

OLIVER FORD
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INTRODUCTION

Oliver Ford is to *Spy-Fi* what *Smallville* is to super heroes: a series about the growth and learning of a young man who will grow up to be the next James Bond.

Oliver is a scholarship student at a tony east coast college...dealing with classes, a clueless, callow rich-boy room mate, and all the issues of fitting-in and growing up.

Oliver Ford is also a spy.

Recruited into a covert counter-terrorist cell based at the university, using the highest technology, answering to a mysterious, all-knowing and all-powerful handler - and working alongside three other supremely gifted students - Oliver Ford juggles his coursework and exams with high-octane missions against the enemies of democracy.

Oliver Ford has no super powers: an earnest, attractive seventeen year old all-American boy driven to excel by a profound personal tragedy, all Oliver has are wits, strength, and focus. He runs while others walk, he acts while others talk.

Oliver Ford is a series about teenagers in transition: building a makeshift family among themselves...while engaging in high-risk, high-stakes missions that test every fiber of their character.

Oliver Ford is also about a young man torn between two father figures: the ruthless handler who drives Oliver into a world of danger, and the profoundly humanistic professor who becomes his moral compass.

From the shadow of these two fathers - and through his life with his friends - Oliver Ford will emerge a great spy...but first, he has to get through college.

PILOT EPISODE

TEASER

Iraq. Fall. 2009.

Three HUMMERS packed with young soldiers GLIDE into a village.

Inside one of the vehicles, the salty camaraderie of soldiers in battle very much in evidence as the men tease the living hell out of the youngest member of the team: an unassuming kid by the name of NICK SANTIAGO.

And as the vehicles navigate the narrow streets...

...AN IED lands on the lead Hummer - BLOWING IT TO PIECES. A machine gun nest on a roof OPENS FIRE on the now-scampering soldiers.

The rain of lead pins the boys down, but Santiago SPRINGS from cover and leaps onto a balcony.

Santiago is a guided missile. He RUSHES into the building and BARRELS through apartments and hallways...

...then LEAPS from a window onto the side of another building, SCALES the wall and lands on the rooftop to attack the machine gun nest.

In a whirlwind, Santiago takes out the machine gun nest. The street below is quiet. The other soldiers marvel at Santiago's courage.

Back at the base, Santiago is cheered by his peers...until the Military police APPREHEND him.

Santiago's CO leads him into an office to confront a CIVILIAN ADVISOR, who drops a file. Santiago's real name is OLIVER FORD: and he is seventeen years old.

Oliver paid a friend for the identity: and it wasn't hard defrauding a storefront recruiter to get in the army. The real question: "why would a young man of seventeen defraud the government to become a grunt in this craphole?"

"If I could explain it," Oliver answers, "I wouldn't have done it."

The CO turns to the Civilian. What does this mean? Stockade? Juvie hall? The Civilian regards the CO with a sneer: "I don't think so, a boy his age needs an education."

McCrimmon College. The beginning of the fall semester.

Think Harvard or Yale. The place is lousy with wealthy parents dropping off their entitled spawn. Among the Benzes, Beamers and Argyle, Oliver Ford steps out of a bus...into an environment as hostile as any he has ever seen.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

Oliver moves into his new dorm, where he meets JIMMY HALSEY: a rich and incredibly neurotic guy who will serve as a best friend in the course of the series.

Jimmy and Oliver hit it off early, with Oliver's quiet, take-it-all-in demeanor a foil for Oliver's yammering, clueless Wooster-like personality: even as Jimmy's mother (who drops him off at the dorm with the help of a servant) gets it out of Oliver that he is a scholarship kid - mysteriously endowed with a full ride - and implies that her son should hang with a better class of people.

That night, Oliver and Jimmy prowl the campus and find themselves following a group of attractive freshman girls to the doors of a fraternity party. Jimmy and Oliver are turned away at the door by a massive frat boy doorman: typical first week of college party - girls get in for free, men have to be on the guest list.

Jimmy tries to pull rank: he's a legacy at this house. The doorman tells Jimmy he can wait until pledge week.

Jimmy argues with the doorman, not noticing Oliver...SCALING the side of the frat house. As Jimmy steps

away, he sees Oliver - opening a window from inside, beckoning him in with a smile...

...the next morning, Jimmy nurses a hangover from hell and Oliver goes to his classes.

First is an English seminar - a small class taught by Professor Benjamin Stanley: think of him as Robin Williams in *Good Will Hunting*. Stanley sets up the schedule of assignments, beginning with the task of reading all of Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast* within the first week.

As class ends, Stanley singles Oliver out. Stanley is Oliver's faculty advisor and Oliver missed their first appointment before the class: why?

Oliver prevaricates: his roommate was hung over and...

