

Presenting a new sci-fi television series ...

MINE DARK

by Brough Hansen

A Screencraft Fellowship Finalist

INTRODUCTION

A former VA psychologist moves to a small mining town to escape her demons when a dark conspiracy covering up a supernatural being envelopes her in its mystery ...

Mine Dark is a serialized, single season television show that bends multiple genres: it is a noir, wrapped in a thriller, inside a sci-fi. The series guides the viewer downward into a moral and technological hell-scape of sinister secrets.

This nihilistic and cynical world would be bleak, if not for the story's saving grace: a true, everyday *heroine* who will unearth—and dismantle—the entire system.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. First, let's take a trip to ...



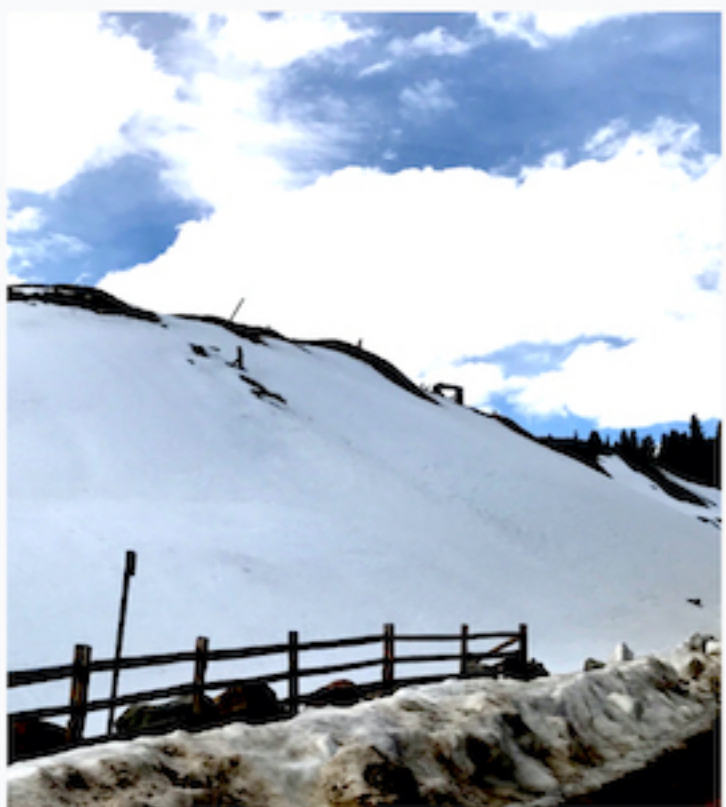
SILVER CITY

SETTING

Mine Dark takes place in a small mountain town known as Silver City, Colorado. Silver City is a boneyard of the glorious Old West; a boom town bedecked with East Coast money, gunslingers and brothels that met its end when the silver ran dry. Now, it's a half-assed tourist destination of scrap metal yards, trailer parks and enough forest to safely hide a body.

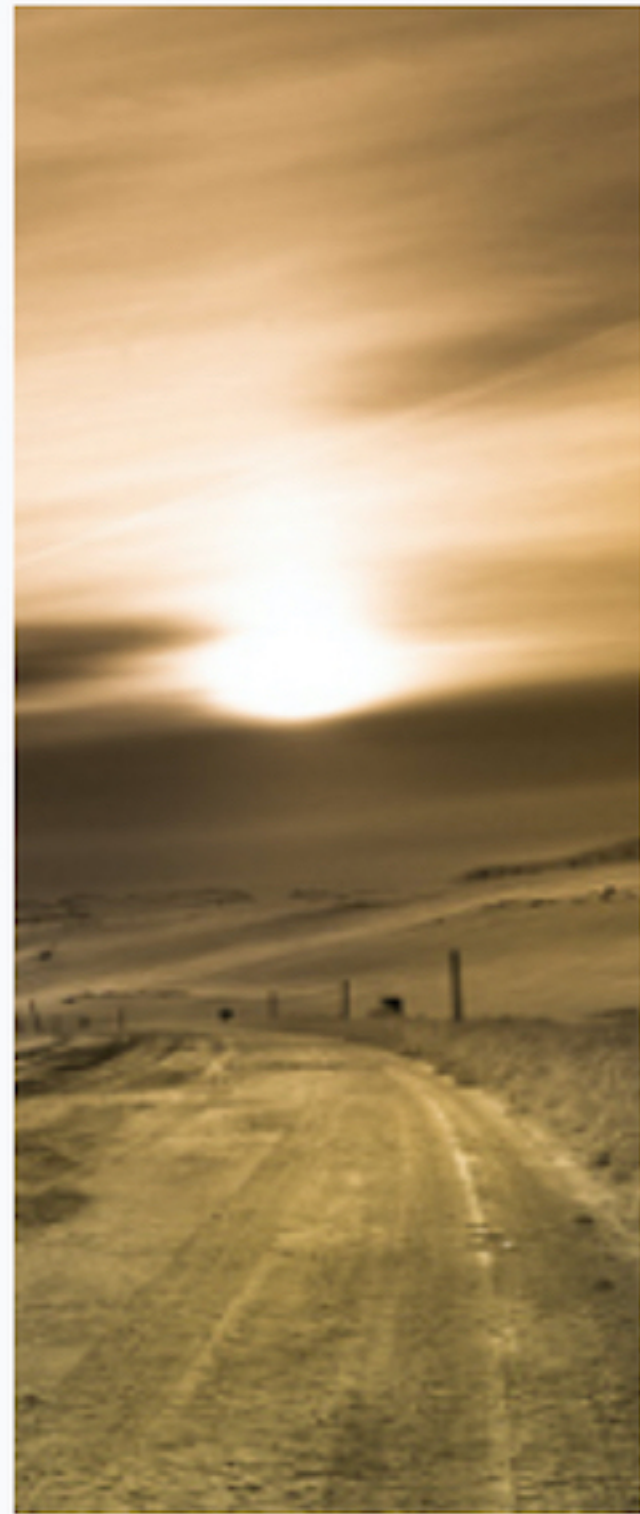
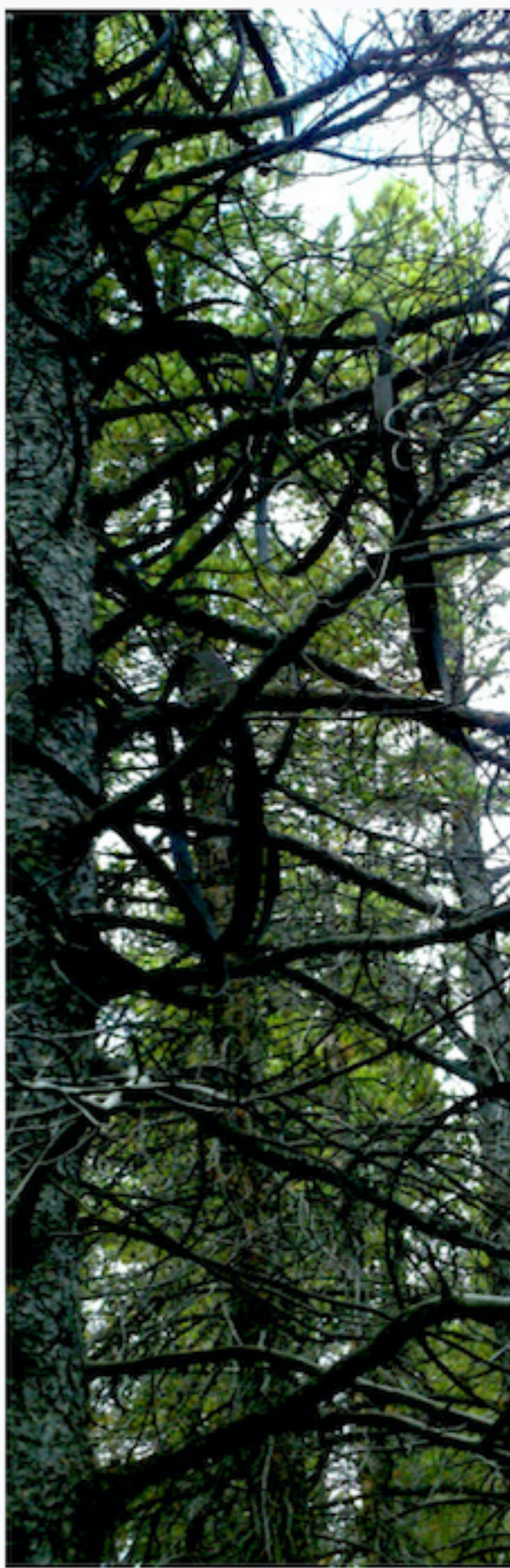
Silver City's nose-bleeding elevation is 10,000 feet, lifting this spare, neo-noir almost two miles above sea level. The ravaged infrastructure of a once thriving mining community evokes a Rocky-Mountain-style rust belt aesthetic: fields of unused black slag, the collapsed wooden entryways of abandoned mines, and a populace living in poverty.

