

LA FILLE-DÉ

(Dice Girl)

Drama Series - 8 x 1 hour

A 17-year-old girl with the biblical name of Jeromine reads the future in the dice, earning her the nickname Fille-dé (Dice Girl). When a Syrian family smuggled in from Greenland reports the disappearance of their five-year-old son in the quiet village of Euphrate and plunges the community into turmoil, Jeromine is revealed as the daughter of God.

When dice are orchestrated by the divine...

Synopsis

Jéromine tries to live her life harmoniously in Euphrate, a village on the edge of Quebec's Far North, but she is not liked. She disturbs with her proclamations that sound like prophecies. She does nothing like the others. She no longer goes to school and works at menial jobs to support herself.

Since she was a child, Jéromine has carried dice in her pocket. She consults them every time she has to make a decision. As she approaches adulthood, the answers they give her are crucial, and indeed the dice prove her right when she saves someone from certain death.

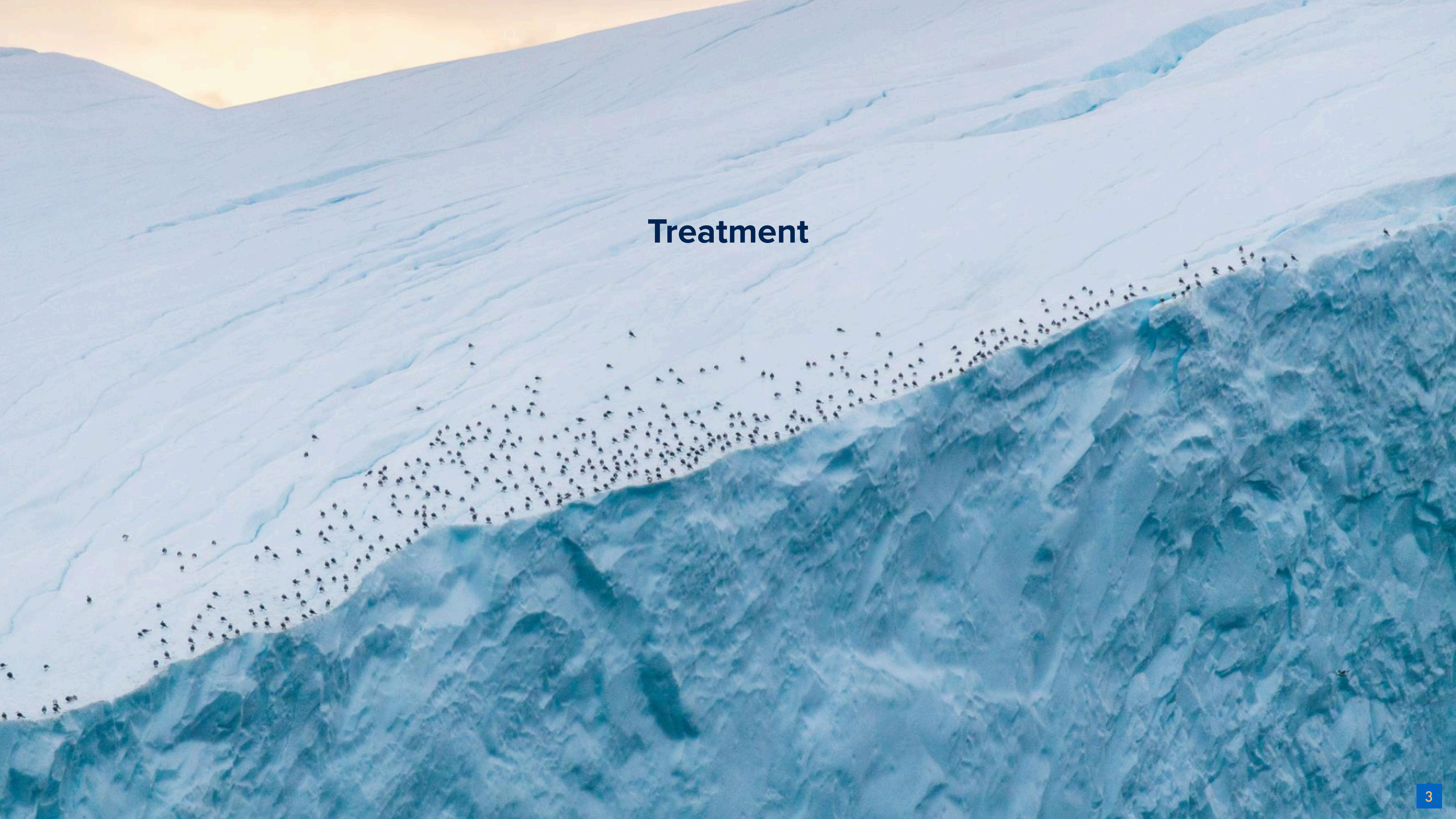
One day she finds a pink boot that has arrived with the surf of the Fraser River, something unheard of in this place untouched by human pollution. When she touches it, she falls to her knees, the sky clears and she sees in vision the macabre fate of a migrant child, landed in the wrong place.

