

"SUCH A PLACE AS THIS"
The Sheridan Tapes - Season 01, Episode 22
Recording Draft - September 10, 2020

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Based on story and characters from
"Homestead on the Corner"
By Trevor Van Winkle

tape #2-5-53-5-6

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

A quiet, lonely scene: the quiet hum of AC, the faint clicking of an off-kilter fan, and the far-away sound of traffic through an open window.

After a moment, someone leans forward in their chair and starts a tape recorder.

ANNA SHERIDAN

(postulating on
existential questions)

What makes a person who they are?
Fundamentally, I mean. Is it
physical? Mental? Spiritual? Or
something else that no one's even
begun to guess at yet?

(beat, then SCOFFS)

I know I'm not the first to ask
that question: we've been
theorizing on it since we had the
words to do so. But, cliché as it
may be, I'll ask again: what makes
me -- *me*? What makes Anna
Sheridan... Anna Sheridan? Ability?
Talent? I don't think so. She's
hardly the first person to ever sit
down and write a scary story. Not
even the first writer to lose their
grasp on where the fiction ends and
real life begins: Arthur Conan
Doyle tried his hand at criminal
deduction on more than one
occasion... You know, when he
wasn't attending seances and
debating spiritualism with Harry
Houdini. That all happened, by the
way. Look it up.

(beat)

So if not ability, then what does
define Anna K. Sheridan? The work?
The accomplishments, the awards?
No... Even colder. Without her
books, she's still the same Anna...
Maybe not the version the rest of
the world got to see, but still the
same, when you get right down to
it.

(beat)

The friendships, then? The
relationships? Ah... Now that's
getting closer. Much closer. But
still no cigar.

(MORE)

ANNA SHERIDAN (CONT'D)

Go back fifteen years, back when it was just her, the van, and a few ghost stories, and she's still Anna goddamn Sheridan, through and through. It was all already there... Even if some parts of her were hidden, even from herself.

(beat)

So. Not her abilities, then. Not her work, or her accomplishments, or her friendships or her lovers or her family. So what's left? A name? That's hardly unique either. "A rose by any other name would..." etcetera etcetra. And she's gone by more than a few in her time. Anna. Amy. Even A.L. Sheridan, that one time she listened to a publicist about a century behind the times. So it seems like that only leaves us with... Memories. It's fitting that someone who lived such a storied life should be reduced to nothing but stories. Sometimes it even seems like that's what she wanted: recording her own life like it might slip away from her at any moment. Huh. I guess it kind of did, in the end.

(beat)

But that's not quite true either. I mean, if someone looked like her, sounded like her, and knew every thought she'd ever had, every memory and fantasy and fleeting hope that ever passed through her mind -- would they be the same person? I mean, the rest of the world might think so, but what about the person who replaced her? What about that *other* Anna? I mean, would they ever be able to forget who... *What* they were before? Could they ever *really* become her, or would they forever be stuck between who they are and who they want to become? A halfway person, never able to be whole? How long does it take for the mask to become more familiar than the face behind it?

Someone knocks on the door behind Anna -- or, as we now suspect, *the Echo*. She turns in her seat slightly, then back to the recorder.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER) (CONT'D)
Well then... I guess it's time to
find out.

CLICK

INT. POLICE CRUISER -- OUTSIDE HALFWAY HOUSE -- MID-AFTERNOON

Sam and Maria move around as they prepare for the confrontation to come. Sam fumbles a little with the recorder, while Maria fiddles with a small mechanical device.

MARIA SOL
Tape rolling?

SAM BAILEY
(checking)
Yeah... Looks like it.
(gestures to device)
Any luck with that thing?

MARIA SOL
(distracted, slightly
annoyed)
Not really... I tried to follow
Anna's old blueprints, but...
Hardware was never my strong suit.

SAM BAILEY
So you don't think it'll pick up
the Echo's signal?

MARIA SOL
(irritated)
Oh, it'll pick up its signal all
right.

Maria switches it on, and a noisy, slightly out of tune scanner chime begins to beep wildly.

MARIA SOL (CONT'D)
(annoyed)
It'll just pick up everything else
in a three mile radius too.

Maria switches it off.

SAM BAILEY
(disappointed)
So... Pretty much useless then.

