team of choice is Texas in *2x5 Payback*; Blair schools Jim in Texas accents in *3x6 Vendetta*. It should be noted however that Blair says here that he has cousins Fort Worth, not that he used to live there. I picture Naomi's family coming from Texas, but Naomi and Blair moving around a lot when Blair was growing up.)

**Living arrangement:** Moved into bedroom under Jim's stairs for "one week" after basement warehouse apartment was destroyed by meth lab explosion next door in *1x4 The Debt*. Never left. Never mentioned again. Does pay rent (confirmed in *4x1 Sentinel Too Part 2*), but probably
frequently late or incompletely.

**Likes:**

- Adventure, new experiences, travel, research, learning
- Outdoor recreations (fishing, camping, kayaking, etc.: 2x4 Reunion, 2x15 Secret, 3x4 Poachers, 3x19 Crossroads)
- The Jags
- 1961 baseball memorabilia (2x06 True Crime)

**Dislikes:**

- Fast food (Possibly. He calls pizza "pie of death" in 1x8 Love and Guns, but he digs in in 2x12 Blind Man's Bluff.)

## Timelines

**Jim's Backstory Timeline Of Continuity Contradictions And Possible Time Travel**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event &amp; Date</th>
<th>Canon Support/Discussion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Born</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>September 14, 1957 (3x9 Red Ice); Circa 1962 (3x17 Remembrance)</td>
<td>The personal records Yuri hacks into in Red Ice give a definite D.O.B. for Jim. Later in this timeline we will see that it is late 1994 in show time when the story begins, giving him a starting age of 37. This date, however, is difficult to reconcile with the events of Remembrance, in which Jim was supposed to have been ten in the early 70s, or &quot;25 years ago&quot;. No matter how you reckon the actual dates, if Jim was ten 25 years ago, he would have to be exactly or close-enough to 35 at this point in season 3, when--according to the Red Ice date--he is supposed to be 40. Personally, I prefer the '57 date. Jim makes a good 40. (Possibly because RB was actually born in '58.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event &amp; Date</td>
<td>Canon Support/Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finds a body</td>
<td>SIMON: Yeah, I remember that cat [the strangler]. He had a three-year spree in the early '70s. (<a href="#">3x17 Remembrance</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circa 1973</td>
<td>The body that Jim found was the strangler's last victim. Simon's statement suggests that the strangler's spree ended in, say, '72 or '73. This jibes with the &quot;25 years ago&quot; said by several other characters, if we assume it's about 1997 during the episode. It's explicitly stated that Jim was ten, but according to the '57 birthdate, he would have been about fourteen. We now have a number of options:</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- Assume that the '57 date is incorrect (a typo in the records or something), that Jim was actually 32 at the start of the series (shyeah), and he and Blair have only seven years between them instead of twelve, which doesn't seem to make sense given their dynamic. Also, it's less sexy, somehow?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assume that the '57 date is correct, and that Jim is misremembering (and failing to recalculate) his actual age at the time (and that we are seeing Jim's false memories in flashbacks). This calls into question the reliability not only of those flashbacks, but all Jim flashbacks in other episodes (which makes sense given Jim's frequent memory problems and &quot;repression&quot;), and possibly the reliability of Jim as a central POV character at all. Can we trust the evidence of Jim's senses? Can we trust the evidence of our own??</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Make our peace with lack of continuity in a cheesy action show. Obviously, this is a last resort.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becomes motorcycle enthusiast</td>
<td>BLAIR: What do I mean. That thing with the bikes today, the Harleys. You're an expert. JIM: I was into bikes in high school. BLAIR: Why didn't you tell me? JIM: You never asked. (<a href="#">2x5 Payback</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early or mid 70s (during high school)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Goes to college (mentors Danny)</td>
