

HILTON'S SONG

Written by

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INT. HILTON'S BEDROOM - MORNING

HILTON (late 20s, unshaven mess) lays in bed with his blood shot eyes open. On the night stand next to him is a half bottle of whiskey and an empty bottle of seltzer. He's been drinking all night and it's very possible that he's still drunk.

HILTON (V.O.)
Day twenty-six is about to start.

His room feels incomplete. Like it had a full furniture set that a couple bought together but only half of it remains.

HILTON (V.O.)
Twenty-six days since you ripped my heart out of my chest and crushed it.

INT. HILTON'S BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Hilton takes a shower.

HILTON (V.O.)
And you still haven't given me a reason why, Michelle. Sure, you said we lost the spark, but why? What we had was great. We were happy. I did everything I could to provide for you and give you everything I could.

INT. HILTON'S HOME OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Hilton has a towel wrapped around his waist. He looks at the room with contempt.

HILTON (V.O.)
We had put our roots down here. I bought this place for us. How could you just walk away from it?

INT. HILTON'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Coffee brews. Hilton waits for it. He's now wearing a suit and looks at his phone as he waits.

HILTON (V.O.)
How can you just turn me into a stranger over night?
(MORE)

HILTON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You even blocked me from your
phone? I loved you and you treat me
like a cancer.

He closes his phone and pours a cup of coffee to-go in a
tumbler.

HILTON (V.O.)
I just need to know why Michelle.

His phone rings. Caller ID: Ed.

HILTON
Hey Ed.

INT. ED'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

ED (40s, haggard) drives and talks on the phone.

ED
You caught one. Harbourside Motel.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

A WOMAN (20s, pretty, dress, dead) lays sprawled out on the
bed. TWO CSI MEMBERS examine the room while a UNIFORM COP
guards the door. Ed studies the room as he supervises.

Hilton walks in.

HILTON
Morning, Ed.

Ed winces.

ED
You should get some mouthwash.
I can still smell last night's
whiskey.

Hilton breathes into his hand to check.

HILTON
Noted. What do we have?

ED
No ID on the woman or belongings.
No sign of a struggle in the room.
The theory is she was killed
elsewhere and dumped here.
(MORE)

ED (CONT'D)

She's got one missing earring and the other is probably at the murder scene.

HILTON

Any security cameras?

ED

This is an hourly place so they keep a premium on anonymity. No cameras or IDs needed when booking a room in cash.

HILTON

Description from the clerk?

ED

White guy.

HILTON

That narrows it down.

He looks at the Woman without touching her.

HILTON (V.O.)

She was pretty.

HILTON

If she was a sex worker then she's not wearing that much make up.

ED

Could be an escort going for the girl-next-door look.

HILTON

Jane Doe possible hooker is murdered and L.T. gives it to me.

ED

You've had a rough couple of weeks. This one is about as low profile as it gets.

HILTON

I appreciate the softball. Unis are still canvassing outside?

ED

Yeah.

HILTON

Can you cover me for an hour? I have an errand I need to do.

Ed nods.

ED
Make it quick.

INT. HILTON'S CAR - DAY

Hilton sits in his car. He's parked on a city street watching the people that walk by.

HILTON (V.O.)
It had to be another man, Michelle.
That's the only thing I could think
about as to why you left. I get it
that you want to be happy and I can
even support that. You told me that
wasn't true but in my heart I--

MICHELLE (30s) walks across the street. Hilton watches her and she doesn't notice him.

HILTON (V.O.)
Everyday you look more beautiful
than the last.

She walks into a building.

Hilton grabs a notebook and writes in it.

HILTON (V.O.)
Another day walking to work alone.
Where the hell is this new
boyfriend of yours, Michelle? These
streets are dangerous.

His CELL PHONE RINGS. It's Ed.

HILTON
Yes, Ed?

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The scene cuts back and forth between their conversation.

ED
Finish your errand?

HILTON
Just did.

ED

We found her purse in a dumpster a block away. The victim's name is Elizabeth Gigliotti, 26 years old, no criminal history, and probably not a sex worker given that she is recently on unemployment and her last job was being a nanny.

HILTON

Where does she live?

ED

Uptown. I'll make this easy for you. She lived with a roommate. I'll go there and talk to her while you visit the family she worked for and see what you can find out. I'll text you the address.

HILTON

Got it.

Hilton hangs up. He finishes writing his note on Michelle. His phone PINGS.

He looks at the address in his text message and drives away.

EXT. MUNSON FAMILY HOME - DAY

An establishing shot of a wealthy suburban home.

MAUREEN (O.S.)

(pre-lap)

I just can't believe she's dead.

INT. MUNSON FAMILY KITCHEN - DAY

Hilton sits across from MAUREEN (40s, strong will).

MAUREEN

She was almost like a little sister to me. When we would all go out together people would think we're related.

HILTON

I'm sorry for your loss.

MAUREEN

Thank you.

HILTON

The first twenty-four hours are the most important for any investigation so if I come off as curt then please forgive me.

MAUREEN

Of course.

HILTON

How long did she work for your family?

MAUREEN

Just over ten months.

