

DUPLICANTS

By Kobi Niv

A white unmarked car is parked at a cab station. A young woman climbs into the passenger side seat. She is black, beautiful, wearing jeans and an unbuttoned shirt over a t-shirt, her hair pulled back in a bow. The driver, a white man, older, matted hair, unshaven, also wearing jeans and an unbuttoned shirt over a t-shirt, turns to her and says, “No, no, no, this is a mistake, I’m not a cab, I’m a cop.” He pulls out his badge and shows it to her. The young woman smiles and says, “It’s okay, I’m a cop too.” She shows him her badge, and adds, “I’m subbing in for Gentila, he can’t make it.” “Something happen to him?” the man asks, concerned. “No, no,” the young officer responds. “Something about his wife’s pregnancy.”

This is the young officer’s first shift on the job. Her name is JANET MARGOLIS. Everyone calls her MARGO. This is her new assignment as a patrolling officer, out of uniform in an unmarked car, a detective. Because, as mentioned, Bruno Gentila, the longtime partner of the detective behind the wheel, JOHN TOLLY (everyone calls him TOLLY), couldn’t make it, and so they sent her to partner up with Tolly for the night shift, to fill in for Gentila but also to allow Tolly, an experienced and rather worn-out detective, to serve as a mentor of sorts. They both believe this will be their first and last shift together. But that won’t be the case, not at all. These two officers, Margo and Tolly, who have partnered up for one night by chance, will become inseparable as a result of the episode’s events. They are two of the four detectives who make up the show’s heroes.

They head out on patrol and field several calls on the radio, nothing out of the ordinary. The only incident that requires their intervention is a domestic disturbance, a couple screaming at each other loud enough for the neighbors across the hall to complain, but when they get there, it turns out to be a false alarm.

Margo answers Tolly’s question and tells him she joined the force because her father was a police officer in Minneapolis, and he was murdered. He tells her, “Oh, like Clarice in *Silence of the Lambs*.” She says, “No, no. He wasn’t killed by criminals. He was killed by cops.” “How do you know that?” he asks. “Were they caught?” “No,” she says. “They weren’t caught. But I know it.” “And you joined the force to get them?” he asks, and quotes a famous movie line, something he does often. This one is from *The Princess Bride*: “Hello, my name is Inigo Montoya,” he says in a South-American accent. “You killed my father. Prepare to die.” “Maybe,” she says. He lets go of the wheel and shows her his hands. “It wasn’t me,” he says. “I only have five fingers on each hand.” She laughs.

Tolly has problems of his own, as we learn when he gets a phone call from his ex-wife's lawyer during the shift. He tells Margo his ex-wife is falsely accusing him of defaulting on his child support and abusing their daughter. She's used these accusations to have a court order issued which prevents him from seeing his six-year-old girl, and it's torturing his soul and wearing on his already-thin nerves.

Their conversation is interrupted by a call on the radio: shots were heard in a nearby neighborhood. They turn on their siren and head their way, as more information comes in on the radio. There are officers down, badly hurt, and ambulances on the way as well. By the time they get there, they find squad cars, EMT crews and TV vans, including the extravagant local reporter known for covering the "extraordinary stories," NICK BERRY, wearing his trademark Santa-Claus hat. In the background, several yards apart, two officers in uniform lie on the ground, both shot dead, one in the chest, one in the head, their personal weapons in their hand or by their side.

Tolly and Margo take charge of the investigation. The officer shot in the head is bloody and unrecognizable. But the other officer, the one shot in the chest, Tolly can ID him: "I know that guy," he tells Margo. "That's Charlie Kobalsky. He was in our precinct. A work horse. Got two little girls."

They scan the area and talk to the other cops and forensic technicians. Meanwhile, the bodies are removed from the scene, while the investigation continues out in the field. Tolly gets a call on his cellphone from the morgue. The forensic pathologist tells him, "Get down here. I want you to see something." Tolly and Margo head down to the morgue. "In the movies, they always give the coroners names that have something to do with death," Tolly tells Margo as they drive. "In Chinatown, they called him Morty." "What's ours called?" "Fisher," Tolly says. "Jack fucking Fisher."

They arrive at the morgue. Fisher, the forensic pathologist, is waiting for them inside. He leads them through a hall over to two tables where the slain officers' bodies are covered in sheets with stickers on them: 1378 and 1379.

