

Cloning Christ

By John Spare

1-1HN8RM5

[johnearlspare@gmail.com](mailto:johnearlspare@gmail.com)

EXT. HIGH CLIFF - NIGHT

MOONLIGHT.

MURMURING OF VOICES in the distance.

**SUPER: April 3, 33 A.D.**

A LARGE MAN in a white hooded robe, **his face never revealed**, wears a SILVER VIAL from his neck. BLOOD surrounds his chin.

At his feet A BODY wrapped in linen, an arm exposed, clearly defined TEETH MARKS inside the elbow. He reaches to remove the cloth from the face of the corpse...

LOUD VOICE (OS)

Oy! I see 'em! Down there!

No time to see the deceased's face, he throws the body over his shoulder, races to the edge of the cliff. The sound of RUSHING WATER from below.

He looks over his shoulder. Approaching TORCHES clamor down the hillside. He heaves the body off the cliff, runs from the converging mob.

INT. MODERN CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

A well-dressed ATTORNEY (male, 40's) sits beside a DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMEN (male, 60's) at a conference table displaying a variety of RELICS, a speaker phone and a pair of WHITE LINEN GLOVES.

FEMALE VOICE (OS)

(from the speaker phone)

He's here now.

ATTORNEY

When you're bringing him back,  
emphasize the importance of being  
punctual will you please?

FEMALE VOICE (OS)

He's already on his way back, said he  
could find his own way.

The door opens revealing JESSE KRISTOFF (38, white), scraggy beard, shoulder length sloppy hair, wrinkled shorts, an old stained T-shirt which, if inspected closely, would lead to what he had for dinner, and a pair of flip flops.

He takes a seat directly across the table.

ATTORNEY

Dr. Kristoff, so glad you could make it. Now can we please get to it?

Kristoff looks at the relics from left to right, picks up the first item, a RUSTED SPIKE.

ATTORNEY (CONT.)

Whoa! The God damn gloves you demanded are right there!

The attorney turns to his distinguished client.

ATTORNEY (CONT.)

Sorry. I normally don't curse like that. Just hate when people don't follow agreed upon directions.

KRISTOFF

(inspecting the spike)  
And I hate it when people don't recall that gloves were to be available if I thought they would be needed.

He unceremoniously drops the spike, glances at the next item, a ratty, nearly falling apart WHITE TUNIC with a large faded red cross stitched to the center.

He moves to the next relic, a small PLANK OF WOOD. Picks it up, sniffs it.

ATTORNEY

Can you just use the gloves please?

Kristoff LICKS THE WOOD. Places it back down.

Stares at the next piece, a weathered CHARCOAL SKETCH, which changes his demeanor. He fishes in his pocket, pulls out a smudged pair of glasses, puts them on. He reaches for the gloves, puts them on, picks up the sketch.

The sketch portrays a woman watching a male figure sitting on a smaller figure. He holds it up to the light, places it down, takes off his gloves.

ATTORNEY

Well?

KRISTOFF

The fee?

The attorney looks to his client, who nods in the affirmative. The attorney reaches into his vest pocket, pulls out a thick BLUE ENVELOPE, slides it across the table to Kristoff.

Quickly, Kristoff thumbs through the cash, **stands**, stuffs the envelope and his cruddy glasses into his shorts.

KRISTOFF

(rapidly as he points to each item  
from left to right)

Crucifixion spike, fake. Nails were hammered, bent actually, to fight gravity, ensuring the condemned couldn't slide off the cross. Next. Not fake, but it's an original Ku Klux Klan robe, nothing that belonged to a Templar Knight. The wood, fake, third century. No one was ever crucified on this. The sketch, at first glance, looks good for the timeline, but I would need to do detailed testing.

He exits leaving the attorney baffled. The silent client nods, smiles. The attorney bolts up, races to the door.

INT. ATTORNEY OFFICE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kristoff pushes the elevator down button as the attorney marches directly to him.

ATTORNEY

That's it?

KRISTOFF

Unless he wants me to validate the sketch, yeah, that's it.

ATTORNEY

I know your reputation, Kristoff for Christ's sake, that's why I contacted you, but you've got ten grand of my client's cash in your pocket right now and you hardly looked at the relics.

DING. The elevator doors open. Kristoff steps in.

KRISTOFF

If you're aware of my reputation then  
you know you can count on the accuracy  
of my evaluations.

The doors close as the attorney pushes them back open.

ATTORNEY

I have a reputation as well asshole,  
and I'm not about to go back in there  
and tell my client he got nothing for  
his money.

Kristoff fishes the envelope from his pocket, haphazardly  
pulls out half the bills, hands them to the attorney.

KRISTOFF

Really want to help you're client?  
Tell him to find more reputable  
dealers and stay off the Dark Web.

The elevator door closes.

EXT. NYC STREET - NIGHT

A homeless BLACK WOMAN (40's), sweating in the intense summer  
heat, sits on the sidewalk outside a liquor store, a WOODEN  
CUP in her hands.

A PROSTITUTE (female, 20'S) paces the sidewalk.

Kristoff approaches, exhales cigarette smoke, pitches his  
butt into the street, opens the blue envelope. He drops a  
hundred dollar bill into the homeless woman's cup.

The hooker notices.

KRISTOFF

You should get out of this heat.

Kristoff opens the liquor store door.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Kristoff holds another crisp hundred at the register,

KRISTOFF

A lighter, too.

The CLERK slides a fifth of Wild Turkey towards him. The  
prostitute enters, relishes the cool air conditioning, sidles

up to Kristoff.

PROSTITUTE

Get the bigger bottle.

The clerk slides a **FLUORESCENT GREEN LIGHTER** and cigarettes across the counter.

INT. KRISTOFF'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

On the kitchen counter a **GIANT EMPTY BOTTLE OF WILD TURKEY** surrounded by two overfilled ashtrays.

FEMALE MOANING. MALE GRUNTING.

A modern, expensive apartment. Newspapers, textbooks, dirty laundry, pizza boxes, littered throughout.

A ragged, decorated **CHRISTMAS TREE** in the corner. Large, unlit bulbs strung around the brittle, decaying needles all over the floor. One dusty, faded wrapped **GIFT** sits underneath.

One wall is adorned with several academic awards, plaques, ribbons and a **photo of an ideal family: a beautiful blond WIFE (30's), a giggling, angelic DAUGHTER (6) and a much cleaner cut Kristoff.**

SILENCE.

The bedroom door opens. The prostitute, naked, sweating, holds her clothes and a wad of cash, closes the door.

INT. OLD FASHIONED LECTURE HALL - DAY

Projected images flash on a large screen.

KRISTOFF (OS)

Brahman. Buddha. Ra. Jesus. All supernatural beings reflected in some of the greatest works of art.

The presentation holds on a painting of Jesus. Behind the podium, Kristoff pauses to chug from a Gatorade bottle, walks into the ray of projector light, his face superimposed over that of Christ.

KRISTOFF

Did I leave someone out? Oh, of course...the Prophet Muhammad!

With great theatrics, Kristoff clicks for his next

slide...which is just a blank screen.

The students LAUGH. Kristoff takes another belt of Gatorade.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

We all know showing a depiction of Muhammad is not cool. It could result in a fatwa which is just a fancy word for death sentence.

In the front corner of the room, a female Graduate Assistant, IZZY, (late 20's, chubby, bookish) watches the lecture.

A REDHEAD STUDENT (white, 20's) raises her hand.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Yes?

REDHEAD

Why? I mean, we have paintings and statues of Jesus and Mary. Why are Muslims so uptight?

The door in the back of the lecture hall opens. A LARGE MUSCULAR MAN (white, 30's) drinking from a pint of milk, enters unnoticed, takes a seat in the back.

KRISTOFF

Not sure who you are referencing when you say we, but I wouldn't categorize Muslims as being uptight. The long and the short of it is they believe---

A defiant MUSLIM STUDENT (black, 20's) interrupts.

MUSLIM STUDENT

Christians are infidels. Nothing new there according to our faith.

The muscular man grits his teeth. Takes a gulp of milk.

KRISTOFF

Let's not get off point, OK?

MUSLIM STUDENT

Don't you think it's dismissive? Framing your lecture to ridicule our beliefs? The real topic here should be *why* depictions aren't permitted.

Kristoff rubs his temples with both hands.

KRISTOFF

OK, go ahead, enlighten the class.

MUSLIM STUDENT

We don't believe The Prophet can be depicted properly. Take Jesus, for example. That image you had up there, it's the epitome of false advertising.

Izzy crosses her arms, looks to the floor. Kristoff nods.

MUSLIM STUDENT (CONT.)

Intelligent worshipers know Jesus was a black man, but you would never know that looking at these paintings society keeps shoving down our throats. Isn't that right professor?

KRISTOFF

That's always been up for debate.

MUSLIM STUDENT

Let's debate it then. In fact, from my own studies it doesn't appear that Jesus was the Messiah at all.

From the rear of the room the large man stares daggers at the back of the Muslim student's head.

REDHEAD

(to the Muslim)

How can you say that? He performed miracles--

MUSLIM STUDENT

Name one. Or are you one of those Cafeteria Christians that chooses only what part of their faith is convenient?

REDHEAD

What about Jesus raising people from the dead? Or all the sightings of the Virgin Mary?

KRISTOFF

To be fair, no one has ever witnessed a miracle firsthand or can produce solid proof.



REDHEAD

My mother had cancer. We prayed, all of us. Everyone at my school even. Now she's cancer-free for over six years. That is a miracle.

MUSLIM STUDENT

Little girl, you may think Jesus cured your mother's melanoma--

REDHEAD

Cervical cancer!

KRISTOFF

OK, let's all take a deep breath here. If we're going to talk about miracles I think it's important we define what that word means. Let's try this.

Kristoff takes a cigarette from his pack. Holds it up in his right hand for all to see, locks eyes with Izzy. She silently slides her finger across her throat.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Ready to witness a miracle?

In a flash the cigarette seems to vanish.

REDHEAD

A magic trick isn't a miracle. It's in your other hand.

Kristoff opens his left hand. It's empty. Immediately it reappears in his right hand.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Who's to say a magic trick *isn't* a miracle? What if I do have supernatural powers? It's all about perception, and perception is reality.

REDHEAD

(to Kristoff)

Asshole.

(to the Muslim Student)

And fuck you!

The student bolts upright, gathers her belongings, storms from the lecture hall past the muscular man who never takes his eyes from the smirking shit stirring Muslim student.

Kristoff, pleased with himself, finishes his Gatorade.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

And this looks like the perfect stopping point for today. Maybe we can dig more into Jesus' ethnicity next time. OK. Leave. Class dismissed. You don't have to go home but you can't stay here. Don't forget final thesis topics are due in two weeks.

The remaining students rise as Izzy approaches. Kristoff disconnects his laptop, packs up his satchel. **The muscular man's eyes follow the Muslim student as he leaves.**

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Make a note to give Malcolm X a D for being a dickhead.

IZZY

The girl was right you know?

KRISTOFF

Really? Right about miracles?

IZZY

About you being an asshole. You're supposed to inspire students, not antagonize them.

His belongings now packed, he shoots a free throw with the empty Gatorade bottle directly into a corner trash bin.

IZZY (CONT.)

Want me to come over tonight?

KRISTOFF

Only if you want to watch me get completely shit faced.

IZZY

Tempting, but I was hoping we could review the thesis topics that have been coming in.

KRISTOFF

Izzy, I'm the professor, you're the teaching assistant. If you can't approve topics how are you going to be able to lecture when the time comes? You have to get comfortable with all

of this. Wait. Hear that?

IZZY

The sound of students lining up to complain to the chancellor?

KRISTOFF

My liver begging for booze.

IZZY

Jesse, you can't wipe out the past by dowsing it in alcohol. It's time to move forward.

KRISTOFF

Different strokes for different folks.

INT. CLASSY BAR - DAY - FLASHBACK

**A strangely clean cut, well-groomed Kristoff** sits at the crowded bar drinking whiskey, in a heated phone conversation.

KRISTOFF

Tell your mother to stop giving me shit every fucking time I call. For Christ sakes I just want to talk, Amy.

AMY (OS)

(on the other end of the phone)  
She's only looking out for us.

KRISTOFF

Holly is still my daughter! And whether you want to own it or not I'm still your husband!

PATRONS and A FEMALE BARTENDER **pouring a large glass of milk**, startled by this outburst.

AMY (OS)

Jesse, you can't keep doing this. I need more time to--

KRISTOFF

--figure things out? Yeah, I know. You keep saying that. You can figure out whatever you need to in New York just as well as you can in Arizona.

AMY (OS)

I'm so done talking about this. We're

going to Easter Mass, not like that matters to you. Stop calling. Please.

KRISTOFF

If I want to talk to her you can't stop me. Don't make me get my lawyer involved.

AMY (OS)

If you wanted to talk to Holly you would've asked by now.

The female bartender delivers the milk to a **large male patron** seated across the room in a corner booth.

