

NETHER

PILOT EPISODE

WRITTEN BY JASON DRISKILL

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Characters:

Chad Roberts - 17 yr. Caucasian male, graffiti artist and videographer, he carries a small video camera with him constantly, as well as a backpack containing spray paint, a jumbo Sharpie marker, and a skateboard.

Bridget Graybar - 17 yr. "hot cheerleader," army brat, 3 year resident to Millerville.

Charlotte Pike - the cheerleader's roundish sidekick, Millerville native, an accommodating optimist.

Dalton Breuer - 17 yr. Caucasian male, native to Millerville, the handsome and athletic captain of nearly all his high school's team sports.

Jeremy Miller - 17 yr. Caucasian male, nerd stereotype.

Sheriff Jerry Warren - 40's, doughy, hopeless comb-over, moustache, squinty, physical embodiment of "southern drawl"

Dr. Myra Veal - a bony, self-important woman in her mid-60's, overdressed in a cocktail dress and jewelry, even when wearing a lab coat.

Chuck & Mitch - deputies, mute, expressionless.

Missy, Tracy, Stacy - Millerville High cheerleaders.

John White - 17 yr, athletic, incomparably handsome.

General Graybar - middle-aged army General.

Main Setting:

Present Day, Millerville, TN - A tiny, rural town located on Highway 61 about thirty minutes northeast of Knoxville, and about forty-five minutes northwest of Oak Ridge.

EXT. HIGGLY PIGGLY - EVENING

SPRAY PAINT hits a brick wall.

A wider view reveals A YOUNG MAN covering the wall in an elaborate array of colors. With a can of paint in one hand and a masking board in another he performs a ballet, seeming to sculpt the surface of the wall into a crisp salad of lines and letters: "Nether,"

ARTIST'S FACE

Over the artist's shoulder we see a cigarette lighter spark in the darkness. The young man spins around in a defensive stance, caught off guard.

SHERIFF WARREN

You're new round here, aren't you?
Moved in over on Briarwood Lane?

CHAD

(guarded)

Maybe. Yes. How'd you know that?

SHERIFF WARREN

Millerville's a small town. Roy `n Clara know you're out here painting the backside of their Higgly Piggly?

The young man refuses to answer.

SHERIFF JERRY WARREN steps out of the shadow into the moonlight, slowly approaching the young man.

SHERIFF WARREN

I didn't think so.

(pause)

Looks pretty. "Nether." Now that's an awfully fancy word. What's it mean?

No response. The sheriff takes another step forward.

SHERIFF WARREN

Sounds deep. Like Latin. I bet it means something like "angsty teenage punk." Or "complete disregard for authority." Am I close?

CHAD

Closer than I'd like.

The sheriff is almost close enough to grab the young man, but maybe not. They're in a standoff.

Chad fakes a dodge to the right, dashes left, grabs his bag and hops a fence.

The sheriff sneers. Behind him we can make out the silhouettes of the police car and his two deputies CHUCK EVANS and MITCH NILES. Warren pauses to suck a long drag on his cigarette. Breathing out, he issues a command.

SHERIFF WARREN

Go get him boys.

A small light flashes on an earpiece that the Sheriff is wearing as the shadowed deputies agilely hop the wall in pursuit.

EYE LEVEL WITH PAVEMENT

Once on the concrete, Chad pulls a skateboard off of his backpack, throws it to the ground and hops on board, pumping his foot against the pavement as fast as he can.

As he catches up with (and begins passing) our POV, we see not too far behind him the deputies giving chase. Further behind them the police car screeches around the corner.

Our view pulls backwards, passing Chad, and raises enough to see his face display growing concern.

He darts into an alleyway. Once in, however, he realizes that it's a dead end.

The deputies appear at the mouth of the alley, and the police car pulls up, blocking the entrance.

From their POV we see that it is empty - where did he go? They look up the wall. The young man is nearly to the roof, shimmying up the drainpipe.

As he pulls himself onto the rooftop of the old hardware store he pulls a video camera out of his pocket to record the moment. Looking through the viewfinder at them, he chuckles in triumph.

Suddenly the deputies leap onto the wall and begin climbing like expert rock-climbers. Pulling themselves into better light we can see for the first time their faces: snarling, bleary-eyed, foaming-at-the-mouth. They climb fast.

CHAD

No way! What are you guys?

He backs away, turns and runs across the rooftop. The two deputies reach the top.

The chase resumes. They leap from the roof of Jones Hardware to Willy's Live Bait, to Sissy's Café. The deputies are gaining on him and the fugitive's face expresses actual concern.

He pulls out his skateboard, leaps onto an air conditioning unit and rail-slides down the edge of a slanted staircase roof that propels him off the building over the street.

The deputies stop at the edge, unable to follow.

As he soars, our view arcs around him to look over his shoulder. We/he can see the layout of the small Southern town square - a gas station, café, city hall, library and a few small boutique shops - surrounded by moonlit countryside.

The skateboard clatters to the concrete below as Chad grabs hold of the streetlamp and swings himself around, sliding down the pole. Halfway down, he jumps down to the sidewalk landing face-to-face with BRIDGET. CHARLOTTE stands nearby.

Bridget shoves him backwards.

CHAD

Sorry! Geez.

BRIDGET

Are you trying to kill someone?

CHAD

No. I'm running from...

He looks up at the rooftop. The deputies have vanished.

CHAD (CONT'D)

...the police.

BRIDGET

Those police?

He turns and sees the police cruiser turning the corner behind them. He jumps behind a clump of nearby bushes.

BRIDGET

Hi Sheriff.

SHERIFF WARREN

Evening ladies. Did you happen to notice if the 'hot' sign is on over at the Krispy Kreme?

CHARLOTTE

It's on.

BRIDGET

Krispy Kreme? So you're not chasing a desperate fugitive...?

SHERIFF WARREN

(chuckles)

Heck no. Me 'n the boys are hunting down donuts, enjoying this beautiful summer weather. Ya'll have a good'n!

The cruiser drives on by. As it does, we get a close-up view of the Sheriff's earpiece again. The two deputies are seated in the back seat; they both appear somewhat normal.

Chad emerges from hiding.

CHAD

But... they were just trying to kill me!

BRIDGET

Yeah, you're real high on their list of priorities.

CHAD

Those two in the back seat, they were acting all crazy a minute ago.

CHARLOTTE

Mitch and Chuck are kind of 'simple.' The Sheriff takes care of them. He made them honorary deputies so they'd feel important. Don't worry, they're totally harmless.

CHAD

Scaling walls and foaming at the mouth?

BRIDGET

They drool a little. Don't be an asshole about it.

Charlotte hands him his skateboard.

CHARLOTTE

I'm Charlotte. This is Bridget.

CHAD

Chad. My dad and I just moved here.

BRIDGET

Oh, right... the house on Briarwood.

CHAD

How does everyone know that?

CHARLOTTE

It's a small town. Hey, did you get one of these?

She starts to show him a piece of paper, but Bridget grabs it and interrupts.

BRIDGET

Why are you so worried about the police? Did you do something illegal?

CHAD

No... no.
(delicate pause)
I'd better go.

He raises his hand for an awkward wave goodbye and runs off.

CHARLOTTE

Welcome to Millerville, Chad!

BRIDGET

What a weirdo.

On his skateboard he coasts down the highway.