

UPWARD MOBILITY
Limited Series
Pilot

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END OF TEASER**OPENING TITLE SEQUENCE**

WE HEAR THE RHYTHMIC SOUNDS of assembly line production OVER BLACK. Gears grind. Screws screech into place. The monster hisses.

THEN WE FADE IN TO SEE AND SLOWLY MOVE OVER PANELS of the Diego Rivera Detroit Industry Fresco Murals. Men and women become one with assembly lines as they labor to build the machines of the industrial age, including AIRPLANES.

WE HEAR AN END-OF-SHIFT WHISTLE BLOW.

TITLE: Upward Mobility.

ACT ONE

INT. BOMBER PLANT - DINING ROOM KITCHEN - LATE MORNING

A dish rack packed with china monogrammed with the FORD LOGO rattles out of a steaming fog via the herky-jerky conveyer belt of an industrial dishwasher. A BUS BOY silently flinches as he plucks hot plates from the rack and stacks them.

A black waiter, LESTER MUMFORD, 50s, and a young white TRAINEE, both in starched white serving jackets, walk past the Bus Boy and stop at the kitchen beverage station.

Even though he'll never hold paper on a spec of land, Lester addresses the Trainee with the posture and confident formality of the man who owns this kitchen.

LESTER

Mr. Ford and his executives have a breakfast meeting here every day.

He holds up a small milk can for the Trainee to see.

LESTER (CONT'D)

This here's unpasteurized. Better for a body, Mr. Ford believes. Man's particular about his food and drink. Fix that good in your mind.

The fresh-from-the-hills-of-Kentucky Trainee rolls his eyes. Does this darky think he's his boss?

Lester pours the milk into a glass and hands it to the Trainee as a COOK taps the order-up counter.

COOK

Lester, food's good to go here.

They grab the plates and push through the swinging door to the dining room.

INT. BOMBER PLANT - EXECUTIVE DINING ROOM - LATE MORNING

The breakfast rush is long over. Waiters freshen tablecloths and set out crystal goblets for lunch.

Still seated at a large round table is HENRY FORD, 79. Reed thin and as ruddy as a farmhand, he studies a PHOTO that HARRY BENNETT, 55, holds in front of him.

Harry, a pudgy-pawed professional ramrod, sports a spiffy bowtie around his tree trunk neck and a barely concealed chip on his shoulder.

HARRY

Muscle wise, this is our man.

WE SEE A PHOTO OF A UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN FOOTBALL PLAYER.

MR. FORD

Even Edsel could spot him as one of your moles.

Harry holds up a second photo for Mr. Ford to consider.

HARRY

I was in the ring with him. Tough contender.

Breakfast arrives. Lester serves Harry a steak with a bottle of ketchup. The Trainee gives Mr. Ford the milk and oatmeal. Mr. Ford studies the second photo.

MR. FORD

Every dang thing wrong with my boy, he's brought on himself. Smoking, boozing, cutting the rug with his smarty pants friends. Boy just won't take to the bit. Won't follow my lead. Time's come to put smarter eyes on him. To study him so we can figure out how to break him.

Harry smoothers his steak with ketchup. Mr. Ford flips through the photos, lays one on the table, nods approvingly as he pushes the winner to Harry who takes a look.

WE SEE it's of a middle-aged man holding a Willow Run Bomber Plant Employee of the Month plaque.

HARRY

Sure. Joe Salvo. He's a barn-sized alter boy.

Lester approaches, carrying a phone with a long cord trailing from the kitchen.

LESTER

Call for you, Mr. Bennett.

Harry takes the phone.

HARRY

Harry here.

He pauses for a beat. Shakes his head. So much for breakfast.

HARRY (CONT'D)

I'm on my way.

Harry hands the phone back to Lester and rises to leave.

MR. FORD

What's the fuss and bother?

HARRY

My man at the tower says one of our planes just blew up. The whole crew is dead.

Mr. Ford stares off. Steely gray eyes void of empathy.

The news causes Lester to freeze in his tracks and cross himself before he heads back to the kitchen.

HARRY (CONT'D)

And Edsel just landed.

Mr. Ford jostles in his chair, knocks his napkin off his lap to the floor. He picks it up, snaps it out with a crack and tucks it in old school, at the neck. He hands Harry the Employee of the Month snapshot.

MR. FORD

Put the overgrown alter boy on your payroll. Get him hired at Edsel's.

HARRY

(Pushing back, but with restraint)
If he's back to work, my people here got him covered.

MR. FORD

Soon.