

TALES OF THE DAMNED:

Episode 3 - "A SOUL WITHIN"

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Based on the concept by Christine Gillam

FIRST DRAFT (REVISED)

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"A SOUL WITHIN"TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERTED HIGHWAY - NIGHT

A lone eighteen-wheeler cruises along the highway. A graphic of a naked pink lady decorates the front of its cab.

The plains of the NEVADA DESERT occupy both sides of the road. In the distance a small group of lights can be seen. This is SOUTHPOINT.

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - NIGHT

CODY NEWMAN sits at the wheel of his truck. He takes a swig of whiskey from a bottle in his left hand. A voice comes over his CB.

VOICE

Breaker, breaker Pink Lady. Cody,
where you at?

Cody puts his bottle into a pouch on the inside of the driver door and picks up the receiver.

CODY

Sam, you still up? I thought you
were gonna let me down. This darn
road is too long, and I need me
some fun.

SAM

You'll have to blame the missus.
She had me running errands.

CODY

Damn women! Can't they find
something else to occupy their
time? Glad I'm on the road Sammy
boy. Don't get any females out
here telling me what's what.

SAM

So where in the hell are ya?

A road sign passes the cab window: SOUTHPOINT 2 MILES.

CODY

I'm on the Vegas stretch about 2 miles outside Southpoint.

SAM

Damn man, you're a little behind schedule. You gonna be holding up?

CODY

Had to get me some about 50 miles back... I'll hold up at the next service.

Cody looks at the fuel gauge, it's on low.

CODY (CONT'D)

I have to fill up anyways.

SAM

Hope she was worth it.

CODY

Are they ever?

Both men laugh.

EXT. SOUTHPOINT - STREET - NIGHT

A creature moves out of a bush and onto the main street. Houses on both sides of the street filter away into the distance. The creature steps further out and under a street lamp.

The matted fur of a COYOTE is clearly visible. Its eyes are focusing down the street. It lets out a little pant showing broken teeth and cut gums. It has various gashes around its nose and eyes.

Suddenly it darts across the street and heads up a narrow alley.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

The coyote is rummaging through an overturned trash can. It pulls out the remains of a cooked chicken and tears into the carcass.

Suddenly the coyote turns at the sound of a growl. Standing in the alley is a DOBERMAN PINCHER - the short fur on its back standing to attention.

The coyote drops the carcass from its mouth and turns its body to face the Doberman. They both growl and show their teeth at each other. Pieces of bone and chicken are jammed between the coyotes teeth.

The Doberman pounces at the coyote.

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - NIGHT

Cody takes another swig of his whiskey, puts it back in his pouch and grabs the CB receiver.

CODY

Right, come on Sammy boy, what's my challenge?

SAM

You're in the middle of the desert Cody. Short of a couple of other truckers coming by, you have no challenges.

Suddenly two headlights appear and approach the truck from the other side of the road.

CODY

We might be in luck. I've got a sucker heading right towards me.

SAM

OK. If he goes first, you get first dibs on the misses when you get back.

CODY

I heard that.

Cody puts his foot flat on the accelerator.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The truck shifts gear and moves across into the oncoming lane.

INT. ONCOMING CAR - NIGHT

THE DRIVER is talking into a cell phone. He is not wearing a SEAT BELT.

DRIVER

What the hell is this guy playing
at?

(beat)

Hang on baby, I'll have to call
you back.

The driver hangs up the phone.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The driver responds to Cody's antics by moving into the
other lane.

Cody reciprocates by following the cars manoeuvre.

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - NIGHT

Cody laughs into the CB receiver.

CODY

This chump doesn't wanna know.

SAM

So I've won?

CODY

Hell no, I wanna piece of that
ass.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Both vehicles head towards each other. The gap between the
two continues to decrease. The driver makes another effort
to switch lanes, and again, Cody responds.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The driver is visibly concerned.

DRIVER

Jesus Christ!

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Just before impact the car steers off the highway trying to move around the truck. However the deep verge on the side of the road proves too difficult for the driver to handle as the car tips and rolls over down the verge and onto its roof.

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - NIGHT

Cody laughs out loud.

CODY

Yeah baby! I got the son-of-a-bitch! That's a piece of ass you owe me Sammy...

