

Hello Porters, fans of *Traveler* and any folks who may have randomly found this page. First off, on behalf of the cast, writers and everyone involved in *Traveler*, I want to thank all those who fought so hard over the past two months to get our show back on the air. It was inspiring to see your effort and devotion. And you fought valiantly. But in the end, I think the same thing that doomed our show - lack of awareness - also made it impossible to muster the kind of numbers needed to save it. So, while I will never forget the great - albeit frustrating - experience of *Traveler*, the time has come for all of us to move on to new season passes, new Web page bookmarks and new "save the show" campaigns, as I'm sure there will be some deserving series this fall that will get the short end of the marketing/ratings stick.

But before I get to your much-deserved (and lengthy) *Traveler* answers, I also wanted to say that it's been a blast interacting with you here and on the *Traveler* IMDb message board. Speaking with you and answering your questions was the best and most fulfilling part of the show's summer season. I hope our discussions can continue with my next show, *Darwin's Law*, a one-hour action comedy about a CIA hit man who becomes a homicide detective, which you will hopefully see on ABC (yes, I aim to woo all angry Porters back to the network) in the fall of '08. Now, in my efforts to provide closure before people have completely forgotten what happened in our fun and fast eight-episode run, I offer this final blog entry the once promised and now delivered closure that you guys deserve.

Q1. What is the Fourth Branch?

This was to be the driving mystery of Season 2, as Will, Jay and Tyler attempt to expose the clandestine organization that Jack Freed mentioned moments before his limo exploded in "The Exchange." The Fourth Branch is a secret society comprised of the oldest families in America. Many people forget that when this country was founded, democracy was not a proven, accepted form of government. There had not been a successful Western democracy since Athens. And in many ways, America was viewed as a great experiment. Our founding fathers wanted independence from England, and they needed to unify a fledgling country populated by a multinational constituency to win the war. What better way to rally a disparate army against the oppressors than to promise the common man a voice in the new government? This was the great promise of early American democracy.

But what if the founding fathers were also scared of the common man's power? Would they have perhaps put safeguards into place? A branch that sits above the people's three official branches of government? That, my friends, is the Fourth Branch. A group comprised of the oldest families in America that implements checks and balances on the government to guide the true course of our country. Think about the iconic families of American politics. The Kennedys. The Tafts. The Bushes. Did you ever wonder how they managed to wield so much power and influence? Their membership in the Fourth Branch plays a big part.

And while our founding fathers believed in using the branch to foster a youthful nation, today the branch has become a shadow government that uses economic, political, social and legal influence to maintain strict control. Right now, their senators are making sure that their latest Supreme Court nominee gets appointed. Their members on the New York Stock Exchange are keeping the price of oil high so we support the effort to bring democracy to the Middle East. What is the Fourth Branch? It is the realization of one of our worst fears, that though we live in the world's greatest democracy, we are not the ones steering the ship.

Q2. What's with the Painting?

The second season was meant to have a *Da Vinci Code*-esque historical fiction element, and Trumbull's "The Declaration of Independence" was the key that would start that engine.

Trumbull is a fascinating figure. In 1773 he graduated Harvard at the age of 17. He went on to fight in the Revolutionary War. Then he travelled to London in 1780 and studied painting under Benjamin West. There, he was captured and imprisoned as an American spy. Later he returned to the United States, where he went on to become one of the most famous painters and politicians of his time, including a stint as governor of Connecticut. He died at the age of 88 and was interred beneath the Art Gallery at Yale University a crypt that Will, Jay and Tyler would most certainly have visited in Season 2.

If you have looked into "The Declaration of Independence" painting, you know that the "signing" was a complete fabrication in regard to the document itself, and historians have always wondered why there are five people in the painting who were not actual signers of the Declaration of Independence. This sent our little hyper-creative minds spinning in the writer's room, though I will admit that the painting was the object of much debate. But we came up with the idea that the painting was in fact the Holy Grail of the Fourth Branch. Because in truth, this painting does not depict the signing of the Declaration of Independence, but rather it captures the formation of the Fourth Branch itself. And looking into the families of the men present in the painting holds the key to finding the current members of the branch.

