

SCENE 1

OVER BLACK:

MAX (V.O.)

I've been told it's not normal to be invited to the execution of the man that murdered my brother by the murderer himself. Then again, most people's brothers aren't murdered. Still, I figured the least I could do was... show my face.

The sound of a large door slamming echos.

INT. PRISON - DAY

MAX MAYHEW, 40s, eclectic, takes a long time to remove items. First, his tinted glasses, then his bucket hat, revealing he's balding, his watch, his belt which has a big buckle on it, a rather large pocket knife, his cigarettes, and his joints. As he does so, he shows his medicinal card. All he has left on his Canadian tuxedo - straight denim. They even take his toothpick. They try taking his notepad, but he yanks it away from them. They let him keep it. Everyone else is in black.

MAX (V.O.)

It was my first execution so I didn't know what to expect. As soon as you walk in, they take everything but your pride. They say it's not out of suspicion but your protection. Typical government.

Max and several others are ID checked. They then get separated into three groups. There's signs on the wall.

The first sign says "victim's relatives". A couple people stand there. The next sign says "media". A couple people stand there. The last sign says "inmate's chosen witnesses". Max stands alone under that sign.

MAX (V.O.)

Then you get filed into lines. Relatives, of the person being executed, media, and the inmate's chosen witnesses. I stood there alone - with an odd sense of importance.

The others look at Max. Then, TWO GUARDS enter. Max checks the time on the wall. The Guards start talking.

MAX (V.O.)

The Guards talk at you for a little while. Saying "should there be a prison break or security threat please remain in place." Maybe instead of the guards talking to us, they should be guarding. I'd prefer not to be shived to death with a toilet brush.

The guards then take them, in their lines, to the execution waiting room.

MAX (V.O.)

After, you get transferred to the "viewing room", which, is an unsettling name to me. It's like we're at the zoo, but instead of the monkey enclosure, it's a human getting killed.

INT. VIEWING ROOM - DAY

The group enters. Max sits in the back right of the lined up chairs. The room is very sterile. Max takes out his notepad and starts writing.

MAX (V.O.)

The viewing room makes you want to die. It's sterile and cold. Devoid of life. Fitting.

The door shuts behind them and the blinds open. They can see execution room and chair.

MAX (V.O.)

When the blinds open, the medical chair seems to look more like a coffin than an object people usually heal on. But what was the saddest, was the single ceiling tile above the chair painted like the sky. Like that will bring them peace.

HAROLD BINNETI, 50s, enters in cuffs and prison attire. The DOCTOR and GUARDS are with him.

END SCENE.

SCENE 2

INT. TAVERN - DAY

LORETTA PARKER, 60s, prepares the bar. The bell dings as Max enters. There's people already in the bar. Max finds a corner seat and sits. He takes out a notebook - the one where he's writing his book in.

He carefully examines the bar before penning his first words.

MAX (V.O.)

I could never decide if those in a bar at 4PM on a weekday were full of life or devoid of it. Either way, I find myself here among them. This town is barely recognizable but the people remain the same - kind and isolated from the rest of the world.

A few more folks come in and greet their pals.

MAX (V.O.)

What happens here stays here forever. And that's my concern. If Harold is innocent, his accusation was no accident. It was purposeful. Someone has sat, quietly, with the truth for decades - waiting for the world to forget my brother.

Loretta takes a look at Max.

LORETTA

Well I'll be damned. Good to see you, Max.

Max looks up.

MAX

Loretta Parker.

LORETTA

I hear you're talking tonight.

MAX

I forgot how fast word spreads in this town.

LORETTA

Faster than a fat kid on cake. What do you want?

MAX

Nothing. I stopped drinking after Mom and Dad died.

LORETTA

I was sorry to hear about that.

MAX

Everyone dies one way or another.

A beat.

MAX (CONT'D)

How are you, Loretta?

LORETTA

Same old, same old. Nothing has changed in here since you thought you were slick with your fake ID.

MAX

What about out there?

LORETTA

New folks are in town, strip malls are being built, and I think we've had a dozen mayors in twenty years. The football team even won more than 3 games too.

MAX

What about the Sheriff? Janice tells me it's been O'Brien for a long time.

LORETTA

Seemingly the only thing that doesn't change.

A beat. Loretta pauses working.

LORETTA (CONT'D)

I know you're here to ask me some question about Benji. What do you want to know?

MAX

Harold Benetti.

LORETTA

Never liked him. He was a drunk, constantly getting thrown out. Cops took his license away for too many DUIs.

MAX

So it was normal he'd walk all the
way home?

LORETTA

It's the only way he got around
town.

END SCENE.