

"THE LAKE WHICH BURNETH"
The Sheridan Tapes - Season 04, Episode 91
Recording Script - September 13, 2023

by

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Based on story and characters from
"Homestead on the Corner"

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1. EXT. SHAMSON MINE SITE - MORRISON'S DOMAIN - DAY

The canyons surrounding the burned-out ruins of Shamson Mine echo with distant howls of fear and pain.

As they approach, occasional sounds of violence can be heard, along with the roar of noisy diesel engines.

As the vehicles approach, the loudspeakers attached to them begin to broadcast Adrian's voice.

ADRIAN BRIGGS

(trying (badly) to sound
like he's on board)

By the decree of our gracious lord and protector, the one who redeemed us out of the dark for glorious salvation, the god-king of Oslow; these words go out to all who resist his gift of peace and holy redemption. From this day forward, all lands upon this Earth and all worlds beyond are under the command of the Lord of all life by the divine right of conquest. Those within his domain are hereby ordered to lay down arms and cease all resistance immediately, and submit themselves to the god-king's mercy and judgement without delay. Fear not this judgement, however: for those deemed to be unworthy shall be given a new life and a chance to be redeemed through fire and light within his holy city of Oslow. But those who continue to resist -- those who flee the light of our glorious redeemer -- shall face the justice that awaits them for their crimes against the king of all worlds past and present and still to come. For behold -- the God-King has come, and his reward is with him.

As Adrian's message continues, one of the Shamson mine monsters rounds the corner, moving as fast as its shambling, creaking form allows.

It's not fast enough -- two of the large vehicles roar out of the opposing canyons, cutting the creature off. It screams in rage as several "officers" dismount, lashing out with its fiery claws.

The sound of ripping cloth is heard, and one of the officers goes down with an unnatural hiss of air that almost sounds like a scream... but it doesn't slow the others.

The monster roars, sounding more scared now. Two more vehicles emerge behind the creature, boxing it in as it whimpers in fear.

A second roar echoes from below the earth... the other Mine Monster. The cornered creature calls out mournfully in response... then whimpers as the "officers" close in.

CLICK.

MAIN THEME

2. INT. CITY OF OSLOW - MORRISON'S DOMAIN - DAY

Two sets of footsteps echo in a quiet, claustrophobic street. Indistinct loudspeaker announcements can be distantly heard, but all else is silent.

SAM BAILEY
(hushed, masking
nervousness)
You're being awfully quiet. For
once.

NED LEROUX
(hushed, annoyed but also
nervous)
Not the time to be a smart ass,
Bailey.

SAM BAILEY
(hushed)
Oh come on... we haven't seen one
of those -- uh...

NED LEROUX
(hushed)
Faceless police officers?

SAM BAILEY
(hushed)
We haven't seen them for a while
now.

NED LEROUX
(hushed)
Doesn't mean they're not listening,
Bailey. We're taking enough of a
risk being here in the first place.

SAM BAILEY

(hushed)

If they were going to stop us, they would have done it at the gate. I think you were right, we're... hidden from these things, somehow.

NED LEROUX

(hushed)

This is still Morrison's domain. I'm not leaving anything to chance in here.

SAM BAILEY

(hushed)

If you're so worried about it, you could have just stayed at the house. Helped take care of Bill and Rob.

NED LEROUX

(hushed, clearly masking)

Kate and Jerry can take care of them just fine. And I wasn't about to let you blunder in here alone and risk all of our safety.

SAM BAILEY

(SCOFFS, hushed)

Gee, thanks for the vote of confidence.

(beat, more genuine)

I'm glad you're here, by the way. I mean it.

NED LEROUX

(hushed, distracted)

Save it, Bailey.

SAM BAILEY

(hushed, growing agitated)

No, I'm serious. After what happened in the Source/, I really feel like--

NED LEROUX

(hushed, urgent)

--Seriously Bailey, shut up -- I think there's someone coming.

Sam and Ned stop, finally hearing several sets of regimented, uniform footsteps echoing up the narrow lane.

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, urgent)
 Shit... quick, down this alley.

Sam and Ned duck into a nearby alley. A moment later, a half-dozen "officers" march past in lockstep.