Gargantuan mountain peaks loom over the town valley, an endless expanse of wind-whipped snow drifts, yellow grass and the rotting wood of long-lost ghost towns. Silver City is not without its charm, however. There may be no better place in the world to hide away and start a new life ...











LABYRINTH

BELOW GROUND

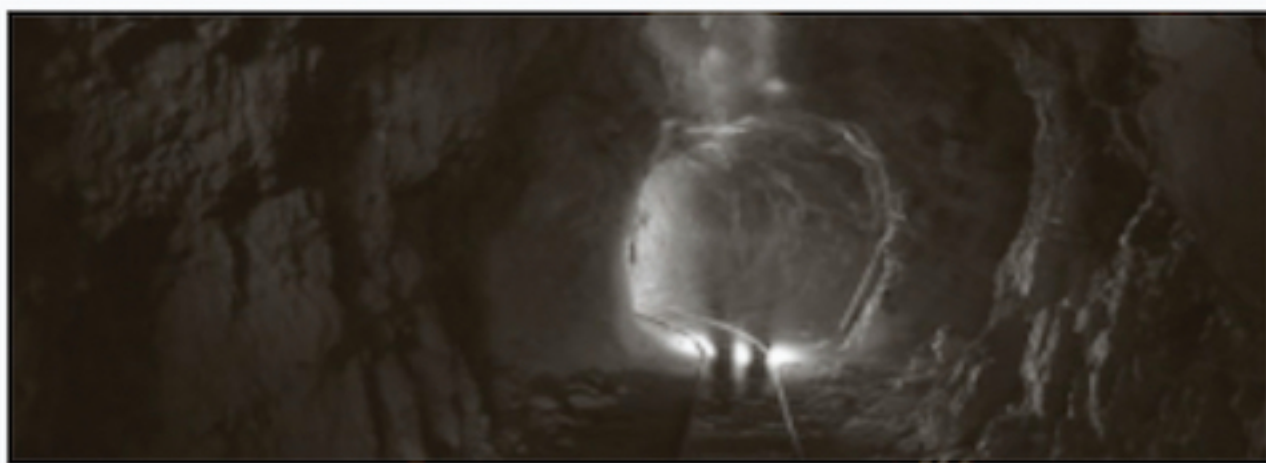
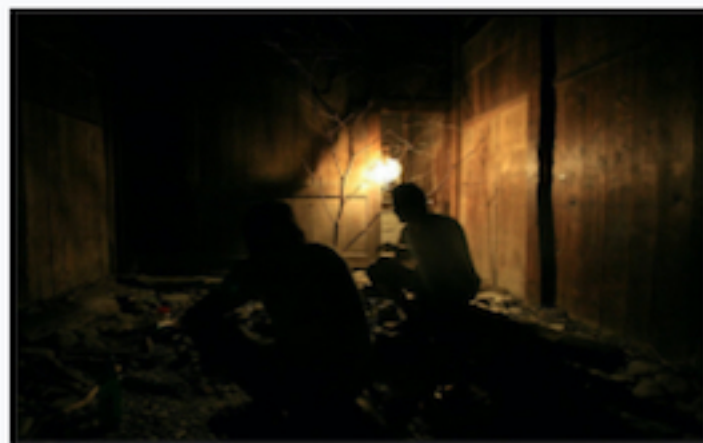
Silver City sits atop an intricate underworld: the *mines*. You might lose your way wandering their depths, disappearing into a vast network of collapsing shafts and winding tunnels, remnants of the violence that this bygone occupation inflicted on its subterranean workers.

These tunnels are the *labyrinth* of our world and a fitting metaphor for the story as a whole: a disorienting descent into a fragmented, spiraling nightmare from which there is no escape.

And wherever there is a labyrinth, there is a Minotaur. Anyone wishing to explore Silver City's netherworld would do well to heed the warning from an old European map:

Here there be monsters.







A photograph of a group of people standing in a snowy, mountainous landscape. The scene is captured in a high-contrast, almost black and white style, with the snow appearing as bright white against the dark, shadowed figures and the dark background of the mountains. The people are dressed in winter clothing, and their forms are partially obscured by the deep shadows. A dark, horizontal banner is superimposed over the middle of the image, containing the word 'CHARACTERS' in a white, serif font.