KRISTOFF

How is she? The dog bite healing OK?

AMY (OS)

The pediatrician says she is going to have a scar. And before you start with how mom's dog needs to be put down again it was an accident.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. KRISTOFF'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

**The disheveled Kristoff we first met** sweats, MUMBLES, thrashes, wakes up on the sofa.

He looks around the darkened room. The nearly empty bottle of Wild Turkey on the end table beckons him. He swigs the remnant, lights a cigarette with the recently purchased **neon green lighter**.

He stands barefoot in the dark, doesn't even wince when stepping on the hard, bone dry pine tree needles. He studies the Christmas tree, reaches for a single RED bulb, twists it into place. The tree illuminates the entire room. He looks down at the lonely wrapped gift.

Smoke filters upwards. THE WAIL of a smoke detector.

His concentration broken, Kristoff sees the brittle needles singed by the heat of the bulbs. He untwists the RED bulb, removes it from the electric string.

The light vanishes. He squeezes the bulb.

CRACK.

He opens his palm to reveal broken glass, the metal stem and a deep BLEEDING GASH IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS HAND.

EXT. NYC ALLEY - NIGHT

Horns HONKING. Car's motoring by. VOICES from pedestrians. A typical evening in the city that never sleeps.

CRASH! Glass falls from a high window several stories above the alley.

**THUD! The mangled body of the Muslim student lands in a crumpled heap.** SILENCE.

A side door opens as the large, muscular man exits into the alley. Studies the corpse.

LARGE MUSCULAR MAN  
(in a British accent)  
Infidel you say, right? Tell it to  
Saint Peter then.

INT. CROWDED NYC DIVE BAR - NIGHT

A male bartender, FRANK, (white, 60's) pours a draft beer from the tap.

KRISTOFF (OS)  
SEE! Frank, look, right there!

Annoyed, the bartender looks up to see a totally smashed Kristoff, **hand bandaged**, pointing to the television.

On screen a sharply dressed TELEVANGELIST (50's) exits a courthouse surrounded by an ENTOURAGE and mob of REPORTERS.

KRISTOFF  
This is what I'm talking about!

Under the muted TALKING HEADS, the closed caption reads:  
TELEVANGELIST FOUND NOT GUILTY TODAY

FRANK THE BARTENDER  
No time for your lectures tonight,  
Professor, you got me? You were warned  
last time and still deserve an ass  
kicking for that.

KRISTOFF  
Wait a minute...you didn't send that  
asshole money?

FRANK THE BARTENDER

Fuck you! I'm a Catholic!

KRISTOFF

Right...you just throw your money in the collection plate to help the church bury their skeletons.

FRANK THE BARTENDER

A little respect, huh?

The bartender directs a thumb down the bar where **the distinguished gentleman first seen at the attorney's office sips a beer.**

Kristoff looks over, a glint of recognition as he tries to place the face.

KRISTOFF

Frank, I'll get a round for him and everyone in here if you show me again.

FRANK THE BARTENDER

Fuck off.

KRISTOFF

Come on, let me see it. I appreciate great artwork!

MALE VOICE (OS)

This guy fuckin' with you, Frankie?

Kristoff turns his stool. There stands an ITALIAN GIANT (40's), oozing with the desire to beat somebody's ass.

KRISTOFF

I just wanted to see his tattoo. He showed me last week.

ITALIAN GIANT

You wanna see a tattoo?

The giant rolls up his sleeve to expose a tattoo of the famous image from The Shroud of Turin.

Kristoff grins, pulls out a cigarette, lights up.

ITALIAN GIANT (CONT.)

Whaddya gotta say for yourself now, asshole, huh? The burial cloth of Our Blessed Savior.

The bartender makes the sign of the cross, kisses the crucifix medallion hung from his neck.

KRISTOFF

Beautiful, nice ink for sure...but  
it's fake.

FRANK THE BARTENDER

(regarding Kristoff's cigarette)  
Put that fucking thing out!

ITALIAN GIANT

Oh, it's real friend.

KRISTOFF

Did you know I was invited to Rome to  
validate the Shroud? Jesus, like six,  
seven years ago now.

ITALIAN GIANT

Pally, you're treading some really  
thin ice here.

KRISTOFF

I'm willing to bet that you're one-  
hundred percent positive that magical  
cloth came in contact with Jesus.

ITALIAN GIANT

God damn right it did!

KRISTOFF

It took me less than three hours to  
prove it was a fake. Oh, and you don't  
tread ice...you tread water.

The bartender nods to the giant.

Two gigantic Italian hands grab Kristoff by the neck. The bartender rounds the bar with a baseball bat, follows as Kristoff is dragged to a rear exit.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Frank stands behind Kristoff, holds him upright via the baseball bat across his throat. The giant viciously pummels Kristoff's ribs. A solid PUNCH to the face.

Kristoff drops to the dirty alley floor. The giant provides a quick KICK to head.

The bartender hands the giant the bat, takes off his belt, furiously WHIPS the beaten, drunken Kristoff with the strap.

A car SCREECHES to a halt. A door OPENS, SLAMS.

The giant turns, sees **the distinguished gentleman and the large muscular man standing in the darkness.**

ITALIAN GIANT

Father, this guy's disrespecting Our Lord and---

DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN

You don't just beat up non-believers!

FRANK THE BARTENDER

He's a real asshole, father, seriously.

The gentleman bends down, inspects the unconscious Kristoff.

DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN

You could have killed him.  
(to the large muscular man)  
Get him in the car.

The muscular man throws the victim over his shoulder, walks towards the vehicle.

FRANK THE BARTENDER

Hey, uh, father...we're sorry here...

He struggles to hold his pants up, belt still in hand.

DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN

And you call yourself a good Catholic.

They watch as the giant places Kristoff in the backseat.

ITALIAN GIANT

Father...can I confess...right now.

Without looking behind him, the gentleman throws a half-assed blessing over his shoulder, walks towards the vehicle.

INT. CHURCH RECTORY - DAY

Kristoff is covered under a white afghan, laid out on a sofa.

THUMP. The sofa moves. THUMP. It moves again.



Kristoff's right eye flutters open, then his swollen left, only to see the muscular man sitting on a nearby coffee table kicking the sofa.

DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN (OS)

Brooks! That's enough.

The gentleman, now wearing the collar of a priest, cellphone in hand, stands over Kristoff.

DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN

Good morning.

Kristoff grimaces as he sits up. The priest points to a glass of water and a bottle of Tylenol on the coffee table. The professor reaches through his pockets, pulls out the **FLUORESCENT GREEN LIGHTER**, then his cigarettes.

DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN (CONT.)

Father Liam McManus.

Kristoff holds up the smokes, silently seeks permission if he can light up. McManus nods. Eagerly, he places the cigarette in his mouth, strikes the lighter.

Brooks watches Kristoff like a predator, **his eyes follow the green lighter as it's placed back on the coffee table.**

KRISTOFF

Jesse Kristoff.

FATHER MCMANUS

Yes. We've met, albeit briefly.

Kristoff exhales smokes, cracks open the bottle of Tylenol.

KRISTOFF

We've met but you still saved me from getting my head kicked in? And what about this gorilla?

McManus, sits on the sofa. Kristoff pops several Tylenol, chases them down with gulps of water.

FATHER MCMANUS

Mr. Brooks? He's sort of an employee of the church.

BROOKS

Soldier of the church, yeah?

FATHER MCMANUS

I'd like to show you something Jesse.

KRISTOFF

(flicking his cigarette ash into  
the empty water glass)

Father, listen...you seem like a nice  
guy, and I appreciate you helped me  
out last night...it was last night  
right? What time is it?

BROOKS

Seven A.M. it is Sunshine.

The professor flops back on the sofa.

KRISTOFF

Shit. Got a lecture at five.

(to Father McManus)

You're the guy that got screwed with  
those fake relics, right?

McManus rises, walks to the window, opens the blind.

FATHER MCMANUS

I promise you'll want to see this.

Kristoff squints as the morning sunlight enters.

KRISTOFF

I told your lawyer the sketch may be  
legit, but I'm sorry, you got fleeced  
on the rest of it.

Father McManus reaches into his pocket, produces a small  
black pouch, tosses it towards Kristoff, who nearly burns  
himself with the lit cigarette as he tries to catch it.

Kristoff opens the bag, pulls out weathered silver coins. The  
professor holds them up to his swollen eye with his bandaged  
hand, studies one carefully, places it in his mouth, pulls it  
out, bites it. Looks up to the priest.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Where'd you get these?

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Fourteen paintings encompass the walls of both sides of the  
church, each depicting the story of Christ's struggle from  
arrest through the resurrection: The Stations Of The Cross.

Together, Father McManus and Brooks walk down the main aisle to the large altar. Both kneel and genuflect.

McManus turns, looks to the entrance of the church, signals for the hesitant Kristoff.

Brooks wraps his long, muscular arms around the top of the altar. Grunting, heaving, he slides the altar across the marble floor revealing a rickety staircase underneath.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - DAY

A string of uncovered light bulbs illuminate the dirt floor and brick walls. McManus opens a large iron door to reveal...

INT. CHURCH RELIQUARY ROOM - DAY

**...a large wooden box adorned with gold markings, gold handles and two cherub sculptures perched on the lid.**

Kristoff stands in the doorway of this cold, cement room, Brooks dangerously close behind him.

BROOKS

Either you go of your volition, then,  
or I'll carry ya, yeah?

Reluctantly Kristoff enters. Father McManus steps aside in order for Kristoff to get a proper view of the large box.

Kristoff studies the crate, grins.

KRISTOFF

Really? Who sold you this one? You  
need to do better if you want to make  
any profit in this business.

BISHOP PASI (OS)

We don't need your vote of approval,  
professor, The Ark is very authentic.

Kristoff turns to see BISHOP PASI (male, white, 70's) dressed casually in a Notre Dame t-shirt and shorts, holding two clear dry cleaning bags containing beautiful purple robes.

The professor grins, reaches to touch the golden box, pauses.

BISHOP PASI

I wouldn't recommend that. You know  
the repercussions, the risk.

BROOKS

(to Bishop Pasi)

It's wrong, then, innit? Let this piss  
ant git his filthy fingers on it,  
yeah? Shouldn't even be casting eyes  
on it Your Grace.

Kristoff fishes his cruddy glasses from his pocket, puts them  
on, kneels, inspects the gold markings. Eyeballs the cherubs,  
HEBREW NUMBERS under their feet.

BROOKS (CONT.)

It's blaspheme is what it is! If I  
hadn't known what grows beyond that  
wall there I would swear this pansy  
would be in contempt of buggery, yeah?

The Bishop gives Brooks a stern look.

BROOKS (CONT.)

Fuck it then, right?

Brooks storms out of the room. Father McManus attempts to  
follow him as Kristoff continues his inspection.

BISHOP PASI

(to Father McManus)

Leave him be. It's settled.

KRISTOFF

Looks pretty damn good...but the  
numbers--

BISHOP PASI

Those represent years.

KRISTOFF

Years?

BISHOP PASI

Dates. Coordinates to be precise.

Kristoff walks around the large box, studies every intricate  
detail.

KRISTOFF

And you two think this is the real Ark  
of the Covenant, is that it?

FATHER MCMANUS

We don't think, Jesse. We know.

KRISTOFF

Right...so which one of you wants to explain why the most sought after holiest relic in history is sitting in the basement of a banged up church?

BISHOP PASI

It's quite safe here. Even Harrison Ford would never think to look in, as you say, a banged up church. Plus, it's always been protected.

KRISTOFF

By the pouting limey that stormed out?

BISHOP PASI

Him as well as thousands of others.

The professor stands, shakes his head, CHUCKLES.

KRISTOFF

This is a joke, guys, not buying it.

BISHOP PASI

Rest assured, this is no joke.

The bishop hands Father McManus the dry cleaning bags.

KRISTOFF

(to Father McManus)

You know the drill. I'm not doing anything official until there's money in hand.

BISHOP PASI

You weren't summoned here to do anything official. Far from it.

KRISTOFF

I wasn't summoned anywhere. Your friend there saved me from a world class ass beating last night, showed me some authentic Roman silver, said he had something else to share so--

BISHOP PASI

A very select few of the church have used this gift for centuries.

KRISTOFF

Oh, I know the stories of warlords and

kings carrying it into battle, just add it to the list of shit that comes along with religious zealotry.

BISHOP PASI

Thank you, professor. You've confirmed you're the perfect man for the job.

KRISTOFF

Don't want another job.

BISHOP PASI

What I'm offering isn't money. It's an opportunity.

The Bishop crosses the room and opens another old wooden door, his back towards Kristoff.

BISHOP PASI (CONT.)

Good morning. There's someone here to see you.

Intrigued, Kristoff tries to look over McManus' shoulder.

FATHER MCMANUS

(loudly)

It's fine, honey, I'm here too.

The Bishop steps aside as a YOUNG GIRL (white, 9) in Hello Kitty pajamas enters.

