

Television Show Concept

**HIVE**

**SERIES BIBLE**

# Introduction

8x 1 hour Episodes

*Hive* is a dark comedic-drama that follows five strangers trapped inside a tacky, low-budget sitcom. Watched by an unseen audience ever hungry for entertainment, the reluctant 'stars' must learn to play along with their eerie 'supporting' castmates or risk being killed off for cheap laughs. Can they work together to uncover the mysteries of their captivity to escape? Or will they be consumed by the bright lights of 'stardom' and their darkest impulses laid bare?

Hive is an allegory for the social media age.

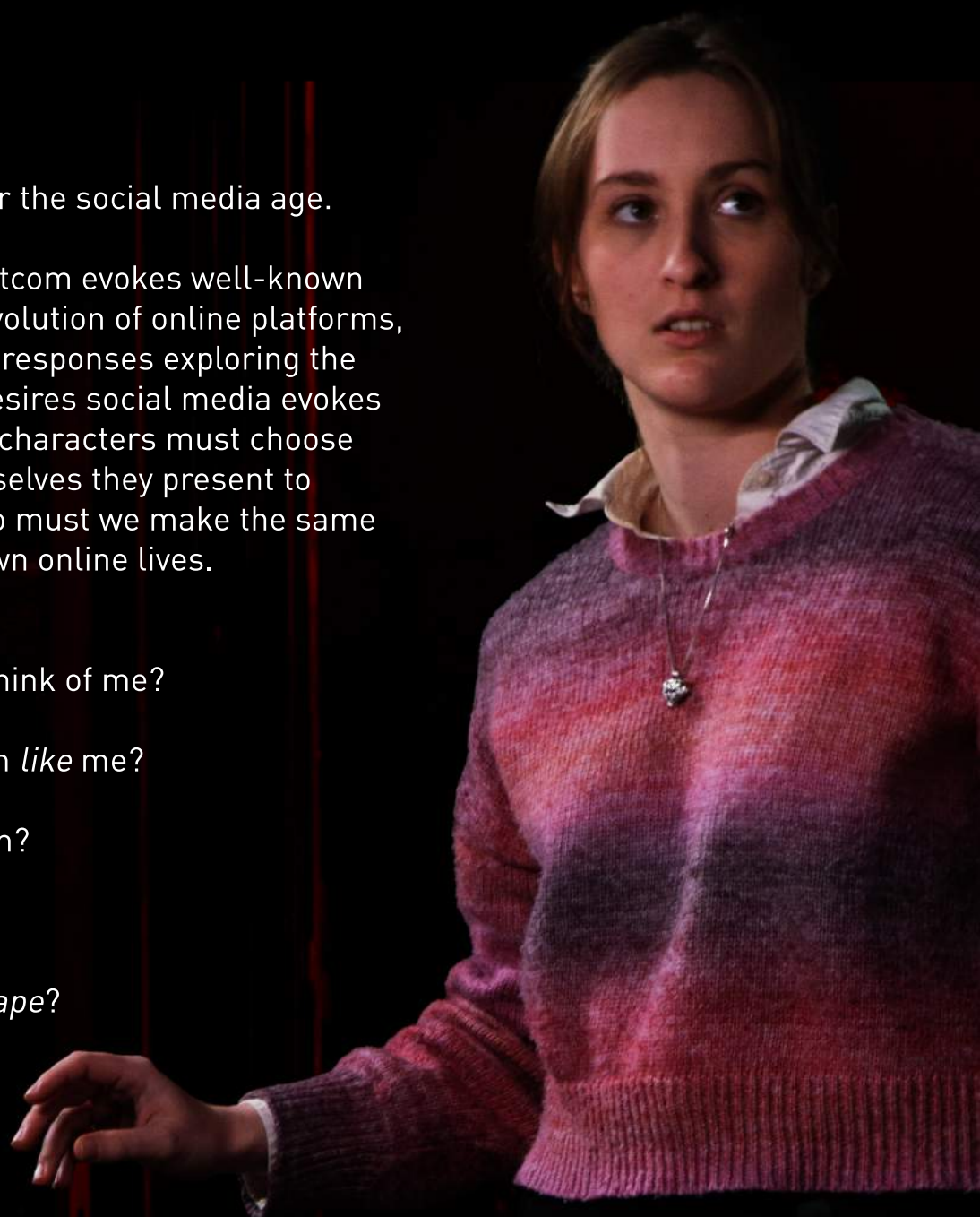
The 'The Bee Hive' sitcom evokes well-known 'flashpoints' in the evolution of online platforms, with the characters' responses exploring the intense needs and desires social media evokes in users. Just as the characters must choose what aspect of themselves they present to 'the Audience', so too must we make the same decisions with our own online lives.

