PARTNERS IN TIME

by

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EXT. RURAL COTTAGE - DAY

A quaint cottage sits alone, as if spat from the end of a dirt road where the hints of a small town lie.

If houses could talk, this one would have a southern accent.

The well-worn porch shows its grain in the afternoon sun. A tire swing sways in the merciful breeze, completing an almost perfectly period tableau. Almost.

In the cottage’s shadow is parked a shiny car with no wheels, floating a few feet off the unpaved ground.

This is the future.


Next to the car is space for another in the driveway. A trail of magnetically smoothed dirt leads into the road, as if pressed by a roller.

The breeze’s whisper dies down, leaving an unnerving silence. The nothingness is cut by a barely audible TICKING.

Closer to the house, a small mailbox on a wooden post is visible. The ticking grows LOUDER.

Closer to the mailbox, lovingly painted letters in pastel colors read:

     Mrs. & Mrs. Tilly

The ticking grows to a DEAFENING level. Ambient sounds echo into a vacuum of silence.

Closer on the painted names, the ticking STOPS.

Terrifying silence, closer on the brush strokes of just their titles:

     Mrs. & Mrs.

BOOM.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE:

“PARTNERS IN TIME”
EXT. MAIN STREET - SUNRISE

The blasting ROAR of an engine.

A time-worn and boldly emblazoned SHERIFF’S CRUISER floats down a quintessential small-town main street.

“Mom and pop” shops line the paved thoroughfare, rattled out of their stillness by the thundering engine noise.

A quaint view of a boulevard still sleeping is bisected by an early morning commute.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - SUNRISE

The driver is SHERIFF HARVE BARROW, 50s, side-lit by the rising sun. His cragged face is framed by “salt and pepper” temples and a short-brimmed Stetson.

Aviators mask his eyes, leaving only a grimace below.

One callused mitt clenched to steering wheel, he dispassionately breathes in vapor from his morning coffee.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - MORNING

Barrow SLAMS the door of his cruiser, parked out front of the unassuming, brick-front Sheriff’s Station. He walks stiffly, back cracking with a stretch.

He ratchets out his keys as the grip of his other hand pushes the Station’s front door open, already unlocked.

His perpetually frowning face cracks ever more downward.

BARROW
(sotto)
What the ...

His knees pop as he crouches to set the coffee cup on the ground. He stands up quietly, fist strangling his holstered pistol’s grip.

He breathes in crisply and holds it.

A beat before he loudly PUNCHES the door open, declaring his entrance. He struts though the doorway in a commanding pose: hands on belt with elbows outward.

The silhouette suits him.
INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Barrow struts into the station with imposing steps. He looks
to the single holding cell to his left. Empty. Nobody in the
armory just past. Small place; not many spots to hide.

A leather SQUEAK. Barrow spins more quickly than he should
toward his desk, directly across from the holding cell.

Chair back facing him, the Sheriff can see a pair of shiny
boots propped up on the windowsill behind the desk. He draws
his pistol, cocking the hammer with a threatening CLICK.

LEE
Sheriff Barrow, I presume?

The chair spins around and there sits the smiling visage of:
DEPUTY FRED LEE, late 20s, mustachioed and well-groomed.
Smile from ear to ear. Barrow does not return the favor.

BARROW
Who in the hell are you?
(looking him over)
Where’d you get that uniform?

Lee clears his throat.

LEE
My name’s Fred Lee, and I’m your
new Deputy.

BARROW
(sotto, growling)
I hate that that rhymes.
(louder)
Never had an old Deputy. So how can
I have a new one?

Barrow uncocks his gun, reholstering it. Lee’s smile wavers.

LEE
Wait, you weren’t ribbing? You’re
actually not expecting me?

Lee flips open a leather-sleeved tablet on the desk.

BARROW
Hey, that’s mine …

Lee taps rapidly on the tablet screen.

LEE
Yeah, and judging by the dust, I’ll
wager you didn’t see my transfer.
... and get out of my damn chair.

Barrow takes off his hat and jacket. Throws them on the rack next to the door, which he kicks closed.

Transfer announcement. Unread. Confirmation. Unread. Follow up --

Can only bring myself to fire that thing up once a month. Tops.

Barrow walks up to the front of his desk. Lee’s gaze is locked to the tablet screen.

Guess solar hasn’t made it’s way out here --

WHAM. Barrow slams the tablet cover closed. Lee pulls out his wedged fingers.

You’re off the beaten path now, son. We only just closed our Post Office last year.

On the desk, Barrow’s cell RINGS its default tone. Lee picks it up, but the Sheriff swats it out of his hand, answering.


Click. He shoves the cell in his pocket and grabs the tablet off of his desk.

We got a call, partner?! Let’s --

Barrow takes his sunglasses off, silencing Lee with a stare.

I’m only going to say this once, so listen up, fancy. This ain’t your parish. It’s mine. You ain’t my deputy. What you are ... is gone. If your ass is here when I get back, you won’t have a hole to shit out of. I’m not “ribbin’” and ...

(beat)

EXT. RURAL COTTAGE - DAY

The Sheriff’s cruiser is parked along the dirt road, lights flashing. Remains of the decimated mailbox smoke out front. The splintered post stands charred.

Barrow knocks on the front door.

Muffled sounds of a series of locks hurriedly unlatching issue from behind the door. The brass knocker shakes.

The door opens to reveal a distressed EM TILLY, 40s, crying into a tissue.

EM TILLY
Sheriff, thank God.

Barrow makes no greeting from behind his sunglasses.

INT. RURAL COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

She shows him in. Daintily furnished in yellows and blues, the house displays the evidence of a loving marriage. Twin armchairs. Shared bookshelves. Dining room table for two.

Conspicuously absent are any family photos or portraits. Framed art and rustic artifacts cover the walls.

The Sheriff is painfully out of place, his gun hand habitually propped up on his holster. He firmly clenches his tablet in his free hand, squeaking against its leather case.

BARROW
Can’t say I was in the neighborhood. None out here.

JO TILLY
And I do thank you, Sheriff.

He makes no move to console the weeping woman as she closes the door and moves toward the kitchen. She blows her nose.

BARROW
If your pourin’, I’ll take a tea.

Barrow catches her off guard. He barks more than speaks.

EM TILLY
Yes, uh, I was just about to -- sweet?

BARROW
No.
He sits awkwardly on a small floral couch in the living room. A squatting giant, his knees jut up too high.

She pulls a pitcher out of the refrigerator and pours him a glass. The ice cubes clank against the glass with her jittering hands.

She sets the sweating glass on a coaster in front of him.

EM TILLY
(sniffling)
Lemon?

He ignores her.

BARROW
Why don’t you tell me what happened here today, Miss ... ?

She sits down in the armchair across from him.

EM TILLY
Tilly. Em. Uh, Emily, that is. Missus.

He looks over the top of his sunglasses and notices she isn’t wearing a wedding ring. His brow scrunches. He taps into a memo on his tablet.

BARROW
Go on then, Missus Tilly.

EM TILLY
I was waiting for Jo to get home, and I heard a ... it sounded like a gunshot, but I guess it was an --

She turns to look out the front window. A car pulls into the driveway. It powers down and hurried feet rush to the door.

Em stands as JO TILLY, 30s, rushes into the living room and embraces her tightly. The crying women kiss.

They pull apart to reveal a grimacing Sheriff. He’s taken his sunglasses off and glares at the couple.

BARROW
I think I have everything I need.

He violently grips his tablet shut with a loud SLAP.
INT. SHERIFF’S STATION

Lee rocks back and forth in Barrow’s chair. His eyes scan the room. Barrow lives here. Documents are unattended to, but the floors are polished. Holding cell cot neatly tucked.

His eyes lock on gleaming gunmetal in the armory. Swinging himself up, he crosses to lean on the armory’s door frame. It’s dark. Polished receivers are a glint in his eye.

LEE
(sotto)
Cleanliness is next to godliness...

He runs a hand over the barrel of a shotgun; one in a line. He plucks it off its rack, spins the rifle. Ends in faux aim.

Click. Fires off an invisible round.

LEE
Nope.

He focuses past the barrel at an evidence locker at the end of the room. Thinking, he spins the rifle back into the rack.

BACK AT THE DESK:  Lee looks through drawers. He finds an old ring of keys. Grinning, he tosses them up and catches them with a snap.


A bag stuffed behind boxes catches his eye. He grabs it, unzips and pulls out a rumpled ball of black fabric. He smooths it out to reveal a tattered black hood with a mesh eye-and-nose opening in the shape of a cross.

His brow furrows and he replaces it, bothered.

Spinning the key ring in his hand, he considers the empty station and walks over to the holding cell. Fingers across the bars, he unlocks and swings open the well-oiled door.

He leans on the opening, looking inside.

LEE
Why’s a Sheriff like him need a holding cell?

A shift of his head and **Sheriff Barrow is revealed STANDING RIGHT BEHIND HIM.**
BARROW

For this.

Barrow KICKS Lee into the cell, closes and locks it in one move. Lee falls to the floor, catches himself on his palms and rolls over with a squeal.

LEE

Crazy old bastard --

Barrow casually takes off his hat and jacket and tosses them onto the rack. He takes his sweet time crossing to the desk before sitting down and reclining in his chair.

BARROW

I told you.

Lee stands up, brushing his hands off on his pants.

LEE

You might play renegade out here, but this isn’t up to you --

BARROW

Yes it is.

LEE

I am --

BARROW                        LEE
No you’re not.                -- your deputy.

LEE

YOU NEED ME.

A beat. Barrow removes his sunglasses and leans forward.

BARROW

Try that again.

Lee presses his face to the bars, as close as he can be.

LEE

You’ve played the game. A long time. Best there is, you figure, and you’d probably figure right. (gulp)

But the game has changed. (beat)

You can feel it. You’ve spent your life looking the ugliest side of it in the face, but now ... there’s something else. There’s something worse growing out there.
EXT. WOODS - DUSK

Bright red sneakers are dragged through muddy grass by two flanking sets of worn, high-lace workbooks.

The sneakers belong to a TERRIFIED TEEN boy, gagged. The two meaty hands gripping his arms belong to BRUTES dressed in tattered suit jackets.

One is BEARDED and the other is SMILEY.

BEARDED BRUTE
Don’t lie to him.

SMILEY BRUTE
Everyone knows.

The teen raises his beaten head as best he can.

BEARDED BRUTE
The whole Clan, by now.

They drag him deeper through the woods, toward a clearing ahead. The trees get farther apart leading toward an ABANDONED MAIL SORTING FACILITY.

The teen’s eyes widen as he sees the dilapidated building. He tries to speak through his gag, unsuccessfully.

SMILEY BRUTE
Hush. You knew what was coming.

They drag him across the clearing and his protestations grow louder. Smiley shrugs at Beard, who promptly lays a silencing PUNCH across the teen’s jaw.

The teen falls limp as they enter the facility.

INT. SORTING FACILITY - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

The teen’s feet scrape through layers of dirt and debris. Patterns of light spot the floor through eroded holes in the wall and ceiling. Planks cover the already sparse windows.

They drop him on a couch, one of many out-of-place pieces of furniture filling the room. A cobbled-together gathering space. Curious looks from hiding CHILDREN peek over the backs of armchairs and sidetables.

The Brutes pop their heads through a set of towering, ornately-carved doors -- mismatched and bolted to a wall.

Beard turns back to the Teen and gestures him come.
INT. LAIR – DUSK

The last streaks of daylight dance across the large room filled with makeshift pews, leading to an elevated platform.

On the platform is a wooden THRONE, constructed in a fashion more akin to a rocking chair. On the throne sits an imposing figure, left mostly in shadow. This is LOUIS HELLMAN.

At his feet are two conservatively dressed MAIDS. A few other CLAN MEMBERS spread throughout the benches, observing.

HELLMAN

Come.

His voice is deep and practiced, reaching across the room.

At the door, the Smiley Brute cuts the Teen’s tied hands free, pushing him down the center aisle toward Hellman. He resists, turning back. Beard produces a shotgun.

The Teen inches like a death-row inmate. He kneels before the platform, trembling. Tears run down into his mouth gag.

Hellman stands, coming closer the light.

His three-piece suit is threadbare and muted, drawing the eye directly to the black hood topping off his figure. It’s the hood from the evidence locker, piercing eyes and flaring nose visible through the mesh cross. He holds up a Bible.

HELLMAN

You know Leviticus. And yet ...

He descends stairs and leans down to the Teen.

HELLMAN

You were seen with the Reeves boy. Did you think your fellow Clansmen would stay silent?

He beckons the brutes with a single wave. They hurry.

HELLMAN

Since you seem to have a liking for that sting ...

Hellman grabs the Brute’s shotgun as they push the Teen to the ground, turning him over. Without hesitation, Hellman places the barrel at the backside of the teen’s pants.

HELLMAN

“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind.”
The Teen screams through his gag.

    HELLMAN
    “It is abomination.”

BLAM.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - MORNING

Barrow drives. Lee is in the passenger seat. Awkward silence.

    LEE
    So, lay of the land today?

No response from Barrow. Gulp.

    LEE
    I ought to get to know the county.

    BARROW
    Parish.

    LEE
    Whoa there, Sheriff. You let me out of the cell.

    BARROW
    No. “Parish.” St. Joan is a Parish. No “counties” in Louisiana.

    LEE
    Got it.

    BARROW
    And don’t take me letting you out of that cell the wrong way. This is a ... probationary period.

Long beat. Lee looks out the window.

    LEE
    You’re a merciful human being.

    BARROW
    I’ve been called worse.

Lee links his hands, knuckles cracking with a bend.

    LEE
    Can I ask you about something? (beat)
    The black hood?
BARROW
Went through my evidence locker?

LEE
Is it what I think it is?

BARROW
Should have kept you locked up.

LEE
The Clan?

Barrow takes a moment to phrase before responding.

BARROW
I don’t make it my business.

Lee shifts his weight toward Barrow, interested.

LEE
Is it true? Are they back? You hear things in the city, Barrow.

BARROW
That why you’re not up there now? Hear too much?

Lee shifts back.

LEE
No.

BARROW
I suggest you keep in the plugs if you ever want to get back there.

LEE
You can’t get rid of me that easily.

BARROW
You’d be surprised.

Barrow tightens his fists on the steering wheel. Lee sighs.