It takes a long moment for them to pass, but their march doesn't falter or slow. Eventually, their footsteps fade into the distance.

NED LEROUX
 (hushed, confused)
 That's way more of them in one place than we've seen before.

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, theorizing)
 Roving patrol, maybe?

NED LEROUX
 (hushed, thinking)
 Didn't look like it to me.

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, glancing out at the street)
 I think they're heading for that big building in the middle of town.

NED LEROUX
 (hushed)
 The pyramid-looking thing?

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed)
 I still think it's more of a ziggurat, but yeah... that looks like where they're heading.

Before Ned can answer, a SUDDEN, BLOODCURDLING SCREAM is heard from one of the apartments off the alley, muffled by the thick brickwork.

Sam and Ned freeze -- but the scream doesn't come again.

NED LEROUX
 (hushed, nervous)
 What the hell was that?

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, confused)
 I'm not sure. It... it sounded human, though. Maybe...
 (MORE)

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)
 (static and distortion
 rises, mounting horror)
 Oh god.

NED LEROUX
 (hushed, worried)
 What? What is it?

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, distorted,
 pained)
 Everyone else in Oslow... all the
 other people Morrison trapped in
 the Source... they're still here.

NED LEROUX
 (hushed, confused)
 What? No, no, we haven't seen
 anyone but those... "officers"
 since we got here.

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, distorted,
 pained)
 These apartment blocks aren't for
 decoration, Ned. They're full. All
 of them. 12,000 suffering souls,
 sealed inside these rooms.

NED LEROUX
 (hushed, realizing he's
 right)
 What for? What does Morrison want
 with all of them?

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, distorted,
 pained)
 I don't know, but... they're
 suffering, Ned. Suffering like I've
 never felt before.

3. CONTINUOUS

Sam, awash in his power, steps out of the alley, almost
 sleepwalking. As he speaks, the sounds of what he's
 describing can be faintly heard.

SAM BAILEY

(hushed, distorted,
pained)

Behind these walls, they do not sleep, they do not wake, they do not eat or drink -- they are still alive, but only in the loosest sense of the word. The curtains are heavy and thick and never opened. For if they look out their windows, they may see things the god-king does not desire them to see... the open sky. The moon and stars. The sprawling labyrinth of walls and watchtowers their city has become.

(beat)

The passage of time means nothing in this place -- all moments are eternal, and eternity is but a fleeting whisper. Each apartment has a clock mounted to the wall... but it is a liar, and the hands run backwards as often as they move forwards. Not that it is often seen. The only light comes from the small television placed against the far wall, casting the single room in ghostly, flickering shades. The only furniture is a single, uncomfortable wooden chair, mounted to the floor in front of it. You may stand or you may lie on the uneven carpet covering the floor... but if you wish to sit, you must stare at that screen, and the images playing endlessly upon it.

(beat)

The lawyer cannot remember his name. He cannot remember how he came to be in this place, though the words on the television tell him he has passed through darkness and water to find this place of redemption. He does not remember such a passage, but he feels that, were he to dream, he would dream of such a place. He does not know how long he has been in this room. His mind is hazy, and somewhere inside him he knows that he must sleep... but sleep never comes, and the television is never quiet. How long has it been since he last slept?

(MORE)

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

He remembers trying to keep track of the days when he first found himself in this room, but the more he tries to remember, the fainter and fuzzier it becomes. He thinks he counted out a full month before the tally began to slip from his mind, and he could not find anything sharp enough to carve it into the concrete walls imprisoning him. How long ago was that? The clock seems to lie more and more with each passing day, and more than once he's tried to tear it off the wall and smash it... but like everything else, it's firmly bolted in place. So all he has left to do is watch the television, and the images the god-king sees fit to send down the wires.

(beat)

Once in a blue moon, he sees his lord and jailor in the square, making some speech the lawyer can barely understand -- full of grand pontification and talk of worlds beyond the one he used to know, worlds that will fall before the might of the god-king... But such speeches are rare, and ended quickly. What plays at all other times, at all hours of the... day? Night? He cannot say. But no matter the hour, the images dancing across the screen remain the same -- every crooked, guilty client he ever took on, knowing he would be well paid for keeping them and their friends out of jail. Every innocent person he turned away because they could not pay his fee, leaving them to their fate in a court that would show them no pity. Even some things he knows he never saw -- the actions of his clients, the assaults and robberies and murders he helped them walk away from... the full depth and breadth of the injustice he sowed, despite the oath he took to uphold it. And he sees his mother -- overworked and exhausted at the end of a long shift -- telling him once again what a disappointment he is.

