

Notes from July 15th, 2022, after finishing Season Two of Lodge 49. -Jack



Lodge 49 is a show which is often explicitly about the overladen, confusing, and out-of-sync reality of modern life. It is perhaps even more poignant and apt today than it was when it aired in 2018 and '19. There is something about the show being cut short (at the end of Season 2) with several cliffhangers, including the biggest one of the series, which might emphasize this thematic thrust towards the absurd core of modernity even better than if it had been continued.

Bitcoin plays a crucial, if side, role in the show and its precipitous rise and recent fall would fit well within an imaginary third or fourth or fifth season. One could envision the brand icon and entrepreneur Janet playing a part in its globally encompassing rise. Now, the “*arc of the Janet universe*” has trended back **away** from profit in this part of the circle. It is easy to imagine the crypto ads from Super Bowl LVI situated within the high-level “marketing” (scamming) of both Janet and her company (the aptly named and silicon-valley-esque: ‘**Omni**’) as well as that done on lower levels by other characters in the show.

The downturn of crypto exchanges/companies like Voyager, where regular investors' money is currently inaccessible and its fate unclear, dependent upon results of lawsuits and evaluations, is reminiscent of how the employees of an Omni subsidiary go unpaid but are told they are going to be compensated in stock of their failing restaurant. The current price of Bitcoin remains higher than in 2018 and 2019 (Fig. 1), but the rise and fall of endless alternative cryptocurrencies would fit even better within the narrative of the show – where bitcoin serves as a modern-day mythology, a source of hope, for those who have lost all faith in the everyday magic of the world.

Bitcoin (BTC) price per day from October 2013 to July 14, 2022
(in U.S. dollars)

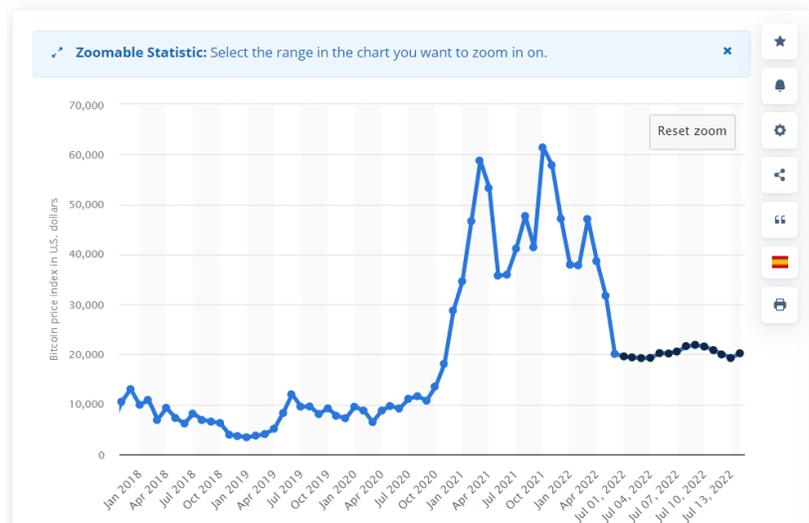


Figure 1

To one interested in politics the show manages to embody what feels like a crucial – maybe the only crucial – conflict point in today's politics. In a world so atomizing and overpowering, how can we create community, and allow ourselves love? It does this without having much that is explicitly '**Political**' (with a capital P). We follow and care about workers and laborers, damaged to varying degrees. The story is driven by debts, assumed from dead

family, or acquired semi-conscious in a hospital. Magical truths and potentials drive our cast, but in the end the value is in the others who believe alongside you. Failing that, those that choose to be with you, even without belief.

Paul Giamatti appears in my favorite role of his, the incredibly productive and eccentric L. Marvin Metz – whose voice we heard reading aloud his endless audiobooks before we see him onscreen. Metz, and the more central character Connie to a lesser extent, are the artists in the series – and as such are an interesting lens with which to examine the thrust of the show. Metz is even more lost than Dud, Blaise, and the rest of our wayward Lynxes – believing in hollow-earth theory beyond even the shared, hopeful, belief in alchemy. However, he is self-aware in his unmooring. He plays a supportive role often, encouraging and funding. He disappears before we see the final moments of our main cast. Artists, speakers, perhaps anyone who thinks of themselves as a ‘global-being’ (an individual whose life and tangible existence is supported by something diffuse and immense, rather than local and face-to-face): is this the most they can contribute? Is this invaluable, or the most meager of contributions?



Lodge 49 is my favorite show of recent years, and although I wish it had a season or two more it stands as a well-worth-watching piece as it is. Season 1 alone is a satisfactory watch, 2 left me wanting even more than 1 did, but still leaves many aspects, storylines, and sentiments, feeling completed. It is the only show I have seen the directly confronts modernity, and the nihilism of this time that is so widespread but manages, not only, not to dive into it but in fact to be curative of said nihilism. We are important, just as important as everybody else. There might not be magic, but there are ancient scrolls and exciting adventures. The Order of the Lynx might be weird, but it is a place to feel welcome. If you can, please consider giving it a watch, a like, and see what the show makes you feel.



“I don’t know if I can handle paying that kind of price. Everything is all tangled, the good stuff and the bad stuff. It just seems unfair. And on some days, all of the beautiful things in my life break my heart. Will it always feel this way?”