"You ready?" Fisher asks. Tolly nods, and Fisher pulls down the sheet, uncovering the face and shoulders of number 1378. It's the officer who was shot in the chest. His face is unharmed. On his right shoulder, there's a tattoo of a black cat, its back arched, its tail bushy, ready to attack. "Yeah," Tolly says. "I ID'ed him out in the field. Officer Kobalsky, Charlie Kobalsky." "Okay," Fisher says. He leaves the dead officer's face and shoulders exposed and walks around the tables. Tolly and Margo follow him over to the other body. He reaches for the sheet, and after Tolly nods, removes the sheet from the other officer's head and shoulders. It's the officer who was shot in the head. The blood has been cleaned off his face, and it's unmarked save for the entry wound in his forehead, a broken nose, and a few bruises. Tolly and Margo stare at him, in shock. It's the same man. This, too, is Charlie Kobalsky. He's got the same tattoo on his right shoulder as well, a black cat, its back arched, its tail bushy, just like the tattoo on the first dead officer's shoulder. Tolly and Margo pull back, frightened. They stare at the two dead men, stunned. They are clearly looking at two dead bodies belonging to the same man. "What is this?" Tolly asks. "That's what I want to know," Jack says. "It's why I called you here." The camera holds on the face

and shoulders of the two dead men, who appear absolutely identical (with the exception of the bullet hole in the forehead).

In the city of Wichita, Kansas, an odd case is unfolding: two officers show up, both shot dead, one in the head, the other in the chest. So far, it's nothing out of the ordinary, but during the course of the investigation and the autopsies, the odd, chilling fact comes to light—the two slain officers are the same man.

It's not just that the two men look exactly alike. And it's not that they're identical twins, which no one, including the two of them, knew existed, and who both happened to become police officers, and who both wound up—on purpose or through sheer coincidence—at the same crime scene, where they were both murdered. Not at all. Everything from their badges to the results of all postmortem tests—identification by a loved one, fingerprint analysis, state-of-the-art DNA testing—points to an unequivocal conclusion: the two dead officers are the very same man, officer Charlie Kobalsky, married and father of two girls, a local resident.

While the detectives try to understand the phenomenon, the pathologist who performs the autopsy on both bodies coins the new word “duplicant.” It refers, as everyone involved in the case understands, to a man who seems to have been created through some sort of cloning process, and is entirely identical, in every single way, to a living, breathing person. The new term is to be used only by people within the investigation, and it gives the show its name as well, bringing the viewer in as part of the investigative team, sharing a secret unknown to the public at large.

The duplicant is a human creature, differing from a replicant in the film *Blade Runner* in at least two ways—he is not a robot but apparently a clone, and he does not simply appear to behave like a person, but is identical to a specific, existing person. The duplicant is also different, of course, from a doppelganger or a lookalike, meaning any person with a strong physical resemblance to another living person, or any such term. This is something new, something that has never happened before in the history of the human race.

This startling, alarming discovery causes the city's chief of police to call in the FBI for assistance. A joint task force, comprised of two local detectives and two federal agents, operating under absolute secrecy (as any media attention could spread panic in the public), investigate the matter to find out if this was a singular case, how it was possible to begin with, and if they have exposed the beginning of a plot by a foreign power, a hostile organization, or even aliens, to take over the United States and possibly all of mankind by replacing the human race with cloned humans, produced, distributed and controlled.

The show is a science-fiction detective mystery taking place in the present, where the viewer is let in on a secret investigation, not into murders or crimes but a hostile takeover of the human race by means of human clones, an attempt whose very existence undermines reality itself, radically transforming the lives of the show's heroes.

The show and the investigation will address every possible question raised by the existence of such a creature. How was he created? By whom? For what purpose? How

does it work? Who controls him? And, of course, the central question—is there any actual difference between the duplicant and the “real” person he was cloned from? Such questions lead to deeper, existential ones—what is the real “self” each and every one of us believes we know and cannot be without? What difference is there, if any at all, between our own unique “self” and the “self” of any other person? Who is the creator, the father, of every “self”?

The Setting

The show takes place in the city of Wichita, the largest city in Kansas (though not its capital), in the heart of the Midwest. The city has about 400 thousand citizens, with a similar demographic breakdown to the country as a whole.

