

INT. SUPERMAX CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - CELL 1649 - DAY

A maximum-security prison cell in a large, noisy prison. There are two beds and a toilet. A few photographs are pasted to the wall. Recently-convicted introvert murder-rapist GARY GOODIS, 30, lies on his bed reading a dog-eared paperback novel. CORRECTIONS GUARD DREYER leads ELDRIDGE THOMPSON, 60, into the cell. A loud BUZZER rings out as the door unlocks. The guard closes the door behind Eldridge and leaves.

ELDRIDGE
Goddamned lockdown. Here's your
mail, kid.

He throws a letter onto Gary's bed and crosses to his own. Gary looks at the letter.

GARY
Thanks.

ELDRIDGE
Another letter from your momma?

GARY
Yeah.

ELDRIDGE
Prolific writer, that lady. She
still think you're all innocent?

Gary ignores this and opens his letter. Eldridge sits and opens a small mail package of his own. Inside are a cassette tape, a note, and a photograph of a teenaged boy standing next to a car. Eldridge looks at the photo.

ELDRIDGE
Heh. How about that. The kid's all
grown up...

Gary ignores Eldridge and reads his own letter. Eldridge puts aside the contents of his package and turns his attention to Gary. He watches him read. Then:

ELDRIDGE
Hey Gare. You seen this? The clover
here? You see that?

Eldridge holds out his right hand and shows Gary a small GREEN CLOVER tattooed between his knuckles.

ELDRIDGE
That's the sign of the Brotherhood.
We protect the white man in here.
(MORE)

ELDRIDGE (cont'd)
Bosses were wondering whether you'd like to meet with them, maybe wear the colors yourself.

Gary looks at the tattoo and glances at Eldridge without making eye-contact.

GARY
I-- I don't know...

ELDRIDGE
Well, I put up your name. Figured you could use some friends. You still haven't come out into the yard yet. Been a while. People are talking.

GARY
I was working on my appeal.

ELDRIDGE
Shit scared is more like it. I know your appeal was rejected, kid. You should drop the act. Everybody knows what happened with that girl and her brother. You raped her. Shot them both. Got a life sentence for it. You should think about admitting it and getting on with things.

Gary thinks on this for a long MOMENT.

ELDRIDGE
But the real question is, are you ready to defend your race? Bosses want an answer at dinner tonight.

GARY
I... I don't-- Why are they even interested in me?

ELDRIDGE
I put your name up. I vouched for you. And you're a lifer. Makes you valuable. Sometimes guys on the outside need shit done on the inside -- little "favours." Lifer's got nothing to lose. You off a guy in the kitchen, what's ten more years on forever, right? Guy like you gets taken care of real good.

A long PAUSE. Gary thinks hard. Eldridge clears his throat.

ELDRIDGE

But if you want in, you gotta tell me the truth about that girl. 'Cause if for whatever reason you really are just some poor asshole that got railroaded, it ain't going to do any of us any good to be associated with each other.

Gary looks at the letter from his mom. Slowly:

GARY

So you'll protect me, but only if I did it.

ELDRIDGE

What would be the point otherwise? Yeah. Nobody'll touch you. You'll be a fucking king. We got guards, we got smuggling, drugs, we can reach out to any prison in America. You'd be a part of that. Otherwise you're a nobody rapist dealing with the niggers and spics alone, and that's not an easy ride.

Gary reflects on this as another BUZZER sounds in the distance.

ELDRIDGE

That was D Block. They're switching the order again. Could be us next.

GARY

Okay, hypothetically speaking, then.

ELDRIDGE

What's that?

GARY

Hypothetically, I killed her. And the other one.

ELDRIDGE

That a fact?

GARY

Hypothetically.

ELDRIDGE

And what'd that feel like, hypothetically?

GARY
It felt... It felt good.

ELDRIDGE
Good.

GARY
Yeah.

ELDRIDGE
Yeah. That's what I figured. That wasn't so hard, now was it?
(hears another BUZZER in the distance)
There goes C Block. As soon as we're unlocked, I'll take you to meet the guys, get you marked up. You won't have to worry no more.

GARY
...Thanks.

ELDRIDGE
Gotta protect the tribe, right? You want to play a quick game of cards or something? I'm getting antsy here. You got your deck under there?

Gary turns his back on Eldridge to remove a deck of cards from beneath his bed. Eldridge slides a box out from the corner to serve as a table.

GARY
You ain't gonna tell my momma, are you?

ELDRIDGE
Don't worry kid.

Eldridge GRABS Gary from behind, MUFFLING his mouth with one hand and restraining his arms with the other. He STABS him in the stomach with a SHIV.

ELDRIDGE
Just doing a favor for a guy on the outside.

Eldridge's hand MUFFLES Gary's yelps. He pulls the shiv upward toward Gary's heart.

FADE TO BLACK.