

FLIGHT DECK

Critique Analysis

SERVING FAITH



Critical Analysis

Reading *Serving Faith*, I felt a quieter, heavier weight than I did with *Serving Power*—a moral gravity that presses inward rather than outward. This screenplay doesn't chase urgency; it waits for it. From its opening invocation of Hebrews to its final unanswered silences, the script feels like a meditation disguised as a thriller, one that asks not what faith says, but what it costs. Paul Thornhill is clearly uninterested in easy righteousness. Instead, he constructs a story where belief becomes dangerous precisely when it is sincere, and where kindness, once politicized, turns into evidence

ServingFaith . What struck me immediately is how Clara is written not as a symbol first, but as a human being first. She is tired, methodical, emotionally guarded, and deeply wounded long before the hunted man ever appears at her door. Her faith is not loud or performative; it is practiced through repetition—soup, doors opened just enough, hands cleaned again and again. The screenplay understands something deeply psychological about belief: that true conviction rarely feels triumphant. It feels anxious. It feels lonely. It feels like choosing to act even when you know the consequences will be personal and permanent. The church itself becomes one of the most powerful symbols in the film. It is not a sanctuary in the romantic sense; it is porous, surveilled, compromised. Doors creak.

Footsteps echo. Fresh paint cannot hide recent presence. The building mirrors Clara's inner state—maintained, functional, outwardly calm, but constantly at risk of exposure. The idea that a place meant for refuge can become a liability is one of the screenplay's most devastating ideas. Safety here is conditional, revocable, and constantly under review. The recurring imagery of soup is deceptively gentle and profoundly unsettling. Feeding someone should be an act beyond politics, beyond legality, beyond suspicion. Yet in *Serving Faith*, soup becomes a marker of presence, of having been welcomed, of having existed at all. Bowls left unfinished, skins forming on the surface, spoons resting beside empty frames—all of it suggests lives interrupted mid-gesture.

Nourishment, in this world, becomes traceable, incriminating. To feed someone is to leave evidence. To care is to mark yourself. One of the screenplay's most emotionally complex threads is Clara's relationship to motherhood, loss, and guilt. The baby's cry that haunts the narrative feels less literal than psychic—a sound memory, an unresolved grief, a reminder of something Clara once failed to protect. Her faith is inseparable from this wound. She helps not because she believes she is righteous, but because she believes she owes something to the world. That distinction matters. It's what makes her choices feel earned rather than idealized. The hunted man is written with remarkable restraint. He is not a plot device or a symbol of innocence alone; he is watchful,

practical, self-erasing when necessary.

He understands systems better than Clara does, and that reversal is crucial.

Faith, here, is not naïve, but it is vulnerable. Survival belongs to those who know when to disappear. The tragedy is that Clara's role requires her to remain visible. What I found most haunting is the screenplay's refusal to resolve faith into certainty. There is no miracle, no divine intervention, no moment where belief is rewarded with safety. Instead, *Serving Faith* insists that belief is proven only in isolation, when no one is watching who can help you. The final image of doors opening elsewhere, of faith migrating from institution to individual, feels less like hope and more like responsibility being passed on—quietly, anonymously, without recognition. In the end, *Serving*

Faith is not about religion as doctrine. It is about faith as behavior. It asks whether belief still matters when it costs reputation, freedom, and safety—and whether it means anything at all if it doesn't. Thornhill has written a screenplay that feels painfully current, morally serious, and emotionally restrained. It doesn't ask the audience to agree with Clara. It asks something far more uncomfortable: what we would do if someone knocked on our door, and whether we would still call it faith if we chose to keep it closed.
