

Quenching the Fire

While Watching It Burn

'Entertainment Weekly' lay on the coffee table with a pair of reading glasses sprawled across it. The glossy pages were open to a TV review, ruffled by the breeze of a turning fan. On the television itself was an episode menu. The show's title mirrored that of the review.

"Quenching the Fire": Irony at its Most Entertaining

****Beware: Spoilers Ahead****

If you were cautious about yet another follower of the dystopian trend in the wake of numerous YA adaptations, don't be. With the new Netflix original, *Quenching the Fire*, you can sit back, relax and experience a contemplative yet action-packed six episodes.

Aurora Bond (Bailee Myers) despises violence - is repulsed by it. But the Global State will not accept aversions to their form of rule: to survive, you must kill...

Season 1 - Episode 1

Edinburgh, Capital Zero

"Your parents began a noble legacy. You were introduced to it. Now you will continue it. The Global State is young. You must preserve it."

The north's icy wind whipped the words around the watching crowd. Aurora paused on the tarmac, her eyes looking back at her parents. They nodded reassuringly. She forced her feet to move and boarded the rocket.

Her opinion had become invalid. This was her only option.

The Academy, Capital Zero

The rocket rattled through the tumultuous wind. It touched down on the tarmac, the tail of fire extinguishing soon after. Aurora and her fellow recruits disembarked into the heart of Capital Zero. On the horizon was a thick, grey line of skyscrapers. Clouds the colour of thunder masked the absent sun. An icy wind whipped around the faces once again. The frozen huddle

of bulky jackets was ushered to TT1 and taken into the heart of the city, to The Academy.

Through the window of the bullet-shaped train, eager and awestruck faces marvelled at the sheer wonder of Capital Zero. Formidable and authoritative, the buildings seemed to command one's total and utter subservience. The soundscape was a cacophony of noise, but it was a busy, efficient noise. The colour scheme was a sombre grey, frowning on any form of rebellion. The pedestrians conversed with apparent loyalty, fearful of the unknown punishments that hung in the air. Aurora felt herself shrinking under the weight of her surrounds. While others gazed around, excitedly drawing their neighbours' attention to a new landmark, she stood at the rear of the group. Her walk into the facility was tentative; her fingers fiddled with her blonde hair.

An automated voice spoke flawlessly. "Welcome, Assassins, to The Academy! Here you will be trained to serve the Global State. Our Instructors will teach you the skills, tactics and strength needed to fight the Threats and preserve our world. You may find it difficult at first, but with time you will rise to pledge your servitude to us."

Quinn returned to the room. She went to place her ice cream next to the magazine but paused at the sound of the automated voice.

"Our instructors will teach you the skills, tactics and strength needed to fight the Threats and preserve our world."

Her eyes turned to the window and saw the ocean hugging the sand while a full moon watched on. Quinn looked away, annoyed. Why must she always be ignorant? She didn't want to be that person who reacted with wide-eyed horror. She wanted to be able to respond intelligently; understand why humanity is the way it is. She wanted to learn how to fight and unlock that particular type of protagonist she had always wanted to be. She wanted to train for the Global State, be in the Global State.

Shutting the blinds, Quinn flopped on the couch (it was too hot to do anything else) and, hugging a pillow to her chest, entered Aurora's world.

Five Years Ago - Edinburgh

Aurora curled up tighter in her seat as the Minister neared her name on the list. As he said it, it appeared on the screen and remained there with the others - an ever-present reminder.

“Welcome to our State’s new Assassins!”

The screen went black. Aurora stayed in her ball as her parents went about their usual routine.

“You can’t disobey the Global State, kiddo,” Isabel eventually said. “The Dynasty Act is in motion - Assassins are passed through the family line whether we like it or not.”

...

“This is actually great timing. Dad and I have to work again, starting Thursday. You’ll get to come with us.”

...

“You’ll get to see Capital One...”

