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The Handmaid's Tale

By Bruce Miller

EXT. MAINE - COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

A road curves through the Maine countryside.

A CAR appears, driving too fast. It swerves, fishtails, then
SKIDS OFF THE ROAD.

The car bounces across a grassy pasture and stops. The
engine revs. The wheels spin, but the car doesn't move.

LUKE (27, former hipster) jumps out, looks under the car.

The wheels are buried in the soft ground.

JUNE (28) gets out. Carelessly pretty. On a normal day,
she's feisty and capable. But today she's fighting panic.

She leans into the backseat and pulls out HANNAH. The threeyear-
old is scared, crying a bit.

JUNE:

(to Hannah)

Shhh, you're okay. Did the car go
bump?

(to Luke, urgent)

Can we push it out?

LUKE:

(mind racing, fearful)

I don't know. I think.

(and then)

We need to put something under the
wheels.

Luke moves around the car, pops the trunk. Rushing.

SIRENS SCREAM IN THE DISTANCE. Coming closer.

Luke and June FREEZE -- pure terror. They're out of time.

Luke makes a decision.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Go, take her.

There's an augural certainty in his voice. But June is less
sure.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

JUNE:

We need the car.

Luke grabs a BACKPACK, starts tossing in water bottles,
diapers, a small ziploc bag filled with GOLD JEWELRY.

LUKE :

Just keep going north.

Luke points, across the field to the woods.

LUKE (CONT'D)

It's about two miles to the river.

They said someone would meet us.

(and then)

Go, I'll catch up.

The sirens grow louder. Engines GROWL nearby.

June hesitates, but just for a moment -- there's no time for sentiment.

June pulls Hannah close and RUNS FOR THE WOODS.

She doesn't look back.

EXT. MAINE WOODS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Tall boxelders and sugar maples shade an undergrowth of spindly Balsam Pines.

June runs, carrying Hannah as she weaves between the trees.

She gone a few hundred yards when --

THREE QUICK GUNSHOTS ECHO.

JUNE STOPS SHORT. She turns back and scans the woods for a long, terrible beat.

Nothing. Just the sounds of the forest. Trees creaking in the wind.

Then, she sees MOVEMENT.

NOT LUKE.

Men in BLACK UNIFORMS. She can hear their faint SHOUTS.

They carry SNUBBY AUTOMATIC RIFLES.

FUCK. June RUNS FOR HER LIFE.

She stumbles, almost falls, keeps running. As fast as she can. She's gasping from fear and exertion.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

But she isn't going to outrun them, not carrying Hannah. She looks around for somewhere to hide -- makes a quick decision.

June pulls Hannah to the ground behind a FALLEN TREE. Hannah CRIES. June covers her mouth.

JUNE :

(almost silent)

Shhh, baby girl. Please.

Her pursuers close in. Six, eight of them. All men.

We can see them clearly now.

These aren't police, and they aren't soldiers. There are no American Flags on these uniforms. Just a symbol on the shoulder.

Two Angel wings.

These are GUARDIANS OF THE FAITH.

GUARDIAN #1

(pointing)

Go up around there...

GUARDIAN #2

Do you see her?

June holds Hannah tightly as the Guardians move closer. Her mind races.

Then, suddenly, her most primal instincts take over. June GETS UP AND RUNS WITH HANNAH IN HER ARMS.

A Guardian immediately spots them.

GUARDIAN #1

There!

June runs HARD, FAST -- fueled by crystalline panic.

A GUARDIAN sprints after her, catches up. HE GRABS HER by the collar.

June twists VICIOUSLY. She punches the Guardian, a few hard jabs, and manages to pull free.

June runs, holding Hannah close.

But more Guardians have caught up. They grab for her, pulling her down to the ground.

JUNE :

Get off, get the fuck off me...!

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

June SCREAMS, CLAWS, PUNCHES, KICKS. A Guardian pulls away screaming, his eye bloody. A BEADY-EYED GUARDIAN stumbles back clasping his groin.

BEADY-EYED GUARDIAN

(hurting and furious)

Whore....

She's a fighter. But there are too many. The Guardians manage to hold her.

They drag Hannah from her arms.

JUNE :

No no no! Don't touch her...!

HANNAH:

Mommmmmmy!

June desperately tries to get free. The BEADY-EYED GUARDIAN, still hurting from the kick to the groin, hits June in the head with a TRUNCHEON.

June FALLS BACK as the world swims gray.

GUARDIAN #1

(re:

Careful! She's a red tag.

HANNAH :

Mommmmmmy!

JUNE turns her head. Half-conscious, she sees HANNAH

REACHING OUT FOR HER as a GUARDIAN CARRIES HER AWAY.

ON JUNE'S FACE as her eyes flutter into unconsciousness --

FADE TO PURE :

WHITE:

EXT. MAINE WOODS - DAY - LATER

OVER WHITE. VOICES. DRY LEAVES, STICKS CRACKING -- THE SOUND OF BOOTS WALKING ON THE FOREST FLOOR.

JUNE'S FACE as she drifts awake.

She tries to focus -- she can see the trees up above, stretching into gray sky.

She is MOVING.

PULLING BACK, we see that June is strapped to a STRETCHER. Guardians carry her out of the woods.

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EXT. MAINE - COUNTRY ROAD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The Guardians carry June towards the road. June can see her CAR, still sitting in the field where she left it.

No sign of Luke.

THREE BLACK SUV's sit parked on the road. Official vehicles with flashing lights. They are all marked with the same angel wings symbol. More GUARDIANS mill around.

A RED VAN waits. Doors open. Like a trap.

The Guardians load June into the van. THEY LOCK THE DOORS.

THE BLOOD-RED VAN drives away down the country road. As it grows smaller in the distance, we hear JUNE'S VOICE.

JUNE (V.O.)

(calm)

A chair. A table. A lamp.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

The bedroom is perfectly neat, decorated in beiges.

Polished wood floor, braided rug. A folksy touch.

It could be a room in a QUAIN T NEW ENGLAND B&B.

JUNE (V.O.)

Above, on the ceiling in the middle
of the room, there's a spot that's
been plastered over.

(and then)

There must have been a chandelier
once. They've removed anything you
can tie a rope to.

JUNE sits, hands folded, looking out of the window. She wears
a full RED DRESS, almost a cloak.

A starched-white bonnet covers her head, obscures her face.

JUNE (V.O.)

There's a window with white
curtains. The glass is
shatterproof. But it isn't running
away they're afraid of. A Handmaid
wouldn't get far. It's those other
escapes, the ones you can open in
yourself.

(and then)

Given a cutting edge.

(and then)

(MORE) (CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

JUNE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Or a twisted sheet and a
chandelier.

It is an otherworldly tableaux. A woman draped in red, in
this dollhouse-perfect bedroom.

JUNE (V.O.)

I try not to think about those
escapes. It's harder on Ceremony
day.

(and then)

Thinking can hurt your chances. And
I intend to survive. I intend to
survive for her.

(and then)

My name is Offred. I had another name, but it's forbidden now. So many things are forbidden now.

June is now OFFRED.

Welcome to our world. Welcome to Gilead.

Somewhere in the house, a CLOCK CHIMES loudly.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - HALLWAY/STAIRS - DAY

Offred walks down the stairs. She moves so quietly, it's like she doesn't even push any air in front of her.

She stops outside the kitchen door.

IN THE KITCHEN, RITA (50, gruff) kneads bread. She wears a DULL GREEN DRESS -- the uniform of a "Martha" -- the caste of domestic workers in this society.

