

Redeemer

February OWC entry

FADE IN:

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Rusty iron bars. A metal slab for a bed. A broken toilet.

It's a rotten place, crawling with roaches and other similar critters. Dim light emits from a hanging light bulb.

Resting against the wall is a slim man in his mid-thirties wearing a blue prison jumpsuit; eyes covered over greasy hair, his hands a dirty black--MAYNARD.

He looks through the bars of his cell, seeing nothing but blackness. Distant, collective snoring can be heard.

VOICE (O.S)

They're gonna kill us, man. I told
you. They're gonna kill us...

The voice comes from his neighboring inmate--MARLON. In another cell. Resting on his cold, hard bed. Built and dripping with sweat.

MARLON

Stupid, stupid...fucking stupid,
that's what it was. What we did...

MAYNARD

You know, for a muscle-bound fool
like you, you sure act like a pansy
when you feel like you're in
trouble.

Maynard slowly moves his head to stare at Marlon.

MAYNARD

(cont'd)

It's me they're coming for. If you
just be quiet and let them do their
job, you should be okay.

Marlon doesn't reply. Only his heavy, desperate breathing can be heard.

MAYNARD

(cont'd)

Whatever they do to me couldn't be
any worse than what they would do
to me on the chair.

MARLON (O.S)

Are you fucking crazy? They'll rape you and beat you 'til you're a shit-stained piece of dead meat. Chair's nothing compared to what you got comin' bro.

MAYNARD

I don't care about the pain. Dying in front of all those people--in front of her...it'd be just...

He trails off. He slicks his hair back with his hand, revealing a big scar on his face. He shakes his head.

MAYNARD

I just wouldn't bear it. I know I wouldn't.

MARLON

So why'd you do it, then?

MAYNARD

The killing, the beating....I don't know what you wanna know. I've done lots of different shit in this fucking joint.

MARLON

No, I'm talking outside these fucking walls, man. I know you loved them. I mean, you talk like you did. If I had known you outside this fucking place you'd be the last person I'd suspect for murder.

Maynard puts his hands on his hair, eyes filling with anger...

EXT. STREETS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A bald man with a SKULL tattoo on the back of his head is talking to Maynard--clean, before prison.

SKULL MAN

You really think you're tough shit, don't you? You're way behind in your debts, man...

The Skull Man's lackeys gather around, wielding crowbars and metal pipes.

SKULL MAN

I wouldn't expect a fucking junkie like you to be aware of the danger of not paying for his fix. But remember, people like us can make other people...disappear....

INT. MAYNARD'S HOUSE - DAY

Maynard rushes in, tears in his eyes.

He runs towards his bedroom to see a naked WOMAN--dead and bloodied on his bed. He screams in a rage and grabs her.

He cries uncontrollably until a sudden realization crosses his mind--he runs to another bedroom...pink walls--a child's bedroom.

In the middle of the room stands a seven year-old girl--MEL--holding a dead puppy in her arms, bullet-holes on its chest.

Maynard stands, frozen still. Shock, pain, confusion, all emotions rolled up into one.

The child's crazed stare is fixed on Maynard, casting blame.

SKULL MAN (V.O)

I would never hurt a child. That's way below my standards. Just remember, Mel--it's your daddy's fault.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Maynard's face has scrunched up into a twisted contortion of pain and regret. Marlon can't take his eyes off him.

MARLON

Geez, man. All that for a fucking fix?

INT. MAYNARD'S HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Maynard plops himself down on his couch--blood on his clothes, wide eyes--completely insane by now.

He lights a cigarette and sucks on it slowly.

He sees a briefcase on the table and he opens it...three syringes.

A little note is attached to them--"my condolences"

He flips it around--"consider yourself redeemed"

Maynard scoffs and sticks the needles in like it was nothing. Mel watches, sitting on one of the stair steps.

His head spins, his vision distorts. Completely strung out. Sirens wail in the background.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Back in the cell. Maynard has tears in his eyes now.

MAYNARD

I always wondered how someone could have so much control over people. Just exploiting weaknesses, pulling strings. Sounds a lot harder than it really is. They pulled my strings no problem. I might as well have killed her myself.