At the time of our story, rumours of the Fourth Branch have increased in the corridors of Washington. Freed and others have decided to start a campaign to increase their control of the country with the Drexler bombing. A bombing that would serve two purposes: to strike a new chord of fear in the American public, as suddenly young, well-educated white males would be seen turning against their own country; and to destroy a piece of evidence, which if discovered, could expose the existence of the branch itself.

Q3. Who is the Porter?

The Porter is actually a rogue CIA agent named Jon Anselmo. He ran a CIA black ops team in Pakistan and was taken out because someone in the Fourth Branch did not want a certain high-level terrorist captured just yet. Anselmo was furious. Not only did he lose five good men, but he could not get answers about what went wrong. Despite being told that he'd wandered into a mystery well above his pay grade, Anselmo kept pushing. Eventually, he heard whispers about the Fourth Branch and tracked the conspiracy theories to a Colorado real-estate baron. Rather than hide the truth from Anselmo, the Baron saw an opportunity to gain an important ally in returning the branch to its proper purpose.

As with most multilevel Hydras, the Fourth Branch had fractured due to infighting. After a lengthy battle from the 1960s through the 1990s, two factions emerged: One, led by Jack Freed's family, wanted to completely wrest control of this country away from the people. The other, led by the Baron, had hoped to return the branch to the benevolent presence it held at our nation's birth. And if that did not work, the Baron was ready to disband the branch altogether. In exchange for compensation to the families of the men Anselmo lost, Anselmo became the Porter, a man bent on destroying the corrupt side of the Fourth Branch. His first mission was to follow Will Traveler to the men who were giving him his orders. That leads us to the next

question.

Q4. Is Jack Freed dead?

Though Neal McDonough would hate to hear me say this, Jack Freed is dead. Yes, he was in the limo when it blew up. And, no, he did not blow it up himself.

The Season 2 premiere was meant to begin with the same scene that ended Season 1, only this time we would see it from a new perspective. We would open on a small, remote control bomb packed with C4 as it tore down the damp, dark streets of New York. Unnoticed, it would zip past Jay, Tyler and Will as they had their final conversation at the phone booth. Then it would slip underneath the parked limo, and we'd cut to the person controlling the bomb the Porter. As the Porter clicks the kill switch, *Boom!* the limo, Freed and our boys' alibi, would again go up in smoke. Why did the Porter kill Freed? Because the Baron had given him orders that once he had identified the tyrant, the cancer had to be removed before evidence of the branch could leak to the public. Which leads us to

Q5: You can't just keep the guys on the run forever, can you?

I'm sure this is something that the writers at *Prison Break* are dealing with right now. And in a way, I am relieved that I will not have to deal with the same issue. But the answer is no, we were not going to keep the guys "on the run." In fact, in the Season 2 premiere, after we see the limo blow up, Will and the guys would then escape Freed's forces and New York with the help of the Porter. Jay, Tyler and Will would end up at a train yard, with Will boarding a freight train as it picked up speed. Jay would reach a hand out for Will's help. But Will would tell him, "It's better if we split up." "You don't honestly believe that?!", Jay would answer back. And in a moment of decision that would determine the fate of Season 2, Will would stretch out his hand and help the friends he betrayed onto the train. They will search for the truth together. As the train rolls away from the New York skyline, we FADE TO BLACK. And when we fade up, it is *three months later*.

A mining town in Colorado. A news report in a locker room tells us that another month has passed without any sign of the Drexler bombing suspects, and officials now believe that the three "Ivy League Terrorists" have surfaced in the Middle East. Amongst the workers getting ready to head into the mine, we find Will Traveler. And yes, his appearance has finally changed! It turns out that Jay, Will and Tyler have not left the country. They have laid low in a middle-of-nowhere town. And now that people have moved on to other current events, like more domestic bombings and the approaching election, Jay, Will and Tyler are ready to start their search into uncovering the truth behind the Drexler bombing and the Fourth Branch.

