

## Season 1 Recap and Season 2 Preview



[Intro theme music]

### **Joel McKinnon**

Welcome back, my dear friends, and I regret to inform you that this is not the first episode of season and two, but a mere postscript to season one and a quick preview of upcoming attractions. In looking back, I want to say how much this has been a blast to do and I'm just thrilled that there are people out there who find it worthwhile to listen. You encourage me to do my best to continue the story. Our next season will feature some amazing characters and some truly mind blowing plot twists, but I'll get to that in a bit.

### **Joel**

First, a quick recap of the story thus far. In our first episode, "The Psychohistorians," young PhD student Gaal Dornick left his home planet on Synnax and traveled to the capital of the empire, Trantor. He discovered his boss, Hari Seldon, waiting for him in his hotel room and was told the empire was due to collapse any day now, then got arrested along with him and stood trial for disturbing the peace. Seldon tricked the high commissioner, Ling Chen, into sending him, Dornick and 100,000 of his followers to the edge of the galaxy to a lonely and primitive planet named Terminus, where they were to catalog all of the knowledge of the human race into a grand Encyclopedia Galactica.

Or so they thought. In "The Encyclopedists," we saw the fledgling colony of Terminus face its first Seldon Crisis when the belligerent nearby system of Anacreon broke away from the empire and threatened the Foundation with imminent annexation. The clever young mayor of Terminus City, Salvor Hardin, used the Foundation's technological advantage, chiefly the understanding of nuclear power, to convince Anacreon's powerful neighbors to join in an alliance against them. This was the first occasion in which Hari Seldon's recorded image appeared in the vault, the specially designed chamber in which he would periodically provide updates on the Seldon Plan to the horror of Louis Pirenne and his Board of Trustees.

Seldon informed them that the ostensible reason for their project, the creation of the encyclopedia was a fraud. Their real purpose was simply to take over the galaxy. Eventually, a generation later in "The Mayors," we found Hardin firmly in power and facing an even more serious threat from Anacreon in the person of the wicked regent Wenus who intended to use his nephew Lepold's coronation to launch a powerful attack upon Terminus. But again, Hardin had the political skills to rise to the occasion. He had turned the knowledge of sophisticated technology and especially of nuclear science to form a false religion and with the help of Foundation high priest Poly Verisof, turned the tables on Wenus and brought him to a humiliating and rather messy end.

Later, we took a quick side trip with smooth talking salesman Limmar Ponyetz in "The Traders" on a high stakes rescue mission to the Kingdom of Ascone where the ethically challenged protagonist used sophisticated high tech extortion to free his comrade and get the superstitious Askonians hooked on Foundation gadgetry. Still later in "The Merchant Princes," Hober Mallow dueled on the home front with the powerful politician Jorane Sutt, and on the distant planet of Korell, with the tired but still greedy Comdor Asper and his well connected but difficult wife, the Comdora Licia. He used a similar technical trick to catch the spy Jaim

Twere and his faux priest Jord Parma in an act designed to undermine Mallow's authority through character assassination. A side trip to visit an old man named Onum Barr on the unfortunate planet of Siwenna may have appeared almost incidental, but will have significant implications in our next chapter.

Don't worry, I'll bring you up to speed when we get there. After that whirlwind activity and so many strange names, you might wonder what you really need to remember going forward. To be honest, it's not that much, and I'll try to help with that too. For now, just keep a space for Hari Seldon, Salvor Hardin and Hober Mallow in your memory banks. They will be referred to frequently as the legendary founding fathers of Foundation. And as we march through the ages to come, while we get ready to start into the next great chapter of this epic in season two, the novel "Foundation and Empire," I want to bring up something else that I haven't discussed much yet, and that is this new and ambitious TV series based on Foundation to begin streaming on Apple TV Plus starting on September 24 of this year.

Interviews with the showrunner indicate they intend an ambitious 80 episodes. A lot of commentary in the online community has sprung up around some significant departures from the original storyline, evidenced in the prerelease trailers, including three generations of rulers on Trantor named Brothers Dawn, Day, and Dusk. No Cleons, and a much larger role for Gaal Dornick. The latter has been cast as a female person of color, as is Salvor Hardin, who also seems to be lugging around a large weapon quite out of character for the Hardin we've come to know and love. In my opinion, the gender swaps and greater diversity is welcome, while some of the changes in basic plot may be a bit harder to swallow.

Then again, this is the year 2021, and if it wants to succeed in capturing the imagination of today's audience, it probably needs to make some significant changes to grab the attention span of a far different audience

than the one that was introduced to the original stories. I'm rooting for it to succeed, and I hope it draws even more people to read the source material and maybe even to listen to this podcast. There's getting to be a lot of buzz about the show, and this is bringing a lot of Asimov fans out of the woodwork online. I've already mentioned the Asimov subthread on Reddit and a couple of others are dedicated more directly to Foundation and the upcoming TV series, and I'll link to these in the show notes.

Another great place to stay caught up is my friend Luigi at his YouTube channel Foundation Era. He's put together a string of videos analyzing the tea leaves from the limited material Apple has produced, as well as one on the Asimov future timeline I mentioned in episode six. Luigi was kind enough to give Seldon Crisis a plug on his most recent video, which resulted in an enormous spike in downloads for this podcast. So thank you very much, Luigi! There's another new podcast that I just discovered I want to call out by the name of Star's End.

The three co hosts Dan, Jon, and Joseph are a joy to listen to as they talk about the latest news on the TV show, discuss Asimov trivia, and introduce listeners to the original story in a way that I find really complements my approach on this podcast. It's like getting invited over to hang out with some Asimov geek friends, just having a good time talking about their favorite topic. You can find it all on the major platforms like Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify and Anchor, and they have a website at [starsendpodcast.wordpress.com](http://starsendpodcast.wordpress.com). Or you can find them at the Twitter handle [@starsendpodcast](https://twitter.com/starsendpodcast). Links in the show notes.

Of course, I expect more podcasts, YouTube channels and other platforms to spring up as the Apple Show gets closer and really welcome the growth of this robust online community. The more the merrier. Some of you have asked how you can help to support my efforts to produce this podcast, so I've started a Patreon page for now. It's going to be really simple because I just thought of it like this minute and there are a lot of ways I might end

up using it. The link will be in the show notes, and I'll provide more info when I develop it a bit more.

So what's coming up? Only one of the most amazing and stimulating novels I've ever had the joy of reading. "Foundation and Empire" is the middle novel of the original trilogy, and some say the best. There are two chapters which I'm going to break up into five episodes. The first up is "The General" part one of two, and then the three episodes of "The Mule." In the first episode, we'll meet two descendants of characters from "The Merchant Princes" and a young general of the declining Empire determined to reverse their fortunes and stamp out their emerging and still tiny Foundation.

"The Mule" will feature Asimov's first compelling female character in the epic, as well as one of the most compelling anti-heroes in all of fiction, not just science fiction. I've got some subtle and not so subtle surprises coming in this season, besides the colossal ones Asimov will bring in his elegant story construction.

[Exit theme music begins]

## **Joel**

Stay tuned for a fabulous season two beginning in only two weeks. I can hardly wait to bring it from my humble studio to your waiting ears. Stay on this channel, subscribe if you haven't yet and you'll be hearing soon from a new season of Seldon Crisis!

[Theme music plays out]