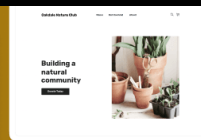
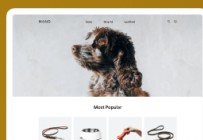




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Review: Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. Season 6 Episode 1 - "Missing Pieces"

2019-05-10 20:00:00 by [Chris Compendio](#)

Everyone plays dirty, looks dirty

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There's a bit of a whiplash effect every time *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* returns. Probably more than anything else in the larger Marvel Cinematic Universe, *S.H.I.E.L.D.* essentially goes through a soft reboot every single year. While the season six premiere "Missing Pieces" isn't too complicated to follow, perhaps "Scattered Pieces" would have been a more appropriate title.

None of the [new elements in this new season](#) are explained in detail, but it is all done deliberately. *S.H.I.E.L.D.* has gotten smarter in exuding an aura of mystery, and more recent premiere episodes make a habit of introducing new vocabulary terms and proper nouns that viewers will have to keep note of for later on. The same applies for the season six premiere, and it succeeds in balancing dense world-building with the same character building the show is known for.

But have any of these characters taken a shower in a while?



Season six picks up a full year after the end of season five, bizarrely not mentioning the events of *Avengers: Infinity War* (you know, the movie where half the universe's population died at the end) and seemingly not tying in with *Avengers: Endgame* at all. Fine with me—the show has built enough goodwill to make me care about this specific corner of the MCU, so I felt fully zoned in. Granted, it's a lot to catch up on, as the characters have been up to a lot since we've last seen them.

There are two main plot lines happening: one is a straight-up sci-fi adventure. Now that space is an open playground as of last season, Daisy, Simmons, and returning supporting characters Davis and Piper are on a mission to find a cryogenically-frozen Fitz. The earthbound plot has Mack as the new S.H.I.E.L.D. director leading the team as they investigate mysterious anomalies around the world. Despite being more grounded, the latter was harder to keep track of.



There are just too many damn new characters. We return to the familiar base of *The Lighthouse* from season five, but in the year-long in-universe gap, it's full of fresh faces with no real proper introduction. Granted, it's lovely seeing S.H.I.E.L.D. as a fully-operational organization rather than the scrappy underdogs from seasons two onwards, but as of now it's difficult to view these faces more than redshirts that happen to have names this time around.

One such apparent redshirt (I seriously don't remember his name, even after checking twice) is now the new flame of Yo-Yo Rodriguez, whose romance with Mack hasn't worked out since his ascension to Director. It isn't anything compelling in this episode in particular, but given that *Agents* has a decent job of crafting romantic stories without delving into soap opera territory, I'll consider it just another piece being laid out for later use.

The dynamic between May and Mack is one I'm looking forward to—Mack has been more of an everyman, making him a bit out of his element in a new role (he frequents a bar amongst other places to stay human away from the space and espionage), leaving the more enlightened and experienced May as someone to lean on. Less interesting is the subplot involving Mack and May's recruitment of a university professor named Marcus Benson, who is reluctant in another cliched "I'm getting too old for this shit" manner, but we'll have to wait and see how yet another new character fares.



Simmons and Fitz's relationship has always been the most fascinating bedrock of the show, and while we've seen Fitz go far and beyond for his beloved, we now see Simmons doing the exact thing. The quartet in space is going through a bit of cabin fever, with everyone wanting to regroup back to Earth, except for Simmons, of course. It seems a bit one note, and I'm curious to see how previous minor characters like Davis and Piper, now with a noticeable higher amount of dialogue, will play dramatically, considering we know little to nothing about them.

I guess I shouldn't have been surprised that this premiere episode left more questions than answers, ending with a cliffhanger that will probably set the emotional foundation for the S.H.I.E.L.D. team back on Earth, especially for May. If you've seen any commercial for it, you'll know that the **new main baddie named "Sarge" looks like a certain former Director named Phil Coulson**. There is zero explanation for what is happening, who these mysterious, dirty, mercenary-looking baddies who are "crossing" dimensions(?) are and what they want. I'd be lying though, if I said that I wasn't so intrigued.

Despite the relative lack of action in the premiere (it looks like the budget was blown on those pretty decent-looking space sequences), this season premiere was a reminder that this show can get by pretty far through atmosphere and character dynamics alone. I'd just hope that the **shortened 13-episode count** for this season is enough to get through the more complicated aspects of whatever the writers are setting up.

Still, I have to wonder if those bad guys ever wash up after themselves. And how does the space crew bathe in that tiny ship? Clean up, *S.H.I.E.L.D.*



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Sam Raimi might be directing the Doctor Strange sequel

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There was some concern when the news broke earlier this year that Scott Derrickson, director of the first *Doctor Strange* film, was **parting with** upcoming sequel. *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness* was said to lean heavily

into horror stylings, and some speculated that Derrickson's "creative differences" departure might have pushed the horror envelope a little too far for comfort over at Marvel. Today's news would seem to push that envelope all the way through the door.

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