Q6: Did Carlton Fog survive the season finale?

Most definitely. In Season 2, Carlton Fog would be remanded to a criminal hospital - similar to the one we saw Johnny Sack waste away in at the end of *The Sopranos* - while his case bounced from one appeal to another in the justice system. While recovering, he would be visited by a young vet in officer uniform just back from serving in Iraq. This vet would sit at his bedside, an intensity in his eyes that speaks of devotion to the wounded man before him. And Carlton would tell this young man, "we have a problem with your brother." This is how we meet Gabriel Fog, the nemesis that will be hunting down our guys throughout Season 2. Ultimately, we had planned for the two brothers to meet at either the midpoint or finale of the season. And Tyler would actually have fallen at the hands of his brother.

Q7: What happens to Chambers and Marlow?

To be sure, the Season 2 premiere would have picked up their story in the present day. Chambers realizes that Marlow was the one who called his cell phone, and after a major cat-and-mouse chase through the FBI field office, Marlow would disappear. Three months later, she's also gone underground, and the media has been sold a story that she was in fact in collusion with Will, Jay and Tyler, and she helped them escape New York.

Now, Marlow is on her own hunt to find out how Chambers was involved in the Drexler bombing. Meanwhile, Chambers has been promoted to head of the entire New York Field Office. Everything is going great, except for the fact that Chambers' daughter - the one mentioned in Season 1 - becomes suspicious of her father's involvement in the Drexler conspiracy. His daughter, another new character for Season 2, would eventually become convinced that her father had framed Jay, Tyler and Will. And when the boys resurface, she would reach out to them, eventually becoming a new love interest for Tyler.

The Fourth Branch would learn of Chambers' daughter's indiscretion. And Jack Freed's mother, the woman now pulling the strings, would tell Chambers that his daughter would have to be removed. Through flashback, we would learn that Chambers faced the same situation when he was stationed in Israel. His wife discovered he was pulling off covert raids, kidnapping Palestinian soldiers on behalf of the branch. And that time, he sacrificed his wife in hopes that it would help return his family to prominence in the branch. This time though, Chambers will choose his child over his loyalty to the cause, allowing one of our great villains to end his arc on a redemptive note.

Q8: Is Kim still alive?

Yes. She's alive, though she's not doing well. At the end of Season 1, we left Kim as she was about to experience "rendition" firsthand. She has spent the past three months in a Central American prison. She is a broken woman. But not broken enough to stop believing in Jay.

Jay has attempted to find her, risking everything to return to New York and reach out to Mr. Doherty for help. Unbeknownst to Jay, Kim was pregnant when he was forced to flee New York. And while in custody, being tortured, she miscarried. A major storyline for Season 2 was to be Kim's struggle to stay alive, while Jay slowly and surely tracked her down.

Q9: What is Jay's connection to the Fourth Branch?

In the finale, Jack Freed told Jay that his father had worked for the Fourth Branch. Throughout the first season, we hinted that there was a mystery surrounding Jay's father's death, questions that had haunted Jay his entire childhood. Without knowing the truth, he had held his mother accountable for his father's suicide, believing that she abandoned Tom Burchell in his hour of need. But in Season 2, Jay was going to look into his father's real work for the military and how it connected to the branch. He would discover that his father was part of a unit in the first Iraq war that was run by none other than Jack Freed himself. While not a member of the Fourth Branch, Burchell's father had served Freed and his objectives with loyalty. But when the unit became dispensable, and their operations needed to be covered up, Tom Burchell was set up to take the fall.