LEE
Well, you might not make it your business, but what happens when you can’t hide out here anymore? (beat)
What happens if you have to choose a side?
EXT. ROAD - DAY

The cruiser coasts down a paved road toward town. Dark clouds on the horizon ominously exude guttural thunder.

A sign reads:

“Welcome to St. Joan”

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

At the far end of town, main street in the distance, the gas station has four surprisingly familiar pumps. At the end of the line is a single, neglected electrical charging station with a home-printed “OUT OF ORDER” sign taped to it.

The Sheriff’s cruiser pulls up, jolting to a harsh stop. Lee rattles like a bobblehead in the passenger seat.

Barrow gets out, slamming the door as he walks around the back of the cruiser. He flips open the fuel cap and swipes a card in front of the pump’s zeroed display.

Lee rolls down the passenger side window.

LEE
So, this a “one street” town?

BARROW
Pretty much.

LEE
I’ll bet all the action out here is on the fringes, eh? Backwood stuff.

Barrow finishes, slaps the gas cap closed and gets back into the cruiser, firing it to life.

BARROW
Not much to see. Where to?

Lee’s attention is distracted by they gas pump display: the numbers on the readout are zipping up and down rapidly, until finally landing back on the purchase price. Weird.

BARROW
Deputy.

His gaze is broken. He turns back to Barrow, mind foggy.

LEE
Sorry. You said something earlier about a Post Office?
EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

The cruiser pulls up in front of the building. Weeds have taken over. Lee and Barrow get out.

BARROW
Why’d you want to come here?

Lee smiles, a little embarrassed.

LEE
I’ve never seen one.

Barrow shakes his head.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

The post office is abandoned. Empty. Picked-over. Natural growth of just over a year peppers the corners. Cracked light fixtures expose their lack of bulbs.

Light spills through the front glass door. Unlocked, Lee and Barrow enter.

BARROW
We were the last state in the union to accept the national fibernet.

LEE
Global at this point. After you guys, I think Antarctica was the last hold out. Not by choice.

BARROW
Kept this place going. Hrm. That was my P.O. box.

Barrow gives a reminiscing touch to a brass box on a wall of dozens. Pulls it open. Empty.

LEE
Don’t mind marching against time?

Barrow closes the box.

BARROW
I don’t march against anything.

Lee looks around, curiously turning a corner.

Barrow stays in the main room.
LEE
So, that call the other day. The mailbox bomb.

BARROW
What about it?

LEE
Whoever did it, you think they hacked one of the parcel drones?

BARROW
Yeah, it’s called walking up to a mailbox and putting a bomb in it.

Something on a wall in the back room catches Lee’s eye.

LEE
Barrow, in here.

Barrow enters. Looks at the wall. Blank save for a large, spray-painted graffiti symbol: a skull with a cross covering its eyes and teeth, in same position as the Clan hood.

BARROW
Yeah?

LEE
You know what this is.

BARROW
What, you want to hunt down every graffiti artist in the parish?

LEE
Dammit, you know what I mean.

Barrow leans in to Lee.

BARROW
Drop it.

LEE
Is that all you do, Sheriff? If you’re dropping everything, what do you pick up and DO?

BARROW
When I’m not pickin’ up and drivin’ your car-less ass around, city boy ... I walk my beat.

LEE
What, exactly, is your “beat?”
INT. DINER - DAY

Barrow and Lee sit at a booth in a classic diner. Chrome and leather. WAITRESSES in short skirts. One of them, DUSTY, sets a mug of coffee down in front of Barrow.

BARROW

Thank you kindly, Dusty.

DUSTY

Surely, Sheriff!

Dusty smiles and leaves. Lee looks at him incredulously.

LEE

... hell of a beat.

Barrow lifts up his mug. Breathes in the vapors. Sips without blowing on it. Gulps.

BARROW

Sure you should be casting stones?

LEE

I can’t be the first.

BARROW

I’m not the one that got spit out. I chose to be here.

LEE

That your way of asking a question?

BARROW

Nah. I got a pretty solid notion why you’re not up there anymore.

LEE

And I figure you’re down here because you’ve always been here.

BARROW

Figure again. Startin’ and endin’ somewhere ain’t “always been.”

LEE

Care to fill in the middle?

BARROW

No.

Lee shakes his head. Someone sitting at the counter catches his eye. It’s the Bearded Brute. His sleeve is rolled up, partially exposing a tattoo: the skull cross symbol.
Lee’s eyes widen.

LEE
Check out the beard at the bar.

BARROW
I don’t give a shit about your bear tastes. Don’t ask don’t tell, son.

LEE
(groans)
No. The tattoo.

BARROW
Yeah, I seen him around.

LEE
How would you like to do some actual work?

BARROW

LEE
Keeping me around just to cut me loose?

BARROW
Honestly? I’m keepin’ you around ‘cause you got muscle and mine’s dyin’. You might as well use it.

Lee squints. Not sure how to feel about that.

LEE
Now we’re talking. Can I get a car?

BARROW
Don’t push it.

Takes another sip of coffee.

LEE
Affirmative.

Lee gets out of the booth. Barrow grabs his wrist.

BARROW
I’m givin’ you an inch, but don’t expect me to back you up when shit goes south.

Lee leans down, returning Barrow’s look.
LEE
No need to drag you into my shit. You already wallow in your own.

He pulls his wrist free, walking toward the counter. The Bearded Brute takes a big bite out of a hamburger, juices spilling down his beard onto the plate. Lee sits down at the counter next to him.

LEE
Nice tat.

He turns and sees Lee’s uniform.

BEARDED BRUTE
(mouth full)
Thank ya ... Dep-you-tee.

LEE
You want to come out and tell me about it?

The Brute’s eyes narrow. He begins to stand, Lee following. He towers over Lee, who instinctively moves his hand toward his holstered pistol. Silence in the diner.

The Brute SWINGS a fist at Lee, who blocks it with a quaking arm. Feeling the room tremble, Lee sees a rattling clock on the wall out of the corner of his eye.

He’s distracted as he notices the hands are moving backwards.

Seizing the opportunity, the Brute PUNCHES Lee across the face, sending him spinning onto the floor, blood spouting.

Lee writhes on the floor. The Brute KICKS him in the stomach. Groaning, Lee curls down as the Brute STOMPS his face back. The boot’s tread slices above Lee’s eyebrow.

Dusty stands on top of the counter and shouts.

DUSTY
That’s it, OUT!

BEARDED BRUTE
Keep him on a leash, Sheriff.

The Brute wipes crumbs off his mouth and tromps out the back. Barrow bends over, helping Lee up and out the door. Face bloodied, Lee looks back at the clock. It’s ticking normally.

The door closes with a chime.
INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE – DAY

Lee sits on an examination table, his wounds being tended by DOCTOR KELLEY, 40s, brunette with streaks of gray in a bun. Her respectably aged hands move with precision.

Barrow leans next to the window facing them, arms crossed.

DR. KELLEY
Looks like you found yourself on the wrong end of a boot, Deputy.

She snips the clear thread from a stitch.

DR. KELLEY
Best try and keep those on the ground from now on.

BARROW
Sage advice, Doctor Kelley.

DR. KELLEY
You can keep the sweet talk, Harve.

She smiles and exits the room.

LEE
Did you see ...

BARROW
You get the mud kicked out of you?
(a sniff of a laugh)
Yeah, I saw that.

LEE
The clock?

Dr. Kelley comes back in with a bandage tape roll.

LEE
I felt the room shake, and then --

DR. KELLEY
There was a quake a bit ago, wasn’t there? Thought it might’ve been a rig driving by.

BARROW
What else could it be, Lee?

LEE
I don’t know.
Kelley finishes taping him up.

DR. KELLEY
Be seein’ you Sunday, Harve?

BARROW
Yes, ma’am. Deputy Lee’l be joining us as well.

LEE
Sunday?

DR. KELLEY
Sunday service with Pastor Maria.

BARROW
Though, Dolores, I must admit, you’re a better lady Doctor than she is a lady Pastor.

DR. KELLEY
After all these years, you still think that’s a compliment.

She playfully pokes Barrow’s chin and exits.

LEE
Church?

Lee hops off the table, holding his tender gut.

LEE
I don’t think so, Barrow.

Barrow pushes himself off the wall, putting on his hat and heading for the door.

BARROW
Stop thinkin’, Lee.

Barrow puts on his sunglasses at looks back at Lee.

BARROW
You THOUGHT you’d take on the Clan startin’ at the bottom, and all you got was the bottom of a shoe.

LEE
That just how you wanted it?

Barrow turns. Lee spots a barely perceptible smirk on him.

BARROW
Come Sunday, we’re goin’ to church.
EXT. CHURCH - SUNRISE

The church is modest, with three small spires up front and thin stained glass windows lining each side. A single set of wooden doors greet the arriving CONGREGATION.

Thunder threatens from the horizon. Storm clouds loom just beyond the church, a contrast to the visibly rising sun.

Lee and Barrow walk down a line of cars parked in the dirt lot next to the church. The cruiser shrinks behind them as Lee is visibly impressed. Dozens of cars are packed in like piano keys. More than he’d expect for a town this size.

They turn to the front of the church where PASTOR MARIA, 30s, stands with a smile and a nod for each incoming townsperson. She’s a petite lady with kind eyes and shortly worn platinum hair that matches her white clerical collar.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

The sun casts patterns of color through the stained glass windows. A religious kaleidoscope is projected on the rows of pews stuffed with people.

Lee heads for an open seat in the back row, but Barrow keeps walking toward the front. Lee reluctantly follows.

Barrow takes a seat in the front row, patting the empty space next to him. Lee forces a smile and nods at those seated around him.

Lee leans over to whisper in Barrow’s ear.

LEE
For a hermit, you don’t seem to mind being front and center.

Barrow turns to him. Lee leans back.

BARROW
Hermit to the world maybe, but not here. I’m a public figure. Now so are you.

LEE
You can’t hide from the other people in your hiding place. Cute.

BARROW
I do my duty. Do yours and shut up.
Pastor Maria closes the doors and makes her way to the front of the Church. She stands behind the pulpit, which is sat simply on the same level as the rest of the church.

Lee looks around the room, taking note of the stained glass windows. Each represents the imagery of disparate faiths.

PASTOR MARIA
Good Morning, St. Joan.

Mostly grumbles from the crowd. A few boisterous early risers.

PASTOR MARIA
What was that? I said, “GOOD MORNING, ST. JOAN!”

An overlapping muddle of morning greetings answers back, louder this time. Barrow barks. Lee tries to hide laughter.

Pastor Maria smiles.

PASTOR MARIA
That’ll do. Welcome all. Before we begin today, I’d like to introduce a new member of our congregation: Deputy Fred Lee.


PASTOR MARIA
Welcome him here as you will about town. He will be serving with Sheriff Barrow.

Barrow coughs, pipping up.

BARROW
Ah, the Deputy is currently in a probationary period. To be clear.

Maria nods to show she understands, placating the Sheriff.

PASTOR MARIA
It’s a blessing to have you with us, Mister Lee.

(to everyone)
As you all have no doubt heard, an attack has recently befallen one of our recent neighbors. Though the Tillys do not actively attend service here, we must keep them in our thoughts and prayers.
Pastor Maria takes a minute before continuing, more gravely. The rising sun is obscured by moving clouds, muting colors.

PASTOR MARIA
And for those of you with kin that participated in this attack and others like it ... or perhaps those of you yourself involved ... think hard on today’s message. Meditate or pray on it as you will.

(beat)
For those that judge others will not be judged here. But neither will they be welcome.

She gives a moment to let this sink into the room.

THUNDER RUMBLES, the room giving a slight tremble. Lee’s brow furrows. He sits up at attention.

PASTOR MARIA
Let us begin. When --

CLASH. Thunder quakes the church, shattering the windows inward.

Multi-colored shards fly everywhere as Lee LEAPS up from his seat to block Pastor Maria with his body. He closes his eyes tightly and then ... silence.

He opens his eyes; sees Barrow looking at him incredulously. Lee looks up to see:

The shards of glass floating, suspended in mid-air.

The entire congregation is awestruck at the sight. Thunder sounds again, distorted this time. Drawn out. The rumble is almost ... reversed.

The shards begin to move slowly back toward the windows, reassembling themselves.

BARROW
Everybody OUT.

Shaken out of their shock, everyone flees to the doors. Almost half are able to stream out as the final pieces of broken glass lock themselves back in to form the windows.

An even more deafening BLAST of thunder and the windows repeat their explosion. People run faster out as the flying blades cut through clothes and slice flesh.

INT. SHERIFF’S STATION – DAY

Barrow sits behind his desk. He’s holding a bandage up to his cheek. Lee sits in a chair pulled up next to him, not looking any better. They’re bloody messes.

BARROW
What in the hell was that?

LEE
I don’t know.

BARROW
Mass hallucination?

LEE
We got some scrapes that would suggest otherwise.

Barrow nods in agreement.

BARROW
Can’t argue with that.

Barrow checks the bandage. Replaces it.

A painful beat of thinking.

LEE
... magic -- ?

BARROW
Shut the fuck up.

Barrow doesn’t tolerate that shit.

LEE
You got a better answer?

Barrow sits up in his chair. Looks authoritative.

BARROW
This is obviously some kind of ... natural phenomenon.

Lee scoffs.

LEE
Natural? Have you seen many naturally occurring glass windows that break and then put themselves back together? If anything was ever SUPERnatural --
BARROW
Cut that out. No speculation. We just need to figure out what in the hell it is. And how to stop it from happening again.

Barrow gets up out of his chair.

LEE
Do we?

BARROW
What do you mean? Of course we do.

Lee stands and faces him.

LEE
I mean, is this ... bigger than us?

Barrow isn’t happy at this. Hands on belt.

BARROW
You wanna call in the Feds?

LEE
Why not?

BARROW
This is OUR parish --

LEE
(surprised)
Our?

BARROW
Don’t even. This is MY parish. I don’t want BIGGER. This won’t get BIGGER. Not if we don’t let it.

Lee nods it off. Doesn’t want to argue it anymore.

LEE
You’re the boss, Sheriff. I doubt this was an isolated incident. Surprised we haven’t gotten calls.

BARROW
Turned the cell off.

Lee shakes his head, frustrated. He swats the cell off the desk and powers it up. They both watch as the “missed call” notification tacks up. And up. And up.

