

CHASING ANNA

Pilot

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CHASING ANNA  
"Pilot"

TEASER

FADE IN:

**INT. LIVING ROOM / TUSCAN COUNTRY HOME - DAY**

Legend: Tuscany; 23 Years Ago

YOUNG ANNA (10) is hiding behind large stuffed chair. She is covering her ears to shield herself from the YELLING coming from another room. She is an Italian girl who is a bit eccentric, full of energy one moment and completely and utterly drained the next.

MUFFLED SHOUTING in ITALIAN between MAN and WOMAN fighting drown out the TELEVISION.

ANGLE ON THE TELEVISION

It is the movie XXX. Italian film star Anna Magnani plays out some absurdly silly moment, in contrast to the ARGUMENT raging nearby.

BACK TO SCENE

Young Anna seems lost in the television.

A KNOCK at the window. With the ARGUMENT and the TELEVISION, Young Anna doesn't seem to hear the KNOCKS.

A LOUDER KNOCK jerks Young Anna's attentions to the window and her friend, YOUNG ZANNY (8). She is an American girl with a flock of blonde hair. She and Young Anna are the living version of the Yin and Yang.

Young Zanny waves to Young Anna, beckoning her outside.

Young Anna slides open the window, and scampers out.

**EXT. VINEYARD / TUSCANY - CONTINUOUS**

The house is situated on a small hill overlooking the small vineyard. Young Anna and Young Zanny dash from the house and down the hill.

Young Anna and Young Zanny scamper across the vineyard. They weave expertly through the rows of grape vines.

YOUNG LUCIA (11) looks very much like her little sister, Young Anna, so much so, they could almost be twins. She snaps a photo of them with her Polaroid. She rips it from the camera. She simultaneously shakes it to encourage development and chases after the other girls.

YOUNG LUCIA

Wait for me!

At the edge of the vineyard, the girls encounter a wooden fence. Young Anna and Young Zanny scramble over the fence giggling as they land in the neighbor's yard.

Young Lucia snaps another photo through the slats in the fence.

**EXT. TOMATO FARM / TUSCANY - CONTINUOUS**

The neighbors are cultivating a tomato farm on the adjoining property. Young Anna and Young Zanny scramble through the tomato vines.

Young Anna stops when she sees a particularly ripe, deliciously red tomato. She plucks it.

YOUNG ZANNY

What are you doing?

Young Anna takes a huge bite. The juices run down her cheeks.

YOUNG ANNA

It's wonderful.

She offers the tomato to Young Zanny, who reluctantly takes it. She looks around, checking for witnesses.

YOUNG ZANNY

What if they see us?

YOUNG LUCIA

Don't worry! It's just one. They have thousands.

Young Zanny takes a bite.

YOUNG ZANNY

It tastes like ... like ketchup.

YOUNG ANNA

Ketchup? Silly American, you don't deserve it.

Young Anna tries to steal the tomato away from Young Zanny. They fight for the tomato, and fall to the ground. Young Zanny lands on top of Young Anna. Their eyes meet -- innocently, but there is a connection.

The tomato rolls away.

YOUNG ANNA (CONT'D)

Do I look like a bed?

YOUNG ZANNY

You're soft like one.

Young Anna pushes Young Zanny off, and lunges for the tomato. Young Anna holds it up triumphantly. Young Zanny leaps to her feet.

YOUNG ZANNY (CONT'D)

There's thousands. Remember? I'll get my own.

Zanny frees another tomato from the vines.

YOUNG ANNA

You better. You can't have any of mine!

Young Anna plucks tomatoes one after the other until the makeshift basket she's fashioned out of her shirt tails cannot hold any more.

YOUNG ZANNY

Well, you can't have any of mine!

Young Zanny is wearing a button down shirt over a t-shirt. She strips the outer layer and makes a bag of sorts. She fills it with tomatoes.

YOUNG ANNA

Come on!

Young Anna darts back toward the fence. When they arrive, she slips under the lowest wooden slat, clutching her bundle of tomatoes tightly.

When Young Zanny reaches the fence, she offers her shirt/bag over the fence to Young Lucia.

YOUNG LUCIA

I'm not touching them. Mother's going to be very mad.

Young Anna snatches the bag. Young Zanny scampers back over the fence.

**EXT. VINEYARD / TUSCANY - CONTINUOUS**

The girls giggle as they weave their way through the grape vines. Young Lucia snaps more photos as they run.

Young Anna bursts out from the row of grapes and smashes into her MOTHER (40s), a large woman who looms over Young Anna.