The Academy, Capital Zero

Aurora soon discovered that, just as she thought, murder lurked in the shadows of the federal capital.

“Next. Bond and Hamilton.”

Aurora tightened her protective gear and stepped into the arena. Her opponent was a body of muscle. His eyes were narrowed, as if scrutinising her.

Hamilton made the first jab, leaving a lasting bruise. She retaliated as best she could, but his strength (and evidently practice) was no match for her futile punches. When the clock blared at two minutes, Aurora surrendered.

“Remember, you are learning how to kill,” the instructor reprimanded. “You will not succeed through half-hearted defence.”

While the next pair readied themselves, Aurora hid herself at the back of the watching group. Shaking arms wrapped themselves around her body, and her eyes blurred. She hadn't seen fighting like that in a long time...but she'd seen it...

Five Years Ago - Capital One, The Western Continent

Sirens screeched through the halls. Feet pounded against hers. Smoke bled through the air. In confusion, Aurora followed Isabel deeper into the Western HQ.

“Mum...What’s happening?”

“They’ve breached security. I’m taking you some place safe.”

They ran through crumbling walls and falling roofs.

“Isabel!” Xavier was running in the opposite direction. “What do you think you’re doing? Aurora needs to get out of here!”

“That’s what I’m doing, Xavier!” Her voice dropped to a whisper. “They’re growing stronger. They’re blowing apart the building. We have no power over them anymore. They’re going to destroy everything.”

“No, they’re not. The Global State won’t let them.”

Another silent boom vibrated in Aurora’s ears. Gunshots exploded at the end of the hall. Three pairs of eyes snapped around.

They were coming.

“Isabel, you take them. I’ll go with Aurora.”

Isabel stood to meet the Threats as Xavier and Aurora ran. Aurora twisted her head and watched: the fists and limbs...and her mother’s pull of the trigger.

The Academy, Capital Zero

Aurora gingerly placed her newly issued A510 handgun in her locker, secured it with facial recognition and threw the unwanted object into the depths of her brain. She then collected her dinner from the machine and slumped at a lone table at the back of the dining hall.

“Assassins.”

The Academy’s Director stood before the recruits. Their buzzing chatter quietened.

“The Global State has issued an edict for the extermination of Victor Hilton.”

The room became a beehive of excitement. Victor Hilton! Any aspiring Assassin would yearn to be the one to fulfil this task. The Director raised his hand to quell the noise.

“For years, the Threats have been crafting an underground network of factions. Their intention? To unite and topple the supremacy of the Global State. The final faction to join their web is meeting to do so in three months. If the web is completed and successful, we will be overrun.

“Stopping them will be no easy task. As Assassins, you all have the opportunity to enlist for this mission. It is already led by Level 4 Assassins, which means that you will merely be aiding them. You must hunt down Victor Hilton - leader of the Threats - and eliminate him on behalf of the State. Once that is achieved, the network will be entangled and the Threats will be at our mercy.”

“All Assassins wanting to enlist must submit their names to their Shield Alpha.”

Quinn’s grin joined the many other smiles. She would finally do something different. Experience something that she knew nothing about. She felt vaguely uncomfortable, but it wasn’t real, right? She would be playing make-believe: a whimsical fantasy undertaken within the safety of her lounge room.

Aurora was staring at her locker when she was approached by her Shield Alpha.

“From Edinburgh.”

A communication was placed on the table.

That's weird. Other Assassins haven't got these.

Aurora touched the screen to reveal the message. Trying to hide her emotions, and failing, she pushed her way out of the dining hall.

Miss Bond,

It is our duty to inform you that Assassins 4-40 and 4-70 - Isabel and Xavier Bond - were killed by the Threats on the Hilton Mission. As their next of kin, it is your responsibility to resume their role as leaders of this mission and continue defending our world. Please submit your name to your Shield Alpha at The Academy to proceed. Failure to do so means disobeying the Global State and will be punished with the greatest severity.

