

Innocence Condemned

FADE IN

1692

The wind blows as the branches of a big oak tree sway, it's leaves dancing in the dark only glistening by the light of a full moon hanging in the still sky. Not far from the tree, hanging on a black iron poll along a deserted road, a sign reading "Welcome to Barwick" swings back and forth.

The only sounds are the wind and the creaking of the old metal sign swinging in the windy night.

A light in the distance can be seen, followed shortly after by the sound of thundering hooves hitting the tightly packed dirt road.

The moon light makes evident a wagon pulled by four black horses. Two men adorn the front bench seat. One is holding the reins and the other is holding a long carriage whip. As the wagon passes the sound diminishes as the horse drawn vehicle is once again enveloped into the darkness of the night and it disappears.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF BEA CLEVENGERS HOUSE - NIGHT

The horses come to a quick halt in front of a shanty of a house. Dust covers the ground around them almost like a thick fog. The horses pull at the reins and make horse noises. You can see steam billowing off of the sweaty coats of the four animals.

The driver wraps the reins around the rein guard and the other man sticks the whip in the whip socket and they climb down the wagon. One of the men carries a rifle and the other has a handful of rope as they make there way to the front door of the rickety house.

The house is dark. The men get to the front door and begin pounding, beating on the front door.

A glowing light seconds later can be seen through the front window.

The door opens. John Clevenger(30s) is standing in the doorway holding a candle in his left hand.

SAMUEL WAYMAN

By order of the Church Bea
Clevenger is charged with
witchcraft!

The two men push their way past John Clevenger. John runs behind the men holding the candle.

INT. BEA CLEVINGER'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The three men enter. Bea(30s) still under the covers, springs up in bed. Her hair a mess and in her night gown she struggles but has no time to run as Samuel drags her out of the bed. His partner just holds a gun towards her husband John. In low light, you can see tears stream down her face.

BEA CLEVINGER

I'm not a witch! I'm not a witch!
John!

A struggle ensues. Bea kicks and moans animal like sounds as she is dragged out followed by the two men.

EXT. FRONT YARD OF BEA CLEVINGERS HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Samuel Wayman climbs up the steps at the back of the wagon pulling Bea up behind him. Her nightgown catches the wagon and the bottom tears as she is dragged up against her will. His partner follows and clips an iron around her small ankle. He begins to quickly tie her hands behind her back with the rope. She pulls at her confines and cries loudly.

Her husband, John, tries to board the back of the wagon but Samuel kicks him in the face and he falls off of the back of the wagon. Samuel jumps up on the front bench of the wagon, unravels the reins, and cracks the whip. As the wagon takes off John makes one more attempt at grabbing the back of the wagon to climb on to help his wife. He holds on and runs trying to catch up enough to jump but can't keep up with the strong herd. He falls to his knees, crying and watching as his wife is stolen away into the darkness.

INT. JAIL - NIGHT

Samuel drags Bea into a dark cell. He pulls at a chain until he reaches a shackle at the end and clamps it around Bea's little wrist.

She watches as he turns around and locks the door behind him. She sits on the cold dirty floor. She is shivering from both fear and the cold night air. Her hair is unkept, tangled and long. Her face is dirty from the dusty struggle and her night gown is soiled and torn. As footsteps fade away, the dim light goes to pitch black in an instant.

She lays there in the dark. She grabs her leg all the sudden.

BEA CLEVINGER

Who's there?

There is no answer. Bea moves away until the chain is tight. It is silent and dark.

A moment later she grabs at her hair. She fights to crawl away again.

BEA CLEVINGER (CONT'D)

Who are you? What do you want from me?!

Silence again fills the space around her.

She curls up in a fetal position on the floor shivering.

INT. JAIL - MORNING

As light comes through a few small windows, Bea moves around and her eyes open slowly.

She pulls up into a sitting position. Looking around she sees four other women in the cell. The floor is dirty. There is a bowl of water near her. She pulls at the chain and tries to free the shackle that binds her with no luck. The others are chained to the wall in a similar fashion.

A woman, Lila, chained to the wall to the left of Bea stretches and comes to life.

BEA CLEVINGER

What is happening?

LILA

We are sentenced to hang. Witches they say.

BEA CLEVINGER

But I'm not a witch.