Young Anna crashes to the ground. Her tomatoes roll across the ground, scattered.

Young Zanny is a few steps behind, and ducks into the grapes trying to avoid detection.

YOUNG ANNA

Mama, I'm sorry.

MOTHER

You will be.

Mother pulls Young Anna to her feet by her shirt collar. Young Zanny watches through the vines.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Come out here right now, Zanny  
Hendricks.

Young Zanny drops her shirt/bag of tomatoes in the vineyard and sulks out.

Young Lucia was lagging behind enough that she remains undetected. She snaps a photo of Mother looming over the girls.

The girls share a glance, then almost as if it was planned, they take off in opposite directions.

But not more than a step or two. Mother snags them both by a limb or shirt sleeve. She pulls them into her clutches.

YOUNG ZANNY

It's not Anna's fault, ma'am. I ...

MOTHER

Silence. Stay.

Mother picks up one of the tomatoes. She examines it intently, almost as though she has never seen one.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You stole these. A sin.

YOUNG ZANNY

We were just having fun.

MOTHER

Zanny. Go home. Explain yourself to your own mother.

YOUNG ZANNY

My mother is in New York.

MOTHER

Huh. No wonder you're a little terror. Go explain yourself to whomever cares. If there is anyone.

Young Zanny slinks away. She mouths "I'm sorry." And then in English belts out a sing-song overly dramatic farewell as she dashes away.

YOUNG ZANNY

You are my world, Anna! I'll never forget you.

Young Anna smiles.

Mother smacks the smile from her face.

Young Anna fights back tears.

MOTHER

What did she say?

YOUNG ANNA

Nothing, Mother. Just good bye.

MOTHER

Look at me when I'm talking to you.

Young Anna looks up. Tears bead up in her eyelids.

YOUNG ANNA'S P.O.V.

Blurry through the tears, Anna sees Mother's face. She blinks. Then she sees another woman behind Mother. She blinks again. The woman is still there.

MOTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You cannot run from trouble.

BACK TO SCENE

Behind Mother is MANGANI. She is the ghost of Anna Mangani, as she was in her prime. She is beautiful, strong, stoic and powerful. She smiles at Young Anna.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I will always find you.

Anna is staring blankly past Mother at Mangani.

YOUNG ANNA

Anna Mangani?

MOTHER

Are you listening to me.

Mother raises her hand to smack Young Anna again. But Young Anna simply looks past the incoming blow. The palm catches her harder this time.

Young Anna stumbles to the ground. She bounces to her feet, not wanting to show weakness.

She looks frantically for her Mentor. But she is gone.

Now the tears flow in earnest.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Inside the house now.

Mother leads Young Anna inside, pushing her through the door perhaps a bit too roughly.

The tomatoes remain scattered on the ground.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

**EXT. TUSCAN COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING**

Legend: Tuscany, Present Day

Close on a ripe red tomato.

A blanket is spread on the ground. The tomato and the remains of other delectables are laid out on the blanket.

ANNA MORETTI (33) is now a beautiful woman and mother. She is just finishing a picnic with her son, LORENZO "ENZO" MORETTI (5). He looks a lot like his mother. They both have warm inviting smiles.

They are picnicking in a lush, green meadow that is nestled in the rolling hills. Two horses graze nearby.

ENZO

Mama, can I give something to the horses.

ANNA

Sure. Give them the carrots.

Enzo grabs two large carrots. He offers one to his horse first. But the other horse is impatient and tries to nose his way in and snatch the carrot.

Enzo pulls away.

ENZO

Wait your turn.

Anna cleans up the remains of the picnic while she watches her son.

The chosen horse gets a hold of his carrot, so Enzo offers one to the other horse. It is greedily devoured.

ENZO (CONT'D)

What is your hurry to get a carrot when you barely enjoy it. Right, Mama?

ANNA

Yes. Life is best when we savor each moment.



ENZO

Even the bad ones, Mama?

ANNA

Not so much savor them, but learn from them.

ENZO

Why does Father say you never learn?

ANNA

Don't worry about that. That's adult stuff.

Anna has finished cleaning up the breakfast. She straps the sack onto her horse.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Ready to go, bambino?

ENZO

Sure. But one question. Can we race all the way home?

Anna has to lift Enzo so he can get his foot in the stirrup. But then Enzo pulls himself up onto the saddle like he was an old pro.

ANNA

I don't think so, honey.

ENZO

Come on, Mama. Let's savor the ride.

ANNA

It's too far for the horses. I tell you what, we'll race to the edge of the grounds.