Marcel Mann

Minister for Threat Defence

Aurora wrenched her locker open. There it was. She stared at the gun as the first sparks ignited. As the grief set in, the fire gathered speed. It trapped her in a ring while the world caved in from the edges, sizzling...smouldering...burning. She wanted to stop the flames and rid herself of this torturous feeling. But she didn't want to kill. She didn't want to recreate that day at the Western HQ, with Aurora in place of Isabel. She didn't want to be an Assassin...The locker door was cautiously shut. There the gun would remain.

“Bond!”

The Director exploded into the Instructor's presentation. Aurora looked up from reading her combat notes and saw his finger savagely beckon. They stepped out into the hallway.

“Where is your name? I have combed every list submitted to me, and not one has your name written on it! Do you want me to have to report to Marcel Mann that Aurora Bond has chosen

to defy the Global State? Never has an Assassin turned their back on us! Our power is not going to crumble now. Submit your name, or both you and I will know what happens when the Global State does not get their way.”

A shattered Aurora was left in the hallway. She couldn't ignore it. She mustn't disobey the Global State. They'd kill her for ignoring the Dynasty Act. There was no other option. She'd rather be alive in the fire and quench it over time. She could adjust to it. Aurora submitted her name.

The day after those chosen for the Hilton Mission were isolated in a high-security wing of The Academy, Aurora was issued her new weapon. She fearfully held the VH-200 by the grip. A similar size to her A150, yet more deadly, this killing companion was specifically designed to battle Hilton.

Quinn interrupted the silence. “Are we learning how to shoot these now?”

Faces looked gleefully at each other.

“Loading and maintenance must be mastered before you enter the shooting range.”

And so, as light glinted off the barrels, the Assassins practised loading bullets into their personal weapons.

Season 1 - Episode 2

Aurora fell to the ground. Blood trickled down her face as she grimaced in pain. A voice growled close to her ear.

“You fought longer than last time. You're persistent. And I hate persistent people.”

A foot pressed down on her back.

“Let me tell you this now: you do not want to win against me.”

It pressed harder.

She didn't want to die. Aurora clenched her eyes closed in frustration...and rolled out from

under her opponent. She sprang up, and her fist collided with his cheekbone. Hamilton staggered back as Aurora tackled his bulky frame to the ground. Entangled limbs thrashed. Aurora found herself forced onto her stomach. Her hands were pinned behind her and her head wrenched back as if an invisible knife were being held to her throat.

“I won.”

Shaking, Aurora felt Hamilton release his grip.

“Next!”

Aurora joined the ring of spectators and watched the next fight. She felt...liberated. Like the fiery feeling in the pit of her stomach had lessened somehow. Across the room, Hamilton winced and rubbed his cheek. It was a good punch.

Five Years Ago - Capital One, The Western Continent

Capital Zero had sent reinforcements. Soon, what had been destroyed was restored.

They met when Aurora was wandering, bored.

“What’s your name?”

It was a soft demand.

“Aurora.”

...

“Are your parents Assassins?”

A cautious nod.

“Where are you from? Capital One? Are they doing a home mission?”

“Capital Zero.”

“Aaah. You’re being dragged along for the new Dynasty Act, aren’t you?”

“I guess...Are your parents also Assassins?”

“Of a kind...But we’re still here to deal with the Threats.”

Their chatter waded through the grass. It was a long conversation before a signal sounded.

“Hey, Aurora? Do you want to have lunch with me? Afterwards we can go swimming. The lake’s so warm right now.”

A smile. “Ok.”

Season 1 - Episode 3

The Academy, Capital Zero

Aurora retrieved her gun from her new locker, holding it for the second time.

She joined Shield 1-5-1 as they made their way towards the shooting range. Aurora stood aligned in front of a target and readied her equipment. She poised to shoot. At the instructor’s mark, twenty guns simultaneously released a bullet. Sound waves thrummed in Aurora’s ears. They reverberated in her muscles and rolled over her like a perfectly spinning wheel. The feeling of liberation that had arisen after her fight with Hamilton returned.

