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Hooked
by
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FADE IN

OPENING CREDITS THROUGHOUT:

1. EXT. PRINCES FREEWAY - DAY 1.

A black volvo travels along the Princes Freeway towards Geelong.

A phone conversation. FRANK's voice; gravelly, worn, insidious.

FRANK (O.S.)
I have something I need to tell you. (Pause). Something you need to know. Well... (laughs) not know, really... experience.

A sign:

"AVALON AIRPORT EXIT"

The indicator ticker.

2. INT. VOLVO - DAY 2.

The driver is TOM PRITCHARD (30) - handsome, intense, barrister. He takes the exit.

FRANK (O.S.) (CONT.)
My case launched your career. We both know that. Even though you failed me...

Tom drives over a bridge.

TOM (O.S.)
It was a matter of process, Frank. You were guilty as charged, we both know that. Your crimes... they were the most heinous...

A sign:

"BARWON PRISON"

TOM (O.S.) (CONT.)
You're just lucky this country doesn't carry the death sentence.

FRANK (O.S.)
Lucky... This cunt of a lucky cuntry.

TOM (O.S.)

Look. I don't know what you want from me. There's nothing I can do for you.

3. EXT. BARWON PRISON - DAY 3.

Concrete wall engraved with:

"H. M. PRISON BARWON"

Tom pulls over, delaying the inevitable. He is dreading this.

FRANK (O.S.)

I'm sick, Tom. I'm dying.

TOM (O.S.)

(awkward)

I'm sorry to hear that.

FRANK (O.S.)

No need for the false sympathy, Tom. I just wanted you to know...

4. EXT. BARWON PRISON - ON A SURVEILLANCE MONITOR 4.

Tom's car at the guard gate. A BUZZER lets him in.

5. INT. BARWON PRISON - DAY 5.

Tom makes his way through security scanners, is patted down, has his iris scanned.

FRANK (O.S.)(CONT.)

The things I did... I wasn't always like that. There's something I need to share with you. Before I die.

A PRISON GUARD escorts him to the Acacia ward - a high security unit for high risk prisoners.

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

You have to come. It's important...

6. INT. PRISON INTERVIEW CELL - DAY 6.

The guard unlocks a high security interview cell.

FRANK: 50ish, in prison uniform, is seated behind a metal desk in a metal chair. Both are bolted to the ground.

Frank's wrists and ankles are cuffed. He looks visibly unhealthy. His skin has a grey, ashen quality and his face is worn.

FRANK

I would rise to greet you if I could... but for these fucking things.

Indicating the chains around his wrists and ankles.

The guard leaves the room, locking the door on the way out.

Tom sits down opposite Frank. Avoids eye contact. Frank stares at him openly, his breath RASPY.

A moment of stillness, just the sound of Frank's breathing.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Curiosity killed the cat.

Tom jumps, rattled, only now becoming aware of the dangerousness of being alone in a cell with a mass murderer.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Chillax mate, I'm not going to kill you. Bit hard to in here...

TOM

What do you want from me?

FRANK

I have something for you. To be used in your defence of Doctor Phillip Rhapsis.

TOM

How do you know what cases I'm running?

FRANK

I get information in here. It travels (laughs) through the walls... Your guy. Your crim. You can get him off.

TOM

I'll certainly try to. That's my job.

FRANK

(unimpressed)

A guy called Herb Morton the key witness?

Tom nods.

FRANK(CONT'D)
He's a kiddy diddler. From way
back. Oh yeah.

7. INT. POST OFFICE - DAY (FLASH-FORWARD) 7.

A day later. Tom enters the post office and talks to a POST
OFFICE WORKER who directs him to the PO Box.

FRANK (CONT.) (O.S.)
There's a PO Box in Collins street.
In the post office. Pin code entry.
Box number same as the pin.
Remember this number: 3771.

Tom enters the pin. Opens the PO Box. Takes out a memory
stick.

FRANK(O.S.) (CONT'D)
Key that in and Herb's history.

(END FLASH-FORWARD)

8. INT. PRISON INTERVIEW CELL - DAY 8.

TOM
You called me here for this? So
that I can discredit the witness in
my case?

FRANK
Let's just call it a sweetener. No,
I called you here for something
else entirely.

TOM
What?

FRANK
I had a nice childhood. Nice
family. Had lovely kids. But you
know all that... Yes. Everything
was rosy...

Frank breathes with difficulty, exhausted by his speech.

TOM
That's the thing no-one could ever
work out. What made you snap...