Offred watches her kneading the heavy bread dough.

OFFRED (V.O.)

Rita makes the bread from scratch.

It's the kind of thing they like the Marthas to do.

(and then)

A return to traditional values, that's what they fought for.

Rita sees Offred.

RITA:

(annoyed)

Always showing up when I'm in the midst. Hold your horses.

She wipes her floury hands on her apron and pulls a set of KEYS from her pocket. She crosses to a cabinet, unlocks it.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

Offred waits in the hallway. A SOFT CLICKING CATCHES HER ATTENTION. Offred looks across the hall. A door, slightly open, reveals a perfectly-decorated SITTING ROOM.

In the sitting room, Offred can just see the shoulder of a WOMAN IN BLUE. She sits in a chair, knitting. Her needles click against each other.

LOOKING AT THE WOMAN, OFFRED FLASHES BACK TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM - DAY -FLASHBACK

Outside the sitting room window, a hard rain falls.

OFFRED stands in her RED CLOAK, a red suitcase beside her.

They are still damp from the rain.

She is alone in the room. Eyes cast down. An unmoving figure in red.

There are no books in the room. No visible writing of any kind. And no technology.

The only sound is the rain hitting the window. A spring rain, with plump, cold drops.

SERENA JOY opens the door, strides in. She's a brittle 40, in the signature pale blue of a Commander's wife.

Offred starts to look towards Serena -- it's a reflex. But she stops herself, keeps her head down.

Eyes to the floor.

Serena sees Offred twitch and catch herself. Serena takes a beat to enjoy her power at work. And then --

SERENA JOY :

So. Here you are.

Offred keeps her eyes lowered.

OFFRED (V.O.)

Here I am.

(and then)

Aunt Lydia said it was best not to speak to the wives unless they asked you a direct question. Think of it from their point of view, Aunt Lydia said. It isn't easy for them.

(and then)

Boo fucking hoo.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

Serena Joy sits, takes out a cigarette. Lights it. She looks Offred up and down. After a long beat --

SERENA JOY :

You can sit down. I don't make a practice of it, but just this time.

Offred considers -- she is carefully choosing every word, every movement. This is a dance. If Offred missteps, there will be consequences.

Offred sits, folds her hands in her lap.

SERENA JOY (CONT'D)

So, old what's-his-name didn't work out?

OFFRED :

No, Ma'am.

SERENA JOY :

Tough luck. This is your second posting, then?

OFFRED :

Yes, Ma'am.

SERENA JOY :

Good. Our last one was brand new.

It was like training a dog. And not a very smart one.

(and then)

I expect you know the rules?

OFFRED :

Yes, Ma'am.

SERENA JOY :

Don't call me ma'am. You're not a Martha.

From the doorway, someone CLEARS THEIR THROAT. Offred glances over and sees COMMANDER WATERFORD (50'). Tall, a little thick in places, not necessarily handsome, but... commanding.

Offred IMMEDIATELY stands up, bows her head obediently.

SERENA JOY (CONT'D)

Well. Look what the cat dragged in.

(re:

This is the new one.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

COMMANDER :

(to Offred, too casual)

Hello.
(then, catching himself)
Blessed be the fruit.

OFFRED :

May the Lord open.
A beat. And then -

COMMANDER :

I'm Commander Waterford. Fred
Waterford.

OFFRED :

I am Of-fred.

COMMANDER :

Right.
(and then)
Well. Good.
The whole process is proscribed, unnatural. The Commander
turns to leave, pauses --
COMMANDER (CONT'D)
(brightly)
Nice to meet you.
Serena Joy REACTS with a glare -- this isn't part of the
ritual greeting. It is far too intimate.
Offred turns the words, and the rules, over in her head. She
doesn't know how to play it, what to say. She chooses --

OFFRED :

Thank you.
The Commander leaves.
Offred shifts in the uncomfortable silence. The rain hits
the window. An uneven rhythm of taps.
Offred sits down again.

SERENA JOY :

(sharply)
Get up.
Offred gets up.
SERENA JOY (CONT'D)
I want to see as little of you as
possible. Understand?
(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

OFFRED :

Yes, Ma'am...

(and then)

Yes.

SERENA JOY :

Mrs. Waterford.

(and then)

You'll find that in this house, we believe in mercy. But if I get trouble, believe me, I'll give trouble back.

Offred stares down at the floor, as we --

END FLASHBACK:

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - HALLWAY/STAIRS - DAY

Rita steps up, bringing Offred out of her memory.

RITA :

Tell them fresh for the eggs, not like last time. Tell them who it's for and they won't mess around.

Rita hands her a wicker shopping basket, then tears some paper tokens from a ration book.

They have pictures on them, but no words. Twelve eggs, a piece of cheese, a fish.

OFFRED :

Okay.

Rita offers a frown and heads back to the work.

OFFRED (V.O.)

The frown isn't personal. It's really the red dress she disapproves of.

(and then)

I've heard Rita talking to Marthas from other houses. "I wouldn't debase myself like that," they say. Or "It's not what you call hard work. Do the shopping and spread

your legs."

Rita goes back to kneading the bread, sinking her hands into the soft dough. Offred watches, hungrily.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

RITA :

You gonna stand there all day? Be rude, leaving your friend out there waiting.

OFFRED (V.O.)

I want to tell her that Ofglen is not my friend, that I've exchanged barely fifty words with her in the two months since I got here. I want to tell her that I sincerely believe that Ofglen is kind of a pious little shit with a broomstick up her ass.
And then...

OFFRED :

Under his eye.

Offred leaves. Off Rita -- back to work.

EXT. WATERFORD HOUSE - DAY

Offred comes out, walks down a path bordered with flowers. The garden is beautiful, perfectly kept.

A FEW GUARDIANS patrol, guns slung over their shoulders.

NICK BLAINE (26) digs in the flowerbed. He's attractive in a boyish sort of way. He wears a Guardian's uniform, with the jacket off and the shirt open at the throat.

OFFRED (V.O.)

(re:

He's one of the Guardians assigned to the house. He drives for the Commander, but sometimes Serena Joy has him help her in the garden. Do some of the heavy lifting.

(and then)

I know his name. Nick. I heard the Commander speaking to him once.

"Nick, I won't be needing the car."

Offred stops. Nick's wheelbarrow and garden tools block the path. She doesn't say anything, waits for him to notice.

NICK :

(re:

I'm sorry.

Offred gives a tiny nod, doesn't look up. Nick starts to clear the path.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

Offred looks at his sweaty, muscled forearms as he lifts the heavy tools. She forces herself to look away.

NICK (CONT'D)

Going shopping?

OFFRED (V.O.)

No, Nick, I'm gonna knock back a few mojitos at the Oyster House

Bar. Wanna come along?

And then -

OFFRED :

Yes.

NICK :

If you're going to All Flesh, avoid the chicken. I read they've got crazy levels of dioxin.

Offred hesitates, weighs her responses. Always so careful.

OFFRED :

I'm going to Loaves and Fishes.

NICK :

Then you should avoid the tuna.

A beat, and then --

OFFRED :

Mercury?

NICK :

No, I just don't like tuna very much.

Nick smiles. It is almost a normal moment. The garden path is clear, but Offred lingers.

OFFRED (V.O.)

He lives here, over the garage.

Low status, he hasn't even been issued a woman. Maybe he's lonely.

Maybe he watches me.

(and then, horribly)

Maybe he's an Eye.