Anna pulls herself up onto her horse.

ENZO

You'll lose.

ANNA

If this is a race, we need stakes.

ENZO

What are stakes?

ANNA

What are we racing for?

ENZO

If I win, you have to let me have your desert tonight so I get two.

ANNA

Fine. And if I win, I get your desert?

ENZO

No, Mama!

ANNA

The stakes have to be meaningful.

ENZO

You shouldn't have two deserts. I don't want Father to call you fat and yell at you.

ANNA

How about if I win, you have to give me a big hug and kiss.

ENZO

Deal.

ANNA

Start us off.

ENZO

On your mark. Get set. GO!

Enzo flips his reins and spurs his horse into action.

ENZO (CONT'D)

Yah! Yah! Go boy!

Anna gives her reins a soft flop. But her horse is anxious to run, and darts off after Enzo without coaxing.

ENZO (CONT'D)

You're falling behind, Mama!

Anna is actually pulling back on her reins whenever her horse gets too close to Enzo. He is unaware and enjoying the fast ride.

They gallop over the first hill. Across the next valley, atop another hill, a stone wall marks the finish.

Enzo pushes his horse harder!

ENZO (CONT'D)

Come on boy! You can do it!

The faster Enzo's horse runs, the more Anna's wants to keep up. Anna is actually working hard to stay just behind Enzo.

They start the ascent up the hill toward the stone wall.

The horses are breathing heavier now facing the climb. But they are still running full speed and also seem to enjoy the race.

As they approach the summit, and the wall Anna give a good hard tug on her reins. She wants Enzo to have a bigger win.

Her horse isn't happy, tugging back on the bridle. But he knows who is boss, and fades a bit.

Enzo turns his horse onto a little trail that leads to a gap in the wall. He pushes his horse at full sprint right through.

When he reaches the other side, he drops the reins and puts his arms up over his head.

ENZO (CONT'D)

And the winner is Enzo!

ANNA

Hands on the reins, young man!

Enzo grabs them.

ENZO

Sorry, Mama!

Anna gallops through the wall. Both riders have slowed their horses to walk.

ANNA

Good riding. Until the end. What was that with the hands?

ENZO

I won. I was excited.

ANNA

You know the rules. Always keep control of your horse.

ENZO

I know.

ANNA

Let's head home.

As they descend into the next valley, we see their destination. On the opposite hill sits a large stone castle. It is modest by castle standards, but makes Bel Air look like a trailer park.

**EXT. CRUISE SHIP - NIGHT**

Legend: Near the British Virgin Islands

A luxury cruise ship steams through the Caribbean.

**INT. CRUISE SHIP - NIGHT**

This is a long hallway with staterooms on the port side.

EDUARDO RAMIREZ (40s) is a Latino musician who is always strumming, tapping, humming or whistling. He is diminutive and wiry, immature, untrustworthy, a regular man child. Right now, he is HUMMING the Mission Impossible theme.

He moves down the hallway as though he were a spy or a cop. He brandishes his "finger gun". Occasionally he slams his back against the wall, and slides along it.

When he reaches an intersecting hallway, he drops to one knee as he swirls into the opening. He aims his "finger gun" down the hall.

All the while, he continues to HUM. Occasionally, he strums out a beat with his "unarmed" hand on his stomach.

He continues down the adjoining hall in super spy mode. He abruptly stops humming and moving when he sees a door ajar.

Eduardo listens outside the open door. The steady SOUNDS of running water come from within.

Eduardo pushes the door open just a bit further.

ANGLE ON AN IPAD INSIDE THE OPEN DOOR

Eduardo looks up and down the hall. The coast is clear.

He swipes the iPad. As he tries to pull it through the door, he slams it into the door frame.

The iPad crashes to the floor.

EDUARDO

Shit!

He scoops up the iPad and bolts down the hall.

A MAN, dripping wet, pokes his head out of the open stateroom.

He catches a glimpse of Eduadro as the spy turned thief bashes his way into the stairwell.

**INT. GOLDEN GROTTO BURLESQUE CLUB - NIGHT**

Legend: Los Angeles, Ca

The club is dark. Everything is trimmed with gold leaves, lines and accents. Bars line the three walls away from the stage. Tables fill the center.

On stage, there is a TEN PIECE BIG BAND. In the brass section, STEPHANIE (28) plays the trombone. She is sexy without the horn. When she plays it's raw beauty.

Seated at a table right in front of the stage is DAVID MURPHY (31). He is Midwestern corn fed good looking jock type, with book smarts, but he's a bit naive.