The city is also known as the “Air Capital of the World,” because it is surrounded by six enormous airplane factories, as well as a large Air Force base, facts which turn up the pressure on the investigation, as they face concerns that whoever is creating the duplicants means to take over the nearby airplane manufacturers and Air Force base. The FBI headquarters in charge of Wichita and Kansas state is in Kansas City, Missouri (as opposed to Kansas City, Kansas), which, of course, is yet another source of tension within the investigative team on either side of the state line.

Cast of Characters

The investigation is handled by two sets of detectives—the initial pairing of local detectives, and the two FBI agents sent to Wichita from the bureau’s regional headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri.

TOLLY (John Tolly). 41 years old. White. An experienced detective, worn-out from years on the Wichita police force. Tolly is divorced and the father of a six-year-old girl who lives with her mother. Based on what he claims are false accusations of late child support and abuse, his ex-wife has gotten a court order that prevents him from seeing his daughter, with the exception of half an hour a week in a public place, under close supervision by a social worker. The imposed separation from his only child, whom he loves dearly, tortures Tolly. He can barely get any sleep. He watches (and constantly quotes) endless movies due to his insomnia. All of this makes him an impatient, nervous wreck, emotional and even aggressive at times.

MARGO (Janet Margolis). 26 years old. African-American. Single. A new detective at the Wichita police department, smart and beautiful, who is assigned in the first episode as a temporary replacement for Tolly’s partner, who cannot make his shift that night. However, the events that take place during their shift together turn their temporary partnership into a permanent one, for the entire duration of the duplicants investigation, and the course of the show. Margo’s father was a police officer too, and was killed in the line of duty. The killer, who Margo believes was also a cop, was never caught. Her desperate need to solve the mystery of her father’s murder is Margo’s primary drive, and seems to be the main reason she joined the force.

VAN DIJK (Robi Van Dijk). The name is pronounced like “Van Dyke.” 38 years old. White. A senior FBI agent. Handsome, with a subtle tick of excessive blinking. He is considered a brilliant investigator, “The best we’ve got,” according to the director of the FBI’s regional headquarters, who sends him to Wichita to head the investigative team. And yet, he is a controversial figure, and some at the bureau see him as a “problematic personality, narcissistic, not a team player, with dubious loyalty.” Van Dijk is a bachelor who obsessively pursues many short-lived relationships with women, but has never been able to maintain a meaningful, long-term relationship with any of them.

SANCHEZ (Cezar Sanchez). 59 years old. An experienced field agent with the FBI. Hispanic, warm, smart and likeable. In the first episode, Sanchez is on suspension, the reasons for which will come to light later on. He is recruited to the duplicants investigation as Van Dijk’s deputy, both because he is a highly qualified field investigator, and because he is asked to supervise and report back to headquarters over Van Dijk’s head. For the purpose of his involvement in this case, his suspension is lifted. Early on, there seems to be the occasional tremor in his hands, and some believe he might have a drinking problem, like his father, who died of alcoholism when Sanchez was a child. Later on we will discover, in a candid conversation with Margo after they become confidants, that Sanchez has Parkinson’s, which he has been hiding from everybody. Sanchez lives alone, and though he has two grown sons, for some reason they are not in touch with him.

Main Storyline

The news that the two bodies belong to the same man is brought to the attention of the local chief of police. At first, he dictates a press release to the media, describing the casualties as a slain officer and his murderer, a man impersonating a police officer. Then, he orders for all the necessary tests, as if they were dealing with two crime scenes. The results confirm the initial assumption: the bodies share the same fingerprints, the same DNA. The bodies belong to the same man. “They are so precisely identical,” the pathologist adds. “That both bodies present with early stage prostate cancer, at exactly the same rate of progression.” The chief of police calls the regional FBI headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri, for assistance. The director of the regional headquarters himself, along with agents Van Dijk and Sanchez, is rushed to Wichita, to an urgent meeting with everyone who knows anything about the case in attendance.

