

# TOIL AND TROUBLE

Written by

Broom Hilda

FADE IN:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

VARIOUS SHOTS:

Parents with children in Halloween costumes.

A Demon and a Ghost knock on a door. A smiling woman fills their bags with candy.

Kids checks their bags to see what they scored.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - DAY

A white colonial unlike the rest of the cookie-cutter homes. It's charming and old, but well kept.

TOM (68), white hair, bushy stache, sits in a rocker on the porch. Next to him is a good-looking dude with dark hair, BRAD (37).

Tom sips a beer, Brad a hard cider.

BRAD

You okay?

TOM

Yeah, I'm all right. Just missing Helen is all. First Halloween without her.

Brad nods.

BRAD

Yeah. I'd imagine the first one is tough.

TOM

She used to like watching the kids. The costumes and all.

BRAD

She was a good woman, Tom.

Just then, a WITCH approaches. She stands next to a tree stump with a large bowl of candy on it. She doesn't reach for the candy. Just stands there.

TOM

Aren't you supposed to say something?

Silence.

Brad looks at Tom and smiles.

TOM  
(laughs)  
Okay, okay. Go ahead and take some  
candy.

But the Witch doesn't move. She glares at them for an awkward moment, then marches off.

They watch her go.

BRAD  
Well, that was weird.

TOM  
You know some kids, I hear, they  
have autism. Other issues. Things  
aren't always what they seem, I  
guess.

BRAD  
(nods)  
You're right.

Brad finishes off his drink. Rises.

BRAD  
Well, Tom, I think I'm gonna head  
off. I can smell dinner.

TOM  
Oh. Okay.

BRAD  
You want me to bring you over  
something later? Chrissy makes a  
good chicken.

TOM  
Naw, that's okay. I still haven't  
finished what you brought over last  
night.

BRAD  
All right. Well, I'll see you  
later, Tom.

Brad waves, heads down the walk.

TOM (O.S.)  
Brad?

He turns.

TOM  
Thanks for stopping by.

Brad smiles. Nods. No words are necessary.

Leaves fall around him as he ambles down the --

STREET

He turns and spies a house across the way.

HOUSE

The blinds are drawn, but -- a set of eyes peer through an opening, hold a moment, then slowly disappear.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tom sits at the table, finishes his supper. As he raises food to his mouth, he suddenly drops his fork.

It clinks on the linoleum.

Tom swallows hard. Touches his forehead. Sweaty. He rises, exits the room and opens a door.

Beat.

He reappears holding a rusted-out hacksaw.

The sweat continues to build. He unbuttons his shirt, tugs at his collar and stumbles into the --

LIVING ROOM

He grits his teeth. Eyes smash shut. A jolt of pain from somewhere.

TOM  
What's happening..?

He lurches to the front door.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Tom kicks the screen door open -- stamps out with the hacksaw -- paces the porch furiously -- eyes wild.

He descends the steps. Kicks the leaves.

TOM  
I can't take it anymore...  
I can't take this. I'm burning.  
It's so hot!

He rips off his shirt. The veins in his neck bulge. Looks around. Sees --

The tree stump.

He knocks off the candy bowl, falls to his knees and throws his head on the stump. Grabs the saw and drops the sharp teeth on the nape of his neck.

Tom's in tears. Drooling. Heavy breaths.

He pulls the blade across his neck. Once. Twice. Deeper. Skin pulls back and tears away. Blood runs down his shoulders.

The third time he hits bone.

Two TEENS, not in costume, rush over. The last Halloween stragglers.

TEEN 1  
Holy shit! Mister, are you okay?

Tom drops the saw. Gets to his knees, then stands on wobbly legs, covered in blood.

TOM  
Never better.

Tom puts both hands under his jaw bone, and pushes up as hard as he can.

TEEN 2  
Mister... Mister!

TEEN 1  
Dude, get your phone.

TEEN 2  
Fuck that.

Tom pulls harder. Flesh tears. One last thrust and he rips his fucking head off.

One teen gasps. The other screams.

Numerous porch lights flick on down the STREET.

INT. BRAD'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brad relaxes on the couch, bathed in the TV light. He cocks his head when a faint scream is heard from outside.

He gets up and runs to the closet. Reaches up, pulls out a pistol and slips it in his waistband.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Brad races to Tom's house. When he arrives he's almost bowled over when one of the teens crashes into him.

TEEN 1

Fuckin' guy just tore his head off!

BRAD

Wh-- What?

The teen takes off.

Brad inches forward, then stops. His eyes widen as he surveys the gruesome scene.

BRAD

Jesus Christ.

INT. CAR (PARKED) - DAY

Brad sits in his car, fingers through a file. On the --

RADIO

*... An unidentified man was found decapitated in Kingstown late last night. Eyewitnesses said the wound was self inflicted... I-- I don't know how that works, but... In other news, a Greenville youth was reported missing. This marks the second youth to go missing after the discovery of eight-year-old Daniel Gale last month...*

Brad exits the car.

EXT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

It's the house across the street from Tom's. The one with the eyes peering from the blinds.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

INT. HOUSE

POV: DOOR SPYHOLE -- Brad holding his ID and a badge.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The door opens slowly to reveal AMY (34), black hair, goth, several piercings.

BRAD  
Miss Peterson? I'm detective Brad  
Silvestri. Can I ask you a few  
questions?

She stands there a moment, stares at him. Let's him in.

BRAD  
Thank you.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Brad follows Amy through the hallway. She turns a corner and goes out of sight into the --

KITCHEN

Brad enters. Amy stands next to a large round table filled with herbs, vials of colored oils and incense.

AMY  
As the yellow moon wanes, so may I  
increase--

Brad rushes to her and puts a hand to her mouth.

BRAD  
Are you nuts? You wanna turn me  
into a goddamn frog or something?

AMY  
That's a love spell, Einstein.

BRAD  
Yeah, well, I'm happily married.

Upon closer inspection, Brad notices a crude, fabric doll on the table in the center of a pentagram. Minus a head.

Amy notices him.

AMY  
Like my work?

BRAD  
Couldn't just have given him a  
heart attack?

Her smile, framed by that midnight hair, reveals how  
deliciously evil and terribly attractive she is.

AMY  
You know I have a flair for the  
dramatic.

Brad drops a file on the table.

BRAD  
*Hmph.* Suppose I could have just  
arrested him. I had the evidence.

AMY  
Now what fun would that have been?

FLASHBACK - VARIOUS SHOTS

Grainy.

-- Tom sits on a bench at the park as children play on the  
swings. His eyes dance as he watches.

-- Tom in his car, passenger door open. A young, hesitant  
CHILD enters. They drive away.

-- A pillow pressed hard against someone's face. It's HELEN,  
Tom's wife, as he smothers her.

BACK TO SCENE

Amy crosses to the table, picks up the file Brad left. She  
leafs through it.

AMY  
Karl Bookman. Is this our next  
mark?  
(Brad nods)  
What did he do?

BRAD  
You don't wanna know.

AMY  
Mmm...

He heads to the door.



BRAD  
I'll call you in a few days when I  
get more info.

She brushes hair from her face.

AMY  
Don't be long. Mustn't keep a lady  
waiting.

Brad, with his hand on the doorknob, winks.

BRAD  
Double double, toil and trouble...

He shuts the door behind him.

FADE OUT.