

MASTER STEPHEN

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PILOT EPISODE: SUPERVISION

A road runner skitters across hot asphalt.

The highway splits two endless oceans of dry rock and desert. Not a flicker of life in sight. The sun rises.

An old baby blue pickup truck is smoking, crashed against a boulder, just off the road.

A cluster of scattered buck shot holes imprint the passenger door. Tire blown out. All of the windows are shattered.

Dozens of quarters lie, spilled across the sand.

A baby cries.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL, NIGHT

A faucet squeaks on, rushing water over us like we're being waterboarded.

A syringe, rubber tube, and plastic baggy are tossed into a dirty toilet bowl. The flush is plunged down by a shaky hand, the unmistakable side effect of heroin withdrawals.

BETH Garrison, 24, not particularly striking, with bright expressive eyes that haven't closed in days, maybe weeks. She appears small and fragile.

ONE CONTINUOUS SHOT: We TRACK behind her, shaky, like a documentary, as she exits the bathroom, through a motel room that couldn't have cost more than \$30/night and out into the parking lot.

EXT. PARKING LOT, CONT.

Her small delicate features mask the strength of a motherly lion that neither she, nor you the reader, will understand until about 10 pages from now.

She hurries to her old car, the only one in the parking lot, which has all of its windows freshly shattered, not dissimilar to the baby blue truck we saw at the top of the page.

A baby cries.

BETH

Shhh, it's okay, I'm here Baby
shhh.

Oh my god. There's really a baby in there amongst the broken glass without a car seat.

She opens the driver's door, pulls a power drill and a handful of LOCKS.

She rushes back inside the room and DRILLS part of the lock into the door.

The baby cries louder.

She constantly checks her surroundings, but the parking lot is too scary and dark to know if anyone is there. Paranoid.

She finishes with the last lock, then rushes back toward the car. She reaches into the broken window and lifts her baby, **STEPHEN**, almost 3, into her arms. He immediately stops crying, happier than you could possibly believe, considering the situation.

BETH (CONT'D)

I know, I know. Shhh.

She reaches through the broken window and pulls a raggedy suitcase, awkwardly rolls it into the room with her free hand. Just when--

VRRROOOOOM.

A loud, old baby blue pickup truck screeches into the parking lot, in much better shape than we saw it on the previous page.

She slams the door shut and hurries into the bathroom with Stephen. We're still in the ONE SHOT and we stay with the half installed locks, uselessly hanging there.

We hear Beth strip Stephen naked and gently place him into the tub.

Headlights shine through the cheap motel shades and then disappear as the truck shuts off.

UNKNOWN (O.S.)

BETH!

She SPRINTS toward the door, sliding to her knees to grab the drill again, lines up a screw and begins drilling-

BANG BANG BANG!

The door almost opens and the screw bounces away somewhere under the bed.

She leans her bodyweight against the door, grabs another screw from her lips, shakily drills the locks into the door frame one by one.

UNKNOWN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
What's that noise? I know yer in there Beth!

She finishes drilling the last lock and falls back with relief and as always, it doesn't last.

UNKNOWN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Open the door. We need-a talk about this.

She crawls backwards toward the bathroom, stopping to open the motel mini fridge. A glass bottle of beer leftover from a, who-knows-how-long-ago, previous tenet. She grabs it, continues to the bathroom.

UNKNOWN (CONT'D)
OPEN THIS DOOR!

BANG BANG BANG!

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM, CONT.

Stephen is happily splashing around in the bath. Beth takes a swig of the beer, her shaky hand spilling some onto her shirt. She's had worse.

BETH
Stephen. Hi. Can you say "hi"? Hi Momma. Hi Momma.

He doesn't.

She keeps the bathroom door open, the locked door always remaining in view.

UNKNOWN (O.S.)
Beth. We can talk about this. Let's just- just talk. You always say that don't ya? We don't gotta fight all the time. We can just talk it out, ya know, together. Find a- a- revolution-- resolution.

She gulps the rest of the beer and gives the empty bottle to Stephen to play with. He is ECSTATIC with his new toy. She smiles, just a little.

BETH
You're high.

UNKNOWN (O.S.)
YOU'RE HIGH YOU JUNKIE TRASH! OPEN
THIS DOOR!

BANG BANG BANG BANG!

She just remembers something. It physically hurts to ask--

BETH
Can you... can you leave the car
seat?

UNKNOWN (O.S.)
OH now look who's asking fer
favours. You need something from me?

BETH
Please Miles. It's in your truck.
Just leave it by the-

~~UNKNOWN~~ **MILES (O.S.)**
Why don'tchya come out here and get
it yerself? Come on. It's right
here. I'm lookin right at it. It's
all yours.

It's useless.

BETH
Just leave us alone.

Stephen treats the bottle like a submarine and goes with it
UNDERWATER.

We CUT for the first time--

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL, CONT.