(MORE)

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

How she slaved away day after day to provide for this family, and he couldn't even bother to keep the house clean. How he never came to visit when he was away at law school. And even when she laid dying in that hospital bed, all she could talk about was how his neglect and carelessness had somehow put her there.

(beat)

In the cell... apartment... cage next door, a girl sits before the flickering box, transfixed by the images it shows. Faintly, she remembers other boxes, other screens -- ones she chose to look at, and ones which did not simply play her own memories back at her in an endless, torturous loop. She recalls that she used to see her friends on those screens... the ones who lived far away, but who shared a closer kinship with her than the one she shared with her own family, or most everyone who lived in this place. Oslow, she thinks it was called... but the name feels off, like a half-remembered dream. Like someone else's life.

(beat)

And on the screen before her, that's what she sees. A person who looks and sometimes sounds like her, but who dresses in clothes which do not fit her, speaks words she does not believe, answers to a name that is not hers... even if she can't remember her own name in this place. She sees herself standing in front of a mirror, staring at her reflection through tears and wondering why her body does not look the way she wants it to, the way she feels, the ways she's always wanted it to be.

(MORE)

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

She feels that pain through those images as sharply as she's ever felt it, as she hears her father's voice rumbling through the TV's speakers, saying that she will never be good enough, that she will never be who she wants to be, that it would be easier to stop pretending and just give in... but her father never said those words. She never told him how she felt, who she truly was... and the voice on the TV sounds strangely like the voice of the god-king.

(beat)

And in the apartment below her, a detective paces the floor, as she has many times since she found herself in this place. In her mind, she chants what little she knows for certain like a mantra, trying desperately to hold onto her sense of self, her sense of identity. It feels like she has been here for years, but she knows that isn't possible -- she has not eaten, drank, or slept since she arrived, and she knows that only a few days could have passed -- otherwise, she'd be dead. She ignores the clock on the wall and the TV whenever she can... the images playing there are maddening, and she refuses to look. Once more, she recites what she knows. That she was a police detective before the world went mad and she forgot her name. That the man calling himself the god-king is nothing more than her old boss, though he looks worse for wear every time she sees him on the screen. That all of this is utterly wrong, and she needs to escape this place.

(beat)

Once more, she glances over to the door. It isn't locked... it's never been locked. None of the doors in this place have keys or latches or deadbolts -- for if you're living in the light of the god-king's grace, what have you to hide? She knows that she is being surveilled...

(MORE)

SAM BAILEY (CONT'D)

that the TV can see her as easily as she can see the images upon it. But she has long since ceased to care. And as the voice of Morrison's herald begins to speak, announcing that a special address from the god-king is about to begin, she knows she will not have a better time than this. She bolts for the door and throws it open, fleeing into the open street as the blazing sun burns her eyes--

4. CONTINUOUS

NED LEROUX

(stunned, horrified)

Ramos?

Sam cuts off, the distortion falling away. As he was speaking, a door burst open, and DETECTIVE RAMOS PANTS as she scans the street.

SAM BAILEY

(confused, almost like
he's waking up)

Wait... what?

NED LEROUX

That's detective Ramos... what is she doing here?

Before either of them can respond, a low, pulsing alarm begins to play through the loudspeakers on the street, and distant footsteps begin to approach.

SAM BAILEY

(whisper-shouting)

Shit -- Ramos! Ramos!

DETECTIVE RAMOS

(immediately suspicious)

Who... who are you?

NED LEROUX

Ramos, it's me... it's Ned. You need to come with us, *now*.

DETECTIVE RAMOS

(paranoid, backing away)

No... no, no, I know what you are now. I've seen it. You're like them -- both of you. You aren't human.

NED LEROUX
 (desperate, pleading)
 Ramos please, listen to/me, we're
 trying to help--

DETECTIVE RAMOS
 (panicked)
 Stay away from me!

