

EPISODE TWO: Remote Ops, Very Old School

13

INT. CLARK FARMHOUSE

13

Sound of Rebecca walking out of the barn.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Security force just showed up at
Rebecca's farmhouse. No doubt
looking for me. She's going out
there now to try to hold 'em off.

Sound of Emmett opening the barn door a crack.

EMMETT (V.O.)

It's Arlin, same law man who shot
that slougher last night. He
brought a deputy. There's no way I
can get past them. I'm trapped in
this barn.

Distant sound of ALI and Rebecca approaching each other.

REBECCA

Ali.

ALI

Morning Mrs. Clark.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Sounds like Rebecca knows the
deputy. That's something at least.

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EXT. CLARK FARM TURNAROUND

14

REBECCA

Is Arlin getting out of the truck
or is he waiting for an invitation?

ALI

He's just taking his morning pills.
(sotto)
Lot of 'em.

REBECCA

I imagine so. When did you join up?

ALI

It was the only thing I could find
after Mabel's closed.

REBECCA

Well don't you start on any of that nano junk, you hear?

ALI

Deputies aren't allowed to mod anyway. Just Arlin.

The truck door swings open and Arlin steps out.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Arlin is getting out of his car. The way his muscles bulge out of his shirt, the veins in his neck, tell-tale signs of a nano mod.

ARLIN

Rebecca Clark! Hope you're not giving my new deputy any trouble.

REBECCA

(turning on the charm)
Not at all! What brings y'all out so early? Want some coffee?

ARLIN

I'm afraid this isn't a social call. I saw a couple sloughers walking the fields last night.

REBECCA

That right?

ARLIN

Up to no good, I'd wager. We cleared out that cesspool under the overpass so figured there'd be stragglers. Feed picked one of them up coming this way.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Shit.

REBECCA

A slougher came through. Needed power so he's helping me out in the barn.

ARLIN

This barn here?

REBECCA

Only one I got.

ARLIN

I'd like to meet him. Make sure he gets where he's supposed to be.

REBECCA

You don't have to do that.

ARLIN

No trouble at all. Ali, you wait here. Make sure he don't slip out the back.

ALI

Yessir.

EMMETT (V.O.)

He's coming this way.

Arlin starts for the barn. Rebecca follows.

15

INT. CLARK BARN - CONTINUOUS

15

The barn door SLIDE OPEN. Arlin enters, followed by Rebecca.

ARLIN

What do we have here?

REBECCA

He's helping me get this old auger working again.

ARLIN

Let the man speak for himself. You're first gen.

EMMETT

That's right.

ARLIN

You've seen action.

EMMETT

Some.

ARLIN

Boy, you look like you been shot up, blown up, and just plain run over. Time was a soldier got hit, he stayed down. Then Uncle Sam started patching you boys up sending you back in.

EMMETT (V.O.)

The way he's looking me up and down. I've seen it before. He's adding up how much he could sell me for. Piece by piece.

ARLIN

Prosthetic arm, both legs -- what were you? Logistics? Transpo?

EMMETT

Remote Ops.

ARLIN

Oooh! A neural implant. Very old school. Well thank you for your service, soldier.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Now he wants to shake hands?

Arlin shakes Emmett's hand. We hear a CRUNCHING SOUND.

EMMETT'S COMS

WARNING! WARNING!

EMMETT (V.O.)

Quite a grip.

(Struggling)

Son-of-a-bitch is lighting up my pain receptors.

ARLIN

We had a little incident last night at an illegal encampment few miles back. You didn't happen to be there?

EMMETT

No, sir.

ARLIN

S'pose not. What happened to your friend? If I'm not mistaken, there were two of you.

EMMETT

You must have me confused with someone else.

EMMETT (V.O.)

He knows I'm lying. Now he's just deciding what to do about it.

REBECCA

Why don't we let him finish up and be on his way?

ARLIN

I want to see him in action.

REBECCA

You want to see what in action?

ARLIN

Remote ops, right? Isn't that what you said? Show me.

REBECCA

Is that really necessary?

ARLIN

It is my duty as head of security to make sure no drifter comes through taking more than he's owed. You gave him power. Now let's see him fulfill his end of the bargain.

EMMETT

All right.

EMMETT (V.O.)

