

Introducing Seldon Crisis



[Theme music plays in background]

Joel McKinnon

I am very happy to introduce Seldon Crisis, a new podcast exploring Isaac Asimov's classic epic, "Foundation." Along the way, I'll be diving into each of the chapters of this masterpiece and doing my best to bring intriguing characters to life while evoking the mystery and drama of this amazing epic. I plan to provide historical, cultural and personal context for the time it was written, as well as how I see it as relevant to the times we live in today and the challenges we as a society face now and in the future. Let me give you a little preview of the first few episodes.

Joel

In the first, "The Psychohistorians," a young mathematician named Gaal Dornick travels to the capital city of Trantor to meet the greatest master of his field, psychohistorian Hari Seldon. He finds that Seldon has acquired a reputation as a prophet of doom and will shortly stand trial for causing instability in the Empire. Dornick gets arrested as well, and witnesses a tense courtroom drama in which Seldon skillfully outmaneuvers the Empire's chief administrator, Ling Chen, saving both of their lives and establishing authority to launch his thousand year project to secure the collected knowledge of humanity and eventually establish a new empire from the ashes. The next couple of episodes take us to the farthest fringes of the galaxy, where the nascent Foundation has established its Encyclopedia Galactica on the barren planet of Terminus and faces existential threats from a rising breakaway alliance of kingdoms determined to seize control of the foundation and utilize its valuable knowledge for their own devices.

A hero emerges in the person of the mayor of Terminus City, Salvor Hardin. He manages to anticipate and navigate the threads of psychohistory foretold by Seldon and resolve multiple "Seldon Crises" to mitigate the apparently overwhelming threats facing the Foundation. Later, we'll encounter lone traders who will use the Foundation's knowledge to profit and to preserve Seldon's plan and the authority of Terminus. They will develop innovative technologies and systems of control, notably the use of a false religion to spread the influence of the young Foundation. One such trader, Hober Mallow, will become the first of a succession of merchant princes.

Still later, we will encounter the last remnants of the old Empire as they become aware of the rising Foundation and try to regain control under the great General Bel Riose. Seldon's plan will continue unimpeded until a new and entirely unanticipated force appears, a mutant being with mentallic

powers known as the Mule, who will upend the carefully thought out plan. A rumored Second Foundation will become the only hope for defeating the Mule, but at what cost? Please join me and listen to the first episode of Seldon Crisis, "The Psychohistorians," as we travel to the gleaming imperial capital of Trantor and meet the man called "the Raven" for his prophecy of impending doom and witness his battle with the shortsighted governing authorities to establish the seeds of a new renaissance on the distant fringe of the galaxy.