Ramos bolts up the street... just as a squad of "officers"
 rounds the corner. She stops up short, terrified.

DETECTIVE RAMOS (CONT'D)
 (desperate, terrified
 pleading)
 No no no no, please... I'm a police
 officer, I don't deserve this! I'm
 one of you! Please... please!
 (turning and pointing)
 Take them! Take them instead,
 they're not supposed to be here!
 Please!!!

The "officers" coldly ignore her as they advance. There's a
 BRIEF STRUGGLE, but in a moment they're already dragging
 Ramos back towards her cell.

DETECTIVE RAMOS (CONT'D)
 (screaming, desperate)
 Take me to Morrison! There's been a
 mistake, I'm not supposed to be
 here! Just let me talk to him, I
 know he'll listen! He'll want to
 talk to me! Please! Please!!!

There's no response from the faceless "officers," as ever.
 They reach her door, open it, then throw her inside.

RAMOS SCREAMS IN RAGE as the door shuts, muffling the sound.

Silence fills the street again. The officers stand still for
 a moment, then turn to march back the way they came.

In the silence, SAM'S BREATHING IS HEAVY WITH ANGER, and
 after a moment the static and distortion of his powers begins
 to rise.

NED LEROUX
 (feeling his power,
 warning, hushed)
 Bailey -- don't.

SAM BAILEY
 (slightly distorted)
 I can feel it, Ned... how easy it
 would be to tear those things
 apart. They're barely being held
 together... I doubt Morrison would
 even notice.

NED LEROUX
 (hushed)
 Because he can just make more. You
 said it yourself -- these
 apartments don't even have locks.
 The guards aren't what's keeping
 the people here.

SAM BAILEY
 (outrage)
 You knew her, Ned! Same as me...
 Are you really okay with just
 leaving her here like this?

NED LEROUX
 (clearly pained, hushed)
 No. But I don't think she really
 wants to see me right now.

SAM BAILEY
 So we just... move along?

NED LEROUX
 (hushed)
 There's nothing else we can do,
 Bailey. Not right now.

SAM BAILEY
 (long pause, unhappy)
 ...Fine.

The pair reluctantly turn and continue walking up the street.

5. CONTINUOUS

Eventually, the pair reach the corner the "officers"
 disappeared around, then come to a stop.

SAM BAILEY
 (long pause, stunned)
 Is... is that...

NED LEROUX
 (taken aback slightly)
 OCPD headquarters. What Morrison's
 turned it into, at least.

SAM BAILEY
 (squinting, not quite
 believing his eyes)
 No, no it can't be... it's too big
 to be the old HQ.

NED LEROUX
 ("just look at it")
 And yet...

SAM BAILEY
 (long pause, reeling
 slightly)
 What is it supposed to be then,
 some kind of... temple? Fortress?
 Palace?

NED LEROUX
 All of the above, I guess. What
 else would satisfy Morrison's ego?

Suddenly, one of the loudspeakers in the street crackles to
 life.

ADRIAN BRIGGS (O.S.)
 (distorted through
 speaker, unconvincing)
 People of Oslow, stand ready and
 prepare for an address from your
 gracious lord and master, the god-
 king reborn.

NED LEROUX
 We should get off the street... I
 don't like the look of this.

SAM BAILEY
 Same here.

Sam and Ned move quietly to one of the nearby alleys, peaking
 around the corner to see what's happening.

A John Philip Sousa march begins to play on the loudspeakers,
 and the "officers" in the courtyard opposite begin marching
 into formation.

NED LEROUX
 (squinting, trying to see
 clearly)
 How many officers do you think
 there are in that courtyard?

SAM BAILEY
 (trying to count)
 I'm not sure... hard to tell
 through the gate. There probably
 aren't that many there normally...
 Right?

NED LEROUX
 (SCOFFS)
 Hell if I know.

A sudden, keening wail rises above the music and the sounds
 of marching. SAM WINCES AND COVERS HIS EARS at the sudden
 noise.

SAM BAILEY
 (slightly pained)
 What the hell was that?

NED LEROUX
 (stunned)
 It sounded like...

The creature wails again, but it's cut off with a sharp thud
 as one of the officers strikes it.

