

GOSPEL
A TELEVISION PILOT

Written by

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ACT ONE

EXT. ISLAND ON LAKE (1019) - NIGHT

A tree falls. Another tree crashes down. An army of IROQUOIS INDIANS is systematically destroying a forest. The front line chops down the trees. Another group removes the branches and cuts them into uniform size logs. A third group takes the logs and carries them over to a large, deep pit that is over thirty feet wide.

At the pit a dozen VIKINGS take possession of the logs. They tie them to ropes. A primitive pulley system is used to lower the logs into the pit.

INT. PIT (1019) - NIGHT

We follow a large log as it is lowered down one hundred feet. At the bottom, THREE VIKINGS and SIX INDIANS position the log into a row where it is then hammered into place on top of an already existing row. A system of scaffolds and ladders allows the workers to move to and from the surface.

EXT. ISLAND ON LAKE (1019) - NIGHT

Overlooking the entire operation are EIGHT IROQUOIS and FOUR VIKING ELDERS. They are afraid.

INT. 1979 TRANS AM (2019) - NIGHT

This is a classic car that has clearly lived past its glory days. The seats and dashboard are faded. Torn upholstery has been fixed with duct tape.

Sitting in the driver's seat is JOSEPH REDBIRD (early 20s, long black hair, cheap clothes, Native American). He takes a cigarette out of a soft pack of a brand called 'Native Spirits' (cheap, Indian reservation shitty tobacco) and lights up.

Joseph is staking out the Red Apple Rest, a lonely convenience store/gas station next to the on ramp for Interstate 81. He has a view that looks down on his target.

He holds a very old brass compass with strange markings in his hand.

INT. RED APPLE REST CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

The aisles and wall coolers are well stocked with snacks and beverages. In the center of the store is a large island with 15 different types of coffee available for self-serving customers.

ANDREW WILLS (20 year old, college student) starts brewing a pot of hazelnut coffee. He pulls out a large trash bag from the island's garbage can and proceeds to empty the smaller garbage cans around the store.

INT. 1979 TRANS AM - NIGHT

Joseph puts the compass in his coat pocket. He grabs his Remington hunting rifle off the back seat and opens the door.

INT. RED APPLE REST CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Andrew takes the garbage and enters an 'Employees Only' door.

INT. RED APPLE REST BACK ROOM - NIGHT

A small food prep kitchen, walk-in freezer, office, and store room are in the back of this store.

Andrew unlocks and opens the steel back door.

EXT. RED APPLE REST DUMPSTER - NIGHT

Andrew throws the trash into the dumpster.

The barrel of a rifle pushes up against the back of his head. Joseph, wearing a bandana over his face, is holding it.

JOSEPH

Do not turn around. Do not look at me.

Andrew turns around.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

What did I just say? You want me to shoot you?

Andrew looks forward.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

You think this is a joke?

Andrew shakes his head.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Answer me when I talk to you.

ANDREW
No.

JOSEPH
Good. You got two choices. We can do this the easy way where I get what I want and you get to go home or we can do it that hard way where I still get what I want. Which one will it be?

ANDREW
The easy way.

JOSEPH
Keep in mind that it's not your money I'm taking.

Joseph marches Andrew back into the store.

INT. RED APPLE REST OFFICE - NIGHT

Andrew opens the safe and there is only one cashier drop envelope plus about two hundred bucks in \$20s, \$10s, \$5s, and \$1s.

Joseph shakes his head.

JOSEPH
Is this really all of it?

ANDREW
They sent that cash to the bank this morning. There was only one register opened today.

Joseph motions and Andrew hands him the envelope. Joseph opens it. There's less than a hundred bucks. He's not impressed.

ANDREW (CONT'D)
Most people here pay with cards now.

Joseph pockets the cash from the envelope and grabs the other money in the safe.

INT. RED APPLE REST BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Joseph walks behind Andrew with his gun raised. They pass through the door to enter the store.

INT. RED APPLE REST CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY

A STATE TROOPER (white, 30s) is at the island pouring himself a large cup of coffee. He looks up and sees Andrew and Joseph. It takes a second for the situation to register.

The State Trooper grabs his gun but it's too late. Joseph puts two bullets in his chest.

Andrew runs to the door. Joseph puts two slugs in his back.

The store becomes silent again. Joseph looks down at both men. They're dead. He slings the rifle over his shoulder and goes to the cash register.

EXT. RED APPLE REST - NIGHT

Joseph walks out the front door carrying his rifle and a small plastic bag with less than \$300 in cash. He walks past an empty Pennsylvania State Police car.

He leaves the parking lot and climbs up a small hill.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER - NIGHT

At the top of the hill is a large, empty parking lot save for Joseph's rusted Trans AM. It has Wisconsin license plates.

Joseph gets into his car and drives away.

INT. 1979 TRANS AM - NIGHT

Joseph drives down the road and passes the scene of his crime. Another car passes him in the opposite direction. He watches in his mirror as it pulls into the Red Apple Rest.

Joseph slams the gas and gets on the on-ramp for 81 North.

End Act One

Act Two

INT. MELISSA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

This room feels incomplete. There's a sofa with a suitcase on top. On the carpet there's indents from furniture once there. The TV rests on the floor rather than on a stand. There are a few framed photos hung on the wall along with a lot of empty picture frame hangers.

MELISSA (white, early 30s, a little overweight) walks out of bedroom carrying a pile of clothes. She puts them on the couch, quickly folds them, and places them in the suitcase.

On the TV a documentary is playing about Viking witches.

Melissa closes the suitcase and turns off the TV. She puts on her jacket and goes to the door.

She stops and takes a long look at her home. She lets out a sigh, opens the door, and walks out.

INT. 1995 FORD RANGER - DAY

SAM WHITNEY (50s, beer belly, blood shot eyes) drives his 20 year old pick up truck through a fresh coat of snow in the mountains. A cigarette hangs out of his mouth. JIMMY MARTIN (17, baby face, muscular) sits shotgun. The inside is dirty.

SAM

Look, you got to keep in mind that dollars are not the same thing as money anymore.

JIMMY

That doesn't make sense.

SAM

Look for yourself. It says Federal Reserve Note.

Jimmy takes out a five dollar bill and confirms that it does say federal reserve note.

SAM (CONT'D)

Back when I was a kid those used to say silver certificate. As in you could take that paper money to the bank and redeem it for physical silver. Now all it is, is an I.O.U.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

from the Federal Reserve, which I should mention is not even a real government agency. It is instead a private club of rich bankers who hijacked our once great country's economy.

JIMMY

I thought the Treasury Department prints the money.

SAM

Only when their masters at the Federal Reserve tell them to. This whole country has been screwed since Nixon took us off the gold standard. This what caused all the income inequality because the rich could just keep printing more and more cash while us people still have to work and then find what little we have becoming more and more diluted in terms of value.

EXT. GULL POINT ENTRANCE - DAY

Sam's car pulls up to a sign that says 'Gull Point Community'. Next to it is a turn off for a dirt road.

INT. 1995 FORD RANGER - DAY

Jimmy points to the road.

JIMMY

Someone's here.

Sam sees it. Fresh tire tracks in the snow.

SAM

Well that's unusual for this time of year.

JIMMY

Could be someone coming to their cabin to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Sam shakes his head.

SAM

These are summer homes without the necessary insulation suitable for winter life.

Sam reaches under his seat and grabs a 9mm hand gun.

SAM (CONT'D)

I bet it's junkies trying to strip the pipes out of one of the houses again.

JIMMY

Maybe we should just call the sheriff.

SAM

We will. But first I want to know who these belong to.