**Kristoff and child lock eyes. Instant recognition from both.**

KRISTOFF

Holly?

He races to his daughter. Tears stream from his face, he hugs her motionless, befuddled frame.

Kristoff pulls back from the girl, makes a futile attempt to groom his hair, tucks in his shirt. He looks to the bishop.

KRISTOFF

This isn't her, it can't be...this is how she looked when...when..

BISHOP PASI

When she died in the Arizona Easter Mass shooting five years ago.

This phrase strikes a chord with the young girl.

GIRL

Daddy?

A PRICE TAG dangles from her pajamas. **Kristoff inspects her calf, a pronounced scar in the form of a healed dog bite.**

KRISTOFF

What kind of fucking game are you playing? Who is this? God damn it!

The professor turns, marches towards the bishop.

BISHOP PASI

Can we get to the opportunity at hand?

Kristoff jabs his finger into the bishop's chest.

KRISTOFF

You're sick!

BISHOP PASI

This is your daughter.

KRISTOFF

It's not!

BISHOP PASI

She is. A perfect clone of your dead little girl.

Frightened, Holly takes Father McManus' outstretched hand.

BISHOP PASI (CONT.)

Subjects grow rapidly to the precise point of the body's evolution from whence the blood was drawn.

KRISTOFF

Blood?

BISHOP PASI

Her blood. Insurance required a toxicology report on both your wife and child. Have you forgotten?

KRISTOFF

No...it's not...

BISHOP PASI

That is your daughter. Her mind, her memories. The brain synapses aren't

complete yet, but very soon will be.

INT. RECTORY KITCHEN - DAY

A full bottle of beer appears on the table in front of a smoking, frazzled Kristoff, sitting, staring into the living room at Holly who is immersed in a television cartoon.

KRISTOFF  
Anything stronger?

Brooks sits directly across the table staring at him with eyes as cold as ice.

BROOKS  
This 'ere a gin mill, then now?

Father McManus opens the refrigerator, sets the entire six-pack carton in front of Kristoff. The professor twists open a bottle, takes a long gulp.

KRISTOFF  
I want to talk to her alone.

BISHOP PASI  
You'll be able to do more than talk to her, professor. You can raise her, cherish her.

KRISTOFF  
Amy. You have her blood too?

FATHER MCMANUS  
Yes, Jesse, we do.

KRISTOFF  
Do it. I don't care how much money you want, I'll verify anything.

BISHOP PASI  
You don't have to verify anything, Professor Kristoff. We will gladly do as you wish, on this you have my word, but only upon your return.

KRISTOFF  
Jesus, then let's go. What are we waiting for?

Brooks SNORTS.



BROOKS

So just like that, then? Our Savior's name in vain and get on wit' it right?

Father McManus looks to the Bishop who points with his chin at the living room. McManus exits, sits down next to Holly.

BISHOP PASI

Do you recall when Pope John Paul the Second was assassinated?

KRISTOFF

May nineteen eighty one. Mehmet Ali Agca tried to kill him. He didn't die.

BISHOP PASI

Oh, but he did...the first time.

KRISTOFF

Bullshit.

BISHOP PASI

Agca was successful. You see, professor, the church needed the Supreme Pontiff to survive, not only as a modern day miracle, but also so he could forgive his assailant.

KRISTOFF

The pope was replaced with a body double? Like the whole McCartney is dead conspiracy?

BROOKS

Doubles now? Of the Supreme Pontiff? 'Dis one knows it all then, fuckin' tosser.

BISHOP PASI

It's much more involved than that.

Kristoff finishes his beer, cracks open another.

BISHOP PASI (CONT.)

It was decided Agca would return precisely two days prior to the event, in order to allow him to perform his task properly.

KRISTOFF  
 (nodding sarcastically)  
 So now we have time travel and  
 cloning? Got it. Of course.

CRASH! Jesse throws his full beer bottle across the room causing Holly to jump into Father McManus' lap. Brooks never takes his eyes off Kristoff.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)  
 What the fuck? Come on!

BISHOP PASI  
 It is a sacramental ritual!

Kristoff leans in, face to face, eye to eye with the bishop.

KRISTOFF  
 I really don't give a shit about any  
 science fiction fairy tales, just tell  
 me how to get my family back.

BISHOP PASI  
 Travel to ancient Jerusalem. Return  
 with the blood of Jesus Christ.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

Brooks drinks from a carton of milk, looks through a telescope across the street into Kristoff's apartment.

KRISTOFF (VO)  
 Christ's blood? What the hell for?

Through the lens a clean cut Kristoff rages at AMY (white, 30's) who holds a crying infant Holly.

BISHOP PASI (VO)  
 The time has come for the faithful to  
 take action, to expedite The Second  
 Coming of the Messiah.

Brooks continues to watch as Kristoff throws a fistful of money at his wife, bills rain down to the floor.

KRISTOFF (VO)  
 That's just totally insane. The Ark is  
 a communication device, not a time  
 machine! Why would you even try to

enlist an atheist in some crazy  
bullshit like this?

BISHOP PASI (VO)  
You weren't always an atheist, isn't  
that so professor? And you certainly  
will not be the first.

INT. ST. PETER'S BASILICA CONFERENCE ROOM - FLASHBACK - DAY

Seven CARDINALS in full regalia sit around an intricate  
conference table all facing a wise POPE JOHN (white, 80).

BISHOP PASI (VO)  
The plan to finally use the sacrament  
of the Ark was approved in October  
nineteen sixty-five at the Second  
Vatican Council.

The Pope looks to each Cardinal who either nods in the  
affirmative or shakes their head in the negative to cast  
their vote.

The vote is tied three to three. The Pope turns to the final  
Cardinal, ARGENTO (black, 60's) for the tie breaking vote. He  
nods "yes".

INT. DARK BASEMENT - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

A FIGURE COVERED IN A WHITE ROBE walks up a ramp leading to  
THE ARK. The seven Cardinals and the Pope bow their heads as  
the figure descends into the Ark, careful not to touch the  
outside as he enters.

BISHOP PASI (VO)  
The first to accept the assignment  
received the sacrament in April of the  
following year.

The lid of the ARK, complete with the two cherubs, rests on  
two long poles extending on both sides on the brick floor.

Argento and another cardinal each take their place on either  
side of the lid, pick it up by the poles, place it over the  
opening enclosing the white robed figure inside.

BISHOP PASI (CONT.) (VO)  
He failed to return. Since that time  
the vessel has been used on eight  
other occasions, each time with the  
holiest, most pious Catholics chosen

by a secretive Vatican panel. Each time we improve the process, changing the clothing of the chosen, sending them with more silver, each set to return with the blood in a matter of hours within our time...yet nothing.

KRISTOFF (VO)

If any of this is even remotely true you have the wrong guy. If sending the holiest of the holy back in time didn't work what makes you think sending an alcoholic who knows better than to believe in any of this is finally going to do the trick?

EXT. CATHOLIC ORPHANAGE - FLASHBACK - DAY

A weathered NUN (white, 80's) takes a very YOUNG KRISTOFF (5) by the hand up the stairs to the front door where Argento waits.

BISHOP PASI (VO)

When you were five your father died by lethal injection for murdering your mother. With no other immediate family to raise you it was up to the church. I'm certain you remember Monsignor Argento.

Argento extends his hand to the young, scared Kristoff.

INT. ORPHANAGE OFFICE - FLASHBACK - DAY

A preteen KRISTOFF studies the Bible, the Torah and the Quran. Argento peppers him with questions, each exact response results in a sincere smile from both student and teacher.

KRISTOFF (VO)

He taught me everything I know...

BISHOP PASI (VO)

Yes. He nurtured your incredible memory and curiosity regarding all things holy.

KRISTOFF (VO)

Wrong, he brainwashed an impressionable kid who had no family. Isn't that always the church's goal?

Indoctrinate them when they're young?

INT. HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - FLASHBACK - DAY

An awkward teenage Kristoff crosses the stage and is awarded a science medal from a proud TEACHER.

BISHOP PASI (OS)

Brainwashing? You gravitated to the sciences on your own. Argento reported your progress daily. You became a true prodigy with in-depth understanding of theology and science of your own curiosity and volition.

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

Kristoff lays on the bottom bunk studying a text book.

BISHOP PASI (VO)

You never knew it, but the Vatican provided you with the full scholarship to Georgetown. We needed you to continue your studies in preparation for this moment. A standout student, yes, but you fell to temptation.

A NUDE GIRL leaps from the top bunk. Kristoff's MALE ROOMMATE throws his feet over the side. The girl winks at Kristoff as she gets dressed.

EXT. ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG - FLASHBACK - DAY

Kristoff, part of a TEAM OF RESEARCHERS, sifts through sand in the blazing heat. He pauses, takes a sip from his canteen, looks around and notices a FEMALE RESEARCHER (40s) remove a small idol from her pocket.

KRISTOFF (OS)

Being attracted to women is part of science, it's how most men are. That's not how I lost faith.

She places the idol within the sand only to then turn to the group and announce she has found something. She is immediately surrounded by the rest of them as they marvel at the planted discovery.

INT. FAITH HEALING TENT - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

On stage a "fire and brimstone" EVANGELICAL PREACHER (white,

40s) lays hands on the FAITHFUL causing each to immediately fall to the ground.

Kristoff pays particular attention to a BOTTLE BLONDE WOMAN (white, 30's) in a wheelchair as the preacher lays hands on her legs, commands her to walk.

She rises and crosses the stage to an enormous ovation.

KRISTOFF (VO)

Every where I looked there was no  
real, tangible sign of God.

INT. DEEP SOUTH DIVE BAR - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

The bottle blonde woman dances at the jukebox holding a beer. Kristoff, drinking at the bar, watches as she approaches.

KRISTOFF (VO)

Religion is all about money, power,  
fame, usually all three. Faith doesn't  
even fit into the equation.

INT. MESSY TRAILER - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

The bottle blonde continues her dance as Kristoff, sitting on a ratty couch drinking a beer watches. She takes her top off only to reveal needle marks on her arms.

She leans in to kiss him. He kisses her back.

KRISTOFF (VO)

The harder I searched the more  
bullshit revealed itself.

INT. SMALL MEXICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH - FLASHBACK - DAY

A statue of THE VIRGIN MARY appears to have actual tears rolling down her face.

Standing on the altar, Kristoff looks up to the high ceiling, watches as one single drop of rain falls from a hole in the roof landing precisely on Mary's cheek.

He turns to face the full congregation who immediately bow to their knees and make the Sign of the Cross.

KRISTOFF (VO)

If the show was good enough people  
would believe anything. Faith is built  
on one big lie.

INT. RECTORY KITCHEN - DAY

BISHOP PASI

Your lack of faith is exactly why  
you've been chosen.

KRISTOFF

That makes zero logic. You need to  
send a priest, or a saint or someone  
who actually gives a shit.

BROOKS

Smartest words out 'is kisser yet.

Brooks rises, opens the refrigerator, takes a carton of milk.

BISHOP PASI

Vatican scholars, psychologists, even  
the Blessed Pontiff himself believe  
those sent before failed precisely due  
to their faith. That at least one of  
them made contact with Jesus Christ  
only to forgo their mission to instead  
become a follower, even a founder of  
the Catholic Church.

KRISTOFF

What about the other seven? Why  
haven't any of them returned with this  
blood that's supposedly so important?

BISHOP PASI

It's likely they were arrested by the  
Romans, possibly the Jews. Murdered  
perhaps by a band of thieves. Failed  
to properly perform the return ritual?  
We simply will never know.

Brooks takes a long gulp directly from the milk carton.

KRISTOFF

Or, possibly, it's all bullshit.  
Cloning, still in it's infancy, that I  
can almost wrap by head around, but a  
fucking time machine?

BROOKS

Talkin' 'bout a sacrament here, not a  
bleedin' time machine, you twit!

BISHOP PASI

Brooks is correct. The Ark is a sacred vessel, yes, but paired with the sacrament the miracle does exist.

KRISTOFF

(pointing to Brooks)

Why doesn't he just get in the box and convince Jesus to come back? Why all of this cloning bullshit?

BROOKS

(to Bishop Pasi)

Takin' a punt on me is what I been sayin', yeah?

BISHOP PASI

You, Professor Kristoff, are not only an expert in the customs of the time, something we should have put more of an emphasis on when selecting those who have went before, however being a non-believer increases the odds of your success. The Vatican is afraid if we send one of the faithful they will interfere, try to stop Christ's crucifixion.

KRISTOFF

So?

BISHOP PASI

No crucifixion results in no church.

KRISTOFF

Well, no church means no holy wars, less children molested by priests and no Easter mass where my wife and daughter were slaughtered!

BROOKS

Ya gonna let his gob go on like that then? Should be cut to go on a bender he fancies so much or better still I can just cut 'em and be done, yeah?

FATHER MCMANUS

(from the living room)

One hour in our time Jesse, that's all we're asking. This is an opportunity to restore what's been taken from you.