They look at each other. Time to get to work.
EXT. PARK - DAY

A small park rests a few blocks off the main street. Lined by trees, residential streets can be seen beyond.

Barrow and Lee exit the cruiser, slamming their doors at the sight of a group of TOWNSFOLK circled around something. The air is still upon their approach, but a sharp wind picks up as they reach the outer circle of the group.

Everyone’s chatting frantically. Most in the front row of the circle are using their phones to take video of something below. Barrow doesn’t look happy.

BARROW
Where’s the Liddell girl?

No response from the crowd. Barrow and Lee give each other a frustrated glance.

LEE
HEY!

Nothing. Barrow’s had enough. He whips out his pistol and FIRES a shot in the air. The crowd disperses, revealing:

A dog, running in a circle. Backwards.

The wind is strongest around the point the dog circles. The Sheriff kneels down, examining the dog’s path. Lee looks up at the spottily stormy sky.

A young girl, ALICE, 9, walks up to the Sheriff.

ALICE
I’m here, Sheriff.

Barrow turns to her. Lee removes the crowd from the park.

BARROW
You called this in. That was a good thing to do. Sorry about everyone else. Tell me what happened?

She’s clearly upset, stuttering over her words.

ALICE
It was nice out, so Walker and I were playin’. Then it got all stormy and he started running around. Then he just stopped. Like, frozen.
BARROW
That when he started doin’ this?

ALICE
Yeah. Can you help him?

Lee rejoins them.

BARROW
We’re going to do our best.

Barrow stands.

LEE
Not sure that’s the best idea, Sheriff.

BARROW
Why the hell not? I’m getting her dog back.

LEE
We don’t know enough. What if --

BARROW
“What if” can wait.

Barrow rolls up his sleeves and starts picking up sticks from ground. He kneels down again, following the path of the dog with his eyes.


LEE
Wait with her.

Barrow goes to the cruiser and pops the trunk. He ruffles around and pulls out a small sack. He slams the trunk shut and hurries back over.

Lee is curious. From the sack, Barrow produces an worn-out baseball. He smiles. Lee shakes his head.

BARROW
Your dog like baseballs?

She shrugs. Barrow grips the ball, lining his fingers carefully up with the stitches. He pitches it past the dog. The dog TWITCHES, instinctively leaping out of its loop to bite the ball it its mouth.

The girl runs and embraces her dog. Barrow takes out his phone, scrolling to the next call. Back to the cruiser.
LEE
At least it was just a dog.

Barrow grunts.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOME - DAY

A worried couple, MR. AND MRS. GALE, late 40s, sit on their porch, waiting. The cruiser parks on the street in front of their house, and they stand to greet Barrow and Lee.

Mrs. Gale is a wreck. Tear-swollen eyes. Mr. Gale has his arm around her.

Barrow tips his hat.

BARROW
Mister and Misses Gale.

MR. GALE
Sheriff.

They shake.

BARROW
This is Deputy Lee.

Nods.

MRS. GALE
Thank you both for coming. I didn’t know who else I could call.

BARROW
Everyone’s in a bit of a fuss today, Misses Gale.

LEE
Where is she?

Mr. and Mrs. Gale look at each other.

MR. GALE
We’ll take you around back.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOME - BACK YARD - DAY

Their backyard is huge. A hill with no fence behind.

As they walk around the side of the house, they can see on top of the hill is a magnificent old tree. As they circle it, they are slowly able to see:
The largest branch of the tree has a plank swing attached. Their daughter, DOROTHY, 6, is swinging. She swings back and forth once before JUMPING out of the swing.

Mid jump, she FREEZES, suspended in the air. She then REVERSES, back into the swing.

She’s caught in a never-ending loop.

They feel the same cut of the wind as they approach her. They look up and note similarly isolated darkness above.

Mrs. Gale bursts into tears at the sight.

MRS. GALE
What’s happening to her?

BARROW
We saw something similar at the park earlier today.

LEE
Not exactly similar. That was a dog.

MR. GALE
Is there anything we can do?

LEE
We’re just investigating, Mr. Gale.
It would be too --

BARROW
Like hell.

Barrow starts rolling up his sleeves. He backs down the hill, readying himself to charge. Lee stands in his way.

LEE
We have no idea what we’re dealing with. You could --

BARROW
I could save her.

Barrow’s death stare. Lee lowers his head and backs down.

The Gale’s step back to give Barrow room. He breathes, readying himself. CHARGING up the hill, he JUMPS as the girl LEAPS off the swing, catching her in his arms.

THUNDER CRACKS and then dissipates. The parents rush to their shaking daughter. Hugs and kisses and thanks.
INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Barrow and Lee enter the medium-sized library. A dozen or so geometrically arranged rows of bookshelves. Empty and quiet.
Barrow waves at the Librarian, MS. ISAAC, 60s.

MS. ISAAC
Afternoon Sheriff.

BARROW
Afternoon. Got anything on meteorology, weather patterns, things like that?

MS. ISAAC
Your Deputy couldn’t Google it for you, Harve?

LEE
You might’ve noticed we’re having some signal disruptions and other weather ... anomalies.

MS. ISAAC
I hadn’t. Down past Fiction. Third shelf up, on the right.

Barrow nods thanks. He stomps down to the aisle, scanning the shelf quickly, grabbing a handful of books. He takes a seat in a study cubicle. Starts reading.

Lee peruses the aisles. Finds himself in Fiction.

Stops on the Sci-fi shelf. Thinks a moment. Moves his finger alphabetically along the authors until he reaches “W.” Slows as he reaches “Wells, H.G.”

His eyes widen with a thought.

Lee plants himself in the study cubicle next to Barrow.

LEE
I know you said we shouldn’t speculate --

BARROW
We shouldn’t. Gettin’ some facts will be quite enough.

LEE
If you’re going to keep endangering people’s lives, don’t you think we should at least talk about what might be going on?
BARROW
Keep your magic to yourself, Lee.

LEE
Not that. Not exactly.

Barrow is curious. He leans back past the cubicle divider.

BARROW
That the stench of a thought I smell?

LEE
If you could travel back ...

BARROW

LEE
Hear me out. If you could go back in time ... wouldn’t you want to stop someone responsible for starting a war?

Barrow thinks.

BARROW
Sure, I might’ve fantasized about killing Hitler when I was a kid. Who hasn’t?

LEE
Exactly.

BARROW
Exactly nothing. Even if I entertained your piss-ant notion, this “traveler,” no matter how noble his intentions, is tearing this town apart.

LEE
Think it’s going to come to that?

BARROW
If we don’t figure out what’s causing it. And it ain’t no time traveler. One little hole in your theory: we ain’t in no civil war.

Lee looks Barrow straight in the eye.

LEE
How do you think they start?
EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - SUNSET

The cruiser ZOOMS past the station.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Lee looks out the window, confused.

LEE
Are we not going back to the station?

BARROW
No.

EXT. BARROW’S HOUSE - NIGHT

Barrow’s house is a squat, single story with a four-car wide garage. An untended, overgrown garden covers its face.

The cruiser pulls into the driveway. Parks.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Barrow looks straight forward. Lee looks at him.

BARROW
I saw you jump in front of the Pastor. No time to think. Just on instinct. I noticed.

LEE
Thank you?

Barrow looks into his lap.

BARROW

LEE
You’re not coming?

BARROW
You’re on your own with this one. I’m NOT takin' on the Clan, and I don’t buy your crazy-ass theory. St. Joan needs savin’. I plan to.
LEE
Well, I appreciate your permission.

Barrow sighs.

BARROW
I’m not just giving you my permission.

Barrow clicks the garage door opener on the sun flap.

EXT. BARROW’S HOUSE – CONTINUOUS
The garage door opens to reveal a covered car.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER – CONTINUOUS
Lee’s jaw literally drops.

BARROW
It’s a loaner.

Lee jumps out of the cruiser.

EXT. BARROW’S HOUSE – CONTINUOUS
Barrow follows Lee to the car. He pulls off the cover, revealing: a classic 2014 Mustang. Wheels and everything. Sleek and charcoal gray.

LEE
You don’t even have to say it. Not a scratch, fill up the tank, all that Jazz.

Barrow tosses him the keys.

BARROW
Yeah, you know what happens if you don’t take care of her.

LEE
She got a name?

BARROW
Pearl.

Lee smiles.

LEE
Thanks, Barrow.
EXT. MAIN STREET - SUNRISE

Lee drives the ‘Stang down main street. All smiles behind the wheel. Gets some judgemental looks from passers-by.

INT. BAR - SUNRISE

The bar is a long, over-cluttered hallway. Not a lot of room to move. Lee takes a seat at the bar. A few barflies passed out at the far end.

JESS THE BARTENDER, 20s, greets Lee. She’s got the look of having been here all night.

JESS THE BARTENDER
What can I get you, Deputy?

He leans in toward her.

LEE
I’m on duty. Pour me something that looks like whiskey.

She nods.

JESS THE BARTENDER
(loudly)
One iced tea, coming up!

LEE
Yeah, thanks a lot.

She slaps down the tea, in a tall glass with a lemon slice and tiny pink umbrella. He plucks out the umbrella and crushes it in his hand. Tosses it aside.

A young punk, WHITNEY, late teens, sidles up next to Lee. Her face has the same look of having been here all night.

WHITNEY
Hey there.

Lee sips his tea.

WHITNEY
You’re a cop.

LEE
You’re observant.

WHITNEY
Sweet talker!
LEE
Not your type.

She reseats herself. Hungover.

WHITNEY
Don’t be so sure.

LEE
I am. You from around here?

WHITNEY
Yep.

LEE
Ever run in with the wrong sort?

WHITNEY
I AM the wrong sort. Who do you mean?

LEE
The Clan.

WHITNEY
Oh. Yeah.

She’s uncomfortable.

LEE
Any around here?

She looks around.

WHITNEY
Nah. You can always tell. Wanna see some tonight?

He nods. She sticks her hand in his pant pocket and pulls out his phone. She taps in her number and sets in on the bar.

WHITNEY
Ditch the threads.

She pushes herself up and turns to leave.

LEE
I was wrong.

She stops. Looks confused.

LEE
You’re just what I was looking for.
EXT. LOCAL NEWS STATION - DAY


INT. LOCAL NEWS STATION - LOBBY - DAY

Barrow stands at the front desk, ditsy SECRETARY behind.

SECRETARY
Who are you looking for?

BARROW
You’ve got to have some kind of meteorologist on staff.

Blank stare.

BARROW
A weather man. You’ve got a weatherman?

SECRETARY
Oh! One moment please.

She clicks an intercom. Barrow sits and cracks open one of his books from the library.

SECRETARY
Sandy, Sheriff Barrow is here to see you.

EILEEN (V.O.)
(muffled)
Send him in.

INT. LOCAL NEWS STATION - OFFICE - DAY

The “weatherman,” SANDY, 30s, stands behind her desk. She’s facing a projection wall, manipulating information on a map.

SANDY
Excuse my mess, Sheriff. Busy day.

BARROW
No doubt. What’ve you heard?

SANDY
Lot of rumors floating around.

BARROW
Can I ask your expert opinion?
She stops playing with her map and turns to him.

SANDY
I’m afraid I’m not an expert in mass hysteria, Sheriff.

BARROW
Your amateur opinion then?

She sits down across from him.

SANDY
What are you asking me, Sheriff?

BARROW
Forget rumor. Things are happening. I want to know why.

SANDY
I’m sorry, I don’t know why.

Barrow is getting annoyed. He sits forward.

BARROW
There’s got to be something. Something I can FOLLOW. Something I can TRACK.

SANDY
I can track storms. I don’t chase ‘em, but I can track ‘em. But you’re not trying to track a storm. It’s what came after.

BARROW
Which is WHAT?

SANDY
We’re getting into fringe sciences, Sheriff. Not popular in my field.

BARROW
I’m not in your field.

SANDY
If I were you ... I’d try to find a way to track Tachyon particles. That’s your problem.

BARROW
Why is that a problem?

SANDY
Nobody knows if they exist.
INT. LEE’S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Small hotel room. Lee sits on the edge of the bed. A closet is in front of him. He runs his hands through his hair. He stands and looks down, considering his uniform.

He opens the closet in front of him: an extra uniform and ... nothing else. Empty.

Thinking, he goes over to the room phone and dials the front desk. Waits for a greeting.

   LEE
   Hi. How far is the nearest department store?

He checks his watch.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Lee is dressed in an awkward selection of clothes that betrays an identity crisis.

He stands in a crowded line of teens and twenty-somethings waiting to gain entry to the warehouse. Colored lights and a pulsing beat seep from a rolled up delivery gate.

A glowing buzz in the pocket of his too-tight pants. He checks his phone. A text:

   Knock, knock.

A tap on his shoulder. He turns. Whitney. Hair brighter and clothes punkier than her wilted appearance in the bar.

   WHITNEY
   I half expected you to show up in your blues and browns.

   LEE
   I can play.

   WHITNEY
   We’ll see. Nice pants. Where you hiding your badge?

   LEE
   No spoilers.

She laughs.
INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A full-on RAVE. The intensity of which could only come from a packed group of repressed southerners.

The floor is a seething wave of humanity. On the stage, a MASKED HOUSE DUO mixes. Redneck Daft Punk.

Lee and Whitney wade into the chaos.

She starts looking around. She spots a group of serious looking guys in black tee shirts. She gets Lee’s attention and gestures to them with her head. Lee looks.

He leans down to her, yelling over the crowd.

LEE
Not my type.

WHITNEY
No. Look.

She points out their visible tatoos. Clansmen. They stick out of the crowd. Most of them have about as much rhythm as they do hair.

Lee gives her a peck on the cheek and leaves her alone. She watches him go, consumed by the crowd.

Approaching the group of Clansmen, Lee banks right, circling around them. As he curves through people, he can see that his old friend The Bearded Brute is among them. As their group sticks out from the crowd, he sticks out among them.

Beard spots him watching them. Beckons the group to follow him. They stalk toward Lee, who starts maneuvering toward the back door.

The Clansmen push people out of the way, clearing a path that allows them to catch up to Lee. He faced them. A dance-floor altercation ensues, knocking over nearby dancers.

Lee blocks an few hits, but takes more. Lands on the ground. A few kicks later, the Clansmen move on.