<td>SIMON: Danny lost his dad when he was a little kid. When Jim was in college, he became his big brother. They were real close. Jim was the one who helped Danny get into the academy. (<a href="#">1x3 Killers</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late 70s/early 80s, presumably</td>
<td>It should be noted that I have no real reason to believe Jim went to college right after high school; he might easily have gone to school during or as part of his time in the Army. (His father certainly had the money to send him right out of high school, but Jim seems the type not to want to be supported any longer than necessary.) Strangely enough, though, Jim must have interested Danny in police work before he himself was an officer. The timeline gets pretty full closer to the present day; he can't have been in the force long enough to go to college during that period of his life. More likely he was an actual Big Brother-type big brother when Danny was a child, suggesting an earlyish time period (Danny is probably not more than 10 or 15 years younger than Jim). Do the Big Brothers even take right-out-of-high-school college students?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event &amp; Date</td>
<td>Canon Support/Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joins army</td>
<td><strong>unknown</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>JIM: He [Jim's father] had promised Stephen that he was going to take him on this trip if he kept his grades up. One day Steven comes home with a &quot;B&quot;. A &quot;B&quot;. The old man says &quot;Stephen, sorry, the deal's off. Jimmy, pack your bags.&quot; [Story involving car vandalism follows]</td>
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<td>BLAIR: So, he got to go on the trip?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>JIM: Yeah, and I got to go one of my own.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>BLAIR: Right. Join the army, see the world. (2x23 His Brother's Keeper)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This seems to imply that Jim joined the army not long after high school, but it's so vague that it could be anything. Jim may actually already have been in college at this point. Hell, Stephen may have been in college at this point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets involved in covert ops</td>
<td>At some point.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jim's involvement in covert ops is revealed in 2x3 Deep Water and is the crux of the plot in 2x15 Secret. Jim also refers to being in &quot;special ops&quot; (is that the same thing?) in 4x4 Dead End on Blank Street.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relationship with Veronica (competes with buddy Alan Archer)</td>
<td>87ish?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>JIM: After a couple of months [after finding out Veronica was with Alan], Veronica was transferred to Hawaii. We shipped out to the jungle. End of story. (4x4 Dead End on Blank Street)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In other words, the flashback events of Dead End happened just before Jim left for Peru. It's also stated that Alan followed Veronica to Honolulu and they married &quot;nine years ago,&quot; or five years before the start of the series (Jim must have been in Peru).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane downed over Peru</td>
<td>March 14, 1988</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ARMY GUY: It [the downed plane] was carrying a crew from Seventh Troop on an anti-insurgence op, commanded by Captain James Ellison. On March 14, '88, their Huey disappeared en route to the landing zone. (1x1 Switchman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rescued from Peru</td>
<td>September 1989?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>JIM: We were ordered to contact the local tribes and organize a militia. These men and I have held the Chopec Pass for 18 months. And quite frankly, Captain, I'm kind of tired. (1x1 Switchman)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goes to Bali for R&amp;R (one week with Lila)</td>
<td>Conjectured Oct '89</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JIM: Her name is Lila Hobson. I met her when I was in Bali seven years ago right after they pulled me out of Peru. I was on R&amp;R. We stayed at he same hotel, got involved, end of story.</td>
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<td>JIM: We had one week together. One morning she just left. I tried to track her down, but I couldn't. (3x18 Love Kills)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>He leaves the army right after this (see next item.) Are you allowed to take R&amp;R at the end of your tour?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event &amp; Date</td>
