

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

PILOT: SPARKS

WRITTEN BY

MAND PASKUSKI

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 (V.O.)  
(FILTERED)

Ready?

ANOTHER WOMAN'S VOICE above the hum.

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.) (FILTERED)  
Are you sure we're safe here?

INTERVIEWER'S RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)  
We're secure for now. Please start.

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

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

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

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

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

INT. AIRCRAFT - FLIGHT 375 - DAY

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT - we'll call her: IRIS (60's), - checks BOARDING PASSES as travelers enter the plane.

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)  
We are the batteries. The people. The juice the machines charge themselves on. And we are, in part, to blame for the bomb going boom.  
(MORE)

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 Though, mass-manipulation doesn't  
 happen over-night and by the time  
 we were drinking the death-Kool-  
 Aid, so-to-speak, it was too late.

THE COUNTDOWN BEGINS: SUPERIMPOSED 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 (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 You know that saying?  
 "Truth never damages a cause that  
 is just."  
 (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  
 Said she wasn't feeling well. I've  
 already notified, we'll be one  
 short. You'll have to survive with  
 just me.

The pilot belly laughs. Iris smiles, sinisterly.

INT. AIRPORT - WOMEN'S WASHROOM - DAY

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT (40's), slumps lifeless on the toilet in a  
 stall. She BLEEDS from the NOSE and EARS.

DEAD.

Her NAME TAG reads: JONES.

EXT. SEATTLE - NAVAL BASE - DAY

ARMY TRUCKS wheel through a large metal gate.

SOLDIERS MARCH in route-step formations.

INT. SPECIAL OPERATIONS OFFICE - DAY

SUPERIMPOSED TEXT: 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 like before in horrific history.

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

EXT. ROVERSIDE POWER PLANT - DAY

SUPERIMPOSED TEXT: 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 NAME TAG 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 roadkill.

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.

The colleagues make eye contact.

EST. STRATOSPHERE / IN THE AIR - DAY

INT. PLANE CABIN - DAY

SUPERIMPOSED TEXT: 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), stylish, shy and of slim-build, 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 widespread 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] --- ?

JOURNALIST

Mrs. Dunfield, over here!  
Look here!

DUNFIELD

A rumor 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 Laughs.

REPORTER [BURNSIDE]  
 Ms. Dunfield, could you elaborate  
 on your statements made earlier  
 this morning regarding reformation  
 of government? Some believe--

DUNFIELD  
 Certainly...I...

A GUNSHOT.

SCREAMS. People duck low and dart their eyes for the  
 direction of the shooter.

Dunfield's security grab and cover her.

BANG BANG! Two more rounds ring out followed by chaos. People  
 run from the scene, some fall down wounded on the City Hall  
 steps.

BANG!

A MASKED MAN (30's - 40's), holds a SMOKING GUN.

PAPERS, CARTOGRAPHY MAPS, and ELECTRICAL CHARTS are clutched  
 tensely in his other hand.

MASKED MAN  
 Tell them the truth! Tell them!  
 Tell the truth! Tell them, you  
 psychopathic show pony coward! It's  
 the only way!

He and Dunfield make eye contact and then he makes a run for  
 it.

MASKED MAN (CONT'D)  
 If you don't, I will!

JOURNALIST  
 Is that Irving Laws? Doctor Laws?

Dunfield notices the journalist identify the man.

REPORTER [BURNSIDE]  
 Stop him! Stop that man!

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)  
 Call 911! Is anyone here a doctor?

Dunfield whispers into her security's ear. The journalist is  
 taken and shoved into a BLACK SUV.