

C.R.Y.P.T.O.

PILOT: V = IR

written by

Amanda Blush

OVER BLACK:

TEXT: "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." - Abraham Lincoln

The RECORD BUTTON of a TAPE RECORDER CLICKS.

A YOUNG WOMAN'S VOICE, thin, over the crackle and pops of CASSETTE TAPE HUM.

INTERVIEWER'S RECORDED VOICE
(FILTERED)

Ready?

ANOTHER WOMAN'S VOICE above the hum.

RECORDED VOICE (FILTERED)
I'm gonna get into a lot of trouble
for this...

Some MICROPHONE STATIC as it moves closer to a mouth. An exhale, and then...

RECORDED VOICE (FILTERED) (V.O.)
What is the price of Power?

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

PASSENGERS file into the jetbridge and onto the AIRLINER. A small aircraft. Domestic flight. Completely full.

RECORDED VOICE (FILTERED) (V.O.)
And who are the so-called "Powers
that be?"
(beat)
How did they get there?

INT. AIRCRAFT - FLIGHT 375 - DAY

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT - we'll call her: IRIS - checks BOARDING PASSES as travelers enter the plane.

RECORDED VOICE (FILTERED) (V.O.)
We put them there, did we not? We
did this. Not altogether
knowingly...mass manipulation
doesn't happen overnight. People
don't just wake up deciding to
drink death Kool-Aid...

THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS: FLOATING TEXT in the lower left corner flicks from 7:44AM to 7:45AM PST | This will be a recurring staple in the development of our timeline.

RECORDED VOICE (FILTERED) (V.O.)
(CONT'D)

You know that saying?
"Truth never damages a cause that
is just."
Clichè maybe...but that doesn't
mean it's not right.
(beat for emphasis)
Whatever you think you know about
the events of BLACK SKY DAY...I can
assure you...you're wrong.

A PILOT (40's) steps out of THE COCKPIT to grab himself a CUP OF COFFEE before take-off.

PILOT
Where's Jones?

A DOLLOP of BLOOD stains Iris's SHIRT CUFF. She pulls her jacket down to conceal it, touches a nervous fingertip to the side of her eye, and says:

IRIS
She said she wasn't feeling well...

She grimaces and places a hand on her stomach.

IRIS (CONT'D)
Bathroom.

INT. AIRPORT - WOMEN'S WASHROOM - DAY

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT slumps lifeless on the toilet in a stall. She BLEEDS from the NOSE and EARS.

DEAD.

Her NAMETAG reads: JONES.

EXT. SEATTLE - NAVAL BASE - DAY

ARMY TRUCKS wheel through a large metal gate.

SOLDIERS march in militative lines.

INT. SPECIAL OPERATIONS OFFICE - DAY

8:00 AM.

GENERAL ZIMKA (50's) tucks his HAT under his armpit. He dons an EYE-PATCH.

He enters a RESTRICTED ROOM. As he enters, through the crack in the door, SOLDIERS in MATCHING UNIFORMS stand abruptly and pay him a special respect 'SALUTE.' As they do, they utter TWO WORDS: "NOVAE MIRTAE."

The salute is not one to recognize, though it's familiar. We've seen and heard it's cousin in such gestures like "Sieg Heil." and "Heil Hitler."

Each puffed up chest sports A PATCH with an INSIGNIA. The crest reads: "Novae Mirtae" (New World).

EXT. ROVERSIDE POWER PLANT - DAY

8:40 AM.

FIVE CARS are parked in assigned spaces.

A MAN (Late 30's) hops off his MOTORCYCLE, removes his HELMET and enters the building.

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The man enters the Control Room to see some of his colleagues already at work.

He removes his leather jacket and replaces it with a WHITE LAB COAT. His NAMETAG reads:

DR. OAKLEY KELLER.

ROGER SMOLLETS (Late 30's), black glasses, lanky, sits perched over an operations console.

TOLLI FITZGERRICK (Late 30's), pale, pink nail polish, pours a CUP OF COFFEE.

CAROLINE HAMMERSCHMITT (Late 30's), beautiful, curly hair, beauty mark, swivels in her chair.

C. HAMMERSCHMITT
(to Keller)
You're late again.

R. SMOLLETS
And you look like shit.

THE FAX MACHINE PUTTERS with activity. Incoming fax.

PATRICK MARSHALL (Late 30's) short, sideburns, round glasses, enters with YVONNE COLLINS (Late 30's), freckles, BUTTONS all over her lab coat. They carry CLIPBOARDS.

Y. COLLINS
(to Keller)
Hi. Rough night?

P. MARSHALL
(re: fax)
Laws?

Keller goes to pour himself a cup of coffee but the pot is empty.

Fitzgerrick sips from her cup.

T. FITZGERRICK
Sorry.

O. KELLER
(to Collins)
Rough morning...

Hammerschmitt reads the FAX PAGE. Her head jolts up, eyes full of horror.

There is a round of eerie eye contact made by all.

EST. STRATOSPHERE / IN THE AIR - DAY

INT. PLANE CABIN - DAY

8:45 AM.

TURBULENCE. Beverages in PLASTIC CUPS VIBRATE.

A BACKPACK rests at a pair of SNEAKERS. The pack's BAG-TAG reads: VICTOR HAMMERSCHMITT.

VICTOR (Early 20's) PLUGS his HEADSET JACK into the AIRPLANE ARMREST.

He watches THE NEWS on the TV in the seatback in front of him. His face is worth remembering...though he has no idea, it will appear as breaking news on the very same station he's watching, some several hours later.

ON TV SCREEN: NEWSCASTER VIKKI MORNINGSIDE (30's - 40's) addresses the CAMERA:

MORNINGSIDE (FILTERED)
Mixed emotions today as
presidential candidate Parker
Dunfield made some highly
controversial remarks regarding her
plans for a wide-spread government
reformation...

ON SCREEN: CUT to COVERAGE of CANDIDATE PARKER DUNFIELD (40's) as she exits CITY HALL.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - CITY HALL - DAY

Dunfield wears a MUTED YELLOW SUIT and BLACK PEARLS.

On her LAPEL is a PIN with THE INSIGNIA on it.

REPORTERS JAM their MICROPHONES in her face at all angles.

TWO SECURITY GUARDS loom behind her, arms akimbo.

DUNFIELD
One at a time, please.

REPORTER (O.S.)
Ms. Dunfield, you and your team
have been accused of poll-
tampering, what do you have to say
about the accusations?

DUNFIELD
"If you tell a big enough lie and
tell it frequently enough, it will
be believed."

JOURNALIST
Isn't that [Hitler] --- ?

DUNFIELD
A rumour is a dangerous thing if
used wisely. This I'm afraid is not
such that but rather a weak attempt
by Candidate Kopperman and his
pawns to dissuade and mislead the
public. Well, I for one find it
cute.

Some Laugh, "cute" is an odd choice of word to describe her running mate KOPPERMAN.