When a child is found drowned, face down in the bay where the boot was found, it is discovered that he is of Syrian origin and that his name is Suleyman. He was wearing a pink boot on his left foot, the right one was unshod. His body is taken to the clinic where the coroner will perform an autopsy.

A few days later, Jéromine finds a way to access the body of the young victim and touches his foot. Shortly afterwards, the child inexplicably comes back to life... The resurrection is attributed to Jéromine's powers.

No media outlet is silent about the astonishing news that a 17-year-old teenager has resurrected a child who was declared dead two days earlier. The announcement goes viral. "God's daughter is born," the media headlines read, and she is in Quebec!

Treatment



Context

While Suleyman's family tries to integrate into their new life as refugees, the lives of the inhabitants of Euphrate, a Quebec village located in a northern terminus, and those of the inhabitants of the northern village of Nain unfold in parallel.

In Euphrate, a French-speaking Quebec village, Jérôme is not accepted. She is not much better welcomed in the English-speaking, predominantly Inuit village of Nain in Labrador, where she tries to make contact with her father. In this village, an illegal adoption plot is being hatched by a deposed notary from Euphrate.

Although different in culture, the two villages are both located in the northern reaches of Quebec and are struggling with the same plagues of poverty, isolation, addiction and idleness.

Their destinies are catapulted together when Jérôme brings back to life a young child found dead on the banks of the Fraser River, which is common to both villages.



One day, Jérôme finds a small pink boot in the surf of the river Fraser Bay, which borders the village of Euphrate where she lives. When she touches it, she receives a shock that makes her fall to her knees, her heart speeds up, the sky clears, the world around her seems to stop.

Where did this boot come from, who does it belong to? From the size of it, a child...but is he or she dead? Alive? In danger? What does this mean and how is this boot irrevocably linked to the fate of the village of Euphrate and Jérôme? This boot is the trigger for the upheaval of an entire village when it is discovered that it belongs to a five-year-old child named Suleyman, who has been declared missing by his family, who have been smuggled to Canada.

In this time-forgotten village, the internet is almost non-existent and the population travels many kilometres to work and support themselves. Nestled between a mainly Inuit northern village and a deep valley, the Quebec village of Euphrate, a northern terminus, counts barely 800 souls.

Jerome is known as Dice Girl because she is able to predict significant events by drawing the dice she always carry with her, listening to chaos and chance. She consults them every time she has to make a decision. As she approaches adulthood, the dice prove her right when she saves Jean-Baptiste, an agent of the Sureté du Québec, from certain death.

Little Suleyman, meanwhile, is reported missing by his family's illegal crossing of the Atlantic Ocean on a cruise ship from Greenland.

When the police tells Suleyman's mother, Fatima, that a boot has been found that could be her child's, she screams and shouts in Arabic, which complicates the situation because there are no Arabic translators in this remote area. The puzzle becomes more complicated when it is discovered that the pink boot was bought at the general store in Euphrate. How did the boot end up on the foot of the Syrian boy who left Greenland? And where is the child?

The answer comes with the surf when Suleyman is found face down on the beach of the Fraser River, a cruel echo of the child found dead on the beach in Bodrum, Turkey.

The media seize on the news in a frenzy. First a story about illegal refugees arriving from Greenland in a village at the most extreme end of Quebec, then the atrocious news of a Syrian boy found dead on the beach. That's all it takes for journalists to rush to the village of Euphrate.

