

SINNER

10 PAGE EXCERPT

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FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBIA - NIGHT

A full moon radiates in the clear sky over the quiet neighborhood.

A man, let's call him THE KILLER, wears a ball cap and carries a FEMALE BODY out of a two-story home.

The Killer lugs the body around a beat-down Camry.

Trunk opens. Body thrown inside.

The trunk slams closed and rattles the California license plate.

INT. CAMRY - CONTINUOUS

Various religious items cover the dashboard. Engine turns over.

EXT. SUBURBIA - CONTINUOUS

The Camry speeds past another car parked on the street then disappears.

EXT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Catholic church: *SAINTE MICHAEL'S PARISH*

The Camry drives past.

INT. CAMRY - MOVING - DAWN

The Killer bites his fingernails vigorously. We can see he is lips but nothing else.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

Endless foothills covered in sunflowers. The Camry flies down the highway.

EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

The sun begins its ascension as the Camry flies past a sign:
WELCOME TO NEVADA

EXT. DESERT - MOMENTS LATER

An arid wasteland. Nothingness everywhere.

The Killer pulls the corpse out of the trunk and drops it on the desert floor. He grabs a gallon of fuel.

Gasoline drenches the body.

Bloody, mangled fingernails strike a match.

The match lands in the hair and engulfs the body in flames.

Camry drives off. The body burns as the sun rises.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

A YOUNG CHILD (4), wide hazel eyes, with a messy head of hair, jumps out of bed. He wears stripped pajamas. He scampers out of his room...

APARTMENT - LIVING AREA - SAME

Claustrophobic. Catholic items scattered throughout the house, almost as if they were trying to keep something out.

The child walks into the living area and stops suddenly.

A WOMAN (late 20's), brown hair with a bullet wound through her skull, lies in a pool of her own blood. A pistol in her hand.

As the sun shines through the single window it illuminates a blood stained picture of The Virgin Mary holding Baby Jesus. Blood drips from the photo.

END FLASHBACK

INT. FATHER RIVERA'S ROOM - MORNING

Modest. A small wooden desk on the other side of the room next to a small closet. A large crucifix on the wall.

FATHER MIGUEL RIVERA (26), short brown hair complimented by a clean shaven face, sleeps peacefully. He flinches suddenly. For a brief moment he appears tormented but quickly calms.

Sunlight lurks towards Father Rivera's eyes. It hits. He wakes. His hazel eyes shimmer in the sunlight. A smile.

Father Rivera hops down from the bed too small for his stature, drops to his knees, and bows his head in prayer.

INT. RECTORY KITCHEN - MORNING

Quaint and compact. A small circular table in the middle of the room.

Father Rivera, dressed in his daily attire, (black shirt and slacks with a white clerical collar) pours a cup of coffee.

MONSIGNOR GALLO (O.S.)
Good morning, Miguel.

Meet MONSIGNOR CHARLES GALLO (73), a handsomely aged, tall man with a full head of silver hair. His presence demands respect but also exudes vices.

FATHER RIVERA
Morning, Monsignor.

MONSIGNOR GALLO
Has your back adjusted to our comfortable beds?

FATHER RIVERA
Thankful to have a bed.

MONSIGNOR GALLO
Very good, Miguel.

Monsignor Gallo smiles and pours a cup of joe.

Father Rivera has a seat at the table.

Peaceful silence.

MONSIGNOR GALLO (CONT'D)
I wonder if you could do me a favor. I'm suppose to hear confessions this morning but something's come up. Normally I wouldn't ask --

FATHER RIVERA
Not a problem.

MONSIGNOR GALLO
Oh. Thank you, Miguel.

Monsignor Gallo removes a key from his pocket and sets it on the table next to Father Rivera.

MONSIGNOR GALLO (CONT'D)
Don't lose it.

Monsignor Gallo smirks and hurries out of the kitchen.

INT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Match strikes.

Father Rivera lights a set of candles on the altar.

A presence fills the room.

Father Rivera genuflects towards the Sacristy, then continues towards the confessional.

CONFESSIONAL

Dark wood. A red light and a green light built into the side. One door. Above the door a sign: *MONSIGNOR GALLO*

Father Rivera smiles.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - SAME

The key unlocks the door.

Tight quarters. A lattice screen sections off the small room.

Father Rivera squeezes past the screen and slips into the seat. Flips the vacancy light on.

EXT. CONFESSIONAL - SAME

A green light turns on.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - SAME

Father Rivera opens a prayer book. Read quietly to himself.

The confessional door opens. Father Rivera flips the vacancy light off and hits another switch.

EXT. CONFESSIONAL - SAME

The green light turns off and a red bulb shines.

INT. CONFSSIONAL - SAME

As Father Rivera flips to the front of his prayer book he slices his finger. Blood gushes out and drips on the page.

The Killer kneels behind the grille.

FATHER RIVERA

In the name of the Father, the Son
and the Holy Spirit.

Both make the sign of the cross. Father Rivera sucks on his finger.

KILLER (O.S.)

Bless me, Father, for I have
sinned. It has been some time since
my last confession... these are my
sins... I've blasphemed. I've lied.
I've cursed.

Father Rivera examines his finger.

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

I've had impure thoughts about a
woman, and masturbated.

This catches Father Rivera's ear.

KILLER (CONT'D)

To be perfectly honest, Father, I
haven't gone to mass in quite
sometime.

FATHER RIVERA

Something brought you back.

KILLER

Yes, Father.

FATHER RIVERA

And what's that?

KILLER

Let's just say I'm the reason
Anjelica Callas and Ralph Habeeb
won't be attending mass this
morning.

Father Rivera is taken back. He attempts to look through the screen.

FATHER RIVERA

How so?

KILLER
They're no longer with us.

A beat.

FATHER RIVERA
Why? What did they do to deserve
such a thing?

KILLER
They were sinners, Father.

FATHER RIVERA
Aren't we all?

KILLER
We are. But how many of these
pious, pieces of shit are ready to
admit that? How many are ready to
die at moments notice? Not a single
one. Not even you. Not even I.

FATHER RIVERA
And their sins?

KILLER
They were coveters. They deserved
the fate God had chosen for them.

FATHER RIVERA
You believe God chose this?

KILLER
The Lord works in mysterious ways.

Father Rivera is stunned.

KILLER (CONT'D)
Be assured, Father, this is only
the beginning.

The Killer quickly exits the confessional.

FATHER RIVERA
Wait!

Father Rivera jumps up and rushes out of the confessional.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Father Rivera darts out of the confessional and scans the
pews.

The church doors swing closed as the Killer exits the church.

Father Rivera races towards the doors. Just as he arrives they fly open. SAMANTHA MOREN (60's), head covered in a veil, enters the church.

Frightened Father Rivera jumps back.

SAMANTHA MOREN
 Forgive me, Father. I didn't mean
 to startle you.

Only the back of the Killer is seen before the doors shut.

SAMANTHA MOREN (CONT'D)
 While I have you, there is
 something--

FATHER RIVERA
 Did you get a look at that man just
 now?

Samantha looks around confused.

SAMANTHA MOREN
 What man?

FATHER RIVERA
 The man that just left the church.

SAMANTHA MOREN
 You're the only person I've seen on
 their way out of here today.

Concerned. Sweat builds on Father Rivera's brow.

INT. SACRISTY - MOMENTS LATER

Mass robes hang near a mirror. Kitty corner, a small sink. Father Rivera runs to a trash can and vomits.

MONSIGNOR GALLO (O.S.)
 Are you feeling ill, Miguel?

Father Rivera emerges from the garbage.

Monsignor Gallo skulks behind.

Father Rivera wipes his mouth.

FATHER RIVERA
 No, Monsignor.

MONSIGNOR GALLO

How's my confessional treating you?
Be sure to keep it tidy.

FATHER RIVERA

Will do.

Father Rivera falters past Monsignor Gallo who watches with suspicion.

EXT. SUBURBIA - DAY

Two-story house taped off. The POLICE DEPARTMENT stands guard as news trucks and vans file in around the block.

CAPTAIN DALES(65), short and overweight with a depleting hair line, speaks with a busty blonde REPORTER(25).

REPORTER

Is it safe to say this is a crime
of passion?

CAPTAIN DALES

Yes, we've taken the husband,
Victor Callas, in for questioning.
We're just hoping that forensics
can find something so we can wrap
this thing up.

OFFICER VIC (O.S.)

Captain Dales?

Captain Dales turns to the young and eager OFFICER VIC.

OFFICER VIC (CONT'D)

I think you better take a look at
this.

SPECIAL AGENT CASE (O.S.)

You know...

SPECIAL AGENT THOMAS CASE (34), 6 foot, sleek and tan, with a thin beard and piercing black hair, swaggers onto the crime scene. His pretentiousness gleams through his game face as he removes his sun glasses.

SPECIAL AGENT CASE (CONT'D)

I think I better take a look first.

CAPTAIN DALES

Who the hell are you?

SPECIAL AGENT CASE
I'm the man taking over your crime
scene, Captain.

CAPTAIN DALES
On what authority?

Case flashes his badge: *SPECIAL AGENT: THOMAS CASE -- FBI*

SPECIAL AGENT CASE
Your missing person was located
across state lines.

CAPTAIN DALES
Where's Tosh?

SPECIAL AGENT CASE
At home with the shits.
Excuse me.

Case brushes shoulders with Captain Dales and continues
towards the house.

CAPTAIN DALES
(mumbles)
Prick.

SPECIAL AGENT CASE
(to Officer Vic)
Now, what did you want to show me?

Officer Vic turns to the neighboring house.

INT. RALPH HABEEB'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Luxurious. All hardwood. Officer Vic leads Case through the
home.

Up the stairs...

HALL

Case runs his fingers down the walls.

MASTER BEDROOM

An opulent bedroom, covered in blood. RALPH HABEEB'S blood
stained corpse lies in a pool of crimson atop white satin
sheets.

Above the bed, a blood smeared message: 9. *YOU SHALL NOT
COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE*

Case approaches the bed. Eye twitches as he scrutinizes the mess.

OFFICER VIC
Should I get CSI?

Case studies the scene.

Officer Vic runs off.

On the night stand, a church pamphlet: SAINT MICHAEL'S PARISH

Case grabs the pamphlet and looks back at the blood-smeared message.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The pews are filled. Some members of the CONGREGATION are forced to stand in the back.

Monsignor Gallo stands at the pulpit, in the middle of a pivotal sermon.

ALTAR

Father Rivera sits off to the side. Next to him, DEACON AYALA (53).

MONSIGNOR GALLO
The devil is the prince of this world. Never was he more the prince of this world than in these apocalyptic times --

Father Rivera scans the pews.

PEWS

Samantha Moren glares across the church at a thuggish looking MEXICAN MAN sitting with his FAMILY.

MONSIGNOR GALLO (O.S.)
So... Are you prepared? And if you're not, what are you going to do to be prepared?