On the floor, Lee opens his eyes. He sees them exit through the back door. He smiles and hops up. He’s fine.

Helping up other fallen dancers around him, Lee makes his way to the back door. He opens it, seeing the last of them mount their motorcycles and trail behind Beard’s raised Truck.

Lee follows.
EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Barrow pulls the cruiser up to the Diner. He’s about to shift into park. Through the window, he can see Dusty inside, serving a milkshake.

He thinks. Shifts into reverse.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Barrow sits where Lee had sat before. Jess behind the bar.

JESS THE BARTENDER
Today must be a hard day for law enforcement.

BARROW

Jess fills him a glass. Cuts the foam with her finger and licks it off. Slides it to him.

A RAGGED BARFLY is slouched on the stool next to Barrow.

JESS THE BARTENDER
Anything else I can get for you, Sheriff?

Barrow gulps his beer. He lets the foam mustache stay on him for a moment.

BARROW
Not unless you know someone that can build me a device to track tachyon particles.

Wipes off the foam mustache.

JESS THE BARTENDER
Not going to lie, Sheriff. I don’t know what that means.

BARROW
Theoretical physics, Jess. No one does.

RAGGED BARFLY
You need Lightning.

Barrow is surprised.

BARROW
Thought you were asleep.
RAGGED BARFLY
On and off. I’m either catchin’ Zs or droppin’ eves. Sounds like you need LIGHTNING.

BARROW
Tell me something I don’t know.

RAGGED BARFLY
Nah, nah, you’re not hearin’ me. Lightning lives out on the edge of town. He can build anything.

BARROW
How would I find him?

RAGGED BARFLY
Just look for the big aluminum bus.

BARROW
That explains why he’s called “Lightning.”

RAGGED BARFLY
You’d think, but no. It’s ‘cause he moves really slow.

EXT. LIGHTNING’S ALUMINUM BUS – NIGHT

The bus sits in an overgrown field. The lights of the town can be seen in the distance. Barrow leaves the cruiser headlights on.

Where the bus’s door should be is bolted a screen door that would be more appropriate on a trailer home.

Barrow knocks. Frame rattles.

He turns around to check the area and when he turns back, standing against the screen door is LIGHTNING: 50s, muscular for an older man, with a shiny bald head and round glasses.

BARROW
Whoa. Are you Lightning?

LIGHTNING
My. Name. Is. Lightning.

BARROW
Yeah, I’m gonna go.

Lighting opens the screen door and beckons him in. Barrow sighs and steps inside.
EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Lee drives the Mustang, following the Clansmen down a dirt road through the woods. He keeps the headlights off and the roaring of the Clansmen’s bikes and Beard’s truck sufficiently drown out any noise.

The Clansmen slow as they approach the clearing.

As the trees open up, their vehicles join DOZENS MORE, all parked in the clearing in front of the abandoned mail sorting facility.

Lee stops a safe distance away from the clearing and observes them dismount and enter the lair.

INT. MUSTANG - CONTINUOUS

Lee takes a moment to himself. He breathes to calm his excited breathing. He takes one more look out the window before dashing out of the car.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Lee dashes, lightfooted, away from the car. He keeps to the edge of the trees around the clearing.

Moving to the edge of the facility, he runs out of the woods and sneaks along the side to the back of the building.

INT. SORTING FACILITY - LAIR - NIGHT

Pulling planks off of a back door, Lee makes his way into the lair. Immediately, he can hear the CLAPPING of a large group.

He takes in his surroundings: the back half of the large room, converted into a sort of back stage area behind the elevated platform.

He peeks into the main part of the room, taking in the full view of the crowd. The room is packed. HUNDREDS of people fill the pews, sit on the floor, and stand along the walls.

Hellman walks back and forth on the platform as he makes his proclamations. Gesticulating with bravado, his is larger than life. He’s got everyone in that room enraptured.

Lee listens.
HELLMAN
Blessed Clansfolk. The time is almost upon us. Our preparations nearly complete.
(beat)
Our faith will soon be rewarded!

Clapping from the crowd. A couple “amen”s.

HELLMAN
The reign of The Suits is at an end. We stood up and showed this country that The Man could not abolish our right to bear arms --
(claps)
And now we will stand to protect them from sullying the sanctity of our most sacred bond!
(amen)
Many States have betrayed us in this, including our own. All the more reason we must RISE and STAND AGAINST those that would besmirch the purity of our nation!

Hellman sits on his throne.

HELLMAN
The time for hiding in the shadows has expired! We shall languish in the whispers of legend no longer!
(beat)
Those who choose to not stand with us as brothers will fall. Justly. Town by town, this parish will fall. And the next. And the next.
(spittle)
THIS COUNTRY WILL BE OURS.

The crowd erupts in ovation. Hellman stands, hands to the sky, bathing in the glory of his followers.

They chant “HELLMAN.” “HELLMAN.” “HELLMAN.”

Lee looks around the back room more completely: boxes of armament scattered among flammable barrels. Hellman can make good on his promise.

Hellman turns to exit and Lee skips toward the back door. Lowering himself in the doorway, he gets one good look at the maniac descending the stairs.

Lee breaks himself away, escaping into the night.
EXT. LIGHTNING’S ALUMINUM BUS – NIGHT

Crickets and quiet.

The moon hangs low, brightly outlining the reflective surface of the bus. Lights on inside.

INT. LIGHTNING’S ALUMINUM BUS – NIGHT

The gutted bus is littered with wires and mechanical parts. Lightning and Barrow sit in neighboring recliners.

LIGHTNING
An interesting proposition indeed, Mister Sheriff.

BARROW
Can you help me or not?

LIGHTNING
Tracking Tachyon particles presents a unique challenge in that they are inherently unobservable due to the greater-than-light speed at which they theoretically exist.

BARROW
Fanciest way I ever heard to say “no.”

Barrow gets up to leave.

LIGHTNING
However ...

Barrow stops.

BARROW
Say it quick, Lightning.

LIGHTNING
Though the source evades, the residual energy spikes would be uniquely charged and therefore track-able.

BARROW
Could you rig me somethin’ to do that?

LIGHTNING
That depends ... are you capable of dismissing property violations?
Barrow nods. Lightning nods back.

BARROW
You know how to reach me when it’s done.

LIGHTNING
One more thing, Sheriff. The range of this device will be unavoidably limited. To narrow the field, I’d suggest you chart points of occurrence for each disturbance and attempt to discern a pattern.

BARROW
You mean, like on a map?

LEE
Precisely.

Barrow thinks.

EXT. LOCAL NEWS STATION - NIGHT

Barrow picks the lock on the front door.

BARROW
(sotto)
Apologies, Sandy.

INT. LOCAL NEWS STATION - OFFICE - NIGHT

Barrow enters Sandy’s dark office. He powers up the projection wall. He’s faced with a map of the parish.

He takes out his phone and scrolls through the addresses of the reported disturbances, inputting them into the map.

A red dot signifies each location.

He punches in the last one and steps back, looking at the pattern: a spiral of dots, of increasing severity, point to a plot of land on the eastern edge of the map.

Barrow looks grimly at the plot.

BARROW
What in the hell are you?
INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - MORNING

Barrow sits behind his desk with his hands linked in front of his face. The lights are off, only the morning sun shining through the half-open blinds behind him.

The ROARING engine of the Mustang parking outside.

Lee comes through the door, switches the light on.

LEE
We need to talk.

BARROW
Yes we do. I’ve found a way to track what’s happening ... whatever it is. You’re comin’ with me ‘case I need backup for what’s found.

LEE
You’re picking at the scab, Barrow. I found ‘em. The Clan. Their lair.

BARROW
Good for you. Now get ready, we’re heading to the East edge of town.

LEE
They’re planning something.

BARROW
No surprise. Meanwhile, we’ve got a job to do.

LEE
They’ve got EXPLOSIVES. They’re not some small-time hick militia. They’re planning to take over St. Joan first, then everything. Led by some guy madman named “Hellman.”

BARROW
Louis Hellman. Yeah.

LEE
You can’t ignore it anymore ... this is BIGGER than us.

Barrow looses his cool.

BARROW
NO!
LEE
Why is this so hard for you,
Barrow? Call the Feds! We need backup!

Barrow looks solemn.

BARROW
I left here for “bigger.” Brother in law’s a senator. “Bigger” killed the only person I ever loved. Left me alone.
(beat)
That’s why I’m here. That’s why this is my parish.

Lee quiets down.

LEE
It won’t be if we don’t stop him.

BARROW
If that’s the tide, we float with it. Can’t turn it.

LEE
That’s just it: if someone’s coming back, causing all this chaos, that means we CAN stop it.

BARROW
I don’t give a shit about “can” or “can’t.” I won’t. I won’t stop a war if it’s brewin’. Best ride the wave. And survive. ’Cause that’s all that matters. Protect these people best we can.

LEE
I will. By taking down Hellman. And I need your help, Barrow.

BARROW
I guess my not choosin’ a side somehow’s got you confusin’ me for someone with compassion.

Barrow looks him in the eye.

BARROW
I don’t care what happens to someone like you.
EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - MORNING

Out from the front doors, Lee and Barrow exit without looking at each other, turning in opposite directions.

INT. LEE’S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Lee bursts in, slamming the door shut. He pulls off his uniform top, tossing it aside. Kicks off his boots.

In his uniform pants and white undershirt, he grabs the top of the door frame to the bathroom and starts doing pull-ups.

After ten reps, he immediately drops to the floor and starts doing pushups. Plants his arms, swings his feet under into sit-up position.

As he crunches, he catches a glimpse of his open closet. His ridiculous clothes from the rave hang side. He shuts the closet and continues with more intensity and focus.

EXT. FIELDS - DAY

Lee runs.

He chops himself a path through the dead foliage beneath his feet. Earbuds drown the sound of the world out.

INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Lee crosses the station to the armory. He carries an empty duffle bag.

He drops the duffle bag on a cabinet inside and unzips. He looks to the rifle rack and notices one missing. He takes the remaining five and loads each, placing them in the bag.

Grabbing another holster from the cabinet, he rigs it to sit on his opposite leg, a gun resting on each hip. He pulls out a double shoulder holster, looping it around his arms.

He covers everything with a longer field jacket. Vainly smooths it out.

Lee leaves, bulky with weapons.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Lee drops the duffle in the trunk of the Mustang. He hops in and revs it up. MUSIC SWELLS as he blasts into the night.
INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - NIGHT

Barrow drives. Passing lights on his face. He looks grim.

FLASH. His attention is grabbed by the glowing screen of his phone below him.

INT. LIGHTNING’S ALUMINUM BUS - NIGHT

Lightning lets Barrow in. He’s cleared a bit of space on his “kitchen” table. There’s something covered by a white sheet.

BARROW
That it?

LIGHTNING
Yes. Did you take care of what we had arranged?

BARROW
Just give it to me and I won’t turn you in.

Lighting frowns, pulling off the sheet. THE DEVICE is a cobbled mess. Exposed wires and circuits protrude everywhere. A cumbersome battery hangs off the back, with a small handle just above that.

An old iPhone LCD mounted above the handle flickers to life, beeping as Lightning switches the device on.

LIGHTNING
On. Off. Beeps faster as the readings spike.

Barrow picks it up, weighing it in his hand.

BARROW
Anything else I need to know?

LIGHTNING
Yeah. Don’t hold it too close to your chest.

INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Barrow clicks the overhead light on as he drives. A map printout is unfolded on the passenger seat next to him.

He glances down at a red “X” on the eastern ridge.
EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The Mustang pulls up to the clearing in front of the lair. Lee opens the door and stealthily slinks around to the trunk. He removes the duffle bag.

He checks the clearing. It’s empty. He struts down the side of the building, entering as he did before.

INT. SORTING FACILITY - LAIR - NIGHT

Entering through the back door, Lee crouches behind a row of crates. He peeks over. A few BRUTES are unloading boxes and taking inventory.

Lee inches down the crates toward the elevated throne platform. A few more Brutes and other Clansmen are scattered throughout the pews.

Hellman sits casually on the throne, going over notes.

Lee quietly unzips his bag. He removes one of his longer, single-shot rifles. He looks over his shoulder at the smallest noise and gun rattle as he readies the shot.

He flips up the site. Hellman leans directly into view.

Lee breathes out half a breath. Finger tightens on the trigger just as ...

A meaty hand grabs his barrel, pushing it to the side. It’s the Bearded Brute.

BEARDED BRUTE

Police!

The entire place comes to attention.

Two Clansmen hurry Hellman out of the facility, covering his head and chest with their hands like a Secret Service detail would a president. He escapes.

Dozens of Brutes circle Lee.

Beard recognizes him.

BEARDED BRUTE

You. Hadn’t had enough, Deputy? Your gut getting used to my boot?

He looks down at Lee’s bag of weapons.
BEARDED BRUTE
‘Fraid I can’t let you off that easy this time. Boys.

He backs up, gesturing with both hands extended toward Lee.

BEARDED BRUTE
Light’im up!

Before the Brutes can raise their weapons, Lee draws the pistols on his hips with incredible speed. He blast both rounds into the Bearded Brute’s knees.

He topples to the ground, screaming in pain.

Distracted, the Brutes behind watch him fall, giving Lee a split second to grab his bag and slide behind the crates.

The Brutes return fire, the crates splintering.

A MILITANT BRUTE shouts to the group, raising his hand.

MILITANT BRUTE
Wait. Watch what you’re toasting.

The Brutes look at the crates now lined with holes. Inside: weapons that shouldn’t be shot at.

The Militant Brute makes hand gestures for others to cover the doors. Lee crawls along the edge of the crates. Taking a moment to breathe, he chooses one door and leaps out from the crates. The Brutes begin shooting immediately.

It’s a full-on fire fight.

Lee dodges between boxes that are promptly torn to shreds around him. This gives him a thought.

Crouching behind a pillar for cover, he reloads. Behind a group of Brutes he spots an arrangement of barrels. He finishes loading his pistols and holsters them.

Lee pulls out the rifles from his bag and slings them over his back, except for one that he readies in his grip.

A few more deep breaths and he dives out from behind the pillar, firing toward the Brutes. They dodge in every direction, returning fire.

One of Lee’s shots finally lands, the barrels behind the Brutes exploding into a fireball that engulfs half of the room. Lee dives, effectively evading the flames.