Suddenly the coyote appears from nowhere stepping out onto the highway.

CODY

Shit!

Cody drops the CB receiver and slams on his brakes.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The dog looks up into the headlights of the truck, its face is riddled with blood, its eyes scratched and torn. The pink lady on the front of the truck approaches with speed.

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - NIGHT

A loud thud can be heard as the truck slams into the coyote.

CODY

Damn fucking coyotes!! I hope you rot in hell ya filthy animal.

SAM

Everything ok Code?

Cody picks up his CB.

CODY

Yeah, just hit another damn coyote.

SAM

Hey, you ain't getting any bonus points from me.

CODY

Arghh, means I gotta spend best part of the morning cleaning my damn bumper.

EXT. ROADSIDE VERGE - NIGHT

The car lays still, the roof crushed in.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The driver lies awkwardly on the side of his neck. His face is cut by the glass from the windscreen and windows which have smashed in on impact.

MANDRAKE (V.O.)

To seek retribution can be to take the soul of another.

MAIN TITLE

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. ROADSIDE VERGE - MORNING

The sun burns down on the crashed car. Suddenly the driver's door is pushed open. The driver slowly pulls himself out from the car. His face is covered with dry blood. He notices his cell phone on the inside of the car's roof. He takes it out and flips it open. There's no signal.

DRIVER

Damn it!

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

The driver clammers over the edge of the verge and onto the highway.

He is limping slightly and clutching his arm. He suddenly hears what he thinks is a car. He turns in the opposite direction, a BLUE OLDSMOBILE approaches. The driver sticks out his bad arm to thumb a lift. He winces a little.

INT. BLUE OLDSMOBILE - MORNING

The hands of the Oldsmobile driver steers the car to the side of the road. The car stops and the handbrake goes on.

The driver approaches the window.

EXT. ROADSIDE - MORNING

The window of the Oldsmobile rolls down. MANDRAKE is at the wheel of the car. He is wearing his trench coat and Fedora.

MANDRAKE

Can I help you?

DRIVER

I hope so, I was in an accident
and need to get to a phone.

MANDRAKE

No problem, jump in.

INT. BLUE OLDSMOBILE - MORNING

Mandrake leans across and opens the passenger door. The driver climbs in.

Mandrake pulls away from the roadside and continues on down the highway with his passenger.

MANDRAKE

So what happened to you?

The driver continues to rub his bad arm.

DRIVER

Some guy last night, I still can't believe it.

MANDRAKE

What?

DRIVER

This guy, in what looked like an eighteen-wheeler, decides to play chicken with me. I tried to avoid him, but he would just switch lanes and continue towards me. I didn't know what to think, I tried my hardest to avoid a collision, the next thing I know I'm waking up in my car upside down in a ditch back there.

The driver notions over his shoulder back where Mandrake had picked him up.

MANDRAKE

You call the police?

DRIVER

I couldn't get a reception on my cell.

MANDRAKE

There are some fools on the road. You're lucky to be alive.

DRIVER

I...

Up ahead the driver sees something lying in the road.

DRIVER

There's something up ahead.

Mandrake pays no attention to the driver, continuing at the same pace.

DRIVER

I think it's a dead animal.

Mandrake continues to ignore his passenger.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Hey man, you gonna stop?

Mandrake turns and looks at the driver as he hits the dead coyote.

Suddenly the driver starts to shiver. His head flings back against the headrest.

DRIVER

Damn I feel cold.

The driver winces in pain as he leans forward putting his head between his knees.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGHWAY CAFE - MORNING

Cody enters the café. There are about two dozen truckers at various tables enjoying their breakfast.

Cody approaches the counter. A man wearing an apron walks over to his customer.

OWNER

What will it be?

CODY

Eggs, bacon and a cup of coffee.

OWNER

You got it.

Cody takes a seat by the window. His truck is visible from the window. He takes a look at the pink lady and tilts his cap to her. He then notices the blood on the trucks bumper and tuts.

CODY (TO HIMSELF)

Damn coyotes.

INT. BLUE OLDSMOBILE - MORNING

The driver seems a little more composed now. Mandrake turns to him.

MANDRAKE

You OK?

DRIVER

Yeah. Why?

MANDRAKE

You looked to be in some pain back there.

