

CONTINUED:

Michael looks down the assembly line toward the inmate at position Number Five.

Lincoln.

As the Inmate Foreman moves on, the C.O. in charge barks out:

C.O.  
Break it down, cons. 10-minute  
chow!

INT. PRISON MESS - DAY

Michael collects his food. Briefly makes eye contact with Abruzzi across the mess. A knowing nod between the men.

Westmoreland's a few places back in the line.

Michael crosses to where Lincoln sits, takes a seat. They eat in silence. After a while, Michael nods.

MICHAEL  
Veronica came around yesterday.

Lincoln swallows some food. Thinks.

LINCOLN  
Still engaged to that guy?

Michael nods. Lincoln shakes his head. Regret there.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)  
Coulda been me.

MICHAEL  
If you hadn't self-destructed.

LINCOLN  
Give me a break. I was 18. Think I  
meant to knock up Lisa Fochs? I was  
just being stupid. Hurt.

(beat)  
By the time she came back, I didn't  
deserve her anymore anyhow.

He lets out a long breath.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)  
Shouldn't have pushed her away.

MICHAEL  
You pushed everyone away.

(CONTINUED)

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LINCOLN

I'm an anchor in here, man. All  
I'll do is drag 'em down with me.

The other INMATES begin to sit down around them.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Look straight ahead.

MICHAEL

Huh?

LINCOLN

Far as these guys are concerned,  
you and I aren't brothers. Just a  
couple of cons doing time.

MICHAEL

Corrections doesn't know. And by  
the time they do--

LINCOLN

It's not Corrections I'm worried  
about.

He makes eye contact with a group of NLRs (NAZI LOW RIDERS)  
that has just taken seats at the table beyond them. These  
swastika-drenched misanthropes make the Woods look like choir  
boys in comparison.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

You're all right now, 'cause I'm  
Shotcaller. But once I'm gone, your  
insurance policy isn't gonna be  
good here. 'Cause a lot of those  
guys out there, they want me dead.  
And once I'm gone, you're gonna be  
the next best thing.

Michael swallows some food, nods.

MICHAEL

I'm not planning on sticking around  
that long.

LINCOLN

You're not still serious--

MICHAEL

I'm not here on vacation.

LINCOLN

Bro. Getting outside those walls,  
that 's just the beginning. You need  
money--

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Michael eyes WESTMORELAND across the way.

MICHAEL

I'll have it.

LINCOLN

And you need people on the outside.  
People that can help you disappear--

MICHAEL

I've already got 'em.

His eyes fall across ABRUZZI .

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

They don't know it yet. But I've  
already got 'em.

LINCOLN

Look, whatever you got going, fill  
me in, 'cause I'm in the dark here.  
The goddamn void.

Michael casts a wary eye around, then:

MICHAEL

Chapparal Associates got the  
contract to design this place in  
'99. 2 year job. But the head  
partner got in way over his head.  
Couldn't crack it. Four million  
dollar contract. Biggest one they  
had. Of course he didn't want to  
lose it. So he sub-contracted out,  
an under-the-table sort of thing  
with a former associate. That guy  
was one of the partners at my firm.  
We basically ghost-wrote the plan--  
crossed the t's, dotted the i's,  
grouted the tiles, if you know what  
I'm saying.

Lincoln sits back, putting it all together.

LINCOLN

You've seen the blueprints.

MICHAEL

Better than that.

Beat.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I've got 'em on me.

INT. KITCHEN STOCK ROOM - DAY

Michael buses his plate, subtly steps into the stock room. A moment later, Lincoln follows suit. For a brief moment, they're out of sight of the C.O.s, Inmates. Michael unbuttons his shirt, slips it off.

LINCOLN

Good god. What happened to you?

For the first time, we get a good look at the ELABORATE TATTOO that covers the whole of his torso, arms. Not a square centimeter of virgin skin. It's glorious, a labyrinthine web of images--angels and devils, vines and barbed wire, rivers and roadways--all intertwined, all overlapping.

Lincoln marvels at the artwork. Beautiful, yes. But still:

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Am I supposed to be seeing something here?

MICHAEL

Look closer.

As Lincoln does, so do we. And like one of those 3-D posters that you have to stare at for a few minutes--until you stare through it--the underlying scheme suddenly becomes clear.

The angels and devils become cell blocks and buildings. The vines and barbed wire become walls and fences. The rivers and roadways become pipes and shafts beneath the surface.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

The train's leaving the station,  
Linc.

The tattoo expands, morphs, rising from Michael's body as the camera sinks deeper into it.

The real slowly gives way to the virtual; soon there is no stock room around us, no Lincoln, no Michael.

There are only BLUEPRINTS, hovering in space.

They morph one more time, two dimensions becoming three--

EXT. WALLENS RIDGE - DAY

--and suddenly we are outside the wire, outside the walls, looking at the whole of Wallens Ridge from a God's eye view.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

And you're gonna be on it.

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