CHARACTERS

MAIN CHARACTERS

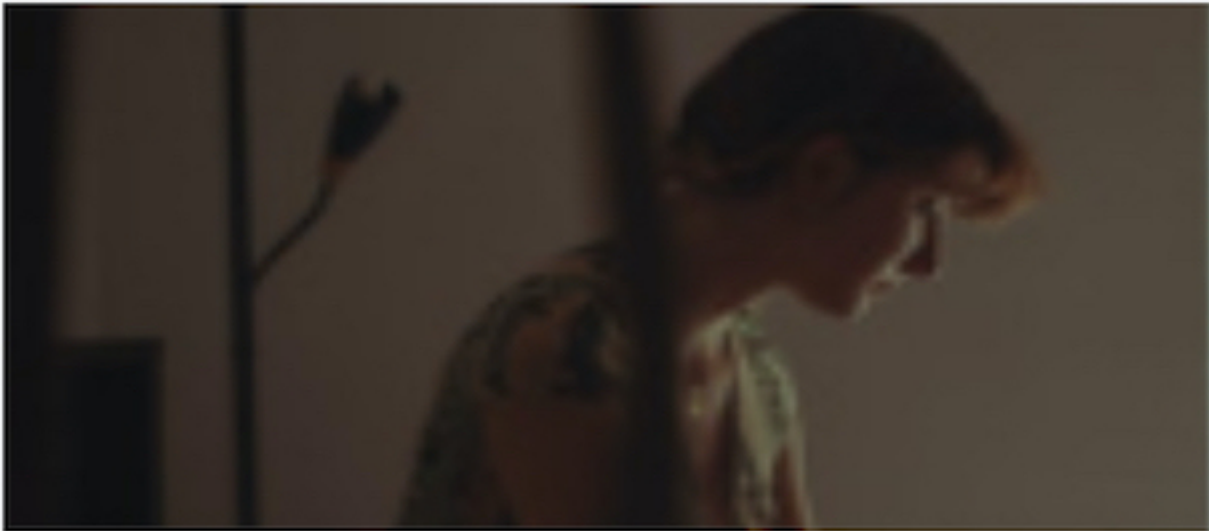
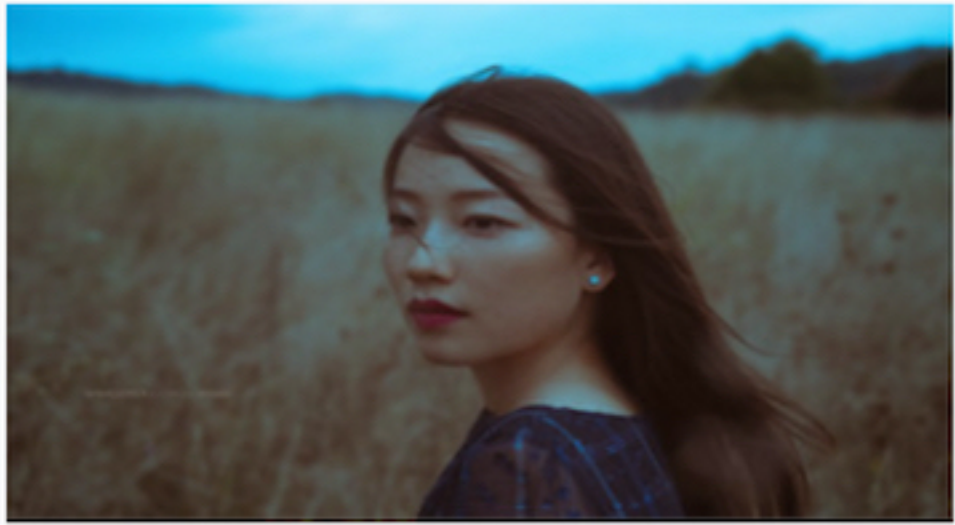
DOCTOR RAINE WALKER (early 40s)—a former psychologist for the VA, Raine burned out professionally and moved to Silver City to begin a new life. She owns an antique shop and lives a quiet existence. The trauma she experienced working with tortured soldiers continues to haunt her dreams.

MIKE HUBBARD (early 40s)—a veteran of the War in Afghanistan, now a Deputy Sheriff in Silver City. His Great Great Grandfather was the first Sheriff of Silver City back when it was a thriving silver town. A smart, direct, down-to-earth man. Raine's helper and confidant.

UR (late teens)—a mysterious young woman whom Raine rescues in the pilot. Fragile, soft spoken, and of unknown provenance, she possesses a significant power that will reveal itself as the series unfolds.