DRIVER

Back where?

The driver looks back over his shoulder confused.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

I'm fine. It's just this damn arm.
I think I've torn a muscle or something.

The driver looks over the pristine condition of the Oldsmobile's dash board.

DRIVER

Nice car you have here. Must cost you a pretty packet to keep it running?

MANDRAKE

Well, I inherited it in this condition, so I've been lucky, really. It holds the gas well too.

The driver notices the fuel gage, it reads HALF FULL.

DRIVER

Where are you off too?

MANDRAKE

Vegas, I like to gamble once in a while.

DRIVER

I was on my way to meet my girlfriend there. We were...

Suddenly the driver notices an eighteen-wheeler parked outside a roadside café, the pink lady clearly visible on the front of the cab.

DRIVER

Stop the car!

Mandrake hits the brakes.

MANDRAKE

What is it?

The driver stares at the truck. Darkness fills his eyes as he turns his attention to the café and the truckers inside.

DRIVER

I need some breakfast.

MANDRAKE

You must've been reading my mind.

Mandrake turns the wheel of the Oldsmobile and heads into the forecourt of the café.

EXT. CAFÉ FORECOURT - MORNING

The Oldsmobile pulls into the forecourt and parks up.

INT. OLDSMOBILE - MORNING

The driver winces as he forgets and leans on his bad arm to push the door open.

MANDRAKE

I'll meet you inside. I have a quick phone call to make.

The driver doesn't respond. He just heads straight for the café door. Mandrake looks on and smiles his wicked smile.

INT. CAFE - MORNING

The driver stops dead in the middle of the café and looks around at the truckers tucking into their breakfast.

The owner approaches the counter.

OWNER

Can I help you?

The driver does not respond.

OWNER

Hey buddy, you OK?

The driver's concentration is broken. He looks up at the owner.

DRIVER

Er yeah, can I have a coffee,
black.

OWNER

Coming up.

The driver takes a seat by a window which also looks out at the eighteen-wheeler. Cody is seated opposite the driver but at the other end of the café. He is ramming his breakfast into his mouth as if he hasn't eaten for days.

The owner places the coffee on the driver's table.

OWNER

You look like you've been in with
Tyson. Shall I keep the coffee
coming?

The driver responds not really taking in the owner's comments.

DRIVER

Sure.

He continues to look around the room once again. Suddenly a trucker two tables in front of him stands and approaches the counter. He drops some cash on the till and says bye to the owner.

The driver watches him with a fixed glare as he follows the trucker out of the café with his eyes. He then turns to the window and waits. He sees the trucker go behind the cab of the eighteen-wheeler.

The driver jumps out from his seat and out the café door.

EXT. CAFE - MORNING

As the driver emerges from the café he notices the trucker pull out in a truck behind the eighteen-wheeler.

DRIVER (TO HIMSELF)

Shit.

He turns and heads back towards the café.

INT. CAFÉ - MORNING

The driver sits back at his seat and sips his coffee. Suddenly he winces once again. This time he feels a pain in his midriff. He puts his hand to his stomach. As he brings his hand back up he notices blood on his fingers.

He looks down at his shirt. Speckles of blood begin to seep through his shirt.

He gets up and heads for the toilet.

INT. CAFÉ - TOILET - MORNING

The driver stands in front of a broken mirror on the wall. He slowly lifts his shirt to reveal a wound oozing with blood. Pieces of ripped flesh hang from what looks like a bite wound.

DRIVER

Jesus Christ.

He quickly turns to a hand-towel roll and pulls at it until it rips from the mechanism. He starts to frantically wrap the towel around his midriff.

INT. CAFE - MORNING

The driver emerges from the toilet and takes his seat, his hand now held at his stomach. He takes another sip of his coffee.

Suddenly the eighteen-wheeler springs into life and begins to pull out towards the exit of the forecourt.

The driver jumps up and dashes out the café once again.

EXT. CAFE - MORNING

The driver looks at the backend of the truck as it pulls out onto the highway.

He then looks over to the Oldsmobile. Mandrake is not inside.

He rushes back to the café.

INT. CAFE - MORNING

The door swings open. The driver calls out to the owner.

DRIVER

Did you see a guy come in here
with a hat and a trench coat?