Oh FUCK. We can see the terror in her eyes, even if we don't know exactly why. Later, we'll find out "The Eyes" are the secret police of Gilead. The Gestapo. Offred goes pale, looks away.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

OFFRED :

(as saintly as possible)

Peace be with you.

She hurries away, through the gate. OFGLEN waits on the sidewalk. In her red cloak and white bonnet, she is another Handmaid. Offred's twin, dressed exactly alike. Head bowed.

OFGLEN :

Blessed be the fruit.

Offred is still rattled -- did she make a mistake with Nick? A fatal mistake? It's possible.

OFFRED :

(shaky)

May the Lord open.

Ofglen notices that she is agitated.

OFGLEN :

Are you okay, Offred?

OFFRED :

Yes, very well, praised be. You are so kind to ask.

(and then, V.O.)

Pious little shit.

Offred tries to calm herself as she walks off with Ofglen.

EXT. GILEAD - UPSCALE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Idyllic. Stately homes, with beautiful gardens, hiding so much darkness.

MARTHAS walk on the streets, some GUARDIANS. No wives, no Commanders. A few Marthas push strollers or walk with boy children. THERE ARE NO GIRL CHILDREN OUTSIDE.

The cars that pass are either commander-black or wife-blue, luxury gas guzzlers. A few MILITARY HUMVEES pass -- black with the winged symbol on the doors.

Offred walks with Ofglen.

OFFRED (V.O.)

We go everywhere in twos. This is supposed to be for our protection, but that's bullshit. The truth is we're watching each other for any whiff of heresy.

(and then)

She is my spy, as I am hers.

(and then)

(MORE) (CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

OFFRED (V.O.) (CONT'D)

She has never said anything that was not strictly orthodox. But then neither have I. She may be a true believer, a Handmaid in more than name. I can't take that risk. I can't end up on the Wall and leave my daughter here. Alone.

(and then, aloud)

We've been sent good weather.

OFGLEN :

Which I receive with joy.

(and then)

The war is going well, I hear.

Offred reacts, hungry to hear any news. But she quickly buries her desire, answers as evenly as possible.

OFFRED :

(eager, playing cool)
By His hand.

OFGLEN :

They've defeated more of the
rebels.

OFFRED :

Praise be.
(and then, very carefully)
What were they? The rebels.
Ofglen hesitates, narrows her eyes.
OFFRED (V.O.)

(re:

When she gives me that look, I want
to punch her in the face.
(and then)
But she's right. Any curiosity is
dangerous. But I'm ravenous for
news. Even if it's false news it
must mean something.
Ofglen's suspicion wanes. She smiles.

OFGLEN :

Baptists, I think. Suicide
bombers. They had a stronghold in
the Blue Hills.
Offred waits, eager for Ofglen will offer more. She doesn't.
After a long beat, Offred abandons her hopes --
(CONTINUED)
"Pilot" 11/29/15 15.

CONTINUED:

OFFRED :

(unfulfilled)
Praise be.
Offred and Ofglen pass a SMALL WHITE CHURCH.
Behind a wrought iron gate, Commander's Wives in blue dresses
stand chatting near a line of idling black SUV's. The door
to the church opens.
A dozen pre-pubescent GIRLS emerge from the church, dressed
in long, pink and white smocks. Virginal. ARMED GUARDIANS

escort them.

Offred STOPS -- stares at the girls. ONE GIRL looks her way, smiles. On OFFRED as we --

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY -FLASHBACK

Three-year-old HANNAH runs into the breaking waves, laughing. Pure joy.

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. GILEAD - UPSCALE NEIGHBORHOOD / CHURCH

Back on Offred, rocked by her memory.

OFGLEN :

Offred.

(and then)

We should go.

She turns, trembling slightly, fighting her emotions. They walk on.

INT. LOAVES AND FISHES - DAY

Offred and Ofglen enter. A sign shows a LOAF OF BREAD and a FISH. Pictures, no writing.

Only women are shopping -- Handmaids, some Marthas, and a few ECONOWIVES -- working-class wives in multicolored dresses.

It is a grocery store. Some bare shelves, not too much produce, but otherwise, pretty ordinary.

It's like Ralphs. Except for the armed guards patrolling the aisles, and the packages of food marked with pictures.

There is no writing anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

Offred is still shaken by her memory of Hannah. She follows Ofglen by rote, not thinking. Two Handmaids, OFSAMUEL (19, talker) and OFERIC (32, observant) step up. Excited whispers.

OSAMUEL :

Under his eye.

(chatty)

Did you see? They have oranges.

OFGLEN :

Praised be. The war in Florida
must be going well.

OFSAMUEL :

I know, right?

OFGLEN :

(to Offred)

Your Mistress likes oranges.

OFERIC:

(cynical)

Just make sure she knows you got
them. Don't let a Martha take the
credit.

Offred fights to focus on the conversation. Finally says...

OFFRED :

I don't have a token for oranges.

OFSAMUEL :

Tell them you're Commander
Waterford's. He's very high up.
His name is in the news...

The Oferic looks to her, sharply. Ofsamuel realizes, goes
ashen.

OFSAMUEL (CONT'D)

I didn't read it. I promise. I
just overheard my Mistress...

Ofsamuel is digging herself in deeper. Ofglen comes to the
rescue.

OFGLEN :

We should get some oranges before
they're all gone.

They all walk off. Offred waits a moment, still shuddering
from her memory of her daughter. A beat, then she follows.

TIME CUT TO:

"Pilot" 11/29/15 17.

INT. LOAVES AND FISHES - MINUTES LATER

Crates of oranges are stacked into a makeshift display.

Women crowd around. Ofglen, Oferic, and the other Handmaids
take oranges.

Offred just stares at the crates. Mind elsewhere.

OFGLEN :

Praise be His bounty.

(to Offred)

Take some.

Offred takes a few oranges, puts them in her basket. As she does --

OFFRED:

They took my daughter. I don't
need oranges. I need her back. I
need to scream. I need to grab the
nearest machine gun.

(and then)

I need someone to talk to.

(and then)

I wish Moira was here.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. RED CENTER - GYMNASIUM - DAY -FLASHBACK

ANGLE ON a young woman -- MOIRA (28, quick and profane) seems
to be listening intently. She wears a red handmaid's dress,
sits at a SCHOOL DESK.

WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL --

A former high school has been turned into a indoctrination
center for Handmaids.

AUNT LYDIA (O.S.)

They made such a mess of
everything. They filled the air
with chemicals and radiation and
poison.

In the gym, Moira and other WOMEN in red dresses sit at rows
of desk -- hands folded, silent, obedient, eyes front.

Stern women in brown uniforms watch the class. Cattle prods
hang from their belts. These are AUNTS -- brutal overseers
of the Handmaids.

AUNT LYDIA (50, pleasant and sadistic) lectures to the women.
A computer projects power-point slides on a screen.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

It shows a graph of FALLING BIRTH RATES.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

So God whipped up a special plague,
just for them. A plague of
infertility. Do you blame Him? I
most certainly do not.

A door opens. Moira turns her head slightly, just enough to
see.

Across the room, GUARDIANS lead in a group of NEW ARRIVALS,
including JANINE (22, ballsy) and OFFRED.

Offred shuffles, looking a little sleepy. Drugged.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

And as birthrates fell, what did
they do? They made things worse.

Can you imagine? Birth control
pills, morning after pills,
murdering babies in the womb?

Cutting them into pieces.