FRANK
The best shrinks in this fucking
cuntry couldn't work it out.

TOM
No.

FRANK
Not you.

TOM
No.

FRANK
Not anyone.

TOM
But you. You know, don't you? What
made you do it?
(whispering)
Why did you lose it?

FRANK
Oh but I didn't lose it, Tom. It
was never anything that I lost. It
was something I gained.

Frank leans back in his chair, enjoying Tom's terror.

We see, attached to the back of his neck two HOOKS. They are
attached to a pair of tubes. Both the hooks and tubes have
the viscous fluidity of umbilical cords.

They rattle slightly before disappearing. But we know they
are somehow always there.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Do you remember Monty Ryan?

TOM
Monty Ryan...
(remembering)
He was a customer of yours. You
fixed his plumbing. He had a heart
attack or something. You called the
ambulance. Performed CPR on him,
almost saved his life, from memory.

FRANK
Almost saved his life my arse. No-
one ever looked into his story, did
they? Because no-one ever thinks
like that.

TOM
Like what?

FRANK
He was one sick puppy, that guy.

9. INT. BASEMENT - HALF LIGHT 9.

Chains. Whips. Tools of torture. We see two pairs of chained feet - dirty, bloody.

FRANK (O.S.) (CONT.)
He had a couple of women locked up
in his basement, a regular Ariel
Castro.

TOM (O.S.)
What? How... Who was he?

FRANK (O.S.)
Just a regular Joe. Like me.
Until...

One of the feet jerks violently.

10. INT. PRISON INTERVIEW CELL - DAY 10.

TOM
Until what?

FRANK
Do you believe in reincarnation?

TOM
I never really thought about it.

FRANK
Okay then. How about a genetic
defect, handed down through the
bloodline.

TOM
Okay.

FRANK
Well, this is a bit like that.
Except it's not passed on through
the genes...

11. EXT. CELL - DAY 11.

The guard checks the messages on his mobile. Chuckles to himself.

GUARD
(taps in a message)
Liza you are one hot babe and my...

A sudden noise from inside Frank's cell startles him.

GUARD (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Everything okay in there?

The guard looks in the window of the cell.

GUARD(CONT'D)
Shit!

TOM (O.S.)
(calling out)
Help! Something's happened to
Frank.

Keys jangling in the lock.

12. INT. FRANK'S CELL - DAY 12.

The guard enters the cell. Frank's torso stretched over the table - he is DEAD.

GUARD
Holy shit.

The guard pushes the emergency button on the wall. Emergency sirens sound. The guard runs to Frank and performs CPR. Another two GUARDS run in.

Tom watches the chaos unfold calmly. A moment. He smiles.

THEN

He snaps out of it and assists the guards, helping to move Frank's body to the floor. They are grateful for his efforts, though they all know it is futile.

END OPENING CREDITS.

FADE OUT

13. EXT. TOORAK HILLS - DAY 13.

Avenues of sweeping elms, the afternoon sun gently dappling through the leaves. The houses are mostly old, stately mansions. This is a very expensive part of town.

We come to:

A single-story weatherboard house with a simple garden and a white picket fence. It is humble by comparison to some of the neighbouring properties, but still swish enough for its posh location.

Focus on:

A FOR SALE SIGN

Beneath, in smaller writing:

UNDER INSTRUCTION FROM STATE TRUSTEES

14. INT. HOUSE - DAY

14.

Tom's wife, ALLISON: 30, pretty, heavily pregnant - is being shown through the house by a well dressed REAL ESTATE AGENT. Allison struggles to keep up with the agent.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

And this is the kitchen. Obviously in need of a bit of a birthday party, but at this price, what can you expect?

Allison looks at the tasteless lime-green Formica.

The agent looks at her expectantly. Nothing. The agent continues through the kitchen to the dining room.

REAL ESTATE AGENT(CONT'D)

The dining room... The advantage with this property is because of it being a vacant possession you could pretty much move in straight away, if that suits you...

The dining room is empty, painted a neutral white. Allison crinkles her nose.

ALLISON

Oh God, what's that smell?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Smell? I can't... The building has been empty for some time...

Allison is about to vomit.

ALLISON

I'm sorry, I'm going to... Where's the toilet?

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Oh! Gosh! This way, this way.

The agent rushes down a corridor, Allison in hot pursuit, hand over mouth. The agent pulls open the door to the bathroom. Allison rushes in. Makes it just in time.

The agent remains outside the bathroom, a disgusted expression on her face.