Aurora was cocooned in an irreversible moment.

Quinn was still rooted in her shooting pose. Her surrounds had retreated and left her in a marvelling reverie. The action of shooting a gun was nothing like she’d ever experienced before. She’d felt power surging through her. She had control over life and death. Is this what murderers feel? To be god-like and yet horrifically depraved? Or do they feel nothing at all as they take revenge? Whatever it was, Quinn didn’t like the sense of it.

The Academy, Capital Zero

An almost unblemished face, with its blonde hair and new red streaks, formed the reflection

in the mirror. It sported one light-purplish bruise where there used to be many. Aurora finished washing her hands and walked to lunch, shutting the door on the empty barracks.

In a piercing panic, the walls yelled with urgency.

“Victor Hilton spotted in Angeles! Assassins: locate and execute the Threat.”

Where’s Angeles?

The simulation chamber.

Aurora sped down the hall, intent and driven. She slammed her VH-200 into her holster and tore towards the Simulation Block. *Quinn bounced with nervous energy.*

It was a projection, and it all appeared real. The artificial sky was clothed in dark storm clouds. High-rise buildings huddled together as if protecting themselves, occasionally emitting someone from their murky depths. Shops on the main street were beginning to close for the day, their shelves still stocked. On the horizon, thunder prowled across the churning ocean. Aurora began to stealthily pick her way down the backstreets, oblivious to the remainder of Shield 1-5-1 entering the chamber.

Where would he hide? Aurora gently moved the sagging door of the building nearest to her and crept inside. Shafts of tattered light did their best to penetrate the cracks in the walls. Dirt nestled on the floor and floated through the air. Water dripped steadily from the ceiling.

A noise like the sound of falling furniture sounded from the back room. *Instinctively, Quinn leapt into a hiding place.* Aurora kicked open the door and burst inside, her gun poised.

Silence.

Quinn relaxed as she watched an annoyed Aurora exit the room. The latter was cautiously picking her way down the street, eyes peeled for movement, when gunfire cracked. Changing course, Aurora sprinted towards the sound.

Yells became louder as the destination neared. Waves smashed on the sand. More gunfire erupted.

Hamilton was writhing on the ground, clutching his shoulder. A holographic Hilton was

pointing a gun at his opponent, about to silence him.

“Hey!” Aurora fired her own gun.

Hilton yelled, clutching his thigh. Aurora kicked him to the ground and aimed her weapon at the target.

“Do you think your heart’s cold enough to kill me?” His voice was grave, yet his face was white and flickering. He struggled to stand.

Aurora didn’t pull the trigger.

Hilton snarled. “That’s right. It isn’t.”

The Assassin was tackled at the legs. Her head hit the ground. A weight restricted her from rising. His gun was pointed towards her.

“I will never be killed by the Global State,” Hilton said. “They do not need that satisfaction.”

Gritting her teeth, Aurora swung her leg around the body of the Threat and heaved herself up. In a split second, she’d gained control of his gun and pulled the trigger. Hilton slumped to the ground and disappeared.

The landscape dissolved in a mass of pixels.

“Thanks,” Hamilton grunted as he struggled to stand.

“You’re welcome,” Aurora said curtly.

Turning her back, Aurora stalked from the chamber, her eyes conflicted.

Aurora fingered the handgun, its polished surface shimmering in the computer light. She shoved it in the holster and walked into BR 4.

Her briefing was calm, yet forceful.

“Plans have changed. Victor Hilton has moved to Angeles on the Western Continent to meet with some of the rebel groups. Our primary goal is to assassinate him; any Threats you meet

along the way are secondary.

“Tomorrow at 0600 hours we will fly to Capital One, and then to Angeles. We will land at 1400 hours and begin at 2200 hours. You will proceed in whatever way makes you inconspicuous. Everyone has been assigned two partners and a route - you will be working with them and they with you to navigate this route. Each leads to Hilton’s supposed hiding place. When spotted, shoot on sight. Alert Capital Zero, who will transport his body for public display. Remember: Assassins are one with the State.