Aunt Lydia takes a beat, as if the pain is too much for her.
She steadies herself, goes on.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

How could they have done such
things? Just so they could have
their orgies. Their Tinder. So
they could rut about like beasts.
Such wickedness.

(and then)

They were dirty women. They were
sluts.

The Guardians leads the women to the desks. Offred looks over
the room of women. She spots MOIRA. Eyes connect.

Recognition. WE FLASHBACK TO:

INT. CAMBRIDGE APARTMENT - MORNING -FLASHBACK

Offred, in normal clothes, sits at the kitchen table, working
on a laptop. Notes and books are scattered across the table.
She sips coffee.

It all seems so normal. And so decadent, compared to life in
Gilead.

Moira enters, T-shirt and pajama bottoms. Bed head.

MOIRA :

Got any cigarettes?

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 19.

CONTINUED:

OFFRED :

In my jacket maybe.

MOIRA :

Where's your jacket?

OFFRED:

(exasperated)

Dude, I need to finish this. It's due by ten.

MOIRA :

For Dietrich's class?

(off her nod)

What's it about?

OFFRED :

Campus sexual assault.

MOIRA :

For or against?

This gets a little grin from Offred. A PRETTY WOMAN comes out of Moira's bedroom, leans into the kitchen.

WOMAN :

Moira honey? I've got to get to work.

(and then)

We should do this again.

MOIRA :

Babe, I would love that.

The woman smiles, waves politely to Offred, then heads out. Offred looks to Moira.

OFFRED :

You don't even remember her name, do you?

MOIRA :

(busted)

Just give me a fucking cigarette.

Two friends.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. RED CENTER - GYMNASIUM - CONTINUING

Moira and Offred meet eyes. Moira shakes her head just slightly.

No.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

Then Moira looks away.

Offred understands the message --don't let anyone see that we know each other. She walks past Moira, not offering any recognition. She sits down.

Aunt Lydia continues her lecture, full of devotion.

AUNT LYDIA :

...but you are special girls.

Fertility is a gift directly from God. He left you intact for a Biblical purpose.

(and then)

Like Bilhah served Rachel, you girls will serve the Leaders of the Faithful and their barren wives.

You'll bear children for them. You are so lucky. So privileged.

JANINE (23, ballsy) another new arrival, sits down behind Offred. Leans to her --

JANINE:

(whisper)

Welcome to the friggin' looney bin, right?

Janine grins. Immediately, an AUNT strides over. Without a word, she HITS JANINE IN THE HEAD.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Jesus, what the fuck!?

Aunt Lydia comes over. A murmur runs through the woman.

AUNT LYDIA :

All right, girls. We'll have quiet. Like little mice.

(to Janine)
Welcome to the Rachel and Leah
Center.
(and then)
Up.

JANINE :
(defiant)
Fuck you.

AUNT LYDIA :
Blessed are the meek, Dear.
Aunt Lydia quickly pulls out her prod and jams it into
Janine's neck. She SHOCKS HER, HOLDING THE PROD AGAINST HER
SKIN.
(CONTINUED)
"Pilot" 11/29/15 21.

CONTINUED:
Janine screams, cowering. Three Aunts descend, pulling
Janine to her feet and dragging her away.
Aunt Lydia heads back to the front of the makeshift
classroom.
OFFRED (V.O.)
Blessed are the meek.
(and then)
They always leave out the part
about inheriting the earth.

AUNT LYDIA :
Back to work, shall we, girls?
On Offred, as Aunt Lydia returns to her lecture.
INT. RED CENTER - CAFETERIA - NIGHT
The cafeteria has been converted into a dorm for the
Handmaids in training.
Blue moonlight glows through the windows, illuminating neat
rows of narrow cots.
Moira and Offred lie in their beds, talking quietly,
carefully.

OFFRED :
I tried to run with her, but she
was so heavy. I tried.

MOIRA :

(so much sympathy)

Hey, I know.

(and then)

Those motherfuckers were chasing
you with machine guns. None of this
is your fault.

OFFRED :

(doesn't know)

I know.

(and then)

Then I heard shots. He must have
tried to slow them down somehow,
give us a better chance to get to
the border.

(and then)

They just shot him.

Moirra reaches out, touches her face.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 22.

CONTINUED:

MOIRA :

Don't lose hope, darlin'. He's
always been a survivor.

OFFRED :

No. He's dead, Moira.

(and then)

What about Odette?

MOIRA :

Reclassified as an Unwoman and sent
to the colonies. She was gone in
the first dyke purge. She was on
top of their list.

(and then)

We were stupid. They told us
exactly what they believed in.
What they wanted to do. We called
them wing-nuts.

OFFRED :

They are.

MOIRA :

We should've taken them seriously.

We didn't look up from our fucking phones until it was too late.

Across the cafeteria, the door opens loudly. Offred and Moira immediately close their eyes and feign sleep.

Two Aunts drag JANINE into the room. She's limp, moaning.

A BANDAGE COVERS HER RIGHT EYE. There is a small stain of BLOOD on the gauze.

They drop Janine onto her cot and leave. After the door shuts, the room is silent.

Janine curls up and whimpers, softly.

Offred listens. It is a terrible sound.

OFFRED :

What did they do to her?

MOIRA:

If my right eye offends thee, pluck it out.

(and then)

We're breeding stock, kid. You don't need eyes for that.

Offred tries to absorb this unreality. Janine whimpers.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 23.

CONTINUED:

OFFRED :

We are down the rabbit hole or something.

MOIRA :

Yup, no joke.

(and then)

God, I'd kill for a fucking cigarette.

Offred musters a smile. Off these friends, we --

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. GILEAD - THE WALL - DAY

FOUR BODIES hang by their necks from hooks set into the brickwork. Hands tied in front, white bags over their heads. Each body has a placard hung around its neck: A human fetus, a black triangle, a red inverted cross...

Pull back to reveal OFFRED and OFGLEN looking at the wall.

OFFRED:

A priest, a doctor, a lesbian.

(and then)

I think I heard that joke once.

This wasn't the punchline.

(and then)

Moirra isn't up there. She could still be dead, I know. There are a hundred other walls in a hundred towns, a thousand mass graves in the woods.

(and then)

But she isn't here, and that gives me hope. It may be false hope, but that's a sort of hope nonetheless.

CHURCH BELLS ring out. Time to go home.

OFGLEN :

Should we take the long way, by the river?

Offred nods, then remembers. Painfully. It's Ceremony day for Offred.

OFFRED :

I can't.

(and then)

I have to get ready for the Ceremony.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 24.

CONTINUED:

Offred looks gray. But Ofglen reacts with restrained joy.

OFGLEN :

Praised be. We'll go straight home then.

(and then)
May God bless your endeavor and
bring forth His miracle.

OFFRED :

(hiding dread)
Praised be.

CUT TO:

INT. - WATERFORD HOUSE - BATHROOM - TWILIGHT

The bathroom is decorated with blue wallpaper, curtains, a blue fake-fur cover on the toilet seat. Perfectly neat. It's a bathroom that might belong to your great-aunt. Steam rises from the full bathtub. Offred undresses, removing her white wings and shaking loose her long hair.

OFFRED (V.O.)

They took out the mirror. And there are no razors, of course.

There were incidents in the bathrooms at the beginning.

Cuttings, drownings. Before they got all the bugs ironed out.

She removes her heavy red cloak, the petticoats, the red stockings, the loose white cotton pantaloons.

Offred slides into the tub. Hot water. It feels lovely.

OFFRED (V.O.)

