

THE LINE

"Pilot"

Written by

Ty Leisher

TLEISHER@GMAIL.COM
(310) 256-8656

TEASER

EXT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

A crowd of CONGRESSMAN, AUDIENCE MEMBERS and PRESS line up behind a metal detector. GUARDS wave them through.

HAKEESH BIKIR, 32, Indian, sets a plastic case on a security conveyor belt.

He holds up a photo ID badge, a GUARD checks it.

Hakeesh walks through the metal detector.

The guard stares at the x-ray of the case, inside: wires.

GUARD

Open it.

Hakeesh opens the plastic case. The guard peeks inside, silver microphones, a large mixer, cables. The guard waves him in.

INT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS scour the majestic empty chamber. Dogs sniff around desks, agents check under seats with mirrors.

INT. OVAL OFFICE -- DAY

PRESIDENT JEFFREY, 52, regal, sits behind the elegant Resolute Desk, he stares at a printed script.

A KNOCK. NELSON JONES appears in the doorway. Nelson is 51, bald, small glasses, a desk jockey if there ever was one.

NELSON

Mr. President. It's time.

Jeffrey looks up and smiles.

INT. ENTRANCE HALLWAY - HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

President Jeffrey and Nelson rush through the monumental hallways of the house chamber.

NELSON

After the address you'll be meeting
Governor Alvarez.

(MORE)

NELSON (cont'd)
He's in town, just wants some face
time to take back home.

JEFFREY
How are they doing?

NELSON
Still recovering but they are getting
along fine.

JEFFREY
Schedule a trip next week, I'd like
to see if there's anything more I can
do for them.

Nelson nods, jots it down in his notebook.

NELSON
You know your speech?

JEFFREY
Yes.

NELSON
It'll be --

JEFFREY
Nelson...
(chuckles)
I know the speech.

Jeffrey and Nelson walk into the house chamber entrance.
They stop, face each other.

JEFFREY (cont'd)
Thank you, for everything.

Jeffrey and Nelson hug, pat each other on the back.

NELSON
Enjoy this last one, sir.

JEFFREY
Have we done any good?

NELSON
We've done great.

Jeffrey smiles at Nelson as he disappears into the chamber.

NELSON (cont'd)
Knock 'em dead, Mr. President!

INT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

The room squirms like a living organism. CONGRESSMAN, REPORTERS and television CAMERAS OPERATORS settle in.

Hakeesh strategically places microphones at the front of the chamber. He adjusts the podium microphone, nervously.

The SERGEANT AT ARMS, a bald man, 62, stands tall, walks in and bellows --

SERGEANT AT ARMS

Mister Speaker. The President of the United States.

The chamber ERUPTS with applause as Jeffrey enters, he greets people as he passes.

Jeffrey steps up to the podium, greets the VICE PRESIDENT and SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, all smiles.

A hush rolls over the auditorium as Jeffrey leans in to the microphone.

Hakeesh rolls up the mixer controls.

JEFFREY

Thank you Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President --

An USHER points to an empty seat, MRS. HOFFMAN, a classy, 47, waves him away, she checks her phone, impatient.

INT. SECRETARY OF STATE OFFICE -- DAY

A woman MOANS. A desk RATTLES back and forth, a photo of Mrs. Hoffman vibrates off the desk and SHATTERS.

President Jeffrey speaks on a television.

JEFFREY (V.O.)

-- members of congress, my fellow Americans everywhere.

The Secretary of State, RALPH HOFFMAN, 54, peppered hair, passionately kisses --

CAROLINE SANCHEZ, 26, stunningly gorgeous. Caroline lies on the desk, her legs wrapped around Hoffman, his pants around his ankles.

CAROLINE
(between moans)
Shouldn't you be there, Mr.
Secretary?

HOFFMAN
It's a waste of time.

Hoffman smiles, kisses Caroline.

HOFFMAN (cont'd)
I'll be late.

KNOCK! KNOCK! Hoffman looks at the closed-door.

EXT. SECRETARY OF STATE OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

BILLY, 27, the most average man, everyone would be quick to forget his name, knocks again.

BILLY
Sir, the State of the Union has
begun.

HOFFMAN (O.S.)
Just a minute!

MOANS of ecstasy emanate from behind the closed-door.

A moment passes, the door FLINGS open. Hoffman rushes out, buttoning his shirt.

HOFFMAN
I left twenty minutes ago.

Hoffman flees as Billy looks in at Caroline, she pulls her skirt straight, flashes him a smile.

INT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

Jeffrey glances around the room as he speaks, he makes eye contact with Nelson and at Hoffman's empty seat.

JEFFREY
Six years ago I asked you to put your
trust in me, that my campaign
promises were not shallow offerings.

INT. HALLWAY -- DAY

Hoffman rushes through a hallway, he speed-walks slow enough to avoid attention as he struggles to button his jacket.

INT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

AGENT MONROW watches Hakeesh turn away from his mixer and rush towards an exit. Monrow chases.

JEFFREY

Despite the progress we have made,
this congress stands on the precipice
of --

An EXPLOSION at the podium rocks the entire chamber. The President, Vice President and Speaker of the House are blown back.