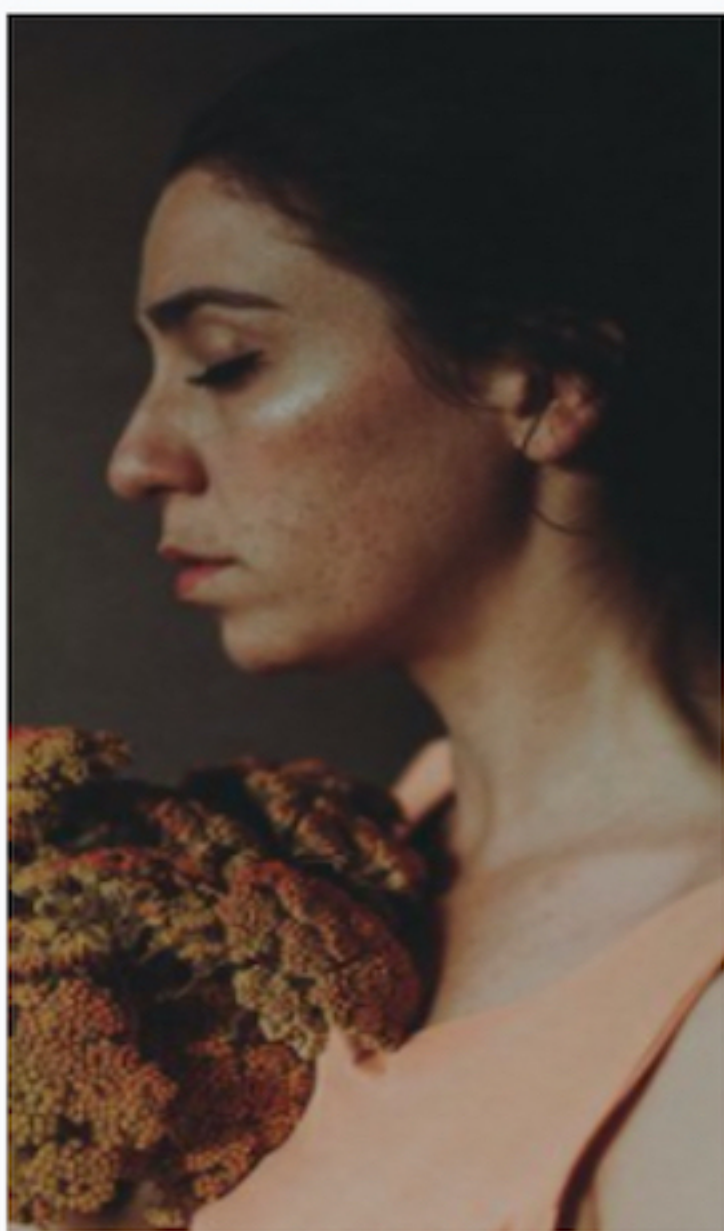
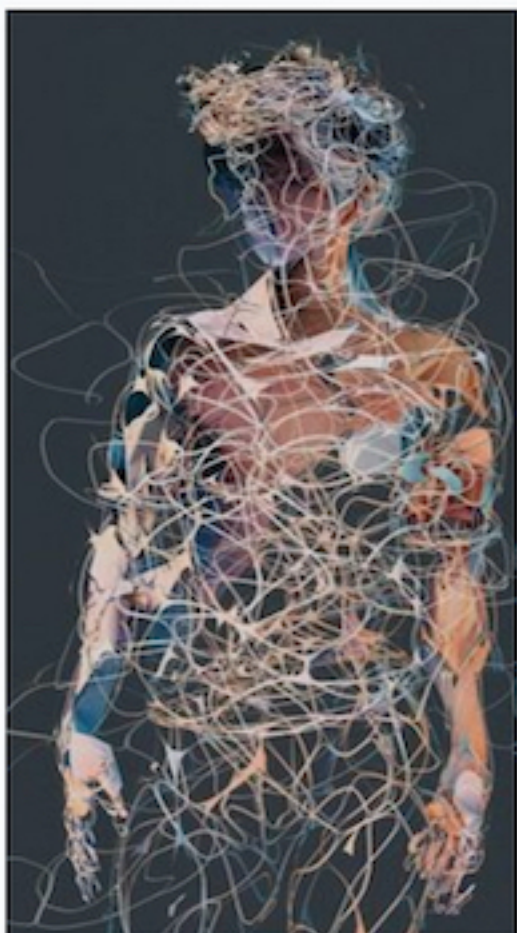
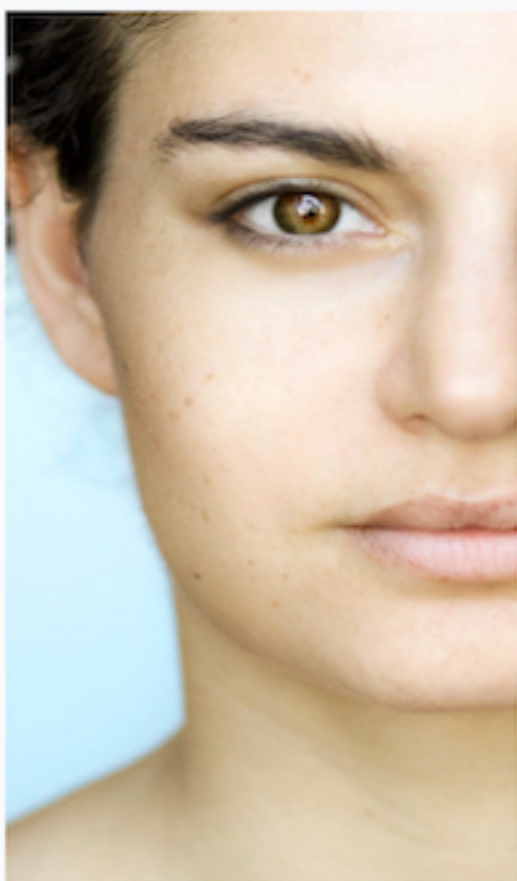
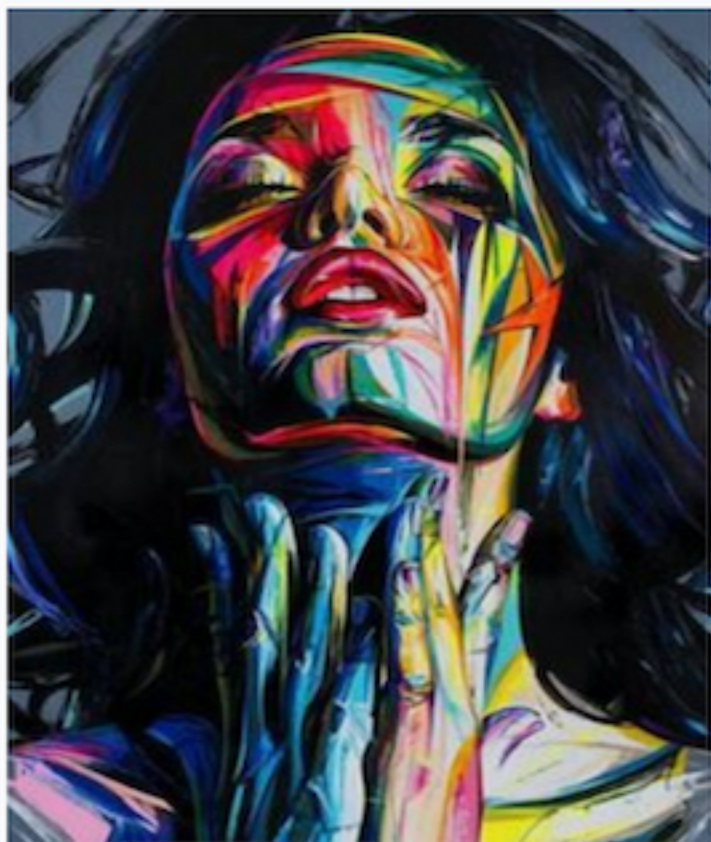
FRIEDRICH AND KLAUS MEIER (70s)—twin brothers who appear to live as hermits in the mountains, a conscious misrepresentation of who they really are. Raine discovers Ur in an underground fallout shelter on their property.

TOWNSPEOPLE—an eclectic array of mountain folk: recluses and criminals, the poor, mad and homeless. These are the raw and brutal faces of destitution as they appear in the forgotten settlements of off-brand mountain towns.