The bath is required before the ceremony. I am to make myself clean. But it's also a luxury.

Just to take off the veil, to feel my own hair again with my own hands, is a luxury.

Offred washes her hair. For the first time, we notice a small RED METAL CUFF on the top curve of one ear -- there's a six digit number etched in the surface.

The cuff could be jewelry, in another time, edgy and urban. But this isn't jewelry.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 25.

CONTINUED:

It is an ear tag, akin to the identity tags used on cattle. Offred lays back and closes her eyes.

On OFFRED, WE FLASHBACK TO:

INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM - DAY -FLASHBACK

Offred takes a bath with baby MAYA -- she's six months, fat and slippery. Maya squeals. Offred buries her face in Maya's wet and perfect neck. Inhales deeply.

OFFRED (V.O.)

She comes to me so clearly in the bath.

A perfect memory. But dark questions intrude...

OFFRED (V.O.)

(rising fear)

When do I come to her?

(and then)

Does she even remember me? Please, God, let her remember me.

The memory bursts abruptly --

END FLASHBACK:

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BATHROOM - TWILIGHT

...as Offred jerks back into reality. Her eyes open.

OFFRED (V.O.)

They probably told her I was dead.

That's what they would do. Best thing for everyone, they'd say.

(and then)

When people say that, they always mean that it's the best thing for them. It never means the best thing for you.

Off her face...

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Offred sits on the bed, dressed and still. Hands folded in her lap. A tableaux. Her mind races.

OFFRED (V.O.)

I am washed and brushed like a prize pig.

(and then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 26.

CONTINUED:

OFFRED (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I want to know what I did. To

deserve this.

Offred FLASHES BACK TO:

INT. RED CENTER - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Chairs are arranged in a circle, with a single chair at the center. Offred, Moira, and the other Handmaids-in-training sit on the perimeter.

Janine sits in the central chair. She wears a SMALLER BANDAGE over her missing eye. Aunt Lydia stands beside her.

Other Aunts stalk the outside of the circle, watching all the women, cattle prods ready.

JANINE :

The boys kept coming down into the basement for hours, it felt like. At first they took turns, but later I think there were two or three at a time. I knew most of them from school. I just couldn't believe they were doing it, that it was happening.

AUNT LYDIA :

But it did happen.

JANINE :

Yeah.

AUNT LYDIA :

And whose led them on? Whose fault was it?

Janine shrugs, weakly. She hangs her head.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

Whose fault was it, girls?

Offred looks at Janine. She's crying now. Moira and the other women in the circle respond, pointing and chanting in unison. Offred joins, weakly.

WOMEN :

Her fault! Her fault! Her fault!

Aunt Lydia gives Offred a stern look -- she is not showing enough enthusiasm. Moira leans to her.

MOIRA :

(urgent whisper)

Come on, do it.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 27.

CONTINUED:

AUNT LYDIA :

And why did God allow such a
terrible thing to happen?

Aunt Lydia looks at Offred. Offred steels herself and joins
in with terrible energy. The women point at Janine,
accusing.

WOMEN :

Teach her a lesson! Teach her a
lesson! Teach her a lesson!
It's a scene of horror from another century.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

A CLOCK CHIMES, bringing Offred out of her memory. She
stands up, walks out of the bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Offred enters. The room is quiet, empty.

OFFRED (V.O.)

I am here before the others. That,
too, is part of the ritual.

Offred steps to her spot, marked by a small RED CUSHION. She
kneels. Head down, hands in her lap.

OFFRED (V.O.)

I am to wait. I am to be a woman
in waiting.

(and then)

Ordinary, said Aunt Lydia, is what
you're used to. This may not seem
ordinary to you now, but after a
time it will. It will become
ordinary.

(and then)

I want to throw up.

Rita enters, wiping her hands on a dish towel. She takes her
place, standing behind Offred.

Nick enters next. Stands beside Rita. A long beat.

RITA :

Wish they'd hurry up. Some of us
got things to do, you know.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 28.

CONTINUED:

NICK :

Hurry up and wait.

Footsteps in the hall, then Serena Joy enters. She sits
down. Lights a cigarette. A beat, and then...

SERENA JOY:

Late again, as usual.

(then, to no one)

What is it about men?

A long beat. There is a knock at the door.

OFFRED (V.O.)

The knock is prescribed. This room
is her domain. It's a little
thing, but in this house, little
things mean everything.

SERENA JOY :

Come in.

The Commander opens the door. He is dressed in his black
uniform. He looks over the assembled group.

COMMANDER :

Good evening.

(and then, to Serena Joy)

Dear.

He smiles. Almost warmly. She nods in return. He pulls out
a key on a brass ring.

COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Then let's get started.

A polished wooden box sits on the table beside his chair.

The commander uses the key to unlock the box. Extracts a
King James BIBLE, opens to a marked passage.

Clears his throat.

COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

(reading)

And when Rachel saw that she bare
Jacob no children, Rachel envied
her sister, and said unto Jacob,
Give me children or else I die...

He continues reading in V.O. As we --

CUT TO:

"Pilot" 11/29/15 29.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - SERENA JOY'S BEDROOM - LATER

CLOSE ON OFFRED'S FACE. We can hear a soft GRUNTING. Offred
moves a bit, in the same rhythm.

COMMANDER (V.O.)

And she said, Behold my maid
Bilhah, go in unto her...

PULLING BACK, we reveal that Offred is lying between Serena
Joy's open legs.

Serena Joy lies, fully clothed, on her outsized Colonial four-
poster bed. She holds Offred's hands, pulling them back
awkwardly.

Offred's red skirt is hitched up to her waist. No higher.

COMMANDER (V.O.)

...and she shall bear upon my knees
that I may also have children by
her. And she gave him Bilhah her
Handmaid to wife, and Jacob went
unto her.

Below that, the Commander fucks Offred. Methodically. With
monotonous exertion.

ON OFFRED. Her back hitting against Serena Joy's pubic bone.
Trying not to wince. Her face blank.

ON THE COMMANDER, pumping. Dutifully. He glances at Offred
for a moment. She avoids eye contact.

ON SERENA JOY. Pained. She grips Offred's wrists tightly,
digs her nails in.

ON OFFRED -- What lesson is God teaching her?

The Commander grunts softly.

Serena Joy twists Offred's wrists PAINFULLY, contorting her
into a posture that looks like sadomasochistic bondage.

Offred bites back a moan. The Commander grunts loudly and
COMES.

Offred looks relieved.

The Commander rests for a beat. Then he steps back and pulls

up his pants. Neatens his clothes.

He nods formally, then leaves.

The door CLOSES.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 30.

CONTINUED:

Offred is left entangled with Serena Joy. They lay there for a beat, then Serena Joy roughly extracts herself and sits up. She finds a cigarette, lights it.

SERENA JOY :

Get out.

Offred hesitates, startled by her venom.

SERENA JOY (CONT'D)

Are you deaf?

OFFRED:

(respectfully)

The chances are better if I lay on my back afterwards...

SERENA JOY :

(slow, fierce)

Just get out.

Offred gets off the bed and leaves. ON SERENA JOY for a miserable beat, then we --

CUT TO:

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Offred lies in her bed, awake. Moonlight through the curtains makes patterns on her face.

The grotesque horror of the ceremony replays in her mind.

She tries to settle her thoughts. It's not working.

OFFRED (V.O.)

This is what I do when I'm back in my room.

(and then)

I take off my clothes. I want to wash, but it's not allowed. I put on my nightgown and get into bed. I don't sleep. I try not to smell them on me. I try to think about something else.