“Understood?”

The Assassins nodded and dispersed to the barracks.

After a blur of shuddering aircrafts and the more relaxed noise of Angeles, Aurora, alone, snuck down the main street directly to the target’s suspected residence. The air was still as Aurora kept to the shadows. The full moon pulsed with light, and icy tentacles crept like spiders’ legs over her skin. The streets were abandoned, with the city’s residents driven indoors by winter’s frosty bite.

The only undetectable movement, save Aurora, was Quinn. Surprised by the cold, she hugged herself and crept along to see what Aurora would do.

Aurora’s transmitter pierced the night.

“We’ve found Hilton! Repeat: we’ve found Hilton. Located on the corner of Ocean and Washington. Threat rally. They’re everywhere. Need backup now.”

Aurora leapt from the shadows and tore towards the centre of the town. Screams and gunshots echoed in the frozen air.

“Hilton has left the building.”

“Pursuing now.”

Aurora sprinted after Hilton, Quinn following. Off-target bullets were fired from both sides, ricocheting off surrounding buildings. The pursuit led them to the beach. Hilton tripped onto the sand and arose only to see Aurora’s gun pointing at him.

“The Global State won’t get the satisfaction of killing me.”

Hilton launched his body at his opponent. She fell to the sand, yelling in shock and pain. The gun was wrenched from her hand and pointed at her heart.

Aurora lay beneath his weight, her face contorted in an effort to summon energy.

Haunting words rolled around and collided in her head. “Make them pay. Make them pay for destroying our stability. Make them pay for undermining our great State... It is our duty to inform you that Isabel and Xavier Bond were killed by the Threats... Why do you fight, Mum?... It makes them pay.”

Aurora threw herself at Hilton.

“You will pay!”

Hilton howled as the butt of the gun was slammed on his head.

“Don’t worry,” Aurora said.

Both guns were cocked.

“The Global State won’t get the satisfaction.”

Two fingers touched their respective triggers.

“I will.”

And, after a split-second hesitation, the Threat was silenced.

The crack of the gun jolted Aurora as if an electric shock had sent her heart into rapid palpitations. She saw the body lying, eyes glassy, on the sand. Guilt. Aurora had done what she said she’d never do. Where had she been while her darker alter-ego learnt how to quench the fire?

There. She had been present.

She’d refused to interfere while the other self took the course of action that seemed the most

practical. It had learnt how to deal with the grief while surviving the pressures of the Global State.

Did she want to continue? Did she want to do their bidding? Or did she want to be different from her parents? Resist the Dynasty Act and discover what those unknown punishments were?

Aurora blinked and realised that her eyes had been glued to Hilton's. Fear - wisps of smoke - wafted like tendrils around Aurora's body. Her heart quickened. Her breathing intensified. But...her parents were dead because of him. And he was dead because of...Aurora blocked that thought.

“Assassin 4-08 to Capital Zero. Hilton eliminated. Hilton Mission completed.”

Aurora re-assumed her role as leader and left Victor's body behind. The dark side had been right.

Season 1 - Episode 4

The Sector of Ministries, Capital Zero

Aurora exited the TT10 into the Sector of Ministries. The tall white buildings from childhood memories stood proud, dignified. She entered the Ministry of Defence.

“Aurora Bond to see you, sir.”

The office door was closed. Aurora stood attentive, her nervousness hidden, while Marcel Mann addressed her.

“Bond, I'll be brief. Due to your successful assassination of Victor Hilton, the Ministry of Defence is promoting you to Assassin Level 5.”

Aurora stared at the Minister. “That's the highest level.”

“Does that trouble you?”

“No, no. That's fine. Thank you.”

“Yeah. Thanks.”

Mann passed her a file. Its screen was busy with words and images blurring into a familiar sludge. The Threat’s face stared out knowingly. It was Frazer Hamilton.

