

THE TERRIBLE GOD (ending)

BY

Banshee Blackwell

The Written Confession of Douglas Tully:

All of my life, I've been unlucky. But when I met Mavis, I thought maybe my luck had turned. She was the most beautiful girl I've ever known, smart, kind, and loyal. Five times I asked her to marry me, and when she finally said yes the sixth time, I truly thought no one was as fortunate as I. But when our Fredrick was born, the doctors said she shouldn't have any more children or her health would deteriorate. However, we wanted a big family. From Fredrick to Helena to Beth to Thomas, all the children had taken something from her after they were born. She would recover, then fall ill, and the cycle would repeat. She almost died giving birth to Thomas, which is when she decided to stop bearing children.

The kids grew up to be healthy, spry things. Seemingly good souls who cared about their mother dearly, but I never felt at ease around them. I felt love towards them, like any father would feel towards his offspring, but I approached them sternly to quell them from acting out.

Soon, they grew up: Fredrick moved out of the house to start a family of his own, Helena was on track to go to university, and Beth and Thomas earned high marks in school.

One day, when the girls were in town with their mother, Thomas left to play near the barn. I was busy looking over some papers at my desk. I heard a loud *THUD* come from outside. Thomas had climbed the barn and fallen off it. I ran to him but recoiled at the sight, for it was a bloody one. His head had split open, a puce pink peeking out from behind his head as he lay twitching in the grass. I knew I had to move him away from the animals, so I rushed to get a blanket from the house and wrap him in it, moving him to the porch. I waited for Mavis to come back before calling the police because I knew they wouldn't have let her see him if they had gotten there before her. I sat on the porch waiting. An hour had passed, and they finally came home. Mavis kept the girls as far away from the sight as possible, sending them off near the tree line. She screamed and cried over his body, and I called Fredrick to tell him the news, and *then* the police. Mavis stayed in bed for weeks after the incident, occasionally walking like a spectre through the house, moaning and weeping.

A year later, everything got worse. All I wanted was my family, and they turned away from me, gradually. They conspired against me. I became paranoid that Beth was planning to run away. It came to a head one night when I was coming home late one night, and I saw through the window, Helena and Beth talking. They nodded at each other, and Beth went upstairs quickly. I knew if there was any night she'd leave, it'd be tonight. I opened the door to see Helena still in the kitchen. I demanded to know what she and her sister were planning, when she responded as if she didn't know what I was referring to, my simmering anger boiled over. I grabbed the nape of her dress and dragged her outside towards the cellar, unsure of what I was going to do next. She shrieked, begging me to let her go. I couldn't stand to hear the sound of her cries but I kept going. Mavis soon rushed from her place in the parlor to the scene and put her hands on me, telling me to let her go. I struck her, something I would never do of sound mind. She crumpled to the ground, I only then realized just how frail she was.

I threw Helena down the cellar and chained the door shut. I heard her hit the floor hard but get back up and ascend the ladder. The doors would respond to her pushing but never give in.

I saw Mavis crawling away from me and I had to think fast. I grabbed the axe that lay near the cellar and advanced towards her, '*Monster!*' she cried, '*These are your children!*'

She repeated that over and over until she finally choked after I buried the axe in her chest. I heard the crack of her ribs. She gurgled out blood, still attempting to speak and I brought the axe down again and again, splitting skin, opening a wound, until she finally lay still, mouth agape and bloody. Immediately, I dropped the axe and backed away from the body. In shock, I began to call for Beth, my dear Beth...

I ran back into the house. I heard her footfall above me, she was still in her room. I called after her continuously, trying to find her upstairs. At her door, I knocked on it calmly. I twisted the door knob but it was locked. I was sent into a frenzy, I pushed on the door until finally, it broke open. The room was deserted; however, the window was wide open. I stuck my head out of it and looked for her outside in the dimming light. I heard her voice coming from the side of the house where the cellar was. '*I'll get you out, Lena!*' she said I heard the heavy *CLANK* of the axe on chains. I yelled her name again and all went quiet. Suddenly, her little form, carrying the axe, ran from the house to the woodland on the far side of the property.

Before running back outside, I grabbed my shotgun from my bedroom. I, then, followed her into the woods.

I could barely see out there, as day had now turned to night. I was jumpy, I just wanted my baby girl back. The one who would dance and sing and talk to me. After nearly a half hour in the forest, I began to lament the fact that I had likely lost her. I worried— how would she find her way back, and with only an axe to protect her...

Behind me, I heard a rustling and the snapping of a twig from far away, the leaves crunching getting closer and closer and closer— acting quickly, I reeled around and pulled the trigger...

And there lay Beth about ten feet away from me, bleeding out, axe thrown from her hand.

She had called the police just before Mavis began screaming. They arrived shortly after I had gotten back to the house. I sat on the porch steps, just as I had done with Thomas.

They let Helena out of the cellar after I was securely away in the police car.

Apparently, they found Beth's journal. They say it's damning, I said it was likely all lies.

Signed,

D. Tully

24 April, 19—