From the looks of it, this auger hadn't so much as turned on since Cabal Christmas. But if I'm walking out of this barn on my own, I better make something happen. Access remote panel.

EMMETT'S COMS

John Deere Tractor MODEL R8-2929. Running diagnostic...

EMMETT

Software on this thing's ancient. When was the last time it ran?

REBECCA

Before the war probably.

ARLIN

Guess you got your work cut out for you.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Bastard wants me to fail. I'm not about to give him the satisfaction.

The farm equipment's electric motor WHIRLS and HUMS as Emmett's internal coms unit connects with the ancient auger.

EMMETT (V.O.)

There's so much broken code in here. Older the machine, the more vestigial crap to wade through.

The auger's crankshaft makes an UGLY GRINDING SOUND.

ARLIN

That can't be good.

EMMETT (V.O.)

He's right, it's not. But I was trained to fix vehicles while being shot at. I'll be damned if I can't do it now.

The GRINDING stops and the electric motors starts to PURR. The attached AUGER SPUTTERS TO LIFE, the six-foot drill bit spins, flinging dirt across the barn.

REBECCA

You did it!

SPLAT!

ARLIN

Hey I just had these cleaned! Turn that dang thing off.

Emmett powers down the auger.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Can't say that was an accident getting dirt on his fresh white britches. Smile on Rebecca's face tells me she enjoyed it too.

ARLIN

Just keep the dirt in the ground. And get on out of here once it's done. I don't want to hear about you bothering any other fine folks in this here town.

With that, Arlin marches out the door. As Rebecca follows --

REBECCA

(sotto)

Thank you!

The moment the door closes, Emmett collapses to the ground, exhausted from the effort.

EMMETT (V.O.)

That took it out of me. Working off this twenty-year-old stack doesn't do me any favors either.

16

EXT. CLARK BARN - MOMENTS LATER

16

Arlin and Rebecca walk toward the truck where Ali waits.

REBECCA

Thanks for stopping by, Arlin.

ARLIN

My pleasure. One more matter to discuss. About that deferred payment we agreed to.

REBECCA

You said the seventh. That's not till Tuesday after next.

ARLIN

Now, now don't get your panties in a bunch. I was just making sure you remembered. Hate to see you lose this beautiful farm of yours.

REBECCA

Like Jelena Covic?

ARLIN

Heard about that, huh?

REBECCA

Small town. Word gets around.

ARLIN

She has no one to blame but herself.

REBECCA

What about the bullet in her leg?

ARLIN

An unfortunate escalation.

REBECCA

I'll bet. You'll get your money.

ARLIN
 One way or another. Any more
 trouble with that slougher, gimme
 holler. I'm always nearby.

Arlin climbs into the car.

ARLIN (CONT'D)
 Let's go, deputy.

We hear the car drive away.

REBECCA
 Modded bastard.

17 INT. CLARK BARN - MOMENTS LATER

17

The door to the barn slides closed.

EMMETT
 You didn't have to do that. Lie to
 the law for me.

REBECCA
 Yes I did. You don't know Arlin.

EMMETT
 Not sure I'd want to.

REBECCA
 Just the same, you might want to
 get on to that VA once your able.
 You showed him up pretty good with
 that auger.

EMMETT
 Paid for it too. Just about drained
 me.

REBECCA
 New stack can't come soon enough.

EMMETT
 Yes ma'am. Can barely hold a charge
 it's so decayed.

REBECCA
 How many VA's you been through
 looking for one?

EMMETT
 This'll be my ninth.

REBECCA

And you're sure they have it?

EMMETT

That's what they told me at the last one.

REBECCA

All right then, let's get you on your way. Got enough juice to make it?

EMMETT

Should be.

Emmett pulls his cord from the wall, tucks it into his bag.

REBECCA

I'll see you out then.

18

EXT. CLARK FARM - ROUNDABOUT - MOMENTS LATER

18

The two come to stop on the gravel drive.

EMMETT

Thank you for the kindness, ma'am.

Emmett starts down the path.

REBECCA

(Calling after him)

Emmett.

EMMETT

Ma'am?

REBECCA

I got to go into town anyway. You can ride with me.

EMMETT

I'm happy to walk.

REBECCA

Stop that. Let me go grab my keys.

Rebecca heads back toward the house.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Carly?