“We don’t know what we’re dealing with here,” he tells them (and the viewers, who feel as if they’re watching an emergency meeting held in secrecy, concealed from the public). “But whatever it is, we can’t even imagine the consequences. It’s entirely possible that, due to a failed murder or something of the sort, we have stumbled upon a plot of unknown scope and scale here. There’s no way of knowing who is behind this. It could be an enemy country—Iran, Russia, North Korea. Could be a terrorist organization—Al Qaeda, ISIS. And we could be dealing with extraterrestrials here or God knows what, trying to effectively take over, wipe out the human race and replace it, replace us all, not only those of us in this room but everyone out there (he gestures

out at the camera, so that the viewers understand he is speaking about all of them), kill us all and replace us with clones under their control. Do you understand? So the first and most important thing is not to let any detail of this investigation out of this room; share it with absolutely no one else. I have not even reported it to my superiors at the bureau. You say nothing. If any of this gets out, you must understand this, if any of this leaks, everybody out there at home, sitting in front of their TVs, (once again, he gestures at the viewers, so that they realize he is speaking about them, and hopefully feel some of the dread he is conveying), will start looking at their wives, their kids, their colleagues, their friends, anybody else, as if they were these duplicants, and not the people they've known all along. And you don't need me to tell you what could happen then. This disaster would not be contained to Kansas and Missouri; it wouldn't be contained to the United States. We're talking global chaos here. So it is of the utmost importance that this remains classified, I mean airtight. But just as important, we need to find out what this is, where it comes from, who makes them, what they want, who they are, everything. We need to find and stop whoever is behind this as soon as possible. And this is all up to you. I can't add any manpower to this investigation. You understand that, right?" Everybody in the room nods. "Then let's go, get to work!"

The next morning, the lead investigator, agent Van Dijk, is watching TV in his rented apartment in Wichita. On the local news, extravagant reporter Nick Berry interviews a woman who claims that, when the bus she takes home from work pulled over at a stop, she saw a woman standing there who looked exactly like her, down to the clothes she was wearing, and she took a picture of her on her cellphone. The investigative team brings the reporter Berry and the woman from his report in for questioning. Both swear the story is entirely true. Tolly and Margo are sent off to locate the woman's duplicant in the area where her picture was taken, but they can't find her. Eventually, the woman breaks down in the interrogation room and tells them she wasn't the one who took the picture of the woman who looks just like her; it was her husband who took a picture of her there, at the bus stop. He was using the picture to prove that she had been unfaithful, and so she made this story up and went on TV with it, to keep her husband from killing her.

That night, when Nick Berry is released and pulls up to his home, an unidentifiable man attacks him and beats him from behind. The car sounds a bell, indicating that a door has been opened. We hear the trunk opening, the thump of something tossed inside, and the door shutting. A silhouette gets in behind the wheel. A passing car's headlights illuminate the driver's face. We see it is Nick Berry himself. He starts the car and drives off. Berry's boyfriend, wearing boxer shorts and an Air Force t-shirt, walks out of the house and calls out, "Nick! Nick!" When the car disappears, the boyfriend cries out "Help! Help!" The reporter goes missing until the next morning, when he goes on the air to report that he was kidnapped by aliens. The team brings him in for another interrogation, and he insists he is telling the truth. Van Dijk releases him and has him followed.

Van Dijk and Sanchez head off to take part in an academic conference on cloning at a large university in California. They play the part of sales reps for a large European pharmaceutical company, and try and get as much information as they can out of professors and experts on the possibility of human cloning and the abilities of

organizations, countries and various scientists in the field to do so. Among the people they meet is a professor named LIMA DEL SOL, who tells them that at the biology department of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, scientists achieved human cloning several years ago. “And it’s a good thing, cloning,” he whispers to them, as if sharing a secret. “It’s good, because it will eradicate death. Because if you can clone people, then people will never die. They will always be.” But then his face contorts with rage, and he says, “But the government put an end to the project. They killed it.” “Why did they kill it?” Sanchez asks. “Because they want to control our deaths,” the professor explains. “Whoever controls death controls the world.” The two agents aren’t sure if they should take the odd professor’s story seriously. Soon, they learn that no one else at the conference knows him or has heard his name. And when they call the biology department at the University of New Mexico to follow up on their cloning capabilities, the dean laughs it off and denies everything.

The team surveilling Nick Berry reports to Margo and Sanchez, who are on call, that Berry has driven out of the city and stopped by a small patch of woods. He entered the woods, remained there for a while (they were unable to see what he was doing in there), and now he’s heading back out of the woods toward his car. They ask the detectives what to do—should they keep following Berry, or stay put and enter the woods to find out what he was doing in there? The detectives order the surveillance team to split up; one should leave in his car to keep following Berry, and the other should stay put and guide Margo and Sanchez, who are heading out immediately, and tell them exactly where Berry went in the woods.