MARIA SOL

(snipping at him)

And what are you bringing to the table, detective Bailey? A gun you're not going to use? Your razor sharp deductive wit?

SAM BAILEY

(slightly hurt)

Okay, okay, I get the point.

(beat)

Look, is everything okay?

MARIA SOL

(surprised)

What?

SAM BAILEY

(cautious)

It's just... You've been acting kind of strange since...

MARIA SOL

(CHUCKLES, masking worry)

You've known me for less than a week -- I don't think you have enough of a baseline to tell when I'm acting "strange."

SAM BAILEY

(insistent)

No, I'm serious -- ever since we left the station you've been...

MARIA SOL

(cutting him off)

You mean since you stumbled back into your office bleeding and rambling about the *thing* wearing my girlfriend's face? Yeah, I don't know why I'd be acting weird -- complete mystery to me...

SAM BAILEY

(grumbling acceptance)

Alright, fine. But still...

MARIA SOL

(brutal, final)

But nothing. We're here. We deal with this thing, and as soon as we're done with that, we never see each other again. Sound good to you?

SAM BAILEY
(disappointed)
Yeah. Come on, let's go.

Sam and Maria open their doors and step out onto the pavement. With a slightly rushed pace, they cross the parking lot and approach the front door.

Maria suddenly stops.

MARIA SOL
(alert)
What a minute.

SAM BAILEY
(annoyed)
What is it now?

MARIA SOL
(nervous)
Something's... Something's not
right here.

SAM BAILEY
(rolling his eyes)
Please don't tell me you're having
premonitions or something?
(beat, slightly worried)
Wait, is that actually a thing?

MARIA SOL
(irritated)
No, you idiot... Don't you feel it?

SAM BAILEY
(growing confused)
Feel what?

MARIA SOL
(trying to describe the
feelings)
A slight... Movement in the air.
Like it's vibrating or...
Twitching, maybe. And an odd taste
too, like...

SAM BAILEY
(noticing it as well)
Like licking an old penny.

MARIA SOL
Copper. I was going to say it
tastes like blood, but... Yeah.
Penny works too.

SAM BAILEY

What is it?

MARIA SOL

I'm not sure... I've felt it before though. It's subtle, but once you notice it, you can't really ignore it again.

SAM BAILEY

Do you think it's the Echo?

MARIA SOL

(feeling it out)

No, no... Not just the Echo. It doesn't *feel* like it, somehow. More like...

(notices the door)

Um... Sam?

SAM BAILEY

What?

MARIA SOL

(hesitant)

Was that door like that the last time you were here?

SAM BAILEY

(confused, then seeing it too)

Like... Oh. No, definitely not.

Sam steps up to it, then swings a heavy sounding brass knocker against the old, weathered planks of the door.

MARIA SOL

It looks... What, medieval?

SAM BAILEY

Gothic revival, more like.

(notices Maria's look)

What? I took a few architecture classes in college.

MARIA SOL

(shaking her head)

Of course you did. So -- Not supposed to be here?

SAM BAILEY

No. Definitely not supposed to be here.

They're both silent for a moment, then....

MARIA SOL
(barely daring to hope)
I don't suppose there's another way
in?

SAM BAILEY
(remembering, with a
little excitement)
I'm... Pretty sure there's another
door around the back. Come on.

Sam and Maria turn and run off and around the corner of the building. They stop short.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)
(annoyed)
Oh, come on...

MARIA SOL
Look, are you sure they didn't just
change them out since you were here
last?

SAM BAILEY
No, I'm sure they didn't. Here...
Keep an eye on it... I'm going to
check the front again.

MARIA SOL
What will that do...?

SAM BAILEY
Just trust me, okay?

Sam turns and jogs a few paces back around the building, then calls out to Maria.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)
Is it still the same?

MARIA SOL
(distant, calling out)
Yeah! Why?

SAM BAILEY
(calling back)
The front door's back to normal.

MARIA SOL
(confused, crossing over
to Sam)
What? When did it...

SAM BAILEY
 (desperate)
 Wait, wait!

MARIA SOL
 (as she rounds the corner)
 Why? What are you...
 (notices, confused)
 Um, Sam? Why are you staring at...