The man, "UNKNOWN", is **MILES GARRISON**, 28, her red neck
husband, once high school sweetheart, now a tall hulking man
with rage to match. Deadly combination.

He shouts close into the door.

MILES
Beth... you listen to me. Listen
real good. That's my son too.
Alright? Mine.
(MORE)

MILES (CONT'D)

You know what that means? We *both* get a say in what's best fer him. I know my rights.

BETH

I am what's best for him.

CUT BACK AND
FORTH

MILES

Ha! And when exactly have you been that? You don't think I know exactly what yer out there every single night? Craig told me you've been fuckin' everyone in the-

BETH

And who's gonna pay for diapers and food?! You? You haven't had a job in three years Miles!

Beth steadies her hand from shaking with her other one.

Stephen is STILL underwater.

That's uh- a little disconcerting but, Beth barely seems to notice. Weird.

MILES

You mean who's gonna pay fer yer next rock, right?

BETH

No. I'm done. We're leaving and there's nothing you or anyone else can do to stop us.

(beat)

MILES

Where ya gonna go? Cause I'm not leavin' this spot right here, and neither are you. I'm gettin' that money. For US! I'm doing what's best fer US.

BETH

You're pathetic.

MILES

Pathetic. Yeah, okay. Sure. Sellin' yer ass for \$30 while I'm tryna make a better life fer us is pathetic.

BETH

You're pathetic because you're willing to sell a child Miles. My son.

MILES

Says the girl willing to PAY someone ELSE to get rid of it for her!

Beth doesn't respond. Hits her like a freight train.

MILES (CONT'D)

Do you have any idea what that type of money would do fer us? Fer your mom? We could get a nice house on the-

BETH

Fuck you.

BANG! Miles pounds the door, one of the locks breaks off. He composes.

Beth clocks a bright spotlight from an unknown source shining in through the blinds. We don't know what that is yet, but she does.

MILES

It's not yer decision to make. It's mine too. Both of us. Open the door.

Baby Stephen is STILL underwater... and the bubbles are slowly disappearing. *Oh my god... She's letting her baby drown. Oh my god- DO SOMETHING!*

She doesn't.

BETH

(to Miles but too quiet for him to hear)

You know, when I found out I was pregnant, I never been so scared in my whole life. I was so young, could barely take care of myself. When I went to the clinic...

(tears well up)

When I woke up... they said that- they tried, but he was gonna be healthy. "Tried". I didn't even know what that meant. They tried? I got home and... I felt so bad. Like I betrayed him.

(MORE)

BETH (CONT'D)

All night I told him I'm so sorry.
I love you. But, what if he hated
me now? How could he ever forgive
me? How could I blame him?

(beat)

Maybe that's why he won't talk to
me anymore...

(to Stephen)

I'm so sorry.

Stephen, still underwater. Floating. Dead.

MILES

It's our decision Beth. I'm his
fath-

BETH

You're not.

MILES

What?

Miles presses his ear close to the door.

MILES (CONT'D)

WHAT'D YOU SAY?

(then)

BETH-

BETH

HE. IS NOT. YOUR BABY!

BANG BANG BANG BANG BANG -- Another lock flies off the frame
with a *TING*.

MILES

BETH I SWEAR TO-

BETH

He's not. I checked. You're not his
father. You never liked him
anyways.

MILES

(beat)

Who?

Beth is silent.

MILES (CONT'D)

You don't even know... do you?

The words sting and she can't bring herself to admit- he's
right.

MILES (CONT'D)
 (spits at the door)
 HA! Could be any sad sap in Cape
 Hills, huh? You disgust me.

Suddenly, bubbles begin emerging from the bathtub again, floating to the surface. *He's alive?* More bubbles, more and more and more.

And it's not stopping. The force of the bubbles are splashing over the sides of the tub and steam fills the room. It looks like a hot spring ready to erupt. And then the water is BOILING. **THE BATH WATER IS BOILING THE BABY.**

DO SOMETHING BETH!

She doesn't.

Outside, Miles looks behind him, reassured by someone we can't see yet. He tries a new tactic.

MILES (CONT'D)
 Beth. Yer a danger to that boy. And it's a danger to you. Somebody's gonna get hurt. He'll be safe with them. Okay? Safer than with you. We can take the money and start a new life. I wanna quit too. We can have the life we always talked about. Before Stephen. That little blue house by the beach... remember?

Tears stream down Beth's face.

Then, the bubbles stop. The water clears. Baby Stephen lifts his head from the water, the happiest boy, pleased with himself over his new trick. He claps his little hands and tosses the "bottle" out of the tub, landing in front of Beth. But it's not a bottle anymore. It's been MELTED and MORPHED into a thick, pointed glass icicle.

MILES (CONT'D)
 We can forget all this and be happy. Shoot, we'll be so happy we won't even need to get high. Sober. Forever. That's what I want. I love you. Because otherwise we- they're going to take him. You know what kind of people these are. They're not taking no for an answer. Just unlock the door and let's talk. Just talk. That's all.