He taps the gas and turns down the dirt road.

EXT. GULL POINT COMMUNITY - DAY

The Ford Ranger slowly drives. Occasionally the forest landscape is broken up by a summer cabin.

INT. 1995 FORD RANGER - DAY

Sam focuses on the tire tracks while Jimmy scans the area.

JIMMY

There!

Sam stops his pick up truck. Through the woods they see a car parked next to one of the cabins. Sam pulls binoculars out of the glove compartment and takes a closer look. It's Joseph's Trans Am. The Wisconsin plates are clearly visible.

SEMI-AUTOMATIC GUN FIRE rains into the side of Sam's truck.

Jimmy screams.

Sam shifts to reserve and floors the gas to get the fuck out of there.

EXT. GULL POINT COMMUNITY - DAY

Joseph steps out of the woods with an AK-47. He aims at the Ford Ranger and lets off volley of bullets. He misses and the pick up truck disappears.

EXT. INTERSTATE 87 NORTH - DAY

Melissa's green 2014 Honda Civic speeds down the road. A New York State Police car pulls out from behind some bushes and chases her.

INT. MELISSA'S CAR - DAY

Melissa is deep in thought as she drives. She looks in her rearview mirror and sees the State Police car. It's lights are flashing. She pulls over.

Melissa reaches into her hand bag and pulls out her FBI badge. She opens it and waits.

From the mirror she sees LOU SMITH (clean shaved, sun glasses, built like a bull) walking to her car. Her mouth drops and she rolls down her window.

Lou's surprised to see her as well. It's been a while and there's an unspoken history between the two.

MELISSA

Hi Lou.

LOU

Melissa. You were driving over 90.
Everything okay?

MELISSA

Yeah, sorry. Didn't realize I was
driving that fast. I'll slow down.

LOU

Your dad told me you were coming
home for Thanksgiving.

MELISSA

Yeah. It's been a while since I've
seen you. You look good.

Lou slightly smiles at the compliment.

LOU

I heard you got engaged.

MELISSA

I heard that you and Sarah had a
second kid.

LOU

Three months old now.

MELISSA
 Congratulations.

LOU
 Thank you. Where's your fiancée? He
 didn't come with you?

MELISSA
 No. He's with his own family this
 week.

LOU
 You guys are engaged but not
 spending the holiday together?

MELISSA
 Something like that.

Melissa looks away from Lou. She doesn't want to be talking
 to him about this.

LOU
 Got ya. You should come over for
 dinner tomorrow or Saturday night.
 It would be nice to catch up.

MELISSA
 I'll have to see what the plans are
 with my family. My sisters both
 came back for the holiday.

LOU
 Sarah would really like to see you.
 It's been a while since you two
 last hung out. We got a real nice
 place and--

Lou's radio cackles to life.

RADIO DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 Come in, Lou.

Lou grabs his mic.

LOU
 Go for Lou.

RADIO DISPATCHER (V.O.)
 We got a break in at one of the
 houses in Gull Point. Sam Whitney
 says they shot at him with an AK.
 Captain is working together with
 County Police to apprehend the
 shooter.

The mention of 'captain' gets Melissa's attention.

RADIO DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Meet them at Warrensburg Post
Office.

LOU
Ten-Four. Sorry, Melissa but I got
to go.

MELISSA
Do you think your captain would
mind if I offered my assistance?

Lou bows to her. Be my guest.

EXT. WARRENSBURG POST OFFICE - DAY

This is a tiny building with a small parking lot on a deserted country road intersection that consists of a general store that's closed for the season and two abandoned/decaying buildings.

Three State Police cars and four County Police cars are in the parking lot. On the hood of a County Police car is a map that is being reviewed by seven men (six white, one black, all are cops wearing bulletproof vests).

MOSLEY (40s, needs a shave) and NORTON (20s, former athlete) flank their boss New York State Police Captain FRANK DURAND (60s, tall, a man's man).

MERTZ (40s, bald, mustache), GREGORY (30s, lanky), and OTT (40s, fat) stand behind their boss, SHERIFF MICHAEL KING (50s, black, and commanding). King is the man in charge. This is Sheriff King's county and he has called for the State Police to assist him with manpower.

KING
The idea is for my guys to move in from this direction so that his only path of retreat is to the point at the shore. The ice on the lake isn't solid yet so he will have no place to run. Your team will form a second line to make sure there aren't any holes for him to escape through.

King addresses Frank directly.

KING (CONT'D)

Think your upstate rednecks can handle that?

Frank nods. He doesn't like King or his ball breaking.

Lou's cruiser pulls into the lot followed by Melissa's. The "civilian" car distracts King.

KING (CONT'D)

Did he bring a reporter?

Frank squints his eyes for a better look.

FRANK

That's my daughter Melissa. The one I told you about in the FBI.

KING

Hope she has her gun.

Melissa walks over to the group with Lou. Frank hugs Melissa.

FRANK

Happy Thanksgiving.

KING

Glad to have the FBI on board.

MELISSA

I'm just here to help.

KING

You know, you guys might actually be interested in him. Our witness says the shooter drove an old Trans Am with Wisconsin plates. That matches the description of a vehicle involved in the murder of a Pennsylvania State Trooper early this morning.

MELISSA

Well let's work together to stop him first and then we can decide who's mess he is.

LOU

Are we sure he's still there?

KING

I got Officer Pulaski watching Gull Point's entrance and no one has come in or out of there since the shooting. My guess is that he's holed up in one of the houses. It's a big development but we'll find him. Let's move out.

Everyone heads to their cars. Frank stops Melissa. He takes off his bulletproof vest. She shakes her head and walks.

Frank blocks her path. He won't take no for an answer.

EXT. BLACK BEAR ROAD - DAY

On a narrow road the police caravan drives with their lights flashing but no sirens.

EXT. GULL POINT ENTRANCE - DAY

The caravan arrives at the entrance. County Police Officer Pulaski's car is there and the driver's side window is broken. Pulaski sits in the driver's seat with his mouth wide open, frozen in either shock or pain. He's been shot in the back of the head. The engine is still running.

The cars stop moving and pull over. Everyone gets out to look. There's a set of footprints that came from the woods, to the back of the car, and then off into the mountains.

King's face fills with silent rage.

KING

State police head to the house and secure the scene. County comes with me.

King charges on foot in the direction of the footprints.

The State Troopers get back in their cars.

Melissa stands there. She looks at Frank and he looks back.

Melissa bolts into the woods.

Frank nods to Lou. He chases after her.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

King leads his group and they take the formation of an arrow with King at the tip. His eyes are focused on the tracks. Mertz, Gregory, and Ott flank their captain with their eyes focused on the woods and any threats it might hide.

Melissa catches up to them. Ott raises his gun but lowers it when he sees her.

KING

You can go and help the state police, Ms. Durand. We got this.

MELISSA

We're hunting an interstate fugitive, Sheriff King. It's my duty to represent the bureau.

KING

And when we catch him we will turn him over to the FBI once it's cleared through all the proper channels.

MELISSA

I'm sure you will but I have to insist on my presence.

KING

Yeah, okay. Sure. But just remember that this guy is dangerous and if it comes down to it, it's better for him to be dead than any of us.

Lou runs up to Melissa. She's startled and points her gun at him.

LOU

Jesus!

Melissa lowers her gun.

LOU (CONT'D)

Your dad wanted me to come.

MELISSA

I'll be okay. Go back and watch his back.

LOU

You know I--

KING

Both of you shut up and fall in
before we lose him.