EXT. CHURCH STEPS - DAY

Father McManus and Holly sit on the church steps. Kristoff comes out of the church. McManus gets up, relinquishes his seat, takes Kristoff's place at the church entrance.

KRISTOFF

Hey monkey.

HOLLY

I feel tired.

KRISTOFF

I'm told you'll feel better soon.  
Maybe you should go back to bed for a  
bit? Where do you sleep? Here?

HOLLY

In that room downstairs.

Kristoff turns to Father McManus standing behind them.

FATHER MCMANUS

It's for her safety, Jesse.

HOLLY

It's OK. I like it sort of. It doesn't  
have the mirror like my old room.

KRISTOFF

The mirror?

HOLLY

The monster protection mirror you put  
across from my bed. Daddy, you don't  
remember? You said I could-

KRISTOFF

*-use it to watch if anything was  
behind you while you were sleeping.*  
You remember that?

HOLLY

Yeah, just now when you asked about  
where I sleep. Every day things keep  
coming back. Like when mommy and I  
went to church. She let me bring a  
basket the Easter Bunny left me. And  
there was a lady there. She had like a  
big gun or something? It was loud...

KRISTOFF

(getting choked up)

Holly, things like that you have to try not to remember, ok? I'm super happy you're here now, but I need to go away for a bit, just a few hours, and then, when I come back we can go home. You'll get to sleep in your old room again.

HOLLY

With the monster protection mirror?

Kristoff, crying, nods. He wipes his eyes, hugs his daughter.

KRISTOFF

I need to talk to someone now, ok?

HOLLY

Father Liam?

Kristoff nods, gives his daughter another solid hug, stands, walks over to the priest.

KRISTOFF

I'm ready.

FATHER MCMANUS

What? No. Time is fluid, Jesse. We can't do this today, we need to prepare you and--

KRISTOFF

Not today. Now. Right now.

FATHER MCMANUS

There's instructions, protocols. We can have you ready in a month, maybe.

KRISTOFF

Now. You said yourself I'll be back in just a few hours, and when I do get back I'm taking Holly home and we'll discuss getting Amy back as well. Final offer.

INT. ST. TOBIAS RELIQUARY ROOM - DAY

The face of a dusty clock: Eleven Forty-Five.

Kristoff wears an ancient BLUE ROBE and leather sandals.

Brooks stands directly in his face as Father McManus and Bishop Pasi, now both wearing purple robes, prepare for the ritual.

BROOKS

I seen you yeah, for decades now. Know when you picked your nose, wiped your arse, wanking off even, and you is the bloke hand chosen no less to lay eyes on the Messiah, yeah? What be wrong wit' 'dat, you over me?

BISHOP PASI (OS)

You have much of your own to attend to today, Mister Brooks. I suggest you get started.

Brooks spits at Kristoff's feet, exits the room.

KRISTOFF

Is he always like that?

Father McManus ignores the comment, hands him a small black bag, places a tiny silver vial secured by a leather band gently around Kristoff's neck.

FATHER MCMANUS

The clothing, satchel, sacred vial, money, even you, Jesse, are now blessed.

BISHOP PASI

You'll arrive sometime between Wednesday and Holy Thursday.

KRISTOFF

Can't you just set it up for Good Friday and be done with it?

BISHOP PASI

And what if you don't make it to the Cross in time? No, professor, the window has been approved.

FATHER MCMANUS

There's enough silver in there to find an inn for a few nights, buy some food. Don't go waving it around. Stay close to Calvary. Get the blood.

The bishop gestures for Kristoff to ascend the step stool

placed by the Ark.

KRISTOFF

I need my cigarettes.

BISHOP PASI

Impossible. They're not blessed.

KRISTOFF

I'm taking them anyway.

BISHOP PASI

Anything not of the period may risk  
your return.

KRISTOFF

Then I guess you better bless 'em.

BISHOP PASI

Have one now if you must.

Kristoff crosses the room to where his street clothes rest in a pile on an old desk, his back to the clergymen, takes a cigarette from the pack, lights it with the green lighter. He takes a drag, drops the pack back on the desk next to the clothes and his bloody hand wrap.

BISHOP PASI (CONT.)

The tomb where you arrive, you must  
remember it, return to it. Once inside  
you will recite The Apostle's Creed.  
It is this prayer, and this prayer  
only, that will bring the blood back.  
You do recall the prayer, professor?

Discretely he takes the green lighter and his filthy, smudged glasses, places them in the inside pocket of his robe. He turns to face them.

KRISTOFF

It begins with "I believe". Is it  
going to be a problem that I don't.

Kristoff sucks down a final drag, looks around for somewhere to place the butt. The bishop takes it disapprovingly.

McManus helps Kristoff into the Ark, careful to not touch the outside.

Bishop Pasi circles Kristoff with burning incense, CHANTS in Latin. The Ark sits ominously in the background.

Both holy men look down into the box. Kristoff tries to get himself comfortable, lays down as if in a coffin.

FATHER MCMANUS

Find an inn. Observe, but keep a low profile. Just make sure you're at Calvary to get the blood.

KRISTOFF

Let's do it.

The bishop nods in agreement as he and Father McManus each grab the poles that support the lid to the Ark. They carefully slide the heavy cover of the Ark into place.

DARKNESS.

CUT TO:

INT. IZZY'S OFFICE - DAY

Izzy sits marking up a paper from a student. The name at the top of the page reads "Michael DiMuzzio". The page is COVERED IN RED NOTES.

She drinks from a clear water bottle, finishes the last drop. Pulls the next FRESH CLEAN paper from the stack. She looks down to see the student's name: "Michael DiMuzzio".

Confused she rifles through the stack searching for the paper she just marked up. It's not there. She notices her water bottle is once again a third of the way filled.

CUT TO:

EXT. DIVE BAR - DAY

Frank, the bar tender from earlier stands in front of the entrance, fishes keys out of his pocket. Notices a flyer for a band taped to the door.

FRANK THE BARTENDER

How many times do I have to tell these assholes about this shit?

He rips the handbill down, puts the key in the front door lock, turns it.

Suddenly Frank finds himself dumbfounded standing in front of the door again, no keys in hand, the flyer back on the door.

INT. CAVE - DAY

COMPLETE BLACKNESS. MALE GROANING. RUSTLING. ROCKS TUMBLE.

A SPARK from the green lighter ignites limited visibility.

Kristoff moves the lighter around illuminating cave paintings of stick figures with large heads, animals, serpents, angels.

As he continues with his makeshift flashlight the flicker lands on a DECAPITATED MALE BODY wearing the exact same BLUE ROBE and leather sandals he has on.

Precariously he stands, sees a small sliver of light coming from one end of the cave.

EXT. MOUTH OF CAVE - DAY

Larger rocks move slightly from the entrance of the cave. Kristoff's bruised left eye appears through a gap in the opening. He pushes debris and rubble.

With difficulty he squeezes through on his stomach, looks around in wonder.

SAND. ROCK. A GURGLING RIVER.

He looks to his right...more of the same. To his left, in the far distance...A CITY.

KRISTOFF

Son of a bitch...

Carefully, his sandal clad feet wrestle to gain leverage as he descends from the mouth of the cave.

He reaches sand, solid footing. Turns from the direction of the city to the long run of caves and rubble.

DOZENS OF CAVE OPENINGS, all nearly identical...

He rummages through his pocket, retrieves the GREEN LIGHTER.

In front of the original cave, Kristoff places the lighter under a unique SQUARE ROCK, a makeshift breadcrumb.

EXT. PATH OUTSIDE JERUSALEM - DAY

Kristoff approaches the city, oblivious to the STARES and MURMURINGS of fellow PEDESTRIANS.

Totally amazed with the stone buildings, dwellings and architecture, his progress is halted by the strong hand of a ROMAN GUARD (30'S).

ROMAN GUARD

Where you think you're going, then?

Kristoff, shocked back to reality.

KRISTOFF

Sorry?

ROMAN GUARD

You will be, Blue Jew, if you don't share your intentions?

KRISTOFF

Uh...I'm traveling--

ROMAN GUARD

On what business?

KRISTOFF

I...um...need work.

ROMAN GUARD

Work is it? A wealthy Jew like you?

Two HOODED FIGURES approach. The guard nods as they pass.

KRISTOFF

I'm not wealthy, I just need--

ROMAN GUARD

I don't give a horse's shit. This is my post, I decide who gets in.

Kristoff points to the hooded couple as they walk casually past the guard.

ROMAN GUARD (CONT.)

Paid their tariff this week!

Kristoff reaches into the satchel, pulls out a coin, presents it to the city guard. The soldier smiles widely, pleased with the currency, steps aside.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET - DAY

Kristoff walks through the street, receives odd looks from shepherds, children and the elderly.

He stops at the entrance to a TEMPLE, stares at the merchants who have converted the interior to a marketplace.

INT. TEMPLE MARKETPLACE - DAY

Chickens, lambs, cattle, pottery, figs and dates: just some of the items bought, sold and bartered.

Totally amazed by this culture, he pauses at a table, picks up a clay vase. A WOMAN gives a VENDOR a coin, is handed a live rooster.

FRIENDLY MERCHANT (OS)

You like, yes?

Kristoff looks up to see this FRIENDLY MERCHANT (male, 30's, bearded).

KRISTOFF

Impeccable craftsmanship...

The merchant puts his arm around Kristoff, PULLS HIM CLOSE.

FRIENDLY MERCHANT

I admire your linens! So crisp, clean.

Kristoff places the vase down, clutches his garments, concerned. Steps away from the merchant.

FRIENDLY MERCHANT (CONT.)

I make you trade? For your linens?

KRISTOFF

What I really need is a hotel.

The merchant scrunches his nose, not able to comprehend.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

An inn?

The merchant grins, points just beyond the temple gates.

EXT. CITY INN - DAY

From the front of a stone hut an INNKEEPER (50's, obese) watches Kristoff stop a VILLAGE BOY (10) across the street. The child points to the inn. Kristoff nods in appreciation.

Kristoff strides across the street, only to halt as a PRISONER (20's, bald) drags a cross followed by TWO ROMAN SOLDIERS and a SMALL MOB of humans and reptilians hurling



stones at the condemned.

Kristoff's eyes follow the procession. In the distance CALVARY. Several CROSSES cut against the skyline. VULTURES peck the flesh of the deceased crucified.

Kristoff enters the inn.

INNKEEPER  
(regarding the bald prisoner)  
A servant who betrayed his master.

The innkeeper's steely eyes study the approaching Kristoff.

INNKEEPER (CONT.)  
Sent to collect fish from the inlet  
fed by the Jordan. Decided not to  
return. Very unwise.

KRISTOFF  
Do you have any room?

The innkeeper eyeballs him, fixates on his attire.

INNKEEPER  
Room, yes, but it demands a healthy  
sum.

Kristoff opens his satchel--NO SILVER! Reaches to his neck--NO VIAL! He thrusts his hand into the interior pocket, pulls out his only remaining connection to the future--his smudged glasses. Panicked, he looks up the street towards the Temple.

INT. TEMPLE MARKETPLACE - DAY

Out of breath, Kristoff arrives to the area where he met the Friendly Merchant. The table, and the thief...gone.

He looks around frantically. His eyes land on the woman from earlier and her newly purchased rooster. She CHANTS in Latin, BLUDGEONS the animal with a rock.

INT. CITY INN - DAY

INNKEEPER  
Begone! There are dwellings elsewhere  
on the far end of the city!

Kristoff stands, Mount Calvary in the background.

KRISTOFF

No, I need to stay here. Please, I had silver. I was in the market--

INNKEEPER

The temple? Nothing but a den of thieves, serpents, zealots and whores!

KRISTOFF

Listen, I just need a place for a few days. I'll work for the room. What can I do? What do you need?

The innkeeper looks towards Calvary, back to Kristoff.

INNKEEPER

Currently I am in need of fish.

Behind the inn keeper a large FISHING NET hangs on the wall.

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

Kristoff struggles with the fishing net. He watches TWO FISHERMEN (both 30's, dirty) fifty yards away cast their nets with ease as they stand knee deep in the water. He tries to replicate what he sees, falls down with a violent SPLASH.

FISHERMAN #1

Oy! You there! Find your own spot! You spoil our yield with your flopping!

Drenched, Kristoff rises, waves to the angry men. He drags the heavy, empty net to the shore, sits down, rubs his head, trembles from alcohol and nicotine withdrawals.

He picks up a twig, sticks it in his mouth, inhales deeply. This substitute doesn't work. He throws it in the sand.

To his right, a MOTHER (20's) washes clothes at the river's edge. A BOY (7) treads up to his chest in the water.

MOTHER

Lazlus, not so far.

Sweet female LAUGHTER. Kristoff turns to see the source, a PRETTY TEEN girl (15) sketching on a piece of PAPYRUS. She smiles at him. He stands, walks up the incline to her.