A few days later, Jean-Baptiste is stationed outside a dispensary under floodlights. He is guarding Suleyman's body, waiting for his parents to identify him. The coroner has performed the autopsy, which concluded that he fell off a cliff and drowned.

Jéromine strikes up a conversation with her friend Jean-Baptiste. She asks him to come into the dispensary. He refuses. She insists and he finally agrees in the name of his friendship for her, despite the professional risk he is running. She goes inside and in the darkness of the room she sees Suleyman's body lying on a metal table. At the sight of him, she transcends herself and recognizes him. She moves slowly forward and touches his blued foot, the one that was wearing the pink boot she found. She smells a diffuse metal odour and receives a shock that envelops them in a halo of light filled with dusty particles.

Meanwhile, a search of the cruise ship *Ocean Endeavour*, where the Syrians had been hiding for the crossing, uncovers a child adoption racket set up by Isidore, a deposed Euphrate notary. In the rush of the landing, Suleyman had exchanged his running shoes for the little pink boots of a girl destined to make the reverse crossing to be adopted by a Danish couple.

A few hours later, Suleyman's mother arrives to identify her son. To support her in the awful task, she is accompanied by her mother-in-law and sister-in-law who have not left her side since Suleyman's disappearance. A small circle of journalists has formed to monitor their behaviour. The family enters the clinic, closely followed by the coroner.

Outside the tent, silence lingers and then death screams can be heard. Inside, Suleyman's family dare not approach their child. Suleyman is sitting naked on his bed, his eyes wide open; his body is bluish and bleached, but he has come out of the grave and is very much alive! He tries to speak. They come closer to listen to him. He whispers: Jéromine.

Jéromine's miracle sends shock waves around the world. Thousands of people, in need of hope, begin to converge on the village of Euphrate, while at the same time atheists, godless people and believers show their disbelief and anger against the girl who does not claim to be of any religion.

No television, radio, blog, podcast or social media is silent on the astonishing news that a 17-year-old teenager has resurrected a child who was declared dead two days earlier. The announcement goes viral. "God's daughter is born," the media headlines read, and she is in Quebec!

Characters



Main Characters - Euphrate

Jéromine is on the verge of adulthood at the age of 17. She is strongly built and taciturn. As a child, she would converse with her God, the Earth. She played with her dice to decipher the messages intended for her. She knew she was in harmony with nature when she conversed with the surrounding wildlife. At the age of 11, she became aware that she was not quite herself, neither male nor female, and began to dissociate herself from her body, her head inflating like a balloon on its way to the immensity of the sky. She found school boring and preferred to learn everything about nature, the stars, the tides, in her surroundings. At 17, as signs of the divine were multiplying around her, Jéromine finds the pink boot in the waves of the river Fraser Bay. Her destiny is linked to that of Suleyman, whose painful journey from Greenland to Euphrate she saw in visions. She then senses the role she must play in this world.

Sarah, the only teacher in Euphrate, is naive but touching in her desire to have a child because it conceals a wound that hides another deeper one. Her neuroses sometimes make her difficult to understand and make her act immorally. Sarah manages to consider buying a child through the illegal adoption network set up in Euphrate. Sarah is, however, the one who could, if she had the courage, give the key to the enigma of the little pink boot from the very beginning.

Jean-Baptiste is a zealous and impatient Sureté du Québec agent, he complains that there's not enough work to do in this forgotten village. Jean-Baptiste was married to a woman called Sarah, before their desperate efforts to have a child ended their happy marriage. He faces a serious dilemma when his investigation reveals that Sarah was involved in the adoption traffic before she walked away in shame.

Ishaq, a 72-year-old man, is what folklore used to call the village idiot. His intelligence, no more than that of a 12-year-old boy, is nevertheless endowed with great empathy.

Ishaq was very attached to his mother and cared for her until she died at the venerable age of 93. He has been inconsolable ever since. He is sociable and wants to make friends with all the people in the village who tolerate him, even if they think little of him. It is only with Jéromine that he finds the complicity he had developed with his mother. Ishaq has a habit of collecting objects that seem unimportant but then acquire great value, such as his collection of baseball cards, Elvis memorabilia or bottle caps. He likes to rummage around and pick up anything that glitters; gold ribbons, shells, stones and other unusual objects. It is he who will unravel the mystery of the little pink boot by finding one of the filamentous remains of the boot on the road.