Melissa and Lou fall into the arrow formation.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

The state troopers roll up to the summer house. Joseph's 1979
Trans Am is parked where we last saw it.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The county police with Melissa and Lou follow the tracks.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

Frank, Mosley, and Norton walk up to the house. The front
door has a nine panel window on it's top half. The panel
closest to the door knob has been smashed.

Frank looks inside the car window. The cash from the Red
Apple Rest is thrown all over the front seat. The back seat
is covered with guns. Enough for 20 men.

MOSLEY

Hey boss.

Frank turns. Mosley is pointing through the broken glass at
the other side of the entrance's door knob. There's a string
attached to it.

Frank turns on his flashlight to get a better look inside.
The string is attached to the stove.

FRANK

I guess the front door's not an
option.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

The county police, with Melissa and Lou, arrive at a creek
that has not yet frozen. The tracks end here.

Melissa scans the woods. It's deserted.

King kneels down for a closer look.

KING

I guess he's got wet shoes now.

LOU

That creek runs down from Pharaoh Mountain into the lake.

MELISSA

How old do you think these tracks are?

LOU

Ten minutes maybe.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

Frank walks around the house as Mosley and Norton keep an eye on the woods.

At the rear, Frank finds a slightly open window. A rubber hose has been duct taped into the opening and any air gaps have been sealed off. Attached to that hose is a large propane tank that is filling the house full of gas.

Frank turns the knob to shut it off. He takes a deep breath and scans the area surrounding the house. Although the leaves have all fallen off the trees, there are still a lot of places in these woods where someone could be hiding.

His radio cackles.

KING (O.S.)

Frank?

FRANK

Go for Frank.

KING (O.S.)

Find anything interesting?

FRANK

He filled the house up with propane and rigged something to the front door so if we opened it there would be a spark and explosion.

EXT. CREEK - DAY

King, his cops, Lou, and Melissa stand next to the creek waiting for the boss to decide the next move.

KING

You guys okay?

FRANK (O.S.)

We didn't blow up if that's what you're asking. You guys locate him?

KING

Suspect ran through the woods to Donovan's Creek where we lost the footprints.

FRANK (O.S.)

My guess is he's a country boy.

KING

Yeah. Call Albany. We're going to need a helicopter.

FRANK (O.S.)

You got it.

A small, shiny object about 30 feet away reflects sunlight. Only King notices it.

KING

Keep the house secured.

FRANK (O.S.)

Copy.

King addresses the group.

KING

We're going to split up. Mertz, Gregory, Durrand, and Lou, you guys follow the creek up the mountain to Route 27. Ott and I will follow the creek to the lake, confirm he's not there, then grab the cars.

LOU

Two people can't drive three cars, Sheriff. If we don't catch him then we're going to need to set up a wide dragnet with all available cars and man power.

KING

All right, fine. Durrand, you're with me.

Everyone nods in agreement and splits up.

King leads Melissa and Ott. He scans the ground for the object that caught his eye but now all he sees is snow and forest.

MELISSA
Looking for something?

KING
I always am.

King and Ott exchange a look. They don't want Melissa there.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

Frank walks up to Norton and Mosley.

FRANK
The house is filled with propane.
We're going to break the windows to
air it out.

EXT. UPPER CREEK - DAY

Lou, Mertz, and Gregory walk along the creek, keeping their feet dry while scanning the area.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

The State Troopers check each window for booby traps and then break them.

EXT. LOWER CREEK - DAY

King, Ott, and Melissa walk. King nods to Ott. They run. Melissa is caught off guard.

MELISSA
Hey!

She chases after them.

EXT. UPPER CREEK - DAY

Lou hears Melissa's shouts faintly coming from lower creek.

LOU
I think I hear someone shouting.

GREGORY
Sheriff would have radioed in if
there was anything.

Lou nods but that answer doesn't satisfy him.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

The troopers continue breaking windows.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Joseph is laying down on his stomach behind a fallen tree. His AK is slung on his back and in hands is his Remington rifle with scope. He looks through the scope at the house.

He watches as the troopers smash the windows. All of them are vulnerable to him right now, but they're not his main concern.

Joseph aims through one of the windows of the house and focuses on another large propane tank that's inside. One bullet is all he needs to blow everything up.

A twig breaks.

Joseph spins to see Ott. Before the county cop can register what is happening he is pumped full of lead.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

Frank, Mosley, and Norton dive for cover.

EXT. UPPER CREEK - DAY

Lou, Gregory, and Mertz hear the gun fire and run to it.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

Frank is taking cover behind a large stack of fire wood. He pokes his head out and sees...

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Joseph jumps up from his position and runs.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

Frank fires his gun...

EXT. WOODS - DAY

And misses. Joseph disappears into the forest.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

FRANK

Let's go!

Frank, Mosley, and Norton move into the woods.

EXT. WOODS - FALLEN TREE - DAY

King finds Ott lying on the ground. Dead. King fills with rage.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The State Troopers slowly move in, following Joseph's tracks, well aware of the fact that he could be anywhere.

EXT. WOODS - BOULDER - DAY

Joseph runs and hides behind a large boulder. He looks back and sees his footprints in the snow. He is about to run again but stops himself. He looks up at the top of the boulder.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

The troopers keep moving.

A twig breaks. They spin around.

KING

It's me.

They lower their guns.

KING (CONT'D)

The son of a bitch killed Ott.

Frank nods his condolences.

FRANK

We'll get him.

Frank motions to the tracks.

EXT. WOODS - BOULDER - DAY

Joseph lays on top of a large boulder. He camouflaged himself with dead leaves and snow. He scopes out the troopers and King.

He moves from King to Mosley to Norton and then finally rests on Frank. The only one not wearing a bullet proof vest.

BLAM. BLAM. BLAM.

Joseph's eyes go wide and he fires a shot. It misses Frank.

Frank looks up and sees Melissa standing over Joseph.

Joseph slumps over dead with his eyes open. Melissa killed him. Shot him in the back three times after she saw him scoping her Dad.

Melissa is in shock. She's not used to killing people.

King runs to the boulder and climbs up. He checks Joseph's pulse and smiles.

KING

Relax. You did a good thing.

She takes a deep breath and registers the situation.

Joseph's blood spills over the boulder.

End Act Two

Act Three

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Joseph's body lays covered up where he died. EMS WORKERS (male and female, 20s) load Ott's corpse onto a stretcher.

FIVE NEW STATE TROOPERS (4 White, 1 black, 20s-50) are photographing the crime scene area and gathering evidence.

Frank, Melissa, Lou, King, Gregory, Mertz, Norton, and Mosley are off to the side with District Attorney CLINTON VAN ROOYAN (30s, ambitious). Van Rooyan is taking notes in a small notebook.

KING

So after I discovered Ott, I ran into Captain Durand and his two men. We continued to follow the suspects tracks when I heard Agent Durand scream "freeze", which was then followed by her three gun shots.

Melissa is caught off by that statement. She never said that. Frank gives her a look: go along with this.

Van Rooyan finishes his note and turns to Melissa.

VAN ROOYAN

What did he do when you said freeze?

MELISSA

He ignored me and continued to aim at the four officers.

Van Rooyan quickly notes that and shuts his book.

VAN ROOYAN

Does everyone agree that's what happened?

MOSLEY

One hundred percent.

Frank and Norton nod in agreement.

VAN ROOYAN

Thank you. I got all that I need for now but we have to see where this goes.

(MORE)

VAN ROOYAN (CONT'D)

It's a local shooting involving the entire local police department and local state police with two dead officers plus a suspect that committed murder across state lines.

Van Rooyan stops talking and stares at something in the distance. Everyone turns to look at what he sees.

