

WHAT IS HELL?

Written by

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FADE IN.

EXT. PARK - DAY

WILL, 25, lolls on a blanket. Oily, dirty jeans, faded tee, he smiles at CLARE, Hispanic, 20, long hair, pierced eyebrow, tattoo, urban hippy. He hands her a beer under a glorious sun. A parade of joggers and cyclists pass.

WILL
I think we'll just hang.

CLARE
Hanging works.

WILL
I don't think they can find us here.

CLARE
We got no reason to move.

WILL
You know, I am sorry about your aunt.

CLARE
She wasn't supposed to be home.

WILL
Yeah, well, I could have handled the situation better.

He sips his beer and watches the stream of people.

CLARE
She was screaming. You had to do something.

WILL
Fuck.

CLARE
What?

Will points down the path at a group of Hispanic TEENS, a gang.

WILL
Headhunters.

Will and Clare jump up and run away from the blanket and the path. They charge into the woods.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Will and Clare break out of the woods and into the residential street of a neighborhood rapidly turning into ghetto. Overhead, a summer storm erupts with lightning and rain.

CLARE
Why does it always rain?

WILL
It's summer. It rains.

They run across the street, and she turns left. He grabs her arm.

WILL (CONT'D)
Not that way.

They turn right and run through the rain.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Will and Clare peer around a building at the end of a block of apartment buildings.

CLARE
It looks clear.

WILL
Yeah, it does.

They round the corner and walk swiftly in the rain. They go fifty yards before a lowrider rounds the corner behind them. Will glances behind, and they run.

Only to have two gang HOMEBOYS step into the sidewalk ahead.

Will and Clare turn, but they're caught. Even as they face the street, the lowrider SQUEALS to a stop, blocking them and spewing out more HOMEBOYS. They grab Will and Clare and toss them into the car.

INT. PACO'S BASEMENT - DAY

Will and Clare face each other, lashed in chairs. Faces marred with cuts and bruises.

PACO (O.S.)
Amigo, do you know what hell is?

Standing to one side, PACO, 30, smoking, tattooed, gang leader, as lethal as a cobra. He steps forward and squats eye-to-eye with Will.

PACO (CONT'D)
I think hell is seeing bad things happen and not be able to do a damn thing about it.

Paco blows smoke into Will's face and shows Will a wickedly sharp, straight edge razor.

WILL
Let Clare go. She did nothing.

PACO
Amigo, she let you in, she let you in. And you say she did nothing? She let you in to steal my money and kill mi tia, and you say she did NOTHING?

With terrible speed, he slashes Will's face, laying open a bloody cut. Clare SCREAMS. Will HOWLS.

PACO (CONT'D)
DO YOU KNOW WHAT HELL IS?!

Paco grabs Clare's hair, jerks back her head, and slices her throat, spewing blood all over Will.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Will wakes on the blanket. Oily, dirty jeans, faded tee, he rubs his eyes and looks quickly at Clare, long hair, pierced eyebrow, tattoo, urban hippy. He shakes his head to clear it. A parade of joggers and cyclists pass.

CLARE
What was it?

WILL
Bad, muy bad. We have to go.

They stand, and she starts to gather the blanket and cooler.

WILL (CONT'D)
Leave it.

CLARE
But.

WILL
We won't need it.

They turn away from the path and head into the woods.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Will and Clare break out of the woods and into the residential street of a neighborhood rapidly turning into ghetto. Overhead, a summer storm erupts with lightning and rain.

CLARE
Why does it always rain?

WILL
It rains in the summer.

They run across the street, and she turns left. They run through the rain.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

The rain has slowed as Will and Clare run past dumpsters and piles of cardboard and trash. They stop and climb on top a dumpster. Will jumps and catches the ladder of the fire escape. He reaches down and hauls Clare onto the ladder.

CLARE
You think this is a good idea?

WILL
Paco watches the front.

They climb several stories before they reach the little balcony they're looking for. He raises the window, they tumble inside.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

A wet Clare climbs through the window, followed by Will. They embrace and hold each other.

CLARE
We made it.

WILL
Come on, change. We can't stay.

She strips as she goes for the bedroom. He goes to the freezer, pulls out a gallon ice cream box.

Out of the box, he pulls a wad of cash, a small revolver, and a bag of cocaine. He drops everything on the table as he crosses to the bedroom

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

In dry jeans and bra, Clare is drying her hair with a towel as Will enters, taking off his shirt.

WILL
We don't have time for that.

CLARE
It was wet.

Will continues to strip as Clare stops and puts on a fresh tee.

WILL
Get what you need.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Clare emerges from the bedroom, spots the things on the table as she retrieves a large purse from under the sink. From the purse, she extracts a small wallet which she checks for money and ID.

She also pulls out a small knife. She takes both to a small purse hanging on the wall, placing knife and wallet inside.

Will crosses from the bedroom and pockets the items on the table.

WILL
Ready?

CLARE
Do you need it?

WILL
You know what Paco will do if he finds us.

Will goes to the window.

WILL (CONT'D)
We can't stay.

Clare slips the purse over her shoulder and climbs onto the fire escape.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

The rain has stopped. Clare and Will climb down the escape. They reach the dumpster and climb down. They walk down the alley.

Ahead of them, two Hispanic HOMEBOYS step out from behind a dumpster.

Seeing the Homeboys, Will and Clare reverse course. They sprint like fugitives, only to confront a lowrider that turns into the alley ahead of them.

They stop and look around. No place to go. They back into a wall as Will pulls out his revolver. He puts Clare behind him as the lowrider skids to a stop. More Homeboys pour out to join the two who close from the other direction.

WILL
Stay back.

Paco steps to the front.

PACO
Amigo, why the gun? You no trust
me?

Will starts to slide to the side.

WILL
I'll shoot you, I will.

Three Homeboys produce pistols which stops Will.

PACO
Put it down. We'll talk.

Will looks around. He's out of options. He takes a deep breath before he puts the gun to Clare's head.

PACO (CONT'D)
NO!

Will FIRES, killing Clare. Then he puts the revolver to his own head and smiles.

BANG

EXT. PARK - DAY

Will wakes on the blanket. Oily, dirty jeans, faded tee, he rubs his eyes and smiles at Clare, long hair, pierced eyebrow, tattoo, urban hippy. A parade of joggers and cyclists pass.

WILL
The sun feels so warm.

CLARE
We can't stay.

WILL
Why not?

CLARE
They will come.

WILL
Is that any worse?

CLARE
We have to keep trying.

WILL
There's no way out.

CLARE
The police?

WILL
Again?

CLARE
Then the bus station. We were close there.

WILL
Like the train station and the airport and that rental car place. We could try the carjacking again.

Clare stands and brushes off her jeans.

CLARE
Killing me was better.

Will stands and holds out his hand.

WILL
Yeah, luckily we got to the apartment.

She takes his hand.

CLARE
Let's do that again.

They start away from the path and into the woods.

FADE OUT.