

SALLY AND THE HUNTER'S MOON

Written by

Dan Dunbar

The spirits become restless under the Hunter's Moon

On an isolated farm of poverty and muscle cars, when a teenage girl, who cannot communicate, discovers a sociopathic murderer has moved in and is stalking them, she must protect her family by channeling the dead to lure him into her trap.

FADE IN:

EXT. MUNDORF LAKE - DAY

Small lake at twilight, isolated in the midst of a forest. Trees like skeletons. Shallow waves lap the shore. Peaceful, quiet.

LONNIE

Please, man. No... no more. I'm cold... so cold...

LONNIE (54), overweight, long dark hair cascading down his back, crouches on his knees.

LONNIE

All I did was give you a ride. You had your thumb out. Was I wrong to do that?

VICTOR (27), conceited, a young tough with collar-length black hair, wears a leather jacket, holds a bottle of Kentucky bourbon in one hand, a pistol to Lonnie's forehead in the other.

VICTOR

Here, have a drink. It'll calm you.

LONNIE

I don't want a --

VICTOR

Take it!

Forces whiskey into Lonnie's mouth. Pulls it away.

LONNIE

I didn't do nothing to you. Why are you doing this?

VICTOR

Got no hobbies.

Holds out the bottle.

VICTOR

Have some more.

Pours liquor on Lonnie's head, tosses the bottle which shatters.

VICTOR

Where did you say we are?

LONNIE
Locust. I grew up here.

VICTOR
Locussss. Sounds like a shit town.

LONNIE
I should never have shown you my
pistol.

VICTOR
It's a real beauty. Now go down and
wash off.

Lonnie scampers down, splashes water on his face. Furtively
looks for an escape. Victor kicks him.

LONNIE
What do you want? Money? I can give
you money. I got something...

VICTOR
What do I look like. A pawn shop?

LONNIE
I got family. I used to swim in
this lake. Just please, please
don't kill me!

VICTOR
What did you say?

LONNIE
Please, please don't kill me.

Victor COCKS his head.

VICTOR
Aw, that's so sweet!

Victor pushes his head underwater, arms flail. Pulls a
hunting knife from a sheath on his belt. Stabs Lonnie. The
struggle subsides.

Victor ties Lonnie's clothes around the body and stuffs in
rocks. Pushes the body out and watches. It floats for a
moment, then sinks. Victor vainly shakes his head, feels his
hair brush his neck.

SQUALK! Startled bird catches his attention. Victor looks up.

Sees SALLY SWEET (13), just entering puberty, standing across
the lake on a berm. She wears a sheer print dress and heavy
mud boots, holds her Doll.

Startled, she runs off.

With knife in hand, Victor bolts, and the chase is on. He runs through the woods. Breathes heavily. Rapid footprints crunch dried leaves. Reaches the ridge and sees a small farm not far off in the distance.

Sally, running through a dried cornfield, is almost home.

She turns and looks back. Holds up her doll. Victor rubs his chin with the blade of the knife.

Across the distance, Sally and Victor face off.

MONTAGE OF SNOWY, DAMAGED VHS VIDEO FOOTAGE OF HAPPIER TIMES:

EXT. FARM - HOUSE - DAY

A farmhouse, unpainted, rusted tin roof, sits on a barren knoll. Behind it, an outhouse and well. A bucket swings in the breeze.

YOUNG VERNA SWEET (40), thin but strong, picks tomatoes in the garden. Realizes she's being filmed and turns shy.

Derelict cars line the gravel drive. Weeds grow through the fenders. Rusted transmissions, drive shafts, car seats, engine blocks lay in the field. Field mice dash among the parts.

YOUNG SALLY SWEET (5), bubbly, in a print dress, is in a tire swing. YOUNG PAUL SWEET (15), buzz cut, t-shirt and jeans, races up to Young Sally trailed by his pit bull. Paul gives her a push. Sally shrieks with delight.

INT. DEN - DAY

Drab. Chipped wood wainscoting. Lone light bulb dangles from the ceiling. Christmas tree with handmade paper ornaments and tinsel cut from aluminum foil.

MUNDORF SWEET (44) wears his hard life on his face, deeply gouged by cigarettes and alcohol. He hands a Doll, a man in black suit, to Young Sally. Her eyes light up as she clutches it.

Young Paul opens a box, finds a baseball mitt and glove. Excitedly tosses the ball in the air, hits the Christmas tree. Mundorf picks up the ball and admonishes him.

