

Innocence Condemned

FADE IN:

SUPER: A dark time in Christianity - 1692

The wind HOWLS through the branches of an almost bare tree. A full moon hangs above.

Along a dirt road, a wooden sign swings in the wind CREAKING. It reads *Welcome to Barwick*.

A light in the distance can be seen, followed by the sound of THUNDERING hooves hitting the dirt road.

Two black horses break through the darkness pulling a big wooden wagon carrying two men, SAMUEL and HARPER.

The driver, Samuel(46), short, fat, wears a black hat as he tightly holds the driving reins.

Harper(44), skin and bones, stringer hair in his face also in a black hat, holds a skinny black whip.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF BEA CLEVENGERS HOUSE - NIGHT

The horses come to a quick halt in front of a shanty of a house. Dust covers the ground like a thick fog.

Samuel wraps the reins around the rein guard and Harper sticks the whip in the whip socket. They climb down.

Harper reaches up and grabs a musket rifle and the two head steadfast to the front door of the rickety house.

Samuel pounds the front door. The dark house comes to life as a small flicker of light appears through a window.

The door opens. JON CLEVINGER(30s), messy hair, stands in the doorway holding a candle in his left hand.

SAMUEL WAYMAN

By order of the Church Bea
Clevenger, wife of Jon Clevenger is
hereby charged with witchcraft!

Harper and Samuel push their way past John Clevenger. John runs behind.

INT. BEA CLEVINGER'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A door swings open. The three men enter. BEA CLEVINGER(30s) still under the covers, springs up in bed.

Harper turns around, pointing his musket at Mr. Clevenger. Samuel grabs Bea's wrist and pulls her out of the bed.

Not able to ground her feet, she falls. He pulls her up.

BEA CLEVINGER
Jon! Help! Stop! Please!

A struggle ensues. Bea kicks and moans like sounds as she is dragged out of the room.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF BEA CLEVENGERS HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Samuel climbs up the steps at the back of the wagon pulling Bea up behind him. Her nightgown catches the wagon and tears.

Harper stands guarding the wagon with his musket rifle still trained on Mr. Clevenger.

After chaining her, Samuel climbs over the front wagon bench and grabs the reins. Harper steps up on the back step of the wagon as it takes off into the night.

Mr. Clevenger runs helplessly behind the wagon until it disappears in a cloud of dust.

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

Samuel drags Bea into a dark cell and attaches her to a chain shackle.

BEA CLEVINGER
Please! What did I do?

SAMUEL WAYMAN
You've been charged with witchery.

BEA CLEVINGER
But I'm no witch! Please don't do this.

He just turns and leaves the cell. The sounds of FOOTSTEPS disappear. It's dark. Quiet. Bea sobs.

Bea jerks her leg toward her chest and grabs it with her hand.

BEA CLEVINGER (CONT'D)
Who's there? What do you want.

There's no answer. Bea's eyes wide open as she shivers.

Seconds pass and Bea thrusts her hand to her hair. She pushes away until the chain snaps tight securing her to a hard wall.

BEA CLEVINGER (CONT'D)
Leave me alone!

A luminous figure can be seen backing away. She has long, white hair, her face thin and bruised. She disappears.

Silence again fills the space. Bea curls up in a fetal position on the floor burying her head in her knees.

INT. JAIL - MORNING

As light comes through a few small windows, Bea moves around and her eyes open slowly.

Other women are chained in the cell. She pulls at the chain and tries to free the shackle that binds her with no luck.

A woman, LILA(28), chained to the wall to the left of Bea stretches and comes to life.

BEA CLEVINGER
Why were you tormenting me in the night?

LILA
It wasn't I. I cannot even reach you. See?

Lila walks over pulling her chain as far as it will reach.

BEA CLEVINGER
Someone touched me in the night.

LILA
She must sense your innocence.

BEA CLEVINGER
I am innocent...but, who is she?

LILA
SHE is Orillia Elderbush.

Lila shrugs and walks back over to wall and sloppily falls into a sitting position.

LILA (CONT'D)
Or she was. God rest her soul.

LILA (CONT'D)

Orillia was condemned as are we.
She was no witch though. It's said
she was the most innocent virgin
ever condemned.

BEA CLEVINGER

Are you saying she's dead?

LILA

Yeah....but story has that she
haunts the innocent.

BEA CLEVINGER

Haunts?

LILA

Last girl she haunted disappeared.
But be thankful. To disappear,
hell, even death can be better than
what some say we'll go through in
here.

BEA CLEVINGER

Whadda you mean?

LILA

It's hearsay, but some say the
Pastor hand picks his likings from
the congregation. Innocent girls to
feed his sick dark side.

The sound of a key UNLOCKING a door can be heard. Samuel
enters dressed in black with a big white puffy collar.

He unlocks her shackles and leads her by her arm with him.
She walks with him glancing back at Lila.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The room is full of mostly men dressed in dark, somber
Puritan dress. Bea stands in shackles.

PASTOR CULLEN, tall and dressed in black, stares at Bea. His
dark eyes move slowly up her body. He licks his lips.

JUDGE NICHOLAS

You are accused of being a witch
Bea Clevenger. Are you in the hands
of Satan? What say you?

BEA CLEVINGER

I beg you Sir, I am no witch.

JUDGE NICHOLAS

The Pastor has brought it to our attention you do not attend Church.

BEA CLEVINGER

I've been ill Sir.

JUDGE NICHOLAS

Illness is only one way of God punishing our evil doings. It is our finding that you are guilty of witchcraft and will be hanged.

Bea cries and begins moaning furiously, almost animal-like.

Pastor Cullen points at her.

