

SIGNS & WONDERS

"Pilot"

By Liz Maestri

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. MEGACHURCH - ALTAR - MORNING

CLOSE on the sweaty face of JONAH FAIN, 40. He mouths an unintelligible prayer.

A WOMAN's hand touches up foundation on Jonah's face. He tries to suppress an itch from the brush.

He scratches his face. Her hand slips. Makeup smears.

JONAH

Sorry. I'm sorry. Instinct.

WOMAN (O.S.)

(re-blending the makeup)

You're fine.

Blinding theatrical lighting illuminates the altar area, a stiff and well-dressed Jonah, and SHERRY, 45.

SHERRY

Your face is pretty much set. Go ahead and relax. Just don't touch that pretty face again, ok?

Jonah checks his cell phone.

SHERRY (CONT'D)

Your Daddy's gonna be so proud of you today, I just know it.

JONAH

Even though I'm a grown man in makeup?

SHERRY

You're doing the Lord's work.

JONAH

Old man taught me everything except how to feel natural up here.

SHERRY

Let Jesus take the wheel, Pastor Jonah. You're just like him.

JONAH

Jesus? Or my Dad?

A LIGHTING GUY interrupts, readjusting Jonah's spike marks on the altar.

LIGHTING GUY

Can I get you to move just a hair to
your left, Pastor?

JONAH

Sure thing.

LIGHTING GUY

Other left.

JONAH

Sorry.

LIGHTING GUY

Can't wait to say I knew you when!

SHERRY

I think I hear your new flock, Jonah.

The church doors swing open. Scores of CHURCHGOERS swarm into
the sanctuary, filling every pew in sight.

JONAH

(to Sherry)

Get off the stage.

Sherry adjusts a wisp of Jonah's hair before scurrying away.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hoo-eee lookin' good, boy!

Jonah shields his eyes and looks out into the church.

SANCTUARY

APPLAUSE and HOOTS from the crowd as "BIG" JONAH FAIN, 80,
and RUBY FAIN, 70, ride up to the altar in a golf cart. Their
DRIVER stops near Jonah and helps them out.

JONAH

What do you think of this suit?

BIG JONAH

Sharp as a tack.

RUBY

Looks expensive.

(to Big Jonah)

Golly, Father, we made a good-looking
boy, didn't we?

JONAH

I wasn't sure if this one was too
modern looking.

RUBY

Stripes don't show up good on the TV.

Big Jonah HONKS his golf cart horn and holds up a megaphone.

BIG JONAH

(into the megaphone)

Friends! Give your new pastor a hand!

RUBY

Hallelujah!

Big Jonah, Ruby, the BROADCAST CREW, and the crowd APPLAUD as CHRISTIAN WORSHIP MUSIC blasts over the sound system.

BIG JONAH

(into the megaphone)

A new generation is rising up!

CHEERS as Big Jonah and Ruby take their seats in the pews.

ALTAR

Jonah checks his spike mark.

A FLOOR MANAGER gives him a standby sign.

Jonah looks straight down into Big Jonah's eyes.

SANCTUARY

A strangely mocking smile shoots across Big Jonah's face.

BIG JONAH

(softly)

Don't fuck this up, boy.

ALTAR

Jonah sweats bullets.

The Floor Manager points at Jonah.

He's on.

The world spins. Jonah collapses.

The MUSIC reaches a fever pitch as the SCREEN GOES BLACK.

END OF TEASER