NED LEROUX (CONT'D)
 (realizing, pointing)
 Wait, you can see it now... look.

SAM BAILEY
 (sees it, confused)
 What the hell is that?

NED LEROUX
 One of the monsters from Shamson
 mine... we had a run in with them
 back when Kate was first in Oslow,
 then Morrison and I captured one
 for the psychic wheel.

SAM BAILEY
 (completely lost)
 What's it doing here? I thought
 Morrison sent them all away, like
 Amanita.

NED LEROUX

I don't know. Maybe it was trying
to get home?

The creature whines again, but it shut up even quicker by one of the "officers."

The patriotic march comes to a crescendo as a pair of elaborate doors open with a deep boom... and Morrison emerges from the ziggurat.

SAM BAILEY

(mix of terror and
confusion, hushed)

Is that...

NED LEROUX

(equally confused, hushed)

Yeah... that's Morrison all right.

The music cuts out and the "officers" stand at silent attention. Morrison hesitates, then begins to descend into the courtyard, his limping and halting footsteps echoing.

SAM BAILEY

(hushed, confused)

Is that what he looked like when
you found him in the tunnels?

NED LEROUX

(hushed, completely lost)

No... I mean, he was in bad shape
then, but... at least he was all in
one piece.

ADRIAN BRIGGS (O.S.)

(distorted, unconvinced)

Behold and tremble, children of
Oslo! Your lord and master
descends from his palace to face a
fugitive from justice, recaptured
from the wild lands beyond the
borders of your sacred city -- One
who dared long ago to strike the
god-king a blow that was meant to
be mortal... but his power and
grace were so great that he rose
upon his own might and remade
himself into the image of the
divine. Praise HIM! Praise the god-
king and his justice!

NED LEROUX
 (realizing, hushed)
 Holy shit.

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed)
 What?

NED LEROUX
 (hushed)
 Morrison said that when the
 creatures escaped, the mine monster
 tore out his heart.

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, confused)
 What does that have to do
 with/anything--

NED LEROUX
 (hushed, urgent)
 Quiet, I think he's talking to it.

INDISTINCT CONVERSATION can be faintly heard, with the
 monster whining in response.

There's a faint sound of creaking, scraping movement from the
 creature, and NED GASPS SOFTLY.

SAM BAILEY
 (hushed, confused)
 What is it?

NED LEROUX
 I think that's/his heart--

Before Ned can finish, MORRISON CRIES OUT as he pushes his
 heart back through the scar across his chest. A faint
 crackling, fleshy noise is heard... then silence again.

The silence lingers for a tense moment... then MORRISON
 BEGINS TO LAUGH SOFTLY.

THE LAUGH BUILDS, then Morrison raises his hand, and the
 crackling of the Mine Monster's flames is replaced by the
 roar of eldritch fire and a scream of pain.

It lasts for only a second before reality tears in two around
 the monster and it (and its screams) vanish into the Source.

And then the courtyard is silent once more.

SAM BAILEY

(hushed)

Oh my god...

6. CONTINUOUS

After a moment, Morrison turns and walks to a small podium nearby, his footsteps steady and assured. The microphone pops slightly as he moves it.

EDGAR MORRISON

(formal address)

My loyal subjects, soldiers, and children... this is a day of solemn celebration. For what was once stolen and lost has been restored, and the thief punished and dispatched to the depth of perdition. I have spoken to you many times of redemption and reconciliation, and this, my children, is what that means: the fulfillment of debts, the closing of ledgers, and the balancing of the scales of justice. For all born into this world owe a life debt to the society which birthed them, clothed them, taught them right from wrong and good from evil. And that debt must be paid in duty, obedience, and loyalty day after day after day. But for those who scorn that gift of grace -- those who steal, those who lie, those who rebel against the authorities placed over them, living lives contrary to the natural order -- that debt must be collected more... drastically. One might say that that they did not choose to live in the society they were born into -- that one's place and one's station is in and of itself an injustice. But I say to you that such structures exist for the good of all beneath them. Someone must be on the lowest rung for the ladder to be balanced, so that in time all may climb higher and higher towards paradise... but only if no one tries to supplant the ones above them.