SAM BAILEY
 (focused, slightly
 annoyed)
 Because I think that if one of us
 doesn't keep our eyes on that door,
 it will change back.

MARIA SOL
 (slightly embarrassed)
 Oh. That... Makes sense, I guess.

SAM BAILEY
 (driven)
 Come on, let's just get inside
 before it changes again.

Sam and Maria hurry towards the front door. One of them pulls it open, and a small electronic bell chimes.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)
 (calling out)
 Hello? Is anyone here?

No response. The reception area is quiet except for the ticking of a clock (the timing of which sounds *just* off).

Maria crosses the padded carpet and rings the bell. No reply. After a moment...

MARIA SOL
 Nobody home, I guess.
 (looks over the desk)
 Jeez, it doesn't look like anyone's
 been in here in weeks... The
 receptionist's desk is a total
 mess.

SAM BAILEY
 (growing more unnerved)
 That's weird... He had it spotless
 the last time I was here.

MARIA SOL

(shrugs)

Guess they've really let themselves go. These curtains look like they haven't been cleaned in about...

SAM BAILEY

(jumps)

Wait, don't touch that!

MARIA SOL

(startled, jumping back)

Ah! Jesus Bailey, what was that...!?

SAM BAILEY

(terrified)

Those aren't curtains.

MARIA SOL

What?

SAM BAILEY

The lobby didn't have curtains. Not when I was here.

MARIA SOL

(growing unease)

Then... What are these?

SAM BAILEY

(deeply unnerved)

They're, um... Just... Look a little closer.

Maria leans in to look.

MARIA SOL

What the... It looks like there's something stuck in it.... Lots of somethings. They kind of look like...

SAM BAILEY

Flies. Dead, desiccated flies.

MARIA SOL

(realizing what this is)

Oh god...

SAM BAILEY

"Come into my parlor, said the spider to the..."

MARIA SOL
(sounding nauseous)
Oh god, I think I'm going to be sick.

SAM BAILEY
(sounding more nauseous)
You're not alone. God, what kind of spider could...

MARIA SOL
(noticing something else, nervous)
Um... Sam? I don't think that's the worst part.

SAM BAILEY
What do you mean?

MARIA SOL
What time was it when we got here?

SAM BAILEY
(distracted)
Uh, about... 5:30 or so. Why?

MARIA SOL
(numb terror)
Look through the blinds.

Sam hesitates, then reaches around the spider-web curtains and lifts one of the plastic blinds.

SAM BAILEY
(momentarily distracted from his terror)
It's.. It's pitch black out there.
(lifts the blind a little higher, looks up)
I can't even see the moon. Wasn't it supposed to be full tonight?

MARIA SOL
Yeah. But even if it wasn't, shouldn't we be able to see the streetlights from here?

SAM BAILEY
(realizing)
Oh shit.

Somewhere down the hall, a heavy scuttling sound is heard... The undeniable, bone-chilling sound of spider legs, but far too loud for any creature of our world.

MARIA SOL
 (urgent, fearful)
 We need to get out of here. Now!

Sam and Maria run for the front door. Sam grabs the handle and tries to open it, but it rattles uselessly.

MARIA SOL (CONT'D)
 Dammit, it's locked!

SAM BAILEY
 How can it be locked, we just...

MARIA SOL
 (angry, terrified)
 Oh, wake up Sam! You still think we're in the real halfway house?

A hiss of breath rolls down the corridor towards them.

SAM BAILEY
 Oh god.

MARIA SOL
 Can you see anything?

SAM BAILEY
 No the... The hallway's too dark. I think there's a light switch on the far wall if I can just... Ah!

MARIA SOL
 What!?

SAM BAILEY
 (almost squeaking with fear)
 It's... I just saw a leg. It's... It's right there.

MARIA SOL
 (terrified, but determined)
 Shit. Get back.

SAM BAILEY
 What are you...?

Maria winds back and -- Kicks the doorframe! It rattles, but doesn't budge. She kicks it again -- Wood splinters, but it doesn't go.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)
 Maria...

The spider begins to hiss, and it sounds far too close for comfort. Sam pulls out his pistol, cocking it and leveling it at the unseen creature.

MARIA SOL

Hold on... Just... One... More!

Maria kicks on each word, and with the last, the door bursts open.