The dust settles and Lee pushes himself up off the ground.
EXT. PLANTATION GROUNDS - NIGHT

The plantation grounds are overgrown and untended with years of abandonment. At the end of a tree-lined dirt road sits a glorious old mansion will columns out front.

It’s “Gone with the Wind” plus decades of neglect.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - NIGHT

Barrow drives down the tree-covered entry. Moonlight flits between the passing leaves.

He parks in front of the plantation, leaving his headlights shining through the now-doorless doorway. He folds up his map printout and puts it in his pocket.

He leans back, grabbing his rifle and the Tracker out of the back seat.

EXT. PLANTATION GROUNDS - NIGHT

Stepping away from the cruiser toward the mansion, Barrow fiddles with the Tracker. Car headlights at his back.

After a moment, he manages to power it on. The LCD lights his face from below. The beeps are far apart. He holds it to either side of the house and it slows. Fastest pointing straight inside.

BARROW
Figures.

He holds up his rifle in one hand, Tracker in the other.

Slowly he proceeds. As the beeping slowly speeds up, Barrow feels the familiar wind. A glance at the sky confirms a bizarrely stormy zenith of clouds.

Barrow steps at a snail’s pace into the mansion.

INT. PLANTATION MANSION - CONTINUOUS

Inside, plaster is rotted away to expose bricks underneath. Dead leaves rustle across the floor with the passing winds. Water drips from the ceiling. Vines hang in curling loops. The entire place is dank.

Painted portraits of the long-dead stare down at Barrow.
Barrow’s shoes crunch on passing leaves. Each crunch echoes into the hollow drip noise.

BARROW
Anybody home?

A piece of the ceiling FALLS right next to Barrow, exposing the second level above. The impact sends leaves swirling around Barrow in a peculiar vortex.

He shakes himself loose.

Considers the fallen ceiling piece. He then looks up at the hole it left. More water falls through. The wind grows in intensity as he continues forward, THUNDER now joining it. Each rumble shaking the creaky foundations.

Barrow looks down to his Tracker.

Turning it to the left, a living room, and to the right, a dining area, the beeps die down. Still fastest strait ahead: a staircase leads to the second level.

Barrow gulps.

BARROW
(sotto)
You’ve gotta be shittin’ me.

The staircase is rickety, with the boards that aren’t missing warped and uneven. Remaining sections of carpet are moldy. Grime dirties every crevice.

Barrow puts one foot out, testing the integrity of the first step. It creaks, but seems to hold. He tries the next. Fine. The beeping increases. He looks up with dread. The wind whistles with forboding.

Midway up the staircase, a plank gives way.

BARROW
Shit!

He recovers, catching his balance on the next step. Looking up, satisfied with himself, he sees:

A shadowy figure runs past the hall at the top of the steps.

Instinctively, Barrow FIRES his rifle in the direction of the figure, the recoil sending him backwards. Falling into the broken board, he takes the neighboring boards with him.

Barrow PLUMMETS through the staircase ...
INT. SORTING FACILITY - LAIR - NIGHT

Most of the Brutes lie passed out from the blast. The few remaining -- including the Militant Brute -- shake it off and make their way through the lingering dust, guns raised.

Lee presses himself against the far wall of the room, moving toward the back door.

The Militant Brute spots him.

MILITANT BRUTE

Over there!

They all FIRE, concrete fireworks behind Lee.

He makes it out the back door, managing to land a few shots that take out Brutes before he exits.

EXT. SORTING FACILITY - LAIR - CONTINUOUS

Running into the night, Lee winces at the BLINDING LIGHT of a truck heading straight for him.

His eyes focus and he can see the driver: the Bearded Brute, hands at the wheel, bloodied from crawling.

Lee attempts to dodge, but a squad of Clansmen on bikes flanks him. He’s trapped. Beard stops his truck inches from Lee, pressing him up against the wall.

Beard speaks through a radio in his truck.

BEARDED BRUTE

(amplified)
Drop your weapons, Deputy Lee. You’re ours now.

INT. SORTING FACILITY - LAIR - NIGHT

Lee has been stripped of his holsters. He’s tied up in the throne on the elevated platform. The room is empty, the corners black with darkness.

HELLMAN (O.S.)

Deputy Fred Lee.

Hellman steps out of the shadows.

HELLMAN

What’s a city boy like you doing down here? Punishment, no doubt.
Hellman walks the steps up the platform.

LEE
(through his teeth)
Something like that.

HELLMAN
Good. Good. I’m glad you know something about punishment. What’s coming won’t be as much a surprise.

Hellman gets his hooded face inches from Lee’s. Lee tries to look into the eyes beneath the mesh.

LEE
But you like surprises. Got a big one planned.

HELLMAN
I don’t like your kind of surprise. When we rise, it should come as no surprise to the people of this nation.

LEE
Don’t be surprised if most don’t bend over and take it.

HELLMAN
Know much about that, Deputy?

Lee freezes.

HELLMAN
Yes, Fred, I can see right through you. You might’ve been able to hide from yourself. Your whole life. But you can’t hide from me. No one can.

Lee spits into the mesh eyehole of Hellman’s hood.

LEE
Which one of us is hiding?

Hellman reaches his hand under the hood and wipes off the spit. Flicks it way.

HELLMAN
I’m going to make you the same offer I’ve made every officer of the law that’s had the misfortune of discovering us: join The Royal Right ... or fall in service of our ascension. You choose your fate.
INT. PLANTATION MANSION - NIGHT

Barrow lumbers up out of the rubble of the staircase planks. He pushes himself up to his feet, cracking his back as he fully stands up.

He picks up his rifle and sees that his tracker has been crushed in the fall.

BARROW
Just as well.

Barrow readies both hands on his rifle and walks around to the front of the staircase.

One mitt firmly grasped on the handrail, Barrow hugs the side as he inches up the staircase again.

Hand extended out as far as he can on the rail above the gaping hole he fell through, Barrow LEAPS over the gap. Landing with an UMPH, he catches his balance and quickly sprints the final few steps.

Barrow lands safely on the second floor.

He step forward, and the entire building starts to QUAKE. Thunder roars, wind sweeping the hallway. Barrow RUNS in the direction of the shadowy figure.

Finding himself at the end of the hall, barrow enters an empty room. Outside the windows, he can see the weather worsening. Something catches his eye.

Outside the window, rain has begun to fall. Most falls normally, but between the falling beams, many drops are discernibly traveling UPWARD.

Barrow turns back around. Tired of waiting.

BARROW
Where are you?!

A CREAK from the room across the hall.

Barrow RUNS over. Empty again. Open door to a bathroom across the room. He approaches it, and finds that it is a shared bathroom, with a door leading to another adjacent room.

The door cracked, Barrow KICKS through it and catches his first real glimpse of the figure:

A long, flowing trench coat with a high collar and metallic sheen, fluttering out the room’s main door.
Barrow pursues the figure out of the room.

As they run down the hall toward the staircase, Barrow can make out shoulder-length black hair whipping out from behind the collar.

The figure reaches the staircase and LEAPS down its entire length, crouching to absorb the force of the landing.

A few more boards fall off the stairs in the process and Barrow is faced with a hole even bigger than before.

Barrow shrugs, looking defeated.

BARROW
Welp, I done it once.

Barrow LEAPS, arms above his head. He CRASHES into the heap of junk from the first fall, rolling into the back room where he TRIPS the passing figure.

The figure falls into the darkness of a side closet.

Barrow stands, wobbling, and FIRES his rifle. The muzzle flash illuminates the closet briefly, revealing the figure KICKING through the back wall.

Barrow turns into the darkness of a side hallway, intercepting the figure as they emerge.

Barrow FIRES and misses. Pulls the trigger again.

CLICK. Empty.

Barrow spins the rifle around, SMACKING the figure with the butt of its stock. The figure stumbles, slowing down.

Still faster than old-man Barrow, the figure turns a corner, leading them back to the main entryway. Facing the rear of the building, the cruiser's headlights leave the figure backlit in silhouette.

Barrow CHARGES the figure.

Wind picks up unnaturally again, sending both of them into separate vortexes of blown debris.

BARROW
Stand down! You’re under arrest!

The distraction of the wind tunnels give the figure sufficient time to dash out the back door.

Barrow shakes himself loose and follows.
INT. SORTING FACILITY - LAIR - NIGHT

Lee is still tied up on the throne. Hellman hovers above him.

HELLMAN
So, Deputy, what will it be?
Tempted by divine glory?

LEE
I think I’ll take the other thing.

HELLMAN
The best in life is satisfying and unexpected. I’m afraid you are neither, Deputy.
(beat)
Boys?

Brutes appear on either side of Lee.

HELLMAN
Burn him.

Hellman skips down the stairs and exits.

A TOOTHY BRUTE leaves and returns with a gas can. He holds as the other Brute unscrews the cap. Both tilt it and start to DOUSE Lee from head to toe in gasoline.

Once they’ve finished, Lee opens his eyes and stares them down, gasoline dripping from his mouth.

LEE
Pity to waist a throne.

The Toothy Brute leans down, smiling.

TOOTHY BRUTE
Like you, it’s not the first.
Unlike you, it won’t be the last.

Lee looks to the other Brute.

LEE
Do you all talk like that?

Toothy produces a lighter from his pocket and FLICKS it on.

TOOTHY BRUTE
Any last words?

LEE
Yeah. Thanks for soaking the ropes.
The Brutes look at each other, confused.

With all his might, Lee PULLS his hands apart behind his back. They fold under the pressure, sliding through the knotted cuffs.

The Brutes fumble. Lee TRIPS Toothy, knocking him on his face. The other Brute raises his gun, which Lee deflects, poking the him in the eyes with two fingers.

Reeling back in pain, the Brute’s grip loosens. Lee snatches his gun and blows out his ankles.

Lee wastes no time.

He HOPS off the elevated platform toward the back of the room. He starts pushing all of the crates and flammable barrels together into a heap in the middle of the room.

Grabbing his discarded rifle, he runs out the back door and plants himself at a safe distance. Aims at the heap.

LEE
Here’s your “divine glory.”

Lee FIRES. The cannisters explode, engulfing the entire building in flames. A series of mini-explosions occur as the crates are burnt and ammunition discharges.

EXT. SORTING FACILITY - CONTINUOUS

Lee watches the building burn. He turns and stops cold in his tracks when he sees:

Hellman, seated proudly atop a horse, lit only by the flames.

Behind him, an ARMY of motorcycles, trucks, and other horse-riding clansmen. Hellman trots his horse over to Lee.

HELLMAN
Your act of desperation in destroying this place has only accelerated the end. For it is only that: a place.
(beat)
And we ... The People ... will rise.
(beat)
Run, boy. Tell them. It begins.

Hellman turns and leads his army through the woods.
**EXT. PLANTATION GROUNDS - NIGHT**

Barrow runs out into the backyard of the plantation mansion, the storm raging. He’s soaked in seconds.

The figure runs into the woods beyond the yard. Barrow follows, the rain abruptly stopping as he enters.

The thunderous roar of the storm shakes the woods, wind twitching every visible leaf and twig. Barrow squints. Straight ahead he can see the figure.

He stops to take a SHOT.

It passes through a tree trunk, splintering on impact.

Barrow starts running again, but the figure is gone, no trace of which direction to go.

BARROW

God damnit.

He turns back and notices a sliver of silver dangling from a nearby branch. He moves closer to examine. A metallic thread ripped from his trench coat.

He rips it off. An idea.

Barrow starts looking for other threads, spots a few a distance away. Raises his rifle as he starts running again, full speed.

The trees start to open up and Barrow spots footsteps in the dirt ahead of him. The terrain starts to get more uneven.

He stops, finding himself facing an old mine opening.

Kneeling at the dirt, he sees the footsteps lead inside.

BARROW

Come on out of there. I’ve got you cornered.

He steps closer, peering into the darkness.

BARROW

Come. Out.

His voice echoes this time. It’s a long shaft.

He fishes in his pocket and produces a flashlight. One hand gripping his gun, he sticks the flashlight in his mouth and screws it into the “on” position with his free hand.
INT. MINE - CONTINUOUS

Barrow’s light sends a beam down the long stretch of the mine. The light drops off into black. No end.

He stops for a moment, pulling out his phone. He considers it, but decides against, placing it back in his pocket. He gulps and presses onward.

As the light from the entrance starts to become small behind him, Barrow slows.

He hears something in front of him and FIRES off a round. Nothing.

Barrow steps a few more feet forward, and hears something again. A scraping. He aims in the direction of the sound and FIRES another round. Nothing again.

He proceeds a few more steps and his foot runs into something alive. Immediately he fires off a third round. The muzzle flash illuminates in front of him and he can see:

The figure, slouched over, the shot clipping his shoulder.

He runs past Barrow, booking it for the exit. Barrow follows. He’s got him now.

EXT. PLANTATION GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

Barrow chases the figure back through the woods toward the house. He fires off a few more shots, landing one in the figure’s leg. He stumbles, grasping the bleeding wound.

Barrows starts to gain on him.

Just as the figure reaches the stormy backyard again, mansion looming behind, Barrow TACKLES him to the ground.

Barrow pulls out handcuffs from a pouch on his belt.

BARROW

You are under arrest, for ...
inappropriate, uh ... disruption of
tac -- You’re under arrest.

Barrow spins the figure over to reveal: it’s a woman. This is SEVEN, late 20s, with tousled black hair. She wears a tailor-fit jumpsuit underneath her metallic trench coat.

Barrow is surprised. He looks guilty for having shot and tackled a woman. He backs off and lifts her up, carrying her to the cruiser.
INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Barrow sits, with only his desk light illuminating the room. Lee bursts through the door, dirty, beaten, and dead tired.

BARROW
What in the hell happened to you?

LEE
I’ve been punched, kicked, shot at, and very nearly burned.

BARROW
That all?

Lee walks over to the desk and plops down in his chair next to it. He rubs his darkened eyes.

LEE
They’re coming Barrow. The Clan. Thought I could stop them. Took out the lair ... but they’re coming.

BARROW
So ... you were right.

LEE
Yeah. This Hellman ... he’s a freak. You can smell it on his breath, Barrow. He’s got a small army here, and who knows what elsewhere. I know you don’t believe what I said before, but if someone was going to --

BARROW
Lee, you were right.