Margo and Sanchez get to the woods and meet the surveillance officer who stayed behind. They head into the woods to try and find out what Nick Berry was doing in there. The woods are dense and shady, and visibility is low. They pull out their flashlights and search the area, until they find something suspicious-looking—a mound of dirt, recently piled over a freshly-dug hole. Meanwhile, night falls, and the woods are cast in darkness.

They call in forensics to dig up the hole. The technicians do their job under mobile floodlights. For the time being, Margo and Sanchez don’t tell Van Dijk a thing; they’re waiting to see what they find. But then, the technicians dig up Nick Berry’s Santa Claus hat, and then what appears to be his body. Sanchez calls Van Dijk. Margo calls the officer tailing Nick Berry to find out if he’s still following him. “Yes, of course I am,” the officer replies. “He drove from the woods to the TV station. I’m waiting for him out here; he hasn’t come out yet.”

It’s nighttime. Van Dijk is at home, working. He gets the message from Sanchez about Berry’s body. He shuts his computer, gets dressed, straps his gun on, turns the lights off and leaves his house. On his way to the car, he hears a rustling in the yard. He tenses up. Something rustles again. He runs back and stands flush with the wall, drawing his weapon. He scans the yard, but sees nothing. Then, he hears it again—there’s something behind the house. Van Dijk bolts around to the back yard. He hears someone running away. Van Dijk gives chase. He runs, his back hunched over, through the small patch of trees behind the house, darting behind trees. He sees a figure running away from him. He yells “Stop!” The figure keeps running. He closes in on the man, who has his back to him. He approaches him with his weapon drawn,

just a few yards away. He raises his weapon, about to fire. The man turns to face him. He's dressed exactly like him, and has a gun in his hand, pointed straight at him. Van Dijk looks at the man, stunned. He's facing himself, holding a gun on himself. Both men appear and are dressed exactly alike. They're identical in every way. Two Van Dijks, facing each other, pointing guns at each other—one at the other's chest, the other at his head.

The two identical Van Dijks—the man and his duplicant—stand this way for a long beat, like the fateful gunfight at the end of a Western. They barely move, hesitant to shoot. They're shaking, moving a bit to the right, a bit to the left, a bit to the back. They may even be circling the precise midpoint between them. But they do not shoot. Now we can tell that both of them have the very same tick in their eyes, the excessive blinking. This goes on for a few moments, and due to their constant circular motion, it becomes impossible for us to tell them apart.

Finally, one of them says to the other, "But if we kill each other, what good will that do us? We'll both be dead, and that'll be it." The other one hesitates and responds, "What do you suggest?" The two Van Dijks start a conversation, all while facing each other, weapons drawn. At any moment, one of them—and the viewer would no longer know whether it was the man or his duplicant—could shoot first and kill the other. And in fact, this is exactly what happens. Abruptly, mid-conversation, one of the Van Dijks take advantage of the other's momentary inattentiveness, shoots and kills him.

The Van Dijk left alive tosses the dead Van Dijk's body into the trunk of Van Dijk's car, parked in the driveway. He erases all evidence of what just occurred. He walks out of the garage with a shovel and tosses it into the trunk as well. Then he gets into the car and drives toward the woods where Berry's body was found. When he arrives there, he is briefed by Margo, Sanchez and the others regarding all recent developments. He stays there until the officers and technicians remove the body, pack up the floodlights and their equipment, and leave. Margo and Sanchez are the last ones on the scene, and they turn to leave as well. Van Dijk tells them, "You guys head out. I want to stay here for a while, do some thinking. I'll see you at the office." Margo and Sanchez drive away. Van Dijk is left alone in the woods. He waits for a while, then hurries to the trunk of his car and pulls out the other Van Dijk's body. He buries the body in Nick Berry's open grave and covers it in dirt. He believes this spot, where a body was already found, will not be revisited by the investigative team. He heads back to the office.

"We've got two Nick Berrys. One of them is a body at the morgue; the other's alive in the interrogation room and supposedly doesn't know what we're talking about," Sanchez says, assessing the situation at the team meeting. "Either way, whoever he is, he's lying," Margo says. "Because it's clear that the one who's alive, whoever he is, he's the one who killed the other." Van Dijk concludes, "Then it's clear that one of them is real, and the other is a duplicant. But we don't know which is which, the dead one or the living one, and that's the whole question." And the viewers, who just saw one Van Dijk kill the other, know this very question applies to Van Dijk as well—is the current head of this investigation the "real" Van Dijk? Or is he the duplicant?