Jacob is a 14-year-old boy caught in the middle: too young to consider himself an adult and too old to take refuge in the innocence of childhood. He doesn't have acne like his friends at school because puberty will come a little later for him. He has the angelic face of the pure, which he hides behind a hard-boiled behaviour. He doesn't talk much, but his expressive eyes say it all. He has little affinity for living in society but has a deep love of animals. It is only in their company that he can express his true nature. In Jéromine he finds a profound ally who will enable him to heal himself from the abuse he suffered at the hands of his father. Jacob becomes, so to speak, the first disciple of Dice Girl.

Main Characters - in Migration

Suleyman, a 5-year-old toddler, is curious and has a sharp mind. His Syrian family is of Christian denomination through his father Joseph, and Muslim through his mother Fatima. Like many children with superior intelligence, he suffers from anxiety. He's too small to understand how difficult the migration undertaken by his parents has been for them. When his parents order him to stay quiet in the hold of the ship bound for Greenland, he understands the gravity of the moment. But while waiting for the wealthy tourists to come down to explore the Torngat Mountain area, Suleyman can't take it anymore and decides to sneak out on deck to explore the area. An old woman finds him and mistakes him for the dozen children from the village of Euphrate who are waiting in a barricaded room to leave for Europe where they will be illegally adopted. This is how he puts on the pink boots of a 4 year old girl. In the melee of the landing, he lacks time to return to the hold. Joseph throws Suleyman from the bridge and tells him to run to the edge of the woods where he can find his mother, grandmother and sister who have already disembarked. Suleyman falls to the ground safely, but he is never seen again from that point on.

Joseph, Suleyman's father, is a Christian married to a Muslim woman. He is 37 years old. An engineer in his native Syria, he had the money to leave his country, but the long period of time spent in Lebanon in the refugee camps quickly depleted his savings. However, he and his family managed to benefit from the United Nations' relocation program, which led them to be welcomed by Denmark and then Iceland, where there were already 3,500 Syrian refugees. When he realized that obtaining permits was taking too long, he took his last savings to join a Canadian refugee scheme. He was told by a smuggler that for a few thousand euros, Canadians could help them obtain asylum, papers and passage to Quebec or Montreal to find a job and live decently. Joseph decides to try the experience with his family.

Fatima is Suleyman's mother, of Lebanese descent, born in Syria. She has studied microbiology and astrophysics for several years. When she learns that Suleyman has left the ship's hold, she blames her husband for this adventure. At least in Lebanon it was warmer and there was no fear of losing your child, she thought. She is relieved when her husband tells her that he has thrown Suleyman on the shore and that he is running towards the woods where she is waiting for him, but when in the rush they realize that he has disappeared, she bitterly regrets the trip that was intended to give them a better life. The tension in the couple will be so great that it will tear them apart, but not before Fatima converts to Jérôme's new religion, following the miracle that brings her son back to life.

Main Characters - Nain

Granny Gibb

A descendant of the Isle of Man, Flora is very involved in her village, along with the several hundred English speakers of British descent who live there. She is also very present in the Inuit community, which considers her an ally. She is not a big talker. She works quietly behind the scenes. Her father was a Methodist priest whose origins go back to Viking times. She knows absolutely nothing about the child trafficking but senses that something is up. Nain is little and everything is known. She sees that her son Malachi is especially troubled. She does not ask him questions but offers advice when she feels he is mature enough to listen.

She is the one who will establish the reconciliation between her son and her granddaughter. She is also the one who will help bring together the common destinies of the two villages, Anglophone and Francophone, without forgetting the Aboriginal community that has welcomed her for generations.

Malachi

Jéromine's father is rather absent from the story. That's fine. Jéromine may look for him, may want to understand his origins, but he will not be very present. We will keep the mystery about this man until the end. We know that he is involved in the plot with Isidore. We know that with the help of his mother, and her advice, he will go into hiding in Greenland, while the scandal passes. To what extent will he be involved in the illegal adoption? Is he the one who helped find the families? Is he on the boat with the children to "help"? Does he have a legal background and is he a court clerk? So that he can falsify adoption documents with Isidore? This is to be seen. He himself has 3 children. Jéromine with Madeleine, and 2 daughters with an Inuk from Nain.