OWNER

No, but then I'm not surprised.
It's 80 degrees out there.

EXT. CAFÉ - MORNING

The driver runs around the back of the café. There's no one there. A small phone booth stands to the side of the café, empty.

He runs back around to the front of the café and heads for the Oldsmobile.

When he gets there he notices that the keys are in the ignition. He looks up and scans the area again for Mandrake who's still nowhere in sight.

He then jumps into the car, turns the key and wheel-spins off the forecourt and onto the highway.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. OLDSMOBILE - DAY

The driver sits at the wheel sweating profusely. He looks at the road ahead. The road is clear.

DRIVER

Where are you you fuck!

He glances at the fuel gage. It's still showing HALF FULL. The needle hasn't budged from when Mandrake first picked him up. He frowns at it and taps the dash. The needle doesn't move.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

Cody climbs out of his cab and approaches a gas attendant.

CODY

You got a jet wash?

ATTENDANT

Yeah out back.

The attendant calls out...

ATTENDANT

Jeff!

JEFF (O.S.)

Yeah?

ATTENDANT

Bring the jet wash round front.

The attendant looks back at Cody.

ATTENDANT

Fill her up?

CODY

Yeah.

INT. OLDSMOBILE - DAY

Suddenly the driver looks up and notices the eighteen-wheeler parked outside the gas station. He slams on the brakes and stops. He smiles then turns the wheel of the Oldsmobile and drives into the gas station.

EXT. GAS STATION - FORECOURT - DAY

The driver steps out from the Oldsmobile and heads for the shop, all the while checking back over his shoulder at the eighteen-wheeler.

INT. GAS STATION - SHOP - DAY

The driver approaches a guy at the till. The driver has his hand grasped around his midriff.

DRIVER

I don't suppose you know where the owner of that truck is?

TILL GUY

He was out there washing it only a couple of minutes ago. He can't be far.

The driver continues looking out at the truck.

DRIVER

Thanks.

He grabs a stick of candy from a rack near the till and places it on the counter. He reaches into his pocket.

Suddenly the eighteen-wheeler springs back to life, the driver doesn't think twice. He drops the cash on the counter, leaves the candy and rushes out the door.

EXT. GAS STATION - FORECOURT - DAY

The driver exits the store. He looks in the direction of the Oldsmobile but it isn't there.

DRIVER

What the hell?

He looks around for the Oldsmobile but nothing.

Without a seconds thought he sprints over to the eighteen-wheeler, which is just about to pull out onto the highway.

The driver steps in front of the cab. A loud horn sounds off. Cody leans out the window.

CODY

Get the hell out the way!

DRIVER

I need a ride.

CODY

Do I look like a taxi service?

The driver ignores Cody's comment...

DRIVER

Are you going anywhere near Vegas?

Cody looks up at the sky and sighs, the driver has found Cody on a good day.

CODY

No, but I can take you as far as Indian Springs. Take it or leave it.

The driver runs around to the passenger side and climbs aboard.

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - DAY

The driver climbs into the cab shutting the door behind him.

DRIVER

I'll take it. I really appreciate...

Cody cuts him off...

CODY

Less of the pleasantries. I take you to Springs, you get out and I go on my way. I'm not looking for a friend. Besides, you look like you're in trouble, so the less I know the better.

DRIVER

No problem.

The driver looks out the passenger window as Cody drives out onto the highway.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The eighteen-wheeler heads off down the open highway towards Las Vegas.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Something is running through the forest. Bushes and trees flash past as it continues to run. Suddenly it stops. Panting can be heard.

Up ahead is a DEER. It seems to be basking in a selection of sun rays cascading through the trees. The panting gets heavier.

Suddenly the deer turns and notices its predator and sprints off in the other direction. Once again, the forest passes by at speed as the predator continues to chase its prey.

The predator suddenly comes to a clearing. The deer is nowhere to be seen.

A growling noise can be heard. To the left of the predator is the DOBERMAN PINCHER from the alley. Its face is ripped and torn. Its eyes are bloodshot. It is foaming at the mouth.

We see the predator for the first time. It's the driver. He is naked and on all fours. His eyes are red with his mouth open showing large bloodied fangs.