<td>Canon Support/Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enters police academy</td>
<td>In <em>Dead End on Blank Street</em> he states that he has been with the police &quot;eight years,&quot; which, since it's an early season four episode, means 4-5 years before the start of the show. It makes sense; he can't have waited long after he left the army, or he wouldn't have had time to train and rise up to detective before the start of the show.</td>
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<td>Conjectured Nov '89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works in Vice</td>
<td>March '90 is about as early as he could have started his work in Vice, assuming he was in police academy for about six months, which I believe is standard; although, he might have advanced quickly due to his army training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As early as March '90 until</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb/March '91 (see</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Transferred to Major Crimes&quot;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mad at world</td>
<td>JIM: When I was a rookie, fresh out of the Academy, maybe six months, there was another rookie... [Story about how other rookie is shot in front of Jim follows] I spent the next few months so pissed off at the world-- angry, confrontational. I did some stupid, seriously stupid things because I kept thinking it was my fault. (<em>1x8 Love and Guns</em>) If he's still in this period during the flashbacks of <em>Deep Water</em>, that could explain the moustache.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjectured Oct '90 until</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>early '91</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Transferred to Major Crimes</td>
<td>SIMON: Here's the bottom line, Jim-- I may be new to this department, but if you think I'm a pushover, you've got another think coming. You may have been a hotshot on Vice, but around here, you're just part of my dog team! Is that clear? (<em>2x3 Deep Water</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 1991</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Mentor dies (Jim sleeps</td>
<td>JIM: Hey, check this out. This is Jack's datebook. Last entry was March 19. BLAIR: Yeah. So? JIM: So, that's the date Jack disappeared. (<em>2x3 Deep Water</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with Emily)</td>
<td>The year is derived from the flashback-introducing title card &quot;Four years ago&quot;, and the consideration that this episode takes place in early season 2 (which we're assuming is 1995--see &quot;Show starts&quot;). Jim's one-night thing with Emily, Jack's girlfriend, happened the same night. I mention this only because Jim's guilt begins and ends with sleeping with another man's girl, and not on cheating on any girl of his own, so he can't be with Carolyn at this point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 19, 1991 (see next</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>item)</td>
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</table>
### Blair's Backstory Timeline Of Dubious Veracity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event &amp; Date</th>
<th>Canon Support/Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Born</strong></td>
<td>JIM: '69 was a very good year for me. BLAIR: Yeah, yeah. I was born. JIM: Except for that. <em>(3x2 Three Point Shot)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>We don't know when Blair's birthday is, but this gives him a starting age of 25, give or take a few months. (And if you <em>want</em> a birthday, GM's is May 24, 1969.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steals a</strong></td>
<td>BLAIR: Once when I was fourteen, I went to this store and I stole this microscope, right? (Yes, a microscope, Jim, I was a science nerd.) Anyway, um, the cops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>microscope</strong></td>
<td>caught me and I swore up and down that I'd paid for the thing and I kept lying and getting in deeper and deeper. And finally I just couldn't take it anymore, and I had</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>to come out and tell the truth. But by that time, nobody was listening. <em>(2x23 His Brother's Keeper)</em></td>
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### Event & Date

