

HELL TO PAY

PILOT

Written by

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A FULL MOON

Shines down on

A LARGE PRISTINE ROAD SIGN - NIGHT

With two markers and an oversized metallic GUITAR mounted on top stands at the intersection of HIGHWAYS 61 and 49.

Backlit by the moon, the crisscrossing sign casts the shadow of an INVERTED CROSS on the WINDSHIELD of

EXT. A BEAT-UP BUICK - NIGHT

Pulled to the side of the road. Engine off. Interior dark.

INT. BEAT-UP BUICK

LEE HALL, 35, sits behind the wheel, frazzled. Haunted. He GULPS from a fifth of Heaven's Door Whiskey.

AMY HALL, 35, sits in the passenger seat a million miles away. Detached. Ashen. Broken.

LEE

You'll have to do it.

Amy looks up at the rearview mirror -- then to her husband.

AMY

I always knew I would.

Lee, relieved, puts his head down on the steering wheel.

LEE

I love yo--

--BAM!

Amy puts a bullet into her husband's head.

Amy RETCHES. Her body wracked by dry heaves.

She looks back up into the rearview mirror. Pleads...

AMY

I am too weak. Forgive me.

Amy lifts the SMOKING PISTOL to her head.

EXT. BEAT-UP BUICK - NIGHT

BANG! The GUNSHOT RINGS out from inside the car.

Then... the Buick's interior light clicks on.

The rear passenger side door swings open.

And a LITTLE BOY in pajamas scrambles out of the back seat.

He runs as far away from the car as possible.

The lifeless bodies of Lee and Amy are visible through the blood-splattered windows --

Until the car's interior light CLICKS off.

CORNSTALKS RUSTLE. INSECTS TRILL.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

I was four years old when I first
learned about the Devil at the
Crossroads.

MAIN TITLE APPEARS ON THE SCREEN:

H E L L T O P A Y

EXT. LONESOME STRETCH OF HIGHWAY 61 - PRE-DAWN

A Sheriff's cruiser roars down the highway.

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - PRE-DAWN

DEPUTY CASSI DUNLAP, 28, pretty, intelligent, tears down the road. She roars over a crest as her headlights fall on

The Little Boy sitting in the middle of the road. His PJs glow ghostly white in the cruiser's headlights.

CASSI

Jesus.

Cassi SLAMS on the brakes. Turns the wheel. Tires SCREECH as

The cruiser SKIDS to the side of the highway.

Cassi leaps out of the car. Rushes over to

THE LITTLE BOY

Sits in the middle of the road, HUMMING an odd little tune.

CASSI

Squats down. Grabs the Little Boy. Gently stands him up.

CASSI
My God. Are you okay?

The Little Boy stares at her. This is BRODY HALL, 4, cute, inscrutable, and honestly, more than a little creepy.

CASSI (CONT'D)
How did you get out here?

Cassi takes him to the cruiser. Sits him on the hood.

CASSI (CONT'D)
You're safe now, okay?

Brody ignores her. Cassi forces a smile. Projects calm.

CASSI (CONT'D)
Where are your parents?

Brody remains silent. She looks him up and down for signs of injury.

CASSI (CONT'D)
Can you tell me your name? Hmm? I'm Cassi.

She looks him over for signs of injury. Notices

A slip of paper in his hand.

CASSI (CONT'D)
Can I see what you have there?

Brody opens his hand to reveal

A CRUMPLED PHOTOGRAPH

Cassi unfolds the picture -- stares at the image of

An OLD MAN in a suit and dark glasses sits in a chair and plays guitar as two LITTLE GIRLS in white dresses dance.

Cassi stares at the image, eyes wide with recognition.

CASSI
(to herself)
Amy?

Cassi's a ball of confusion.

CASSI (CONT'D)
Where did you get this?

She snaps her fingers in Brody's face.

CASSI (CONT'D)
Hey. Hello.

Brody blinks. His vacant stare slips.

CASSI (CONT'D)
Who gave you this?

Brody locks eyes with Cassi. Points to one of the little girls in the picture.

BRODY
That's my mom.

CASSI
Wha-- No...

Cassi glares at Brody -- as his guard goes back up. And he resumes HUMMING that haunting little tune.