

HIGHWAY TO HAVOC

Written by

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FADE IN

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

A modest sedan travels a desolate two-lane interstate.

INT. TIFFANY'S SEDAN - DAY

TIFFANY, 30, wholesome, athletic and pretty, turns the radio on while she drives.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Sheriff Dunn, can you tell us if  
there are any new leads on the  
Country Killer?

SHERIFF (V.O.)  
We're working with the F.B.I. to  
find the perpetrator. That's all I  
can tell you at the moment.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Is it true you have his D.N.A. and  
can't match it with any in the  
nationwide database?

SHERIFF (V.O.)  
I'm not at liberty to discuss what  
evidence we have. There'll be a  
press conference when we have more  
to report.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Sir, sir...

SHERIFF (V.O.)  
Now if you'll excuse me...

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
Well, there you have it. The  
elusive man known as the Country  
Rapist/Killer has claimed yet the  
life of another woman in a remote  
area. Today we have with us noted  
psychiatrist, Dr. James Montoya.

Tiffany turns the radio off, looks in the rear view mirror at  
a trophy by her luggage. "First Place, Women's Division,  
Martial Arts," presses a number of the phone on the dash.

TELEPHONE RECORDING (V.O.)  
No one is available to take your  
call. Leave a message and we'll get  
back to you as soon as possible.

She clicks the phone off, turns the radio back on.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)  
That concludes our interview Doctor  
Montoya. You women who remote areas  
are cautioned to always keep your  
doors locked. And don't answer them  
if you're not sure about the  
workman...

She changes back to music, turns it low, presses a number on  
the telephone.

MRS. HAYDEN (V.O.)  
Tiffany! How was the competition?

TIFFANY  
I'll show you the cup when I get  
home in a couple hours. How are  
things going there?

MRS. HAYDEN (V.O.)  
Robbie's been absolutely perfect.  
Ate, went to bed when I told him.  
You know, if I was forty years  
younger, I'd make a play for that  
meter reader of yours.

TIFFANY  
Meter reader? What meter reader?

MRS. HAYDEN (V.O.)  
He seemed disappointed you weren't  
here. Tall, dark and handsome and  
what a bod! Tight jeans, A tee that  
shows muscles. He's hot.

TIFFANY  
Mrs. Hayden, we don't have...

MRS. HAYDEN (V.O.)  
He's at the front door now. Hold on  
just a minute.

A frightened look on Tiffany's face. She flicks the radio  
off.

TIFFANY

Don't open the door. Mrs. Hayden.  
Don't. Open. That. Door. Mrs.  
Hayden!

Background noise of a scuffle. Tiffany presses the record button. Mrs. Hayden screams. Glass breaks.

Tiffany presses the hold button, dials 9-1-1.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

This is nine-one-one. What's your emergency?

TIFFANY

This is Tiffany Matsumoto. I live at fifty two oh one Matsumoto Road. My babysitter's being attacked. I'm afraid...

DISPATCHER

I'm sending emergency personnel right now.

TIFFANY

Tell them to hurry. Please hurry. My son's in the house.

Tiffany accelerates the gas pedal, takes the phone from the holder. The speedometer moves from 65 to 70.

Hands shaking, she presses a number. The phone rings. Rings again.

ROBBIE (V.O.)

Mommy! I'm watchin' a movie.

TIFFANY

Listen to me, Robbie. This is important.

ROBBIE (V.O.)

What's wrong, Mommy? You sound funny.

Speedometer needle moves to 80.

TIFFANY

Remember when Daddy and I showed you that secret room in the gym? You know, the basement?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
You mean by the bicycle that goes fast?

TIFFANY  
That's the one. Now I want you to go down the back stairs as quickly as possible, go in that room and close the door and lock it. Can you do that?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
Why?

TIFFANY  
There's a mean man in the house and I don't want him to hurt you. Now go. And take the phone with you.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
Kay.

TIFFANY  
When you talk, be very quiet. Whisper, okay?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
(whispers)  
Kay.

Perspiration dots her forehead. Speed now 85 miles per hour.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
It's dark in that room. I don't wanna go inside.

TIFFANY  
Inside the door is a small flashlight. Turn it on. Go inside.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
(annoyed, a little loud)  
Kay. The flashlight's on.

TIFFANY  
And you're inside the little room?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
Yes.

TIFFANY  
Now lock the door. Remember how to do it?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
I member.

