

COURIER

S01E01
"Pilot"

Written by

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I OVER BLACK

I

SUPER: In the year 3415, the galaxy has been colonized by humanity. The galactic government, the Democratic Alliance of Humanity, has been struggling to quell the uprising of the Planetary Liberation Front, who seeks the sovereignty of all ruled planets.

DIP TO BLACK

SUPER: Humans developed the Slipdrive, a method of faster than light travel to allow for travel across the galaxy at previously impossible speeds.

COURIERS are needed to transport messages and cargo faster than light, and have become a crux of society.

FADE OUT ALL TEXT EXCEPT "**COURIER**"

TITLE CARD:

COURIER

EPISODE I: THE CONTRACT

CUT TO:

II INT. THE WILDCAT - NIGHT

II

LEO sits reclined in the cramped cockpit of the Wildcat (his hyper speed jump ship) with his eyes closed. The ship is in Faster Than Light (FTL) speeds, with the exterior of the cockpit a blur of particles and stellar masses flying in straight lines of various colors.

A single extra seat is behind LEO's pilot seat that is home to a small black bag with the Orion constellation stitched into the fabric. LEO is wearing a thin black space suit with a long brown coat overtop. He has a black thin profile helmet on, the visor is a brilliant reflective gold. A sleek metal armband is attached to his left forearm with a few buttons on it and a flip-up glass screen.

LEO sees flashes of warfare in his dreams.

A red light blinks and a soft BEEPING ALARM rouses him. The feminine voice of the ship's AI, SAGE comes over LEO's helmet radio.

SAGE (V.O.)

Good morning, captain. Approaching
Perseus station.

LEO stirs and sits up.

LEO
Morning, Sage. How's the slip?

SAGE (V.O.)
Nominal. Dropping out of the slip...
now.

III EXT. THE WILDCAT - NIGHT

III

The Wildcat decelerates from the FTL travel, known as a "slip". The blurred lines of FTL space form into a large Earth-like planet with blue oceans and green continents. Past the planet's terminator, several large cities are illuminated in white lights at night.

The Wildcat's rear thrusters pulse blue as the ship approaches a large space station, the size of a small city floats in orbit around the planet.

The Wildcat is a long, sleek, aerodynamic ship, the cockpit is a matte black metal with a reflective gold glass canopy. The rear of the ship is twice as long as the cockpit, housing the slipdrive engine and life support systems with the ion engine at the rear. Two folding wings are tucked towards the front, giving it the appearance of a tuning fork cutting through the black of space. The wings are anchored just behind the cockpit at the center of gravity. A large caliber railgun is fixed under the cockpit, with a single barrel and a rotating drum magazine. with one pivoting 40mm plasma cannon mounted to the top of the ship, just behind the glass canopy. Two micro-missile pods are mounted under each folding wing.

SUPER: KEPLER-452B, D.A.H. COLONY WORLD

IV INT. THE WILDCAT - NIGHT

IV

LEO presses a few buttons and eases the thruster backwards, cutting the engine.

LEO
Ready for retrograde burn?

SAGE (V.O.)
On your mark, Captain.

LEO presses a few buttons on the cockpit console and pulls back on the joystick. The ship silently spins in space, its engine pointing directly at the Perseus station.

LEO moves the joystick to counteract the rotational force. A readout on the console states he is in a retrograde position.

LEO
Mark.

The ion thrusters kick on, pressing LEO into his seat. He grunts under the strain of the sudden G-forces. The ion thrusters loudly pulse, shaking the cockpit.

SAGE (V.O.)
Engine shutoff in T minus five...

LEO grunts.

SAGE (V.O.) (cont'd)
4... 3...

LEO's vision begins to tunnel.

SAGE (V.O.) (cont'd)
2... 1... Engine shutoff.

The engine suddenly shuts off, leaving the ship in silence. LEO gasps from the sudden lifting of the G-forces. LEO lifts his wrist and flicks the armband open, the hinged top opens effortlessly. The top is blank. LEO presses a button on the armband and a map is projected onto the open top, showing the Wildcat's position and velocity in space relative to the Perseus space station. The armband reads "Time to intercept: 1:16:42" and is counting down. LEO flicks the armband closed and pulls on the joystick, righting the ship to face the Perseus space station. LEO leans back in his seat and crosses his arms, sighing.

SAGE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Leo?

LEO
Yes?

SAGE (V.O.)
Your last meal was more than three standard days ago.

LEO
Has it been that long?

SAGE (V.O.)
Yes.

LEO turns in his seat, grunting. He opens a small compartment behind his seat and reaches in, blindly reaching around for a ration satchel. The compartment is empty. LEO sighs.