“Hamilton was working undercover for Hilton,” Mann briefed. “Their plan was to infiltrate the Defence programs and kill them from the inside. After Hilton’s death, Hamilton assumed control of the Threats. Your task is to eliminate him.”

Five Years Ago - Capital One, The Western Continent

There were many more swims after that - until the Bonds’ mission was completed. On their final night, Aurora and her parents were returning to their rooms, only to be blocked by the nose of a gun.

The shooter was Hailey.

“This has got to happen, Aurora,” she whispered in the partial dark. “We can’t let the Global State win.”

Silent as ghosts gliding quickly through the hall, many other half-visible silhouettes surrounded the confrontation, unstrapping the Bonds’ guns from their holsters.

“We want to do this peacefully,” another voice sounded. “You can come without complaint to the Eastern Reaches and end this there, or end it in the privacy of your own rooms. Either way, you avoid any more violence than is necessary.”

Not saying a word, Isabel threw her wedding ring into the crowd. It exploded, blowing apart the hallway. Those who weren’t knocked unconscious looked at her, baffled.

“It’s for dire emergencies only.”

The Bonds ran through the wreckage, avoiding bullets. Then, Xavier was hit.

“Get up, Xavier! You’ve had worse than your leg!”

“I was getting there!”

But the remaining Threats had caught up.

“Come on, Hailey. You’re too young for this.” Isabel held up her hands.

“So’s Aurora.”

Isabel and Xavier dived at Hailey. Aurora retreated behind an unhinged door as she watched the fists emerge...the failing legs...the ceasing cries...and the bang of a shot. Aurora felt herself being dragged away, leaving Hailey lying in the rubble.

The Eastern Reaches

The door was pleading not to be opened. Aurora stood in front of it, her legs numb. Once her parents had killed a supposedly innocent friend, all in the name of protecting the Global State. And while Frazer wasn’t necessarily a friend, Shield 1-5-1 was a unit.

Her parents... No, she had a task. Kill Hamilton and rise through the ranks of the Global State. Don’t let those red tongues compromise the mission. Live in them.

Aurora inhaled and kicked down the door as Hamilton swiped his gun from his holster.

“You finally embraced the Assassin,” he observed through gritted teeth.

The opponents were circling, timing the release of the trigger. *Quinn circled with them, mimicking Aurora’s actions, yet fearful of what she might have to emulate.*

“You frustrate me, Aurora. Your parents were notorious assassins. You watched them murder one of my own. Yes, we all know about that. Hailey was thirteen. She was angered by the Global State. Not because her parents were killed by them or because they were exiled as punishment, but because she was human enough to feel their oppression. She was doing what was right, and your parents,” Hamilton snarled in Aurora’s direction, “murdered her. You saw it happen. Didn’t you? And now you’ve become exactly like them. Hardened. Cold. Emotionless.”

Aurora spoke through a clenched mouth. “Stop talking.”

“No, I won’t!” A roar sounded unexpectedly from Hamilton’s mouth. He stepped towards

Aurora, his eyes inches from her own. “I’m now Victor Hilton! I’m the one who took his place! I’m the one who will smash the Global State into tiny little pieces...and you along with them!”

A bullet flew. Aurora revealed nothing as she watched Hamilton fall to the floor. He dragged himself upright, with tortured yells.

“You cannot side with the Global State, Bond,” he strained. “Look at you. You don’t even feel guilty.”

Another bullet was fired at Hamilton. He screamed.

“You won’t save me?”

“No...I won’t. I’m an Assassin.”

Aurora turned on her heel and walked out of the building. As she spoke to Capital Zero, she suppressed the returning guilt. She suppressed it despite its tickles that became pokes that became punches. There was no alternate reality. Aurora would never defy the Global State. Ultimately, she would have submitted her name. There was never a moment when she wasn’t conscious of survival.