(and then)

The moon is the same. That's something. They haven't changed that.

(and then)

I'll think about the moon.

(and then, terribly)

I can feel the Commander's come running out of me. I can feel it on my legs.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 31.

CONTINUED:

OFFRED (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(and then, rising panic)

I can smell it.

Offred gets out of bed. Driven by waves of claustrophobic panic, she heads out of the room.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Offred runs down the staircase. She's freaking out.

EXT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Offred runs out the back door and into the yard. A tall fence protects the garden.

She stops on the grass, breathing hard, trying to calm down. She looks up at the moon. Pale white.

Suddenly, she feels someone watching. She turns.

NICK sits on the garage steps, outside his room. He holds a worn paperback book. He was reading in the cool night.

Offred and Nick lock eyes.

The moonlight shines through her nightgown. Nick can see the silhouette of her body.

Offred is frozen for a beat. Then she turns and runs inside.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Offred comes in, reeling. She sits on the bed, but her mind races.

OFFRED (V.O.)

He'll tell the Commander. Will he wake him up, or wait for the morning? How long do I have? But I didn't do anything, not really.

(and then)

That's bullshit, I left my room,

that's enough. They don't need a reason anyway. A Commander can punish us any way he wants. A belt, a steel cable. He could shoot me in the fucking head. I've heard the real creative ones like to tie our hands to the stove burners with wire.

(and then)

Breeders don't need their hands.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 32.

CONTINUED:

As she fights panic...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. RED CENTER - CAFETERIA - NIGHT -FLASHBACK

Moonlight shines on the rows of cots. Handmaids-in-training sleep.

ON OFFRED, sleeping. A far off MUMBLING wakes her. She sits up, looks across the room.

JANINE stands at the windows, naked. Her eye is still bandaged.

Her red nightgown is tangled on the floor beside her. She stares out, mumbling. Offred walks to her.

JANINE :

(mumbling)

Hello, can I help you?

(and then)

Good morning, welcome...

OFFRED :

Janine?

Janine's mouth fixed is in a smile. By now, other Handmaids are stirring. Redheaded ALMA, steps up.

ALMA :

Put your clothes on, Janine. Aunt Beth is on bedcheck. I don't want extra prayers on account of you.

JANINE :

(scary friendly)

Hello, welcome. Can I help you?

Moirira steps up.

MOIRA :

(to the other Handmaids)

Go to bed, don't make this a thing.

Most of the Handmaids head back to bed.

OFFRED :

Janine, wake up. You're having a dream...

Janine looks at Offred. But she isn't talking to her. She's talking to an imagined world.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 33.

CONTINUED:

JANINE :

Hello. My name's Janine. I'm your server this morning. Can I get you some coffee to start?

MOIRA :

Oh, Christ.

ALMA :

Don't swear.

MOIRA :

Alma, go back to your Goddamn bed.

Alma slinks away.

OFFRED :

Snap out of it, Janine. Come on.

JANINE :

(smiling)

You have a nice day, now.

Moirira grabs Janine by her shoulders, then SLAPS HER HARD.

MOIRA :

You aren't there anymore. That's

all gone. Now go back to your bed.
Janine touches her cheek, confused.

JANINE :

What did you hit me for? Wasn't it good? I can bring you another one.

MOIRA :

My name is Moira and this is the Red Center.

JANINE :

I don't know any Moira.

MOIRA :

Don't you know what they'll do?
They'll send you to the Colonies.
You'll be cleaning up toxic waste.
You're skin will peel off in sheets
and then you'll die. You'll die,
Janine.

JANINE :

(breaking)

I want to go home. I want my mom.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 34.

CONTINUED:

Janine starts to cry. Offred pushes the nightgown into her hands.

OFFRED:

(warmly)

Put on your clothes, Janine. Get into bed.

Janine nods. She pulls on her nightgown. Whimpering, she shuffles back to her cot.

MOIRA :

And shut up.

(to Offred)

She does that again and I'm not around, slap her. Hard, don't be a

fucking pussy about it.

OFFRED :

Okay.

MOIRA :

That kind of stuff is contagious.

If we're going to survive we need
to keep our fucking shit together.

They are all close to breaking. Offred nods.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Offred paces, Moira's words in her head.

OFFRED (V.O.)

Pull your fucking shit together.

Offred takes a breath, calms down a little.

OFFRED (V.O.)

You're alive. That's all that
matters.

(and then)

You're alive.

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. WATERFORD HOUSE - MORNING

MORNING. NICK polishes the Commander's black car with a soft
rag. Tilting up, we see OFFRED watching from the bedroom
window.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 35.

CONTINUED:

OFFRED (V.O.)

That hasn't changed. The way men
caress cars. I still don't get it.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Offred looks out the window, watching Nick.

OFFRED (V.O.)

He saw me outside last night. I
know he did. But the Eyes haven't
come for me. No black van. No
boots on the staircase. Nothing.
Yet.

In the distance, a BELL TOLLS. THREE SLOW CHIMES. Offred

reacts -

OFFRED (V.O.)

Three bells. A death knell.

(and then)

They're calling us. There's a
Salvaging today.

(and then)

I am not safe, I know that. Soon
enough that bell could ring for me.

(and then)

But not today.

(and then)

Okay. As Moira would say, every
day above ground is a good day.
And with some nice tequila, it's a
fucking great day.

Offred heads out.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Offred enters. Rita gets out the shopping basket and the
food tokens. She's not happy.

OFFRED :

Blessed day.

(and then)

I've been called...

RITA:

(crabby)

Yeah, I heard. Now I've got my
work to do and your shopping.
Three bells and my whole day goes
to the goose.

OFFRED :

I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 36.

CONTINUED:

Nick enters. Offred stops, surprised to see him. He
hesitates as well. Offred decides to be bold.

OFFRED (CONT'D)

Good morning.

It is a suspiciously casual greeting, definitely a breach of

the strict etiquette.
Rita shoots a look, taking note.
Nick considers -- then.

NICK :

Good morning.
(to Rita)
Mrs. Waterford wanted you to
remember to get oranges, if they
still have any.

RITA :

(bitter)
Yes, Sir. My pleasure.
(and then)
Any other special requests?
Offred thinks, then...

OFFRED :

They had tuna at Loaves and Fishes
yesterday. It looked good, you
should get some.
Offred looks to Nick -- the tuna is an inside joke. She
knows he doesn't like it.
In this world of nuance and danger, she's sending a message,
asking a question -- We had a moment, remember? We're
friends, aren't we?
She's trying to charm him. It might keep her alive.

RITA :

(yuck)
Oranges and tuna. Sounds delicious.
(offhand)
Under His eye.

OFFRED :

Under His eye.
Rita leaves.
Offred and Nick stand in silence. Nick is cool, unreadable.
(CONTINUED)
"Pilot" 11/29/15 37.

CONTINUED:

After a long beat, NICK SMILES. Detente. Maybe Offred has

bought herself a little safety, some good will.
THE BELLS TOLL AGAIN. THREE SLOW CHIMES.

NICK :

Blessed be the fruit.

OFFRED :

(self-satisfied)

Praised be.

Offred leaves. PRELAP the sound of THE BELL, tolling again, slowly. A steady chime now.

EXT. THE WALL/THE COMMON - DAY

Inside the tower overlooking the Common, the bells RING. In here, the sound is huge. Medieval.

DOWN BELOW, HANDMAIDS converge. They move through an ornate set of GATES in the wall.

