

HELL HARBINGER

By

Nick Corbin  
&  
Josh Swaner

INT. SOLITARY CONFINEMENT - DAY

PAUL MAHAFFEY stands in the middle of the cell, looking up at the light shining through a hole in the ceiling.

JUDGE (V.O.)

On this day, the Twenty-second of  
September, 1953...

Mahaffey sits on his bed, a table and tray of food in front of him. But, he stares ahead.

JUDGE (V.O.)

...For the two charges of  
robbery...

Mahaffey stands staring at the wall.

JUDGE (V.O.)

...Paul Andrew Mahaffey is to be  
sentenced to be punished by  
imprisonment in the state's prison  
of the State of Idaho for the term  
of his natural life.

Mahaffey sits in front of another meal, staring ahead.

JUDGE (V.O.)

For the conviction of escape from  
jail...

Mahaffey again stands facing a wall.

JUDGE (V.O.)

...Paul Andrew Mahaffey is  
sentenced to be punished by  
imprisonment in the state's prison  
of the State of Idaho for the term  
of not to exceed five years...

Mahaffey lies on his bed, staring into space.

JUDGE (V.O.)

...Commencing at the expiration of  
the sentences in the preceding  
cases.

The cell door opens. ASSISTANT CAPTAIN FRANK ZACK is on the other side.

ZACK

Inmate! Against the wall! Arms out!

(CONTINUED)

We walks inside to find Mahaffey already standing against the wall, arms spread out, staring off into space.

ZACK

Inmate, do you have any knives or sharp objects on your person?

MAHAFFEY

(containing anger)

No...*sir*.

Zack pats down Mahaffey.

ZACK

Your fourteen months here in Siberia are up. We're taking you back to max security.

Mahaffey says nothing.

ZACK

Figured you'd be a little more excited to get out of this hell!

MAHAFFEY

This ain't hell.

Zack looks around.

ZACK

Fourteen months of bone-chilling nights, with only yourself for company. Well, aside from the rats, and God staring down at you from that hole in the ceiling.

MAHAFFEY

Only people in hell are the ones who deserve to be there.

ZACK

And you don't?

Mahaffey's lip twitches in anger.

INT. CELL BLOCK - DAY

INMATES sit in rundown cells. One sits on their bed, staring down at the floor. Another leans against their cell wall, dejected. A third lies on his bed, quietly crying to himself.

(CONTINUED)

Enter Mahaffey, carrying a folded wool blanket, and escorted by Assistant Captain Zack.

INMATE  
Holy shit, it's Mahaffey!

INMATE #2  
Mahaffey!

The inmates perk up seeing him, reaching out of their cells towards him as he walks past.

ZACK  
Inmates! Arms back inside your  
cell, unless you want them broken!

The inmates hesitantly slink back into their cells. Zack stops in front of an empty cell.

ZACK  
Get inside, inmate.

Mahaffey stares at Zack, then goes inside. Zack closes the cell door behind him. Mahaffey turns and stares at the wall, anger rising.

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Mahaffey lies on his bed. His wool blanket causes him to itch. He pushes it off, frustration turning into anger.

INT. CELL BLOCK - DAY

Mahaffey lies on his bed with no blanket, staring off into space. He finally starts to drift off to sleep.

ZACK  
(rapping the cell bars)  
Inmate! Breakfast!

Mahaffey painfully opens his eyes and stares at Zack. He sits up on the edge of the bed. Enter Zack, carrying a tray of food.

ZACK  
It's slop again. Maybe for lunch,  
they'll surprise you with something  
fit for human consumption.

As Zack approaches, Mahaffey slowly reaches for something. He slaps Zack upside the head with a piece of BED FRAME, causing the guard to hit the floor.

(CONTINUED)

Mahaffey looks around, but there's no response. He searches Zack and takes a RING OF KEYS off his person.

MAHAFFEY

Well, I didn't have anything *sharp*  
on my person.

Mahaffey starts quickly unlocking the other cell doors. The inmates start to cruelly laugh, but Mahaffey motions them to be quiet. Despite this, a guard named HOWARD SCHRAFT look and see Mahaffey unlocking a cell door. They run towards him.

SCHRAFT

Inmate! Drop the keys! Put your  
hands above your head!

MAHAFFEY

We're doing taking orders.

SCHRAFT

We...?

An inmate slams open an unlocked cell door into Schraft, knocking them down to the ground. The inmate jumps on Schraft and strikes them in the face over and over. Mahaffey appears and holds back the inmate.

MAHAFFEY

Keep them alive. Take hostages,  
everyone!

The inmates grab onto Schraft and Zack to do so.

INMATE

Let's put them in our cells! See  
how they feel fighting off rats and  
bed bugs!

MAHAFFEY

This area's too exposed. Take them  
to the guard room.

INT. GUARD ROOM - DAY

Zack and Schraft are tied up together in the middle of the room, with nooses around their neck. They are standing right above the DROP DOOR. Mahaffey and other inmates stand around them menacingly.

(CONTINUED)

MAHAFFEY

(to inmates)

We'll make our stand here. Now, I need you, you, and you to watch those entrances. Cram the locks, too.

INMATE #2

Will do, Mahaffey.

MAHAFFEY

Don't let anyone inside, but don't kill no one, either. Harder to negotiate our freedom that way.

The inmates nod and run away.

ZACK

You're not...going to get away with this...

Mahaffey walks up to Zack.

MAHAFFEY

We're done taking orders. We're done with your authority. You're in hell now, and I'm the devil.

He slaps Zack across the face. Then slaps him again, and one more time. Zack looks at him with scared eyes. Mahaffey looks regretful for a moment, but stands up. He grabs the intercom system.

MAHAFFEY

Good morning, Idaho State Penitentiary, and Warden Clapp. We've got your men: Assistant Captain Frank Zack, and guard Howard Schraft.

The guards glare at Mahaffey.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Guards try to open the door, but it won't budge.

MAHAFFEY (V.O.)

You try to breach this building, we'll kill them.

Police cars and flashing lights appear outside the walls.

(CONTINUED)

MAHAFFEY (V.O.)  
You try to smoke us out, we'll kill  
them.

Snipers take up position on the walls.

MAHAFFEY (V.O.)  
And you try anything but negotiate  
our release...

INT. GUARD ROOM - DAY

MAHAFFEY  
...We'll kill them.

EXT. PRISON YARD - NIGHT

The standoff continues. Across the street, the BISHOP looks out the window of the BISHOP'S HOUSE, illuminated by flashing red and blue lights. He shakes his head, then goes to his knees and prays.

BISHOP  
We pray Lord, that You will right  
all the wrongs that are taking  
place in our world, and vindicate  
those that are being treated  
unjustly. Keep us Father from  
trying to take matters into our own  
hands, for vengeance is Yours, and  
You will repay.

INT. GUARD ROOM - NIGHT

Mahaffey stands by the intercom, visibly shaken and frustrated.

HELL HARBINGER (V.O.)  
(on intercom)  
Paul Andrew Mahaffey.

Mahaffey quickly grabs the microphone.

MAHAFFEY  
You finally ready to negotiate,  
Warden?

HELL HARBINGER (V.O.)  
You'll pray I was the warden.

(CONTINUED)

MAHAFFEY

Who the in hell is this?

HELL HARBINGER (V.O.)

Funny you mention that. I'm the Hell Harbinger.

Mahaffey laughs.

MAHAFFEY

That supposed to scare me?

HELL HARBINGER (V.O.)

You've never respected authority, so you don't know the fear of punishment. Until tonight.

MAHAFFEY

(pauses, conflicted)

Like I said this morning, you breach the doors, we'll kill them.

HELL HARBINGER (V.O.)

Let them go, and I'll surrender myself to you.

Mahaffey turns on the tied up guards, who look back at him with fear. Mahaffey turns away, feeling guilty, by pride overtakes him. He gets onto the intercom.

MAHAFFEY

Deal...but first, you'll have to come and get me.

HELL HARBINGER (V.O.)

Deal. See you soon.

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Inmates stand on guard.

MAHAFFEY (V.O.)

Someone got in here! Take him out...now!

INMATE

You heard him! Spread out!

The inmates search around the dark corners. One of the inmates gets sucked into a corner.

(CONTINUED)

INMATE  
McGinnis?

He looks around the dark corner, not noticing a shadowy figure rising behind him.

INMATE  
McGinnis?

He turns around and the shadow grabs him and slams his head against the wall. The inmate screams.

INT. GUARD ROOM - NIGHT

Mahaffey turns to the door, concerned.

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Other inmates look around, breathing heavy as they panic and get taken down one by one by the shadow. Two inmates run and turn down into a hallway, but one of them gets grabbed by the legs.

INMATE #2  
Help me!

He desperately tries to hold onto the corner, but he gets dragged away out of sight...then screams over and over...then quiet. His buddy desperately runs down the hallway. He turns around and the flights flicker and fog swirls, as HELL HARBINGER follows him.

The inmate falls to the floor. He looks up, a shadow being cast over his face. He see from his perspective as Hell Harbinger walks forward and obscures everything with darkness.

INT. GUARD ROOM - NIGHT

Mahaffey hears another scream, looking panicked at the door. The door blows off and the door swings open. The silhouette of Hell Harbinger stands in the doorway, blood dripping down from his brass knuckles.

ZACK  
(frightened)  
You still sure about you being the devil?

Mahaffey runs over to the HANGMAN'S SWITCH.

(CONTINUED)

MAHAFFEY

One step closer, and I'll do it!

HELL HARBINGER

No, you won't. You're better than this, Paul.

MAHAFFEY

You don't know me.

HELL HARBINGER

I know what you've done. But I also know you feel remorse.

MAHAFFEY

(struggling)

No...I don't. No one's given a shit about me!

HELL HARBINGER

There's always someone out there who will.

MAHAFFEY

I'm beyond saving now.

HELL HARBINGER

I don't believe that, either.

Consumed with anger, Mahaffey pulls the switch. The guards gasp as they drop down, but Hell Harbinger throws a sharp boomerang, cutting the ropes. The guards land safely on the ground below.

HELL HARBINGER

You're testing my patience.

MAHAFFEY

You weren't patient with my friends out there!

Hell Harbinger starts walking into the room, fog following, while Mahaffey backs into the corner in fright.

HELL HARBINGER

I let them live, so their scars can remind this prison about me. But you, Paul, you're the instigator of this rebellion.

MAHAFFEY

Did you see what kind of hell we live in those cells, everyday?

(CONTINUED)

HELL HARBINGER

You're the attempted murderer of  
those men beneath us.

MAHAFFEY

They look the other way, everyday!

HELL HARBINGER

Some would say, you no longer  
deserve to live.

MAHAFFEY

I don't want to die!

HELL HARBINGER

Some would say your heart is so  
wicked, you have no chance at  
redemption.

Hell Harbinger is right on Mahaffey, who falls to the  
ground.

MAHAFFEY

Take me to hell.

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

A door opens to the outside, the melted lock dropping to the  
ground. The sound wakes up an inmate, who looks up.

WARDEN (V.O.)

Inmates! This is Warden Clapp! I've  
got fifteen men guards, armed to  
the teeth with rifles and shotguns!

INT. GUARD ROOM - NIGHT

Hell Harbinger senses something below.

HELL HARBINGER

Are you completely certain? Long as  
you heart beats, you have a chance.

MAHAFFEY

I've hurt people. Even before  
today.

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

The other inmates lying around wake up.

WARDEN (V.O.)

Any one of you sons of bitches who  
are found outside your cell when we  
come inside, will be shot on sight!

The inmates look terrified.

INT. GUARD ROOM - NIGHT

MAHAFFEY

I'm a piece of shit who deserves to  
die!

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Inmates dash into their cells and close the doors.

INT. GUARD ROOM - NIGHT

HELL HARBINGER

Your time is about up.

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

Guards swarm inside. They notice one cell has a door open  
and is empty.

WARDEN (O.S.)

Find Mahaffey! Shoot on sight!

INT. GUARD ROOM - NIGHT

HELL HARBINGER

You really think your life has no  
value? You really think you have no  
chance of making up for everything  
you've done?

Mahaffey thinks on this.

MAHAFFEY

I...I...I want a chance. That's all  
I'm asking for...a chance.

(CONTINUED)

ZACK (O.S.)  
Warden! He's upstairs!

WARDEN (O.S.)  
Go! Shoot on sight!

MAHAFFEY  
Give me a second chance...

The guards burst inside. No one is there.

INT. CELL BLOCK - NIGHT

The guards find Mahaffey alone in his cell, the door closed.

ZACK  
Warden, you gotta believe me. I  
just saw him back there. Him  
and...*something else*.

SCHRAFT  
Called himself...the Hell  
Harbinger. That bogeyman these  
creeps whisper about in the dark of  
night.

WARDEN (O.S.)  
I ain't putting that shit on the  
official report. We told the  
inmates to surrender, and *all of*  
*them* returned to their cells  
without incident.

We hear him walking away. Zack approaches the door.

ZACK  
Consider this your last chance,  
inmate.

MAHAFFEY  
I know. Trust me, I know.

EXT. PRISON YARD - NIGHT

Up on a rooftop, the Hell Harbinger looks down at the  
prison. He looks up at the light of the moon above.

ROLL CREDITS.