LILA

And nor am I. The only witch in here is the one that visits in the night.

BEA CLEVINGER

Who is she?

LILA

SHE is Orillia Elderbush. Or she was.

BEA CLEVINGER

Was?

LILA

After being raped and tortured for months, they hanged her but the rope broke. It didn't kill her so they tied her to a cross and burned her alive.

BEA CLEVINGER

Are you saying she's dead?

LILA

Yeah....but she still lives in here. She speaks to us.

BEA CLEVINGER

I felt someone touch me last night.

LILA

Well, then she's takin' a liken' to ya. Be thankful.

The sound of a key unlocking a big door can be heard. A stout man dressed in a long black coat with a white puffy collar and black hat walks over to Bea. He unlocks her shackles and leads her by her arm with him. She walks with him glancing back at Lila before disappearing around the cell wall.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The room is full of mostly men dressed in dark, somber Puritan dress. Influential society men along with the Church Clergy stand at the front of the courtroom waiting to determine Bea's fate.

Bea stands in shackles next to the Judge's stand. Pastor Cunningham stares at Bea. His eyes move slowly up her body. He licks his lips. Bea looks away.

JUDGE NICHOLAS

You are accused of being a witch Bea Clevenger. Are you in the hands of Satan? What say you?

BEA CLEVINGER

Sir, I am no witch.

JUDGE NICHOLAS

The Pastor has brought it to our attention you do not attend Church.

BEA CLEVINGER
I have been ill Sir.

JUDGE NICHOLAS
Illness is only one way of God
punishing our evil doings. It is
our finding that you are guilty of
witchcraft and will be hanged.

Bea cries and begins moaning furiously.

Pastor Cunningham points at her.

PASTOR CUNNINGHAM
Animal like sounds. See! Proof
she's a witch.

The gavel falls hard.

BANG!

Three men escort Bea out as she wriggles and moans. Tears
stream down her face.

INT. JAIL - EVENING

Bea lays on the floor chained by her ankles. She lays down
curling up on the dirty floor. Her hair is a matted mess and
dirt stains her face.

She reaches quickly up to her cheek and her eyes fling open
wide. The light is dim almost dark in the room.

She whispers.

BEA CLEVINGER
What do you want?

Whispering back.

ORILLIA
To warn you child.

BEA CLEVINGER
It's too late to warn me. They're
gonna hang me.

Bea's eyes fill up with tears as she sits up.

A frail lady appears next to Bea. Bea moves her legs over and
sits up and turns toward the lady.

Bea lets out a blood curdling scream. She moves as far away as she can until the chain snaps tight.

BEA CLEVINGER (CONT'D)
Go away leave me alone!

ORILLIA
He will come for you. Trust me.
Look at me girl.

Orillia comes close to Bea once more. Bea looks at her face. Her face has big scars on it. Her face looks like a mess of molten make up. Her lips still rose red but her bottom lip is swollen with a cut and bruise painted forever on it.

Bea puts her hands on her eyes only after a short look at the ghostly figure.

When Bea looks up, the lady is gone and a man is unshackling her. He puts a dark bag over her head and her world goes black that instant.

She is dragged.

A short distance away he stops dragging her. The bag is pulled from her face. Candles adorn the room all around. There is a big cross hanging on one wall. In front of the cross is a large stone table. She is again dragged. Once reaching the table, the man hoists her up on the table binding her hands and feet at opposite ends of the cold stone table. She lays on her back bound.

In walks the Pastor himself of the Church. The very Pastor that accused her of witchcraft! He is followed by two other men dressed in dark coats and facial masks resembling those from an old masquerade ball.

PASTOR CUNNINGHAM
Let's make her look like a lady.

BEA CLEVINGER
Please don't hurt me...

The men are quickly by her side. One stuffs a rag into her pretty mouth squelching her pleas. The other one pulls out a bag and begins to put make up on her. First charcoal grey powder dusted on her eyelids.

MAN IN MASK
Hold still little girl.

One man holds her forehead still while the other continues dolling her up.

Her eyes are painted with thick black eyeliner. Her cheeks are given a deep red blush and then the final touch her lips.

Bea cries. The tears melt the excessive face paint smearing the black around her eyes. The man rubs the blood red lipstick on her lips. She pulls her lips in but he puts a finger in the side of her mouth revealing them so that her lips and some of her skin is messily covered with the hideous whore red lipstick.