A click. Robbie lets out a sob.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
I want you home, Mommy.

TIFFANY  
I know, sweetheart, but I'm too far away right now. Just stay there and don't make a sound while I call Daddy.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
I'm scared.

TIFFANY  
Don't be scared, baby. Just hold the phone to your ear and I'll talk to you but let me call your Dad first. Okay?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
Kay.

Tiffany puts the call on hold, clicks another number.

BRENDON (V.O.)  
Hi, hon.

TIFFANY  
Mrs. Hayden's been attacked. I'm sure it's by the Country Killer.

BRENDON (V.O.)  
What? What about Robbie?

TIFFANY  
He's in the secret room. I've called nine-one-one. Someone's on the way.

BRENDON (V.O.)  
The company plane's available. I'm leaving for the airport now. I'll call you as soon as I get there.

Her eyes on the road, she disconnects, connects with her son.

TIFFANY  
Robbie, you there?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
I'm scared, Mommy.

TIFFANY  
Whisper, darling. Daddy should be  
there in just a few minutes.

She clicks another number.

TIFFANY  
Mrs. Hayden.

Quiet. She listens a moment. In the background - POP, the  
sound of a soft firecracker. Another POP. It gets closer.  
Two more times - more loud each time.

INT. HOUSE, ENTRY - DAY

On the entry table, a man's hand picks up a photo of Tiffany,  
her husband and son. He runs his finger over her face.

He sets it down, picks up the telephone.

INT. TIFFANY'S SEDAN - DAY

The killer laughs.

KILLER (V.O.)  
Tiffany! You've been listening all  
along, haven't you? You know you're  
the one I wanted but guess we don't  
always get what we want, do we?

TIFFANY  
You bastard. You rape her, too?

KILLER (V.O.)  
It was your fault, you know. You  
should have been here yourself.

TIFFANY  
If you wanted me, why a seventy  
year old woman?

KILLER (V.O.)  
Don't you know the reasons the  
shrinks say I do it? Dominance.  
Power. At least that's what they  
say. Hmmm. Certainly isn't anger.  
I'm not mad at anyone. Why do you  
think I do it?

TIFFANY

I think you're sick... crazy.

KILLER (V.O.)

That's where you're wrong. Maybe we can discuss it over a glass of chardonnay for a few minutes sometime. That's your favorite isn't it? Chardonnay.

She says nothing. He becomes irritated.

KILLER

You don't want to answer? That's fine with me. Besides, you've probably called the cops and are stalling me. I still have work to do here.

TIFFANY

What work? You've done what you intended to do.

KILLER (V.O.)

There's still that little boy of yours.

The phone disconnects. Tiffany stares at it for a moment. Back at the road.

Frantic. She clicks back on the line with Robbie.

TIFFANY

Robbie?

ROBBIE (V.O.)

(whispers)

I think I hear the bad man comin' down the stairs.

TIFFANY

Then don't say a word.

KILLER (V.O.)

(muffled)

Little boy. You in here? Come out wherever you are. I'm not going to hurt you. I just want to talk to you.

TIFFANY

(whispers)

Quiet, sweetie. Very quiet.

KILLER (V.O.)  
 Little boy, your mama wants you to  
 come with me to meet her.

TIFFANY  
 He's lying, sweetie.

A few seconds go by.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
 (whispers)  
 I think he left, Mommy.

TIFFANY  
 Stay there, sweetie. The police and  
 Daddy are on their way.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
 I smell smoke, Mommy. It's comin'  
 under the door.

TIFFANY  
 Oh, dear God. No. Listen to me,  
 Robbie. Remember the stool with  
 three steps up next to the wall on  
 the other side of the room?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
 The tall one that I fell from and  
 hurt my arm that time?

TIFFANY  
 That's the one. I want you to  
 unlock the door, go down low on the  
 floor... crawl. And get to that  
 stool. Can you do that?

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
 I think so.

TIFFANY  
 Try, baby.

Sound of a door clicking. Robbie coughs.

TIFFANY  
 Stay low to the floor. Can you hold  
 the phone and crawl at the same  
 time?

Robbie coughs again.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
 I think so.

TIFFANY  
 Okay, crawl fast to that stool.  
 Then push it up next to the wall.

Robbie coughs two or three times.

Sound of the stool scraping the floor.

TIFFANY  
 Now turn the handle of the window.  
 After you've opened it, climb out.