MARIA SOL (CONT'D)

Come on!

Sam turns and rushes after Maria, through the door into...

Not the parking lot. Definitely not. Both stop up short. It's another reception, one that sounds as busy as the DMV during the midday rush.

Loud murmuring, a few elevated voices, and an even louder clock -- one that sounds *even more off tempo*.

SAM BAILEY

What the hell...

As soon as Sam speaks, the voices all fall silent, and what sounds like a million heads turn at the same time.

MARIA SOL

(definitely unnerved)

Um... Sam? They're staring at us.

SAM BAILEY

(unsure what to make of
this)

Yeah. I noticed.

MARIA SOL

I... I think they want you to put your gun away.

SAM BAILEY

What? Oh, right....

Sam holsters his pistol.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

Sorry everyone, uh... Just a false alarm. Please go about your...

No one's listening. They all look away at the same time, and almost as though nothing had happened, resume their chattering, yelling, and mumbling.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)
 Maria... Do you have any idea
 what's...

MARIA SOL
 Not a clue. It looks... Closer to
 normal, though.

SAM BAILEY
 (SCOFFS nervously)
 Depends on your definition of
 normal. Do you think... Do you
 think they're actual people, or...

MARIA SOL
 Not likely. But your guess is as
 good as mine right now.

SAM BAILEY
 (notices something)
 What's going on with the windows
 now?

MARIA SOL
 Huh? I don't know... It looks like
 it's the middle of the day now.

Maria lifts one of the blinds, then immediately drops it with
 a GRUNT OF PAIN.

MARIA SOL (CONT'D)
 (pained)
 Ugh, my eyes haven't adjusted yet.
 Can you...

SAM BAILEY
 Yeah, sure.

Sam pulls something out of his jacket pocket.

MARIA SOL
 (incredulous)
 Wait... Are those seriously
 aviators?

SAM BAILEY
 (slightly embarrassed)
 First day of work present from
 Bill. He gives them to everyone in
 the office, even though he's the
 only one who can really pull them
 off.

MARIA SOL
Why do you still have them, then?

SAM BAILEY
(slightly embarrassed)
They're, uh... They're the only
sunglasses I have.

Sam slips them on, lifts the blinds -- and freezes. He lowers it, then puts it back up, then pulls off his glasses to make sure.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)
(unnerved)
Maria... It's not the middle of the
day.

MARIA SOL
(confused)
What do you mean?

SAM BAILEY
It's... It's not day out there.
It's not... Anything, out there.
It's just...

MARIA SOL
(curious)
What? Let me see...

Maria grabs the edge of the blinds and pulls the whole thing up.

The moment she does, one of the people behind them SCREAMS BLOODY MURDER, and a sound like sizzling meat fills the room. After a moment, both fall silent -- as does the entire lobby.

SAM BAILEY
What the hell...

Across the room, someone picks up a phone, calmly dials a three digit number, waits a few seconds without speaking, then hangs up.

Almost as soon as they do, a low, warbling thrum begins to shake the room, almost sounding like a police siren... Almost, but definitely not.

MARIA SOL
I... I think we'd better get out of
here.

SAM BAILEY
Yeah.

They both turn and run for the door. It isn't locked, but the moment they open it, the spider hisses, louder than before.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

Shit!

Maria slams the door, while Sam grabs a chair and wedges it under the handle.

MARIA SOL

Do you think that will hold it?

SAM BAILEY

I don't know... Maybe? But we need to find another way out of here, now! Come on, let's try for the back door.

MARIA SOL

Do you think you can find it?

SAM BAILEY

(suddenly uncertain)
Maybe. I think... I mean, if this was the real house, it should be...

The warbling semi-siren grows louder and louder. Something is definitely coming closer.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

(making up his mind)

This way! Come on!

Sam and Maria take off down the corridor, PANTING with fear and exertion. The siren grows fainter behind them, but it's still there.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

Down here, it's just...

Suddenly, a door burst open ahead of them, and the noise of the siren is drowned out by another.

MARIA SOL

(confused)

What the hell is that?

(beat, no reply)

Sam? Sam!?

Sam doesn't respond. Instead, he walks slowly towards the open door. We can hear the sound of waves lapping on the other side of it, along with a low, barren-sounding wind.