MARLON

Why? I mean, you didn't do shit, man.

MAYNARD

I didn't do shit to save my family, I didn't do shit to keep them out of this...fucking addiction--this fucking problem of mine. There's no redemption for what I caused--not a damn bit of it. And I deserve every last load of pain that I'm about to get.

Footsteps and voices echo hollowly in the background...

GUARD (O.S)

Dang, you guys sure ain't minding getting your hands dirty.

MAN (O.S)

Don't worry. It won't be to long before he's down to a dead, bloody pulp.

GUARD (O.S)

Nah, take your fucking time. No
else works around this block but
me.

Marlon instantly puts himself in a sleeping position, facing
the wall, hiding his face.

MAYNARD

Remember, just shut up and let 'em
do what they came to do.

Marlon closes his eyes shut and whispers incoherent
mumblings, more scared than Maynard himself.

Five men appear in front of Maynard's cell, through the iron
bars. One of them is a prison GUARD--he opens the door with
his key and the other four men enter slowly, menacingly.

Amongst them is the Skull Man.

SKULL MAN

Maynard! Long time no see, buddy.

Maynard looks up at them, his face blank. One of Skull's
LACKEYS laughs.

LACKEY

Looks like your execution's gonna
be rushed a little. Hope you don't
mind.

Maynard rolls his eyes, not intimidated in the least.

MAYNARD

I don't mind...

Maynard stands up in a wobbly stance and punches the Skull
Man squarely in the face. He spits out a tooth and a wad of
blood. The rest of the men look shocked beyond belief.

The Skull Man laughs bitterly as he returns the blow--one
hard punch to the gut, another to the face. Maynard drops to
the ground.

The Skull Man's lackeys arm themselves with brass knuckles
and hit Maynard without mercy over his entire body.

Marlon covers his ears as he hears the sound of bones
crunching and Maynard grunting in pain. He prays under his
breath...

SKULL MAN (O.S)
Don't worry Marlon-boy! We ain't
coming for you yet.

The men continue beating a barely-breathing Maynard as the Skull Man grabs the guard's stun-baton.

He stands over a half-conscious, bloodied Maynard as he keeps touching his busted lip.

SKULL MAN
I guess you really are tough shit.

The Skull Man's men restrain Maynard as he shocks him repeatedly.

Maynard screams through clenched teeth. Marlon is on the verge of tears.

Quick flashes...

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

-Maynard's wife screams through clenched teeth just like Maynard. Both younger.

-Maynard's wife carries a baby in her arms, wrapped in a blanket. Maynard tenderly carries it and gently kisses its head.

INT. MAYNARD'S HOUSE - DAY

Several children and their parents are gathered around a dining table.

A four year-old, toothless Mel sitting on her mother's lap blows on birthday candles. Her friends cheer.

Maynard brings her a box with holes in it. Mel opens it with curiosity and a puppy comes out. She smiles in delight.

EXT. KINDERGARTEN - DAY

A slightly older Mel runs towards the younger Maynard.

He lifts her up and she shows him a drawing of her entire family, dog included.

END FLASHES.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

Back to the torture. Maynard finally stops screaming. Too weak to move or think.

The Skull Man grabs the guard's nightstick and hits Maynard hard over the head with it.

A brief image flashes in Maynard's mind--Mel. Mel. Mel.

Tears stream from his eyes as his face slowly twists into a calm smile.

The Skull Man looks down at him in shock and confusion.

Maynard stops breathing. Marlon quits his crying as the noises finally stop.

Silence. The Skull Man stares at Maynard's body, unsure of what he just witnessed. He shuts his eyes and reopens them, trying to shake it off--remorse?

After some hesitation, he throws the nightstick and the stun-baton to the ground and walks out of the cell.

SKULL MAN

Clean this shit up. Pin it on
somebody. We comin' for you later,
Marlon. Wonder what you story will
be....?

Marlon closes his eyes and breaths desperately as the Skull Man and his guys walk out of the cell. The lights shut down.

ROLL CREDITS--

THE END.