The two men step back. The Pastor walks near the frail figure on the table decorated like some medieval doll.

The Pastor pulls a knife out of a belt strap on his waist. She struggles against her binds. The Pastor nods at the two assistants. One man goes to her head while the other goes toward her feet they latch on to hold her down.

The Pastor stands over her with his sharp knife shining in the candle light. Her eyes swell up like they are about to pop out as his knife cuts her gown down the middle exposing her naked flesh.

She struggles as he cuts into her belly. The cuts are shallow. She gasps and her eyes bulge. The vein on her neck can be seen swelling with fear. By the time he stands up she is almost catatonic staring into space. Her face is a black mess. Streaks of make up run from her eyes down her cheeks.

PASTOR CUNNINGHAM

Yep that's what I thought. The mark
of the beast.(laughs)

Her innocent belly now inscribed with the word WITCH carved into her soft flesh. Streaks of blood run down her belly. There is a small pool of blood on the table around the new sculpture.

The Pastor begins quoting scripture as the men move away and then leave out of a door.

PASTOR CUNNINGHAM (CONT'D)

Time to plant a seed in you girl. A
God seed to rid you of your evil
before they hang you. Ask me for
it!

The Pastor reaches down and removes the soiled wet rag from Bea's mouth.

BEA CLEVENGER

Please...

Crying her lip quivers as she tries to speak.

BEA CLEVINGER (CONT'D)
 Sir please I'm no...

He backhands her. His fist finds her chin and her eyes close as her head thrashes sideways from the blow.

PASTOR CUNNINGHAM
 You're in God's hands now Demon!
 I'll drive you out Demon with my
 very seed!

He mounts the table and lays his body down on hers.

Loud knocking at the door interrupts him.

The Pastor stands up quickly. His belly is now smeared with Bea's blood. He puts his robe on and walks out of the door.

Bea looks around. Her eyes are huge and her head bobbles back and forth. She picks her head up and looks down. A frail woman slumps over her ankles untying her binds. As the frail woman walks to the head of the table, she reveals her face.

ORILLIA
 (Whispers) Now be calm and trust me.

Bea looks into the woman's cold eyes. Her scarred, bruised face tell a story in itself. Bea's lip has miniture seizures as she says in a whispering hoarse voice.

BEA CLEVINGER
 Did they do this to you?

ORILLIA
 The Pastor picks who he wants. No one would ever accuse a man of God of any wrong doing.

Orillia unties her hands and Bea, weak from struggling, slowly sits up.

Orillia walks ahead of her quickly.

ORILLIA (CONT'D)
 Follow me...quickly we haven't much time.

Bea follows the ghostly figure to a small tunnel found behind a table. The two crouch down and disappear into it.

The Pastor walks back in unrobing. As he nears the table he yells.

PASTOR CUNNINGHAM
Get in here! She's escaped! She
can't get out of here alive!

EXT. OUT IN THE WOODS - NIGHT

Orillia exits the tunnel climbing up onto the forest floor. Bea follows her. She stands up her legs trembling. She pulls the gown around her body. Standing there in the night, the moon light shines on her pale flesh. Both girls look of death yet one lives.

ORILLIA
Go now, follow the path through the woods. Don't stop for anyone or anything. When you get to the end of the path there is a house. My kin will help you from there.

BEA CLEVENGER
My husband?

ORILLIA
You have to choose freedom now. You can't go back to your life or your husband.

Bea looks down the path. She turns back toward Orillia. Bea's gown pulled around her skinny frame like a robe is now soaked with the left over blood from her belly and only the whites of her eyes can be seen through the dark make up.

BEA CLEVENGER
Thank you Orillia.

Orillia nods and then turns back toward the tunnel and bends over.

BEA CLEVENGER (CONT'D)
Are you crazy?

ORILLIA
No, I do not cross over so that I can stay in that hell.

BEA CLEVENGER
But why?

ORILLIA
So that by chance I may save one soul....like yours.

Orillia disappears into the tunnel hole. Bea slowly turns around facing the path through the woods.

The wind blows the leaves in the trees. There is a cold silence as she begins to walk into the woods. She can be seen walking into the thickness until she disappears in the distance.