In their cloaks, they make a red river, flowing onto the grassy field. THEY ARE GATHERING FOR THE SALVAGING.

OFFRED (V.O.)

To the tolling of the bells we walk, along paths once used by students, past buildings that were once lecture halls and dorms.

(and then)

These buildings belong to the Eyes now. No one ever goes in, not willingly. And no one ever comes out.

GUARDIANS line the path, herding the Handmaids. Watching, listening.

In the crowd, we find OFFRED. She waits as the other Handmaids pass. They exchange greetings. Praise be...

Blessed... May the Lord open...

OFFRED (V.O.)

This is a district Salvaging, for Handmaids only. They don't have them very often anymore. There's less need, we are all so well-behaved.

(and then)

I don't want to be telling this story.

OFGLEN steps up.

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 38.

CONTINUED:

OF GLEN :

Blessed be the fruit.

OFFRED :

May the Lord open.

Paired, they join the others heading through the gates.

EXT. THE COMMON - CONTINUOUS

At the front of the lawn is a large STAGE, with microphones.

Center stage is a FORKLIFT. Two ROPES hang from the blades.

With nooses. This is a public execution.

RED CUSHIONS sit in rows on the grass. Handmaids come in, choose cushions, kneel. Guardians watch everyone.

As Offred crosses the grass, she looks for a familiar face among the sea of Handmaids.

OFFRED (V.O.)

When there are so many of us
together, sometimes you can find
someone you knew. From before, or
from the Red Center. You can trade
some news, if you're careful.

Offred spots someone, drifts over. It's redheaded ALMA, from the Red Center.

OFFRED :

Blessed be the fruit.

ALMA :

(with recognition)

May the Lord open.

There are Guardians everywhere. Alma only glances up. They speak in very low whispers.

ALMA (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Hey.

OFFRED :

(whispers)

Alma. Where are you posted?

ALMA:

(whispers)
Commander Ellis. He can't barely
get it up. Where're you?
(CONTINUED)
"Pilot" 11/29/15 39.

CONTINUED:

OFFRED :
Waterford.

ALMA :
Fancypants. Nice house I bet. I
saw Gabby a few months ago. She
had a miscarriage.
A somber beat, mourning the lost pregnancy. And then...

OFFRED :
Have you seen Moira?

ALMA :
Not since the center.

OFFRED :
Me neither.
A few feet away, a Handmaid turns around.
IT IS JANINE -- we know her by the SCARRED LID AND EMPTY
SOCKET where her right eye used to be. She smiles, clearly a
bit insane.

JANINE :
(brightly)
Oh, she's dead.

ALMA :
Janine?
A nearby Guardian glares.
GUARDIAN #4
Quiet!
They fall silent, look down meekly.
Across the Common, a procession of Aunts files onto the
stage. Behind them, Guardians in BLACK HOODS -- Salvagers --
escort two manacled HANDMAIDS. The prisoners stumble, drugged
to keep them from struggling.

The Guardian moves off. Offred leans close to Janine.

OFFRED :

(whispering)

Janine? Who's dead?

JANINE :

(brightly)

Moira. She hung herself.

(and then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot" 11/29/15 40.

CONTINUED:

JANINE (CONT'D)

She used the bedsheet. They were blue. Mine are white.

OFFRED CAN'T BREATHE. MOIRA KILLED HERSELF? She has no time to process as -- AUNT LYDIA steps to the microphone.

AUNT LYDIA :

To you places, please. Thank you.

Janine moves away, leaving Offred shaking. Ofglen watches her -- always watching and listening.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

Well. Good afternoon girls.

HANDMAIDS :

(in unison)

GOOD AFTERNOON, AUNT LYDIA...

Offred doesn't respond. She is still in shock.

AUNT LYDIA :

Don't you just love these

Salvagings? Who loves them?

Dozens of hands shoot up automatically.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

I hate them. They are wasteful.

You girls are given so much. You

are so privileged. And yet you are

still so weak. So wicked.

(and then)

Wicked, like Ofscott...

Onstage, the Salvagers drag OFSCOTT forward, the first condemned Handmaid. Ofscott can barely stand up by herself.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

The filthy wanton whore who lured a Guardian into breaking his pledge of abstinence. Can you even stand to look at her, girls?

HANDMAIDS :

(in unison)

NO, AUNT LYDIA.

Offred doesn't respond. Ofglen shoots her a look. There are Guardians everywhere, watching, looking for any disobedience.

OFGLEN :

(low)

Offred...

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

No good. Offred is still lost, thinking of Moira.

Onstage, OFRAY, a young Handmaid, is dragged forward.

AUNT LYDIA :

Wicked like Ofray. A girl disgusting enough to commit adultery with her Commander. Under his own roof. Where she was welcomed by his wife.

Onstage, The Salvagers help the drowsy Handmaids up onto STEPSTOOLS. Slide the nooses around their necks.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

These disgusting creatures have given us no choice. They asked for this, didn't they girls?

HANDMAIDS :

(in unison)

YES, AUNT LYDIA...!

AUNT LYDIA :

Yes they did. And we are bound by Grace to oblige.

(off mike)

Are we ready?

Aunt Lydia looks back to the Salvagers. They put CANVAS
HOODS OVER THE PRISONERS, then nod -- everything is ready.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

(off mike)

Praise be.

(to the crowd)

Are you ready girls?

HANDMAIDS :

(in Unison)

YES AUNT LYDIA.

AUNT LYDIA :

Hands, please.

Moving together, all the Handmaids put one hand over their
hearts. Aunt Lydia does the same.

Ofglen nudges Offred. Blankly, automatically, Offred puts
her hand over her heart.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

All together now.

(and then)

His will be done.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

HANDMAIDS :

(in Unison)

HIS WILL BE DONE.

The Salvager KICK OUT THE STOOLS.

Offred looks up as -

OFRAY and OFSCOTT fall and the ROPES GO TIGHT.

NECKS SNAP.

Muscles spasm. Feet jerk. A drool of URINE from Ofscott
falls onto the stage.

Offred, imagining Moira, goes pale.

A CHEER rises. Aunt Lydia raises her hand, and the Handmaids
fall SILENT.

AUNT LYDIA :

Amen.

(and then)

Now, some of you may have already heard that we have a special treat for you today. Please stand up and form a circle.

She smiles down, munificent. The Handmaids shove as they form a circle -- they're excited, they know what's coming.

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

Orderly, girls. You know the rules.

Offred comes out of her fog.

OFFRED :

What's happening?

OFFRED (CONT'D)

A Particicution.

Two more Guardians appear, dragging a man. He wears a torn Guardian uniform, his face bruised and bloodied.

On OFFRED -- his beady eyes look familiar somehow.

They drag him into the circle of Handmaids.

AUNT LYDIA :

This man, once a Guardian in the army of Gilead, is convicted of rape.

(low moan from the crowd)

(MORE) (CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

AUNT LYDIA (CONT'D)

The penalty for rape, as you know, is death. But what's worse, he raped a Handmaid.

(whispers dramatically)

She was pregnant. And the baby died.

A wave of rage from the Handmaids.

ON OFFRED -- she finally recognizes the Guardian. We

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. MAINE WOODS - DAY -FLASHBACK

The Maine woods, from the opening. OFFRED RUNS WITH HANNAH IN HER ARMS.

GUARDIANS descend on OFFRED, pulling away her screaming daughter. The BEADY-EYED GUARDIAN swings his truncheon, hitting OFFRED. She falls.