Stanley tells Oliver to man up: no excuses. Stanley sees this education as the ultimate experience. If Oliver doesn't have the good sense to protect his scholarship, then Professor Stanley will push him to it.

It becomes clear that Professor Stanley will be one of the key relationships in Oliver's collegiate life: a tough but inspiring father figure with a deeply optimistic view of the world.

As Oliver exits, Stanley adds a parting shot: "I was a big fan of your mother's work. I'm sorry about what happened to her."

Oliver shakes his head: Stanley's words cut to the bone...but the question of the identity of Oliver's mother, and what happened will be answered later. Now is time for Oliver's next class. "Strategies and Business Resources for Entrepreneurs," at the School for Public Policy.

Still shaken, Oliver makes his way to the School for Public Policy...and notices a pretty woman walking the same path. Oliver follows as the path to the classroom becomes narrower and winding, leading into the bowels of the building...which is when the woman vanishes from view.

Oliver walks further down the darkening corridor, only to be ambushed. The woman has taken a hiding place and now

holds Oliver at bay with a can of mace. "What do you want?" she asks.

"To go to class," he answers with a smile, before disarming her.

Her name is THEODORA GALE: also a freshman, and more than a little bit paranoid. Before their standoff can continue, a deep VOICE interrupts: "It's customary to hang a tie on the doorknob."

This is NATHAN WIND. A child of privilege with a hardcore conservative bend: Dick Cheney as played by a young Denis Leary. More students arrive at the dark corridor: a strapping, flamboyant Russian-accented boy named ALEXEI SEYMONOV, and KATRINA WINCE...a short-haired, practical girl with the mind of a born literalist (imagine a young Katee Sackhoff).

The five students are going to the same class. It also comes out in the conversation that they are all here on mysterious full-ride scholarships.

The five move toward the classroom, the door is locked...Theodora wants to get out of there...Katrina pulls out a lockpick and opens the door...and inside they find the Civilian Advisor who busted Oliver in Iraq.

"I'm sure you all want to know the real reason we've sent you to college."

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

The Civilian locks the door behind the gathered students and ushers them into a large, dramatically lit Beaux-Arts rotunda, incongruously located in this basement-like area.

The Civilian introduces himself as RICHARD GODDARD, adding that "you can call me 'god.'" Nathan's evangelical sensibilities are immediately rankled, but Goddard is an A#1 alpha dog...and this is when the truth comes out...

...these students are being recruited into a counter-terrorist cell run as an experiment by several Intelligence organizations within the government.

Every week, they will come to this "class" and be given "assignments" - only the assignments will be missions that will tax them to the fullest extent of their abilities, and the stakes will always be real.

Each of the students has special abilities, but they will answer only to god, and operate under the utmost secrecy - with no one but god as a witness to their work.

To everyone outside the cell, this classroom is "Strategies and Business Resources for Enterprise" - for everyone in the cell, the codename is SABRE.

"So what happens now?" Snarks Theodora "A training montage?"

"No training," God replies "you go out and prove yourselves or it's Zero Black."

"Zero Black?"

"Zero Black," answers god. "Zero, as in nothing. Black as in The Void. Oblivion. As in you do what I tell you or it's Zero Black."

Theodora turns to god and asks the next questions. "So we turn into your little mod squad or get killed - what do we get for doing this homework?"

"You get to come back next week for more...and you get to play with these..."

God flips a switch. The rotunda LIGHTS UP. Every alcove is crowded with gadgets, computers, weapons, cars and motorcycles. The pace is a toy box - every young viewer's dream come true.

Katrina finally speaks up: delighted with what she sees. Nathan steps over to the guns, identifying each by name. Theodora heads over to an Aston Martin parked in a niche. Alexei strides over to a computer terminal attached to a

petaflop processor, delighted by the power put in his hands...

...but Oliver just stands back, looking at god.

"Not impressed?"

"My choice is 'toys or death,' how do you think I feel?"
Oliver replies.

"Take your seats," God exclaims, ignoring Oliver's comment, "class is in session."

The five students are given an assignment: professor ANDREW MIXTON, a respected biologist working in a government-funded biology lab at the university is believed to be trading weapons secrets with a terrorist group.

The objective is to break into his lab and place a liquid irradiated tracer in his samples...allowing SABRE to trace the movement of any of the toxins worked on by the scientist. Obviously, success here means that our work be completely invisible.

God steps away, giving the students two nights to do their work, and offering little other guidance.

The five design their mission...using the equipment provided by god, they demonstrate their unique skills...and, while learning to work together, REVEAL the transgressions that brought them under god's eye...