Ott's corpse is loaded into an ambulance.

VAN ROOYAN (CONT'D)

But in my book you all the did the right thing and that piece of shit doesn't deserve anyone's second thoughts.

Van Rooyan turns to address his county cops.

VAN ROOYAN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about Pulaski and Ott.

Van Rooyan leaves the group and walks to the Feely Vacation House. Frank approaches him.

EXT. FEELY VACATION HOME - DAY

Frank and Van Rooyan walk and talk.

FRANK

So you have confirmation that this is the same guy who killed the trooper and store clerk in Pennsylvania?

VAN ROOYAN

License plate matches the one they pulled up from the parking lot's security cameras.

FRANK

So what's going to happen now?

VAN ROOYAN

FBI is sending an agent tomorrow to examine everything. Because it is a conflict of interest, the state police from Lake George are going to secure the scene over night.

FRANK

What about a more detailed search of the area? He could have rigged other traps somewhere.

VAN ROOYAN

Let the Lake George guys take care of it, Frank. We got two dead cops and an Indian cop killer killed by a white FBI agent that happens to be your daughter.

FRANK

It's a justified shooting.

Van Rooyan holds up his hand to stop him.

VAN ROOYAN

I know that everything happened by the book and this was a dangerous situation. But we don't need a political opportunist like the governor to accuse us of a cover up just so he can gain a few votes.

FRANK

Yeah. I understand.

Van Rooyan gets in his car.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Melissa is by herself, lost in thought. Through the trees we can see the barely frozen lake.

King walks up to her.

KING

How are you holding up?

MELISSA

Better than some others today. I'm sorry about Ott and Pulaski.

KING

Thanks. This turned out to be a really shitty Thanksgiving.

MELISSA

So you heard me say 'freeze' to the shooter?

KING

Of course I did. The last thing I need in my town is know-it-all liberals coming up from the city to complain that we shot a cop killer in the back without warning.

MELISSA

Well technically it wasn't you guys. It was the FBI.

KING

I don't think the social justice warriors care about the details.

MELISSA

You're probably right. But how do you feel about it? Are we all one big law enforcement team?

KING

Of course.

MELISSA

Then why did you and Ott run and ditch me at the creek?

King gives her a polite smile.

KING

We ran because time was of the essence to catch that slime sucking scumbag. I wouldn't try to read too deep into this if I were you.

Before Melissa can respond the Black State Trooper (20s) approaches Melissa with an open evidence bag.

STATE TROOPER

We're going to need to process your weapon as evidence.

MELISSA

Sure.

She unholsters the gun, removes the clip, and places it in the bag. The Black State Trooper walks away.

KING

I would greatly appreciate it if we could keep our version of the events consistent.

MELISSA

Of course.

KING

Your father is a good man and an excellent cop. He's a legend in these parts.

MELISSA

Yes he is.

KING

I got his back. Enjoy your Thanksgiving.

King leaves and rejoins the rest of his squad. With two officers dead it's a painful day that's not going to get any easier.

Melissa takes in the scene. King is right. This is a shitty Thanksgiving for everyone here.

She turns her gaze back to the lake and walks down to it.

EXT. LAKE SHORELINE - DAY

Melissa stands on a small clearing and takes in the view of Schroon Lake. There's a thin sheet of ice covering most of the water. It's beautiful and desolate at the same time. In the center of the lake is a large island that is sealed off with a barb wire fence.

Frank walks down and joins her.

FRANK

I'd call this a bad day.

MELISSA

It could have been a lot worse. He was aiming at you.

FRANK

How can you tell?

MELISSA

Direction of the barrel. Plus you were the only one not wearing one of these.

FRANK

You're right, that would have been a lot worse.

She takes off the bullet proof vest and gives it back to Frank.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Is this the first time you ever killed a suspect?

MELISSA

This is the first time I ever used my weapon outside of the range.

FRANK

You saved a lot of lives today.

MELISSA

I hope I did.

Frank puts his arm around her. They gaze out at the lake together.

Melissa notices a man standing behind the fence on the island watching them. LELAND MITCHELL (40s, huge, black).

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Is that the same caretaker?

Frank releases his arm.

FRANK

Oh yeah. Leland's been working for the Gospel of Light for 20 years now.

MELISSA

I guess some things never change.

FRANK

Here they usually don't.

Melissa and Frank look back at Leland.

MELISSA

Do the high school kids still run up to the fence to touch it on Friday nights when they're drinking?

FRANK

That's a time honored rite of passage that we can probably do without.

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

Last year Brendan McGann tried to climb it one night when Leland appeared with his shot gun shooting into the air. The kid nearly crapped his pants.

There's something strange about the island and it takes Melissa a minute to pinpoint it.

MELISSA

All the trees on the island still have their leaves.

Frank looks and notices too.

FRANK

Must be climate change.

Frank taps Melissa on the shoulder.

FRANK (CONT'D)

We should go. Mom's waiting for us.

INT. DAYTON FAMILY VACATION HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

DAVID ROLLINS (shaved head, skinny, 22, white) is sitting in a chair peeking out the window. From here he has a clear view of the Feely house and crime scene. It's less than 100 feet away. All of the curtains in the room are closed.

CARLA DAYTON (17, white, going down the wrong road) is sleeping on the couch. There are a lot of blankets thrown all over the floor. On the coffee table are two used needles and other heroin paraphernalia.

Carla wakes up and looks at David.

CARLA

What's wrong?

DAVID

The cops are outside.

Carla jumps up and looks out the window.

CARLA

Shit.

She grabs the drug items.

DAVID

Relax, they're not here for us.
There was a shooting about half an
hour ago.

Carla stuffs everything into a drawer.

CARLA

What happened?

DAVID

I don't know.

She walks over to the window for a look.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Just stay quiet. They don't know
we're here and I want to keep it
that way.

She nods and sits down next to him.

EXT. DURAND FAMILY HOME - DAY

An unimpressive, old, two story farm house sitting on a large
field that is covered with snow.

Frank pulls up to the garage followed by Melissa.

INT. DURAND LIVING ROOM - DAY

There's a wood burning stove in the corner providing heat.
The carpet and furniture haven't been replaced since the
early 1980s. In fact the only thing new here is a large flat
screen on the wall where a football game is on.

Frank (carrying Melissa's suitcase) and Melissa walk in.

Sitting on the couch are TED (late 30s, mustache, sweater)
and MIKE (mid 20s, boyish). These are Melissa's brother-in-
laws. Behind the couch, Melissa's sister EILEEN (mid 20s,
overweight) is trying to sooth a crying six month old
DOMINIC.

Ted and Mike get up to greet Frank and Melissa.

They all ad-lib hello and hug.

MIKE

It must have been an easy call. We
thought maybe you wouldn't be back
in time for dinner.

FRANK

No. It wasn't easy.

Frank takes his boots off and sits down on the couch. There's a heavy air in the room. Melissa sits down next to him. Both are in deep thought.

EILEEN

Did you guys meet up before coming here?

Melissa looks up.

INT. DURAND DINING ROOM - LATER

Frank (still in uniform) sits at the head of the table next to Melissa and a place for his wife. Mike, Ted, and Eileen are sitting down with baby Dominic in a high chair at the other head.

EMILY (60s, plump, Melissa's mother) and DEANNA (late 20s, pretty) are bringing food to the table.

EMILY

I'm so sorry to hear that Nathan's not joining us. I wanted to talk to you both about wedding dates.

Melissa moves her left hand under the table. It's missing an engagement ring. Frank notices.

MELISSA

Maybe another time.

EMILY

Is everything okay between you two?