Possible Future Storylines

A Brief Affair between Margo and Van Dijk, and its Consequences

Margo and Van Dijk fall into a brief love affair. When they sleep together, Margo notices a birthmark on Van Dijk's behind. Its singular shape sets off alarm bells and flashing red lights in her mind, because this specific shape lends meaning, for the first time in her life, to a word her father said when he was killed many years ago, a word that had meant nothing up until now. She asks Van Dijk about the birthmark, supposedly as part of a flirtatious conversation, and he tells her it runs in his family, that his father has the same birthmark and others on his face. In the same conversation, Van Dijk tells her that his father was in the force too. He served in Minneapolis, where the viewers know Margo's father was killed.

Margo, of course, mentions nothing to Van Dijk. But after he leaves, she collects the condom with his semen from the trash can and samples the semen. She brings the test tube into a police lab and uses a fake excuse to conduct tests comparing the semen's DNA with the DNA of her father's killer, collected from a saliva sample when the killer spat in her father's face. The test results show that the semen and saliva come from two different people, "But it is possible that these two people are related," the lab technician tells Margo. "They could be brothers or something like that." These results only serve to strengthen Margo's suspicion that Van Dijk's father killed her father. "Oh, yeah, and there is one more interesting thing," the lab technician tells her. "The semen you gave me has no sperm." "What does that mean?" Margo asks in wonder. "It means the semen has no sperm in it. This man can't have children. It's a well-known condition. It's called Azoospermia."

The condition may be well-known, Margo tells herself, but it may also be the very thing we've been looking for in our investigation, a way to tell humans apart from their duplicitous, who, unlike human beings, cannot procreate among themselves or through sexual intercourse with human females, because their semen contains no sperm. This is when she first begins to suspect that Van Dijk might be a duplicate.

These events, along with the lab results, could lead to various storylines, taking the show through several plot twists. The first concerns Margo's personal quest to find her father's killer, culminating in her murdering Van Dijk's father—her father's killer—just as Inigo Montoya kills his father's killer in *The Princess Bride*. The second concerns the duplicate plot: Margo shares the information regarding Van Dijk's absence of sperm with her colleague and confidant Sanchez. They decide to investigate, on their own and without informing Van Dijk, the matter of sperm in Nick Berry's semen—both the living and the dead one. But according to the test results, both Berrys had sperm in their semen, meaning this is probably not the way to tell duplicates apart from their human counterparts.

Later in the show, incidents that only the viewers witness, as well as incidents the other characters take part in, deepen the suspicion that Van Dijk is a duplicate. Eventually, these suspicions justify the decision, backed by the upper ranks at the FBI, to arrest Van Dijk. But then, just before his arrest, Van Dijk vanishes, only to return in the series finale (more on that below).

Sanchez's Parkinson's Disease and Eventual Suicide

Sanchez's Parkinson's disease gets worse, ravaging his memory and physical abilities. He and Margo do their best to ignore these incidents and hide the symptoms from the others. Eventually, Sanchez takes his own life by gunshot. Sanchez's funeral, back in his hometown with his grieving brother, and his sons who don't even bother showing up to say their goodbyes, is deeply sad. But when his three friends from the investigative team—Van Dijk, Tolly and Margo—fly back from the funeral to Wichita the next morning, they walk into the office for a meeting and find Sanchez sitting there, alive and well, happy to see them.

Two Serial Killers are Caught and Turn Out to be the Same Man

In an apparently unrelated storyline, the city of Wichita experiences a rash of serial killings. The police treats these killings as score-settling between rival criminal organizations. The murders are all carried out in the same way: two men, dressed as police officers on a motorcycle missing a license plate, show up in slums around the city, stop in a crowded area, pull out their guns and shoot, killing and wounding several people before speeding away from the scene. And yet, when these incidents repeat, and it turns out none of the casualties have any ties to organized crime, the police realize this is a new form of serial killings, perpetrated by two people working together. At some point, a twist connects this storyline to the duplicants investigation, and eventually leads to the solution and the series finale.

After another motorcycle killing takes place in a poor neighborhood, police forces in the area are able to pursue the motorcycle. A massive chase, involving dozens of police squad cars and motorcycles, closes in on the murderous motorcycle, as it flees at incredible speeds and performs astonishing stunts to escape its pursuers. But then, on the road leading out of the city, when it seems the killers are going to successfully escape the police, they go off-road to circumvent a roadblock, hit a rock and flip over. The two motorcycle riders are thrown off their bike, landing at a great distance apart from each other.

The officers in pursuit approach the killers with their weapons drawn. They find two men wearing police uniforms and helmets, badly injured and knocked unconscious. Ambulance crews show up immediately and provide medical attention on the spot. They load the killers onto ambulances and, under heavy police escort, head to the hospital. But at the hospital, when the killers are undressed and treated, it turns out they are both the same man, apparently a police officer. Both have the same badge, identifying them as Don Howard Kimberly.

After the two serial killer "cops," the twin Don Kimberlys with their identical identification, heal from their wounds, it is the first time since the investigation began that the investigators have two identical subjects in their custody who are both alive. Finally, they feel like they can successfully discover which one of them is "real" and which is the duplicant. Their ultimate goal in pinpointing a way to discern real from duplicant is to track down whoever is behind the creation and distribution of these

duplicants, and to destroy the manufacturing and distribution capabilities, and/or get their hands on these scientific and technological capabilities for government use.

The interrogation is drawn-out and difficult, and though they make several breakthroughs, they cannot solve the case. Finally, one of the psychologists recruited for the interrogation suggests, “You should let them escape.” He explains, “When a man is fleeing danger, a threat to his life or his freedom, an existential threat, his instinct is to run to a place he knows—to his parents, if he’s human, or to whoever created him, if he is a duplicant.” The psychologist’s plan is accepted. State-of-the-art tracking chips are implanted in both Don Howard Kimberlys. Then, an accident is meticulously staged: a police vehicle transporting the prisoners crashes, allowing them to escape, but not together.

And, in fact, one of the Dons does flee to his family, his wife and children, while the other one takes a long, twisted route, swapping several identities and taking various modes of transportation to different destinations in opposite directions, supposedly to throw anyone off his trail. But eventually, after an escape lasting many days, he crosses the state line, comes to an isolated ranch house in a forest, and disappears inside the house. The officers following him stake out the place and discover it is run by the eccentric professor, Lima Del Sol, whom Van Dijk and Sanchez met at the conference early in the show. And it’s not just Del-Sol who is there, but Van Dijk as well, who has been missing all this time. And it’s not just one Van Dijk—they count at least three of them.

It turns out that 17 years ago, when he was a professor at the biology department at the university in Albuquerque, Del Sol was able to develop a preliminary—yet apparently operational—capability of perfectly cloning living creatures. However, his colleagues in the department at the time believed his research, his methodology and his “grand invention,” as he called it, were all the result of delusions or mental illness. They not only got him kicked out of the university, they had him hospitalized for several years in a mental institution. When he was released, it appears he built his own lab and research facility, which eventually became a factory line of sorts for the creation of these duplicants. His motivation is not only revenge, but a deep desire to prove to the world that he is a genius capable of fomenting chaos that will devastate human society.

Option for Series Finale:

In the finale episode, the investigative team carries out a classified surprise raid on Del Sol’s duplicant “factory.” However, the raiding task force is exposed and immediately finds itself under attack, as heavy fire comes its way from the factory and its surroundings—machine guns, cannons, rockets. From this point on, the raid turns into an all-out war, with many casualties on both sides. Inside the factory, it turns out there are many duplicants of Del Sol himself, which means the snipers brought on board to kill him are forced to “kill” him over and over again, unsuccessfully. The defense forces protecting the “factory” deploy massive fire against the raiding task force. They are made up of dozens, possibly hundreds of duplicants, working in sync in units made of various numbers of identical members,

commanded by Van Dijk duplicants. The battle is hard and brutal. The attacking forces are caught off-guard, suffer casualties, and stop. The war continues without an end in sight, until suddenly the large building explodes and bursts into flames, as if an atom bomb were set off in its basement. The tremendous blast and heatwave roll out toward the police forces, leaving them no choice but to flee or be burned alive.

But then, as they run away, the police officers and agents look around and realize, much to their astonishment, that they are surrounded by duplicants of themselves, all escaping the blast. In this way, Del Sol's insane vision comes to fruition, as there is no more telling the hundreds of law enforcement officers apart from their hundreds of duplicants.

THE END.