RAINE



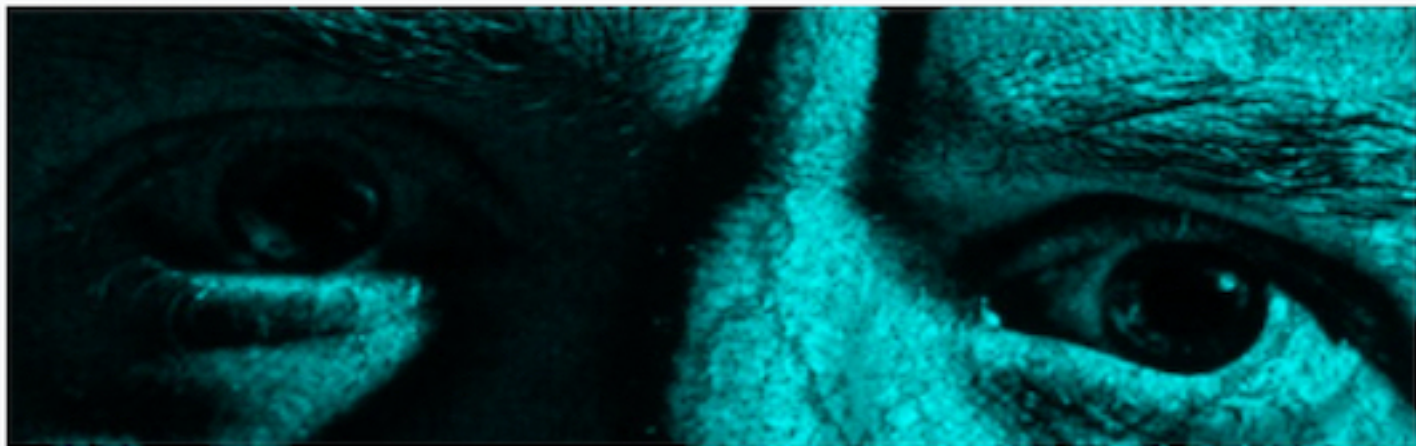




HUBBARD







MEIER BROTHERS

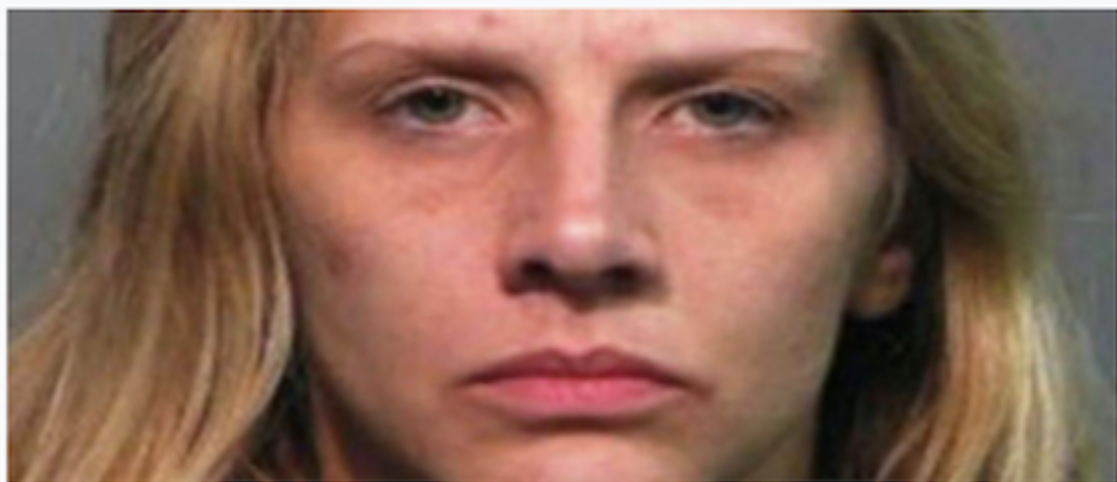






TOWNSPEOPLE







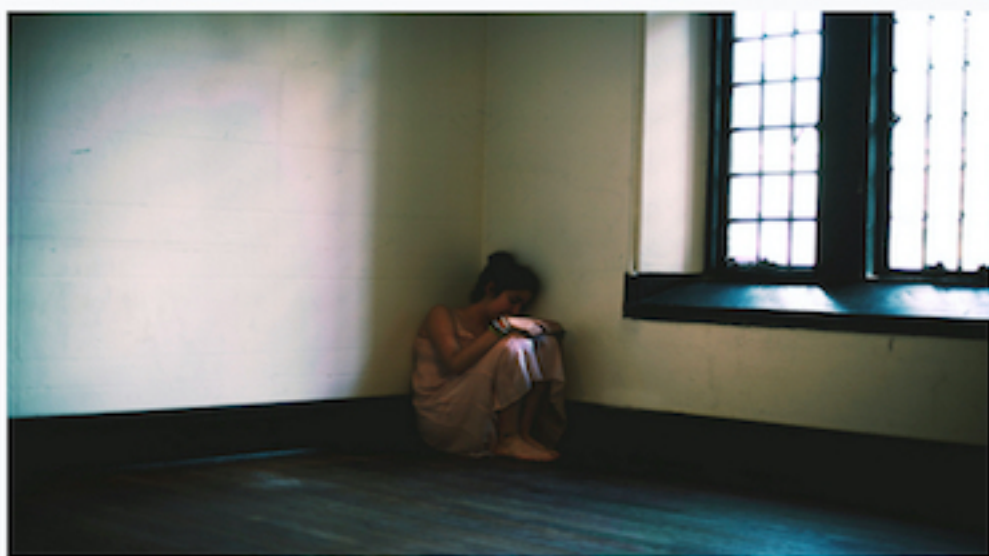
UR

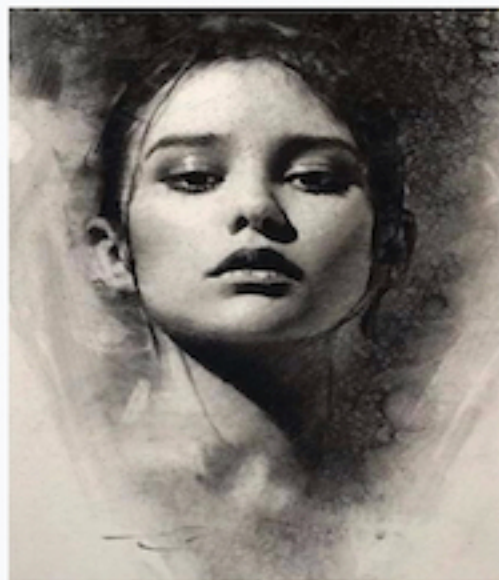
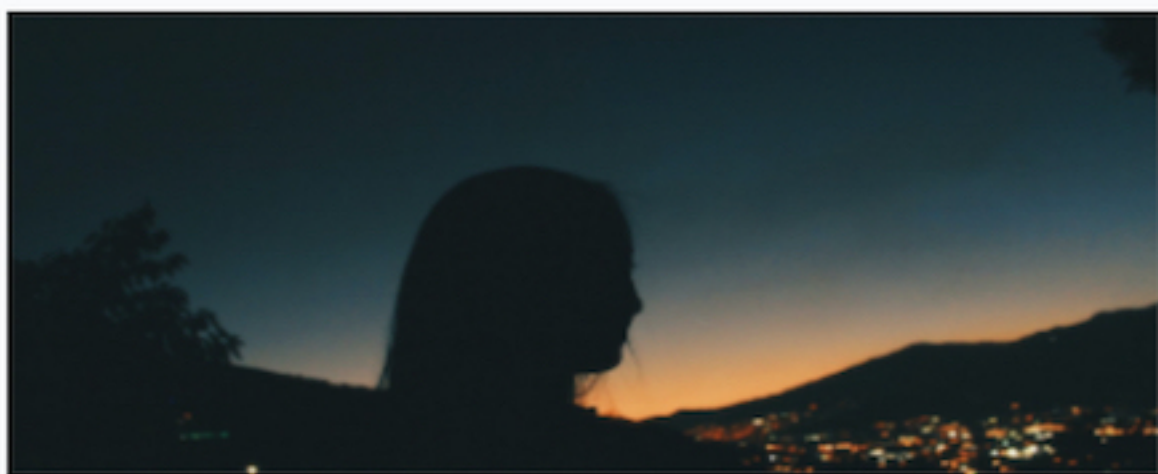
THE GIRL IN THE BUNKER

Raine discovers and rescues the young woman named “Ur” in the pilot episode, which sets up all we know about her so far—and it’s not much. Nobody knows who she is, where she comes from, or why she keeps carving holes in the torsos of dolls.

As the series continues, we’ll learn that Ur has a secret power: the ability to manipulate time itself. This means that she can *move time* forwards or backwards, and she is the only being in the universe with such agency.

Ur doesn’t realize the extent of her capabilities until the season finale, when she finally harnesses her super power’s full force. This universe-shattering gesture will take all of her strength and redeem our world’s inhabitants—even as it almost kill her.