Four more EXPLOSIONS in quick succession around the front of the chamber.

EXT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

Hoffman rushes up the steps. He stumbles as the explosion shakes the ground beneath him.

INT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

Chaos ensues as Monrow rushes to the stage, he kneels next to the bleeding president, checks for a pulse but he's gone.

EXT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

Bystanders scatter as SCREAMS echo inside the chamber, congressmen flood out of the large double doors.

TWO SECRET SERVICE AGENTS grab Hoffman by the arms.

SECRET SERVICE AGENT

Mr. Secretary, please come with us.

Hoffman looks back at the chaos. Smoke pours from the doors and windows as the Secret Service escort Hoffman away.

HOFFMAN

Where is the president?

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE**INT. EMERGENCY HALLWAY -- DAY**

A man lies flat on a gurney, motionless, dozens of DOCTORS and NURSES run with him through the hallways.

This is MICHAEL LEBOWITZ, 54, white curly hair, blood covers his face, black char marks on his clothes and body.

DOCTOR

Michael Lebowitz, fifty-four, was in the front row of the chamber. Third-degree burns to more than sixty percent, internal bleeding.

They burst through double doors into --

INT. OPERATING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The doctors and nurses grab the sheet underneath him.

DOCTOR

Three, two, one.

They lift him onto the table.

Nurses connect heart machines, the rapid BEEP of Lebowitz heart echoes throughout the room as the chaos ensues.

EXT. CABIN SAFE HOUSE -- DAY

A peaceful lake, the ultimate juxtaposition of the emergency room. Birds CHIRPING is silenced by a motor.

Two black Crown Victorians with flashing red and blue lights pull up outside the lakeside cabin.

The bright blue water reflects the sun against the wooden porch.

SECRET SERVICE AGENTS get out of the cars, they check the property. An agent opens the door for Hoffman.

INT. CABIN SAFE HOUSE -- DAY

An American flag hangs in the foyer. A lavish vacation home. Water bottles line the marble counter top.

Hoffman is greeted by Deputy Chief of Staff ANGELA PETERS, a young 45, blonde hair, very fit. She extends her hand.

ANGELA
Welcome to the safe house, Mr.
Secretary.

Hoffman shakes her hand.

HOFFMAN
What's going on?

ANGELA
The President, Vice President and
Speaker of the House have been
killed.

Hoffman sits on the couch, he stares into space and collects his thoughts. Shocked.

HOFFMAN
And Lebowitz? He's next in the line,
why isn't he here?

ANGELA
He is in the ICU.

HOFFMAN
What about my wife? She was in the
chamber. She would've been next to
him.

ANGELA
We're still trying to get an update
on your wife.

HOFFMAN
Is she dead?

ANGELA
The only casualties we have confirmed
are the White House officials. The
Secret Service is doing their best to
find her.

Hoffman rubs his forehead, unable to believe what has happened. Angela watches, her tough exterior falls as she takes a seat next to him.

ANGELA (cont'd)
Ralph... I'm sure she's alright.

HOFFMAN
Jeffrey's dead?

ANGELA
Yes.

HOFFMAN
Do we know who did this?

ANGELA
Not yet. FBI, CIA and Homeland are
investigating.

Hoffman nods, he know there is nothing he can do.

ANGELA (cont'd)
Sir...

Hoffman looks over at Angela.

ANGELA (cont'd)
If Michael dies...

Hoffman knows what she is about to say but he doesn't want
to hear it.

ANGELA (cont'd)
...you will become the next acting
President of the United States.

Hoffman stares at her, uneasy.

INT. HOUSE CHAMBER -- DAY

The empty house chamber moments after the chaos. BLOOD
STAINS the podium and carpet, wood smolders.

Four charred areas of carpet, chairs blown back in a circle
around them.

FIREFIGHTERS extinguish the final flames, take stock of the
room as inspectors mill around.

NICK HUNDLEY, 25, a former marine-turned-field agent, broad
shoulders and a crew cut, stands amid the WRECKAGE.

Nick steps over the debris to --

NICK
Agent Monrow?

Agent Monrow steps over to Nick.

NICK (cont'd)
I heard you saw the bomber?

MONROW
I'm not sure if he was the bomber,
but I saw someone turn to run before
the bombs went off.

NICK
What'd he look like?

MONROW
Indian... Arab, maybe? I'm not sure.

NICK
He was middle eastern, though?

MONROW
It was fast. As soon as the explosion
happened I ran to the President. I
didn't see where he went.

Nick nods.

NICK
Where was he seated?

MONROW
He wasn't, he was over here --

Monrow walks Nick to the audio mixer at the back of the room, it sits among other speakers and wires.

NICK
Was he working the board?

MONROW
Yeah, before he turned and ran.

Nick looks back to the front of the chamber, he thinks a moment and traces a wire connected to the mixer.

The wire extends to the front of the chamber.

He pulls on it, comes to the end where it frays off at the point of the explosion.

He looks around at the wreckage and charred carpet. He notices the cameras, scoffs, shakes his head.

NICK
Do you have the recording from these?