MARIA SOL (CONT'D)
(growing more worried)
Sam? Snap out of it, we need to go!

SAM BAILEY
(trance-like)
I... I can't believe I forgot
how... Beautiful it was.

MARIA SOL
Sam!

Maria slaps him across the face. SAM GRUNTS. The door suddenly slams shut, and everything seems to snap back to normal.

SAM BAILEY
Ow! What was that for?

MARIA SOL
(defensive)
Sorry, you just... You looked like
you were about to go in there.
(beat, a bit unnerved)
What was that?

SAM BAILEY
(realizing how out of it
he was)
I... I'm not sure, actually. I
think... I think it was supposed to
be Agate Shore.
(beat, then confused)
What happened to that noise?

MARIA SOL
I don't know... I think it cut off
when the door opened.
(beat)
Let's get out of here.

SAM BAILEY
Yeah. I think the way out is...

Sam takes a few steps, then stops, noticing something.

MARIA SOL
What is it?

SAM BAILEY
(with dread)
This... This is her room.

MARIA SOL
What? You're sure?

SAM BAILEY
(nodding)
Absolutely. She's here.

MARIA SOL
(sarcastic)
What, are you having a premonition
now?

SAM BAILEY
(slightly sarcastic)
Do you taste copper anymore?

MARIA SOL
(realizing)
No... I don't...

Sam steps up to the door. Through the wood, we can faintly hear the end of "Anna's" speech from the opening. Sam knocks.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
(muffled)
Well then... I guess it's time to
find out.
(CALLING OUT)
Come in!

Sam hesitates, then opens the door.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER) (CONT'D)
(sounding genuinely happy)
Well well, Detective. This is a
pleasant surprise.
(sees maria behind him,
mock-surprise)
Maria! What are you doing here?

MARIA SOL
(voice shaking, but trying
not to show it)
You know exactly what I'm doing
here.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
(confused)
I... I really don't.
(looks to Sam)
What's going on, detective?

SAM BAILEY
 (slightly awkward)
 Miss... Sheridan, I just have a
 couple of questions for...

MARIA SOL
 (angry and heartbroken)
 Don't you look away from me!

SAM BAILEY
 (nervous)
 Maria...

MARIA SOL
 (intense)
 Don't pretend you don't know
 exactly what's going on here.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 Maria, please don't...

MARIA SOL
 (through gritted teeth)
 No!
 (beat, DEEP BREATH,
 then...)
 Look me in the eyes right now, and
 tell me... Who are you?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (sounding genuinely hurt)
 I... I'm Anna.

MARIA SOL
 (angry, aggressive)
 Don't lie to me! Who are you? Who
 are you, *to me*?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (sounding heartbroken)
 Maria, I... I...
 (beat, repentant)
 I'm the woman who loved you. Who
 loves you. And I'm sorry I left you
 the way I did, but... It had to be
 this way. I know you probably can't
 accept that, but -- It's the truth.
 I just hope you can find a way to
 forgive me.

There's a long moment of silence -- and then Maria moves suddenly, ripping the pistol out of Sam's holster and cocking it.

MARIA SOL
Wrong *fucking* answer.

SAM BAILEY
Maria, don't! She's...

Sam cuts off as ANNA BEGINS TO CHUCKLE DARKLY.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
(sardonic)
Well. It was worth a shot, at least. Can't fault a girl for trying.
(beat)
What did I get wrong? Out of curiosity?

MARIA SOL
(unnerved by this sudden turn)
I... Anna didn't leave me. I left her. Before... You know.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
(nodding)
Ah. That would do it, I suppose. Though that one was a flip of the coin, to be honest.

SAM BAILEY
(finally getting his bearings)
Maria, please... You can't do this. I know you can't. It isn't you.

MARIA SOL
(snapping at her)
And how would you know, huh?

SAM BAILEY
Because you're not a killer. I know you're not.

MARIA SOL
(bitterly)
Oh, and I guess you're an expert on that subject, huh? Tell me: killed many people in your time?

SAM BAILEY
(taken aback)
I... What are you...

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (CHUCKLES)
 You're not going to kill me, Maria.
 Trust me: I know how this ends.