FRANK

Emily. We had a rough day.

Emily knows that this is Frank's polite way of saying shut up and she does. Her and Deanna sit down to join the rest of the family.

EXT. WARREN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING - DAY

A modest three story brick building from the 1960s with a large parking lot that has not yet been plowed.

A county police car leads three ambulances to the entrance of the building.

Waiting for them at the door is medical examiner PHEOBE MATTERS (late 30s, bookish, white). She's smoking a cigarette.

King steps out of the police car. The EMTs unload the bodies.

PHEOBE
This couldn't wait until tomorrow?

King shoots her a dirty look.

PHEOBE (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

KING
No one told you?

She shakes her head.

KING (CONT'D)
Two of them are my cops.

PHEOBE
Aw, shit. Who?

KING
Randy Ott and Dave Pulaski.

She looks down.

PHEOBE
Damn it. I'm sorry, Mike. I didn't mean any disrespect.

KING
You didn't know.

Pheobe counts the ambulances.

PHEOBE
Who's the third victim?

KING
Our shooter. An interstate fugitive named Joseph Redbird. You need to do him first so the FBI can collect him in the morning.

She nods.

KING (CONT'D)

I know that it's Thanksgiving but I'd personally appreciate it if you could take care of Ott and Pulaski today so their families can make arrangements as soon as possible.

PHEOBE

You got it.

KING

Thank you.

King stands there for a moment to collect himself.

KING (CONT'D)

I need to go speak to their wives.

INT. DURAND DINING ROOM - EVENING

Everyone enjoys a laugh over dessert. Frank looks over at Melissa. She's distant.

INT. DAYTON FAMILY VACATION HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

David and Carla look through the window and watch a State Police car drive away. Now there is only one left and it's parked behind Joseph's Trans Am.

DAVID

Let's go.

They grab two back packs and sneak out of the house.

EXT. WOODS - EVENING

David and Carla walk on a trail. David is on his phone.

DAVID

Yeah man. We'll be there in one hour.

He hangs up.

DAVID (CONT'D)

We got a ride back to Glens Falls.

CARLA

Look.

There are fresh footprints in the ground.

CARLA (CONT'D)

Is this part of the crime scene?

DAVID

Let's go before we find out.

Something in the snow, about ten feet away from them, reflects the light from the setting sun. David is drawn to it. He picks it up. It's Joseph's compass.

David opens it. The symbols don't make any sense to him.

CARLA

What is it?

DAVID

Looks like an old compass.

The direction of the needle puzzles him. He looks through the trees and sees through the trees that it's pointing at Gospel Island.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Must be broken though. It's pointing South West.

Carla leans in for a closer look.

CARLA

It could be worth a lot of money.

INT. FRANK'S GARAGE - NIGHT

This has always been Frank's sanctuary. Immaculately organized tools fill the walls and in the center of everything is Frank's pride and joy, a 1963 Dodge Charger that he has been slowly rebuilding.

The hood is open and Frank is working on the engine. Melissa knocks on the door and comes in. Frank lifts his head out.

FRANK

How are you doing?

She sits down on a stool at the work bench.

MELISSA

I have to go back to the city tomorrow to give a deposition at headquarters as to why I fired my weapon when off duty.

Frank puts down his tools.

FRANK

You got nothing to worry about.
Just tell them the truth.

MELISSA

I know.

Frank walks over to the bench.

FRANK

This is what you trained for. What
you did, you didn't have a choice.
You were in a situation and you
reacted how you were supposed to
react. It was us or him.

MELISSA

Did you ever kill anyone before?

Frank pauses to think. His personal code has made him keep
his ghosts to himself, away from his family.

FRANK

Six. My first one was a tweaker
named Peter Haspel. We caught him
robbing a store back when I was
starting out as a county cop. My
senior partner froze and got
stabbed in the chest. Lucky for him
his shield deflected the blade. I
made sure that Haspel didn't get
another chance to try again.

Melissa takes this in.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You have no reason to feel guilty
about what you did.

MELISSA

That's not what's bothering me.

FRANK

Then what is?

MELISSA

How well do you know Sheriff King?

FRANK

Why?

MELISSA

After he spoke to you on the radio from the creek he wanted us to split up. The plan was for the down creek guys to confirm that the shooter didn't head to the lake and then get the cars to meet up with the guys going up creek. He just wanted him and Ott to go and when Lou mentioned that two people can't drive three cars he reluctantly told me to come.

Frank sits down next to her.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

We started down the creek when the two of them ran and ditched me.

FRANK

He ditched you alone in the woods while a shooter with an AK was on the loose?

MELISSA

I think they wanted to kill the guy for what happened to Pulaski and they didn't want anyone to see it.

FRANK

Yeah and in the meantime he got Ott killed and you could have been dead too.

Frank stands up in anger.

FRANK (CONT'D)

That asshole moved up here five years ago. He's a retired NYPD narcotics detective that got bored and joined up with the local squad. He always used to say dumb shit like "That's not how we do it in New York".

MELISSA

I guess you didn't like him before today, huh?

FRANK

Sharp police instincts, Melissa.

MELISSA

Keep your distance from him.
Something's not right.

She stands up.

FRANK

What time are you leaving tomorrow?

MELISSA

Early. Maybe six.

FRANK

Mind if I come with you?

MELISSA

You don't have to.

FRANK

I know I don't have to but I want to. You killed someone today and it's not bothering you right now because you're in shock. But in a couple of days it's going to be on your mind a lot and with Nathan not around this week, you could use some company.

Melissa thinks about it.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Besides, it's been a while since I had good pizza.

MELISSA

Sure.

She leaves the room. Frank grabs his tools and gets back to work.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Pheobe wheels Joseph's naked corpse into one of twelve fridges on a wall. His chest has been cut open and sewed up.

She slides the body in and closes the door.

Her cell phone rings. Caller ID says 'Mom'. She picks up.

PHEOBE

Hi Mom. Mom?

She looks at the screen. Only one bar of service.

PHEOBE (CONT'D)
Can you hear me?

The call drops. She shakes her head and grabs her coat.

EXT. WARREN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING - DAY

Pheobe unlocks the door and steps out. She lights up a cigarette. The entire building and the area around it is deserted. It's silent and eerie.

She takes out her phone and calls her mother back.

PHEOBE
Hi Mom. I'm still at work.

(beat)

PHEOBE (CONT'D)
It's going to be at least three
more hours.

(beat)

PHEOBE (CONT'D)
I know that it's Thanksgiving but
we had two cops die today. I need
to complete their autopsies so
their families can make funeral
arrangements.

(beat)

PHEOBE (CONT'D)
Don't wait. I'll be home as soon as
I can.

(beat)

PHEOBE (CONT'D)
I love you too. Bye.

Pheobe hangs up. She takes a drag off her cigarette and flicks it away.

She opens the door and heads back to work.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Pheobe walks back in and puts her jacket down at her desk.

She goes to the fridge and opens the door where a body bag is waiting for her. She rolls it onto the stretcher and pushes it to the table.

Unknown to her, the door for the fridge that she placed Joseph in is slightly open.

EXT. DURAND FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Melissa sits by herself in an adirondack chair with a bottle of Jack Daniels. The sky is clear of clouds and full of stars. She's looking up at them, lost in thought.

INT. KING'S POLICE CAR - NIGHT

King pulls into the parking lot for the Human Services Building. It's been a long fucking day.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

King marches down the hallway holding 7-11 coffee cup.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Pheobe is performing her autopsy on Ott. The door opens and she jumps. It's King.

KING
I brought you a coffee.

PHEOBE
Thanks. Just put it on my desk.