19 INT. CLARK FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

19

The screen door SLAMS shut as Rebecca walks into the kitchen.

CARLY

(singing)

Fixin' the sink.

Yes, I'm fixin' the sink.

For the forty seventh time I'm a
fixin' the sink.

REBECCA

Where are my keys?

We hear the CLANK of a WRENCH echo under the sink as Carly wiggles her way out.

CARLY

Mama, I don't know how many more
times I can patch this thing.

REBECCA

Don't wipe your hands on the good
towel. Use a ratty old one.

CARLY

They're all ratty old ones.

REBECCA

My keys?

CARLY

I hung them up behind the door. Was
someone here?

As Rebecca grabs her KEYS, she accidentally BONKS what sounds like a guitar.

REBECCA

What is that?

CARLY

(Duh)

A guitar.

REBECCA

I see that. Where did it come from?

CARLY

I bought it. With my own money.

REBECCA

Carly, how do I make it clear to
you that we are flat broke?

CARLY

I just --

REBECCA

I know you miss your dad, if I could buy you a guitar I could.

CARLY

I know.

REBECCA

I'm on my way right now to leverage what little collateral we have left in order to keep this farm.

CARLY

(Guiltily)

I'll take it back.

REBECCA

I can't do this alone.

CARLY

I know. I'm sorry.

The door slams closed as Rebecca leaves. Alone, Carly sighs.

20

I./E. TRUCK - TOWN - TRAVELING - DAY

20

Rebecca's old truck radio emanates a tired country ballad. Rebecca drives as Emmett rides shotgun.

REBECCA

That's Mabel's on your right. Best corn bread in town. Used to have anyway.

EMMETT

Why'd it close down?

REBECCA

No one's eating out anymore. Can't afford to. Thank Chem-O-Grow for that. Arlin too.

Beat.

EMMETT

When did he start injecting?

REBECCA

That obvious?

EMMETT

Stiff gait. Taut skin. Even the look in his eye. You can tell.

EMMETT (ALT) (CONT'D)

He barely bends his knees when he walks. His skin's all taut like he just got out of a tanning bed and the look in his eye...you can tell.

REBECCA

He got his first injections about two years ago and we've been paying the upkeep ever since.

EMMETT

Upkeep is right. Nano mods need a about a dozen different drugs just to keep from seizing up. And they're expensive too.

REBECCA

You don't have to tell me.

EMMETT

It's a racket. They're shaking him down so he shakes you down.

REBECCA

Bingo.

EMMETT

How's it work?

REBECCA

After the cops pulled out, Arlin became head of security so he's running things now. Collects fees from the farms all the while lining his pockets with Chem-O-Grow green.

EMMETT

I passed one of their irrigation huts last night. What're they doing here?

Rebecca tosses a BAGGIE of DIRT into Emmett's lap. He opens it to find a tiny plant inside.

REBECCA

Those crops you passed? That's Chem-O-Grow soy. The only and I mean only thing that grows in a hundred mile radius.

Emmett pulls a fresh soybean plant out of the bag.

EMMETT

This is a soy bean plant? In this bag here?

REBECCA

Look closer at the leaf.

EMMETT (V.O.)

Looking at this plant of Rebeccas - something's printed on the leaf.

EMMETT

I'll be damned. Those suits got their logo imprinted on the leaves.

REBECCA

Mmhmm. And if that ain't the saddest metaphor for the state of American agriculture, I don't know what is.

EMMETT

That's what you were doing this morning when I came up.

REBECCA

Trying to find something, anything else that will grow in this soil. So far, no luck.

EMMETT

(Putting it together)

They poisoned the soil so nothing else'll grow?

REBECCA

Bingo. The seeds release a bacteria so nothing else can root. We have no choice but to buy their seeds and grow their soy. They are, of course, the biggest contributor to the CPA and...

EMMETT

Arlin.

REBECCA

Now you get it. We tried our senators, congress people but you can bet Chem-O-Grow's paying them a fortune to look the other way.

(MORE)

REBECCA (CONT'D)

Even the governor said it was a local matter.

EMMETT

So Arlin's their enforcer?

REBECCA

That and more. He takes a cut from all parties. But lately, he's been asking for more.

EMMETT

Those anti-rejection drugs aren't cheap.

REBECCA

And he bilks us dry to pay for it. Half the town up and left. Nothing to stick around for.

