

THE CONFESSION

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INT. PRISON CELL

The grimy and suffocating walls of a prison cell. The flickering neon lights reveal a PRISONER (30s) on his bed, eyes closed. On the table next to the bed is a plate; on it, a single, red olive pit - his last meal.

AUDIO: Footsteps echoing down the hallway outside.

A prison guard appears, bringing with him a PRIEST (50s), complete in his cassock and Bible.

The guard comes in and slaps the PRISONER awake.

PRIEST

It is nearly the hour. Are you ready
for your final confession?

The PRISONER sits up slowly on his bare and steel bed. He doesn't look at the PRIEST. The PRIEST's overpowering standing figure casts a shadow on him.

PRISONER

What do I have to confess, Father?

PRIEST

This is a favour bestowed to you,
criminal. Your life here might be
forfeited, but you can still redeem
yourself if you ask for God's
forgiveness.

The PRISONER looks out his tiny window, his only connection to the outside world. The little square of blue sky stands out in stark contrast against the grey of their surroundings.

PRISONER

It's hard to remember there's a God
when you've been in this place for as
long as I have.

The PRIEST has heard such sentences before. He continues, calm and collected.

PRIEST

God is always with us, and his love
eternal. Be truthful, and you will be
absolved.

The PRISONER pauses.

PRISONER

All right. Here's my confession.
Forgive me, Father. I've sinned.

He clasps his hands together in praying, and looks at the
PRIEST for the first time.

PRISONER (cont'd)

A few days ago, my son came to see
me. He's three years old now. But he
doesn't recognise me. He doesn't know
me, and he'll never do. That's my
fault.

PRIEST

Do not worry. God will watch over
him, make sure he remembers you and
love you, in your family's loving
care.

PRISONER

What family, Father? I'll be gone.
His mother is an alcoholic. There's
no one else. What kind of loving care
are you talking about?

PRIEST

Your mother. Your father. They still
live?

PRISONER

Never knew my Dad. Mom died several
months ago. Cancer.
(smiles ruefully)
And I wouldn't even know, if I hadn't
ask for her chicken soup as my last
meal. They came to her house, and
found her on her death bed.

The PRIEST looks at the plate on the table, with the single
olive pit on it, like a final period.

PRIEST

So you chose to have that instead?

The PRISONER picks the plate up, toying with the discarded
pit.

PRISONER

Fitting, don't you think?
(MORE)

PRISONER (cont'd)

(pause)

Her final moments must have been so painful, but her only son wasn't even there to hold her hand.

PRIEST

She rests in peace, and is with Him now. If you repent and pray for your soul, perhaps the pearly gates will also open for you.

PRISONER

Is that so?

The PRISONER looks at the PRIEST, challenging.

PRISONER (cont'd)

Yesterday, a man died. A fellow prisoner. A friend. Do you know what happened?

(pause)

We were queuing for lunch, and he cut in line. So a guard beat him to death.

(laughs)

We're all on death row anyway, so what do our lives matter?

PRIEST

All lives have their own place in the eyes of God.

PRISONER

Hey, I was wondering. I killed a man. That guard also killed a man. Will the guard need to repent for his sins as well?

The PRIEST struggles for a reply.

PRIEST

Each of us will have to answer to God, in our own time. Do not concern yourself with things beyond your understanding.

PRISONER

Can any of us really claim innocence, though? Aren't we all guilty of something? What about you, father? Do you repent, too? Haven't all priests got a free ticket to heaven?

PRIEST
(uncomfortable)
As I said, it does not concern you.
Finish your confession.

The PRISONER still plays with the olive on the plate. The metal fork makes screeching noises against the ceramic.

PRIEST (cont'd)
(more urgently)
Finish your confession.

PRISONER
I have nothing more to say.

PRIEST
Do you not wish to talk about what brought you to this place?

PRISONER
Do you know what I did?

The PRIEST shakes his head.

PRIEST
You took a life, and that's all I need to-

PRISONER
He raped my little sister when she was ten years old.

Silence.

PRISONER (cont'd)
She was in the choir for the church. Then for five years after that, every week, on Sundays. The day of the Lord. We moved to another town, but it never stopped haunting her. Eventually, she committed suicide. Forever condemned in hell, right?

As the PRISONER talks, he uses the fork to stab the olive with more and more force.

PRISONER (cont'd)
When I came back a few years ago, I went to see him. Wondered if he regretted anything. There wasn't any remorse in his eyes, Father. Nothing. So I slit his throat.

At the last sentence, the plate slips from his hand and crashes on the floor.

PRISONER (cont'd)

He was a priest. Do you tell me that he goes to heaven, too?

The PRIEST is dumbstruck. The guard runs in at the commotion and restrains the prisoner.

PRIEST

Everything happens for a reason. God works in mysterious ways.

PRISONER

Here's my last confession. I regret that I killed him so quickly. He didn't suffer like she did, and that's a real pity, 'Father'. A real fucking pity.

The PRISONER struggles against the manhandling, and spits at the PRIEST. The guard starts hitting him with his cane. Another guard comes in and leads the PRIEST away. They exits.

The PRIEST walks away from the cell, but he finds himself looking back behind his shoulder. Yet, all he could hear is the PRISONER's stifled grunts and groans, and the sound of flesh being beaten.

FADE OUT