He does as he's told and walks over to the table. He looks down at his dead friend.

KING
How's it going?

PHEOBE
Your shooter is finished. I just started on Officer Ott about ten minutes ago.

KING
Will he be available for release tomorrow?

PHEOBE
As long as Van Rooyan approves it.

KING
I'll coordinate with the funeral
home. FBI will be here at nine
tomorrow.

King walks over to the fridges. He sees it.

KING (CONT'D)
One of your fridges is open.

Pheobe stops working and walks over.

PHEOBE
I thought I closed it when--

King opens the door. It's empty. Pheobe gasps.

KING
What's wrong?

PHEOBE
That's the one I put the shooter
in.

King opens the other fridge doors. They're all empty except
for the one with Pulaski.

KING
Where's his belongings?

PHEOBE
Locked in Van Rooyan's office.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

King runs followed by Pheobe. They get to Van Rooyan's
office. The door is wide open. The knob was ripped off.

INT. VAN ROOYAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

King steps in. There are three large, clear evidence bags.
Two on the couch contain State Trooper clothes.

The third one is on the floor. It's empty.

King looks at Pheobe.

KING
He's gone.

End Act Three

Act Four

EXT. WARREN COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING - DAWN

Six police cars (3 state, 3 county) are parked in the lot. The State Troopers have sealed off the building while the county cops search for evidence outside.

A Black Crown Victoria pulls into the lot.

INT. HUMAN SERVICES CAMERA ROOM - DAY

King, Van Rooyan, Pheobe, and SMOKEY (late 30s, geek, county administration technician) are seated at a computer monitor. Smokey scrolls through the security camera footage.

SMOKEY

Okay, so 11:37 was when you grabbed your coat to go outside.

On the screen we see Pheobe, in the morgue, grab her coat and walk out.

Smokey clicks a button and the screen is now divided with nine camera views throughout the building. From one camera we see Pheobe walk down the hall and disappear. Then in another camera she opens the door and steps out. Now another view shows her outside lighting up her cigarette.

King leans forward, anxious to find out the truth.

The camera in the morgue goes black.

KING

What the hell?

VAN ROOYAN

Make it full screen and rewind that.

Smokey clicks for full screen. He rewinds back before the camera cuts out.

And there's nothing happening. Everything is still. The camera just goes black but there's still time code.

KING

Fast forward it.

Smokey fast forwards. After 1 minute 47 seconds into the video the image returns. Smokey pauses it. King leans in.

KING (CONT'D)

The fridge is now open.

VAN ROOYAN

Go back to when it first went black
and let's see what was happening on
the other cameras.

The door to the monitoring room bursts open. MARKHAM (black, 40s, suit) and LOPEZ (Latino, 30s, suit) step in.

MARKHAM

Is Sheriff King here?

KING

I am Sheriff King.

Markham and Lopez flash their FBI badges.

MARKHAM

I'm Agent Markham and this is Agent
Lopez. I understand that there's
been a problem with my fugitive.

King looks to Van Rooyan. The FBI agents turn to him as well.
Van Rooyan stands up and extends his hand.

VAN ROOYAN

Gentlemen. I'm District Attorney
Clint Van Rooyan. We're still
reviewing the security footage to
figure out what exactly happened
but you are more than welcome to
join us.

EXT. NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY - DAY

Melissa's car speeds down the highway.

INT. MELISSA'S CAR - DAY

Frank drives while Melissa sits in the front seat. She's
looking out the window in silence.

FRANK

Your office is close to Ray's
Pizzeria, right?

MELISSA

You're thinking of Famous Ray's.

FRANK
There's a difference?

MELISSA
Ray's, Famous Ray's, Original
Famous Rays, Original Rays-

FRANK
Which one was opened first?

MELISSA
Ray's.

Frank nods. Makes sense.

FRANK
Which one do you like best?

MELISSA
I'll take you to a place called
Two Boots.

Melissa looks back out the window.

FRANK
When's Nathan coming back?

MELISSA
I'm not sure.

INT. HUMAN SERVICES CAMERA ROOM - DAY

Markham and Lopez are now also sitting with King, Van Rooyan, Pheobe, and Smokey.

All nine camera views are on the screen. The morgue camera is black. The hallway camera goes black now. Two seconds later the morgue camera returns back to image.

The hallway camera comes back and a second hallway camera goes out.

VAN ROOYAN
This must be when they broke into
my office.

King and Markham study all of the cameras. We see Pheobe on the phone talking to her mother on the outside camera view.

The second hallway camera comes back and we can see the Van Rooyan's office is now wide open.

Another hallway camera goes out. Now a camera covering an exit goes black while the other camera comes back.

The last camera comes back and we now see all nine images at once again. 4 minutes and 57 seconds since the first black out.

On the TV we see Pheobe finish her cigarette and go back inside.

King picks up his radio.

KING

Gregory?

GREGORY (O.S.)

Yeah boss?

KING

Check the east corridor exit and see if anyone tampered with it. We think that's where they might have left the building.

GREGORY (O.S.)

Copy.

MARKHAM

Go back to when the first camera went black.

Smokey cues it up.

MARKHAM (CONT'D)

Play everything back in reverse.

Smokey does as he is told. There isn't any activity in any of the cameras except for the one in the morgue.

INT. FBI CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

It's a sterile room with a conference table. Melissa sits at one end with Frank sitting about four feet away from her.

There is a camcorder recording Melissa that is being operated by DOUG WIZKOWSKI (50s). Behind him is DUSTIN MOORE (late 40s, bald, authoritative).

MELISSA

I heard the gun fire and I ran to its direction which lead me to the boulder. From the boulder I saw

(MORE)

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Joseph Redbird taking aim at the police officers with the rifle while he also had an AK positioned next to him. At which point I decided that neutralizing the suspect was the only option.

She glances at Frank. He gives her a "look". Moore registers it too.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

I forgot to mention that before firing I did scream 'freeze' and the suspect ignored it.

Doug ends the recording.

DOUG

Right.

Doug packs up the camera.

DOUG (CONT'D)

Sounds like you saved a lot of people, Agent Durand.

He grabs his stuff and walks out of the room.

Moore walks over to Frank. He extends his hand.

MOORE

Captain Durand.

Frank shakes it.

FRANK

Assistant Director Moore.

MOORE

Your daughter has a promising career ahead.

FRANK

She worked hard for it.

MOORE

Yes, she has. I heard you were at Frontier Town in ninety-eight.

FRANK

I was the second car on the scene.

MOORE

Jesus.

FRANK

Yeah. That was a bad one.

Moore understands. He's a veteran of a lot of fucked up shit over the years.

MOORE

Enjoy your time with Melissa on her vacation. I'm looking forward to when she comes back in two weeks.

FRANK

Thank you. I will.

Moore steps out of the room.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I thought you had to be back at work on Monday?

MELISSA

I needed some personal time.

INT. HUMAN SERVICES EAST CORRIDOR EXIT - DAY

Gregory walks over to the door and looks around. Everything seems normal. He tries to open the door. It's locked.

GREGORY

King?

KING (O.S.)

Go.

GREGORY

Everything looks fine here. The exit is locked.

INT. HUMAN SERVICES CAMERA ROOM - DAY

The footage is still rewinding backwards. Now we see the moment when King and the ambulances arrived.

KING

Thank you.

King and company return to a heated conversation that's been in progress since we last left them.

PHEOBE

You all saw the video. I performed the autopsy.

(MORE)

PHEOBE (CONT'D)

His organs were cut out and removed. He was beyond dead.

MARKHAM

I get it. Redbird didn't walk out of here. Someone stole his body. I want to know why and how.