They ride in silence for a moment. Then --

REBECCA (CONT'D)

You get them all at once?

EMMETT

Neural implant I got when I enlisted. Lost my arm to an RPG. Legs came later.

REBECCA

Family?

EMMETT

Not anymore.

21 EXT. BB&R FINANCIAL SERVICES - CONTINUOUS

21

Rebecca's truck squeals to a stop.

REBECCA

This is as far as I go. VA's another two blocks down. Can't miss it.

EMMETT

(Reading)
BB&R Financial services and...
cafe?

REBECCA

Failed attempt to diversify. Too little, too late.

The truck doors open and both step out.

22 EXT. BB&R FINANCIAL SERVICES - DAY - MOMENTS LATER 22

REBECCA
Good luck to you.

EMMETT
Thank you, ma'am. You as well.

As Emmett walks away, Rebecca steels herself and enters -

REBECCA
(to herself)
Okay. One thing at a time.

23 INT. BB&R FINANCIAL SERVICES - CONTINUOUS 23
BANK KIOSK BANK KIOSK 2

<p>Welcome to BB&R, my name is Allo, your AI assistant. How may I help you today?</p>	<p>Welcome to BB&R, my name is Allo, your AI assistant. How may I help you today?</p>
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REBECCA
'Fraid I need a human's touch
today, Allo.

BANK KIOSK
Care for a SafeChecking Matcha
latte while I tell you about the
BB&R Personal Banking --

The Kiosk trails off as Rebecca heads for the back offices.

MITCHELL
Rebecca?

24 INT. MANAGERS OFFICE - BB&R - MOMENTS LATER 24

MITCHELL chuckles happily at the sight of a rare visitor.

MITCHELL
Nice to see a real person for a
change.

REBECCA
Those things ever shut up?

MITCHELL

I wish. Unplugged 'em once and Regional was ringing me out before I got back to my desk. What can I do you for?

REBECCA

I need that check. Today.

MITCHELL

Let's get you squared away.

Mitchell clatters away at his computer. He stops.

MITCHELL (CONT'D)

Denied? That can't be right.

REBECCA

But it was already approved. See?

Rebecca pulls a document from her carefully organized folder.

MITCHELL

Yeah, I remember. Hang on.

He types a series of commands, then sighs at the results.

MITCHELL (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Rebecca. Risk management denied the loan.

REBECCA

I've been banking here for twenty years. Call them.

MITCHELL

There is no "them." Since that block chain fund bought us out, it's all done by algorithm now.

REBECCA

Algorithm? So much for personal banking.

MITCHELL

Truth is, they're letting me go too. By next month, this whole branch will be fully automated.

REBECCA

Oh, Mitchell. I'm so sorry.

MITCHELL

They call it progress.

25 EXT. VA HOSPITAL - DAY

25

Emmett rattles the locked doors.

EMMETT (V.O.)

The VA is boarded up. Just like the last ones. Can't say I'm surprised.

REBECCA

Looks like we're both coming up empty today.

EMMETT

No luck at the bank?

REBECCA

No. I was hoping you'd fare better.

EMMETT

Yeah, I did not, but the next VA's in Foam Lake.

REBECCA

That's a haul and a half. You got some place you can charge up?

EMMETT

I'll find something.

REBECCA

If Arlin spots you, he'll lock you up for loitering. At best.

EMMETT

I'll find someplace to hole up.

REBECCA

It won't be easy this town's so deserted.

After a long beat, Rebecca sighs.

REBECCA (CONT'D)

You can sleep in the barn. Start fresh in the morning.

EMMETT

I can't ask you to do that.

REBECCA

You didn't.

EMMETT

And I can't pay you.

REBECCA

I know.

EMMETT

But I'd... uh... I'd appreciate it.

REBECCA

Least I can do. I will warn you
though, I sleep with a shotgun.

EMMETT

Duly noted.

26 INT. CLARK FARMHOUSE - KITCHEN

26

Carly sits STRUMMING her guitar.

CARLY

Might as well get some use out this
guitar before I bring it back.

Beat

CARLY (CONT'D)

Here goes nothing.

[CARLY SINGS A SONG -- MUSIC AND LYRICS TO BE PROVIDED
SEPARATELY]

END OF EPISODE TWO