BEADY-EYED GUARDIAN

Bitch...

Looking up, she sees his face.

FLASHBACK ENDS:

EXT. COMMON - DAY

THE GUARDIAN IN THE CIRCLE IS THE SAME BEADY-EYED GUARDIAN FROM THE WOODS.

Offred BOILS WITH FURY, READY TO POUNCE. Ofglen pulls her back. Other Handmaids are ready to charge as well.

Aunt Lydia looks out, proudly.

AUNT LYDIA :

Not until I give the signal. When I blow the whistle, what you do is up to you. Until I blow it again.

Are you ready?

Aunt Lydia raises her whistle to her lips.

The Guards release the prisoner's arms.

The Beady-eyed Guardian staggers, falls to his knees.

Sputters unintelligibly.

CLOSE ON Aunt Lydia's lips, closing around the whistle.

SHE BLOWS THE WHISTLE -- A SHRILL, HIGH-PITCHED TONE -

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

OFFRED SCREAMS and attacks. All around her, the crowd surges.

A tide of rage and red.

Offred is the first to get to the beady-eyed prisoner. He looks up. Offred kicks him viciously. Then again.

He crumples backwards. She STOMPS ON HIM --

FROM ABOVE, OFFRED VANISHES IN THE RED THRONG as the Handmaids descend on the prisoner.

The prisoner disappears beneath the red cloaks. We see and hear FLASHES -- blood, fists, screaming, choking.

UP ON THE STAGE, Aunt Lydia raises her whistle to her lips and starts blowing. As the SOUND ECHOES --

Ofglen finds Offred, pulls her back.

OFGLEN :

Are you all right?

No answer. Offred looks down to see A CLUMP OF HAIR IN HER HAND. Janine emerges from the crowd.

Blood smears her face. She smiles.

JANINE :

Have a nice day.

Janine starts to walk away. Offred calls after her -- she might know more about Moira.

OFFRED :

Janine.

(and then, louder)

Janine!

This is DANGEROUS -- even using Janine's name is dangerous. The murmuring crowd camouflages her voice, but a few nearby GUARDIANS turn.

Offred starts to follow Janine. Ofglen grabs Offred's arm, pulls her away.

OFGLEN :

(low)

No.

Offred is shaking, unhinged as Ofglen leads her away.

They pass the spot of the Particicution. A WHITE SHEET now covers the remains of the dead Guardian. Blood seeps through the sheet.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

On Offred --What did I do?

OFGLEN (CONT'D)

(low)

Walk.

Offred obeys, following Ofglen from the Common.

EXT. GILEAD STREETS - DAY

Handmaids leave the Salvaging. They split into pairs and head in different directions.

Ofglen leads Offred by her arm. The sidewalks are emptier now -- most of the Handmaids have peeled off in other directions.

Ofglen walks with her head down. Speaks in low, secret whispers as they walk.

OFGLEN:

(whispers)

I'm so sorry about your friend.

Moira?

Offred nods. She is still shaken from everything that's happened, but she recognizes that Ofglen is breaking rules here. This is dangerous talk.

OFGLEN (CONT'D)

(whispers)

You knew her from the Red Center?

Offred nods, and then...

OFFRED :

And before.

A beat...

OFGLEN :

Was there ever a before?

Ofglen gives Offred a thin smile. A moment of connection.

Trust, almost. But should she trust Ofglen?

Ofglen nods towards a storefront across the street. The sign is just a pictograph -- Bees and a round loaf -- Bread and Honey.

OFGLEN (CONT'D)

That used to be an ice cream place.

OFFRED :

I remember.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

OFGLEN :

They had this amazing salted caramel.

(and then)

That stuff was better than sex.

Offred reacts to this blasphemy, surprised.

OFFRED :

I always thought...

(and then)

You were always such a true believer.

OFGLEN :

So were you. So stinking pious.
(and then)

They do that really well. Make us distrust each other.

A BLACK VAN PASSES, SLOWLY. The windows are tinted. On the side is painted a simple but terrifying image.

AN EYE, with two angel wings. The secret police are on the prowl.

Offred watches it go past. Terrified.

OFFRED :

Eyes.

OFGLEN :

Come on. Just keep walking.

They head off in silence. Offred looks back as the van follows for a block, then peels off.

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. UPSCALE NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Offred and Ofglen walk towards home. It's quiet, only a few people on the streets.

They look down, speak in low voices.

OFGLEN :

How old is your daughter?

Offred reacts, surprised.

OFGLEN (CONT'D)

(off her look)

When you saw the girls outside the church....

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

Ofglen has been watching. Taking note.

OFFRED :

She would be six. Hannah.

This is the first time we have heard her name. Ofglen smiles.

OFGLEN :

Pretty name.

OFFRED :

She's the only thing keeping me
from stepping in front of a car.

OFGLEN:

(I get it)

My wife and I had a son. Oliver.
He's almost ten by now.

OFFRED :

Do you know where they are?

OFGLEN :

Montreal. She had family there,
they had Canadian passports.
(and then)
I didn't. I got caught at the
airport.

OFFRED :

We were trying to cross in Maine.
With my husband. We split up.
(and then)
They killed him.
(and then)
His name was Luke.
Now he has a name. You can hear the guilt in her voice.

OFGLEN :

If you were together, they would've
done the same thing. They didn't
want him, and they weren't going to
let any of us get away. Not if you
had a red tag.

OFFRED :

I know.
(and then)
When I left him, I didn't even look
back.

This clearly tortures Offred. Ofglen has nothing to say, no solace to offer.

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EXT. WATERFORD HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They stop in front of the Waterford House.

OFGLEN :

This is your stop. As they used to say.

(and then)

I'm Emily.

Offred hesitates -- after keeping herself secret for so long, saying her own name feels wrong.

OFFRED :

June. I'm June.

JUNE. IT IS THE FIRST TIME THE AUDIENCE HAS HEARD HER NAME.

Has Offred found a friend? Someone she can trust?

OFGLEN :

Nice to meet you, June.

Ofglen leans close.

OFGLEN (CONT'D)

(very low)

Listen to me. They're watching.

There's an Eye in the house.

(and then)

Be careful.

Offred REACTS -- someone in the house is an Eye?

And how in the world could Ofglen know this? Is she helping Offred, or is this some kind of trap?

Her mind races.

TWO GUARDIANS walk towards them. Ofglen steps back, bows her head. The image of a docile Handmaid.

OFGLEN (CONT'D)

(to Offred)

Blessed be the fruit.

Ofglen walks away, leaving Offred stunned. She turns and looks up at the WATERFORD HOUSE.

A beautiful tableaux -- this woman in red, in front of this stately, dangerous house.

IN VOICE-OVER, we hear OFFRED.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED:

OFFRED (V.O.)

(calm)

A chair. A table. A lamp.

INT. WATERFORD HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Offred sits in her red cloak, looking out of the window.

It is the image from the start of the episode.

That otherworldly tableaux. A woman draped in red, in this dollhouse-perfect bedroom.

JUNE (V.O.)

I sit and watch the curtains move
in the breeze.

(and then)

Nothing can change. Someone is
watching. It all has to look the
same.

(and then)

Because I intend to survive. I
intend to survive for her.

(and then)

Her name is Hannah. My husband was
Luke.

(and then)

My name is June.

(and then)

Some things can't be wiped away.

Some things can't be forbidden.

OFFRED looks out the window. Still. Seemingly docile. But
there is a new defiance in her eyes.

END PILOT: