

UNTITLED HELLRAISER SYNOPSIS  
By Christopher Taylor & Jason Shawn Alexander

It's 1940. A young man, Calvin, sits at a countryside crossroads after midnight. He strums sad and lonesome notes from a beat up guitar. A wheezing pick up truck pulls up, and the driver, an old man, a peddler of wares, asks Calvin if he needs a ride. Calvin declines, saying he's waiting for someone.

In a shabby juke joint, the air is full of cigarette smoke, alcohol fueled laughter and conversation. Calvin, cigarette dangling from his lip, sits on a stool and opens the guitar case on his lap. We don't see the guitar. No one pays the young musician any attention as he sets the guitar across his knee. The guitar is still just out of our view. He puts a slide of polished bone on his finger.

The old man gets out of his truck. He knows there's only one person he could be meeting at a crossroads at this hour. The peddler reminds him that Johnson may have indeed sold his soul to play the blues, but that he also died young with a belly full of fire. Calvin explains that he already knows the Blues. He's there to trade his soul for one last moment with his dead woman. The old man asks to hear some of Calvin's playing.

In the juke joint, Calvin plays one long, mournful note, bending the G string into a banshee's wail. The audience stops and turns to the young man, faces enrapt.

At the crossroads, a string breaks on Calvin's guitar. The old man gets a guitar case out of the back of his truck. He opens the case and reveals a steel guitar with complicated etchings (recalling the designs on Lemarchand's boxes). Calvin has never seen anything like it. The old man tells him it belongs to Calvin. It always has.

Bodies begin to sway and grind in the juke joint to Calvin's music, sweaty flesh sliding against other sweaty flesh, expressions of ecstasy. We can now see he is playing the same steel guitar. Its patterns glint unnaturally.

The old man returns to his truck to get on his way, leaving Calvin with the guitar. He explores some notes; the patterns on the guitar start to emit light. The intersection of the crossroads begins to shine with the same bright light. Calvin stops playing to cover his eyes. When he opens them, four figures face him. The night is black as pitch beyond the five of them and the four roads. Calvin, mouth agape, stares at the quartet. Black leather over pale, scarred and mutilated flesh, with facial features distorted in various horrific manners. Calvin asks if the Devil sent them. The creature with pins decorating his ashen scalp is amused, and points to the guitar. "We come to those who call us; whether they mean to or not, it makes no difference. Your flesh is forfeit."

Panicked, Calvin tells them he wanted to make a deal with the Devil to see his dead woman again. There must be something to bargain with. The leader says such things are not beyond their power, but the price is more than what the flesh on the young man's meager bones could cover. Calvin offers them more flesh...

The juke joint audience is lost in the rhythm of the music, their flesh responding almost involuntarily, mounted by the Loa of the Blues, summoned by the guitar priest. Light starts to shine through the cracks and loose slats of the walls. Like any good bluesman, Calvin knows the key to keeping the listener engaged is a good hook.

Hooks on the ends of chains fly out into the audience. The Cenobites emerge from the deepening shadows. Bodies are dragged, some in pieces, screaming past them, into their realm. Calvin keeps playing, trying to drown out the din with his own pained voice. When it's all over, he opens his eyes to see the Cenobites standing amidst all the blood and carnage, watching him. He asks them if that is enough now. It's been a week of bloodshed, turning juke joints into abattoirs. They tell him the price for his dead lover requires one final payment. As a show of good faith, they let him see her.

Clara emerges from the shadows, confused. She sees Calvin and recoils, accusing him of beating her, shooting her, and that she was actually glad he killed her because he made her life misery. And now she can't be free of him even in death. Calvin just smiles. "I'll make it up to you, baby. We'll be together forever."

The lead Cenobite tells Calvin it's time for his final payment. "Embrace, lovers."

Hooked chains pull the two closer. Clara screams and resists. Calvin continues to smile.

"I won't ever let you go." Animate wire, like guitar strings, coils around their two bodies, joining them, threading their flesh together. The wire cuts into their skin but stops short of dismemberment. Only now does Calvin join in Clara's screaming.

The Cenobite leader is pleased. "You will sing for us new songs of pain and suffering. For eternity."

And then they are all gone; the only remnant of their presence is Calvin's discarded guitar, stained with blood.

The old peddler picks up the guitar. He hums a bit as he takes a rag from his pocket and begins wiping the blood away. He starts to sing the same lyrics Calvin sang earlier. He puts the guitar back in its case and exits.

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