

■ TV SERIES ■

Severance is immensely ambitious to a fault

RAIAN ABEDIN

Imagine a complete removal of your work self from the version of you that exists off-the-clock. While a blessing to some, the concept itself presents many questions delving into the societal, ethical, and individualistic effects this surgical alienation from labour can have on people. These conundrums are the fertile grounds in which *Severance* plants its seed, and the results make for one of the most ambitious shows yet to be finished.

The show follows Mark, after spending a good few minutes crying in his car, entering his unnaturally bright workspace. Descending the elevator, his eyes reel back, as if he's undergoing a seizure, and he returns, not as himself, but as his 'innie' — the work version of Mark. Upon entering, he is informed of the abrupt dismissal of his best friend. No whys or hows are entertained from Mark, and he is promptly made to return to work.

The story that unfolds from here works on multiple levels. The show offers a unique perspective on corporations' involvement in alienating people from their work, masterfully delving into these 'innies' who are confined to exist only as workers and exploring their individual identities even within the walls of

their workplace. The end product is complex and interesting. The finale for season one, in particular, was one of the most riveting hours of television I have seen in recent memory. Season two of *Severance* opens with Mark hitting the ground running, reeling from the events of season one. To what end is Mark running, and what does he end up finding? *Severance* builds itself around questions like these.

Answers are doled out in small, but adequate portions, keeping the audience

asking for more.

This is also perhaps one big spot where *Severance* falters. From a technical perspective, the direction ranges from great to near perfection. The acting does not falter for a second. The storytelling, too, is ambitious, almost too ambitious at

times, as it is clear in parts of season two that the show certainly has an endgame, but it struggles to fill the gaps on how to get there.

Severance feels like an inspired piece of work that dives into corporate culture and the many ways people try to continue living in the decaying dystopia that corporations tend to create.



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