

"WE CANNOT TARRY HERE"
The Sheridan Tapes - Season 04, Episode 86
Recording Script - August 25, 2023

Written by

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

1. INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT - 2/12/20

The house is all but silent, with most everyone asleep. After a moment, Ned leans forward and looks at himself in the mirror as his face begins to shift.

NED LEROUX
(concentrating, voice
slowly shifting)
According to my calculations...
according to my calculations...
according to my calculations...

"RED" LEROUX
(Ned's voice melts into a
perfect replica of Ren's)
Ah! "According to my
calculations..."
(Allowing a bit of Ned to
slip through)
...y'all will be none the wiser.

There's a knock at the bathroom door.

JERRY PRICE
(muffled)
Ren? That you in there?

"Red" takes a beat and then opens the door.

"RED" LEROUX
Heyyy Jerry... what's up?

JERRY PRICE
Oh, just... wanted to see if you
were alright. I thought you were
all in bed already, that was a long
drive.

"RED" LEROUX
Ah, yeah... sure was. Everything's
fine. Just... needed to use the
bathroom.

JERRY PRICE
(awkward, holding back
doubts)
Of course, yeah. Nothing wrong with
that.
(awkward pause)
Well.

"RED" LEROUX
Welp.

JERRY PRICE
Sorry for bothering you.

"RED" LEROUX
("go away")
No worries.

JERRY PRICE
("I'm watching you")
Goodnight, Ren.

"RED" LEROUX
("try to catch me then")
Goodnight, Jerry.

Jerry retreats down the hall, shutting his bedroom door behind him. "Red" waits a moment longer, then steps out into the hall.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
(whispered, spiteful)
So long, Jerry. So long, everyone.

CLICK.

MAIN THEME

2. EXT. ISPHA OBSERVATION POST - MAIN ENTRANCE - LATER

CCTV footage flickers to life as "Red" approaches the exterior door. HE SOFTLY WHISTLES "Home on the Range" as he approaches, clearly trying to look casual.

Suddenly, someone opens the main door, and "Red's" footsteps falter in surprise. They stop and hold the door ajar, greeting him.

SECURITY CHIEF
(casual greeting)
Late night, huh?

"RED" LEROUX
Oh! Uh...
(attempting a neutral
hello)
Yeah, guess it is.

SECURITY CHIEF
(realizes who it is)
Hey... Ren? Ren Park?

"RED" LEROUX
Heyyy... you.

SECURITY CHIEF
 (friendly)
 It's me! Roger!
 (beat, slightly concerned)
 Roger Thomason? Site security?

"RED" LEROUX
 (AWKWARD WORK LAUGH)
 Oh, right! My bad. How's it going?

SECURITY CHIEF
 (uncertain)
 Uh... can't complain. You back
 working with Caldwell then?

"RED" LEROUX
 I guess you could say that.

SECURITY CHIEF
 (surprised and a little
 suspicious)
 Oh wow. Well... glad to see you
 around.
 (beat)
 Are you... working late tonight?

"RED" LEROUX
 Oh, you know, just pulling one of
 my classic all-nighters. Trying to
 get caught up. Anyone else working
 tonight?

SECURITY CHIEF
 I'm the last one out. It's all
 yours.

Roger gestures, holding the door open for "Red."

"RED" LEROUX
 Oh... thanks!

SECURITY CHIEF
 No problem! See you around, Park.

Roger walks off, and "Red" slips inside.

3. INT. ISPHA OBSERVATION POST - CONTINUOUS

The CCTV footage switches to an internal camera as "Red"
 seals the door behind him.

"RED" LEROUX
(whispered)
Let's see if I got the fingerprints
right...

He places his hand on a scanner. There's a whir and a happy
beep before the door slides open for him.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Entry Authorized -- Doctor Park,
Ren, Experimental Projects.

"RED" LEROUX
I've still got it.

He walks through the open door, and it slides shut behind
him. He glances down the hall ahead of him.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
Alright... if I were ISPHA's secret
records... where would I hide?

He listens. Silence, except for the hum of the building's
ventilation systems.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
This way...

He takes a right turn and walks up the hallway. He passes
doors with names labeled on them.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
Dr. Mallory Wight... Stanley
Brothers... Dr. Ren Park -- huh.
Caldwell really wants him back, I
guess.
(beat, continues)
Dr. Atticus Reinhart...

He stops, and reads the next name darkly.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
Dr. Daniella Caldwell.
(beat)
Good a place as any.

He cautiously tries the handle, but it's locked. "RED"
"HMMM"S. We hear a squelching, and he transforms his hand
into a lock pick, picking the lock as he speaks.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
(imitating Kate)
"What does shapeshifting have to do
with anything? How is that helpful?
Meh meh meh meh meh."