Lee is visibly confused.

Barrow points across the room to the holding cell. Seven sits on the cot inside. Hastily wrapped bandages cover her wounds.

Lee’s eyes widen.

LEE
The traveller ... ?

BARROW
Let’s find out together.

Lee and Barrow walk over to the cell. They leave it dark. Only the moon shining through the single cell window.
INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - HOLDING CELL - CONTINUOUS

Seven’s hands are bound behind her back. She sits upright on the edge of the cot. Despite being wrapped, her leg is bleeding onto the floor.

Barrow unlocks the cell. He and Lee enter. They face her.

BARROW
You’re going to answer our questions.

She looks up at him. Silent.

LEE
Why are you here?

SEVEN
I’m afraid that’s classified, Deputy Lee.

LEE
Your knowledge seems to have us at a disadvantage. Knowledge about many things, I would imagine.

BARROW
Who are you?

SEVEN
I’m sorry, Sheriff Barrow, but most of my answers are going to sound repetitive. My name is classified. My code designation is Seven.

LEE
Alright Seven, let’s stop dancing around it: are you or aren’t you from the future?

She smirks.

SEVEN
No. But you impress me Deputy.

BARROW
Doesn’t take much to see what’s going on around this town. Natural energy spikes leading straight to you. Explain that.

SEVEN
Something tells me this took a fair bit of convincing from Deputy Lee.
Lee looks at Barrow.

LEE
I like her.

BARROW
What a waste. What were you doing out there, Ms. Seven?

SEVEN
Just Seven. You found me there, Sheriff, because we were looking for the same thing.

BARROW
You want that leg to get fixed, you better start bein' less vague.

SEVEN
Oh, the leg will get fixed, Sheriff. Especially if I don’t put in a call in the next hour.
(beat)
I’m a federal agent. I work for a classified department of the U.S. Government.

BARROW
A goddamn Fed.

SEVEN
That’s all I’m at liberty to say, but seeing as you and your Deputy have stumbled onto something much bigger than this town --

Barrow winces.

SEVEN
I’ll say this: The department I serve is responsible for the research and classification of temporal anomalies.

BARROW
So, time travel.

SEVEN
Potentially.

LEE
This isn’t about the Clan?
SEVEN
I can assure you, Deputy, this temporal anomaly has been marked priority one. The federal government has no interest in a southern militia.

LEE
Why not?

SEVEN
We’ve got bigger things to worry about than civil rights.

LEE
Even if it leads to war? Is the death of Americans worth it?

She cocks her head.

SEVEN
Is the death of our reality?

BARROW
Has it come to that?

SEVEN
Yes, Sheriff. It’s not just this town that’s threatened. We’ve never seen a temporal event the size of the one approaching.

BARROW
Approaching?

She laughs.

SEVEN
I told you, I’m not your time traveller! Everything you’ve observed so far is the only the precursor. Our reality is anticipating a violent tear. Like the winds before a typhoon. Whatever -- whoever’s coming ...

LEE
They haven’t arrived yet.

Barrow and Lee look at each other. Sigh.

BARROW
Damn. I thought I was done.
INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - SUNRISE

Barrow drives with Lee in the passenger seat. Seven is laying in the back seat.

BARROW
Time travel doesn’t sound fun.

SEVEN
Theoretically, it’s the most violent act the human body could be subjected to. We’d hoped future generations would be smart enough to stay away.

BARROW
Does not appear that they are. Or, will be? Eh, no surprise. People gettin’ stupider every generation.

Lee gives him a look.

SEVEN
I appreciate you allowing me to call in, Sheriff. At my level, a slip-up like this is career-ending.

BARROW
Dolores’ll fix you up nice. I’m not a man to let a lady bleed out.

LEE
That’s as sweet as he gets.

BARROW
Any idea when our uninvited guest will be arriving?

Seven pulls out a sleek tablet device.

SEVEN
Judging by the weather activity, before the day is out.

Lee looks out the window.

LEE
Why today? Ever wonder why they’re coming now?

SEVEN
No. We anticipate such a device, even under ideal circumstances, wouldn’t offer much precision.
BARROW
So, more like a shotgun than a sniper rifle?

Lee looks back at Seven.

LEE
See what I’m dealing with down here?

SEVEN
See this operation through, Deputy, and you just might find yourself back up with the big boys.

Lee contemplates this. Considers Barrow driving.

BARROW
Music to my ears.

EXT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE - MORNING

Lee and Barrow help Seven out of the back of the cruiser and into Dr. Kelley’s office.

The storm is spreading, dark clouds just beyond main street.

INT. DOCTOR’S OFFICE - MORNING

Seven sits at the examination table. Dr. Kelley examines her ankle. Lee and Barrow stand at opposite ends of the room.

Dr. Kelley moves away from Seven’s ankle and looks at her.

DR. KELLEY
Thankfully, your shoulder was just grazed. Unfortunately, there’s still a bullet in your leg.

Seven nods.

Dr. Kelley grabs a long metal instrument and moves in to remove the bullet. Seven’s expression remains neutral.

Barrow crosses to Lee.

BARROW
Do you trust her?

LEE
More than you.
A small GRUNT from Seven and then a PLINK of the bullet in a metal receptacle.

SEVEN
Thank you, Doctor.

BARROW
Lee, would you take Seven out to the car?

Lee holds Seven by the arm and helps her out.

Barrow turns to Dr. Kelley.

DR. KELLEY
Who is she?

BARROW
I need you to make sure none of this is on the books.

DR. KELLEY
To cover your ass?

BARROW
Hers.

DR. KELLEY
She’s got something to do with everything that’s happening, doesn’t she?

BARROW
I’m handling it.

DR. KELLEY
I can see that.

Barrow looks legitimately concerned.

BARROW
Look, Dolores there’s something else. You need to get out of town.

DR. KELLEY
What’s happening?

BARROW
Depends on who you ask. Just, please. And warn as many others as you can. Lee and I can handle this.
DR. KELLEY
You’ve got a good one there. Don’t let him get killed.
(beat)
Be careful, Harve.

She leans in to kiss him. He pulls away, pain on his face.

BARROW
I’m sorry.

Barrow leaves. She takes a few breathes, composing herself.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER - DAY

Barrow drives. Seven is in the passenger seat this time, with Lee in the back.

BARROW
How long had you been out at the plantation when I found you?

SEVEN
When you chased me down? I’d been there almost three days.

LEE
You knew that early?

BARROW
That must be some fancy equipment you got there.

SEVEN
Headquarters detected suspicious readings last week. Close range, with a continuous feed, this does the trick ...

She pulls out her tablet tracking device.

BARROW
I had, uh, something like that.

SEVEN
I saw that. You make that thing yourself? Anyway, at the point you shot me down, I’d very nearly had enough data to pinpoint the exact location of convergence.
LEE
That’ll tell us exactly where they’ll arrive?

SEVEN
It would have. When the Sheriff here ... intercepted me, he broke the stream. We’ll only have a general spot, at best.

LEE
We’ll have to keep on our toes.

BARROW
If I was readin’ the sky correctly, they won’t be too hard to find.

SEVEN
When we do, I hope you brought your windbreakers. It’s going to get ugly.

LEE
All this chaos ... someone would have to have a pretty good reason to come back.

SEVEN
Technically, we don’t even know it will be a person.

LEE
It could be an object?

SEVEN
It could be anything.

BARROW
A weapon?

Lee and Seven look at Barrow.

BARROW
I’m not one to speculate, but if what Lee thinks is happenin’ happens ... I’d not blame the future if they wanted to nuke the whole parish.

SEVEN
If we can’t shut off their device in time, they won’t need a nuke.

Barrow tightens his grip on the steering wheel.
EXT. PLANTATION GROUNDS - DAY

The overcast sky outside the plantation grounds fades into a stormy cacophony as the cruiser enters the grounds. A light drizzle at the entrance becomes a downpour once they park in front of the mansion.

Lee, Barrow, and Seven hurry out of the cruiser to the relative safety of the mansion.

The wind nearly takes Seven away as she wobbles on her leg.

INT. PLANTATION MANSION - CONTINUOUS


LEE
You were HERE for three days?

SEVEN
This is the place.

They all shake the rain off themselves as best they can. Lee walks over to staircase, looks at the gaping hole.

LEE
This where you broke your hip?

Lee lets out a chuckle, silenced by a gaze from Barrow.

SEVEN
As far as the convergence, the best we’ll be able to get is about a hundred yard radius.

LEE
That’s a big circle.

BARROW
Then we split up.

Seven and Lee look at Barrow.

LEE
Split up?

BARROW
Cover more ground.

LEE
You sure that’s the best idea?
SEVEN
He’s right. We don’t know what
to room, and faster we can detain
them, the better chance we’ll have.

Barrow pulls out a spare pistol from his boot and offers it to Seven.

BARROW
Here.

SEVEN
No thanks.

Seven whips out an advanced Fed Blaster from her trench. Barrow’s impressed. Seven smiles.

LEE
Guys ...

Barrow and Seven turn away from each other and see that the strewn debris is now FLOATING around the room, bouncing off fixtures in bizarre arcs that defy conventional physics.

Seven runs to the window, ripping down a dusty drape.

Outside the window: the storm has become torrential. Low hanging clouds circle the house carrying dirt and other refuse with it.

SEVEN
Split.

The three of the them split up.

Seven wastes no time, hopping up the steps with an angelic leap over the gaping hole. Barrow points Lee toward the dining room and he takes the living space to the left.

Barrow, gun at the ready, surveys the living space for oddities. Dust hangs in halos around the posh furniture.

Lee circles an old dining table. A glisten catches his attention and he looks closer: the weather-worn grain of the tabletop appears to be regaining its original luster.

UPSTAIRS:

Seven steps on dipping, soggy floorboards. The hallway sways with the screaming winds. As she approaches the window at the end of the hall, it CRASHES open, the shards sucked outward. Bit by bit, the wood frame around it follows.
Seven wearily starts retreating as:

The entire side of the building begins to tear apart.

The winds pour in, pulling free swarms of cracked paint chips from the walls. Seven squints, shielding her face with her arms. She yells over the sound.

SEVEN
Lee! Barrow! Get out!

DOWNSTAIRS:

Lee and Barrow reconvene in the Lobby. They can see the building pulling apart at the far wall.

BARROW
Come on, Lee!

LEE
We can’t leave her.

BARROW
Did you see how she hopped up those stairs? She’ll be fine.

Barrow grabs Lee’s arm to pull him as:

The second floor and ceiling are ripped off, pulled into the swirling darkness above.

Just as the staircase begins to get pulled upward, Seven emerges from the void, leaping with feline grace. She lands in front of Lee and Barrow, who are frozen in awe.

SEVEN
Oh, come on.

She pulls them both by the arms. They run. Dodging falling bits of ceiling and shards of broken glass, they weave and duck out of harm’s way. They take a few hits, splinters of wood sticking into their clothes and skin.

The walls behind them are decimated as they run past, leaving dust clouds in their wake.

The three of them dash out the back door just as:

The last remaining sections of the mansion are destroyed by the tornado-like vortex storm.
EXT. PLANTATION GROUNDS - CONTINUOUS

They cross the yard behind where the mansion once stood. Seven whips out her tracking device.

Barrow yells over the wind.

BARROW
Don’t think we’ll be needing that.

He points up to the sky: all of the clouds are spiraling to a single point, not far, just past the woods to the East.

LEE
Eye of the storm?

BARROW
Always the safest.

Seven manipulates a few points on the screen of her tracker and pinches in on the eye of the storm.

SEVEN
The barn!

She points, and they all break into a run.

Into the woods, trees are torn apart by the perpetually worsening storm. Thorns whip around them in a blur, cuts appearing on their skin. Arms up to shield themselves.

As the trees behind them are eviscerated, the trees in front of them begin to part. A grassy clearing lies ahead.

EXT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

The grass leading up to the barn flickers in the wind. The barn is simple, old-world construction. It looks as if, in better days, it would have been classic red and white.

Lee, Barrow, and Seven stop in the middle of the grass and gaze up in awe above the barn:

The storm curves down into a perfect funnel above the barn.

Veins of LIGHTNING travel down the funnel into the open skylight frame on top of the barn.

As the CRACKS of thunder mount with the worsening winds, the lightning brightens to blinding, unnatural levels.

BOOM.
EXT. BARN - LATER

Barrow, Lee, and Seven lie sprawled out on the grass. Their eyes FLASH open.

The sky above them is calm. Overcast with light gray clouds, but calm. No winds. No storm. Just gently moving waves of unimtimidating gray.

They push themselves up and brush themselves off. Behind them, they see the woods have been leveled, clear view to the parked cruiser.

They turn to the barn.

It sits perfectly untouched.

BARROW Is it safe?

Seven looks down at her device. Taps a few buttons quickly. Her brow furrows.

SEVEN Perfectly. No readings.

They look to each other and begin to march forward.

Reaching the barn doors, Barrow reaches out his hand, feeling the roughness of the wood, then stops.

He turns to Seven.

BARROW Would you like to make history?

Seven smiles.

SEVEN Thank you, I will.

She jitters with excitement. Putting a hand on each rolling door, she PUSHES them apart.

A piteous look washes over her face.

At what she sees inside:

SEVEN Dear God ...
INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

The barn is lit by the soft glow of the overcast sky flowing in through the open overhead skylight. Old shelves and benches pepper the space, with moldy bales of hay everywhere.

In the center of the barn, on top of a sweltering pile of rubble sits a TIME TRAVEL DEVICE. Broken and dead, it looks a cobbled mess of brass and wire. A protruding tesla coil produces its final blip of energy before falling silent.

Next to it, contorted in pain, lie the TRAVELERS:
Two BRIDES wearing Victorian wedding dresses, splattered in their own blood, lie in a terrified embrace.

Seven, Barrow, and Lee walk toward them, realization dawning on all of their faces. Seven kneels down to the brides.

SEVEN
They’re still breathing.

She gently moves them apart, facing them both up. One is BLONDE, the other BRUNETTE, both covered in lacerations.

LEE
They’re ...

BARROW
Definitely not from the future.

Seven and Lee look at Barrow. Obviously.

The Brunette Bride attempts to speak, coughing. Blood.

SEVEN
We need to get them out of here.

Lee and Barrow each take a bride gently in their arms.

BARROW
Should we bring the device?