KRISTOFF

Hello.

She responds with a shy smile. He points to the papyrus.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

May I?

She turns the papyrus around to reveal a charcoal rendering of the river and rock formations.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

You're very good.

He sits beside her.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

I'm looking for a man...originally from Nazareth. Jesus?

The girl shakes her head in the negative.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Maybe...Yahweh? Or Yeshua? A teacher from Galilee?

MOTHER (OS)

Lazlus!

Immediately their attention turns to the river. The mother frantically rushes into the water, retrieves the LIMP, FLOATING body of her son.

MOTHER

No! Lazlus!

Kristoff races to the riverside. The two fishermen, waist high in the water, look to the mother, then to each other.

MOTHER (CONT.)

He is dead! My boy is dead!

She cradles her lifeless son. Wet sand from Kristoff's sandals spray the mother and dead boy as he slides in.

He attempts to pull the boy from his mother's clutches. In the distance, the fishermen run up the shoreline.

Kristoff forces the child from the grief-stricken mother, lays him on the sand. Quickly he pinches the boy's nose closed, breathes into the tiny mouth.

Confused, the fishermen stop ten yards away from this scene.

KRISTOFF

Come on! Come on! Breathe!

Kristoff pumps the boy's chest, diligently performing CPR.

FISHERMAN #1

(to his fellow fisherman)

We need to stop this, Brother Juda.

The mother throws her face into the sand, violently punches the waterlogged terrain. The second fisherman, JUDA, pulls on the first fisherman's robe stopping him from interfering.

They both watch the mysterious abuse of the young corpse, a glint of recognition from Juda of what he is seeing.

The boy violently COUGHS, water rushes from his mouth. His eyes open. He CRIES. Slowly, the mother lifts her head from the sand, crawls to her boy.

MOTHER

Lazlus!

Kristoff crumples into the sand, watches the mother and child reunion. Juda and his fellow fisherman now approach.

FISHERMAN #1

You returned life to the child?

KRISTOFF

He had water in his lungs...

FISHERMAN #2

I am Matthew. This one 'ere is my brother Juda.

Matthew extends his hand, Kristoff accepts, rises.

MOTHER

You are blessed.

MATTHEW

You'll come with us?

KRISTOFF

Can't. I need fish for my room, and--

MATTHEW

You will have plenty of fish as well as a room with us.

Juda steps in front of Matthew, makes frantic motions with his fingers and hands.

KRISTOFF

I'm sorry, what are you doing? I don't understand--

Kristoff's VOICE causes Juda to make the motions again, this time more frantically. Matthew places his hand on Juda's shoulder to calm him.

MATTHEW

Excuse my brother, he has no tongue and gets frenzied at times.

Juda pushes Matthew's hand away, continues to mime with his fingers the letter "C", then "P", to Kristoff.

KRISTOFF

Are you spelling? Is that it?

Juda smiles, nods, repeats the gestures.

MATTHEW

Spelling? He would never cast a spell this one.

Matthew helps Lazlus and his mother up from the river's edge. Juda repeats the gestures again.

KRISTOFF

The letter C...P...CPR?

Juda nods, places his finger to his lips.

Above the river bank, the girl completes her sketch, now featuring Kristoff performing CPR on the child, surrounded by a blurry, hastily drawn Matthew, Juda and grieving mother.

EXT. ADOBE COMPOUND - DAY

A grizzled man, SIMON (50's), kneels in front of a malnourished tomato plant. His filthy hands move the damp soil in a futile attempt to prop up the vine board.

MATTHEW (OS)

Simon! He has come!

Simon turns to see Matthew and Juda dragging their heavy fish net, Kristoff brings up the rear.

MATTHEW

It is he! Just as our Lord said!

SIMON

He who?

MATTHEW

The prophesied one!

Simon stands before the arriving party. Studies Kristoff. He SLAPS Matthew across the face.

JUDA

(referring to Kristoff's robe)

You bring a man of means here?

Matthew rubs his cheek. Kristoff's totally confused.

Defiantly, Simon steps to the stranger, snatches the professor's hands, turns them palm up. He stares skeptically at the wound in the center of Kristoff's damaged hand.

INT. ADOBE COMPOUND - DAY

Matthew, Juda and Kristoff sit at a large table in the center of the room. Juda nods, smiles knowingly at Kristoff.

KRISTOFF

I'm sorry, but this is a mistake--

Simon opens a linen curtain on the side of the room, signals for Kristoff.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

He enters past Simon. The floor is lined with a dozen hand woven mats and blankets. A LARGE WOODEN CANOPY BED, intricately crafted, sits at the very center of the room.

SIMON

Through here.

Simon unlatches a wooden beam from a door on the far wall. Kristoff, careful not to step on any of the mats, stares at the bed in the center of the room as he follows Simon.

EXT. FENCED REAR OF THE COMPOUND - DAY

A large lot enclosed by a tall fence consisting of thick, dense logs all sharpened at the top to a point. Spears, slingshots, Roman swords lay scattered.

PETER (Middle Eastern, bearded, 40's) sits on a large wooden throne, his dirty bare feet rest in a clay bowl of water, as MARY (20's, long black hair), kneeling in front of him, rubs and cleans his feet.

PETER

There you go now Mary, the hands of an angel you've been blessed with.

She smiles, continues with her task. Peter looks up to see Simon and Kristoff approaching.

PETER (CONT.)

Who's this then wit' ya Brother Simon? Catch another one lurking about?

SIMON

Matthew says it's a miracle worker.

PETER

That right? How so? Looks more like an intruder sent by Caiaphas in 'dem garments or one of the elite to nose about. What miracles you spouting then?

Kristoff, hesitant, stands beside the kneeling Mary, speechless and confused.

PETER (CONT.)

Snake has your tongue? Out with it!

KRISTOFF

It wasn't a miracle. There was a boy...he was drowning.

PETER

You feel no need to kneel before me?

Immediately, more out of fear than reverence, Kristoff drops to his knees.

SIMON

Stop with the mucking about, Peter! He has the mark. Show him your hand!

Kristoff holds up his right hand. Peter squints, grins, looks at the semi-healing wound. Mary slowly gathers the bowl and water vase, backs away out of Kristoff's site.

KRISTOFF  
 (referring to his cut palm)  
 This was just an accident--

PETER  
 And the drowning boy?

SIMON  
 He claims to have returned him to the  
 living.

KRISTOFF  
 I never claimed that!

A BLACK HAND nudges Simon away, unbeknownst to the kneeling  
 Kristoff.

PETER  
 (chuckling)  
 Resurrecting a body? Only the Lord can  
 perform such a work. Do you think you  
 are the Lord then?

KRISTOFF  
 No, it's not like that at all. I'm  
 searching for someone. That's not  
 really right either, I know where  
 he'll be.

PETER  
 Who is it then, the one you seek?

KRISTOFF  
 (hesitantly)  
 This man has many names. Jesus The  
 Nazarene. Or Immanuel? Yeshua?

Peter's grin immediately fades upon mention of the last name.  
 Behind Kristoff's bowed head a spear rises over his head held  
 by a black hand.

FEMALE VOICE (OS)  
 (thick African accent)  
 It is Yessica. And I am not a man.

Kristoff looks up to see YESSICA (female, black, 40's)  
 pointing the spear at his right temple.

YESSICA  
 Mary, bring this Messiah wine.



She lowers her spear, grabs Kristoff's robe, pulls him to his feet. Studies him, calls over her shoulder.

YESSICA (CONT.)

Gather the pipe as well. He looks as if he needs it. And Peter?

PETER

Yes my Lord?

YESSICA

I won't speak again of you sitting on my throne.

Peter, barefoot, immediately rises.

INT. ST. TOBIAS RELIQUARY ROOM - DAY

The face of the dusty clock: THREE FORTY-FIVE.

The bishop, now back to wearing his Notre Dame t-shirt and shorts, looks through a window into Holly's tiny concrete cell.

Inside, she sits on a cot surrounded by ignored stuffed animals, books and toys.

McManus approaches wearing street clothes.

FATHER MCMANUS

It's been too long.

BISHOP PASI

We wait.

FATHER MCMANUS

Something's wrong.

BISHOP PASI

I said we wait.

The bishop turns from the window to the priest.

BISHOP PASI (CONT.)

(sighs)

Speak.

FATHER MCMANUS

Well over three hours. What if he's failed? What if he's dead?

BISHOP PASI

Both are very real possibilities. In either instance, we have a contingency in place. I will make that decision at the appropriate time.

FATHER MCMANUS

If the Vatican discovers we failed again they will take the sacrament back, give it to another diocese. Our fates will be sealed.

Bishop Pasi turns back to the cell, looks through the window at the confused girl.

BISHOP PASI

If I do decide to transfer the assignment, and understand I will make that decision on my own, you will have no choice but to fulfill your own duties. Are you certain you can?

McManus joins him at the window, looks in on Holly.

FATHER MCMANUS

If that's what the Vatican requires, then yes.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - DAY

Kristoff sits alone on one of the mats fascinated by the intricacies and craftsmanship of the large bed in the middle of the room.

He takes his smudged glasses from his pocket, puts them on to get a better look.

KRISTOFF

(to himself)

Just amazing...

MARY (OS)

Wine. And the herb.

Kristoff turns around to see Mary staring at him, carrying a carafe of wine, a cup and long pipe. She looks quizzically at the smudged glasses Kristoff is wearing.

Immediately he pulls them off, buries them in his pocket. She pours wine into the cup.

MARY

Yessica will return directly, but please, drink. Take the pipe. She says it will improve your sickness.

He takes the cup eagerly.

KRISTOFF

Never let me down yet.

Kristoff chugs the wine, pours himself another cup as Mary sparks up the pipe, passes it to Kristoff.

He takes a hit...then another.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Thanks. Your name's Mary?

MARY

Yes. How do you feel now?

KRISTOFF

This is pot.

MARY

(pointing at the pipe)

No, it is made of cherry wood.

KRISTOFF

Whoa! That's some hard hitting stuff. You were washing the other guy's feet back there.

MARY

You wish I should wash yours?

KRISTOFF

No, nothing like that, I'm just wondering where you live.

MARY

I live here of course, with Yessica.

She points to the large bed.

KRISTOFF

No, where are you from?

MARY

From Magdala. Why do ask?

Yessica enters. Kristoff stands.

YESSICA

Yes, stranger, why do you ask? Perhaps you feel you can perform yet another miracle and take her from me?

KRISTOFF

It's like I said. I didn't perform a miracle.

YESSICA

How do you know my name?

KRISTOFF

Honestly, I don't think I do.

YESSICA

I'm convinced you do. You are the tenth in recent days asking of my whereabouts. Why?

KRISTOFF

I'm actually looking for a man--

YESSICA

A man, yes, so each has claimed. For what purpose?

KRISTOFF

How can I say this without sounding like a lunatic?

YESSICA

You need the blood of the Messiah.

INT. FANCY HOTEL ROOM - DAY

THREE DEAD MEN all dressed in expensive clothing. One's HEAD IMPALED on the sharp corner of an antique desk. Another nearly BENT IN HALF in a corner. A broken shard of mirror STICKS from a third's bloody neck.

The Televangelist from the earlier news report, his face a bright purple, gasps for breath. A STRONG HAND holds him by the throat three feet above the ground.

The hand belongs to Brooks who looks deep into the charlatan's eyes, watching as the HOARSE BREATHING SLOWS,

LIGHT FROM THE PUPILS FADE.

The RING of a cellphone. With his free hand Brooks reaches into his suit pocket, answers the phone, never takes his death gaze off the victim.

BROOKS

Yeah...enjoyin' meself, but yeah.  
Finally then?

He places the phone back in his jacket.

BROOKS

Your lucky day, mate. Divine  
Intervention they call it, yeah?

He drops the preacher. An immediate GASP OF AIR rushes into his lungs. Brooks walks past the carnage, exits.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - NIGHT

Simon, Peter, Yessica, Mary, Matthew, Juda and EIGHT OTHER MEN (dirty, unkempt...the remaining APOSTLES) sit around the fire, all watching Kristoff drink from a clay carafe.

YESSICA

As my Father promised, with the  
arrival of Jessa we are now prepared  
to enter the temple.

Simon leans close to Yessica. Matthew and Juda notice.

SIMON

(whispering)  
I am not yet convinced.

MATTHEW

We are. Brother Juda and I witnessed a  
child cross through the door of death.  
Jessa returned him to his mother. Is  
that not proof?

PETER

(points to Juda)  
Let's hear that from 'im, then. Wait,  
he's got no tongue as I cut 'er out  
due to his blasphemous words!

KRISTOFF

We've been through this, I'm not who  
you think I am, that was just--

SIMON

Tell us! Who are you, then?

Yessica places her hand on Simon's arm, immediately calming him. Kristoff takes another swig of wine.

KRISTOFF

I'm a man. A drunk. I don't believe in any of this. Christ, I don't even believe I'm here!

