

VESPUCCI - SERIES PILOT

SCENE 1

MONTAGE - NEWS FOOTAGE

SOUND of angry shouting, sirens, and chaos

A rapid-fire, 8-second smash-cut of raw, visceral imagery from across Canada:

- A protestor in Alberta throws a flaming effigy of the Prime Minister onto a bonfire.
- Riot police clash with enraged truckers blocking a major highway. Signs read: "OTTAWA IS THE ENEMY."
- A panicked news anchor in a flak jacket ducks as something shatters off-camera.
- Grainy cell phone video of a supply train derailed, blocking a critical rail line.
- A Canadian flag is torn from a federal building and trampled.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MALIBU MANSION - STUDY - NIGHT

The chaotic news footage plays on a large, sleek TV screen mounted against a wall of books.

The camera PULLS BACK, revealing the screen is just one element in a vast study. A temple to knowledge. Floor-to-ceiling shelves are burdened with books on history, economics, and military theory.

The camera DRIFTS from the TV, across the quiet, opulent room, and toward open glass doors leading out to a balcony.

The camera finds BENJI FAROUK (mid-20s) by a wet bar, pouring hot water into a mug. He moves with an easy, unimpressed grace,

unfazed by the palace of power around him.

He picks up the mug. The camera FOLLOWS him as he walks through the open doors...

INT. BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

...and onto the balcony. The sounds of the news fade, replaced by the distant rhythm of the churning Pacific Ocean.

SANDRA WARREN (late 30s) sits in a large, modern lounge chair, her back to the house, her focus on the black expanse of the ocean. She's in a simple cashmere sweatsuit, the celebrated CEO persona completely shed.

Benji approaches, setting the steaming mug on a side table beside her.

BENJI

You're trying to solve the ocean again.

Sandra doesn't turn. Her voice is quiet.

SANDRA

It's a closed system. Predictable patterns. Calming.

BENJI

Right. Tell that to the guys whose container ships are at the bottom of it.

A secure tablet on the table flashes to life, its light harsh in the darkness.

INCOMING CALL: J. MICHAELS - DNSA (SECURE)

Benji glances at the screen, his expression unchanging. He's the smoke detector in a room full of gas leaks.

The change in Sandra is immediate. The contemplative stillness evaporates. Her back straightens. Her focus sharpens. "The Architect" is now in control.

She taps the screen.

JOHN MICHAELS (50s) appears, his face pale and strained against the backdrop of a sterile government office. He looks exactly like what he is: a man out of his depth.

JOHN MICHAELS

(A tight, nervous voice)

Sandra. Apologies for the hour. A northern portfolio is... the term they're using is 'fraying.' There's a belief that proactive measures are now unavoidable.

Sandra's response is clinical, devoid of emotion.

SANDRA

'Fraying' is a political term, John, not an operational one. It means your polling has dropped and you're worried about uncontrolled secession. The U.S. views Canada as an evolving socialist threat and needs a buffer from Russia and China. This isn't about fraying. It's about a strategic imperative.

John flinches slightly at the brutal clarity. He is a man built for bureaucracy, not this.

JOHN MICHAELS

The situation is accelerating. We need to impose a structure. A managed outcome. The objective is integration, but it needs to be presented as stabilization. A request for aid.

SANDRA

You need plausible deniability. Understood. The plan for this has been on our servers for four years. We call it Maple Leaf Downfall. We've already modeled the narrative. We won't mention socialism; that would expose

your hand. The public narrative will be that Ottawa only serves Ottawa. We'll leverage existing frustrations with federal policy to do the work for us.

John just nods, his government's internal rationale played back to him as a simple, actionable plan.

JOHN MICHAELS

The finding is active. Full presidential authority. The account is funded. It's your shop, Sandra. Your call.

SANDRA

Acknowledged. I'm activating the plan. You'll have the updated prospectus by 0800. We already have the personnel assets flagged in Aegis. Environmental shaping will begin by end of day tomorrow.

She ends the call. The screen goes dark.

The only SOUND is the distant rhythm of the ocean, which seems to grow slightly louder, filling the new silence.

Sandra remains perfectly still for a long beat, staring out at the black water. The unstoppable, chaotic force she claimed to find calming.

Her hand lifts, reaching for the warm mug Benji brought her. Her fingers wrap around it, but she doesn't drink. Just feels the warmth. A small, human anchor.

Benji watches her, his expression neutral. He is the only one who gets to see the person behind the power.

BENJI

(Quietly)

So. That sounded big.

Sandra finally turns from the water. The immense weight of her

work, the cost of her control, is visible for a fleeting second in her eyes. She gives a slow, tired nod.

BENJI

My stash or yours?

SANDRA

Mine. The custom mix.

Benji nods, already pulling a small, practical metal case from his pocket. A quiet, ritualized act of care.

FADE TO BLACK.