Nathan Wind is a surveillance prodigy majoring in Poli-Sci...even though his world view and open disdain for the rest of the team ruffles everyone's feathers...it is also revealed that he was pinched by the government and given his free ride for stealing the identities of civil rights lawyers and using their credit cards to siphon contributions to conservative think tanks.

Theodora is Danny Ocean as played by a young Catherine Zeta-Jones. Major undeclared. A natural-born deceiver: suspected of stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars in goods and merchandise to fund her extravagant lifestyle. She was ultimately caught having an affair with the CEO of

a high-tech corporation and using his information for an insider trading scheme.

Katrina says little about what brought her here, other than that she is majoring in civil engineering and that "I like to blow things up."

Alexei - the son of naturalized Russian expatriates - was an athlete on the short track to join the Olympic gymnastics team until his career was ended by performance-enhancement allegations. In short, he is the muscle...

...and when it comes to Oliver to confess to his sins, all he adds is "I'm a soldier, I do what I'm told. I guess I'm the muscle too."

"Great," snorts Nathan, "we have a spare in case we lose the russyky."

The gang of five spring their assignment...it's fun and exciting - *Mission: Impossible* in a college campus, with a team of five attractive, smart, fast-talking teens.

Theodora distracts the guards...Nathan doses Professor Mixton with a drug that gives him flu-like symptoms...Katrina confounds the cameras...and Alexei and Oliver infiltrate the lab, with Alexei taking the lead and Oliver breaking into the safe...

...and it all goes smoothly, with these five personalities quickly meshing into an argumentative, bantering, quipping unit even as they go about handling lethal toxins in a highly quarantined lab.

The mission appears to be over...until Alexei's vanity causes him to alert the attention of the guards at the last minute. The secret operation turns into a CHASE: with the guards finally subduing Alexei!

Theodora has to hold Oliver back: he wants to spring Alexei from the guards, he has a plan to subdue the guards as they load Alexei into their vehicles. Theodora doesn't think Oliver can do it, and threatens him with a taser if he tries: one man shouldn't take the entire team down.

Shaking with anger, Oliver tells Theodora that where he comes from, you never leave a man behind. Theodora holds him at bay, and tells him that he'd better get used to the new world.

At that exact moment, god's voice sounds through the audio communications. The Op is over - everyone is to leave their post immediately and return to their dorms - they will be called with further instructions when needed. They are to take no further action.

And off the horrible moment, as Oliver has to let his new friend get carted away...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

Oliver sits at his English seminar, dozing off as Stanley talks about themes of fate and predestination in Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast*.

The class breaks. Stanley approaches Oliver...and lets him know that he received a call from a Professor Richard Goddard at the School for Public Policy regarding Oliver's ability to complete his assignments on time and asking for leniency.

Stanley tells Oliver he is not to be swayed by anyone's influence: he doesn't care what friends Oliver has in high places.

Oliver tells professor Stanley to calm down: he'll read the damned book and be ready to discuss its themes in the time given. Stanley looks at Oliver and tells him whatever he is doing, he'd better slow down - college is a marathon, not a sprint...

"And," adds Stanley, "you'd better know that if you blow this, I will be very disappointed...and I can be a very wrathful god."

Later that day, Oliver and Jimmy Halsey eat lunch at the campus dining hall. Jimmy wants to know where Oliver has been the past two nights - important things are happening:

Jimmy has been working his fraternity connections and wants Oliver to pledge with him...with Jimmy's connections, they are both bound to get in.

Oliver attacks his meal like a grunt at chowtime, shoveling the food into his mouth and shocking his roommate. Jimmy regards Oliver dubiously: does he know he eats like a convict?

And that's when Theodora SASHAYS into the scene and sits across the table from Jimmy and Oliver, flashing Jimmy a megawatt smile.

Jimmy is immediately smitten...and as Theodora affects the posture of a fellow child of privilege and tells Jimmy a story about how she and Oliver are part of a study group, she casually puts a folded newspaper next to Oliver, regarding him with a smile as she asks "Do you know you eat like a convict?"

The headline reads, "**STUDENT IN COMA AFTER CAR CRASH.**"

The story explains that Alexei Seymonov, a McCrimmon student of Russian descent was found in the driver's seat of a wrecked car in a country road in the small hours of the morning.

Oliver and Theodora exchange looks even as she continues to speak to Jimmy like nothing is wrong: and that's when Oliver looks at one of the EMTs pictured at the scene of the accident in the newspaper report...

...it's god.

Oliver, Theodora, Nathan and Katrina regroup at the School for Public Policy...god appears, shaking his head at their piss poor performance. To have to Zero Black someone on a first mission? Something as elementary as a smash-and-tag job?

Enraged, Oliver grabs god and THROWS him against the wall. Who does he think he is to play with their lives like this?