What do they *really* think of me?

How can I make them *like* me?

Is this who I *really* am?

Is there a way to *escape*?



# Tone & World

Our characters primarily live and perform on a Hostel set piece which sits in a seemingly endless black void. The faceless audience laughter, is the only hint that there is something else out in that great beyond. They are the playthings of a powerful, almost voyeuristic force that will be entertained.

The show these characters are forced to be a part of is a cheap-laughs, lighthearted sitcom which contrasts the reality of their dark, apparently hopeless situation. Those grappling with an existential crisis are asked to make pratfalls and witty one-liners to survive. But perhaps they can turn the tide; if you provide, the show rewards. With reward comes hope for some, but for others it's a distraction from the real chance of escape or at the very least sanity.

## Terminology

One of the key themes of HIVE is the use of vernacular, and its intrinsic openness to re-interpretation and manipulation. The language in this document is presented from the perspective of the series protagonists. However, these terms will shift and evolve over the course of the series, becoming a point of character tensions. This will also be useful for the audience, who should be able to easily pick up the terms (promoting their own fan discussions around the series).

### **Characters/Supports**

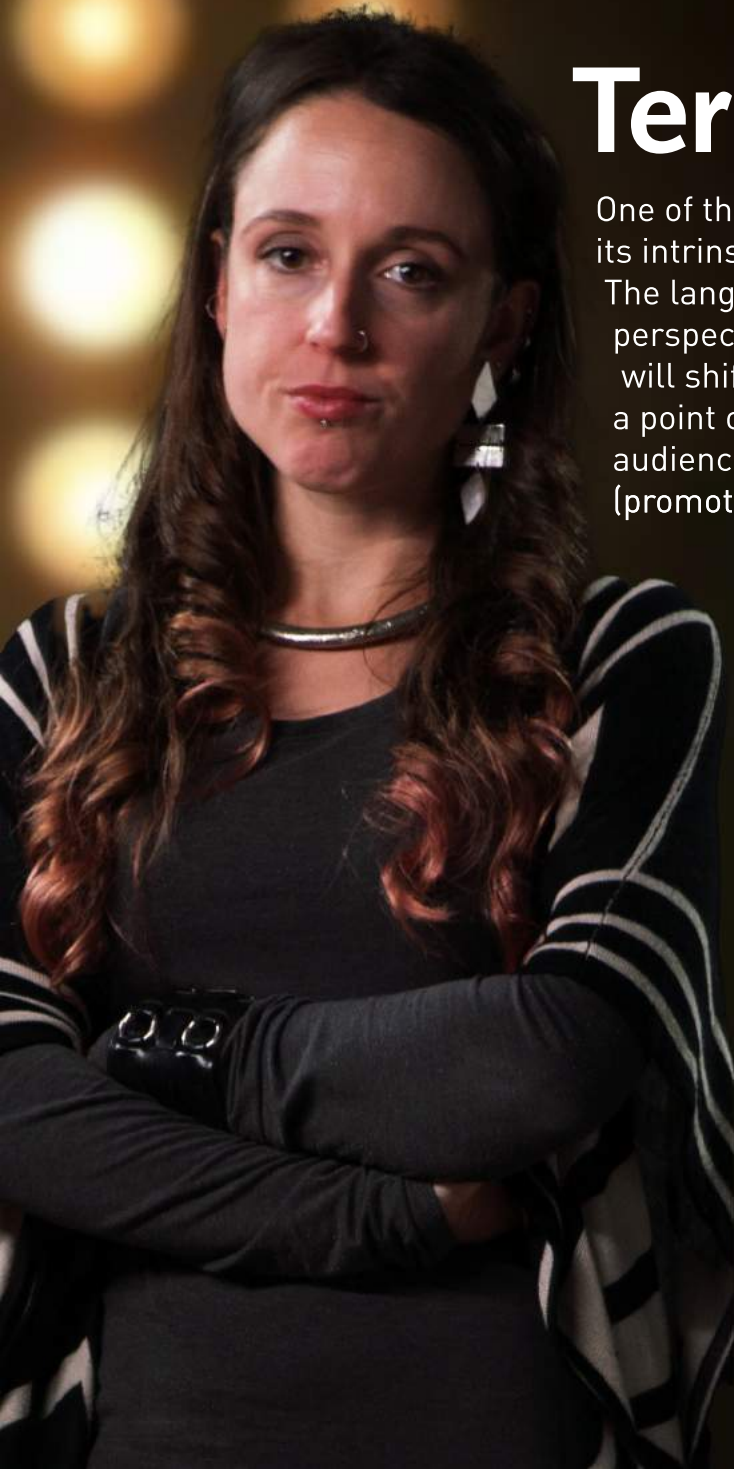
The secondary characters within the 'Bee Hive' sitcom – more or less everyone outside of our aforementioned story perspectives, and thus all potential agents of fear and danger to our Cast. The Characters are largely understood as a direct extension of the Show and its agenda (see below).

### **The show/ The Show**

Refers to both the show-within-a-show - 'The Bee Hive' sitcom - and by extension the true power/s controlling the narrative – The Show, i.e. the unseen enemy, the series 'Big Bad'. The "true" nature and agenda of The Show is one of the principal mysteries that drives the series narrative.

### **Episodes**

Used by the characters exclusively to refer to the events within 'The Bee Hive' sitcom – the sitcom episodes.



