

MR. GUILTY
PILOT

written by

Ray Beer

Based on the short story
"The Wavemaker Falters"
By George Saunders

Why is the world so harsh to those who are losing?

- George Saunders

FADE IN:

EXT. AMISH COUNTRY VILLAGE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

An attraction set in abandoned farmlands that's like Colonial Williamsburg, but for the Amish and also it's a water park. The entrance arch reads "AMISH COUNTRY VILLAGE."

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Tired, EARL (35) shuffles forward in line dressed Amish-ly. The CAFETERIA WORKER hands him a plate of *something* pot pie. Earl eyes it. He guts it with a plastic knife so that red, chunky goop oozes out.

CAFETERIA WORKER
We ran out of beef again, so it's
Manhattan clam chowder today.

Earl grimaces.

He steps out of line and gazes upon the CROWDED CAFETERIA.

It's all Amish. Black suits. Hand-spun dresses. Hats. Bonnets.

And no open spots.

EXT. STREAM. WESTSIDE - DAY

TONY and GERALD are two men with fake Amish beards and Italian accents. They pretend to fish in the stream, populated by ROBOTIC LEAPING TROUT, but ogle something across the water.

Earl walks by with plate in hand. Tony stops him.

TONY
Ay, Earl! How ya doin?

EARL
Hey.

TONY
(points across stream)
Lookie here, check out this broad.

Earl follows his finger across the stream to find SISTER VIV in quiet, shut-eyed meditation.

Earl admires her peaceful tranquility.

TONY
Comes here near everyday to
"meditate." She's up over from the
Center for Wayward Nuns.

GERALD
For sisters who've become doubtful
Gerald gives an eye-widening look to them. *She's crazy.*

TONY
Ay, then maybe she won't mind me
pickin up that habit, too, if ya
know what I mean? Huh?

Tony and Gerald LAUGH. Earl peers back at the nun.
Her eyes have peeped open to catch the men laughing. With
Earl's prying gaze, she squeezes them shut again.
Tony ribs Earl to get his attention back to the joke.

TONY
Ya know what I mean, Earl? A
habit? It's what nun's wear.

Earl rolls his eyes. Walks away as Tony calls after him.

TONY
Earl -- where ya going, man? Eat
with us! Sheesh -- that guy...
(to Tony; re: Sister Viv)
...ya know, Sometimes she sings,
too. But it ain't nothing that'll
knock your socks off.

GERALD
Probably because of all the doubt.

EXT. STREAM. EASTSIDE - DAY

Earl approaches Sister Viv, still shut-eyed in meditation.

EARL
Hey, Sister, mind if I sit here?

A GUTTURAL response. *Growl?* Regardless, Earl sits beside her.

EARL
Don't mind those guys, they're
just a couple of schmucks.

Sister Viv squeezes her eyes shut-er. Earl doesn't notice.

He bores into his pot pie. Stirs it around without purpose.

EARL

You know, Sister, I really do respect what you do. Your life path, I mean. It takes a lot of dignity. A lot of self-respect.

No response. Earl turns away to gaze at the beautiful horizon.

EARL

Sometimes, I think that I should give up everything. Not to join the Church necessarily, just... anyway, I don't have the --

SPLASH-SPLASH gets Earl's attention. He whips back around.

Sister Viv is gone.

Earl searches. Spots Tony and Gerald across the stream with open mouths. He follows their gaze downstream.

Sister Viv's limp body rolls facedown across the rocky current.

EARL

Shit!

Earl TROMPS through the stream at high-alert, catches up to Sister Viv, then attempts to grab her undulating frame, but the LEAPING ROBOTIC TROUT keep halting his efforts.

Finally, Earl hauls Sister Viv's body to the stream's bank.

He lays her down. Searches her pale, unmoving form with worry.

Sister Viv COUGHS up some water. Gathers her bearings.

SPITS in Earl's face.

SISTER VIV

You can't possibly know the darkness in my heart.

Earl wipes the spit from his face in angry confusion.

Sister Viv crawls away as Earl watches, dumbfounded. She begins to BASH her head against a nearby tree trunk. Repeatedly.

Earl watches in disgust.

EARL

Try me.

TITLE CARD