

Hell and Consequences

Faint voices can be heard, a *distant* song begins:

Seems the light is swiftly fading, brighter scenes they do now show. I am standing by the river. Angels wait to take me home. I am weary, let me rest.

EXT. FIELD/POND - DUSK

Existence seems bleak and washed out, everything is saturated with *sepia* tones and *bleached* hues.

White cattails gently sway with the breeze, next to a undisturbed pond.

A dirty and mud-covered boot suddenly smashes through the reflective surface of the murky water. A mixture of mosquitoes and dragonflies scatter for cover.

The boot belongs to a desperate convict. His face grim, eyes dark. He wears convict stripes, which are covered with blood. The nameless convict dashes towards the cover of a nearby forest.

EXT. FARM/ BARN

A young girl wearing a *white* dress. *Abigail* plays with an antique doll, in front of an old *barn*. Painted a bright red with a white trim, a splintered timber-frame that has been worn down by countless humid summers and several harsh winters.

Off in the distance, her mother, *Penelope*, looks up towards the sky as the sun sinks below the horizon. Twilight fills the sky with an array of *pinks*, *oranges* and *reds*.

A brief moment of peace before she glances back down at the picnic-table in front of her, which is covered with the remains of what must have been a magnificent feast.

Across from her sits, *Ethan*, her young husband. He reads from a old *tattered* book. *Penelope* glares at her husband, clearly annoyed. She clears her throat, trying to catch his attention, nothing.

PENELOPE

Ethan, could you please help out.

Ethan finally looks up, dragged back to *reality*.

ETHAN

Uh, yeah of course. What exactly do you need help with, honey?

PENELOPE

First, the dishes. After those, the guest-room still needs to be prepared. Unless you want your brother sleeping outside.

ETHAN

Course not, honey, but--

PENELOPE

So, what exactly is so riveting that you can't help your wife clear the table?

ETHAN

Just an old poem, nothing really--

PENELOPE

A old poem about what?

ETHAN

Uh, an old poem about redemption.

PENELOPE

You're still being vague.

ETHAN

You really want to hear about this?

She takes a seat at the table, pushing a few plates away.

PENELOPE

You have my undivided attention.

ETHAN

Well, the poem asks, who is the author and about his parentage.

PENELOPE

Wait, the author of redemption?

ETHAN

Exactly. The poem develops arguments about who first created redemption.

PENELOPE

Well, who did create redemption?

ETHAN

The poem says that The Son created redemption.

PENELOPE

And The Son would be Christ?

Ethan glances back down at the poem and begins to read.

ETHAN

God is the father, seated on his throne, surrounded by all the heavenly host, turning towards God of The Son, announces that the time has arrived for perfecting the redemption of man. The son accepts the task.

PENELOPE

If you ask me, it seems he never finished his task.

EXT. FOREST

A thundering *heartbeat* drowns out all other sound as those same dirty, mud-covered boots crush dead leaves, leap over small *creeks* and hurdle over thick tree-roots.

The nameless convict suddenly starts *coughing*. He has to stop as the coughing becomes *violent*. He coughs up chunks of black *phlegm* and *mucus*.

After a few moments the coughing subsides and he leans against a nearby tree.

The convict glances around before he reaches into his jacket and pulls out a small, torn photograph. He stares at it intently.

EXT. FARM

The couple continue their conversation.

ETHAN

Actually, that's what the poem says. The Son never does finish perfecting redemption.

Silence, Ethan stares at his wife for a moment.

ETHAN (cont'd)

Are you sure you haven't read this before?

PENELOPE

Absolutely positive, I've never seen that book before today.

ETHAN

Anyway, the poem says that the son never had a chance to finished his work. Satan discovered his plans.

EXT. HIGHWAY

A police cruiser. The old Chevrolet *Impala* turns up clouds of *dust* as it cruises down an unpaved road. The *Impala* is decked out in black and white with a red beacon on top.

The old Chevy slowly approaches the scene of a *grisly* crash. An overturned *prisoner* transport. The large armored-vehicle lies in a narrow ditch, the engine compartment still smoldering.

The brake-pads *grind* as the *Impala* slowly rolls to a stop. Three doors suddenly swing open. Sheriff Harlan steps out first. An older man, heavy-set.

Harlan is flanked by two young deputies, Wade and Jacob. Each deputy carries a *Thompson* submachine gun, loaded with a circular drum magazine. The men slowly approach the damaged transport.

Two bloody and broken bodies lie on the dusty road. Harlan takes off his *aviator* sunglasses and wipes the *sweat* from his brow.

WADE

(shocked)

Are these fellas dead?

HARLAN

(slightly annoyed)

It certainly appears that way.

Deputy Wade nudges one of the dead guards with the barrel of his *Thompson*. Harlan glances over towards Wade.

HARLAN

For Christ sake, don't do that.

WADE
 (embarrassed)
 Real sorry, Harlan.

HARLAN
 Don't be, at least not today. We've
 got work to do.

Harlan glances back at the *Impala*, then lets out a deep sigh before putting his *aviators* back on.

HARLAN (cont'd)
 Wade, find me the prisoner manifest
 and then cover up the bodies.

WADE
 Right away.

HARLAN
 Jacob, jump on the radio and get
 some hounds out here.

JACOB
 Consider it done.

Wade searches the smoke filled front cabin of the transport and pulls out a thick notebook. The upper portion of the manifest is charred and burnt.

WADE
 Take a look at this, Harlan.