God is completely relaxed, even under Oliver's grip. Without raising his voice, he takes Oliver down.

"When you were twelve years old, you watched your mother's execution on the internet. The government barely did anything to get her back: too many kidnapped journalists. You hadn't seen her in months. You found a computer and saw what every one else in the world had already seen. You lied to get into the army so you could get revenge on the people who took and tortured her."

Oliver lets go of god and steps away, but god continues to speak... "You stay here, and the day will come when you're holding a gun on the people who killed your mother. You have my word on that, Oliver."

Oliver shakes his head. He's doing it on his own terms - not like this, and not for this guy...

...and as Oliver Ford walks away from what may be his destiny...

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

Jimmy Halsey hits the books as Oliver storms into the room and throws open his closet, shoving his possessions into a duffel bag.

Jimmy asks if Oliver is going on a road trip: if so where to and can he go? Oliver says nothing. Jimmy pushes. Oliver pushes back, telling Jimmy to back off and keep his mind on getting into the right fraternity.

The tension is broken by the arrival of Katrina, who introduces herself as another one of Oliver's study partners. As with Theodora, Jimmy is immediately smitten with Katrina (we will discover this is not an unusual response of Jimmy's), but Oliver manages to slip away with her.

Outside the dorm, Katrina lays out her case. She holds up her ultracompact laptop and shows Oliver the software tracking Professor Mixton's bio-weapons samples. Mixton has left campus, taking a sample vial with him: a toxin that could take out thousands of people in a single exposure.

Mixton has checked into a hotel in the city: a hotel he shouldn't be able to afford on a professor's salary. Either he on his way out of the country or about to make a sale. The team wants to go in: to prove themselves to god, to avoid being Zero Blacked...and for all the obvious moral reasons...

...but they need a soldier.

In her appeal, it becomes clear that Katrina is the heart of the team: there is nothing glib or guileful about her, just a belief that even if the circumstances of their employment are way beyond fucked-up, this may just be a chance to do something good...

...and Oliver is moved to listen to her.

An Aston Martin pulls up to the curb at a ritzy hotel in a swanky city street.

Oliver and Theodora step out of the car and - with Katrina assisting from the petaflop computer at SABRE, book a suite over the one occupied by Mixton.

Then comes the surveillance. Dressed to the nines, Theodora and Oliver follow Mixton to the hotel restaurant...where Mixton sits with several Eastern European types...

...all the while Nathan BREAKS into Mixton's suite and searches for the toxin...dinner is served...Oliver picks up his fork - only to be felled by a sharp glance from Theodora.

He still has the table manners of a soldier.

So he watches her, and mimics her every move. As she silently teaches him how to eat like a gentleman in a strangely tense, yet flirty moment, Nathan reports that the toxin isn't in the room.

Mixton and his guests get up to leave.

Theodora and Oliver move in to intercept Mixton and his buyers as they make the exchange - but the exchange goes sour when Mixton tries to steal his buyers money and take the toxin.

Theodora and Oliver MOVE - and in a brilliantly executed action sequence, take down Mixton and intercept the toxin: but the head buyer takes Theodora as a hostage and gets away.

Nathan shouts for Oliver to let Theodora go...they have the toxin and they have Mixton...but Oliver commandeers the Aston martin from the valet and gives chase...

...he is not losing another team member.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

In another scintillating action sequence, Oliver ruthlessly pursues the head buyer - ultimately throwing all caution to the wind to T-BONE the bad guy's car into a wall.

The message is simple: once Oliver Ford has decided on a course, he pursues it ruthlessly, giving nothing up, taking no prisoners and never surrendering.

With the bad guys apprehended, the gang reunites at SABRE - and god makes an appearance.

It took a lot of work to clean up after Oliver's little demolition derby. He should have followed orders and left Theodora to her fate.

Oliver tells god that if he wants to Zero Black him, he's more than welcome to do it. It's a standoff...

...and it ends when god BACKS DOWN, and thanks everyone for a job well done.

God exits SABRE. The team is left together to celebrate their victory. Theodora turns to Oliver:

"I just want you to know that if that had been you, held hostage by that Eurotrash..."

Oliver looks at Theodora, waiting for her follow up.

"...I'd have let you go."

And off the moment...

...Oliver answers a question at Professor Stanley's class, making a cogent argument about the themes of fate and free will in Mervyn Peake's *Gormenghast*.

Professor Stanley nods in approval. Oliver closes his book, he may just be able to succeed at both work and education after all...

...but Jimmy Halsey is left trying to WAKE UP his sleeping room mate...there's fraternity parties to go to, and there's no getting in without Oliver's tenacity and skill.

And off Jimmy, trying to rouse the dead-tired Oliver...

END OF EPISODE