MARIA SOL
 (annoyed)
 God, is everyone psychic today?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (LAUGHS)
 No, not psychic. Just... Well
 prepared, that's all. One more
 thing I learned from Anna. Tell me,
 Maria... How's Alice?

There's a long, deadly pause

MARIA SOL
 (sudden terror)
 She... How do you know about her?

SAM BAILEY
 Who's Alice?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (enjoying this)
 Miss Sol's roommate. Currently
 taking care of their apartment in
 Bakersfield all by her lonesome.

MARIA SOL
 (terrified)
 What do you... What have you done
 to her?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 Me? Nothing. She's fine. How about
 you give her a call, hmm? Check up
 on her?

MARIA SOL
 (trying to retake control)
 Look, whatever you're trying to do,
 it...

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (sudden, vitriolic anger)
 Call her!

Maria jumps back. She hesitates, then pulls out her phone and
 dials. It rings for a moment before.

ALICE KEARNS (V.O.)
 Maria?

MARIA SOL
 (freaked out)
 Alice! Alice, are you okay?

ALICE KEARNS (V.O.)
 (annoyed)
 Geez, no need to yell. I'm fine, I
 just got back from the store.

MARIA SOL (V.O.)
 (mincing around the issue)
 Is... everything alright?
 Nothing... Weird going on around
 the apartment?

ALICE KEARNS (V.O.)
 (LAUGHS)
 Why are you asking me?

MARIA SOL
 (creeping dread)
 Uh... Because I'm not there?

ALICE KEARNS (V.O.)
 (LAUGHS, thinking it's a
 joke)
 Sorry? Yes you are!

MARIA SOL
 (terrible realization)
 What?

ALICE KEARNS (V.O.)
 (SIGHS, annoyed)
 Maria, I know you like a good joke,
 but this is a bit much. I'm
 literally standing in the kitchen
 right now. Only you could leave
 this much of a mess.

MARIA SOL
 (trying to warn her)
 I'm... Alice, I'm still in Nevada.

ALICE KEARNS (V.O.)
 (annoyed, insistent)
 No, you're not. I heard you come in
 last night. I mean, I haven't seen
 you all day, but that's not exactly
 unusual, is it...

MARIA SOL

(urgent)

Alice! Listen to me, this is important: Is the... do you think I'm still in my room?

ALICE KEARNS (V.O.)

(becoming unnerved)

I... I don't know. I'm pretty sure you are.

(beat)

Look, this isn't one of those... Those *things* you and Anna used to talk about, is it...?

MARIA SOL

(terrified, crisis mode)

Alice, get out of there. Get as far away from there as you can and... Hello? Hello?

As she's been speaking, a static has slowly risen until it overpowered her voice. It fades as the phone beeps pitifully.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(sadistic playfulness)

Oh? You must have lost signal. It's terribly unreliable in this old building...

MARIA SOL

(angrily)

You... You complete and utter....

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(mock scolding)

Ah ah ah... Sticks and stones may break my bones...

(leans in darkly)

But guns will never stop me.

(back to sardonic glee)

Go ahead: pull that trigger. See what happens to poor little Alice Kearnes. I dare you.

SAM BAILEY

(completely lost)

What's going on here?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(rolling her eyes)

Oh, pay attention, detective.

Maria's roommate: she's my deadman's switch.

(MORE)

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER) (CONT'D)

She shoots me, and my...
Counterpart in Bakersfield comes
out of her room and strangles the
life from poor Alice before anyone
could possibly help her.

(beat)

Mind you, it's not a perfect copy
of Maria... I had to fudge a few
details and keep her out of sight
until she was needed, but...

MARIA SOL

(weak threat)

If you hurt her...

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(SCOFFS, dark)

You'll what? Shoot me? You know
that will only be a momentary
inconvenience at best... One that
will land you both in prison in
very short order. Huh. Might even
be worth the trouble, if just to
take you off the board for a little
while...

MARIA SOL

(bluffing)

Well maybe I just don't want to see
you wearing Anna's face anymore...
You think of that?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(LAUGHS darkly)

You don't need to try and impress
me, Maria... I know exactly what
you're capable of.

Maria falls silent -- then lowers the gun.

MARIA SOL

(to sam)

Here.

She hands the pistol back to him.