# Story

**“You can’t direct the currents.  
But you can flow with them.”**

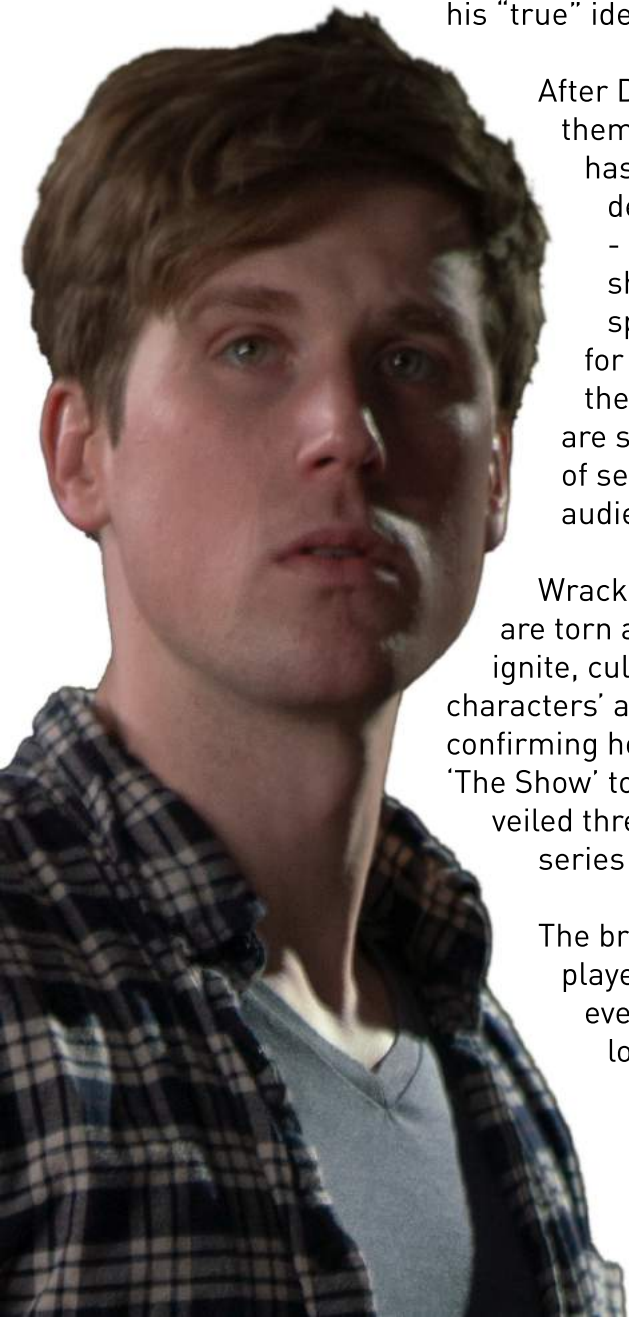
GRACE awakens in a darkened room, the victim of an apparent abduction. Her sole exit is a glowing door, beyond which lies a world of light and pantomime – an archaic television set, adrift in a seemingly endless void. Joined by five fellow “abductees”, Grace struggles to navigate the opening act of a tacky TV sitcom, complete with over-the-top ‘support characters’ and laugh track. Rewards come to those who play along, with the unseen audience showering validation upon the cheapest of jokes. A break in proceedings sees all but our stars frozen in place. Confusion reigns, but hope appears in the form of “THE HERMIT”, the half-mad survivor of a previous ‘show’. As the sponsor messages conclude and the characters ‘reactivate’, the Hermit watches the ‘new blood’ find their feet but refuses to partake in the antics. Punishment comes. After imparting words of wisdom on Grace, the Hermit is brutally crushed to death... all while the support characters quip about building integrity. As the first show ends to rapturous applause, our reluctant stars are left to face the stark reality of their situation – play or die.

The battered cast are collected by LLEW, their sixth ‘co-star’ and affable ‘custodian’ of the Bee Hive set. She reveals a sanctuary (or something to that effect) behind the set - apartments, entertainment, everything the ‘cast’ could need for a comfortable (and lengthy) stay. Some see only a prison – namely VIVIAN, the acerbic pessimist. Theories and accusations fly, with only one clear truth – “to survive, we must entertain”. The twists and turns of the subsequent episodes see our cast portraying (what they perceive to be) the most entertaining aspect of themselves. Some – such as easy-going DAVE and blithe JURI - find their groove quickly, easing into the flow of the stories and the warm affirmation they provide. Others, like neurotic MATTHEW, are the constant butt of the joke, failing to find purchase when displaying his “true” identity. But nothing hits like a good romance.

After Dave’s Valentine’s story is an unexpected hit, he and Grace find themselves bound together in a ‘will-they-won’t-they’ romance. Vivian has no time for this - though a fast crowd favourite, she grows more desperate with each bad punchline. Plans for escape consume her - if it means tunnelling, then she’ll convince the show to give her a shovel. But who’s playing whom? The casts’ manipulations backfire spectacularly, and a plotline gone wrong foreshadows a grim end for Juri. Fed up with “dancing to The Show’s tune”, Juri escapes into the nothingness of the void... a seeming death sentence. His co-stars are shaken, but none more so than his cousin Matthew, whose sense of self continues to corrode under the callous jeers of the faceless audience.