There was always the nagging sensation that she was wrong. But Aurora believed she was right. So she allowed her regrets to be healed, for a callous to shield her from them. She constructed a wall so she could caress her gun with the same strength of love that had once been contempt. Because, the fact of the matter was, it quenched the fire.

The ice cream melted as Quinn’s eyes bore into the television. She watched Aurora’s world fade from the screen, anticipating the following night when she could watch the final episode.

Quinn tried to fall asleep. But her mind was like the ceiling fan, feverishly running in circles, documenting and thinking about all she had seen (and where she’d been) that night.

“Aurora had a choice. Why didn’t she just ignore the Global State? But no, she had to go and

become an Assassin.”

“Maybe that was the only way she could deal with her parents. She had a load of baggage she had to deal with; enlisting to become an Assassin was probably the easiest way. And, by the looks of it, the most satisfying. She was killing the group of people that murdered her parents.”

“But did you see what happened when she killed Hamilton?! She stiffened. Like she was becoming stone. She just accepted that this had happened and moved on.”

“She was filling the grief hole. She was putting her energy into something more constructive - something that meant she wouldn't be killed. Remember the power you felt when shooting your own gun? Imagine having that power when your parents have just been murdered. You could ensure your survival and get revenge.”

“Except for the fact that every episode had blood for no apparent reason. Sadness can be dealt with in other ways.”

“Yes...but the violence had a reason. Think about it. You learned something watching this, right? Every story has a moral message, and this one definitely did. And, if someone busted down your door right now and pointed a gun at your face, you would be able to fight them because you've seen Aurora do it.”

“Theoretically...I guess...”

“There. Told you.”

As her mind began to tire from its schizophrenic debate, Quinn gradually drifted off to sleep. Back in the living room, the magazine, while its words were no longer illuminated, spoke a dark truth.

...Quenching the Fire is more than a meaningless bloodbath. While writers the Owen Brothers don't shy away from exposing the blood and guts of the Global State, they do so for a purpose: to explore the concept of murder.

Pressured by the Global State, Aurora must become an Assassin and

follow in the steps of her late parents (Jessica Robles and Oscar Woods). The trauma of their status as Assassins and their deaths weighs on Aurora as she undertakes her training. Her gun becomes a release, and it is the experience of catharsis that prompts her conversion. Really, it helps her survive.

However, the murder considered here is not necessarily the physical murder Aurora enacts. In an interview for *Rolling Stone*, Scott Owens said, “What we really wanted to explore was the murdering of our empathy. What makes us watch another suffer, especially on TV? What makes us continue to watch or read this despite the fact we know it’s wrong? And Aurora’s the embodiment of that - she goes from hating violence to relishing it.”

This may portray Aurora in a negative light, but it can’t be ignored that any audience member will see a piece of themselves in Aurora Bond. Aurora isn’t following in the wake of revolutionaries like Katniss or Tris who rebel against the oppressive regime they were born into. Rather, she is like many of us, trying to survive in a society that pounces on anyone who goes against the status quo. She is using the means at her disposal to cleanse herself from life’s baggage.

Quenching the Fire is an ironic experience. The show utilises violence to investigate desensitisation to violence. As an audience, you’re watching a fictional character fall into the very trap you yourself may be falling into. But it raises the question: why is a part of me wanting to sit here, watching someone use a gun?

Season 1 - Episode 6

Three Years Later - The Western Continent

The Assassin could now quench the fire. She whirled around, punching and kicking, and