Atmosphere

The special effects used to indicate supernatural events are mostly aural. When they are visual, they are subtle, never shown as if Jérôme is frankly performing miracles but as possible scientific, albeit supernatural, anomalies.

Sounds to suggest visions or abilities in harmony with the forces of the universe, the Earth, are of paramount importance. To demonstrate the otherworldly aspect, the aesthetics and visual effects play more on optical illusions and discomfort than on technical agility as such.

The cold and arid atmosphere, the characters living in small villages and the cultural antagonism between the two municipalities, reinforce the dislocation and contrast it with the loving and unifying force of Dice Girl.

The boundless landscape, where everything is connected, unifies the protagonists of the story in a kind of magical realism.



World

Nain

Although, as of the last census in 2016, this northern village is populated mostly by people of Inuit ethnicity, the narrative of Dice Girl focuses here on the 200 or so English-speaking people of British origin who live in Nain, and places them in direct cultural opposition to the fictional French-speaking village of Euphrate.

Euphrate, a fictional village

As Euphrate is the northernmost city in Quebec, like Radisson, one must look there for inspiration in its mores and culture. In this sense, Euphrate is also a northern terminus, but on the northeast side. We should not, in an effort to avoid appropriating Inuit culture, completely ignore Quebec culture. I don't know anything about Quebecers at this latitude, nor about the culture of Schefferville or other cities far to the north. You have to interview a few Quebecers who live there to fully understand this reality.

The God of Jeromine

About the God of Jeromine

The god of this series is a combined god of several religions: animism, Judeo-Christianity, Buddhism, Kabbalah, Shamanism and most of all, the sacredness of nature, the love of the Earth we inhabit. In this respect, Jeromine's god leads to a syncretic religion. Her God is the Earth.

Season Overview



Episode 2

After the pilot, which tells the story of the present moment (Day Zero), this episode tells the story of the 9 months leading up to it.

Sarah hides her fertility project from her community. Her violent desire to have a child puts her relationship with Jean-Baptiste at risk.

Jéromine takes revenge on her bullies by siphoning gas from their ski-doo and putting it in hers. Jacob surprises her but decides not to say anything. He tries to get closer to Jéromine but pretends to hate her in front of his friends. The two teenagers are abused and discover this affinity between them.

Jéromine gives unsold food from the grocery shop where she works to families in need.

The machinations of Nain's municipality become clearer and under the guise of legal adoption, the village finds itself bypassing several administrative steps that are little examined in this context of estrangement.

In Iceland, Suleyman's father Joseph decides to buy a kebab stand to support his family.

Episode 3

The adoption racket is half-revealed by Sarah to Dice Girl, but she doesn't know that it's being run out of Nain's village. The smuggling continues and has a direct link to Suleyman and the pink boot.

Jacob offers Jérphine some dice. He stole them from her father, a gambler.

Ishaq, a simple man from Euphrates, who will also have a role to play with the boot, is saddened to see that Jérphine no longer cares for him. She is too preoccupied with the twists and turns of her budding destiny.

Jérphine, on the other hand, gets confirmation that she has a special gift for reading the chaos revealed by the dice. In the attic, she also finds the reason for her interest in divination. She goes to Nain more and more often to try to get in touch with her father, but he always refuses to meet with her.

Jérphine's mother continues to mistreat her. She does not accept to see her daughter blossoming into something she has no control over.

Isidore, the deposed notary, recruits mothers who are interested in placing their children, without understanding that they will never see them again.



The Final Ascent



Episode 7

Jéromine is still reeling from the turmoil of finding the pink boot.

Sarah fears that she will be proven to have been involved in child trafficking and prevents herself from giving out vital information about the pink boot that could help solve the mystery of Suleyman's disappearance.

The media disturbs the peaceful life of the Euphrate villagers, allowing them to understand how the outside world views them, but this infuriates Jéromine who does not like this paternalistic view.

