

THE SHERIFF

by

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FADE IN:

INT. THE SHERIFF'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steaming water, pours down onto the scalp of THE SHERIFF, an athletically built woman, sitting down in the corner of a densely fogged shower cell, hiding her face on her knees.

Her limbs are made out of a synthetic, transparent material. Underneath, they reveal biomechanical enhancements around her shoulders, elbows, wrists and fingers.

The bathroom is clinic, white and minimalistic. One wall is half covered with a monitor, depicting the sun in space, slowly dawning over the face of a brown, barren globe. A large digital clock blinks over the display, showing time, date and weather conditions.

- 19:48 -

22/1/2046

CLIMATE: TEMPERATE

Suddenly, a message prompts on top of the clock, reading:

RECEIVING CALL FROM: CITY PEACEKEEPERS . . .

[ANSWER] / [IGNORE]

A well spoken COMPUTER VOICE announces the message.

COMPUTER VOICE
RECEIVING. CALL- FROM: CITY
PEACEKEEPERS.

The Sheriff's silhouette behind the foggy shower-cell wall does not react.

COMPUTER VOICE (CONT'D)
RECEIVING. CALL- FROM: CITY
PEACEKEEPERS.

The Sheriff digs her head deeper in between her knees.

COMPUTER VOICE (CONT'D)
RECEIVING. CALL- FROM: CITY
PEACEKEEPERS.

The Sheriff still doesn't budge.

COMPUTER VOICE (CONT'D)
CALL IGNORED.

The call message is replaced with another:

YOU HAVE (7) MISSED CALLS.

The message stays in view for a short while, before fading away. The Sheriff remains squatted in her foggy shower cell.

FADE OUT.

EXT. NEW-PORT CITY - NIGHT

The white towers of a magnificent city stand tall against the dark night sky. At the centre, one colossal glass-paned skyscraper stick out amongst the blooming pillars. Inside, all sorts of plants are neatly stacked amongst each-other on the countless many floors.

The white city borders the ocean of an otherwise barren wasteland. Strong ocean winds blow gusts of sand across the dessert surface.

INT. THE SHERIFF'S APARTMENT, LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

The Sheriff, now dressed in a bathrobe, stands in front of a large window-wall, overlooking the Central Greenhouse tower. She sips from a feint yellow, neon-light drinking-cup as she observes the robot-arms inside, scanning across the rows of vegetable plants and showers them with clean water.

INT. CENTRAL GREENHOUSE, CROPS - NIGHT

Inside the Central Greenhouse, various lush vegetables glistening with beads of water.

Robotic arms effectively move amongst them, plucking and placing them in a gathering container.

Through the glass windows of the Central Greenhouse, many flats of the white towers are glowing with a pleasant, white bloom. All save one dark flat, where a silhouette is standing inside, sipping from her yellow neon drinking cup.

INT. THE SHERIFF'S APARTMENT, LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

As the Sheriff lifts her hands to take a sip, a small part of her face is illuminated by the dim glow of the cup. Her eyes reflect in the dark window before her, Quick Response (Q.R) codes are printed onto her white retinas.

She closes her eyes and sighs.

The Sheriff turns around and walks into her apartment. The room is big, bare and mostly empty. A long, glass table stands in the centre.

On one end of the table, a pair of arc-shaped Cybernetic Glasses are resting in a docking station. Next to it, on the surface of the table, a small interface indicates that a battery is fully charged.

Passing by the table, The Sheriff places her cup on the surface, a neat square light appears underneath. She walks up to the docking station and places her hand on the device, tapping it with her fingers. Directly, the glasses light up.

She picks up the glasses, puts them on her face, covering her eyes.

FADE TO:

FPS: USER INTERFACE, SHERIFF

A Digital UI fades into view, showing the same background as was displayed on the bathroom wall. This time the scenery has a 3D depth to it.

A small circle blinks into view.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
AUTHENTICATING . . .

A positive beep is heard and the message turns into a confirmation.

COMPUTER VOICE (V.O.)
AUTHENTICATION SUCCESSFUL.

The message disappears into the background, and a menu is booted. Several icons fade into view. At the top right, another message reads:

YOU HAVE (7) MISSED CALLS.

A blue dot appears in the centre of the screen. It moves naturally across the UI, imitating the movement of an eye tracing cursor.

The cursor moves up to the message and stays there for a second. A CONFIRMATION SOUND is heard and the message is enlarged, revealing a list of the missed calls. They are all done once a day at the same time by: The City Peacekeepers.

Next to the list, several options fade into view: [Call Back], [Ignore], [Archive], [Delete], [Delete All].

The cursor moves directly towards the last option [Delete All], hovers over it for a moment. Then moves back up to [Ignore] and selects it.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHERIFF'S APARTMENT, LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

The SHERIFF stands next to the glass table. Every now and again, she slightly shifts her head to the left, or right.

Suddenly, she jerks around and turns to face the front door.

Her breathing intensifies.

CUT TO:

FPS: USER INTERFACE, SHERIFF

The animated background fades away, revealing the living room from the Sheriff's perspective. A message in the interface reads:

CALL AT FRONT DOOR: CITY PEACEKEEPERS . . .

[ANSWER] / [IGNORE]

The eye-cursor is focused on the location of the door, --

It shifts to [IGNORE].