Wracked by paranoia and guilt, any lingering threads of camaraderie are torn apart after Llew’s lies are exposed. Long smouldering resentments ignite, culminating in the cast seizing one of their Bee Hive ‘supports characters’ as a hostage. A botched interrogation takes a bloody turn, confirming horrifying suspicions about their own fates, and finally forcing ‘The Show’ to intervene. Peace talks are held, but there is no peace – only veiled threats. Not everyone survives. But there’s no time for grief - the series finale has arrived.

The broken cast hurtle towards end of season uncertainty, and it’s every player for themselves. Which plotlines will keep them alive? Do they even want to survive? - if it means eternity trapped in a sitcom? A long-overdue win for Matthew sees him integrated into the show’s automated supporting cast, while Dave and Grace’s tumultuous on-air romance takes a triumphant and dangerous turn. As the walls between show and reality crumble, Vivian makes a final shocking discovery – there are others beyond the void. A resistance. And, just maybe, a chance for escape...



# Characters

## **GRACE** - The “Neurotic Leading Lady”.

Young, beautiful, educated and poised, Grace is the kind of girl who’s been bred to succeed... whether she wants to or not. Thrust into the role of ‘Sitcom Leading Lady’, the pressures begin to chip away at Grace’s delicate sense of self, pushing her mental and emotional resilience to breaking point. Can Grace uncover the true purpose behind their strange captivity? Or will she lose herself in a maze of her own fears and insecurities?

## **DAVE** - The “Sweet Leading Man”.

Shy and unsure by nature, Dave is struck with wonder by the strange new reality of the Show. Drawing upon his isolated childhood watching films and TV, Dave finds his place as the Show’s sweet, old-fashioned country-boy. But as the lines between character and man begin to blur, his castmates must confront the unsettling ramifications of an eternity spent trapped in a sitcom.

## **VIVIAN** - The “Wisecracking Rebel”.

A life of hardship has made Vivian a perfect fit for the Show’s cynical, straight-talking bartender... a servitude she refuses to accept. Independent and passionate, the enforced captivity disgusts the rebellious Vivian. As her attempts to escape the Show become increasingly desperate, Vivian is forced to indulge her darkest inclinations in her pursuit for freedom.

## **MATTHEW** - The “Lovable Loser”.

A particularly sensitive and high-strung young man, Matthew still fancies himself a scholar and a gentleman. As he tries to find a worthwhile place in the Show, Matthew’s pedantic and eccentric personality quickly pigeon-holes him as the hapless comic relief – a realization that fills him with horror. His attempts to “redefine” his identity soon find Matthew trapped in a struggle between who he is and who he could become.

## **JURI** - The “Obnoxious Joker”.

The opposite of his cousin Matthew (his sometimes-friend-sometimes-adversary), Juri adapts quickly as the Show’s joker. His unpredictable and cheeky character makes him a fast “audience favourite”, but Juri’s increasingly erratic performances drive a wedge between he and his cast-mates. It is only a matter of time before his actions have dire consequences for all of them.

## **LLEW** - The “Helpful Neighbour”

The only cast member “held over” from the previous Show, Llewellyn quickly becomes mentor to her new “co-stars”. Her unassuming girl-next-door personality wins their trust, as each struggle to adjust to their new lives. But it soon becomes clear that Llew’s helpfulness hides a darker purpose, which when revealed sends her cast-mates careening towards disaster.



# Targets

## WHO?

Our target audience focuses primarily on young people who grapple with an ongoing social media awareness, and grew up with the expectation of sharing every aspect of their lives.

In the same way the characters decide what side of themselves they provide to 'the audience' for entertainment or validation, we make the same decision with our lives on social media.

Each episode tackles a different aspect of this side of our lives, from invasions of privacy to bandwagon bullying, our target audience will feel the dark, comedic similarities, one viral event and meme at a time. And feel the consequences.



# Thank You

**“The Beehive is ours.  
We can make it whatever we want.”**

- Dave