Suleyman's body is found on the bank where the pink boot was found.

Ti-Vic blames himself for not having saved the boy when he saw him running in the woods.

In the wake of the journalists causing a ruckus at the town hall, it is decided that their communications post will be stationed outside the village.

The penultimate episode of the season is the most emotional. A secret surrounds the toddler's tragedy. A makeshift morgue has been set up in the clinic to perform the autopsy on Suleyman's body.

Jéromine manages to get into the morgue. Suleyman's family arrives to identify their child's body, only to find him sitting upright, very much alive. As she approaches him, he says: "Jéromine". It is understood that the teenager has brought the child back to life.



Episode 8 - Epilogue

In this final episode, the tone is set for the next season. Jérphine is said to be the daughter of God. She has convinced a large part of her village with the resurrection of Suleyman.

Her most faithful ally is a defrocked priest from Euphrate who immediately reconnects with his lost faith, but a faith renewed by Jérphine, the medium of God. Her most faithful "disciple" is Jacob who found the pink boot with her.

Jérphine knows what she has to do to bring her village into a new era, tending towards a future of self-sufficiency and now linked to that of Nain.





A Few Notes...

About the Narrative Pivot

The drama of Suleyman's disappearance, the crossing of Syrian refugees and the trafficking of children are the narrative mechanisms and triggering events that allow Jérôme to reveal herself as the daughter of "God", who for her, as for us, is in fact the Earth.

About the Chronology

Apart from the first episode (a few days before Day Zero), all the other episodes run through a year in time, culminating in Suleyman's resurrection (Day Zero).

Author's Intention

What if a new incarnation of God came to life? Here at home?

My story takes place in the fictional village of Euphrate in Quebec. My central protagonist is a young 17 year old Quebec girl, named Jérôme. She has strange abilities, and if you can't call them miracles, you sense her divine nature. Also, Jérôme will never say herself that she is the daughter of God, the Earth. It is the others who identify her as such.

A small pink boot lands on the sand of a northern bay reminiscent of the objects lost by thousands of Syrians in the sea during their migration. It is the mechanism linking the characters who gravitate in Jérôme's universe. This boot is also the Ariadne's thread that helps Jérôme to reveal herself as divine and to lead her village towards what could be the promised land.

When I had the idea for this project, I thought it was relevant to link the boot to the crossroads of religions. Jérôme is Catholic and (maybe) the daughter of God, and the pink boot comes from a Muslim child, so the religions will intersect and presumably link.

Finally, I especially find it interesting that in our largely computerized age, social media can report that God's daughter exists and is in our midst. That this incarnation is credible and that it participates in the creation of a new religion in a Quebec still torn by its Catholic identity seems to me an ambitious but fascinating theme to deal with.

Producer's intention

My name is Ghassan Fayad, Founder of Kngfu, a company that produces content for all screens and platforms. Whether it's documentary, fiction, games, apps or VR, all our projects share common values: a social message, a mix of cultures and a singular approach to story and treatment.

It was with great enthusiasm that I accompanied Katherine in the pre-development of La Fille-dé (Dice Girl). As a producer of independent works for more than 15 years, I am always on the lookout for audacious projects with innovative formats that have an intelligent and nuanced discourse on our societies.

La Fille-dé particularly appeals to me. The birth of a prophetess, today, almost by accident, in such an unlikely place and in unexpected circumstances; The spread of the news on a planetary scale in the blink of an eye; The emergence of a new divine mythology at the confluence of cultures and religions; The skilful crossing of cultures and the questions of identity that are at the heart of the story...

For me, La Fille-dé is a contemporary tale, with a universal and intelligent discourse with multiple layers. A tale with endearing characters and a rich drama full of suspense and twists. It is a project that I would like to bring to Kngfu, and above all, in order to give it its full potential, to extend it to an international scale through a co-production with Europe.

Because of my origins and my professional background, I have already built many bridges with Europe and a number of co-productions (France, Germany, Belgium, Colombia, Israel). But, beyond a financial collaboration, and the shooting of an important part of the series in Europe (Iceland, Greenland), I would like La Fille-dé to be the fruit of an enriching collaboration, which will make the project resonate with an international audience.



LA FILLE-DÉ

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