Robbie coughs.

A second goes by. Tiffany wipes her eyes as her foot tramps down harder on the accelerator. Ninety miles an hour.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
 It won't... open.

Robbie coughs hard.

TIFFANY  
 (panicked, yells)  
 Push, Robbie. Push hard.

Tears stream down her face. Robbie coughs again.

Sound of the telephone dropping to the floor.

TIFFANY  
 Robbie! Talk to me. Are you there,  
 sweetheart?

Silence.

TIFFANY  
 Oh, no. Oh, my baby.

No other cars in sight, the car straddles the line into the oncoming lane. The speed, 90. She presses down on the gas. Speed goes up to 95.

The car shudders. A light on the dashboard comes on. The car sputters. Slows.

TIFFANY  
 (screams))  
 No! Dammit! No!

The car chugs, barely moves. She pushes the accelerator to the floorboard. The car comes to a halt. She presses the hood release, grabs the phone, gets out of the vehicle.

EXT. TIFFANY'S SEDAN - DAY

She opens the hood. Smoke billows from the motor.

She falls down on her knees in the desert sand, lays the phone down, covers her face with her hands and sobs. Wracked with anguish, her body trembles. She continues to cry.

Legs weak, she grabs onto the car, stands. Her hands grasp her stomach, wrenches.

LATER, she stumbles to the driver's side of her car just as... A van comes from the opposite direction, slows, stops.

A MAN, 30s, gets out. Handsome, broad shoulders, tight jeans. He pushes up aviator glasses, cracks his knuckles. A soft POP. Smiles at her.

She closes her red-rimmed eyes for a moment. The sound: a soft firecracker POP. Recognition hits her face. The man strolls across the highway toward her. She glares at him.

KILLER

Car trouble?

She doesn't respond. Opens the back seat of the car, brings out a three-foot long metal pole, turns to him.

TIFFANY

You lousy bastard.

Taken aback, he freezes for a moment. A big smile.

KILLER

We've already had this conversation, beautiful. How did you know it was me?

She looks at his hand.

KILLER

Ah, that's right. You could hear in the telephone. Bad habit.

TIFFANY

You. Killed. My. Son.

KILLER

Couldn't leave a witness, you know.

Both hands grip the pole, she lunges at him. He moves to one side, turns, extends his leg, kicks hers from under her.

Her hands remain tight on the pole as she lands on the ground. She rebounds fast, tries again. He dodges, spins around, grabs her by the neck.

He looks both directions down the highway.

KILLER  
Sadism, rape and murder. I get my  
thrills from torture. The old woman  
was the exception.

He drags her toward the vehicle.

KILLER  
But whatever works.

She jabs the pole in his hip. He turns her, slugs her in the face once. Blood dribbles from her nose. A quick second, this time he punches her in the eye.

He laughs as she falls to the ground.

KILLER  
Yeah. That's what it's called. And  
it's premeditated.

His foot kicks at her. She rolls away, gets to her feet, grabs the pole, stands in attack mode. She moves the pipe back and forth, takes a swing at him.

KILLER  
Ah, Kenjutsu. That's what your  
husband taught you.

He moves fast, dodges another blow. Behind her, he puts his arm around her neck. The end of the metal pole plows into his knee cap. He moans, loosens the grip, limps back a step.

She turns toward him. He smiles.

KILLER  
You're mine.

He lunges. The tip of the pole slams into his chest. A look of shock. He staggers back.

TIFFANY  
Bastard!

Slow motion: His smile turns to fright as he watches the pole aimed at his head get closer. Closer.

LATER

Tiffany sits on the pavement. Blood trickles down her nose and mouth on the tee shirt. One eye swollen, almost shut.

She stares at the killer who lies crumpled on the highway. Blood around his head dries on the hot pavement.

Her phone rings. She remains where she is. It rings, rings again. And again.

She struggles to her feet, rounds the car, slides down the car to the ground. She picks the phone up, presses the talk button.

BRENDON (V.O.)

Babe, he's fine. Robbie's fine.

TIFFANY

(listless)

But the fire?

BRENDON (V.O.)

The sheriff deputies saw him struggling with the window and pulled him through.

(pause)

Tiff, honey, you okay?

A sheriff's patrol car drives down the highway, slows before it gets to the killer's body in the road.

TIFFANY

I'm fine now, Brendon. I'm fine.

FADE OUT.

THE END.