LEE
What if it still poses a threat?

Seven pulls out her tablet. Scans the device.

SEVEN
It’s totally inert. Safe for now.

She picks up the device, putting it under her arm. They move across the wasteland that was the woods toward the cruiser.
EXT. PLANTATION GROUNDS - DAY

Lee and Barrow careful load the brides into the back seat of the cruiser. They join Seven at the open trunk. She’s staring at the device resting inside.

BARROW
Don’t beat yourself up. With time travellers you got a fifty/fifty chance, in either direction.

SEVEN
It’s not that.

BARROW
I guess workin’ with the Feds, you must get used to bein’ wrong.

SEVEN
No. It’s just ...
(beat)
Can you imagine what they must’ve gone through? Just to get here?

A moment considering this.

LEE
Yes.

Seven closes the trunk. Joins the Brides in the back seat.

Barrow looks to Lee, who keeps staring at the trunk.

BARROW
You’re wondering if the reasons brought them here are the same as those what brought you.

LEE
You don’t know anything, Barrow.

BARROW
No, I get it. You couldn’t “be yourself” so they spat your ass in my lap.

Lee lets out the closest thing he can to a laugh right now.

LEE
You wish. It wasn’t that I couldn’t.
(beat)
I didn’t know how.
Lee looks up, locking eyes with Barrow.

LEE
You’re hiding out here. From something “bigger.” And I was sent here. From something “bigger.” Hiding from myself. No more.

Seven taps on the back window.

BARROW
Let’s go.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION – DAY

The cruiser pulls up in front of the station.

From the steps in front, all the way down main street, almost the ENTIRE TOWN is lined up to meet them.

INT. SHERIFF’S CRUISER – CONTINUOUS

Barrow looks at the crowd. He looks back to Seven.

BARROW
Stay with them.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION – CONTINUOUS

They park. Lee and Barrow get out of the car. Dr. Kelley steps out of the group and greets them.

DR. KELLEY
Nobody wanted to leave. You did it!

Barrow shakes his head. Lee faces the crowd.

LEE
Everyone return to your homes. And stay there.

DR. KELLEY
But everything stopped. What’s happening?

LEE
St. Joan is about to --

BARROW
We are ... still assessing the situation.
Dr. Kelley pulls away from Barrow.

DR. KELLEY
Whatever happens, remember, these people want to help.

She turns to leave. Over her shoulder:

DR. KELLEY
Even if you don’t.

He grabs her hand.

BARROW
Dolores, wait. I could use yours.

They watch the last of the townsfolk disappear, leaving main street empty.

Barrow unlocks the station doors while Lee helps Seven move the brides out of the cruiser. They carry them up the stairs and into the station. Barrow checks for observers before ducking inside with Dr. Kelley and slamming the door.

INT. SHERIFF’S STATION – CONTINUOUS

Seven and Lee place the brides down on the holding cell cot. Barrow locks the door. He and Dr. Kelley join them.

DR. KELLEY
Oh my God, what happened to them?

BARROW
You wouldn’t believe us --

SEVEN
-- even if we were permitted to tell you.

Seven gives Barrow a look.

DR. KELLEY
Get them some water. Wrap these lacerations as best you can.

(thinking)
I need my medkit.

Lee goes to the other room to retrieve water and bandages.

A KNOCK at the door. Barrow crosses, frowning. He unlatches the locks and opens the door. Collapsing into his arms is:

Dusty, in a frenzy. She jitters, panicked and terrified.
Barrow carries Dusty over to his desk and sits her down in his chair. Dr. Kelley crosses to him.

**DR. KELLEY**
I’ll be back with supplies.

**BARROW**
Wait.
(to Dusty)
What happened, Dusty?

Breathing heavily, she turns her wide eyes to the Sheriff.

**DUSTY**
They’re coming ... I saw them ...
on horses ... the flames were ...
he tried to stop them, but ... they
took city hall ...  
(crying)
They’re coming NOW!

Barrow’s face sinks, grimmer than ever before.

**BARROW**
Dolores. Take Dusty to your office
and lock the door.

**DR. KELLEY**
What about the --

**BARROW**
Just do it.

Dr. Kelley helps the shaken Dusty out of the station. Barrow crosses back over to the cell. Lee and Seven are helping the brides drink water.

**BARROW**
Well, Deputy, looks like you were
right. It’s zero hour. Time to get
out of the blast zone.

**SEVEN**
What is it?

**LEE**
The Clan. They’re taking the parish.

**BARROW**
And we’re getting out of here. But first ...
BARROW
I want some answers.

SEVEN
Sheriff, I know you’d prefer this
be the Wild West, but if that’s
what St. Joan is about to become,
we need to get them to safety.

Barrow ignores her. Leans into the brides.

BARROW
Why you here? Why you leave your
time for ours?

The Brunette Bride looks up to him with tired eyes.

BRUNETTE BRIDE
To be wed.

Barrow looks down. Frustrated.

SEVEN
You couldn’t do that from ...\nwhence you come?

The brides shake their heads slowly.

BLONDE BRIDE
Tell us, can we be together now?

Silence.

BRUNETTE BRIDE
Have we come far enough?

Barrow looks the dying women pitifully in the eye. Lee
interjects before he can respond.

LEE
Yes.

Seven and Barrow look at Lee.

LEE
We just need to get you to the
chapel, and find the pastor.

SEVEN
Rest now.

The two Brides smile and close their eyes. Barrow leaves the
cell in a huff. Lee follows him outside the station.
EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - SUNSET

Barrow and Lee face each other on the empty street.

BARROW
What in the hell are you doing?

LEE
What’s right. What would you suggest we do with them?

BARROW
Lock ‘em up. Wait till the Clan blows through.

LEE
They’re dying, Barrow. And I’m going to grant their dying wish.

Barrow shakes his head.

BARROW
You know what this war’s about. You know what’s about to happen.

LEE
Not if we stop it here.

BARROW
I told you, there’s no stoppin’ it. This conflict doesn’t just end. I’ve stayed out of it my entire, long-ass life. The laws change as much as the politicians. Trust me.

LEE
That’s what this is about. The senator. Your brother --

BARROW
In law only. Big man, big times, and big enemies that get families SLAUGHTERED.

Lee takes a deep breath.

LEE
Running won’t keep families from getting killed.

(beat)
Especially not one’s like yours that are already dead.

Barrow explodes.
Barrow GRABS Lee’s collar and threatens with a fist. Lee swings around to free himself from Barrow’s grip, elbowing his gut in the process.

Barrow reels over, but doesn’t let go. The two men wrestle each other to the sidewalk pavement.

Lee lands underneath Barrow, who struggles to land a punch. Lee effectively blocks each incoming blow, writhing beneath Barrow’s attack.

They both give in to the heat of the moment.

Abandoning the defensive, Lee steadies himself and then THRUSTS Barrow off of him. Barrow falls backward and Lee kicks him while he’s down.

Moving quickly to a crouching position, Barrow LUNGES at Lee, knocking the wind out of him.

Having gained the upper-hand, Barrow pins Lee down with one hand and raises his other fist in the air.

BRUNETTE BRIDE
Stop!

Barrow and Lee freeze, looking over. Both of the brides are at the front door, weakly propping themselves up on the frame. Their faces look weary and desperate. Like children not wanting parents to fight.

BRUNETTE BRIDE
Please, stop.

Pushing himself up, furious, Barrow wipes himself off.

He steps in close to Lee’s face. Spitting distance.

BARROW
You and the rest of the freaks can stay. You think your new friend is going to stand with you? The Feds won’t take a stand.
(through his teeth)
Why should I?

Barrow gets in his cruiser and fires it up. He spins the car in a sharp U-turn that screeches and skids up dust behind him. Booking it out of the turn, he speeds away.

Lee watches him go.
INT. SHERIFF’S STATION – SUNSET

Lee enters the station, dejected. The brides are back on the cot, asleep.

Across from him, Seven has her boot on Barrow’s desk, tightening the laces.

LEE
Going somewhere?

SEVEN
Just called in my pickup. We’ve got to get them out of here.

Lee shakes his head.

LEE
Barrow was right.

SEVEN
About what?

LEE
You. You’re no better than him. You believe me enough to run but not enough to stay.

Seven steps closer to him.

SEVEN
Stay and get killed? They are more important than any of this.

LEE
Yes. And they’re dying. They deserve better than this. They’re not making any trip.

SEVEN
We will do our best for them. I’ve got a med team on standby --

LEE
You’re not hearing me.

Lee unholsters his pistol and aims it at her.

LEE
They’re not going anywhere. I’m not going to let them get poked and prodded and die for nothing.
(cocks the pistol)
Now get the hell out of my parish.
EXT. FIELDS – SUNSET

The Clan rides through the fields.

Hellman leads them, his horse galloping ahead. Behind him, a group of other horsemen. Behind them, the rest of the fleet.

TORCHES are lit, hand-held with flames streaking behind them as they ride. Tails of fire.

As the army reaches a dirt road, Hellman raises a fist to stop. It takes a moment for them all to brake.

Hellman turns his horse to face them.

HELLMAN
Let us take a moment for prayer, Clansmen, as we look upon our first crusade! May the Lord guide our hands and all extensions of them. May we enforce the Word as it has been spoken to us by God. May we cleanse this nation of its abundant sins and bring her people to glory.

(“amen”s)
St. Joan is only the beginning ... so LET US BEGIN!

They CHEER and CHARGE.

It’s a terrifying assembly, trampling up the dirt road as they make their way to town, visible on the horizon ahead of them as the last streak of sunlight expires.

INT./EXT. – MAIN STREET – VARIOUS – NIGHT

MONTAGE as:

-- Shop owners shut their window gates.
-- Townsfolk lock their doors.
-- Lights are switched off.
-- Dusty and Dr. Kelley secure her office.
-- Pastor Maria lights candles in a solemn vigil.
-- The streets lie empty.

Deathly quiet all around. The town waits.
INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Lee sits behind the desk. Seven is gone. The brides are asleep in the holding cell.

He reaches down, grabs a bottle of water and crosses the station. He leans on the cell’s open gate. After a moment, he sits in the chair across from them.

The CREAK of his weight in the chair wakes the Blonde Bride.

LEE
How are you feeling?

She doesn’t look great. Dried blood caked on her face. He offers her the water. She gulps it down. It’s a peculiar sight. A Victorian lady holding a plastic water bottle.

BLONDE BRIDE
Alive. Thank you.

LEE
We should leave soon.

BLONDE BRIDE
May I let her sleep a few more minutes?

She brushes the other bride’s dark hair.

LEE
Of course. If I can ask you a question.

BLONDE BRIDE
You’ve been so kind to us. Anything.

Lee thinks for a moment, phrasing his question.

LEE
What did it feel like?

BLONDE BRIDE
Like I was being torn apart from the inside. It was quick, but --

LEE
No, I’m sorry, not that. I’m sure that was terrible, but I meant to ask: being ... in love. In your time. How did you --
I see. It was like ... being under water. The moment I saw her, I held my breath and dived in. It felt so perfect down there with her. But we could not stay. After a time, everything we were surrounded by would not let us survive together.

Lee leans back in his chair and looks out the cell window.

The more I think about it ... and everything that brought me here ... all that had to come to pass ... I feel like it was you that found me.

Lee looks to her with a weary smile.

A gunshot. The Brunette Bride wakes.

Lee sits up at attention. He crosses into the main room and looks out the window.

Is it time to leave?

Yes, my love.

They help each other up.

We’re not safe here anymore. I had hoped we’d have more time. We’ll have to go quietly on foot.

Lee opens the door and ushers the brides out.
EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Hellman on his horse trots down main street. He’s holding a torch and his Bible in the same hand. In the other, he holds a voice amplifier to his hood.

Behind him, his main assembly of horse-mounted Clansmen.

HELLMAN

(amplified)
Greetings, good people of St. Joan! Today is the first of this great nation’s future. Your leaders have failed you. We will not. They have compromised. We will not. They have relinquished their responsibility to moral choice. We. Will. Not.

(beat)
Who will come out from hiding and take their place among us? Stand and protect our shared heritage, and we will protect you.

(pause for effect)
Refuse, and we make no guarantees.

The amplifier lets out a loud HISS as he shuts it off.

From the adjacent church, Pastor Maria appears, walking toward Hellman.

HELLMAN

Our first volunteer! A woman of the cloth, no less.

Pastor Maria give him a look of utter contempt.

PASTOR MARIA

You bear the symbol, but you are no holy man, Hellman. You misread and deface the Word of --

BLAM.

Hellman whips out a revolver and BLASTS a shot into Pastor Maria’s chest, tossing her limp body onto the pavement.

Hellman holsters the pistol and raises the amplifier again.

HELLMAN

Not a promising start. A sign of what’s to come, I’d wager. Unless another would care to speak?

(waits)
Very well. Cleanse this place.
From behind them, a squad of Clansmen on motorcycles ROARS to life, moving down either side of the street. Beginning at the far end, they light their torches and TOSS them through the windows of buildings lining the street.

Infernos consume the end block of main street, plumes of smoke issuing into the air.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Lee supports the brides, grasping their arms on both sides of him. He brings them around the back of the station.

He stops for a moment. Allows them to rest on the back wall.

Lee peeks around the next corner. He can hear the chaos at the opposite end of the street. Wanting a peek of the action, he sprints down the alley and peeks around the corner.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Still standing at the end of the street, Hellman turns his horse to face his people.

HELLMAN
It is time to ignite more than these buildings. Let our symbol emblazon these streets and the fallen souls of those who walk them.
(louder)
Bring in the trucks!

Two trucks back into the street. Clansmen riding in the truck beds hop out, lowering the gates. From the trucks they slide out large wooden crosses.

Groups of them carry the crosses, setting them upright around the street every few feet.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Lee rejoins the brides, acting again as their crutch.

He hurries them across the alley behind the neighboring building. He looks down the back street. The church steeple still several blocks away.
EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Hellman takes in the sight of the street lined with wooden crosses. He raises his arms above his head, Bible in hand.

HELLMAN
Let there be light.

On cue, the Clansman IGNITE the flaming crosses.

HELLMAN
Baptism by fire!

Hellman leads the army slowly forward, overtaking the next block of main street.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Lee and the brides are only a block from the church. It looms over them. The chaos on main street sounds nearer.

Their steps are strained.