SIMON

How can we trust this...drunkard, by his own words? Is he truly the one sent to help us on our mission?

GRUMBLING amongst the group.

KRISTOFF

(to Yessica)

What mission?

YESSICA

Tomorrow we restore order to His temple.

THOMAS (40's, scrawny) rises from the group. Kristoff shakes his head. Something by his feet catches his eye.

THOMAS

We are just over a dozen. The money changers are many.

ANDREW (30's, balding) stands as well. Discretely, Kristoff leans over to retrieve a SMALL SHARP STONE.

ANDREW

Have you no faith Brother Thomas? Yessica has assured Father will protect us from Caiaphas and the Council.

Thomas hangs his head.

THOMAS

Protection from the Romans as well?

Kristoff palms the stone, he pushes his finger into the sharp edge, producing a small drop of his blood.

YESSICA

We are protected. We are blessed.

Yessica's eyes penetrate each of followers.

YESSICA (CONT.)

We must be prepared for what will be done. All of us.

With her final words, Yessica's eyes meet Juda's. Kristoff, palming the stone, stares at Yessica's very pronounced jugular vein.

INT. SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

SNORING from multiple areas.

Mary sleeps with her head nestled on Yessica's bosom.

The apostles all sleep on their mats with the exception of Kristoff, seated on the floor in a dark corner. He stares at the SHARP ROCK in his hands.

From the darkness, Juda SNATCHES the weapon from Kristoff. He leans down, face to face with the professor, slowly shakes his head in the negative.

Juda crawls back to his mat.

EXT. RIVERBANK - DAY

Kristoff sits under the dreary dark sky. The Apostles cast their nets in the barren river, no fish in sight. Yessica approaches the professor.

YESSICA

Rise. Walk with me.

She extends a hand to Kristoff. Waist deep in the river, Simon watches with scorn as the professor takes her hand.

Yessica leads a sweaty, shaky, hungover Kristoff away from the apostles along the riverside.

YESSICA (CONT.)

You have a sickness.

KRISTOFF

That's what my wife used to say.

YESSICA

You do understand you are here for a reason.

KRISTOFF

It's not the reason you think.

Yessica smiles as they continue to walk.

YESSICA

It's not my thoughts, nor my intentions that matter.

KRISTOFF

Let me guess, your father's, right?

YESSICA

He is the reason we are both here. We are destined to do what he desires.

From the distance, the frustration mounts as the Apostles pull in empty nets.

KRISTOFF

Maybe you can give him a message next time you see him? Ask why he chose to ruin my life? Can you do that?

Yessica stops. A SMALL SANDBAR extends into the river just above the water's surface. She stares into Kristoff's eyes.

YESSICA

My father doesn't share all, not even with me, but know this, Jessa, you are special.

KRISTOFF

I don't want to be special! I want my wife and daughter back and that's not happening until I have your blood! Do you get that? Your blood in exchange for my family!

YESSICA

You will have my blood, as will all. It has been foretold.

EXT. RIVER - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Peter throws his net down in disgust. The clouds continue to threaten.



PETER

Impossible!

THOMAS

Even if we survive the temple, we will  
all starve!

ANDREW

Simon, we waste our strength on this  
chore! Petition her to bring us fish.

No response from Simon forces the Apostles to look at their  
second in command as he stares down the river. They all  
follow his gaze.

Amazingly, from their perspective, it appears Yessica and  
Kristoff stand in the center of the river, directly ON TOP OF  
THE WATER.

EXT. DOWNSTREAM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

ON THE SANDBAR, Yessica holds her hands up in front of the  
sickly Kristoff.

YESSICA

I can cure you.

Shaking, Kristoff looks up to Yessica, gives a slight nod.  
From the Apostles' vantage point, they watch as Yessica lays  
hands on Kristoff's head.

EXT. RIVER - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

THE CLOUDS DISPERSE. SPLASHING in the river.

Peter breaks his gaze to look at his net. HUNDREDS OF FISH  
flop and battle, trapped inside the mesh.

EXT. DOWNSTREAM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Yessica removes her hands from Kristoff. Instantaneously  
Kristoff's eyes are clearer, his shake ceases.

In the distance, LOUD CHEERING from the successful fishermen.  
Kristoff looks downstream at the celebration. He turns his  
gaze back to meet a calming, smiling Yessica.

INT. HOLLY'S CELL - DAY

Holly sits at a table, flips through a church coloring book.  
Early pages reveal a mess of crayon scrawls. As she nears the

middle of the book the coloring is cleaner, staying within the lines.

She reaches the final uncolored page: Jesus surrounded by smiling children.

Muffled LATIN CHANTING.

Holly gets up from her chair, slowly crosses to the door, listens to the ongoing CHANTING.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH RELIQUARY ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Brooks kneels in front of the Ark wearing full Roman soldier regalia: flowing red cape, helmet, thigh sandals, protective chest plate.

Bishop Pasi, again in his holy robes, circles Brooks CHANTING in Latin. Father McManus in his now in his purple stole, assists.

The blessing complete, Brooks stands, pounds his armor with a beefy hand.

His thick fingers delicately clutch his own SILVER VIAL hung from a leather strap around his neck.

INT. HOLLY'S CELL - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Holly pushes her ear closer to the door.

BISHOP PASI (OS)

In all likelihood the professor is dead, however if you cross his path you are to kill him prior to returning. Understood?

BROOKS (OS)

Oh, not a worry there. Lookin' forward to it, yeah.

INT. CHURCH RELIQUARY ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Father McManus look into the Ark. Bishop Pasi stands directly in front of Brooks.

BISHOP

Templar Knights throughout history have hoped to be involved in this

prophetic event. Now, my son, the future of The Church rests entirely with you.

KRISTOFF (OS)

We're only going to talk with them, right? I have your word?

CUT TO:

EXT. PATH OUTSIDE JERUSALEM - DAY

The Roman Guard from earlier stands at the entrance to the city, eyeballs the large group of Apostles as they approach.

YESSICA

We will speak with the Council, Jessa, yes.

KRISTOFF

Then you will give me the blood?

ROMAN GUARD

So what's this, then? Decided to come out of your caves and make a pilgrimage, yeah?

Yessica stops the group. Approaches the guard.

YESSICA

We wish to visit the temple.

ROMAN GUARD

The temple is it. Saved up your shekels then?

YESSICA

Money is not required to pay tribute to the Lord Our God.

ROMAN GUARD

That so? Let's discuss some things, Jew. You want to git somethin', you need to give somethin', yeah? And you ain't gittin' tills you be givin', now off with the filthy lot of you, reekin' of fish!

Kristoff emerges from the crowd, walks to the Guard.

ROMAN GUARD (CONT.)

Ahh, the Blue Jew has returned!

KRISTOFF

You remember. Good. I more than paid my tariff for the week. I'm coming in, and so are they.

ROMAN GUARD

That so, is it?

KRISTOFF

I did the math.

ROMAN GUARD

Math?

Kristoff leans in, WHISPERS.

KRISTOFF

That coin I gave you, it's worth more than what you earn in a month. I would think you wouldn't want word of your good fortune getting around. Folks tend to get a bit greedy when others do better than them. Who knows what could happen.

The guard studies the close-talking Kristoff, picking up what he's laying down.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Now, we're coming in, all of us, and the only thing you're going to do is smile and wish my group a fine day.

Without looking behind him, Kristoff raises his hand and signals the flock to follow. Yessica places her arm around Mary, guides her past the guard with a polite smile.

MURMURING from the rest of the group as they pass, now following the leading Kristoff. Simon brings up the rear. Stops in front of the nervous guard.

SIMON

Look at my face. Remember me.

INT. TEMPLE MARKETPLACE - DAY

The marketplace bustles, even more so than the day prior. Hundreds of HUMANS and REPTILIANS purchase animals, trinkets

and pottery from a variety of VENDORS.

The Apostle's, now led by Yessica, make their way through the market. With each step, each sight of money changing hands, Yessica's inner peace dissolves.

Kristoff glances to his right, then his left, taking in this garish scene. Something catches his eye. In the distance, the friendly merchant pickpocket has set up shop.

He breaks from the crowd, hauls ass to the vendor's table. The merchant sees him coming, his eyes widen.

FRIENDLY MERCHANT

Wait, wait! You are mistaken!

KRISTOFF

Mistaken my ass!

Kristoff FLINGS the table up in the air! Pottery CRASHES to the ground. Chickens furiously FLAP, goats BLEAT. So much for only talking to the Council!

The merchant cowers on the ground against the stone wall.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Where is it?

FRIENDLY MERCHANT

I don't know this man! Someone help!

He grabs the merchant by the throat, pulls him up.

KRISTOFF

Keep the silver! I want the vial!

FRIENDLY MERCHANT

I do not know this Jew!

In a rage, Kristoff throws the merchant through a nearby table! The Apostle's watch. They turn to Yessica. She nods.

Peter, LAUGHING, violently kicks over a table. Matthew grabs a clay jar, throws it against the brick wall causing COINS to rain down on the shoppers. Enraged, Juda picks up a wooden stool, hurls it across the marketplace.

The Apostles, Mary included, proceed with great anger to trash tables, chasing the money changers from the market. The friendly merchant scrambles away into the maddening crowd. Kristoff gives chase, fighting against the mob.

Yessica stands amongst the crowd, teeth gritted, as she watches the pandemonium.

The friendly merchant runs directly into Simon. He restrains the thief as he tries to escape. Simon looks ahead, sees Kristoff fighting against the crowd. Simon relinquishes his grip on the criminal.

The merchant frantically moves past him, quickly blending into the exiting crowd. Kristoff clumsily attempts to side step Simon, only to be blocked by Yessica's hand.

YESSICA

Enough, Jessa.

KRISTOFF

(to the smirking Simon)

You let him go!

YESSICA

He is of no significance.

KRISTOFF

You don't know what you're doing!

SIMON

Doesn't she?

CLANG!

From the top of the temple steps, a group of ELDER JEWS, each dressed in flowing, expensive robes. One holds a large mallet in front of a ceremonial gong.

The SOUND quells the crowd. Everyone's attention turns to these rabbis. Their leader, CAIAPHAS (60's, white beard) points to the Apostles.

SILENCE.

CAIAPHAS

You! All of you! How dare you defile the business of this temple!

YESSICA

Business is never to be conducted in the house of my Father.

CAIAPHAS

Your father? All of you in your tattered, vile garments. Who do you

profess to be your father, woman?

YESSICA

My father is the same as yours, the creator of all of us, and you mock him in exchange for money.

Caiaphas squints, attempts to identify who from the crowd of the gathered Apostles is speaking.

CAIAPHAS

We worship as we see fit. Pilate has given us his blessing to change the currency here, to provide the animals for sacrifice.

YESSICA

Pilate has no reign over my Father's land, rabbi. This is not the manner to show your reverence.

CAIAPHAS

Step forward, woman! Show yourself!

Yessica steps forward.

YESSICA

I speak on behalf of He. There will be no worship of this blasphemous nature.

CAIAPHAS

And what sign do you show as your authority for doing such things?

YESSICA

Destroy this temple. Eliminate the vulgarity which has transpired here. In three days time I will raise it up to it's rightful state.

The rabbis GRUMBLE amongst themselves. Caiaphas becomes unsettled by this prophetic claim.

CAIAPHAS

It took forty-six years to build this temple. You wish it to be destroyed, and you will have us believe you can raise it three days?

Kristoff steps out from the crowd, addresses the rabbi.

KRISTOFF

You heard her. Three days.

Thomas runs into the the marketplace.

THOMAS

Romans!

The Apostles and Yessica dart to the exit. Kristoff maintains eye contact with the squinting Caiaphas, turns, races after the group.

INT. HOLLY'S CELL - DAY

A child's drawing of a Christmas Morning scene including mother, father, daughter and a decorated tree. The deadbolt on the door turns, drawing Holly's attention. Father McManus walks in with a fast food bag.

FATHER MCMANUS

I brought you something.

The child stares at him blankly. He pulls a cup and straw from the bag, takes a seat beside her.

FATHER MCMANUS (CONT.)

Can you remember how great a milkshake tastes?

She stares at the cup as he unwraps the straw, places it through the lid.

HOLLY

What flavor?

FATHER MCMANUS

Chocolate.

HOLLY

Mommy only lets me have strawberry.  
Didn't you get one for you?

He slides the shake over to the girl.

FATHER MCMANUS

You remember your mother?

Holly scrunches up her nose, shrugs.

HOLLY

Is it Christmas?



FATHER MCMANUS

No, I'm sorry. Milkshakes are the best when they're still frozen.

HOLLY

That was my dad before?

He studies her. Tears form in his eyes.

FATHER MCMANUS

Yes...drink your milkshake.

She puts her hands around the cup.

HOLLY

It's cold. Won't it make my teeth hurt?

Tears stream down the priest's face. He gestures to the cup.

FATHER MCMANUS

Drink it. Please.

Her eyes travel from his tear ridden face to his white collar. She looks back up to his welling eyes.