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event &amp; Date</th>
<th>Canon Support/Discussion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buys loft</strong></td>
<td>JIM: The money was military back pay from when I was in Peru. It finally came through that April. The loft was for sale and I figured it was a better investment than throwing my money into some savings account. <em>(2x3 Deep Water)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>April 1991</strong></td>
<td>This is also the conversation during which we find out that he was involved in covert ops while he was in Peru.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marries</strong></td>
<td>Seriously, when did they even <em>date</em>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carolyn</strong></td>
<td>Jim: Carolyn and I have been divorced for nearly two years. <em>(1x3 Killers)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totally</strong></td>
<td>Jim (swinging club): I haven't used these since I bought them two years ago. <em>(1x10 Vow of Silence)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>unknown</strong></td>
<td>Related to divorce??</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Divorces</strong></td>
<td>Date derived from the date Jim was pulled from Peru + &quot;5 Years Later&quot; titlecard in <em>1x1 Switchman</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carolyn</strong></td>
<td><strong>Buys golf</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1992, or early</strong></td>
<td><strong>clubs!!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1993</strong></td>
<td><strong>Show starts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
<td><strong>1994</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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**Blair's Backstory Timeline Of Dubious Veracity**
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| **Starts taking college courses** | BLAIR: Why stick him with me?  
BUCKNER: Because you were taking college courses when you were 16. If you think back to what it was like, I am sure you can relate. *(2x18 Smart Alec)*  
It is unclear from the wording whether he went to college early or was just taking classes simultaneous with high school. I think it likely that it's the latter, or it would have been easier to say "in college." |
| **Drives a big rig cross-country** | BLAIR: I spent a summer driving across country in my uncle's rig. I did half the driving. *(2x9 Spare Parts)*  
I'm not sure when this was. For some reason I had the impression that it was during high school, but I guess he never says that. He must have been at least 16. I imagine this was no later than early undergrad, or he would have had other things to do with his summer. |
| **Works at Conover (mental institution)** | BLAIR: Okay. Um, when I was an undergraduate, I did a paper on the social structure in institutions to see if the same sort of pecking orders that exist in our society find their way into the microcosmic societies in prisons and mental institutions. Anyway, I spent a semester working nights at Conover. *(3x14 Mirror Image)* |
| **Spends some time at St. Sebastian's monastery** | BROTHER MARCUS: I remember you. The young man who promised to write to allow me to vicariously enjoy his exploits in the real world.  
and later  
BLAIR (to the abbot): Come on, you know me! *(1x10 Vow of Silence)*  
That's the only evidence we have that Blair spent time at St. Sebastian's in the past; the episode sheds no light on why, when, or for how long. From the exchanges given it would be possible to read anything from "a week or two sometime during grad" to "most of his childhood." |
| **Spends "three months living among the Kombai Tree people of Irian Jaya"** | MAYA: So you spent three months living among the Kombai Tree people of Irian Jaya?  
BLAIR: Oh, yeah. It was really, really wild. You see, I was the first westerner they had ever seen. They thought I was a *lilejo*-- an evil spirit disguised as a white man. [Story follows.] *(1x8 Love and Guns)* |
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<td>Goes &quot;up the Amazon in a canoe&quot;</td>
<td>PAM: My teacher showed us a movie once where these people went all the way up the Amazon in a canoe. Did you do that too? BLAIR: Uh-huh. And I almost got eaten by a crocodile. PAM: No way. BLAIR: Way. ([2x2 Out of the Past])</td>
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<td>Spends &quot;a month with this tribe&quot; in Malaysia</td>
<td>BLAIR: I was in Malaysia once, and I spent a month with this tribe that believed that sex was a religious ritual and had be to performed six times every, uh... ([2x7 Iceman])</td>
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<td>Possibly goes to Nepal</td>
<td>BLAIR: It happened to this anthropological student that I knew. He was out doing research in Nepal and an avalanche hit... [Story about overcoming fear follows] JOEL: You, uh, still know this guy? BLAIR: Yeah, it was me. ([2x11 Black or White])</td>
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<td>But later that same episode: JOEL: Wait a minute. What about that bridge in Nepal you were talking about? BLAIR: Uh, well, that was an embellishment on the truth. JIM: You mean a lie, right? A lie.</td>
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<td>Spends &quot;a couple of months in an igloo&quot;</td>
<td>BLAIR: Here. I got these [boots] up in Alaska. Might be a little big, but they should fit. The Dene Indians, they swear by these things. MONIQUE: I heard it's beautiful up there in Alaska. I've never been anywhere. Well, Mexico. What's it like? BLAIR: Oh, it's beautiful, it's beautiful. I spent a couple of months in an igloo. ([3x8 Storm Warning])</td>
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<td>Does &quot;research on the Watumsa Indians&quot;</td>
<td>SIMON: According to her report, the only place that fits the profile is an area east of Lake Quincy -- the Watumsa Basin. BLAIR (correcting his pronunciation): Watumsa. Watumsa Basin, sir. Yeah, I did research on the Watumsa Indians a couple years back. ([3x10 Dead Certain])</td>
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<td>Spends some undefined amount of time in the jungle</td>
<td>JIM: I thought you were Mr. Outdoors. All that time spent out in the wilderness. BLAIR: Yeah. Most of it was in the jungle. The jungle's hot, remember? The thing I don't understand--you're Mr. Heightened Senses; how come the cold isn't bothering you? JIM: It's not that cold. ([3x14 Light My Fire])</td>
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<td>The interesting thing about this exchange is that it casts serious doubt on whether Blair actually went to Alaska.</td>
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<td>Show starts</td>
<td>Date derived from the date Jim was pulled from Peru + &quot;5 Years Later&quot; titlecard in 1x1 Switchman</td>
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<td>September 1994</td>
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