The Wildcat silently slides through space towards the Perseus space station. The space station is a series of large rotating rings to simulate planet Echo gravity. The rings rotate around the landing bay, a long stationary cylinder where ships are brought in and stored in zero gravity. A large 'H' shaped warship belonging to the DAH sits silently in space, its navigation lights on. Several small cargo ships ferry supplies and crew between the ship and station. LEO's helmet intercom buzzes and the voice of the Station Landing coordinator GERRY comes over his helmet.

GERRY (V.O.)
Unidentified scout class ship, state
identification and purpose.

LEO presses a button on his armband to respond.

LEO
Courier Bravo-one-eight, fulfilling
messenger contract tango-sierra-two-
three-seven.

GERRY (V.O.)
To whom is your message destined?

LEO
Administrator Glasc.

GERRY (V.O.)
Wait one.

LEO looks at the space station and fiddles with a small joystick on the console labeled "40MM PLASMA".

GERRY (V.O.) (cont'd)
Courier Bravo-one-eight, landing
approved, cut engines and maintain
course.

LEO
Understood.

Two small drone ships rapidly fly from the looming space station and approach the Wildcat. The drones slow down and latch onto the ship with a muffled CLUNK. The drones fire their engines and guide the Wildcat towards the space station.

V INT. PERSEUS SPACE STATION LANDING BAY - NIGHT

V

The drones pull the Wildcat into the landing bay and gently lower it. LEO presses a button on the console and deploys the landing gear. The Wildcat touches down, and several small robotic arms come up from the landing pad, holding the landing gear in place. The landing bay is a zero gravity environment. The drones detach from the Wildcat and retreat to their charging ports on the ceiling. LEO unbuckles himself and pulls a lever at the top of the cockpit to open the canopy. LEO pulls himself out of the cockpit and uses the exterior handholds on the ship to pull him down towards the landing bay deck. LEO presses a button on his armband. His boots become magnetized and hold him on the floor. WILHELM walks towards LEO, using his magnetic boots to cling to the floor. His walking is robotic due to the magnetic boots. LEO presses a button on his helmet and the visor slides up to reveal his eyes.

WILHELM
Courier Bravo-one-eight?

LEO nods.

WILHELM (cont'd)
Come with me.

WILHELM walks away, LEO follows.

VI INT. PERSEUS SPACE STATION SECURITY HUB - NIGHT

VI

LEO sits on a metal chair in a darkened interrogation room. The room is sparse, only containing a table, two chairs, and a security camera in the ceiling corner of the room. A sliding flat panel door is in the far wall. The bare metal walls create a chilled aura. LEO's helmet sits on the table. LEO's medium black hair is greasy, slicked to the side. The door on the far wall slides open. WILHELM enters, looking at his armband.

WILHELM
Your message was for Administrator
Glasc, correct?

LEO
Yes.

WILHELM
Who was the sender?

LEO
Courier-Dispatcher confidentiality.

WILHELM

I don't think you quite understand the situation you're in, icy. You might want to start talking.

LEO

The contract was clear. Anonymity to everyone besides the intended recipient.

WILHELM

The recipient wants proper screening measures.

LEO

Courier-Dispatcher --

WILHELM

-- Confidentiality, you've mentioned it. Administrator Glasc has requested --

LEO

-- She has been requested to follow orders.

LEO takes the message chip from a pocket in his coat and presents it to WILHELM. A D.A.H. logo is emblazoned on the chip. WILHELM reaches for it, but LEO pockets the message chip again.

LEO (cont'd)

My contract states I am within my right to protect the confidentiality of this message with force.

WILHELM raises an eyebrow, *surprised a lowly courier is threatening him.*

LEO balls his right wrist, his wrist-mounted plasma blaster charges up with a WHIR and HUM. WILHELM swallows nervously and looks at LEO's wrist blaster.

LEO (cont'd)

What will it be?

VII INT. PERSEUS STATION ADMIN OFFICE - NIGHT

VII

LEO stands in front of the Perseus space station's administrator, RAMONA GLASC. RAMONA's desk is sparse, a single electronic tablet sits on the desk, with a digital photo frame of RAMONA smiling with a man and a child. The sheet metal desk reflects the lights from the ceiling.

RAMONA
I was made aware you threatened my
chief of security.

LEO
I did not threaten him, Ma'am.

RAMONA
That's not what the report says.

LEO
He overstepped. I corrected him.

RAMONA
And that's not threatening?

LEO
No, Ma'am, but it is in the eyes of
those not on a need to know basis.