HOLLY

You're a good man.

He forces a smile. She picks up the milkshake.

EXT. PATH OUTSIDE JERUSALEM - DAY

The Apostle's REVEL in their confrontation with the money changers as they walk away from the city.

PETER

I feel alive!

MATTHEW

And I as well, brother!

THOMAS

Yes, but soon we have our next challenge.

In the middle of the pack, these joyous comments cause Mary to look to Yessica with concern. Yessica takes her hand, returns her gaze with a soft knowing smile.

Kristoff quickens his pace, now in stride with Simon as the

celebratory conversation continues behind them.

KRISTOFF

That asshole robbed me, took  
everything. All you had to do was hold  
him!

Simon ignores the comments, looks straight ahead, a POOR  
MOTHER (20's) holds her INFANT outside a ragged tent.

Yessica stops, a wide grin for the mother and child. She  
extends her arms towards the baby. The mother happily passes  
over her child.

YESSICA

And who is this?

POOR MOTHER

Abigail.

YESSICA

Ah, yes, "the father's joy".

POOR MOTHER

Oh, she is, certainly!

The Apostle's gather, smiles all around as the infant COOS in  
their leader's arms.

YESSICA

Where is the father?

POOR MOTHER

He stays under the cover most days.  
His sight is lacking, the sunlight  
does him ill.

YESSICA

Blind is he?

POOR MOTHER

Not entirely, no. Weak.

YESSICA

He's never seen this angel's face?

She shakes her head.

YESSICA (CONT.)

Bring him. Tell him you have something  
of beauty to share.

The mother looks at the crowd of dirty Apostles, a bit concerned.

YESSICA (CONT.)  
Have faith, not fear.

The mother enters the tent. Yessica, child still pleasantly in her arms, turns to Kristoff. The POOR FATHER exits the tent assisted by his wife.

POOR FATHER  
Yes?

YESSICA  
The smile of a child needs to be seen by the parents. It stays with them, adds light to the days when strife are present. Jessa. Help this man.

The Apostle's watch as Kristoff turns his attention to the vision impaired father. Yessica nods, a calming wide grin.

YESSICA (CONT.)  
Let my Father guide you.

Slowly, Kristoff walks over , looks into to the poor man's cloudy eyes.

YESSICA (CONT.)  
Help him see as I have helped you.

Simon leans in to Yessica, who merely raises a soft, passive hand. Kristoff turns to Yessica, then back to the man.

Kristoff reaches into his pocket...retrieves his smudged eye glasses. The Apostles crane their necks to see what this strange object is.

With great care, almost like performing a religious sacrament, Kristoff places the glasses on the man's face.

Kristoff steps back. The poor man flutters his eyes, confused. He turns to his wife, then to his child resting so beautifully in Yessica's arms.

Crying, the man carefully reaches for his child. Yessica hands the infant over. Kristoff cries.

POOR FATHER (CONT.)  
Thank you, my friend. How can I repay you for this miracle?

KRISTOFF  
(wiping his tears)  
It's not a miracle...

POOR WOMAN  
You are wrong...it certainly is.

INT. ADOBE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Four loaves of baked bread pulled out of the stone oven by a female hand. Kristoff sits at the table gutting the day's early catch.

Mary places the bread beside the scaled fish.

MARY  
You are very skilled with the preparation, Jessa.

KRISTOFF  
My dad liked to fish. Learned a lot from that man.

MARY  
It is always good to learn.

She sits beside him, gathers the guts into a large clay pot.

KRISTOFF  
You're certain about her?

MARY  
(laughing)  
You sound like my father at this point.

KRISTOFF  
I'm serious. Tell me.

MARY  
I've never been more certain of anything in my life.

KRISTOFF  
How can you know for sure?

Mary stands with the bowl of guts.

MARY  
After everything you have seen, how can you doubt?

INT. ST. TOBIAS BASEMENT - DAY

Bishop Pasi, still in his street clothes, sits in a metal folding chair next to the Ark.

He snatches his cellphone, scrolls through the contacts, selects: FR. Liam McManus. The call placed, the phone RINGS in his ear twice.

In the distance, the bishop hears a cellphone RINGING. He looks up as the call goes to voice mail.

FATHER MCMANUS(OS)  
 You've reached Father McManus of the  
 Brooklyn Diocese. I can't take your  
 call now, but---

The bishop disconnects the call. Stands, redials.

The sound of McManus' phone RINGING. Bishop Pasi stands in front of Holly's cell door, the phone RINGS from inside. He unlocks the door, opens it.

The room is empty with the exception of the toys, and the priest's cellphone RINGING and VIBRATING on the table.

FATHER MCMANUS (OS)  
 You've reached Father McManus---

**Milkshake drips from the cell wall to the floor.**

INT. ADOBE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Yessica sits at the middle of the long table.

YESSICA  
 Rejoice, my brothers. The creation of  
 my Father's church is at hand.

Kristoff, concerned by what appears to be the Last Supper, leans in towards Yessica.

KRISTOFF  
 This is a mistake. You need to leave.  
 Now. Everyone.

YESSICA  
 Jessa, have you not yet learned the  
 power of faith? Here there are no  
 mistakes. You must trust what you know  
 in your heart.

KRISTOFF

Things are about to get very bad.

SIMON

What is it that you know? You've been in our midst for two sunsets and you expect us to heed your warnings?

PETER

Let him speak, Juda!

KRISTOFF

You need to leave. All of us.

THOMAS

What of the church then?

Kristoff stares intently around the table.

KRISTOFF

There doesn't have to be a church.

SIMON

Blaspheme!

YESSICA

Jessa, it has been foretold.

She places her arm around Kristoff.

YESSICA (CONT.)

All must transpire.

KRISTOFF

Do you have any idea how many people are going to die because of this? Millions, hell, maybe billions throughout the centuries.

MARY

(to Yessica)

What does he mean?

SIMON

All believers will rise again in Our Lord's kingdom!

Kristoff stands, glares over the head of Yessica at Simon.

KRISTOFF

My wife and daughter died at a mass

commemorating what is going to happen here!

Simon stands.

SIMON

Then they are rewarded in Heaven!

YESSICA

Sit. Both of you.

Kristoff sits, Simon remains stands standing.

YESSICA (CONT.)

Mary?

She passes Yessica a loaf of bread.

YESSICA

Take this bread, my brothers, and eat from it. This is my body, which has been given up to each of you.

She passes the bread to her left. Mary pulls off a corner, eats it, passes it to the still standing Simon, who does the same. The bread makes it's way finally to Kristoff.

He pulls off a piece, places it in his mouth.

SIMON

He is not worthy!

Simon storms out of the compound. Kristoff rises to follow, but Yessica's calming hand convinces him to sit back down. Yessica pours wine from a clay carafe into a WOODEN CUP.

YESSICA

As promised, Jessa. This is my blood, available to all for the forgiveness of sin. Take it and drink.

Disappointment, then anger crosses Kristoff's face.

KRISTOFF

This isn't your blood. You gave me your word. Your fucking blood, real blood, not some fermented grapes!

YESSICA

Drink of it and see.

Kristoff looks around the table at the anxious, curious eyes of the Apostles. He pounds his fist on the table, bolts up, knocks the wooden cup over, paces quickly, hands to his head.

KRISTOFF

This isn't right! None of it! I can't stop you if you've got a death wish, but you sure as hell are going to keep your word to me!

Peter and Andrew quickly rise from the table, round the corner to restrain Kristoff. The professor snatches a banged up stone knife from the table.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Back off!

Yessica raises her hand, calling off the Apostles. Wild eyed, frustrated, Kristoff looks at the knife in his hand to the calming eyes of Yessica.

He drops the utensil, exits the dwelling.

EXT. ADOBE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Kristoff sits against the exterior wall next to Simon's tomato plants. His head buried in his hands. Yessica walks out carrying the WOODEN CUP and a leather canteen.

KRISTOFF

None of this is right...you, your name, these false miracles everyone falls for so easily.

She takes a seat next to him.

KRISTOFF (CONT.)

Out of the blue I'm told I need to do this? It's crazy. I can't see right anymore but that stranger with the kid can? This just can't be real, can't be happening.

YESSICA

It is all very much real, Jessa. I know of your journey since my Father created the sea, the creatures. I've been aware of Rome's threat, the men who are destined to die honoring His name. The struggles the church are to have with the weakness of the flesh.



Kristoff stares into her calming eyes.

YESSICA (CONT.)

I know of a man, deep inside his heart, a very good man, who lost his way. It has been prophesied that this man would play a crucial role in our world. Doubts he would have, yes, but he will overcome.

Yessica hands Kristoff the refilled wooden cup.

YESSICA (CONT.)

Drink. There is more here to take to achieve what you wish.

KRISTOFF

I'm not here for wine.

YESSICA

It is identical to the blood that travels through my heart.

Kristoff takes the cup.

YESSICA (CONT.)

I do understand your doubt, Jessa.

Yessica retrieves the utensil Kristoff wielded earlier from her garment. She CUTS her palm, opens the canteen, pours out the wine. Squeezes her hand forcing a stream of blood into the container.

Yessica nods to the wine in the wooden cup. Kristoff drinks.

YESSICA (CONT.)

Yes. You shall find what you have lost, all in due time.

Yessica stands, holds her hand out, helps Kristoff up. The professor wobbles, unsteady on his feet. Yessica hugs him.

Kristoff steps back, DISORIENTED, CONFUSED.

YESSICA (CONT.)

I am sorry you have been prodded into your part. You will be rewarded.

Kristoff collapses on the tomato plant, his eyes close.

EXT. RIVERBANK - NIGHT

A HOODED FIGURE walks purposefully away from the city leading THREE ROMAN SOLDIERS carrying torches and swords.

They pass a high wall consisting of several CAVES. Movement in the moonlight appears from the mouth of one familiar cave.

Brooks drags the decapitated corpse from the mouth of the cave, throwing rocks and boulders away as if they are pebbles.

He stands upright, takes in the darkened surroundings.

SAND. ROCK. A GURGLING RIVER.

His soldier clad boots step down the rocky hillside. Something catches his eye. He flings the corpse away, kneels down, picks up a FLUORESCENT GREEN LIGHTER.

Smiling, he places it inside his chest plate.

EXT. ADOBE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Kristoff's eyes flutter open. Groggily, he stands, steadies himself against the wall. SILENCE.

INT. ADOBE COMPOUND - NIGHT

He enters the dwelling. Everything but the furniture is gone. No wooden cup, no leather canteen, no bread.

The mute Juda enters the room. Kristoff turns to him.

KRISTOFF

They took him already? We have to stop this.

Kristoff attempts to push past him. Juda pulls him back, leans in, KISSES Kristoff on the mouth.

Confused, but piecing it together quickly, Kristoff forcibly breaks the embrace.

Immediately, the hooded SIMON and the three soldiers BREAK into the room, roughly grab Kristoff.

EXT. PATH OUTSIDE JERUSALEM - NIGHT

The Roman Guard gatekeeper faces inside the city. Watches with a smirk as the evening brings about the more SHADY

INHABITANTS of Jerusalem: whores, clients, drunkards and troublemakers. From the desert, Brooks approaches in full soldier garb. He walks past the guard.

ROMAN GUARD

Oy! Where you come from then?

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET - CONTINUOUS

Brooks continues walking, causing the guard to follow.

ROMAN GUARD

You there! What's your purpose?

Brooks stops, turns to the guard.

BROOKS

Piss off!

The guard studies this intruder's odd appearance. The uniform doesn't match what he is accustomed to seeing.

ROMAN GUARD

You're not of Pilate's regime!

Quickly, the guard pulls his sword.

BROOKS

If you don't want metal shoved up your arse you best sheath 'dat.

ROMAN GUARD

Your business then!

BROOKS

My business then, if you don't fuckin' turn 'round, is to rip your scrawny head from your shoulders, yeah?

From behind Brooks a MASSIVE ROMAN twice his size, a human thoroughbred, approaches.

This monster carries a cup of wine. His chest plate and helmet are off, yet he still wears his red cape, white undergarment and thigh sandals.

MASSIVE ROMAN

Balbus, what 'ave we here?

ROMAN GUARD

Nothing I can't remedy Marcel, go on

now.

MASSIVE ROMAN  
What's with all this then?

The large man points to Brooks' attire.

ROMAN GUARD  
Ain't from here, now is he?

Brooks eyes the massive man up and down.

BROOKS  
Look here, Marcie was it, go on now,  
drink and fuck and whatever it is you  
do to pass the time, right? Get on  
wit' it.

ROMAN GUARD  
I say we take him to the Guvnor, let  
'em sort it all out.

The Roman guard, Balbus, places a hand under Brooks' armpit. SLASH! Brooks stabs him in the side with a dagger. The guard crumples to the ground in a pool of blood.

A crowd gathers. The large, wounded, drunken Roman throws his cup down, grabs Brooks by the neck. Pulls him up off the ground.

