

MOTHER OF INVENTION

"PILOT"

Written by

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INT. PIERCE-BRAEBURN - NIGHT

A dark and narrow hallway in a labyrinthian modern office building widens into a small mouth containing an elevator.

The ELEVATOR DINGS. Door opens, revealing:

A WOMAN'S DOWN-TURNED HEAD. Blonde hair tucked into a tight bun, her narrow shoulders clothed in red silk.

She lifts her head upon the opening of the door, showing her face: Late 30s, a perky kind of pretty, perfect skin, save for a few stubborn wrinkles here and there. This is MARGARET PIERCE (NÉE ANDERSON), 39.

She draws in a deep breath of worry as she looks down the long hallway, illuminated only by safety lights.

The sign behind the reception desk reads: "Pierce-Braeburn Securities."

Margaret closes her eyes.

Hears MEN'S MUFFLED VOICES FROM A DISTANCE. They CARRY OVER TO...

INT. ANDERSON HOME - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

LITTLE MARGARET, 9, sleeps soundly under a comforter detailed in white lace.

The MEN'S VOICES GROW LOUDER, ARGUING.

Little Margaret opens her eyes.

INT. PIERCE-BRAEBURN - NIGHT (BACK IN PRESENT)

Margaret opens her eyes with newfound courage and determination.

Steps a high-heeled foot out of the elevator and makes her way through the darkness.

EXT. ANDERSON HOME - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

In a nightgown and flip-flops, little Margaret follows the MEN'S VOICES, now at their apex and accompanied by COWS MOOING in the darkness.

She heads toward a large building with metal siding and cows penned up alongside it.

Throws a fretful look to the cows, who seem to look right through her soul. It freaks her out.

Continues toward the building. Stops short of the pen - tiny next to the bovine giants. She listens. A STRUGGLE INSIDE.

EVERYTHING SUDDENLY QUIET. She opens the door...

INT. PIERCE-BRAEBURN - NIGHT (BACK IN PRESENT)

Margaret turns down another dark hall, a single office shedding light at the other end.

Growing more determined with each heavy step...

INT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Little Margaret gingerly closes the personnel door behind her, powerless over the LOUD CREAKING SOUND it makes.

THE SOUND OF SOMETHING HEAVY BEING DRAGGED AGAINST CONCRETE.

The girl steps gently against the bloody concrete floor, amid a graveyard of hanging animal carcasses stripped of their flesh...

INT. PIERCE-BRAEBURN - NIGHT (BACK IN PRESENT)

Margaret has reached the bright office amid the darkness. The name "Lucas Braeburn" embossed on the frosted glass.

The door slightly ajar, spilling its light into the hallway.

INT. PIERCE-BRAEBURN - LUCAS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A large, luxurious corner office. A leather couch and chair near the door - an office with its own living room.

She peers at a man inside. Seated at a stately desk. Mid-40s, a bit of salt in his pepper hair, sharp dresser. Handsome. Dignified. This is LUCAS BRAEBURN.

He's packing up files, cell phone to his ear.

Margaret watches.

He doesn't notice.

LUCAS
Karen, calm down.

He shakes his head at the caller.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
We'll be fine. Just stick to the
plan.

INT. SLAUGHTERHOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Little Margaret approaches a work light deep in the slaughterhouse, her innocent face becoming more illuminated the closer she gets.

She stops. Looks down. Her flip-flop stuck in a puddle of coagulated blood. Deep. The gunk has reached her tiny toes.

She works her foot back into the straps.

A MAN'S PANICKED VOICE...

LEE (O.C.)
Margaret?

His VOICE CARRIES OVER TO...

INT. PIERCE-BRAEBURN - LUCAS' OFFICE - NIGHT (BACK IN PRESENT)

LEE'S VOICE BLENDS WITH:

LUCAS
Margaret?

Margaret has stepped into the light.

She forces a smile. Lucas seems disconcerted.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
(into his phone)
Uh, let me call you back... Yeah.

He hangs up, re-focuses his attention on Margaret.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

MARGARET
I was looking for James.

Much as she tries to act natural, Lucas clearly notices there's something off about her.

LUCAS
He left hours ago.

MARGARET

Oh.

Behind her, Margaret clutches a large baton-like object with four distinct sections textured like a pistol grip, roughly nine inches long. It's a CAPTIVE BOLT STUNNER.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

What are you doing here so late?

LUCAS

Working. Look, Margaret-

She gets flushed, suddenly bashful.

MARGARET

I was thinking... About what you said.

They meet each other's gaze.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

That night. After you...

He's flushed now, too. And a bit breathless.

LUCAS

Yeah. I remember.

Pregnant pause.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Thought you said you were looking for James.

A shy, endearing smile. Nervous laugh. Perfectly timed.

MARGARET

I didn't know what to say.

He moves toward her. She takes a deep breath.

He kisses her neck. She enjoys the moment.

He lifts his hands to her face. She lifts her arms to return his embrace.

He STIFFENS. CONVULSES. IN SHOCK.

His WILD EYES regard Margaret - his secret crush. His end.

She FLASHES BACK to the BOVINE EYES OF HER CHILDHOOD MEMORY.

She RETRACTS THE STUNNER from the back of his neck.

He FALLS TO THE GROUND.

She calmly lowers the stunner.

Lifts her head up to stare straight ahead. The lines on her face looking a little deeper, her skin a little less perfect.

Her eyes coolly resigned to the fate she has just made for herself.

CUT TO:

TITLES: "MOTHER OF INVENTION"

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. REFRIGERATOR - EARLY MORNING

DARKNESS gives way to WHITE LIGHT as the door opens, illuminating MARGARET'S PERFECTLY MADE-UP FACE against the bright white frame of the refrigerator's inner world.

She reaches for something below. OPENS A DRAWER.

INT. PIERCE HOME - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Dressed in a Lululemon yoga outfit, Margaret searches the stainless steel fridge amidst the marble luxury kitchen.

The arched doorway behind her opens up into the rest of the gigantic home, making her look small against its vastness. Its decor precisely appointed, presenting the perfect image of wealth and status.

Margaret plucks a carton of eggs from the clean, organized shelves. Places them on the counter, taking care to parallel them between the edge of the stove and a cutting board.

She returns to the fridge. Collects tomatoes, green peppers, and portobello mushrooms. Lines them up along the top edge of the cutting board, in descending order of size.

One last trip... She searches all the compartments. Comes up empty. Something's missing.

Looks at her Fendi watch. It's 5:37. She debates.

INT. PIERCE HOME - FOYER - EARLY MORNING

Margaret heads out of the house, wearing a bright sun dress and heels.