RAMONA chuckles and holds her hand out for the message chip. LEO takes the message chip out of his pocket and drops the chip into RAMONA's hands. LEO presses a button on his armband and a message pops up on RAMONA's tablet, prompting her for her signature. RAMONA signs the tablet with her finger and opens a payment website. LEO's wrist monitor armband vibrates and he flicks it open. A dialogue popup is on screen: "PAYMENT RECEIVED: 17,500".

RAMONA
I included a bonus. An apology for
our security chief's... ambition.

LEO
Appreciate it. Take care.

LEO walks towards RAMONA to shake her hand. RAMONA accepts. Their handshake is a forearm handshake, a signal of deep respect in the D.A.H.

LEO breaks off the handshake and turns to walk out of the admin office.

RAMONA
Pleasure working with you, Courier.

VIII INT. PERSEUS SPACE STATION ELEVATOR - NIGHT

VIII

LEO stands on the elevator, surrounded by workers wearing different uniforms designating their specialty. The elevator comes to a stop, and more workers squeeze onto the already cramped elevator.

LEO is pressed against the wall and GRUNTS in discomfort. The elevator stops at the next floor and all the people file out of the elevator.

IX INT. PERSEUS SPACE STATION CONCOURSE - CONTINUOUS

IX

LEO walks down the Perseus station's concourse. The concourse stretches the length of the station, curving with the station's circular structure to simulate gravity through centrifugal force.

The concourse is lined with merchants and trade workers, selling various products and services that appeal to the blue-collar workers of the Perseus station.

X INT. PERSEUS SPACE STATION CAFETERIA - NIGHT

X

LEO sits on the metal bench of the space station's cafeteria. He gnaws on a sandwich made from synthetic meat. LEO's helmet sits on the table beside him. LEO blankly stares into the middle distance, exhausted from a long journey.

LEO's armband vibrates. He flicks it open and looks at the message. "NEW COURIER CONTRACT, message CHIP. CONTRACT CH-417. PAYMENT: 150,000. REPORT TO HORIZONS MINING OFFICES.". LEO stops chewing and looks at the number of credits offered. He closes his armband and runs his fingers through his greasy hair.

XI INT. PERSEUS SPACE STATION RECREATION STRIP - MORNING

XI

The Perseus station recreation strip is a continuation of the main concourse.

LEO walks down the Perseus space station recreation strip, wearing his helmet with the visor down. Several arcades, casinos, nightclubs, and sex/strip clubs line the walkway. Despite the early hour, it is full of people drinking and partying, walking in and out of every business. Large neon signs promote the businesses and brands.

A hologram is above the center of the walkway, in the shape of a scantily dressed woman dancing. The hologram changes into a scantily dressed man dancing. Text appears on the hologram: "Fantasy becomes reality, 1200/H"

LEO walks down the strip, glancing at the hologram, then at the arcade and a sex club. Loud music blares from the club, and scantily dressed men and women dance suggestively in the direction of passerbys.

The lights reflect off of LEO's opaque helmet visor. Two ESCORTS (both female, early 20's, scantily dressed in short silver dresses) approach LEO and caress his forearms and shoulders.

ESCORT 1
(Seductively)
Like what you see, baby?

The Escort's eyes and hair shift color with each second. LEO shrugs the first Escort off of his arm. The second Escort caresses his helmeted head.

ESCORT 2
(Seductively)
We can be whatever you want.

The second Escort moves her hand towards LEO's helmet ear and attempts to press a button to raise the visor. LEO gently grabs the second Escort's hand and moves it away from his helmet. LEO glances at a muscular MALE ESCORT near the door of the sex club, who smirks and smolders at LEO. LEO shrugs the Escorts off and continues moving through the crowds.

XII INT. PERSEUS SPACE STATION HORIZON MINING OFFICE - MORNING XII

LEO stands in front of the "Horizon" mining corporation office in the Perseus space station. The LED sign flickers. LEO has his helmet on, the lights reflecting off of the visor. LEO walks into the office.

The sparse office reception area is barely decorated. A single plastic potted plant is in the corner. The RECEPTIONIST sits behind the bare metal desk, typing on a tablet. LEO walks up to the reception desk and the RECEPTIONIST looks up.

RECEPTIONIST
Can I help you?

LEO
Courier Bravo-one-eight, accepting
contract Charlie-Hotel-four-one-
seven.

RECEPTIONIST
Ah.

The RECEPTIONIST presses a button on her tablet and motions to the stairs behind her.

RECEPTIONIST (cont'd)
Second floor.

LEO walks towards the staircase. He looks up the center of the staircase, only to find there is only two floors. LEO walks up the staircase.

XIII INT. MARIA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

XIII

He opens the second floor door and looks into the room. A comfortably furnished office greets him. In the corner is a comfortable sitting area with a library filled with classical novels. Pride and Prejudice, Shakespeare, To Kill A Mockingbird, Twilight, and many more. The dark brown leather couch and recliner beckon to be used for naps. The desk is fake mahogany, produced from local planet Echo resources. The chair is a deep black leather, heavily used. As if the chair was conformed to one person alone. A fish tank sits on the wall near the door. The top is sealed, and the tank is filled with alien fish. The out of place metal folding chairs are set up in front of the desk, as if to project power from the corporate officer in charge of this office. A secondary door sits on the far wall. MARIA stands at the bookshelf, browsing the dozens of novels.

MARIA
Strange, isn't it? The innate
obsession with the tactile. The
physical feels more real than the
digital. To hold something is to
acknowledge its existence in an
undeniable manner.

MARIA clicks her tongue, then turns to look at LEO. Her eyes widen in surprise. She shakes off the surprise and gives LEO a disarming smile.

MARIA (cont'd)
Oh! Sorry, I thought you were my
assistant. My mistake. Come in, come
in!
(Gestures at couch)
Please, make yourself comfortable.

LEO walks to the couch and sits down. MARIA places the book on the shelf and sits in the chair opposite LEO. The RECEPTIONIST opens the door and strides in, carrying a cup of coffee. They place it on the coffee table in front of LEO. LEO looks at the coffee, but does not move to drink it.

MARIA (cont'd)
What brings you here?

LEO
Courier contract Charlie-Hotel-four-
one-seven.

MARIA's friendly smile disappears in a flash, *the dissolution of her persona.*

MARIA
Ah, yes.

She leans over the table and grabs the coffee cup from in front of LEO. She leans over, subtly pushing out her chest to manipulate LEO with her breasts. LEO intently stares at her cybernetic eyes through his helmet visor. MARIA sits back down in her seat and sips the coffee. *Her manipulations must be more personal and direct.*

MARIA looks into the distance, reading a message on her cybernetic eyes. LEO notices her eyes are inorganic. MARIA's eyes pulse red.

MARIA (cont'd)
I won't lie, Leo. This contract is
very important.

LEO looks surprised that MARIA knows his name. MARIA notices his body language and winks at LEO.

LEO
Please elaborate.

MARIA
(Hostile)
Please remove your helmet before
addressing me.

LEO hesitantly removes his helmet and places it on the wood coffee table in front of him. LEO pushes his hair back and leans back casually in the couch.

MARIA (cont'd)
I hope you adhere to the Service's
mandates. Discretion. Anonymity.

LEO
Of course.

MARIA's cybernetic eyes focus on LEO.

MARIA
You're conflicted about this
contract.

LEO's eyes narrow.

MARIA (cont'd)
Hm. The reason... I'm curious now.
You're apart of the Front, aren't
you? No...

LEO does not react. MARIA squints at LEO, trying to read his expressions.

MARIA (cont'd)
Something more fun...

MARIA pauses and sips her coffee.

MARIA (cont'd)
Motivation through loss. I know that
look.

MARIA looks closely at LEO with her metal eyes.

LEO
(Monotone)
I accept the contract.

MARIA blinks and sighs, disappointed.

MARIA
Well, it's not quite a normal
messenger contract. the message is
intended for a minister at the D.A.H.
headquarters on Earth.

LEO
Earth?

MARIA
How long since your last visit?

LEO
Never.

MARIA
Well, I need to emphasize how key it
is that nobody besides the intended
recipient not only reads it, but is
even aware of the message's
existence.

LEO narrows his eyes.

MARIA (cont'd)
You are creating the potential to be
a liability, just knowing it exists.

LEO steels himself, staring unfazed at MARIA. MARIA's cybernetic eyes adjust, pulsing red.

MARIA (cont'd)

Your path is up to you. Just ensure the message is delivered within two standard months. I hope you take your time to avoid any... undesirables.

LEO

Define?

MARIA

You'll know them when you see them. Destruction of the message is a preferable alternative to any aforementioned undesirables getting their hands on it.

MARIA hands the message chip to LEO. LEO takes a canister from his pocket and slots the chip into it for protection. MARIA rapidly blinks, here eyes flashing red. LEO's armband vibrates and he flicks it open. A message reads "PAYMENT RECEIVED: 10,000".

MARIA (cont'd)

An advance. Succeed in the delivery and the recipient will provide you will the full amount.

LEO

Understood.

LEO begins to walk out, MARIA calls out after him.

MARIA

I don't think I need to make it clear what would happen if you fail, but I may as well.

LEO stands in the door and looks back at MARIA. MARIA's robotic red eyes bore into LEO's soul.

MARIA (cont'd)

If you aren't killed, then I ensure you, you will wish you were. Then, you will be.

LEO steps into the stairwell and closes the door behind him.