

Good Cop, Dead Cop synopsis

December 2004: Alex Munroe, a dead Denver cop, is helping SWAT flush out an armed suspect with the aid of his living partner, Linda Yamaguchi. Unable to go through walls or move things, all he can do is observe and report to his partner via her iPod-like terminal. Together, they help SWAT capture the suspect alive.

Buoyed by their success, they look forward to and dread a concert and reception where the police brass expects them to do a dog and pony show for the rich and powerful. There they meet the living avatar of a dead cable magnate, Bill Rybold, who tries to hire Alex.

Alex has a lot on his mind, however, because while in a chat room, he's contacted by a mother searching for her dead son. He possibly disappeared at a Christian rave in downtown Denver, and Alex and Linda find clues that suggest to Alex the method used to trap the disembodied.

Linda also has a lot on her mind, including a dead mother who won't leave her alone, a partner about whom she worries and the daily challenges of being a female cop.

And the world has worries, too. The discovery of the afterlife in 1997 caused suicides, riots and wars. Religions and governments have faltered or fallen over the revelation that although there is a soul, each person who dies is alone, unable to see or contact those who have died before and unable to interact with the living.

Except, of course, through the AfterNet, an online portal for the dead, a gateway to the larger world of the Internet. The AfterNet allows the disembodied to use email, join discussion groups and chat. Headquartered in Colorado on the Internet's backbone, the AfterNet makes it possible for the disembodied to form a community, to organize and to demand their rights to employment, housing and representation.

A portable AfterNet terminal also lets Alex and Linda talk. It generates an electromagnetic field that captures his thoughts and sends his digitized "voice" to her ear buds. In turn, her speech is translated and projected into the field for him to read.

Trying to get anything done over the Christmas season, however, is difficult. And a missing dead person is low priority, so the case is on the back burner. They also have a court appearance (where Alex's existence is questioned), disembodied witness reports to investigate (the dead, after all, see all) and even a chance for Alex to be a hero when he helps the fire department rescue a boy trapped under a building.

They're invited to spend Christmas at Rybold's party, and he explains to Alex that he's creating the Center for the AfterLife, and wants Alex to work for him. Yamaguchi also reconnects with an AfterNet executive, a man to whom she's attracted.

After Christmas, they go to Colorado Springs, where they learn more about the religious organization that sponsored the rave. But a shooting in Denver while they were gone left a young boy dead, which might have been prevented were they available. They're told to restrict themselves to essential duties and stop the missing person's case.

But using a new interface developed at the AfterNet (trading on Linda's burgeoning romance), Alex finds evidence of an upcoming abduction. On New Year's Eve, they foil the kidnapers, but Linda is wounded and they're in trouble for disobeying orders.

At least they think they've foiled the plans of the religious extremists who were trapping the disembodied, but unknown to them, Rybold had far more sinister plans for the disembodied. He'd led Alex and Linda to the kidnapers, figuring they'd take the fall for his own plans: using disembodied minds as little more than computer processors.