Suddenly the Doberman pounces on the driver. They roll around until the driver gets on top of the Doberman. The driver opens his mouth and with brute force rips into the Dobermans neck. The dog yelps out in pain until silence befalls the forest.

The driver rips part of the Dobermans flesh from its now dead carcass and begins to chew on it. Suddenly he hears the snap of a twig and turns to see Cody standing beside him with an axe.

Cody draws back the axe and swings it at the drivers head.

CUT TO BLACK:

We hear a thud as the axe enters the driver's skull.

CUT TO:

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - NIGHT

The driver suddenly wakes from deep sleep. He is sweating and shaken. Cody looks over at him. He takes a swig from his bottle of whiskey.

CODY

You sure make a lot of noise when you sleep. What ya dream about? Sounds to me like you were having yourself some fun.

The driver sits up wiping his forehead with the sleeve of his shirt.

DRIVER

I er, I don't remember.

CODY

Yeah, sure you don't. The best sex I've had I've forgotten bout too.

Cody laughs with a sarcastic tone.

CODY (CONT'D)

We're gonna park up for the night. I'm wasted. I need some shut eye.

DRIVER

Sure.

CODY

Don't sound too pleased you get the front seat. I've got the bed out back.

DRIVER

Fine.

Cody laughs again.

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Cody lies asleep in his bed. Suddenly he is awoken by the sound of his engine starting over.

CODY

What the...

He pulls back a curtain separating his sleeping quarters from the remainder of the cab.

The driver's face stares straight back at him. His face is wild. His eyes are dark and cold. In a flash he whips his head back then thrusts it forward cracking Cody on the bridge of the nose knocking him unconscious. The snap of bone seems to echo throughout the cab.

CUT TO:

INT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Cody slowly opens his eyes. His face is badly bruised and covered in blood. He starts to cough. He leans to his side and spits out blood. Trying to make as little noise as possible he reaches across his bed for a crowbar.

He then turns to the closed curtain and with caution pulls the curtain back. The cab is empty. He looks at the ignition. The keys aren't there. He turns to look out the window. All he can see is pitch black.

Slowly he climbs out of the sleeping quarters and onto the front seat of the cab. Blood continues to stream from his nose.

EXT. EIGHTEEN-WHEELER - NIGHT

The trucks headlights turn on lighting up part of what looks like the desert. The door to the cab opens, and Cody slowly jumps out.

CODY

Hello?

There's silence.

CODY (CONT'D)

Where's my damn keys, you freak?
Show your face. Now, let's see who
bleeds first this time.

Still there's silence.

Cody starts to cautiously make his way around the eighteen-wheeler.

CODY (CONT'D)

What's this all about? Maybe we can sort this out? After all, I just wanna get on my way.

There's concern now in Cody's tone.

CODY (CONT'D)

Come on damn it!

Suddenly Cody can hear the rustling of a few scattered bushes. The bushes are too far away to see anything clearly.

CODY (CONT'D)

Is that you?

Again there's the rustling of bushes.

CODY (CONT'D)

Hello?

A growling sound comes from directly in front of Cody. He squints but can't see a thing.

CODY (CONT'D)

Is that you, you fucking freak?
What the hell are you?

The sound of heavy panting and growling gradually draws nearer. Cody brings the crowbar up higher above his right shoulder.

As Cody tries to focus the coyote from the highway slowly walks into view. A large wound is visible around its stomach.

CODY

Another damn coyote. when are you filthy runts gonna learn to stay outta my god damn way? Looks like you need finishing off, too.

Suddenly Cody turns to his right to see the driver standing there. The driver's eyes are red with rage. His fangs glimmer off the moonlight.

Without hesitation, he lunges for Cody's throat.

Cody screams out in pain and horror.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE VERGE - DAY

The driver lay awkwardly in his car. His head is tilted to one side of his snapped neck.

NEWS REPORTER

Forty-year-old truck driver Cody Newman was found dead next to his eighteen-wheeler today. The body and the truck were suspiciously parked in the desert about 40 miles north of Indian Springs. He was attacked and bitten by what seems to be a coyote. Forensics say the wounds inflicted on Mr Newman are less than 24 hours old. At present this incident has no connection with a body found earlier this morning along the Southpoint Highway where a man was found dead in his overturned car.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE