

CONFESSION

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FADE IN:

EXT. CHURCH - EARLY EVENING

A gothic church, illuminated stained glass windows casting a soft coloured luminance into the fading day.

INT. CONFESSION BOOTH - LIT

Darkness, lit by a shard of light.

Illuminating FATHER SAMUEL (40 something), a serious, pale individual with unfocused eyes. He makes the sign of the cross.

The confessional's lattice slides back. There only blackness behind it.

A deep, powerful voice announces its presence.

CHASE (O.S.)

I need to speak to you, Father. My last confession was two ears ago.

A creak of a wooden seat.

FATHER SAMUEL

May God, who has enlightened every heart, help you to know your transgressions and trust in His mercy.

The priest's head lowers, listening.

FATHER SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Tell me what troubles you, my son.

CHASE (O.S.)

I've followed a false god.

FATHER SAMUEL

You mean strayed from your true faith?

CHASE (O.S.)

You could say that.

FATHER SAMUEL

How did this happen, my son?

CHASE (O.S.)

Is it alright if I go back to the beginning?

FATHER SAMUEL

You must tell your story as you see fit.

CHASE (O.S.)

Well, I should begin with my own father. He was an atheist, a physicist actually, someone who believed in a "soulless universe and a slowly cooling world." I never believed that. I knew there was something more to it all. Once I read him a famous quote. Would you like to know what it was?

FATHER SAMUEL

I would.

CHASE (O.S.)

It goes, "the more I study science, the...

FATHER SAMUEL

"...the more I believe in the existence of God." I am familiar with the quote. Einstein.

CHASE (O.S.)

I heard it in one of your sermons. My father called me a superstitious fool. We never really spoke after that.

FATHER SAMUEL

I'm so sorry.

CHASE (O.S.)

Don't be. I felt free from then on. I grew closer to the church. I came to every one of your sermons and as I listened to them year on year, I became convinced that I had a calling.

FATHER SAMUEL

As do we all.

CHASE (O.S.)

I knew I had great things to accomplish.

(MORE)

CHASE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 God was speaking to me through you,
 or so I believed at the time.

FATHER SAMUEL
 And did you achieve these great
 things?

CHASE (O.S.)
 I created and ran a charity to feed
 and house the city's poor. At one
 point we were helping thousands
 every day.

FATHER SAMUEL
 Goodness.

CHASE (O.S.)
 The Saint Nicolas Project.

FATHER SAMUEL
 (Amazed)
 Michael?

Silence.

FATHER SAMUEL (CONT'D)
 Michael Chase?

CHASE (O.S.)
 Yes.

Father Samuel looks uncomfortable. He gives a soft cough into
 his fist.

FATHER SAMUEL
 Weren't there some irregularities?

CHASE (O.S.)
 You mean embezzlement? Oh, yes.
 People I trusted. My accountant
 most of all. He left me bankrupt. I
 came to you, remember. You told me
 to turn the other cheek.

FATHER SAMUEL
 (Spluttering)
 Well, what I meant was...

CHASE (O.S.)
 I didn't know the accountant was
 your cousin. The authorities pinned
 everything on me.

FATHER SAMUEL

I'm (A beat) sorry, Michael.

CHASE(O.S.)

I asked you to visit, remember? It was my thirty second birthday and I'd only been inside a few months. A check up revealed bone cancer. Not the type get better from. They released me on compassionate grounds. Some compassion, no money, no home, no way to pay for medical treatment. I came to see you, but you turned me away with a few coins. I guess I was an inconvenience. Who knew what I might tell people.

The priest's head slowly lifts.

FATHER SAMUEL

I'm so, so sorry.

CHASE (O.S.)

Don't be. You haven't heard the end of the story. I wound up in one of the shelters my project had started. The disease was eating me away. I knew I had months and months of nothing but agony ahead of me. So, I decided to end it all. Last week I reached out to you one last time to ask for the last rights before I died.

FATHER SAMUEL

But suicide is a sin. I may not bless one who chooses to take their own life.

CHASE (O.S.)

How about letting an innocent man die alone and in undeserved shame just to protect a guilty family member?

The priest cannot answer.

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

I begged God for a sign not to do it. There was nothing.

(MORE)

CHASE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So, outback in the alleyway, I hung
myself with a piece of old rope
they used to set out the washing.
And that's where I died.

Samuel's eyes widen.

FATHER SAMUEL
Did you say "died"?

CHASE (O.S.)
I did.

FATHER SAMUEL
But you're here now, talking to me.
So, someone came and revived you.

CHASE (O.S.)
Not "someone." I fell into a sort
of void, no angels, no Godly voice,
no holy spirit, just a cold
nothingness. I remember feeling
anger and rage. Most of all I
wanted revenge. That was when it
came to me.

FATHER SAMUEL
What came?

CHASE (O.S.)
I don't know its name. But it's
ancient, and very, very powerful. I
just recall the two red eyes and
the voice. It wasn't human.

FATHER SAMUEL
This thing is not the servants of
God.

CHASE (O.S.)
God was nowhere to be seen. This
thing only wanted to be free, and
me, I wanted revenge.

The priest swallows.

CHASE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So, we made a deal.

FATHER SAMUEL
(Nervously)
What kind of a deal?

CHASE (O.S.)

I guess you could say we became partners.

FATHER SAMUEL

Surely what you experienced was a creation of your unconscious mind.

CHASE (O.S.)

Seemed pretty real to me, and when I woke up I was healed. Not just healed, but stronger, faster, smarter. I got this power coursing through me.

FATHER SAMUEL

This, this is an abomination.

CHASE (O.S.)

Feels pretty good to me, like being on fucking cocaine. Now I can really do great things.

FATHER SAMUEL

They will be works of darkness, not of light.

CHASE (O.S.)

That light flickered out when I died. I told you I followed a false God. I was talking about *your* God; the God who never listens and sure as shit doesn't answer. I found my truth.

FATHER SAMUEL

(Scared but a hint of defiance)

Are you going to kill me, Michael?

CHASE

No Father Samuel. If you hadn't turned me away from the church and refused me the last rights, who knows where I'd be now? You created me.

FATHER SAMUEL

(Horrorified at the prospect)

No!

CHASE (O.S.)
I wanted you to meet your monster.
You failed your Christian duty and
you brought hell to this earth.

The words sink in slowly. Fear gives way to shock, horror and then finally despair.

FATHER SAMUEL
Oh, Lord God, forgive me. Forgive
me.

Two red eyes appear on the other side of the latticed screen.

CHASE (O.S.)
No Father, I don't think he will.
Now, if you'll excuse me, I have
people to kill.

The priest's head drops in despair.

The red eyes disappear.

The confessional door creaks open, then slams closed.

FADE OUT.