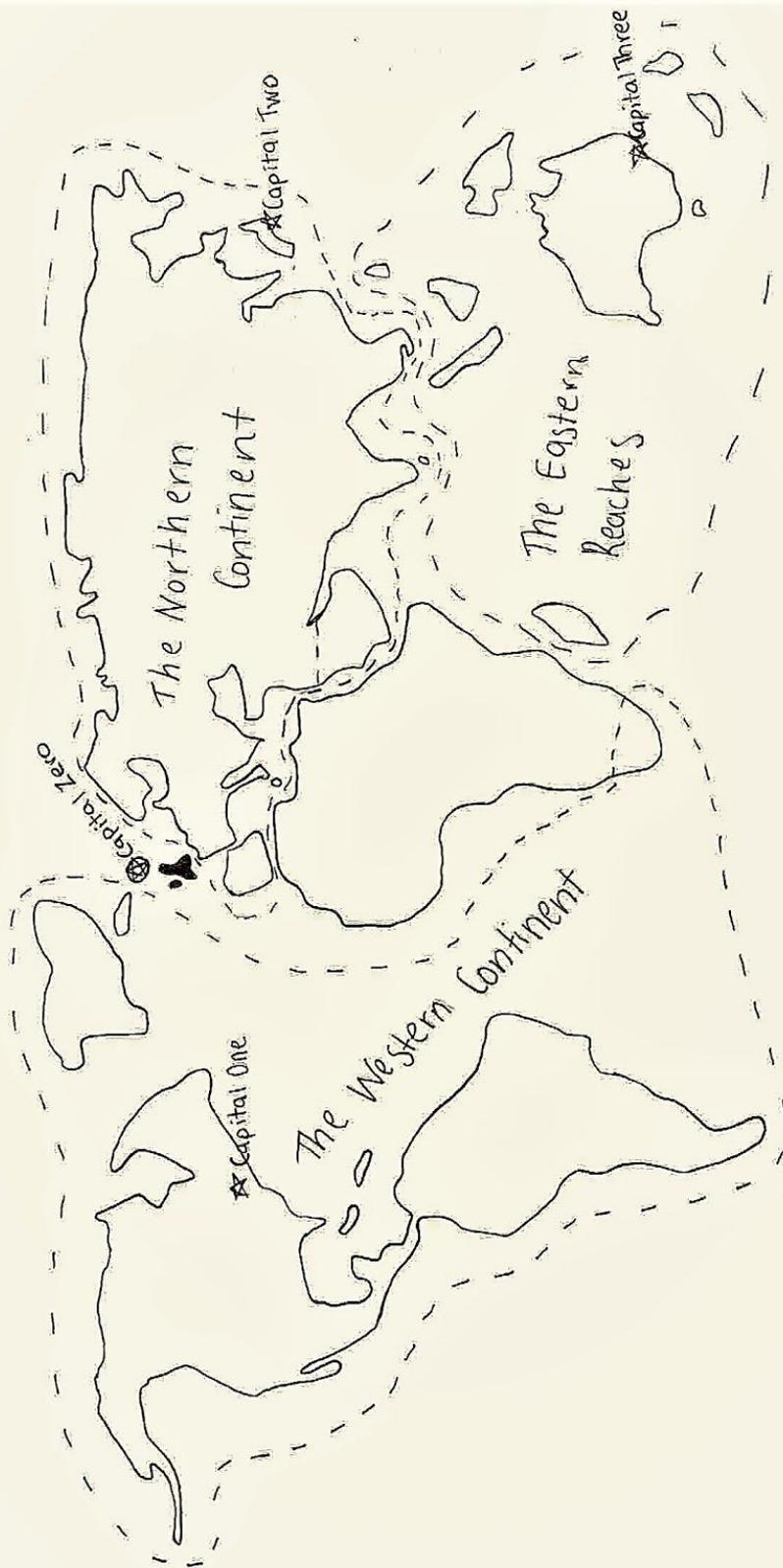
enthusiastically pulling the trigger. Aurora silenced the final Threat and left him on the ground with his lifeless companions.

“Assassin 5-08 to Capital Zero: All Western Threats eliminated. The Western Mission completed.”

“Assassins!” Aurora started, unaccustomed to receiving a reply from Capital Zero.

“Assassins! We have been infiltrated! All Levels report to Capital Zero! We are being overrun!”

Aurora sprinted from the alleyway, roughly pushing air in and out of her lungs. She needed to kill those Threats.



The Global State