HILTON

Why did you let her go?

MAUREEN

I was laid off. I'm an accountant and my firm was downsizing so we didn't need Liz anymore because I was going to be home.

Hilton writes all of this town in the same notebook he uses when he stalks Michelle.

HILTON

And the last time you saw her?

MAUREEN

Two weeks ago? Her last day with us was Friday the 15th.

HILTON

And where were you last night?

Maureen looks at him slightly shocked.

HILTON (CONT'D)

Standard question. Has nothing specific to you.

MAUREEN

I was home with my kids.

HILTON

Was your husband with you?

MAUREEN

He was on a business trip to New York to shoot a car commercial. He's in advertising.

HILTON

Did Elizabeth have any boyfriends that you knew of?

MAUREEN

I don't really know much about her life outside of this house. Except she wanted to be a singer. She moved here to start a career. I know she sang at different clubs.

HILTON

Which ones?

MAUREEN

I'm not sure. It's been a while since I've gone on a night out.

Hilton takes a moment to write all this down. Maureen waits in silence.

HILTON

And her last day here; everything ended on good terms?

MAUREEN

She would still be here if I didn't lose my job. We thought of her as part of this family. She even saved my husband's life once.

HILTON

Oh?

MAUREEN

He had a heart attack three months ago. She gave him CPR until the ambulance came.

HILTON

And how's your husband now?

MAUREEN

Better. Thank you.

Hilton writes that down. He closes his notebook and takes out a business card.

HILTON

Thank you for your time. If you think of anything else please call me.

He gets up. Maureen walks him to the door.

INT. MUNSON FAMILY FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Hilton looks up and glances at a family portrait.

MAUREEN
Goodbye detective.

Hilton leaves.

INT. ELIZABETH'S APARTMENT - DAY

It's a two bedroom with a cheaply furnished living room area.

Ed sits at the couch with ANNABELLE (30s, pink hair and tattoos). A CSI cop examines the apartment without touching anything.

The front door is open. Hilton knocks and enters.

ED
This is my partner Detective
Hilton. This is Annabelle, Liz's
roommate.

HILTON
I'm sorry for your loss.

ANNABELLE
Thank you.

ED
Annabelle was just telling me a
story about Liz's boyfriend.

HILTON
Oh yeah?

ANNABELLE
Former fiancée is maybe a better
term.

ED
He passed away a year ago.

HILTON
How?

ANNABELLE
Liver cancer. They had been engaged
for two months when he got the
diagnosis. She stayed with him,
took him to chemo, and stayed at
his place while he was on hospice.

HILTON
That's very admirable of her.

ANNABELLE
Yeah. She was very admirable. At least they're together again. Anyway, she hasn't dated since then.

Hilton and Ed look at each other. That angle is dead.

HILTON
Is it okay if I look in her room.

ANNABELLE
Okay.

Hilton points to a door on the right. Annabelle nods.

INT. ELIZABETH'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Hilton walks in. The room is neat. There are a few framed photos. He picks one up. In it Elizabeth and a young bald man with no hair pose together.

HILTON (V.O.)
He was lucky to have you, Liz.

He puts the photos down. On a shelf there is a small collection of CDs and DVDS.

HILTON (V.O.)
I have respect for anyone that still has a DVD or CD collection. I still kept mine.

He moves in for a closer look at them.

HILTON (V.O.)
Looks like we have the same taste in movies.

He picks one up.

HILTON (V.O.)
Michelle hated this one. I'm glad to see that you like it.

He puts it back.

He opens drawers and sorts through them.

HILTON (V.O.)
What happened to you last night,
Liz?

He finds a small collection of business cards for night clubs
in one drawer.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CLUB MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Hilton sits across from NICKY (50s, fast-talker) in a small
office. The office is full of old paperwork.

NICKY
She sang here a few times but it
was for our amateur nights.

HILTON
So she wasn't ever hired or an
employee?

NICKY
No. Amateur nights are an open mic
night for anyone that qualifies.
They sing on stage in 20 minute
blocks while a live band plays. In
the end the audience votes for
their favorites.

HILTON
And she was here last night?

NICKY
Yeah.

Hilton waits for Nicky to say more. He doesn't.

HILTON
How did she do?

NICKY
Sang great but didn't win.

HILTON
Was she with anyone?

NICKY
There's a lot of people that come
in here and I can't pay attention
to them all. But we can look at the
cameras together.

HILTON
I would greatly appreciate that.

INT. CLUB MANAGER'S OFFICE - LATER

Hilton and Nicky sit together. Nicky pulls up the footage and plays it.

Hilton watches and listens as Elizabeth sings. She's wearing the same dress that she had on when they found her body in the motel.

Her voice is beautiful.

HILTON (V.O.)
You sound like an angel, Liz.

She finishes her set and the audience claps.

Nicky pauses the video.

NICKY
You saw it all. She came in alone,
waited alone, sang, and left.

HILTON
Doesn't look too promising for my
case.

NICKY
Well, I tried to help. Sorry I
couldn't do more.

HILTON
Is it possible for me to get copies
of this?

Nicky thinks it over.

NICKY
Only the footage with her in it.