Seated with him is DEBBIE (24), good looking she has the street smarts David lacks but she's lost if the conversation ventures beyond reality television.

The band KICKS into the intro of BIG SPENDER from the musical Sweet Charity.

Six stunning BURLESQUE DANCERS saunter onto the stage carrying giant feather fans. They form a line in the middle of the stage with their feathers extended creating a sort of curtain.

As the music nears the first verse, the Dancers kneel and bring their fans to the floor, revealing a dais behind them rising through the floor.

On the dais, ZANNY HENDRICKS (31) is no longer the innocent little American girl stealing tomatoes. She is all woman. She belts out the song.

ZANNY

The minute you walked through the  
door; I could see you were a woman  
of distinction; A real big spender;  
Good looking, so refined.

Zanny is helped down from the dais by one of the Dancers. She saunters to the edge of the stage, right to Debbie and David. She seems to be singing directly to Debbie.

Stephanie watches Zanny.

ZANNY (CONT'D)

Say wouldn't you know what's going on in my mind? So let me get right to the point, I don't pop my cork for every gal I see.

Zanny leaps from the stage, and dances at Debbie and David's table. She loops her boa around Debbie's neck, who doesn't seem to mind the personal attention. And David is all smile.

Stephanie seems to be frowning behind her trumpet.

ZANNY (CONT'D)

Hey big spender, Spend a little time with me.

Zanny slides the boa lower, around Debbie's waist. She pulls gently, but firmly enough to slide the chair slightly away from the table.

ZANNY (CONT'D)

Wouldn't you like to have fun? Fun? Fun? How's about a few laughs? Laughs? Laughs? I can show you a good time, let me show you a good time.

Zanny lays seductively across Debbie's lap.

Stephanie belts out a NOTE way out of sync, almost like she's yelling at Zanny with her horn.

Zanny ignores the outburst and keeps on singing and seducing.

ZANNY (CONT'D)

Hey! Big spender, Hey! Big spender, spend a little time with me; spend a little time with me; spend a little time with me.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. BACKSTAGE / GOLDEN GROTTO BURLESQUE CLUB - LATER**

The Dancers are changing from their costumes back into street clothes. Zanny is at her makeup table, removing her false eye lashes.

Stephanie storms into the room. Dancers part like the Red Sea as she pushes past.

STEPHANIE

Who was she?

Zanny continues to remove her makeup without so much as a glance over her shoulder.

ZANNY

Who?

STEPHANIE

Don't play games with me. Who was the slut you were whoring yourself all over?

ZANNY

Nice. This is a workplace. Real professional.

STEPHANIE

You're one to talk.

ZANNY

I was doing my job. What about you? You never miss a note.

STEPHANIE

Don't make this about me.

ZANNY

This is absolutely about you, Miss Jealous.

STEPHANIE

Who was she?

ZANNY

You're impossible.

STEPHANIE

Tell me the bitch's name.

ZANNY

She's not a bitch. Or a threat. I'm friends with her date, David. I wanted them to feel special.

STEPHANIE

You're supposed to make me feel special.

ZANNY

You are special.

Zanny finishes wiping away her make up. She turns around and looks Stephanie squarely in the eyes.

ZANNY (CONT'D)

You're the only one I'm dating.

Zanny pulls Stephanie in for a kiss.

**INT. NIGHT CLUB / CRUISE SHIP - NIGHT**

Eduardo is playing guitar on stage with three other MUSICIANS. A CROWD watches. Some dance. Most drink.

The Man whose iPad was stolen slips into the night club with a BURLY SECURITY GUARD. The man points to Eduardo on stage.

**EXT. COURTYARD / ITALIAN CASTLE - MORNING**

Anna and Enzo ride into the courtyard. They are greeted by a STABLE HAND who takes bridles of each horse and holds them while the riders hop down.

ANDREA (O.S.)

Anna!

ANDREA MORETTI (40s) appears in the doorway. He is a burly, hairy man who is imposing physically as well as psychologically. His voice BOOMS even when he is not angry.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

Get inside.

Andrea grabs Anna by the arm, and pushes her through the door. Enzo meekly follows.

**INT. FOYER / ITALIAN CASTLE - MORNING**

ANDREA

Irina!

IRINA POLOKOV (20s) dashes into the room. She is wearing a traditional maid's uniform.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

Take the boy to his room.

Irina escorts Enzo up the stairs.

ANDREA (CONT'D)

What were you thinking?

ANNA

We just took a country breakfast.