KING

We all want to know that. But nothing is making any sense. The only possible explanation is that someone was here before the ambulances arrived and they tampered with the cameras. And that theory doesn't add up because there is no way that anyone could have known Redbird would have been here that far in advance.

MARKHAM

I got a theory I'm working on.

KING

I'm all ears.

MARKHAM

Do dead bodies normally disappear from this building?

KING

Are you accusing us of being grave robbers?

MARKHAM

It wouldn't be the first time you've been accused of a moral indiscretion while on duty.

King stands up in anger. Van Rooyan puts his hand on King's shoulder.

VAN ROOYAN

This is the first time something like this has ever happened here.

Off Markham's look. He is not convinced.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

David and Carla walk into a seedy pawnshop in a small, three shop strip mall. The other shops are a 'Beer and Smoke' and vacant.

INT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

A SECURITY GUARD (black, 30s) guards the door. David and Carla navigate through aisles of shitty merchandise to find GEORGE (60s, old school Italian) sitting behind bullet proof glass.

GEORGE

Your mom's been looking for you,
David.

David doesn't give a shit. He puts the compass in the counter drawer.

George rolls his eyes. Fucking dirtbag kid. He closes the drawer and looks at the compass. He opens it, studies it, closes it, and puts it back in the drawer.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

It's a fugazi.

DAVID

A what?

GEORGE

It's worthless.

DAVID

It's old.

GEORGE

The brass casing looks new and
cheap.

DAVID

The previous owner took good care
of it, George.

GEORGE

Oh yeah? Let me talk to him so I
can properly gauge the background
of this item and how you got it.

David doesn't have an answer.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

That's what I thought. This thing
you "found" is a cheap novelty that
supposed to look like a viking
compass. Those marking are
legitimately old nordic but the
freaking needle is garbage. It's
pointing east, not north.

David picks up the compass.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

On the surface it looks like it could be an antique but the metal looks way too new for this thing to be more than one or two years old.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - DAY

David and Carla walk out defeated.

INT. TWO BOOTS PIZZERIA - DAY

Melissa and Frank sit in a booth eating pizza and drinking cokes.

Frank's phone rings.

FRANK

Hey.

Frank's face drops. Melissa is concerned.

FRANK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

What do you mean he disappeared?

INT. MOORE'S OFFICE - DAY

The Assistant Director has a corner office with a great view of the city. Moore is sitting at his desk looking at photos from the Human Services Center that were emailed to him. There's a knock on the door.

MOORE

Enter.

Melissa barges in with Frank behind her but keeping a distance.

MELISSA

When did you find out his body disappeared?

MOORE

This morning. Before your statement.

MELISSA

How did it happen?

Moore looks at Frank.

MOORE

Agent Markham believes it was an inside job. The medical examiner stepped out of the morgue, the cameras went black, and when they came back on he was gone.

FRANK

Why would anyone from the county want to steal his body?

MOORE

Harvest his organs? Mutilate the body as revenge for killing two cops? Maybe he has accomplices in the area that wanted him gone before we could find out some secret? Has anything like this ever happened before in Warren County?

FRANK

Not that I know of.

MOORE

What's your relationship like with Sheriff King?

FRANK

We provide assistance to the county police a few times a year but other than that I don't really have much contact with him besides the occasional run in a Walmart.

MOORE

That's it?

MELISSA

My dad doesn't like him if that's what your getting at.

Frank turns to her. Don't speak for me.

FRANK

What are you trying to imply?

MOORE

King's retirement from the NYPD wasn't fully voluntary on his part. There were some allegations that lead up to it.

FRANK

What kind of allegations?

MOORE

Stealing narcotics from drug dealers and then selling them to their rivals. His partner spun it as an unconventional way to maintain gang peace.

FRANK

If that was true then why isn't he in prison?

MOORE

Because this turned into one of those great cases where the key witness unexceptionally commits suicide and after that you don't have enough evidence to beat reasonable doubt.

Frank takes that in.

FRANK

But you believe he's guilty?

MOORE

He is.

FRANK

How the hell did you end up letting someone like that pick up a badge again?

MOORE

Warren County isn't exactly on anyone's radar, Frank.

Moore turns his computer screen around. Ott's photo is there from his NYPD days.

MOORE (CONT'D)

This other cop that was shot. Ott. He worked narcotics with King. Retired six years ago. That's why I want to know, have you ever been suspicious of Sheriff King before?

FRANK

I am now.

MELISSA

Markham was investigating Redbird's interstate crime spree. Will the disappearing body be part of his case as well?

MOORE

It falls under it. But right now his priority is to find out who Joseph Redbird was and what did he do on his path from Wisconsin to New York.

MELISSA

Then let me find out what happened at the morgue.

MOORE

You're on vacation.

MELISSA

I'll come back.

MOORE

I got more high priority cases you'd be better suited for.

MELISSA

I want this one. I'll even work it while still taking my vacation days.

MOORE

I can't sanction that.

MELISSA

Then just let me come back for three days to pursue this. If it goes somewhere we can continue and if it's a dead end then I'll stop and finish my vacation.

Moore leans back and considers it.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Come on, boss. King is going to be suspicious of FBI agents poking around in his town. But me, I'm just a local girl visiting her family for the holidays.

MOORE

I get your point. But you shot Redbird and now your hunting down his missing body. Don't you think this is a conflict of interest?

MELISSA

No, sir. Redbird is dead and that's that. I just think that I'm your most qualified agent to work this mystery. I grew up in that area. The people there know me and I know them. I also know the layout of the land better than anyone else in the bureau.

Moore thinks it over.

MOORE

Three days, Durand. After that Markham should be done with his probe and then this becomes his problem.

MELISSA

Three days. Starting tomorrow. Today's a travel day.

INT. FBI HALLWAY - DAY

Melissa walks with Frank.

MELISSA

I'm going to need my work clothes.

INT. MELISSA'S APARTMENT LOBBY - DAY

Melissa lives in a nice doorman apartment building. She walks in with Frank and goes to the elevator.

MELISSA

How long has the new medical examiner been working there?

FRANK

Phoebe Matters worked at the county for over ten years. She took over as medical examiner after her father retired two years ago.

They step into the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Melissa hits the button for the 25th floor.

MELISSA

Do you think it's possible there could have been an inside job to steal the corpse?

FRANK

I personally think that's a dead end. And if there was some kind of crooked conspiracy going on in that building there's no way anyone would have been stupid enough to take a body that the FBI was coming to collect.

The doors open and they step off.

INT. 25TH FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Typical long NYC apartment building hallway where every door looks the same. Melissa leads and Frank follows.

FRANK

His body is missing because he was special to someone. An outside party stole it.

MELISSA

Do you think Sheriff King could be involved?

FRANK

I doubt he actually stole the body but he could know who did.

MELISSA

I need to find out why Redbird came to Schroon Lake. Gull Point is too out of the way for someone to get to without planning it.

Melissa stops at her apartment and opens the door.

FRANK

I just realized that I've never been to your apartment before.

MELISSA

It's not that great.

INT. MELISSA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

They enter. Frank notices how empty it looks and everything clicks.

FRANK

I guess Nathan's not coming back.

Melissa closes the door and places her keys on the counter.

MELISSA

That's a good guess, Dad.

FRANK

Do you want to talk about it?

MELISSA

Not really.

Melissa shakes her head.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

It was my fault.

FRANK

Don't be so hard on yourself.
Relationships are a two-way street.

MELISSA

No, it's all on me. I have to live
with what I did.

FRANK

Well whatever it is. I'm sure it
will get easier as time goes on.