The latch releases. He squelches his hand back into place,
opens the door, and steps inside the office, closing the door
behind him.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
(mumbling slightly)
Hmm... Let's see what we've got
here.

He sits in Caldwell's chair behind her desk, opening a filing
cabinet against the wall and rifling through it. Nothing. He
opens a second one, rifling through.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
(spotting something)
Ahhh... "Project Origo?" Where have
I heard that before?

He removes the massive folder, GRUNTING as he plops it down
on the desk and opens it up.

He flips through various tabs quickly. He stops at a thicker
section, pulling out a cassette tape tucked inside.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
(reading)
"Testimony of project researcher
Sarah Freeman, ISPHA... August
13th, 1993." Hm.
(glances over, notices
tape deck)
Ah... thank god everyone's obsessed
with tape decks around here.

He turns around and opens the cassette player, inserts the
tape, and presses play. CLICK.

4. INT. ISPHA RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT - 8/13/1993

Familiar static rises on a small, quiet lab.

SARAH FREEMAN
(terse, professional)
Project Origo researcher Sarah
Freeman, recording August 13th,
1993.
(beat)
(MORE)

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

I have been continuing my meditations and grounding exercises as instructed. Currently I am progressing as expected through the Gateway Experience, and as of last night I have begun level six. I can't believe I've already progressed to this point in the program -- the past several months seem to have flown by.

(beat)

On a more personal note, I... I've been enjoying my explorations during these meditation experiences, for the most part. I joined the project out of a desire to understand the world, to explore new territory. I remember when I was a little girl, I'd lie there in my bed at night feeling my breathing deepen, and I noticed... maybe around age five? Six?... that I could make it feel like I was floating. Shifting upwards and to the side, while at the same time not moving my body at all. Now, I understand that to be my first experience with astral projection. I suppose I've always been suited for this work.

(beat)

Anyway, all of this information has been relayed to the Project Origo team in more official terms. But as this monthly log is here to capture my personal feelings and intuitive hits on what I'm experiencing... here goes.

As of today, I've been traveling for the project on a regular basis for the past three months. The first two months I felt fairly normal, minus a vague sense of being lighter on my feet whenever I returned. However, this feeling normally passed quickly, and I dismissed it as psychosomatic.

(beat)

This past month however... it's beginning to pull at me in ways that feel less innocuous. Dangerous, even.

(MORE)

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

I've put in a request for decreased duty, as I believe the frequency and intensity of my travel may not be sustainable. I contacted the Monroe Institute myself, something that I may be reprimanded for later. But after talking with their specialists, I have the sense that ISPHA's approach may indeed be too aggressive. They're worried that what we may be interfacing with goes beyond simple astral projection and remote viewing. They seemed to think that I may actually be leaving bits of myself behind in the place I see in my travels. In... Origo.

(beat)

I suspect there may be some truth to their theory. I'll be bringing this up with the director on our next call... though to what end, I don't know. I can't substantiate these anxieties with anything other than instinct, which is by no means objective.

(beat)

Still, I... I've started to find myself dreaming of that place, even when I'm not actively traveling. Its swirling waters... black beaches... doors opening in a black sky, and the sense that I could fall forever.

CLICK. Recording ends.

CLICK. Sarah restarts her recorder.

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

(sounding numb, worried)

Project Origo researcher Sarah Freeman, recording September 13th, 1993.

(beat)

This past month--

(words and entire sentences are [redacted])

I have [barely had a night of sleep without] nightmares. In them, I am always watching [the most horrible things happen] to my body, and I am [unable to move]. I have left too much of myself there.

(MORE)

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

I must [get myself back.] I must
[return and collect] what has been
lost.

5. INT. ISPHA OBSERVATION POST - NIGHT

"Red" scrubs through the tape, then presses play. The tape just produces static, with the occasional censor beep.

HE SIGHS, ejects it, and returns it to the folder.

"RED" LEROUX

Well... Something must have gone
wrong with poor Sarah...

He turns a page in the file and finds a single sheet.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)

(reading)

"Addendum: ISPHA Project Researcher
Sarah Freeman was lost in the field
on September 25th, 1993."

(he sighs in frustration)

These fools...

He flips through more of the folder. Something catches his eye right away. He reads aloud again.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)

(slightly surprised)

"Second Addendum: Appearance of
being claiming to be Project
Researcher Sarah Freeman. March
8th, 1999."

He removes a CD from a plastic sheath within, and SWALLOWS NERVOUSLY.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)

A CD this time. Times, they are
a'changin...

He turns back around to the stereo on Caldwell's desk and opens the CD drive.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)

Caldwell, bless you and your old-
fashioned ways.

He pauses, then pulls out a CD already in the tray.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)
 Shania Twain's "Come on Over"?
 (surprised approval)
 Caldwell...

He sets the Shania Twain CD aside and inserts the Project Origo one. BEEP. Recording begins.

6. INT. ISPHA RESEARCH FACILITY - NIGHT - 3/8/1999

A small digital recorder is set down, and someone leans back in their chair. Caldwell speaks, sounding younger, less burdened, more curious, but still focused.

DANIELLA CALDWELL
 This is Project Specialist Daniella Caldwell, Acting Supervisor for the Beta Division of Project Origo. It is March/8th, 1999 at--

SARAH FREEMAN
 (ethereal, haunted)
 Dani, what's going on? Why the formalities? And Acting Supervisor? When did that happen?

DANIELLA CALDWELL
 (beat, hesitant)
 No one's called me Dani in a long time.
 (beat)
 Subject 0-135-PO-B, I'll be asking you a series/of questions regarding your--

SARAH FREEMAN
 (dismayed)
 Can't you just call me Sarah?
 Couldn't you at least do that?

DANIELLA CALDWELL
 If it would make you more cooperative...

SARAH FREEMAN
 (hurt)
 I don't understand why you're treating me like this. Don't you recognize me?

DANIELLA CALDWELL
...Sarah... if you are claiming to
be the operative that I used to
know, you should know that you look
almost nothing like her.

SARAH FREEMAN
(becoming distressed)
I... I don't understand...

DANIELLA CALDWELL
(SIGH; backing off)
Listen... forgive me, I don't want
to cause you any more distress than
you're already feeling. I know it's
nerve wracking being questioned
liked this, but I'm afraid we need
to conduct this interview. So, with
your permission... I'd like to hear
more about what you've been
through.

SARAH FREEMAN
(uncomfortable)
Of... of course...

DANIELLA CALDWELL
Thank you. Now...
(she flips a page)
Please tell me who you are.

SARAH FREEMAN
(as if it's obvious)
I've told you already... Project
Origo Researcher Sarah Freeman,
ISPHA.

DANIELLA CALDWELL
(making a note)
And where have you come from?

SARAH FREEMAN
Uh... originally, Asheville, North
Carolina. Currently residing/in
Ventura--

DANIELLA CALDWELL
(restating)
--let me rephrase. Where were you
prior to appearing in our facility?

SARAH FREEMAN
(after a beat)
Origo.

DANIELLA CALDWELL
So, you're saying you come from
this...

SARAH FREEMAN
Not "from," but... yes. I was in
the extradimensional space that
ISPHA has had me studying through
astral projection for the past few
months. For our purposes, I'm
calling it Origo.

DANIELLA CALDWELL
(beat, QUIETLY CLEARS
THROAT)
Why are you claiming to be the
researcher Sarah Freeman?

SARAH FREEMAN
(insulted)
Dani, are you being serious?

DANIELLA CALDWELL
I'm required to ask these questions
and submit a report, Sarah. It's
standard procedure.

SARAH FREEMAN
What the hell happened to you?

DANIELLA CALDWELL
Sarah, please, just/listen to me--

SARAH FREEMAN
--Has it really been that long?
(she takes a moment to
look at her)
You look different, too.

DANIELLA CALDWELL
(beat, setting aside
paperwork)
Fine. If you really are who you say
you are, then tell me something
that only Sarah Freeman would know.
A memory of ours, something we
shared.

SARAH FREEMAN
(after a beat; dryly,
sadly)
We watched the first episode of
Highlander together when it
premiered last year.
(MORE)

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

You spilled wine on your pants, and the stain dried in the shape of a dog's head. We both couldn't stop laughing.

There is a long silence.

DANIELLA CALDWELL

(realizing it's actually her, more personal)

Sarah... what happened? What have you been doing all this time?

SARAH FREEMAN

(confused)

All this time? I... I don't...

DANIELLA CALDWELL

It's been nearly six years since you disappeared, Sarah.

SARAH LAUGHS; it is distorted. After a moment, she realizes Caldwell isn't joking.

SARAH FREEMAN

No... but that would mean...

Sarah leans in, taking a closer look at Caldwell.

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

You're... you're older...

Sarah sits back, and begins to panic.

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

(voice distortion)

No... no!

SARAH BREATHES HEAVILY, and as she does the electronic equipment around her begins to malfunction.

Recording cuts out. Silence.

7. INT. ISPHA RESEARCH FACILITY - LATER

The tape resumes, only 20 minutes later. SARAH IS BREATHING STEADILY, now locked inside a Faraday cage.

DANIELLA CALDWELL

Sarah... I want to sincerely apologizing for needing to put you in this cage.

(MORE)

DANIELLA CALDWELL (CONT'D)

The electromagnetic interference
you were putting off... our
equipment couldn't handle it.

SARAH FREEMAN

(muttering)

Like a goddamn animal...

DANIELLA CALDWELL

I don't know what's happened to
you, but... there is a large amount
of very delicate equipment in here.
It's not personal.

SARAH FREEMAN

Sure.

DANIELLA CALDWELL

(CLEARS THROAT, attempting
to restart)

Sarah, could you please recount
what you can remember of your
experience in Origo?

SARAH FREEMAN

(growing unease)

Dani... Daniella. I'm starting to
realize that I don't... exactly
know how to account for the time
that I've been gone. I got back
here... eventually... using the
Monroe Institute training from my
time with ISPHA.

(beat, some parts are
[redacted])

I suppose... now that I'm trying to
recall... I do remember the
beginning of my last mission, when
[I communicated my worries about my
mental state to acting Director
Evans, but she assured me that it
was simply the effects of my
increasingly isolation]. I was very
unsure about re-entering, but ISPHA
insisted that I continue.

(beat)

As soon as I was in, and felt
myself slipping nearer and nearer
to Origo, I began to panic. I
couldn't feel enough of my own
presence, my own strength. I
experienced the feeling of my
spirit going through...

(MORE)

SARAH FREEMAN (CONT'D)

well, the best way I can describe it is a spiritual meat grinder. I experienced such utter fullness and devastating emptiness at the same time. The only thing that kept me together at that time was... saying my own name out loud, over and over. That kept me from losing it all. "Sarah Freeman."

(beat)

Eventually, I was able to keep the worlds around me from their spinning and dissolving enough to regain a vague sense of my body again. Once I had that, I used my training to visualize appearing back in my original experiment room at ISPHA.

DANIELLA CALDWELL

(embarrassed)

We'd converted that lab back into a storage closet... reorgs, and all that.

SARAH FREEMAN

(with some bitterness)

I noticed.

(beat)

So what happens next?

BEEP.

8. INT. ISPHA OBSERVATION POST - NIGHT

The recording ends abruptly, and the CD ejects.

"RED" LEROUX

What? No, that can't be it...

He riffles through the folder frantically, but there's nothing.

"RED" LEROUX (CONT'D)

Oh come on Caldwell, don't tell me this is one time your records are incomplete...

The door to the office swings open suddenly.

DANIELLA CALDWELL

(after a beat; a demand)

Ren. What are you doing in here?

"RED" only takes a small moment. Before she can react, he springs up, knocking Caldwell out of the way with a GRUNT, before running away down the hall.

DANIELLA CALDWELL (CONT'D)
Oh, what in the world...

She listens to his footsteps fading, and then the doors getting yanked open as he escapes. SHE SIGHS. CCTV footage ends.

9. INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING - 2/13/23

Sam starts his tape recorder as he enters the room, sits, and CLEARS HIS THROAT.

NED LEROUX
(already knowing he's caught)
That was Caldwell on the landline, wasn't it?

SAM BAILEY
(trying to stay calm, unreadable)
It was.

NED LEROUX
(accepting, resigned)
Copy that.

SAM BAILEY
She told me that she caught Ren sneaking around her office last night. She also said she'd never seen Ren run like that a day in his life, and she had a feeling I'd be able to put the pieces together. Turns out the real Ren was stoned out of his mind in the guest room and didn't leave the house all night, as the sizable dent in Jerry's snack cupboard will attest.
(beat)
You're lucky that ISPHA won't be coming after you, you know. They've got too many other things going on right now to really care.

Ned takes this in for a beat, then finally speaks.

NED LEROUX

I had to figure this out, Sam. From the... human perspective.

(beat, more vulnerable)

I'm afraid of it, Bailey. The Source. I've only seen the edges of the endless chaos... The neverending gashes in the universe that spirit after spirit is continually churned out upon. Darkness. Silence.

(beat)

I've gathered that the main way to survive in the Source is to have a sense of self... a real one. You need that in there, otherwise you just... fade. Even if you aren't caught. Explains why I didn't last very long my last time in there.

(beat)

I suppose "Ned" is... well, it's the closest thing I've had to an actually identity since I first spilled out into the world in the La Brea tar. So if I'm gonna go in, I'd better do it now.

SAM BAILEY

(growing apprehension)

You mean...

NED LEROUX

I'm not taking any more delays lying down. I'm going to rescue Bill and Rob. The place they're in will chew them up and leave nothing behind. They'll never make it out without our help, and we owe it to them to get them back.

(beat)

I can do it by myself if I have to, but I'm doing it.

SAM BAILEY

(at the end of his rope)

You're not going to let up, are you? Even with everything you've told me about the Source, even with everything else that's going on, even though Morrison might be waiting for you... You're still going in there?

NED LEROUX

I am.

SAM SIGHS and rubs his temple. After a beat...

SAM BAILEY

(quietly, bitterly)

Well... Thank you. I guess.

NED LEROUX

What's for?

SAM BAILEY

I don't wanna get into it, but...

I'm telling you now, you're not
doing this alone.

(beat)

I'm coming with you.

CLACK. The recording ends.

ROLL END THEME
AND CREDITS