PASTOR CUNNINGHAM

Animal like sounds. The demon's within! You have your proof.

He turns to the onlookers. The gavel falls hard.

BANG!

Three men escort Bea out as she wriggles and moans against her will. Tears stream down her face. Everyone watches.

Loud WHISPERING can be heard as they drag her out.

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

Bea lays on the floor in defeat chained by her ankle. Her hair is a matted mess and dirt stains her face.

Her own hand flies wildly to her cheek and her eyes spring open in fear.

BEA CLEVINGER

(Whispering) What do you want?

ORILLIA

(Soft Voice) To warn you only of what's to come of you.

BEA CLEVINGER

It's too late. I'm condemned to hang.

Bea's eyes fill up with tears as she sits up.

A frail figure appears next to Bea. Bea scrambles to slide away til the chain is taught.

BEA CLEVINGER (CONT'D)
Go away! Leave me alone!

ORILLIA
He will come for you. Trust me.
Look at me. He did this to me.

Orillia moves floating over to where Bea's cornered. Her ghostly face is littered with bruises and gashes. Her bottom lip swollen to one side.

Orillia extends her frail hand. Bea moves a hand toward the gesture. Orillia instantly vanishes leaving a swirl of fog.

Harper walks into the cell, unshackles Bea and puts a dark bag over her head.

INT. DUNGEON ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The bag is pulled from her face. Candles adorn the room all around. There is a big cross hanging on one wall.

In front of the cross sets a large stone table. She is again dragged kicking wildly toward the table.

As Harper binds her down, in walks Pastor Cullen. Pastor stands near her with a Bible in his hand.

PASTOR CULLEN
I rebuke thee! I rebuke thee! I
abjure thee and summon thee forth
from this woman!

BEA CLEVINGER
I'm not a witch! Please!

PASTOR CULLEN
You have this demon of impurity,
uncleanliness dwelling in your
innards. Let her go demon!

He puts the bible down and lifts a small vial of holy water into the air shaking it above her. Water splashes upon her.

Samuel enters and follows Harper to the table.

PASTOR CULLEN (CONT'D)
It's time.

Harper goes to the head of the table, and puts pressure down on her arms. Samuel applies pressure to her wriggling legs.

Pastor Cullen walks over to a smaller table by the wall and picks up a large blade. He walks to the table and climbs up on it straddling her.

Bea CRIES and MOANS. She struggles but can hardly move as the knife RIPS her nightgown as her belly is exposed.

Her belly rises and falls with heavy breaths. Her eyes roll downward to see her fate. Harper pushes her forehead down.

He cuts into her belly. The cuts are shallow. She gasps. Her eyes bulge.

Beads of sweat form on his forehead. His eyes focused on his deviant task.

PASTOR CULLEN (CONT'D)
As your crimson blood trickles out,
so shall you witch!

Bea's eyes bulge and are glassy. She lays almost catatonic with her mouth agape.

Sweat covers her neck. Her gown still affixed over her chest. Her belly reads in jagged cuts *WITCH*.

PASTOR CULLEN (CONT'D)
This is what the Sovereign Lord
says: Woe to the women who sew
magic charms on all their wrists
and make veils of various lengths
for their heads in order to ensnare
people. Will you ensnare the lives
of my people but preserve your own?

The Pastor stands up. His shirt is now smeared with blood. He climbs off of the table and leans over Bea's face.

PASTOR CULLEN (CONT'D)
Has the wickedness left this body?

Bea all of the sudden comes back to life at the sight of the Pastor. She SCREAMS and kicks wildly.

PASTOR CULLEN (CONT'D)
Only a beast sounds that way. After
I clean up we'll commence ridding
you of this evil.

The men all leave the room. Bea lies there sobbing, thrashing and pulling at her binds.

ORILLIA

(Whispers) Now be calm and trust me.

The faint figure appears once again over Bea. The ropes that bind Bea's feet and wrists drop to the floor.

ORILLIA (CONT'D)

He had his eye on you in church. He is the wicked. Now follow me.

Bea weakly scrambles off of the slab and follows the floating figure through a small opening at the far end of the room.

Bea bends over and gets on her hands and knees, the escape tunnel has narrowed as she follows Orillia.

EXT. CLEARING NEAR A FOREST - EARLY MORNING

They appear out of a tunnel along a wall. Fog lightly lines the grassy clearing. The forest is only yards away.

Bea follows Orillia to the edge of the forest. A dirt pathway cutting through the thick woods appears.

ORILLIA

Quickly now before they discover you're gone.

She points toward the path. Bea runs for it. She stops and turns around.

BEA CLEVENGER

Thank...

Orillia is gone.

INT. DUNGEON ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

PASTOR CULLEN

Get in here! She's escaped! She can't get out of here alive!

Pastor Cullen discovers the small door still propped open in the far corner of the room. As the men enter, they spin around and follow Pastor Cullen out running.

EXT. PATH THROUGH THE FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

Bea runs down the dirt road. Her bare feet CRACKLING over twigs. A root trips her. She falls sliding in the dirt.

The sound of hooves BEAT on the tightly packed dirt path. She turns to look behind her. Men on horses approach.

Bea stands up and turns toward them. She holds her hands up towards the heavens and closes her eyes.

Lightning can be seen across the sky.

BEA CLEVINGER

By the dragon's light, on this
night, I call to thee to give me
your might, by the power of three,
I call thee, to surround and
protect from those who torture me.

Thunder BOOMS. Lightning strikes. A large tree falls, smashing across the path.

Bea opens her eyes. One of the horses rears behind the wall of falling timbers blocking the earthen path.

She smiles, spins around, and continues running down the path.

Thunder CRACKS.

FADE OUT.