SAM BAILEY

(taken aback, stammering)

So you're... You're really it then.
The Echo.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(grinning)

The one of many.
(MORE)

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER) (CONT'D)

Pleased to meet you at last,
Detective -- properly, I mean.

SAM BAILEY

(disturbed)

You... You know we're not going to
let you get away with this, right?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(LAUGHS)

Who's we? You and Maria? The police
department? What exactly do you
have that you can charge me with?

SAM BAILEY

(mostly faked confidence)

Identity theft. Either forgery or
burglary of Anna Sheridan's ID. And
now, attempted assault.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(amused)

I haven't attempted anything! If
something happens to Miss
Kearnes... Well, the blame would
fall on Maria, wouldn't it?

SAM BAILEY

(smug)

Not if we had your whole confession
on tape, it wouldn't.

Sam pulls the recorder out of his pocket.

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

Oh wait... Whoops. Looks like we
do.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(rolling her eyes)

And you really think I didn't know
that? You try to use that thing,
and I'll burn it over with enough
terrible voices to drive the
listener mad.

SAM BAILEY

(taken down a peg)

You... You can't do that... Can
you?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 You already know I can... Or how
 else do you think my voice ended up
 on one of Anna's blank tapes?

(pre-recorded)
 "...Whatever you've heard, I'm
 alive -- I'm alive, and I need
 help!"

(cuts off, darkly)
 I knew that would get your
 attention.

SAM BAILEY
 (putting the pieces
 together)
 That was you?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 You crashed your car less than a
 mile from here. Close enough for me
 to leave you that little... Easter
 egg. Lure you in.

SAM BAILEY
 (mind reeling a little)
 And... The call to my house? I'm
 guessing that was you too?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (suddenly confused)
 What call?

SAM BAILEY
 The one right before I ran into De
 Witt. After you knocked on my door?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (shaking her head)
 ...Nope. Not ringing any bells.

SAM BAILEY
 But if that wasn't you...

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)
 (dismissive, trying to end
 the conversation)
 Look, detective: right now, the
 only thing that matters is what
 you're going to do next. Shoot me,
 arrest me, and you have an innocent
 person's blood on your hands. Or,
 alternatively -- you both walk
 away.

(MORE)

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER) (CONT'D)

Forget this ever happened and bury
the tape with all the rest of
Anna's old recordings. Move on.

SAM BAILEY

What, so you can create more
doppelgangers? Replace more people?

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

(shrugging)

Maybe. Maybe I'm done with that.
Maybe the other Maria's just...
Insurance. Want to find out? Just
try me.

SAM BAILEY

(uncertain)

I... I...

MARIA SOL

(defeated)

Come on, Sam, let's just go. She...
She beat us.

ANNA SHERIDAN (OTHER)

Au revoir, Detective. Maria. I
think you'll find the exit's where
it's supposed to be now. I'll be
seeing you both, soon enough.

Sam stops up short. HE DRAWS IN A SHARP, ANGRY BREATH.

MARIA SOL

(nervous)

Sam... What are you...

Sam turns on his heels and marches back to Anna.

SAM BAILEY

(reciting)

You have the right to remain
silent. Anything you say can be
used against you...

MARIA SOL

(horrified)

What? Sam, don't! She'll...

SAM BAILEY

(driven)

You warned Alice, right? She had a
chance to run?

MARIA SOL
(uncertain)
She... Well, yes, I guess she did,
but...

SAM BAILEY
(determined)
Then I'm not letting this happen.
Not again. It stops here and now.

MARIA SOL
(desperate)
Sam, you can't do this!

SAM BAILEY
(threatening)
Yes, I can, and I will. So stay out
of my way, or I'll arrest you for
obstruction. Understood?

MARIA SOL
(spinning her wheels)
Sam, it's...
(beat, then RESIGNED SIGH)
Yeah. I understand.

With that, Maria turns and starts walking away. Sam ignores her.

SAM BAILEY
(to the echo)
Anything you say can be used
against you in court. You have the
right to talk to a lawyer for
advice before we ask you any
questions. You have the right...

As he's speaking, ANNA BEGINS TO CHUCKLE DARKLY. A static
rises behind it, until...

CLACK. The recording ends.

ROLL END THEME
AND CREDITS