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THE DREAM ISSUE

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PAST AND PRESENT, VISIT



In the DREAM OR NIGHTMARE? *TWILIGHT ZONE* DELIVERED A BIT OF BOTH **ZONE**

★ Any given *Twilight Zone* episode has “a pinch-me-this-can’t-be-real quality,” says Marc Zicree, author of *The Twilight Zone Companion*. But on several occasions, TV impresario Rod Serling’s show dealt overtly in dreams—and nightmares—resulting in episodes that are among its fans’ most fondly remembered. — *Jim Colucci*

PERCHANCE TO DREAM/SEASON 1

A man with a heart condition dreams himself at an amusement park, being lured by a cat-suited seductress onto a roller coaster that would cause his real-life death.

TWENTY TWO/SEASON 2

A woman’s premonition of her own death warns her from boarding a doomed plane flight, producing one of the second season’s most quoted catchphrases: “Room for one more, honey.”

THE MIDNIGHT SUN/SEASON 3

Lois Nettleton is Norma, an artist among the few to remain in New York as Earth heats up after a sudden change in orbit. But in a twisted take on Dorothy’s awakening after visiting Oz, Norma learns that her visions of her paintings melting like wax—the actual material used to create this effect on film—were nothing but a fever dream. Ironically, her concerned friends never clue her in to the truth. As snow piles up outside Norma’s window, the Earth is moving irreversibly not *toward* the sun but *away* from it.

NIGHTMARE AT 20,000 FEET/SEASON 5

In what is ostensibly the show’s most famous episode, a pre-Captain Kirk William Shatner plays a phobic airline passenger who arouses only doubts about his wakefulness and sanity when he spies a midair gremlin clawing at the airplane’s fuselage. The resulting tension resonated so strongly that decades later, “Nightmare” was chosen to be remade, starring John Lithgow, as one of four segments in 1983’s *Twilight Zone: The Movie*. Richard Donner, who went on to helm films in the *Superman* and *Lethal Weapon* series, had earlier scored the job of directing the original “Nightmare” in 1963. “I was passionate about the show,” he remembers. “There was some great television out there, but *The Twilight Zone* was unique even then. Working on the show was a great opportunity, like getting a little badge on your lapel.”

After five seasons, and 156 episodes, of attracting top talent—and winning Serling two Emmys for Best Drama—*The Twilight Zone* signed off the air. But the show has never been far from our collective subconscious.