The person in the government who betrayed Tom Burchell? Jack Freed. With Freed

dead, Jay will seek revenge from the person they find to be running Freed's half of the Fourth Branch - Freed's mother, a Washington socialite who shares more than a few characteristics with Angela Lansbury in *The Manchurian Candidate*. Rosalind Freed will offer to return everything Jay lost after the Drexler bombing: his high-power life as a New York lawyer, a normal life with Kim and his freedom. But by this point, Jay will have found Kim and will know the endgame of the Fourth Branch, and Jay will refuse Rosalind Freed's offer, ultimately having her arrested as the first step in bringing down the families that feel they can control our country.

Q10. Who was Will Traveler?

We answered the "current tense" of this question in Season 1 (Who is Will Traveler? He is a domestic spy working for an undercover FBI operation meant to spy on American citizens), Will's mystery goes much deeper than the Drexler, and we were going to tell Will's origin story as we pieced together the mystery of the Fourth Branch. In fact, I was hoping that the flashback element of Season 2 would be Will putting together pieces of how he came to join Operation Hometown and work under Jack Freed.

In a long ago reality, Will Traveler was Stephen Mailer. (Not even Aaron Stanford knew that name.) You are hearing it here first. Stephen was a lonely kid who was raised by a single mother in a small town in Arizona. Stephen was not the biggest kid in the bunch, so he had to learn to defend himself early. He was aided in this by his uncle, who moved to the small town when Stephen was 12. This uncle gave Stephen's mother money. Soon, they'd upgraded from a trailer park to a two-bedroom condo. This uncle also knew martial arts. He taught Stephen the fighting style of Krav Maga. And it was not long before young Stephen Mailer was the one to be feared on the playground.

While Stephen's mother was frightened by her son's violent nature, his uncle seemed to foster it, using hypnosis and behavior modification to prepare Stephen for a life of service. To what end? Stephen never knew. All he knew is that he and his uncle were patriots. When Stephen turned 17, his mother said goodbye to him, and his uncle took him to join the military. Stephen understood weapons, combat and battlefield strategy 10 times better than the officers who taught him. But he was meant to be a foot soldier. Nothing more. He had always been taught to obey commands. And though overqualified for his service in Afghanistan and Iraq, he felt his uncle placed him there with a purpose: to save lives. He was known, jokingly, as Nightingale. Because when you were about to die on the battlefield, Stephen would swoop in and get you the hell out.

But, amazingly, Stephen never was promoted and was never given medals for his heroics. Instead, he simply moved from unit to unit, and with each move, he was given new dog tags and a different name. During his three years in combat, he saw his uncle three times. The last time was in Baghdad's Green Zone, when his uncle arrived to take him home for his final patriotic assignment. A man named Jack Freed had started an FBI program called Operation Hometown. Something that was essential to winning the war on terror.

It seems that domestic terrorism cells were on the rise. People who appeared to be normal citizens were in fact fomenting revolution. Taking a page out of the CIA's Family Jewels, Freed had established a covert operation to use human intelligence assets to infiltrate and spy on American citizens. Stephen would be one of Freed's best recruits. He helped bust up a Chechnyan sleeper cell before it could attack the

Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C. He stopped a group of neo-Nazis from assassinating a black governor in the South. And then he was sent to Deer Harbor to train for what would be his most important assignment. By then, Stephen went by the name Daniel Taft.

Against every rule in the book, he fell in love with the woman who ran the Operation Hometown safe house in the small town that was used to ferry Hometown operatives in and out of the country. Maya helped Daniel create his new alias. And though it was exceedingly reckless, he picked his new name to remind him of the woman he loved. In the summer of 2005, "Will Traveler" left for New Haven, Connecticut, where he would live with two men with serious bones to pick with President Shears and the U.S. government. He was gradually given his orders, always by his handler, Joseph. He needed to get video of Tyler Fog speaking his true mind about President Shears. Jay Burchell was writing for the law review, and Will needed to make sure Jay wrote about the illegal detention of enemy combatants at Guantanamo Bay.