EXT. FARM - CARS - DAY

Hood lifted, Mundorf repairs a car engine. Young Paul walks by. Mundorf summons him. Young Paul rolls his eyes and continues on.

EXT. FARM - outhouse - DAY

Pulling up his pants, Mundorf exits an outhouse. Busted! Mugs for the CAMERA.

EXT. FARM - DAY

Young Sally dances through a cornfield, the Doll held high in exaltation.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. FARM - ROW OF CARS - NIGHT

Crouching, Victor approaches the farm along a winding driveway, feet CRUNCHING gravel. Along the drive are vintage cars, lined up like a used car lot under a full moon.

He takes cover among them, pauses to rub the headlight of a 1960 DeSoto.

Silently dashes across the lawn to the side of the house.

Slides along the wall, peers in through a window. It's a den with the TV on. Moves to another window, a dark bedroom.

VERNA (O.S.)

Sally, stay in your room until I get you. I'm cleaning the dinner dishes.

The next window is to the kitchen. CLANKING of dishes. VERNA (48), old and tired, puts food away.

BARK! CLACK! A dog's bark explodes. Victor jumps back. LUCIFER, chained to a stake, snaps his teeth, trying desperately to get to him.

Victor touches his cheek. Blood on his fingers. Verna steps onto the porch.

VERNA

Lucifer, hush! Hush now! Damned rabbits, get you all riled. Now be quiet!

Screen door claps shut. Lucifer sits. Victor backs away.

He turns and is taken aback.

Sally, inside, looks out.

VERNA

Sally? Sally, where are you?

Verna leads her back out to the den.

VERNA

Come on back. I don't have time to chase you down all night.

Victor pulls his pistol and returns to the den window. VOLUME is low on TV. Sally sits in the middle of the floor, plays with her Doll.

Victor raises the pistol and takes aim at the girl.

RUUUMPH! A car approaches, breaks Victor's concentration. He retreats. A sedan pulls up. The door is marked "SAFEWAY SECURITY."

PAUL (23), wearing guard's uniform, baseball mitt tucked under his arm, SLAMS the door, spits chewing tobacco juice. With his finger, sweeps inside of his lip, tosses the wad, enters the house.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

Verna sits on a couch, Sally on the floor with her doll. Paul crosses the room.

PAUL

Evening Ma.

VERNA

Dinner's in the fridge.

EXT. FARM - HOUSE - NIGHT

Victor watches as Paul sets his dinner on the table. He touches the food.

PAUL

Cold again.

Paul exits. Victor follows his action.

Paul enters his bedroom, sets his gun belt and mitt on the bed table, closes the window. Passes back through the kitchen, steps out on the porch.

PAUL

Lucifer, you want to come on in?

Takes Lucifer by the collar. Lucifer growls toward Victor.

PAUL

What's the matter, boy? Something out there?

Paul looks, sees nothing.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

Paul carries his food, settles in the armchair near Verna.

PAUL

Everybody smells a lay-off tomorrow. Ain't a good time to be losing work.

VERNA

You're not one of them, you reckon?

PAUL

Hopefully my seniority will mean something. Somebody's got to watch the factory, right?

He takes a bite of food.

PAUL

But I was thinking, if I do get laid off, you know what that means, don't you Momma?

VERNA

No! You know what happened to your Pa! Leave it be!

PAUL

I'm not saying that right now we got to! But Daddy's diamonds--

VERNA

Those were heirloom. Not touching them!

Outside the window, Victor reacts.

PAUL
Just saying.

VERNA
I'll have no more talk!

Paul looks at Sally.

PAUL
How's my baby sister doing at school?

VERNA
New teacher seems to like her. She can be so difficult, you know.

PAUL
She's got more of Pa in her than we realize. More than me.

VERNA
I think the doll reminds her of him.

EXT. FARM - HOUSE - NIGHT

Victor puts his pistol away and looks at Lucifer. The dog sleeps. Victor touches his ear, rubs blood between his fingers. Removes his belt.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

Paul hears a YELP, resumes eating.

EXT. FARM - HOUSE - NIGHT

Victor heads down the driveway, leaving the farm behind. He reaches the edge, turns and looks back. Aims the pistol at the house and mimics pulling the trigger.

VICTOR
Pow! You're dead.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

ZZZT-ZZZT. A fluorescent tube flickers. Victor, at the counter, finishes eating. Two sausage patties lay untouched on his plate. He observes the WAITRESS, SMACKING chewing gum. Notices her snug polyester slacks. Looks around the diner.