DESCENT



STORY

RAINE WALKER (early 40s) is a former psychologist who worked for many years at the VA in Denver, treating traumatized veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. Raine is not only intelligent, but highly empathic. She got so invested in the soldiers under her care, it's as if she became *enmeshed* with their psyches, absorbing their experiences so completely that she continues to suffer nightmares based on the stories they told. When some patients committed suicide despite Raine's efforts, the psychological burden of their loss became too much to bear. She couldn't live with the fact that some people can't be saved. As Hubbard observes in the pilot, Raine "hates losing souls on her watch."

Raine burns out and decides she needs a change. She moves her entire life to Silver City, Colorado and opens an antique shop on the main street of the sleepy, historical town. But the respite is short lived. One day, SHERIFF GEORGE CASTILLO (60s) and DEPUTY MIKE HUBBARD (40s) appear in the shop and ask for her help dealing with an eccentric mountain man who has lost his mind: FRIEDRICH MEIER (70s). Friedrich lives an isolated existence in a mountain shack along with his twin brother, KLAUS MEIER. Raine finds Friedrich standing atop his ramshackle dwelling raving in German, but before she can help him, he blows off his head with a revolver.

What happens next changes the course of Raine's life—and the fate of the entire town. Some strange circumstances surrounding Friedrich's suicide irk Raine and leave her with a vexing question: why did he do it? Facing strong resistance from Castillo, and with the help of Hubbard, Raine decides to solve the mystery. Her vigilante investigation reveals that the Meier brothers have a secret: for at least ten years, they have held a pale, young woman named UR (late teens) locked in an underground bomb shelter on their property.

(CONTINUED)

Raine begins treating Ur as a psychologist and it's evident that the "girl" is not what she seems. No one can find her true identity and she has a propensity for carving geometrically perfect holes through the torsos of toy dolls and figurines. She's also plagued by malevolent visions: when she looks out a window, she sees Silver City drowning in flames, a pitch black sun burning in the sky. Their first session also hints at an extraordinary ability that Ur possesses—a mind boggling and magical power that will grow stronger as the show goes on.

Hubbard becomes Raine's ally and the pair collaborate to peel back the layers of multiplying mysteries. He unearths an incongruous fact about the Meier brothers: though they lived in an outwardly decrepit shack, the *inside* of the shack is decorated like a luxurious and cultured Park Avenue penthouse. The intrigue deepens when Hubbard discovers that the Meiers used to be engineers for the mining company APEX, which began during Silver City's early days and now runs a secretive molybdenum mining facility—an element used to create steel alloys—called ELYSIUM outside town.

The pilot establishes the main storylines of the series: the mysteries of Ur, the Meier brothers, the otherworldly entity that binds them, and the conspiracy cloaking them all. Raine's emotional journey will entail healing her own trauma through the love she finds for the sensitive and powerful Ur. In fact, Raine's exterior and interior obstacles are one in the same: she will have to journey into the labyrinth of her own mind and face the darkest parts of her past to summon the hero within.

Hubbard, Ur and a few key allies will support Raine in her quest. Feelings will naturally develop between Hubbard and Raine, and Raine's motherly connection with Ur will only grow deeper. But none of them can conceive of what's in store, nor the scope and ferocity of the political, technological, and *supernatural* forces standing in their way.



MONSTER

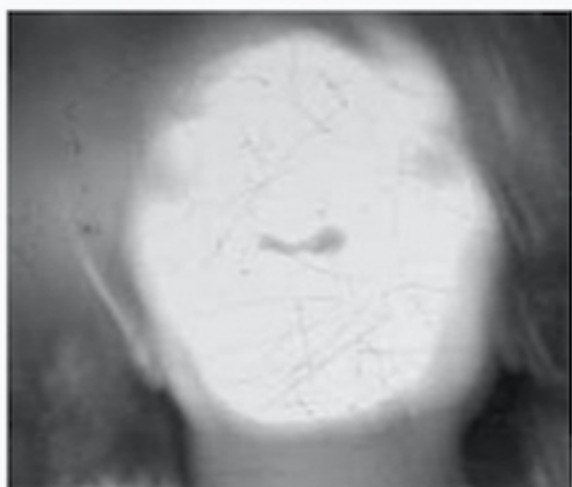
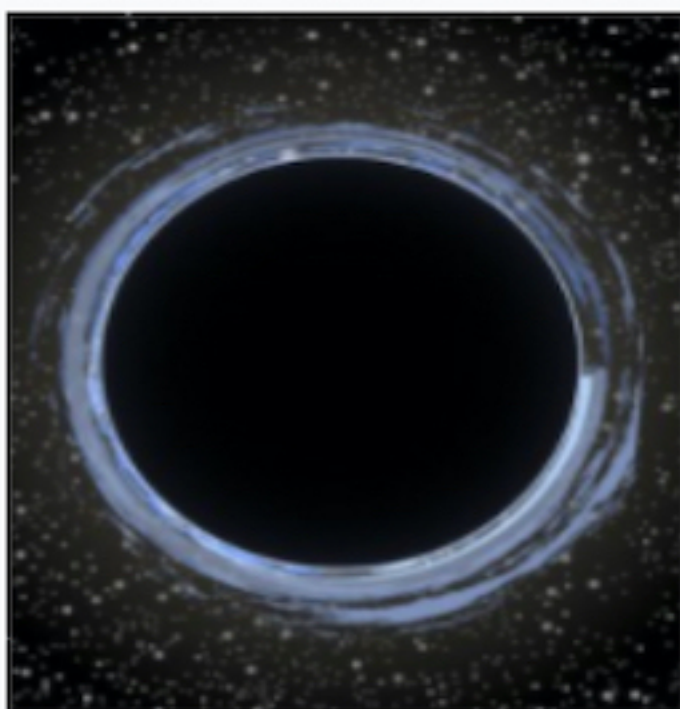
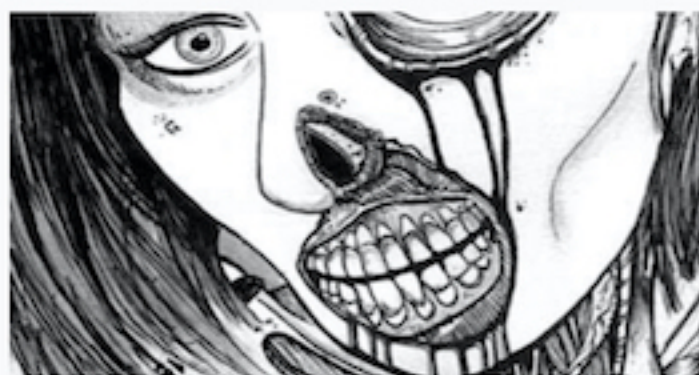
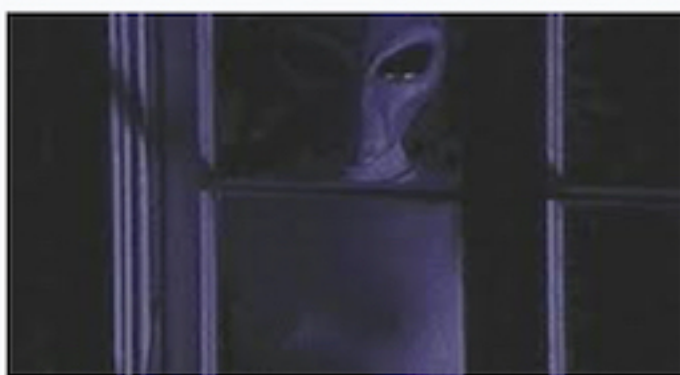
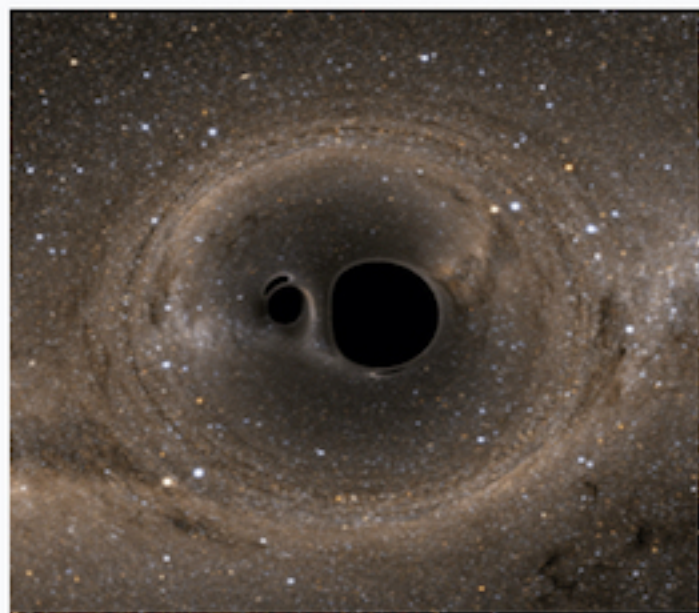
MISTER EMPTY

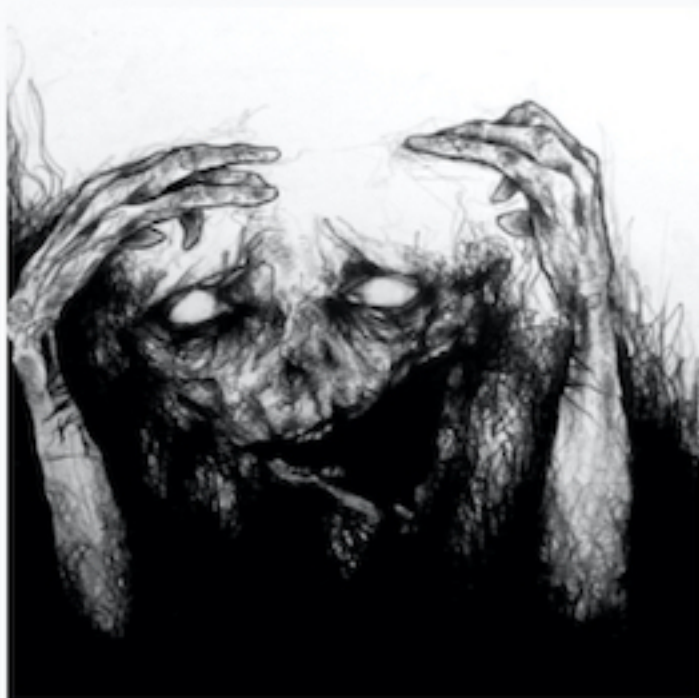
An ancient being lives in the mountains of Silver City, lurking in the shadows of the town mines. It might be an alien, a spirit, or some kind of god. All societies that settled here have a folk tale about the creature. It's a faceless humanoid with a perfect hole running clean through its torso. The story goes that the hole is a vacuum for human souls.

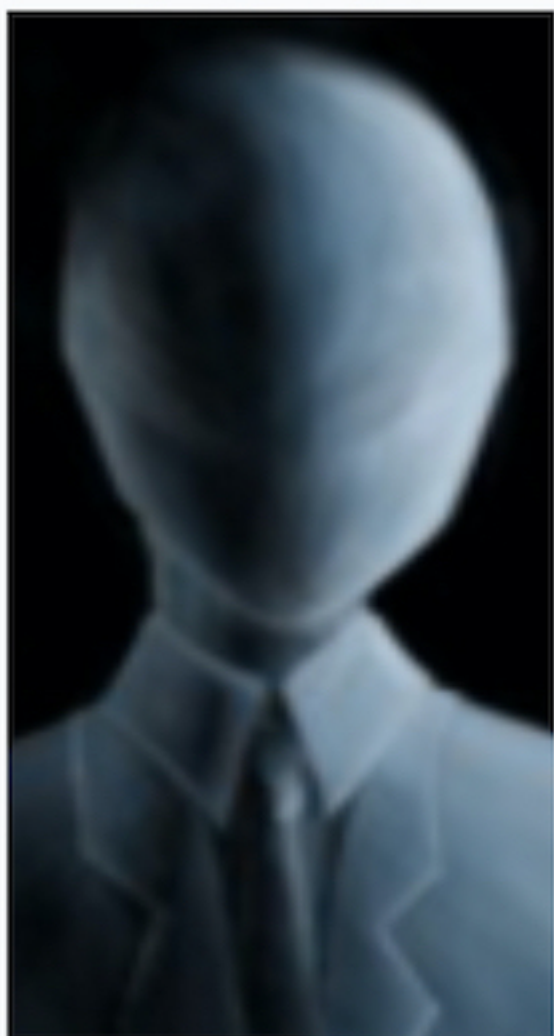
It's had many names over the years. The Utes called it Tangwaci Nooi—"Wind Man." Conquistadors: el Hombre con Agujero—"Hole Man." Finnish settlers: Tumma—"The Dark One." And the Celts called it simply "Diabhal."

Nowadays it's known as Mister Empty.

Mister Empty is not only real, it possess amazing powers. It is a *living time machine*. The hole in its chest isn't for stealing souls, it's a *portal* into the past ... and future.









STRUCTURE

STORY STRUCTURE

Mine Dark will unfold like a film: it will have three acts, divided by genre, that span nine episodes. By the end of the series, our characters will uncover the secret crime plaguing the town, unveil its perpetrators, and take down the system, bringing both the story and their individual arcs to a satisfying conclusion.

ACT I : MYSTERY

In the pilot episode, Raine discovers and rescues Ur, Hubbard and Raine scratch the surface of the larger conspiracy, and we learn about the existence of a frightening being know as Mister Empty. The three main characters are then torn apart and thrown into disparate plot lines, each of which will offer clues to the town's secrets.

A menacing figure on a motorcycle named LEATHERMAN chases Hubbard into an old mine shaft where he unwittingly comes into contact with Mister Empty. The monster sends Hubbard into the near future and he narrowly escapes death at the hands of the town mining company, APEX (a front for a shady government program). Meanwhile, Raine fights the town's corrupt officials as she digs for information about Ur and the Meier brothers, and Ur finds herself imprisoned in TIN TOWN—a shanty-settlement of disfigured men who believe Ur to be their savior. She manages to escape with the help of one of its inhabitants, an enigmatic man named CLEEZ (short for “Ecclesiastes”).

Toward the end of the act, Hubbard sees Mister Empty with his own eyes—a magnificent, luminescent entity that Apex can somehow control—and eventually finds his way to Apex's flagship facility, ELYSIUM. He encounters DARYL SKRIKER (20s), a deformed and mentally damaged young man living in a high-tech cage. Our protagonists temporarily defeat their adversaries, reconvene, and compare notes—only to realize the enormity of the conspiracy they face.

ACT II : THRILLER

Raine, Hubbard, and Ur continue to seek the truth in an increasingly hostile environment. The ruthless head of Apex, BOB YARBOROUGH (60s) learns of Ur's powers and relentlessly pursues her capture with the help of SHERIFF GEORGE CASTILLO (60s) and MAYOR PERRY LINDAHL (50s), Silver City's female head. Leatherman mercilessly hunts them down and the mutant men of Tin Town mobilize to reclaim their goddess, Ur.

A vigilante group known as THE GUARDIANS OF THE ANGELS also create problems for our heroes. The politically powerful group demands to know what happened to their relatives who have gone missing over the years. Initially antagonistic, Raine persuades their vitriolic leader, CAROLYN SKRIKER—a trans woman in her 40s and Daryl's older sister—that they are on the same side. We learn more details about Ur's backstory as she becomes more communicative, and Cleeze helps her gain better control over her special ability.

With enemies fast on their heels, Raine, Hubbard and Ur go into hiding and become a de fact family. Needing answers, Ur uses her newly-honed powers to break Klaus Meier out of jail. They interrogate Klaus and he reveals the show's entire backstory: Mister Empty and its connection to Ur, the origin of the men in Tin Town, and Apex's disturbing true purpose. The fake company runs a top secret, government program that studies time travel by abducting poor people from Silver City and forcing Mister Empty to send them into the future—an ordeal that leaves them physically and psychologically marred.

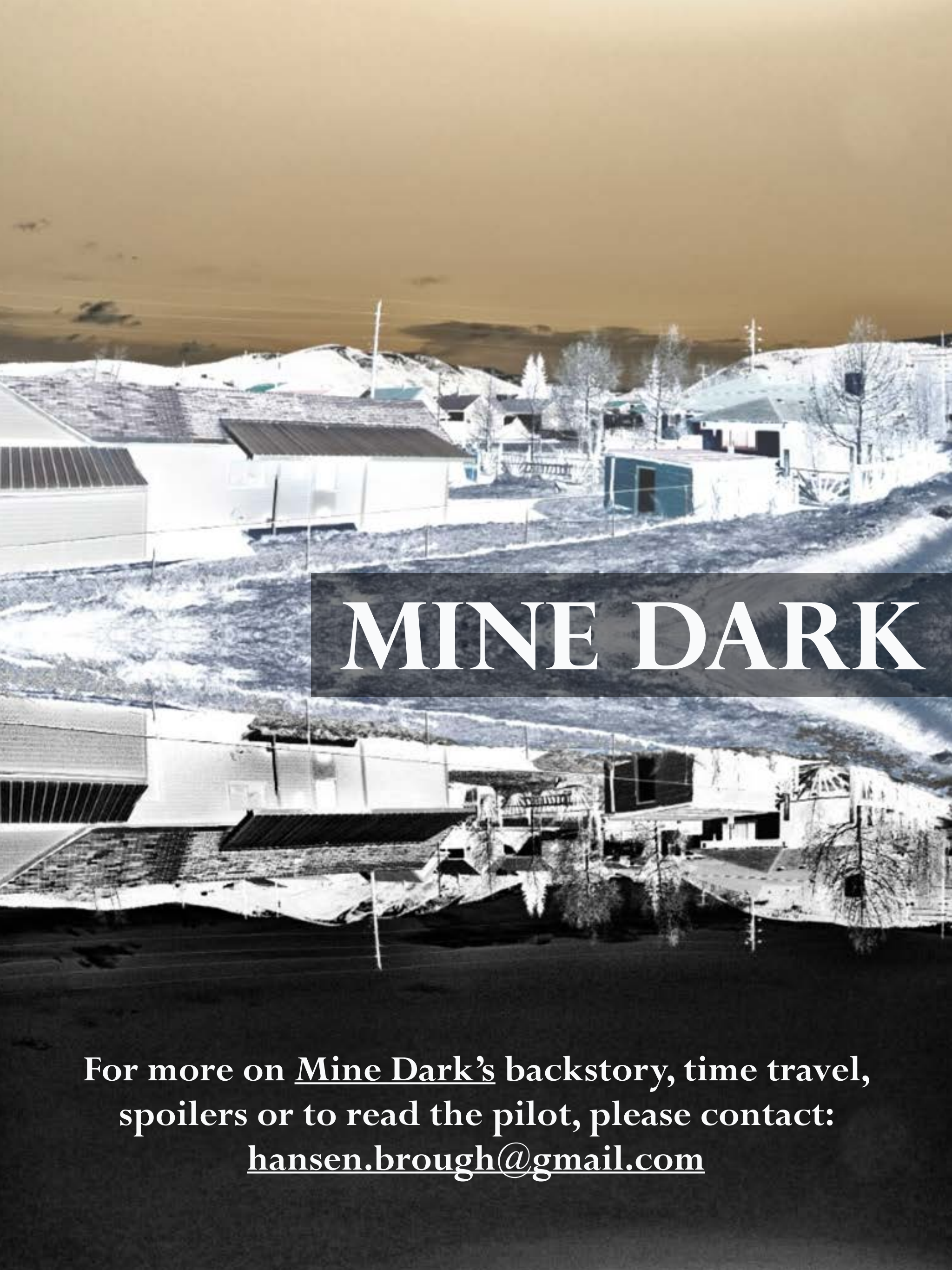
ACT III : ACTION

The show's real antagonists are now clear: Apex and its head of operations, Bob Yarborough. Many adversaries we've encountered turn out to be victims: The Guardians of the Angels, the men of Tin Town, and Mister Empty itself. The Meier brothers—initially reviled as sociopaths who held a woman in an underground bunker against her will—were actually protecting Ur. The brothers designed the technology that Apex uses in its experiments and knew that, if Yarborough discovered Ur's existence, he would subject her to dehumanizing procedures in order to exploit her power.

The allies join forces to defeat Apex once and for all. They hatch a plan to destroy Elysium, release Mister Empty, and free its human lab rats. This impossible operation—part caper, part battle—teeters on the brink of failure until Ur summons the full force of her power and resets the timeline of the entire universe. They arrive en masse in the past, kill Yarborough, and stop the agency before it can commit its atrocities.

Ur's awesome gesture frees Mister Empty and heals Apex's victims, but the exertion costs all of her energy and she momentarily dies. Fortunately, Ur's emotional connection to Raine is so profound that their love miraculously brings her back to life. Hubbard, Raine, Ur and the rest of the town move on with their lives, finally free from danger ...

... for now.



MINE DARK

For more on Mine Dark's backstory, time travel,
spoilers or to read the pilot, please contact:
hansen.brough@gmail.com