Beth wipes the tears away, anger boiling hotter than the bath water, picks the glass shard up from the floor.

MILES (CONT'D)

Otherwise... they're gonna take him and we get nothin'. We don't get that little blue house by the beach, and nothin' changes. And then we're gonna go back to our living hell and yer gonna try and kill yerself again. You want that?

(beat)

So unlock this door and come out. Okay? Please Beth.

BETH is FURIOUS. She grips the glass shank tight, approaches the door.

BETH

Listen Miles. And I want you to really listen. ALL OF YOU!

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT

Behind Miles, **the entire parking lot is now filled with unmarked military vehicles. A dozen men train assault rifles at the motel room door. Medical personnel and scientists standby in hazmat suits.**

INT. MOTEL ROOM, CONT.

Beth steadies her hand, wielding the glass.

BETH

I don't need you. I don't need your money, or your bullshit safety, or your bullshit advice. I don't care how much money you're offering. I don't care how dangerous you think you are. I am his mother, and if you think you're going to take him away from me- you are deeply, DEEPLY mistaken. Not a single one of you will come anywhere near him. Not tonight. Not ever. You don't deserve to breathe the air he breathes and if you want him, I hope you brought enough body bags. You have NO IDEA what he is capable of. He is a god amongst men.

(MORE)

BETH (CONT'D)

You are ants. You are NOTHING! He is not a danger to me and you are not a danger to us. **He is a danger to YOU.**

SLOW MOTION: The door BURSTS open and men with rifles storm inside like a SWAT team, immediately charging her. She STABS the glass icicle into the first one inside as another man grabs her from behind and SLAMS her down onto the bed. She blindly plunges the shank into another one of them, breaking the tip off in his neck. Blood coating the glass causes it to slip from her hands. She's rushed by the whole team, pinned down, thrashing and screaming.

Another man wearing a yellow hazmat suit slowly enters the room, silhouetted by the bright military spotlights shining in from the parking lot. He walks methodically into the bathroom.

This is a nightmare.

Beth is clawing at the men as they easily overpower her but everything goes silent when the hazmat man exits the bathroom, holding a CRYING Stephen wrapped in a towel.

She fights and strains but they pile on top of her, crushing her tiny body into the motel bed.

BETH (CONT'D)

PUT HIM DOWN! LEAVE US ALONE! I'LL
KILL YOU! I'LL KILL EVERY SINGLE
ONE OF YOU!

Stephen cries louder and louder as he's carried out into the parking lot.

Beth wails in delirious sobs as they cuff her with zip ties behind her back and then effortlessly toss her against the wall, slamming her head hard.

The men in the parking lot begin to pack it up, all getting into their vehicles. It's over. Mission accomplished.

Beth, dazed, kicks her legs under her arms so her zip tied hands are in front of her now. She stumbles to her feet, toward the door.

The hazmat man places Stephen carefully into a specially marked yellow vehicle, and then climbs inside.

Miles shakes his head at her in disgust as he walks back toward his truck.

Beth falls to her knees in the door frame, in disbelief as-

Stephen WAILS louder... and louder... and louder... and louder and louder and louder...

AND LOUDER

AND

LOUDER

AND

LOUDER.

Until-

BOOOOM THE ENTIRE PARKING LOT IS FLOODED WITH LIGHT AS VEHICLES EXPLODE ONE BY ONE IN A FIREY BLUE BLAZE OF GASOLINE AND SHRAPNEL.

THE HEAT IS SO INTENSE THAT SOME OF THE TRUCKS JUST MELT INTO A MOLTEN GOOEY MESS. The SHOCKWAVE SENDS Beth and Miles FLYING BACKWARDS HOLY SHIT!

Beat.

Everything goes quiet. Dead quiet.

Miles lies unconscious or dead up against the motel.

The yellow vehicle that Stephen was in, now a blackened smoking pile of metal. *Her baby.*

Beth stumbles to her feet. Ears ringing. In shock.

Her baby is dead. Her baby. My baby- my baby is dead. It's my fault. I couldn't protect him. I let them take him. I couldn't- I'm not- my Stephen is-

The ringing in her ears fades away until-

WAHHHH!

Coming from inside the vehicle.

Still cuffed, she limps toward the sound to find Stephen inside, lying on the seat, **totally unharmed...** unlike the burnt corpses left sitting around him.

BETH (CONT'D)

Stephen. I love you oh my god
Stephen I love I love you. I'm
here. I love you so much.

(MORE)

BETH (CONT'D)
I'll keep you safe. I'm here. **I'll
never let you go again.**

Stephen stops crying when he sees his mom's face. Smiles.
Laughs... proud of his new trick.

We CRANE upwards, Beth cradling her miracle baby amongst
smoking SUVs and roasted bodies in the middle of the
absolutely obliterated motel parking lot. She places the baby
into the only vehicle that isn't totaled, Mile's truck, which
has the car seat.

TITLE CARD: **MASTER STEPHEN**