Fallout’s season 2 finale left plenty unanswered as it expanded in scope

Spoilers to follow for the first two seasons of Fallout*.*

While much of this season could be described as plodding, the pace picked up significantly toward the end. And there’s a whole bunch of stuff to keep track of: the bloodthirsty Legion appear to have settled their civil war and are now marching to New Vegas; Lucy (Ella Purnell) is trying to stop her father, Hank (Kyle MacLachlan), from using a mind-control device to bring some semblance of peace to the wasteland; Maximus (Aaron Moten) is fighting a losing battle against a herd of Deathclaws as he tries to save the residents of the Strip; the Ghoul (Walton Goggins) has inched oh-so close to finding his family who have been tucked away in a cryogenic sleep for two centuries; the newly awakened dwellers of Vault 31 are being massacred by rad roaches; and Vault 33 is verging on a riot after discovering their leader Stephanie (Annabel O’Hagan) is actually — *gasp* — a Canadian.

That’s a lot, and for much of season 2 those threads have remained largely independent of each other, which is part of what has made it feel occasionally disjointed. And while the finale brought much of it together, it still felt a overstuffed. Certain plotlines — in particular Lucy’s brother, Norm (Moises Arias), and his strange journey with the Vault 31 crew — were undercooked. But the areas the show *did* focus on all point to how much bigger *Fallout*’s world really is.

For starters, there’s Hank. He’s spent much of the season trying to refine a Vault-Tec gadget that allows for complete

control over another human being. It mostly works, and he's amassed a small army of subjugates, but he won't be satisfied until he makes the chips, which are embedded in a person's neck, so small as to be imperceptible. The goal, it seems, is to make it so the mind-controlled folks are able to seamlessly fit into society, without anyone actually knowing they're being controlled. But the finale also revealed a larger plan: Hank says that there are already mindless drones out in the world following specific orders. But what those orders are is never revealed. He cryptically tells Lucy that "the surface is the experiment, not the vaults."

The Ghoul, meanwhile, learns that his wife and child aren't actually frozen in an underground vault, but instead are living in some kind of facility in Colorado. And during his adventures in the secret Vault-Tec basement he's told by Mr. House (Justin Theroux) — the de facto leader of New Vegas, a billionaire who was prepared for the apocalypse and also seemed to have a hand in dropping the bombs that started it — that there's actually another bigwig who is even more powerful than he is. Oh, and Stephanie initiates something called "phase two" that seems important and is likely connected to a virus created by one of the prewar tech giants.

With all of this going on, it seemed like the show was racing toward some big revelations. Instead it presented even more questions. What's phase two? What is the plan for the human drones in the wasteland? What's in Colorado? Who is really pulling the strings? It may have been a season finale, but the episode offered nothing close to a conclusion. It even sets up what appears to be a huge battle — the Legion is pushing into Vegas to make its new home base, while the New California Republic shows up seemingly to defend the city — but ends before the sides clash.

Questions are important to keep viewers interested, of course, and I obviously wasn't expecting *Fallout* to wrap up everything two seasons in. But the lack of meaningful resolution for any

of the storylines made the finale feel unsatisfying. What started out as a race to a major conflict or revelation instead turned into a quiet limp to the end, more promise than payoff. Well, there’s always next season.

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