Will had been raised to obey orders, not to question them, but even he knew something was not right. In secret trips to Deer Harbor, he began to make preparations to leave Operation Hometown and the country with Maya. And when the final directive came, his worst fears were confirmed. He was being asked to murder Jay and Tyler, innocent American civilians, while framing them for an attack on New York's oldest art museum. All efforts to reach his uncle were unsuccessful. So, Will decided he would have to improvise. He would let Jay and Tyler live and then blow up the museum. But while researching the plan to blow up the Drexler, Will discovered that the Drexler bomb was to be placed in a gallery filled with paintings by John Trumbull, right below the crown jewel of the Shears' Collection, Trumbull's Declaration of Independence. He began to suspect that the bombing might also be connected to the paintings. Knowing that he'd be punished for betraying his orders, Will decided to steal the painting as a piece of leverage should his plan fail. The rest, as they say well, you saw the rest in Season 1.

Obviously, when Maya was killed (and yes, Maya is dead), everything changed for Will. Like Jason Bourne, he set out on a path to avenge his girlfriend's death and find out who was really running the corrupt government program. This led Will back to his old roommates, and ultimately to Freed.

Q11. How would it all end?

Well, I've touched on Tyler's untimely demise and Jay's refusal to give in to the temptations of the Fourth Branch, but what about the ultimate end of the series? Well, I can tell you that this likely would have changed a bit as we moved through the show, but this is what I was thinking for the series' progression when we finished up:

Season 2: In Season 2 the driving question becomes: "What is the Fourth Branch?" The Season 2 flashbacks reveal how Will was raised and groomed to become a leader in the secret society that has now turned against him (yes, Porters, Will is in fact the heir of the Colorado Real Estate Baron mentioned in the Porter paragraph above). And Jay, Tyler and Will set out on a journey to find and expose members of the society, and this time they will have the help of Agent Marlow, who wants revenge for her partner's murder. The return of Tyler's brother leads to Tyler's murder. And Marlow will ultimately fall at the hands of her former boss Chambers.

But in the Season 2 finale, Will and Jay are miraculously saved from a brutal beating

at the hands of Fourth Branch forces. When they wake up, they find themselves in the middle of the Oval Office. President Shears enters and they reveal everything they know. Unfortunately for them, it's here that we learn that Shears is not just our head of state, he's also the heir apparent of the Fourth Branch.

Season 3: In Season 3 we learn the truth about the Fourth Branch's plan. They have used the bombings against the Shears family interests (and there would be more bombings besides the Drexler) to instill fear in the country and create sympathy towards the administration. And just as they hoped for, a movement has arisen to change the constitution, allowing President Shears to stay in the White House for good.

In order to stop Shears, Jay and Will pretend to turn sides and effectively infiltrate the Fourth Branch on behalf of the Porter - Jon Anselmo - and his unknown boss. But in the Season 3 finale, their efforts are thwarted when Anselmo is killed and President Shears successfully wins election for a third term.

The Endgame

The word "traveler" evokes an image of a wanderer, a man without a country. In a way, that's how many Americans feel today. The Fourth Branch is really a metaphor for today's divisive political climate, the current disconnect between the people and their elected politicians. But Will Traveler is not willing to settle for a false government. He does what we all wish we could do: He changes things. In the final episode of our show, whenever that day would have come, Will sacrifices himself to save Jay from the corrupt Shears administration.

And as the series closes, Jay Burchell is the only one left of the three friends who started *Traveler* on a seemingly innocent road trip. With Kim's help, Jay completes Will and Tyler's legacy, exposing the lies and deceit of Shears, Carlton Fog and all the privileged few who have tried to make America their private kingdom.

The End

And, yes, sadly, this really is the end. Thank you guys again for your passion. It was inspirational. And while this conclusion can not please everyone, I hope it at least answers your questions and allows you to move forward down the road.