

**w2089**

Pilot Episode

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"Whatsoever is, is in God, and without God  
nothing can be, or be conceived."

Baruch Spinoza

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TEASER

OVER BLACK:

BREATHING. In through the nose. Out through the mouth. Slow and steady --

And then it STOPS. Beat.

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - DAY

CLOSE ON

UNBLINKING EYES --

They belong to COLIN MANNING, 30. He sits crouched on a tree limb, fifteen feet above the ground. Wears a tattered military uniform, a wool hat, grips a HUNTING KNIFE in his right hand --

Continues to hold his breath. Total focus. Now we see why --

Below him, approaching a STREAM on tentative hoofs, is a DOE and her FAWN --

The animals reach the water. The DOE glances to her left, her right. Leans down to DRINK. Her FAWN follows suit --

While directly above, Manning finally BLINKS. And lets himself DROP from the branch --

Silent --

Free-falls with KNIFE outstretched --

Lands directly on top of the DOE and, in one fluid motion --

SLITS her THROAT --

Rolls off --

Finally BREATHEs. In through the nose. Out through the mouth.

On his knees, he scans his surroundings --

We're on the outskirts of what looks to be a bombed-out city. Perhaps this was a park. It's overgrown, the trees sickly. It's winter. No sign of human life.

Confident he's not been spotted, Manning scrambles over to the DOE --

BLOOD pulses from her neck into this COLD, GRAY WORLD --

He's transfixed by the RIVULET OF RED that flows toward and into the STREAM --

With one final leg TWITCH, life passes from the beautiful creature. Her EYES glass over --

Manning nods. Glances up --

Sees the FAWN standing by a nearby bush, eyes wide, legs trembling. He watches the terrified orphan for a beat --

Sorry. Survival of the fittest. He rolls the DOE over --

Sinks his KNIFE into her UNDERSIDE --

From between her rear legs, CUTS a slit up the center of her belly toward her chest --

Reaches a HAND inside. Pulls out INTESTINES, LUNGS, HEART --

Tosses them into the STREAM.

EXT. ABANDONED CITY - EVENING

The LONG SHADOWS of evening.

Manning hurries along an empty street, hugging the walls of a large industrial building. Keeps to the shadows.

He carries a backpack now. The DEERSKIN hangs over his shoulders like a cape --

He stops, peers around a corner --

Still no sign of life. But signs of WAR --

Overtaken, torched MILITARY VEHICLES. More advanced than what we know. We're in the near future.

Manning crouches, jogs around the corner. Glances up and around --

Then lifts a street-level GRATE, drops into an air shaft --

INT. INDUSTRIAL BUILDING - EVENING

Hurries through a series of dark hallways --

Barricaded doors --

Up a ladder --

Glancing over his shoulder every few beats, a man paranoid he's being tracked --

Finally stops before a HEAVY METAL DOOR. Reaches into a crevice --

Through the wall, his FINGERS seek something --

CLICK and the door pops open. He steps into a dark room. Only a slim SHAFT OF LIGHT from a hole in the roof high above --

He pulls the door closed. His eyes adjust --

Across the room, curled atop a mound of dirty moving blankets, lies a FIGURE --

Manning lets his breathing slow. He sets his backpack down. Walks over to the figure. Sits. Reaches out a hand --

Gently brushes a strand of dark hair from the face of a beautiful girl, MAGGIE, 9. His daughter. All that's left to love and fight for in this fucked up world.

He smiles down at her. Leans close.

MANNING

(whispering)

Keep your eyes closed. I have a surprise.

She smiles. Eyes closed.

MAGGIE

I know what it is.

MANNING

You have no idea what it is!

He kisses her on the forehead.

MANNING (CONT'D)

I'm gonna blindfold you, my cunning little fox. Because I don't trust you. Never have, never will.

She grins. He grins. Reaches into his pocket, pulls out a BANDANA.

Guides her to a seated position. Ties the bandana over her eyes. Reaches for her hand.

MANNING (CONT'D)

Come. Hold on tight and stay close.

He pulls her up. Leads her across the room.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A MATCH STRIKES --

The FLAME moves toward a CANDLE WICK. Lights it.

MAGGIE (O.S.)  
Okay, dad, can I take it off?

MANNING  
Almost.

Manning blows out the match.

Sits down at a table across from Maggie, who still wears the bandana. The CANDLE creates a warm glow between them.

They appear to sit in a fancy restaurant. The table is set with fine china, wine glasses, silver cutlery.

Manning savors the moment. Smiles at his daughter.

MANNING (CONT'D)  
Okay. Give me your hand.

She reaches out her left hand. He takes it. Encircles her small fingers in his.

MANNING (CONT'D)  
Your pinky here, it's your honesty.  
Always tells the truth. It's small,  
sure, but without your pinky all  
balance in your hand is lost.

He moves to the next finger. Maggie eats it up, loves the way her father tells a story.

MANNING (CONT'D)  
Your ring finger, it's reserved for  
love. The love you have for  
yourself, right here and now, and  
the love you'll have for a man  
someday...

Manning smiles, playful.

MANNING (CONT'D)  
... Or woman, if that's what--

MAGGIE  
Dad!