

the ESTABLISHMENT

"Pilot"

Written by

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ACT ONE

OVER BLACK:

Indistinct voices heatedly talk over one another. We catch a few words here and there: "diplomatic process--", "The President expects--", "proportionate response--", "alienate our allies--", as we

FADE UP TO:

INT. THE SITUATION ROOM - DAY - **SIX YEARS AGO**

Several officials from the Security Council, Pentagon, and Cabinet including Secretary of State MARTHA CORBIN, Secretary of Defense OWEN CORNWALL, NSA Chief JACK GELLER, as well as Chief of Staff WYATT TUNNEY are going at it tooth and nail.

VOICE (O.S.)

That's enough!

The room quiets down to pin-drop silence and all eyes focus on the man at the head of the table, PRESIDENT EDWARD THEODORE CLARKE. Late 40s, distinguished, his intensely handsome features overshadow most signs of the incredible pressure and sleepless nights that come with the job.

GELLER

Mr. President--

CLARKE

I said that's enough.

CLARKE (CONT'D)

Martha, I'd like you to maintain communication with India and get both parties to the table--

CORNWALL

With all due respect, Mr. President, I'm rather inclined to agree with General Geller. This is a military issue. Relegating it to the State Department might send a message to our allies that we're turning our backs on them--

(CONTINUED)

CLARKE

These two countries come to the
brink of war every time one of them
loses a cricket match to the other.
Now we're not turning our backs on
anyone, but--

GELLER

Pakistan is a strategic
partner in South Asia and our
military presence is what--

CLARKE

This is not our fight! We
can't go around waging war
every time there's--

GELLER

It's a sign of weakness!
That's what it is!

WYATT

General, you are way out of
line!

Geller shuts up, fuming.

CLARKE (CONT'D)

I am well aware of the implications
of this decision but unless
Pakistan is knowingly granting
asylum to those insurgents, they
have no reason not to cooperate.

(evenly, to all)

We will handle this diplomatically.
That is all.

Clarke exits among a chorus of thank-you's and Yes, Mr.
President's.

INT. WHITE HOUSE - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER - **SIX YEARS AGO**

Staffers and aides hurry along like pedestrians on Fifth
Avenue during morning rush hour. Secret Service agents speak
inaudibly into their wrist pieces as the President briskly
rounds the corner with Wyatt in tow.

CLARKE

--it's not Geller I'm worried
about. We've been ignoring our
relationship with India far too
long now and it seems--

The agents in front of them stop short and block their way.
Amidst a flurry of radio communication, agents surround
Clarke and start escorting them in the opposite direction.

AGENT

Excuse me, Mr. President. We are
activating Code Purple.

(CONTINUED)

CLARKE
Oh, for Pete's sake!

WYATT
What!? Why?

AGENT (CONT'D)
An unclaimed backpack was found in
one of the restrooms. We need to
get you to the bunker immediately.

They reach an elevator and an agent punches in the code.

CLARKE
(resisting)
What about my family?

AGENT
Secret Service is locating them--

CLARKE
Where's my wife?

AGENT
We need to go now. Sir.

The agent unapologetically guides the President in as the
elevator doors close.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRY ESTATE - GARDENS - DAY

A high society function is underway. In stark contrast to the
hustle and bustle of the White House, guests here mingle at a
leisurely pace. Amidst the indistinct conversations, stiff
body language, and of course the hats, we notice one thing -
this is definitely not how Americans party.

Man of the hour HAROLD WYNTON, 50, who can be described in
just two words: Hugh freakin' Grant, accepts congratulations
from random attendees. His eyes, however, search for - and
land on - MEREDITH CLARKE, surrounded by a group of women.

A classy late-40s herself, Meredith once embodied the charm
of Jackie Kennedy and the grace of Princess Diana. Today
though, her somber eyes and guarded smile tell a slightly
different story.

HAROLD
(approaching her)
There you are, darling. I thought
I'd lost you somewhere.

Holy British accent! Yup, we're not in Washington anymore.

Harold leans in to give her a peck on the cheek and whispers--