

COMMUNION

by

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FADE IN:

1 INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

A metal table and chair, bolted to the floor in a white cell.

A prisoner in an orange jumpsuit - CARTER - is sitting in the chair facing us. Gazing into camera serenely.

An INMATE TRUSTEE appears in front of him. Places a tray and two beer cans on the table. The food on the tray looks delicious: steak, mashed potatoes, pie and cream, the works.

The trustee edges out past the WARDEN, who's in the doorway.

WARDEN

This is it, Carter. The governor has turned down your final appeal.

(beat)

Enjoy your damn meal.

CARTER

Thank you, Warden. I will.

WARDEN

Not as much as I'll enjoy seeing you die. Believe me.

CARTER

(thoughtfully)

You've made my life hell for fifteen years. Why do you hate me?

WARDEN

Fifteen years and not a word of remorse. You took three lives. And spare me the shit about protecting your family. I've heard it.

CARTER

Ever heard of forgiveness, though?

WARDEN

Not for a sinner like you.

Carter picks up his knife and fork.

CARTER

What's the last meal you ate, Warden?

WARDEN

A sandwich.

CARTER

What was it like?

WARDEN

Stale.

Carter smiles. He pops a beer can. Cuts a slice of juicy steak. Eats it, and washes it down. He smacks his lips.

WARDEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Oh dear God.

Carter looks up. The Warden is ashen faced. He points at the TV set behind Carter. It's showing the President's announcement. Carter swivels around to look at it. They both gaze at the images, and the captions beneath them.

CARTER

This is it, Warden.

WARDEN

But... I'm not ready!

Carter picks up a bible from the table, beside the tray. He flicks to the end. He knows what he's looking for. He reads:

CARTER

"Then I looked, and saw a pale horse.
Its rider's name was Death."

Carter lays the bible down. He gazes intently at the Warden.

The Warden is trembling. His face contorts, collapses into a mess of terror and grief. He stumbles to Carter and stands beside him, shaking, looking down at him, full of dread.

WARDEN

(whispering)

I'm sorry.

Carter says nothing. The Warden falls to his knees.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

(choked)

I'm sorry!

The Warden lowers his head. His shoulders heave with sobs.

Carter calmly cuts a morsel of steak and spears it on the fork. He reaches out and tenderly places a hand beneath the Warden's chin and raises his head. Carter offers the morsel.

CARTER

Eat.

The Warden eats. Carter brings the beer can to the Warden's lips. He sips. Carter wipes the rim with a napkin.

Carter raises one hand above the Warden's head in benediction.

The light behind the two men grows brighter until they're in silhouette: the kneeling penitent and his confessor.

END.