The brides collapse in Lees arms. He bends back to support their weight.

LEE
No! Not now.

BRUNETTE BRIDE
I’m not sure we can make it.

Both of their breathing is labored.

LEE
Yes you can, we’re almost there.

Lee pushes the brides into an embrace and LIFTS them both in his arms. Veins protrude from his neck and forehead.

Lumbering forward under their weight, he stomps the last few blocks step by painful step. His knees quake and his ankles wobble, but he presses on.

He can see the flickering candlelight through the stained glass windows. Almost there.

Facing the back door of the church, he raises his foot and KICKS through.
INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

With a CRACK, the door swings open. He goes as fast as he can past the pulpit and sets them down in the first pew.

He checks their breathing.

BLONDE BRIDE
Thank you. Thank you so much.

LEE
I’ve got to find the Pastor.

The Brunette Bride attempts to raise her hand to him.

BRUNETTE BRIDE
You’ve gotten us this far. Don’t make the same mistake we did.

He leans in.

LEE
What’s that?

BRUNETTE BRIDE
Getting yourself killed to get somewhere you’re desperate to go. (coughs)
If we had known ...

BLONDE BRIDE
No.

She grabs her brides hand.

BLONDE BRIDE
A moment wed is worth more than a lifetime apart.

Lee steps away from them, fighting back tears. He slips out the back door of the church from which they came.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Sliding along the back wall of the church, Lee listens. The army’s roar still seems far enough away.

He turns the corner and heads toward the far end of main street down the parallel back road.
EXT. BACK ROAD - NIGHT

Lee keeps to the shadows.

He peeks around corners, making sure no Clansmen are occupying the gap to main street, then dashes across.

The noise of the group grows nearer.

Lee finds himself behind the buildings of the block the Clan are currently sacking. Walking more quietly, he inches down the back of three connected stores.

A few jeering voices threaten from around the alley.

Lee dives into a dumpster just as they turn the corner. He peeks over the edge. Three CLANSMEN, the center of them carrying a flaming torch.

He ducks down and pulls out his pistol slowly.

Raising it next to his head, he takes a few deep breaths and LEAPS out of the dumpster. He FIRES a shot, taking out the center Clansman.

The torch hits the ground, bottom-lighting the tussle to monstrous effect.

Lee takes on the two remaining Clansmen hand-to-hand.

He manages to drop-kick one in the gut while using the momentum from the kick to swing out for a shot at the other. The muzzle flashes but the shot doesn’t land.

Lee falls to the ground, giving the last Clansman enough time to grab his wrists and wring the gun from his hand.

Chest on the ground, Lee SWINGS his legs up from behind, KICKING the Clansman in his face. He reels back, giving Lee enough time to grab his gun and get back on his feet.

He aims his gun at him. The Clansman raises his hands.

Lee hesitates.

Frustrated, he steps toward the Clansman and uses his gun to WHACK him across the face. He falls to the ground, unconscious.

Lee holsters his gun and continues down main street in the opposite direction the Clan is traveling.
EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

The tail end of the clan’s parade moves past a dark alleyway. Lee pokes his head out of the darkness.

In the distance he can see a fallen body:

Pastor Maria.

Checking both ways, he runs out of the alleyway and grabs Pastor Maria, dragging her behind a trash bin for cover. Her legs still poke out.

LEE
Pastor Maria.

He shakes her.

LEE
Pastor, please.

Her eyes open slightly. She cracks a small smile.

PASTOR MARIA
Deputy Lee. Nice to see a friendly face, before --

LEE
Don’t talk like that. I need a marriage performed.

PASTOR MARIA
Found somebody, have you?

LEE
It’s not for me. They’ve come a very long way and they don’t have much time.

PASTOR MARIA
Neither do I, I’m afraid. Only thing about to be performed is a eulogy. Go with God, Deputy.

She blesses him, hand quivering as it crosses.

LEE
Please, let me take you to the church.

He moves in to cradle her. She falls dead in his arms. Lee winces in defeat.

Click. A barrel behind his head.
Lee puts his hands up. Turns to see:

The Bearded Brute, aiming a revolver down at him.

BEARDED BRUTE
Should’a stayed in your closet.

LEE
You know what? I’m getting tired of lookin’ at your beard.

Beard gestures his gun upward.

BEARDED BRUTE
Get up. Hellman’s gonna want you for himself.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - NIGHT

Hellman and his men have reached the far end of the street, most of it in flames. The crosses create a path all the way down. He breathes in the cold night air through his hood.

Hetrots his horse up to the front of the station and bends down to peer through the window. Empty.

HELLMAN
Nobody’s home. What a shame. I guess justice does sleep.

He snaps, and two clansmen KICK open the front doors and begin dousing the station with gasoline.

BEARDED BRUTE (O.S.)
WAIT!

The Bearded Brute pushes Lee through the crowd at gunpoint.

Hellman turns his horse to face them, back to the blackness of the dirt road beyond.

HELLMAN
What have we here?

BEARDED BRUTE
No sign of the Sheriff, but I got his fag Deputy.

Beard kicks Lee to his knees.

BEARDED BRUTE
Thought you’d want the pleasure.
HELLMAN
Indeed I do.

Hellman dismounts his horse. Walks up to Lee.

HELLMAN
You’re braver than the people of this town. I’ll give you that. But you come from rougher terrain. Don’t you?

Hellman kneels down, face to hood.

HELLMAN
Do you like it rough, Deputy?

LEE
Something you need to tell your congregation, Louis?

Hellman stands.

HELLMAN
Turn him over.

The Bearded Brute flips Lee over, pinning him to the ground, face down.

Hellman extends his hand. A shotgun is placed in it.

LEE
Should’ve seen this coming.

HELLMAN
Oh, no, Deputy, I take no pleasure in your beloved sodomy.

Hellman places the barrel of the shotgun against the backside of Lee’s pants.

HELLMAN
I simply prefer to dispense of your kind with a familiar sensation.

Hellman tights his finger on the trigger and ...

BANG.

Hellman is BLOWN to the side by the force of an unseen shot. The shotgun skids along the pavement and his horse bucks, trampling over him. He screams, his Bible-hand arm broken.

The horse runs past, revealing in the road behind it:
Sheriff Barrow, standing with his smoking pistol!

Behind him, Seven drives his Sheriff’s cruiser at the head of a FLEET of advanced federal cruisers.

Obscured in the dark, Barrow signals them and they all switch on their headlights, shining directly at the opposing Clan, who shudders back a few steps at the sight.

Barrow approaches the group, the fleet following him.

He reaches down and picks up Lee, who brushes himself off. Barrow sees the Bearded Brute trying to go for his gun on the sly. Barrow BLASTS the gun out of his hand.

BARROW
Merciful to a fault, I am going to make this offer once: retreat and surrender yourselves to the law. We can all walk away from this.

The Clan members all look at each other, whispering.

HELLMAN
NO.

Hellman hoists himself up from the ground, cradling his dead hand. He backs into his crowd for cover.

HELLMAN
The revolution has only begun. (to his people) Kill them!

The Clansmen CHARGE the fleet.

BARROW
Fine.

Barrow FIRES his pistol in the air and the fleet ROARS to life, charging back. The first few rows of people topple over under Seven’s cruiser.

Barrow pulls Lee aside, out of the charge, into the station.

INT. SHERIFF’S STATION - DAY

The Clan and the Feds do battle outside.

LEE
Thank you.
BARROW
Where are they?

Lee looks doubtful of him still.

LEE
Seven convince you they were too important to the history of scientific research?

Barrow shakes his head.

BARROW
No time for this, Lee. Tell me where they are.

LEE
I’ve got them at the church. I came to find Pastor Maria. She’s dead. They might be dead too, by this point, I don’t know.

BARROW
Let’s go.

LEE
It’ll take a miracle to cross that street.

Barrow reloads his gun.

BARROW
Oh, we’ll cross the street.

CRASH.

A torch flies through the window and IGNI TES the gasoline inside the station. Walls of flame erupt around them.

Lee PUSHES Barrow at the door, narrowly missing the snaking expansion of exploding gas puddles.

EXT. SHERIFF’S STATION - CONTINUOUS

Barrow and Lee land outside. Lee lands on his feet. He helps up the fallen Barrow.

LEE
We even?

BARROW
You wish. C’mon, they’re moving down the block.
EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

The battle rages on.

The burning crosses lining the street add an even more hellacious landscape to the carnage.

Clansmen’s horses buck onto the hoods of charging cruisers. Their hooves dent the metal.

Motorcycles isolate one of the cruisers by circling it. Another Clansmen, on foot, pulls the FEDERAL AGENT out from the drivers seat and TORCHES the car.

Dusty and Dr. Kelley toss medicinal Molotov cocktails out the window of her fortified office, scorching Clansmen.

The sound of gunfire claps like fireworks.

The group has migrated down the main street just far enough to obscure the side street that leads to the church.

Barrow and Lee enter the madness.

They cover each other, standing back to back, with their pistols outstretched.

Twisting through the undulating battle, Clansmen ATTACK them, and they FIRE shots, deflecting their approach.

Just as they cross the halfway point to their destination, a large obstacle steps into their view: The Bearded Brute. He spins his revolver and cracks the knuckles of his free hand.

Lee faces him. Barrow covering.

LEE
What’d I say?

Beard tries to think back to the taunt. Distracted, Lee SHOOTS the gun out of his hand, BLASTING out his knees again. Lee grips the fall brute’s facial hair, TEARING the beard-flesh from his face. Lee tosses it aside.

BARROW
No time. Let’s move.

Barrow and Lee begin to BLAST their way through the rest of the crowd. From above, they’re a twirling pinwheel of muzzle flashes in every direction.

The battle moves along, shrinking as it continues forward. Lee and Barrow make their way to the entrance of the side street, the Church directly before them.
EXT. SIDE STREET - CONTINUOUS

Both sides of the entrance to the street are marked with flaming crosses. Barrow and Lee begin their march toward the church. A loud CRASH behind them.

HELLMAN
Sheriff Barrow!

They both turn and see Hellman, holding Seven at gunpoint. Barrows’ cruiser sits crashed behind them, totalled.

HELLMAN
You may have gained the upper hand today, but the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom. Tell your men to stand down.

Hellman tightens his grip on Seven, shoving his gun deeper into her neck.

BARROW
They’re not my men. I look like a Fed to you? Shoot her or don’t, makes no difference to me.

Barrow looks at Seven. He winks at her. She looks regretful.

HELLMAN
That wink. What was that?

BARROW
Oh, nothing. We just know what’s in the trunk of my car.

Hellman turns to the cruiser. Seven taps a button on her watch and RUNS. Barrow covers her.

INSIDE THE TRUNK:

The Time Travel Device. Rigged with a remote detonator. Red light flashes.

BOOM.

BACK ON THE STREET:

The cruiser EXPLODES in a mushroom cloud, the surface covered in a web-pattern of lightning bolts. The beautifully anomalous electro-fire belch issues into the sky, expanding and churning the clouds above.
The blast pushes Hellman to the ground.

Barrow walks up to him. Hellman writhes on the floor. Barrow kicks him over. Hellman firmly clenches his singed Bible.

BARROW
I know the bit about prying a gun from you cold-dead-hand, but does that also apply to the good book?

HELLMAN
Don’t you dare!

Barrow leans down and snatches the Bible out of Hellman’s hand. Leaflets through it.

Hellman groans.

BARROW
I need to borrow this.

Barrow begins to walk down the street toward the church.

Seven watches Barrow leave as Lee turns to Hellman. Lee walks over to him with a purposeful step. Hellman twitches.

Lee grabs him firmly by the collar, wringing him up.

HELLMAN
Please ...
(gulps)
Please don’t remove my hood. Leave me that, I beg you.

He pulls him closer.

LEE
I’ve seen your soul, Hellman. Don’t give a shit what you look like.

Lee PUSHES Hellman into the flaming cross.

His entire body erupts. The flames travel up his neck and his hood catches fire.

He SCREAMS from beneath his hood, the fibers of which melt into his face. His screams fall silent as the fabric burns away to reveal a pulpy skull beneath.

Lee spits and it sizzles. He makes his way to the church. Seven glares at the scorched corpse at the foot of the cross.

A gentle rain begins to fall, extinguishing Main Street.
INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The brides stand at the front of the church. Barrow is behind them, Bible open. Lee joins him to the right.

The brides join hands, both sets trembling.

BARROW
Do you take this woman to be your lawfully wedded wife?

BLONDE BRIDE
I do.

BARROW
And you?

BRUNETTE BRIDE
I do.

BARROW
By the power vested in me by St. Joan Parish, I now pronounce you ... partners for life.
(lowers Bible)
The brides may kiss.

Tears streaming down their faces, the brides lean in toward each other slowly, their bloody bodies quaking in pain.

Their lips lock and their eyes close.

In full embrace, they fall into Barrow’s arms.

Dead.

Barrow lowers them gently into the pews. Wipes something out of his eye. Lee comes up to him.

LEE
Sheriff, you know you can’t legally perform a marriage.

Barrow looks down at the brides.

BARROW
They didn’t know that.
EXT. MAIN STREET - SUNRISE

Lee and Barrow join Seven over Hellman’s body. The smoking aftermath of battle lies behind them. Dusty serves water to fallen federal agents. Dr. Kelley tends to their wounds.

Barrow locks eyes with Dr. Kelley as she wraps an agent’s arm. They share a thankful expression.

Seven puts her hand on Barrow’s shoulder.

SEVEN
Sorry to tell you, Sheriff, but you successfully curtailed a civil war.

BARROW
We’ve done far better today.

SEVEN
Yes, but we’d be fools to think Hellman acted alone. What’s next?

Barrow looks at Lee.

LEE
After what we’ve been through, I think we could offer a lot to someone fighting the good fight.
(to Barrow)
Maybe time for a family reunion?

Barrow looks uneasy.

BARROW
Don’t get ahead of yourself, Deputy.

LEE
Can I assume that means my probationary period is over?

BARROW
Keep making suggestions like that, and you’re on an indefinite probationary period, partner.

Lee smiles.

LEE
Partner? About time.
EXT. HIGHWAY - SUNRISE

Barrow drives the cruiser down the highway, Lee at his side.

As the sun rises on a new day, their vehicle floats past the state line and toward something ...

... bigger.

THE END.