Hilton nods.

HILTON
That's all I need.

NICKY
Give me a few minutes.

INT. HILTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hilton sits in bed still wearing his work clothes. He watches the footage of Elizabeth singing on his computer as he drinks whiskey neat.

HILTON (V.O.)
Oh Liz, you had some real talent.
If the right person saw you sing
you would have been a star.

The video ends. He plays it again and watches her.

HILTON (V.O.)
A faithful good woman with the same
tastes as me. We could have made a
nice couple together.

He stops the video. He stumbles to the bathroom.

HILTON (V.O.)
Life just isn't fair.

INT. HILTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hilton is asleep in his bed.

Elizabeth, in the clothes she died in, slides into bed on top of him. She kisses him. He kisses her back.

They start making out.

Hilton moves and falls out of the bed.

INT. HILTON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hilton suddenly jerks awake, remembering where he is.

The laptop screen is still on and the video of Elizabeth signing is paused. We can see club patrons in this video.

It catches Hilton's eye.

He types a text message to Ed. After he sends it, he jumps out of bed.

EXT. MUNSON FAMILY HOME - MORNING

Hilton's car is parked in front of the Munson home.

Hilton is outside looking into the windows of one of the cars on the driveway.

He sees Elizabeth's missing earring on the floor.

HILTON (V.O.)
I got you.

The front door opens. KEVIN MUNSON (50s, well dressed, in shape) steps out.

KEVIN
Can I help you?

HILTON
Detective Hilton from the Suffolk
Police Department. I need to speak
to you about Elizabeth Giggliotti.

Kevin's life flashes before his eyes. He needs to choose now.

Kevin runs for it. Hilton chases after him.

HILTON (V.O.)
Is this guy serious?

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS - DAY

Kevin runs and weaves in and out of various obstacles. Hilton stays on him.

EXT. TRUCK LOADING DOCK - DAY

Hilton arrives and looks around. Kevin has vanished but there are a lot of places where he could be hiding.

Hilton draws his gun.

HILTON (V.O.)
Where are you?

It's silent.

Kevin is hiding behind a stack of pallets. He sees Hilton.

HILTON
Come on, Kevin. There's still a
chance to fix this.

Kevin doesn't answer.

HILTON (CONT'D)

You did what you did and we both know that. But escalating this further won't help. Just give up and we can sort this all out.

HILTON (V.O.)

You killed a wonderful person, scumbag. Be a man about it.

Hilton pauses for a response. He doesn't get one.

HILTON

You have young kids. If you cooperate you'll probably be out of prison in time to see their graduations.

Kevin looks at the pallets. Hilton is close enough...

Kevin pushes the pallets.

Hilton hears the noise and instinctively moves to it.

In a blur, he sees something coming at him.

He fires his gun.

The pallets knock Hilton over. He falls off the loading dock onto the road. He hits his head.

FADE TO:

BLACK

A woman's voice hums and lightly sings.

INT. HILTON'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Hilton opens his eyes. Elizabeth is in the kitchen cooking for him.

She hums and sings as she cooks.

She looks over at him and smiles.

ELIZABETH

You're finally awake.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Hilton opens his eyes. Ed is sitting next to his bed humming.

HILTON
You're off key.

Ed notices Hilton is awake.

ED
How's your head?

HILTON
Hurts. How long have I've been out?

ED
Almost four hours.

Hilton takes in the room.

HILTON
Kevin Munson?

ED
You killed him.

HILTON
Oh.

ED
Case is closed though. Missing earring was in his car along with damage on the interior showing a struggle plus scratch marks on his arm.

HILTON
How long did it take Munson to die?

ED
Instantaneous.

Hilton closes his eyes.

HILTON
(sarcastic)
That's too bad.

ED
You know better than to make comments like that out loud.

HILTON
His family's pissed?

ED

Very much at you. Though in a few weeks when they accept what he did to that woman, they'll start to blame him.

Hilton tries to sit up.

ED (CONT'D)

Don't.

Hilton doesn't listen. He sits up. This is important.

HILTON

What's the narrative you came up with when I was gone?

ED

Girl was probably having an affair with the husband, one of them wanted to end it, tempers rose and she was strangled.

Hilton shakes his head.

HILTON

Liz wasn't like that.

ED

Liz?

HILTON

Husband was infatuated with her. Went to see her sing, offered to drive her home, made a move on her, got rejected, got angry, and killed her.

ED

You really don't think they were having an affair together? Why'd she get fired then?

HILTON

She was laid off because the wife was laid off. If there was an affair then she didn't know. Her roommate said she wasn't seeing anyone so we have that. Plus, at the club they didn't arrive or leave together and they didn't talk to each other there either. The guy stalked her, made a move, and killed her.

ED

All right. We'll go with your story
since it's so important to you.
Either way it works.

Ed gets up.

ED (CONT'D)

Lieutenant said good work by the
way.

Ed walks out. Hilton sits there by himself.

He reaches across to the table and grabs his phone. He pulls
up a photo.

A screenshot of Elizabeth singing.

HILTON (V.O.)

I won't let them say anything bad
about you, Liz.

FADE OUT.