(MORE)

EDGAR MORRISON (CONT'D)

So rejoice in your station and your
place within this glorious realm,
and know that there are only two
paths placed before you...
perdition, or paradise. Know my
mercies and live, or scorn my gifts
and...

Morrison suddenly trails off. As he was speaking, SAM'S
BREATHING HAD BECOME HEAVY AND ANGRY, distortion rising
slightly with his rage.

NED LEROUX

(realizing, worried,
hushed)

What the hell are you doing Bailey?
He's looking right/at us--

EDGAR MORRISON

(flat command)

Bring them to me.

7. CONTINUOUS

In an instant, the ordered quiet of the courtyard shatters as
the gates are thrown open, and dozens of "officers" rush out
into the street.

SAM BAILEY

(distortion failing,
panic)

Shit -- run!

Sam and Ned bolt up the alley, emerging into the next street
over.

NED LEROUX

(mounting panic)

Which way, which way?

SAM BAILEY

Uhhh... we came in through the west
gate... what time is it?

NED LEROUX

How the fuck should I know?

The marching footsteps suddenly round a corner ahead of them.

SAM BAILEY

(no other choice)

This way! It's still open!

Sam and Ned sprint down the street and around the corner, heading north...

Then stop up short at the sight of another platoon closing in on them.

NED LEROUX

Shit, where did they come from?

SAM BAILEY

I don't know! Morrison must be coordinating them somehow.

NED LEROUX

So much for being hidden.
(beat, seeing something)
Quick, down here!

Sam and Ned rush down another narrow alley to avoid the pincer, SAM'S PANTING echoing slightly between the buildings.

After a moment, they emerge into another empty, identical street.

SAM BAILEY

(PANTING, out of breath)
If they know we're here now, how are we supposed to get out through the gates?

NED LEROUX

We'll burn that bridge when we come to it Bailey, right now we just need to/keep moving--

BANG! Ned is cut off as a bullet ricochets off the ground at his feet. HE JUMPS WITH A SLIGHT YELP away from it.

SAM BAILEY

(panicked, ducking)
Sniper in the watchtower!

NED LEROUX

Yeah, I fucking got that!

Another gunshot. Sam and Ned rush for the nearest alley, taking cover AS SAM PANTS, TRYING TO CATCH HIS BREATH.

SAM BAILEY

(breathless, panicked)
We need to figure something out...
if the watchtowers can see us/now,
there's no way--

NED LEROUX
 (annoyed, snapping)
 I know Bailey! I know, just... let
 me think...

Before he can do anything though, another set of marching
 footsteps is heard coming down the street.

SAM BAILEY
 (leaning out slightly)
 They're coming this way.

NED LEROUX
 Well let's move then!

Sam and Ned bolt down the alley and across the opposite
 street. The sniper fires twice, bullets pinging off the
 concrete, but hitting nothing.

Sam and Ned duck into the next alley... then come up short.

SAM BAILEY
 Shit... it's a dead end.

NED LEROUX
 Let's double back, we should be
 able to...

A dozen sets of running footsteps suddenly become clear as
 they grow closer. Ned glances out briefly, then ducks back.

NED LEROUX (CONT'D)
 Fuck. They've got us pinned.

SAM BAILEY
 (realizing, horrified)
 They kettled us. There's no way
 out.

NED LEROUX
 (edge of desperation)
 Well... there's still one way out.

SAM BAILEY
 (realizing what he means)
 We can't fight these things Ned!
 There's too many of them!

NED LEROUX
 (dangerous edge)
 I don't see any other choice, do
 you? Backs to the wall, Bailey -- I
 don't know about you, but I'm going
 down swinging.

Ned stretches, cracking and shifting his form slightly. SAM TRIES TO SLOW HIS BREATHING and ready his powers, distortion rising slightly.

After a moment, the "officers" round the corner, closing in with a slow, steady march as they rap their batons against the brickwork. SAM TAKES A DEEP BREATH...

BANG! A gunshot rings out from the roof, and one of the officers goes down.

BANG! BANG! BANG! The shooter fires rapidly, and one by one the officers fall, not even bothering to run.

After a long moment, the alley is dead silent once again. Then, a faint sound of movement as someone peers over the edge of the roof.

LARA SMITH
Still alive, you two?

ROLL END THEME
AND CREDITS