He hands the partially burnt notebook over. The Sheriff begins to read it over.

HARLAN
 Christ in heaven.

WADE
 Uh, what is it.

HARLAN
 (disgusted)
 These poor souls were transporting
 a goddamn child-molester. One real
 sick sonofabitch.

JACOB
 The hounds are on the way, Harlan.
 Oh and the station wants a
 description for the *all points*
bulletin.

HARLAN

Tell them we don't have it yet. His name and description were burnt off. We're gonna have to do this the old fashion way.

EXT. BARN

The nameless convict cautiously walks out the forest and emerges behind the old barn. He heads towards a rundown back door. It partially hangs from *rusty* hinges. The convict pries open the door and slowly steps in.

EXT. FARM

ETHAN

The Son believed that any man could be redeemed. Thieves, rapist and even murderers. Satan knew this wasn't true, there was no hope left for man.

PENELOPE

How did he stop The Son?

ETHAN

The Son thought that the only way to teach man the path to redemption was by showing them the purest form of it.

PENELOPE

(whispers)
A child.

ETHAN

How did you know--

PENELOPE

Finish the poem.

INT. BARN

The typical barn. The convict walks past *rusty* and broken-down pieces of farming equipment, industrial size bags of feed and plenty of hay bales.

The sound of a young girls laughter suddenly echoes throughout the barn.

The convict instinctively *ducks*, he quickly scans around the old barn, trying to find the source of the *haunting* laughter.

He slowly walks over towards the main doors, which are slightly open, allowing a beam of light to flood in. *Abigail still* plays with the antique doll.

The nameless convict stares at her with awe. He briefly glances around one more time before pushing the door open a few more inches.

The old wooden frame of the door *moans* and *creaks*. *Abigail* turns around, slightly confused. She smiles and waves at the convict. He smiles and motions for her to come inside.

Young *Abigail* stands up, leaving her doll behind and walks into the barn.

EXT. FARM

ETHAN

A child must be born. A second
Immaculate Conception. Redemption
in it's purest form. Satan seek to
taint it in its incipency.

PENELOPE

How did he taint redemption?

ETHAN

Satan killed the child.

A *scream* suddenly rings out, echoing from the barn. Both parents instantly stand, confused. They both look towards the barn at the same time, no sign of their young daughter.

PENELOPE

Abigail...

EXT. BARN

Ethan rushes towards the old barn. He pauses, horrified, seeing the antique doll lying alone on the dusty ground. Her *black*, sewn-on eyes stare at his. Then he glances at the barn entrance. Ethan seems *afraid* to open the large wooden doors.

INT. BARN

Trembling hands push the two doors open, Ethan slowly steps in.

Abigail lies motionless on the ground in front of her father. Her *white* dress now covered with blood. He falls to his knees and screams out in anguish. Time seems to slow down. Existence now seems *dreamlike*.

EXT. FOREST

The nameless convict aimlessly stumbles through the dark forest. Something has changed, the convict is now *sobbing* uncontrollably. Off in the distance, something catches his attention. Men *screaming* and dogs *barking*. He looks absolutely terrified.

INT. FARM/HOME- NIGHT

Ethan sits next his wife, trying desperately to comfort a devastated *mother*. He glances up and watches as the porch door is slowly pushed open.

Sheriff Harlan quietly walks in. Wade and Jacob wait at the door, their heads bowed out of respect. Four shotgun-wielding farmers wait outside, next to the parked *Impala*.

HARLAN

(beat)

We've found him.

Ethan doesn't react. Penelope continues to cry.

HARLAN (cont'd)

Just off the highway, near the old cotton mill. Just though you'd want to know, in case you want to come with us.

Ethan slowly stands.

ETHAN

Someone stay with my wife.

EXT. FOREST

A dark forest, cloaked in *shadow*. Once again the nameless convict is on the run. Beams of light flood out through the forest, he tries desperately to avoid them. His boot snatches on a rock and he slams into the ground, he cries out in pain.

The convict glances down at his ankle, which is now bent in an *unnatural* angle.

The group of heavily-armed vigilantes plow through the brush. Ethan leads the pack with a double-barrel shotgun. Several bloodhounds have their noses to the ground, looking for a *scent*.

The dogs start to bark and the men begin to spread out. Ethan continues on his original path, heading straight for the nameless convict.

The convict struggles to stand. The pain is too much and he collapses. His breathing becomes irregular and he begins to cough again.

The sound reverberates throughout the forest. Ethan quickly lifts his kerosene lantern, the small flame illuminates just enough of the forest for Ethan to catch the nameless convict attempting to stumble away.

Ethan screams with a bloodthirsty rage and *lunges* at the convict. The two men roll into a nearby ditch.

EXT. DITCH

As the men wrestle around, a mud-covered boot shatters the lantern and soaks the ground around them with *kerosene*. The distilled oil is quickly ignited and both men are surrounded in a *wreath* of flame.

Ethan pushes the convict away, pulls out a *silver* revolver and stands.

He finally has a chance to look into the eyes of the man who *murdered* his daughter. Their eyes meet and Ethan goes numb. Shock and terror take over as he stares at the nameless convict.

ETHAN

Brother?

Before his brother can answer, Ethan pulls the trigger. A bullet *smashes* into the nameless convict's heart.

Something falls from the convicts hand. The small photograph. The torn and bloody photograph shows *Ethan, Penelope* and a much younger *Abigail* smiling for the camera.

The End