MELISSA

It just didn't feel right. One day
I woke up and I realized that I'm
not happy and this life was a lie
that I can't keep doing anymore.

FRANK

Couples have their rough patches
every once and a while. Part of a
successful marriage requires you
both to work to--

MELISSA

It's over, dad. There's no chance
of us being back together.

Frank takes that in. She means what she said.

FRANK
Who has the ring?

MELISSA
I gave it back to him.

Frank sits down.

MELISSA (CONT'D)
The whole thing had me thinking. I studied hard in high school so I can go to college and study hard so I can get a good job. But all I do there is sit at a desk and look at financial records so I can nail someone I don't know for possible money laundering.

She sits down on the couch.

MELISSA (CONT'D)
I had a boy friend for four years and he was a great guy, but deep down I couldn't love him. I feel like I've been living but I'm not really alive. Is that normal?

FRANK
Everyone feels that way every once and a while, Melissa. But feeling sad about it won't help. All you can do is look forward, pick a goal, and move to it.

Melissa takes it in. Not as uplifting, comforting, or insightful as she hoped for.

EXT. QUACKING BUSH HILL - DUSK

Worn out boots trek up a snow covered trail.

From here we have a beautiful view of Schroon Lake. It's huge. And we also have an unobstructed clear view of Gospel Island.

The boots stop walking and their owner sits down.

It's Joseph. His skin is pale, his eyes lack color, but they have focus and they are fixed on that island.

End Act Four

Act Five

EXT. DURAND FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Melissa's car pulls into the driveway and up to the garage.

INT. MELISSA'S CAR - NIGHT

Melissa turns off the ignition and opens the door.

FRANK
Agent Durand.

Melissa stops.

FRANK (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
My state police squad is at your
disposal should you need us.

MELISSA
Thanks, dad.

She gets out of the car. Frank follows.

EXT. DURAND FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

FRANK
You're going to have to tell Mom
about Nathan.

MELISSA
I will.

FRANK
Sooner rather than later, please.
I'm not going to say anything to
her because she needs to hear it
from you. But if you wait too long
then I'll be in the dog house for
keeping my mouth shut.

Melissa opens the trunk. Frank takes her suitcase and carries it to the house.

Emily opens the door to greet her husband and daughter.

EXT. WHITNEY HOUSE - DAY

A large log cabin isolated in the woods with no neighbors for at least one mile. It is at the top of a giant hill.

INT. WHITNEY LIVING ROOM - DAY

While the exterior is rugged, the interior is comfortable and modern. Plus it has a grand view of the lake along with Gospel Island.

Sam Whitney (wearing a bathrobe) relaxes in a Lazy Boy watching his iPad. He's got a drink in one hand. He finishes the last bit in his glass.

Sam pauses the iPad and stumbles ten feet to his bar. There's a decanter half full of bourbon with a 2 liter of super market brand cola next to it. At the edge of the bar is an empty cheap of bourbon.

Sam fills more or less 1/3 of the glass with bourbon and tops that off with cola. He's drunk but steady.

Sam turns back to his chair and sees Joseph sitting in it. He freezes.

Joseph un-pauses the iPad and watches the video. It's a black and white first season episode of 'Gilligan's Island'.

JOSEPH

Gilligan's Island. One of TV's most classic shows. I remember staying home from school and watching these on daytime TV when I was a kid.

Sam stares at him, unsure of what is happening.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

You strike me as the type of guy who appreciates the classics and the simpleness of the old days, Sam.

SAM

Who are you and how the hell did you get into my house?

JOSEPH

My apologies. I realize that we didn't get a chance to formally meet yesterday. I am Joseph and I walked in through your unlocked front door.

Joseph stands up and extends his hand.

SAM

You're the guy from the police
shoot out.

Sam takes a step back.

SAM (CONT'D)

The cops killed you yesterday.

JOSEPH

And yet here I am talking to you
right now in your living room.

Joseph walks closer to him and Sam backs up to maintain his
distance.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I'm not too thrilled about you
calling the cops on me, Sam. That
really put a delay in my plans.

SAM

You shot at me with a machine gun.

JOSEPH

No other choice. She told me to.
Secrecy is paramount to success for
we must have the element of
surprise.

Sam's back is to the wall with no where else to go.

SAM

What do you want with me?

JOSEPH

Your house.

Joseph gets in Sam's face.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Just like you I have a fine
appreciation for the old, simpler
days and back then, this land
belonged to my ancestors. You could
say I'm here to take it back from
you, white man.

Sam straightens his posture.

SAM

You do not want to test me. I have a large collection of guns in this house. Leave now before I put a bullet in you.

Joseph grabs Sam. Sam grabs him back and they fall to the floor. Sam is filled with rage, ready to defend what is his.

INT. MELISSA'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

The decoration of her bedroom has not changed since she left for college fifteen years ago. The only difference is that her old bedroom doubles as a guest room now.

Melissa lies in the bed, wide awake.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Sheriff King, now in civilian clothes, is lead by his dog JAKE (German Shepard).

EXT. NEW YORK STATE THRUWAY - NIGHT

A 1987 Honda Civic that is too shitty for anyone to steal drives down the road. This is...

INT. DAVID'S CAR - NIGHT

David drives while Carla holds the compass in her hand. The heater is broken and they're both very cold.

CARLA

We've been driving for over an hour.

DAVID

So?

CARLA

This is a waste of time. Let's go back to Rob's place and smoke.

DAVID

No.

CARLA

George said this thing is junk. It's just a broken compass.

DAVID

George is an ass hole trying to rip us off.

CARLA

I thought you said he wouldn't offer you any money.

DAVID

He just wanted me to beg.

The compass point begins to turn.

CARLA

The needle just moved.

David pulls over to the shoulder. He takes the compass from her and looks at it.

David puts the car in reverse and slowly backs up. As he drives he also watches the needle and sees it move back to where it was just moments ago.

He puts the car in drive and slowly moves forward as he watches the needle change.

DAVID

I told you it's pointing to something.

CARLA

Yeah, but what?

DAVID

Something east of here. I'll get off at the next exit.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Jake stops in front of a tree and sits down. King pets his head.

KING

Good boy.

King drops the dog's leash and brushes away snow revealing leaves. He brushes those away too.

Half buried in the ground is a rusting small safe. King digs it out, picks it up, takes the leash, and walks out of the woods with Jake.

EXT. BLACK BEAR ROAD - NIGHT

David's car creeps along the road.

INT. DAVID'S CAR - NIGHT

David and Carla pull up to the Gull Point sign. The compass point swings a hard left. They need to go down the dirt road.

They look at each other.

DAVID
Cops are probably gone by now.

EXT. GULL POINT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

David's car weaves through the vacation development.

EXT. GULL POINT BEACH - NIGHT

The road ends at a small beach on the lake. David's car stops and he gets out with Carla. Together they follow the compass's point and walk to the shore.

They look up and see Gospel Island in front of them with the needle pointing directly at it.

INT. WHITNEY LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sam Whitney lays on his back on his living room floor. His face is blue, his tongue sticks out, and his neck is bruised. He was killed in his own home by Joseph's bare hands.

A secret door disguised as bookshelf is open and behind it is a small safe room with enough guns to equip a small militia.

Joseph grabs an expensive rifle with scope and walks over to window. There's a full moon and from this spot he has a perfect view of Gospel Island.

Joseph opens the window but stops. Something inside the house has caught his eye. On the kitchen table is today's newspaper and on the front page are Melissa and Joseph's photos.

He picks it up and stares at Melissa. A sinister smile overtakes his face.

End Pilot