And selects it.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SHERIFF'S APARTMENT, LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

The Sheriff exhales, rubs her neck and looks down to the stained, grimy utility outfit dumped a few steps away from the front door.

She kneels down and peels a shirt out from it. She drops her bathrobe, throws the shirt over her head, struggling to get herself dressed, when --

She rises to her full height, looking up in alarm.

Her fist is balled-up and trembling.

CUT TO:

FPS: USER INTERFACE, SHERIFF

A message in the interface reads:

CALL AT FRONT DOOR: CITY PEACEKEEPERS . . .

[ANSWER] / [IGNORE]

The cursor chooses ANSWER.

A video-frame pops into view showing CONDOR, a round-faced androgynous man wearing a small headset and a clean Peacekeeper office worker uniform. He appears to be walking.

THE SHERIFF

(Agitated tone.)

You. What do you want?

CONDOR

Good evening Lorraine. I am delighted to discover that you are well. We have been trying to contact you for a couple of days now and were awfully worried about your wellbeing. Especially since you failed to reach back to us.

The Sheriff's eye-cursor moves to the door. A list of functions appear, one of them reads "X-Ray Vision".

The option is activated and six ENFORCER DRONES are shown standing outside the door.

THE SHERIFF

Worried? There is a whole squad of enforcers in my hallway Condor. What exactly were you worried about?

The eye cursor rapidly navigates across the pile of clothes on the floor. It immediately lists all contents, including a HANDGUN.

CONDOR

(Talking during action.)

Indeed, my apologies if the Peacekeeper Agents arouse any alarm Lorraine. We were only worried for your safety, of course.

THE SHERIFF

I really doubt you were just calling to check in on me. And stop using that name.

CONDOR

Very well, I apologize. But we really have to discuss some urgent matters concerning your water usage.

The Sheriff sniggers.

INT. PEACEKEEPERS OFFICE, OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

In a big brightly lit hall, rows of PEACEKEEPERS are walking on treadmills and interacting with virtual monitors.

CONDOR walks among them.

CONDOR

I am so sorry to bring this news to you Lorraine - I mean Sheriff, but our monitors indicate that you have not contributed any new water to the system for over a week now. Yet, still consume large quantities of water every day.

Condor's monitor lists red water transactions by day. The Sheriff's face is projected in another window, a red warning label is displayed under her private information, stating:

!! WARNING !!

"Enhanced operative. History of extreme violence. Treat with caution."

CONDOR (CONT'D)

And I am terribly afraid that you have far exceeded beyond your maximum allowance. Now if only we could have contacted you sooner, --

THE SHERIFF (O.S.)

What are you getting at already?

CONDOR

Well. That you are using off more water than you are contributing, Sheriff and that we are going to need to charge you for the difference.

INTERCUT BETWEEN THE SHERIFF AND CONDOR

The Sheriff scoffs. She slowly kneels down and picks up the handgun from the pile of clothes.

THE SHERIFF

You know you can't force me to do anything. I still got privileges from the last gig I turned in, so get off my back already.

CONDOR

We are very well aware of your privileges now. But I'm afraid that as of today, they no longer discount your obligation to, how shall I put it now, comply to standard water regulations.

THE SHERIFF

Wait. They no longer what?

The Sheriff grins, checks her weapon, takes the safety off and aims it at the door.

THE SHERIFF (CONT'D)

I'm calling your bluff, bloatface. That bounty should have lasted me for two weeks. Besides, your superiors answers to mine, so if you want anything from me, you've got to get it from higher up. *Now piss off.*

Condor is taken aback.

CONDOR

Lorraine - now, I mean miss. That aggressive toon is absolutely not necessary. I am only negotiating your last options here. If you fail to cooperate than I simply can not guarantee protection from any 'harsh penalties' that may result.

THE SHERIFF

Penalties? Get real. You can't arrest me without a warrant and your department can't get one on me. Also, if you think I am impressed by this scouting party of yours, think again.

Condor looks back over his shoulder with a concerned frown.

A strict looking ENFORCER OFFICER is looking back at Condor and shakes his head.

CONDOR
(Hushed: To Officer)
Shall we just restrict her?

Condor and the Officer exchange glances, he then turns back with a concerned look on his face.

CONDOR (CONT'D)
As usual, you are factually correct. But it is my unpleasant duty to inform you that, should you fail to comply to regulations within 42 hours, the City Water Management Council has decided to restrict your private water access to an 'absolute minimum'.

The Sheriff's fist shakes, her trigger finger trembles, stroking the trigger, tapping it. But not squeezing it.

THE SHERIFF
Condor! You can't do this to me.

CONDOR
Oh, I am afraid I must Sheriff. You have 42 hours, the bill has been sent to your inbox. If the debt is not paid back within that time, you will be restricted to about four glasses of water a day. Good luck to you now.

INT. THE SHERIFF'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY

The Enforcer Drones turn around and march away.

INT. THE SHERIFF'S APARTMENT, LIVINGROOM

THE SHERIFF
Condor! You maggot! Come back!

The Sheriff fires two shots at the door. Lets out a low, guttural groan. Then hits her gun against her forehead.

A clear BELL-TONE rings.

COMPUTER VOICE (O.S.)
You have - one - new message.