His face turning purple, Brooks stabs the monster again, then again, and yet another time in the belly before he is dropped to the ground.

The crowd CHEERS. Brooks back peddles on the ground, dagger still in hand. His wounded attacker rallies and charges.

Quickly, Brooks gets to his feet, into a fighting stance. Expertly he slashes at the soldier twice, the dagger in his right hand.

On his third attempt, his wrist is caught by the large hand of this gigantic fighting machine. As if snapping a toothpick, the bones in Brooks' wrist turn to dust.

He drops the dagger, which the soldier quickly kicks towards the crowd. The friendly merchant thief from earlier crawls into the street, retrieves the weapon.

The soldier takes Brooks' helmet off, uses it to pummel him several times in the face. Brooks, bloodied, falls to the

ground.

The merchant thief notices the SILVER VIAL hanging from Brooks' neck. The enormous soldier paces towards his prostrate victim.

FRIENDLY MERCHANT

Look! Look!

Brooks squints through blood covered eyes to see the thief holding his own silver vial before he is picked up by the scruff of the neck.

The savage's arms wrapped around Brooks' neck from behind, feet dangling from the air like a rag doll. Brooks, struggles to breathe, stares into the crowd.

He sees the thief holding his dagger. Brooks takes his left hand away from the large forearms of the soldier, points to the weapon. His dying eyes plead for the weapon.

The crowd CHANTS for death, loving the impromptu battle.

Nervously, the thief scampers up to the pair. Places the dagger in Brooks' left hand.

With his last ounce of energy, Brooks swings his legs up like a gymnast in a forty-five degree angle. Violently, he plummets the knife several times into the groin of the monster. Finally he is dropped to the ground.

Brooks turns, watches as blood pours from the soldier's groin. Rubbing his neck, he walks over to the beast, stomps once on his throat resulting in a LOUD CRUNCH.

AUTHORITATIVE VOICE (OS)

Quite an accomplishment indeed.

The crowd parts as PILATE (40's, regal, wearing a white hooded robe) rides up on a black stallion surrounded by a dozen ROMAN SOLDIERS on foot.

PILATE

In all his years of servitude Marcel  
has yet to be bested.

The thief attempts to leave Brooks's side but is forced back into the center of the street by a soldier.

Another LARGE SOLDIER in full uniform forces his way through the group. He kneels down next to the fallen monster. Cradles

him in his arms. Tears pour from his face.

LARGE SOLDIER

Marcel...my brother...you will be  
avenged, I swear upon Lares and  
Penates.

Pilate nods for a soldier to retrieve this grieving sibling.

PILATE

(addressing Brooks)

Why have you come here, under who's  
order?

Brooks stares Pilate directly in the eye.

BROOKS

Emperor Tiberius has sent me.

PILATE

And for what purpose then?

BROOKS

I am to witness the death of a Jew,  
report back with my knowledge.

PILATE

Any particular Jew or would you like  
to take your pick.

With this the mob quickly disperses.

BROOKS

There is one.

PILATE

Oh? And when, pray tell, did you  
receive this order from Tiberius?

BROOKS

(stammering)

Three days prior it was. I set out  
immediately.

PILATE

Odd. When we met in the morning, right  
here where you now stand, just the day  
prior to now, why wouldn't our emperor  
have mentioned your arrival?

Brooks stands silent. The thief looks to him, waiting for a

response.

PILATE (CONT.)

Secure him until this matter can be clarified.

The soldiers surround Brooks.

ROMAN SOLDIER

What of this Jew, Your Excellency?

Pilate waves his hand irreverently.

PILATE

He is an excellent opportunity to remind the filthy of Rome's intolerance for uprisings of this sort.

A MESSENGER ( male, 15, flushed) races into the street.

MESSENGER

Your Excellency, Caiaphas has requested your presence and wisdom on a pressing matter!

PILATE

A simple ride through the night air was all I desired! Will these duties never end? Very well. To containment with this impostor. Crucify the Jew.

INT. JEWISH TRIBUNAL COURTROOM - NIGHT

Caiaphas and the elders sit at a long table in the candlelit room. Kristoff stands in front of them surrounded by the three Roman soldiers.

KRISTOFF

It's not me that you're looking for.

CAIAPHAS

But was it not you in the temple who looked directly in my own eyes?

KRISTOFF

There's a woman, a leader, Yessica. She drugged me--

ELDER RABBI

Drugged? What is the meaning?

KRISTOFF

The wine, she gave it to me so she could escape. Se wasn't supposed to, but she took everyone with her.

CAIAPHAS

Everyone? Yet here we are.

KRISTOFF

No, her followers, Apostles.

ELDER RABBI

A female you say? Nonetheless, your presence is here. we have no concern with the others. Word travels of your deeds. Did you not grant sight to the blind beggar outside the city walls?

KRISTOFF

He wasn't blind!

CAIAPHAS

And we hear of witchcraft to bring a child back from death, no? Hushed tones that you are the prophesied Messiah.

PILATE (OS)

What is it Caiaphas, I tire quickly of your ceaseless requests.

Caiaphas and the elders rise. The soldiers kneel in Pilate's presence. He signals his men to stand. Approaches Kristoff.

PILATE

Who do you have here? Not another matter of a slave breaking from his master, I trust.

Pilate quizzically studies Kristoff's clothing.

CAIAPHAS

Governor Pilate. Thank you for your presence.

KRISTOFF

Pontius Pilate?

Pilate looks scornfully into Kristoff's eyes, slaps him!



PILATE

You dare to address me directly? Your name, now!

KRISTOFF

Kristoff.

PILATE

Christus? And your family name?

KRISTOFF

That is my family name. I'm Jesse Kristoff. These men have made a mistake.

PILATE

You are either incredibly brave, Jessis of Christus, or irreparably deficient. Tell me, why do you feel you can answer more than what I ask?

KRISTOFF

There is a woman. She has followers, a family, twelve of them, and a woman. It's supposed to be her. I'm not supposed to be here! You don't want me.

Pilate turns to Caiaphas.

PILATE

I tire of this, Caiaphas. What is it that you need? What order can I give to return to my bed?

CAIAPHAS

He must be executed Your Excellency.

PILATE

And this is the consensus, then?

The elders all nod.

PILATE (CONT.)

So it will be.

CAIAPHAS

We request with great pain, a scourging as well, with nails through the limbs rather than twine.

PILATE

This Jew must have slighted you greatly. Very well. Now, with your blessing, of course, my chamber calls.

Caiaphas smirks, nods. Pilate signals to his soldiers. Kristoff hangs his head in defeat, trembles in fear.

INT. ROMAN PRISON CELL - DAY

Brooks, still wearing his chest armor and cape stares through the small window of the iron door.

Across the hall, in another cell a WILD PRISONER (40's, long scraggly hair, crazy eyes) weaves twine into a large circle.

Brooks studies the wooden walls, at eye level a tiny crack. He peers through the opening to the exterior city. In the distance one cross stands upright, an out of focus figure hangs alone.

He braces himself against the wood. CREAKING, but it fails to give. He turns, PUNCHES the wall in frustration with his left hand, his right dangles limply by his side.

SCREAMS OF AGONY echo from behind a closed door.

INT. ROMAN TORTURE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The large soldier, brother of Marcel, drags a leather whip, circles a shirtless Kristoff chained faced down to a slab of rock in the center of the room.

With great glee, he savagely whips Kristoff several times, ripping flesh from his already raw back. Kristoff releases a blood curdling SCREAM.

BROOKS (OS)

Oy! Come git some of me you coward!

The soldier ignores the threat. Picks up Kristoff's head by his long hair. Smiles, punches him squarely in the face.

LARGE SOLDIER

(to the bloodied Kristoff)

Hold your water, precious. Don't goes nowhere, yeah?

Kristoff's eyes roll into the back of his head behind two swollen eye sockets. His jaw dangles, broken and shattered.

INT. ROMAN PRISON HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The large soldier places his face into Brooks's cell.

LARGE SOLDIER

You're a big boy with a bigger mouth,  
aren't ya then?

Brooks rises, face to face with the soldier. The eyes of both men blazing with hate.

BROOKS

Go on then, open it up. Let's finish  
this, yeah?

LARGE SOLDIER

In time, pup. Got me hands full now.  
But I ain't lost sight of ya'.

BROOKS

Your brother, I cut his stones out, I  
did. Stomped his neck like I was  
putting out a brush fire, yeah?

WILD PRISONER (OS)

(chuckling)

Cut out his stones!

The soldier turns to the other cell.

LARGE SOLDIER

Shush it Moppet! You're cock is next  
on the block then!

He looks in, the wild prisoner continues works on his craft.

LARGE SOLDIER (CONT.)

Wot you got there? Give me 'dat.

INT. ROMAN TORTURE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The soldier enters, stands over the bloody, delirious  
Kristoff. He grabs his long hair, pulls his head up.

LARGE SOLDIER

Got somethin' for ya, Messiah King!

INT. ROMAN PRISON HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The torture room door opens. The large soldier drags the  
shirtless Kristoff FACE DOWN by the arm up the hallway.

Brooks pounces to the door, looks out.

He sees a long haired man, bloody welts on his back, wearing A CROWN OF THORNS. Panic appears in Brooks' eyes.

RINGING OF A CELLPHONE.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH RELIQUARY ROOM - DAY

The RINGING continues, emanating from the pile of Kristoff's belongings still setting on a table.

INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - NIGHT

Izzy holds her cellphone up to her ear.

KRISTOFF (OS)

If you're trying to reach me, leave a message.

BEEP.

IZZY

Where are you? You're late! I've got a hundred students waiting.

Frustrated, she disconnects the call. Looks towards a set of double doors.

INT. OLD FASHIONED LECTURE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Izzy walks through the double doors at the front of the room. LOUD CHATTER amongst the students. She reaches the podium, leans into the microphone.

IZZY

Professor Kristoff won't be joining us tonight, so your stuck with me.

EXT. JERUSALEM STREET - DAY

Kristoff drags a heavy cross through the crowd followed by TWO SOLDIERS wielding spears and whips.

At the entrance to the prison, the large soldier, Kristoff's main tormentor, watches with vicious glee as the villagers follow the procession to Calvary.

Struggling to move under the heavy weight of the cross,

Kristoff stumbles in front of the inn from earlier. The obese innkeeper rises from his post. Waddles to the street.

INNKEEPER

A swindler, thief and a liar he is!

KRISTOFF

(gasping)

No..I'm not...

INNKEEPER

Where is my fishing net, then?

He spits directly in Kristoff's face. Turns defiantly back to his business.

From across the street the young girl, the sketch artist from the riverside, draws the scene on her papyrus.

INT. ROMAN PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

Brooks races towards the wooden door like a charging bull, his cape billows behind him. His shoulder crashes into the unforgiving oak, bouncing him onto the ground.

BROOKS

Your sister's ass!

He stands, attempts again to break the door. Frustrated, he paces, looks out the crack in the exterior wooden wall, watches as the procession has finally made it to Calvary.

EXT. MOUNT CALVARY - CONTINUOUS

Kristoff collapses onto the hot earth. The soldiers lay the cross into proper position, drag him onto the wood. Weak, bloody, helpless, he looks to the sky.

KRISTOFF

(gasping)

I'm not him...

SOLDIER #1

Shut it Jew!

The first soldier holds Kristoff's hand and forearm in place, leaving a space at the wrist where the second soldier POUNDS a large spike through the flesh, into the wood. Kristoff SCREAMS as the onlookers cheer this wretched event.

INT. ROMAN PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

Wild eyed, Brooks stares through the fissure in the wooden wall, watches as the cross is raised into position in the distance. He grits his teeth in rage.

EXT. MOUNT CALVARY - CONTINUOUS

Kristoff hangs from the cross, eyes closed. WHIMPERS, knows there is no escape.

MALE VOICE (OS)

It's you then, is it?

Kristoff slowly rolls his head to the right. Through a swollen eye he sees the friendly merchant thief hanging on the cross beside him.

FRIENDLY MERCHANT

It's true what you can do, yes?

Kristoff's damaged eyes rage at this recognized thief.

FRIENDLY MERCHANT (CONT.)

Save us! Forever in your debt I will be!

INT. OLD FASHIONED LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

Projected on the screen, a painting depicting Christ on the Cross. Hanging to his right, The Good Thief pleads with the Messiah for his life.

IZZY

Notice how Gruenwald chose to place the focus of the painting on The Good Thief, rather than on Christ. Active contrasting with passive.

She clicks off the projector, the lights rise.

IZZY (CONT.)

Questions?

The students gather their belongings.

IZZY (CONT.)

Alright, I'll see you all next week, hopefully with our professor in tow. Everyone, have a great week, and don't forget to get me your thesis topics.

The crowd disperses as Izzy, grinning, relishes in the success of instructing her first course. She collects her belongings as she acknowledges the exiting students.

Through the mass exodus crossing in front of the podium, she sees an older man and a young girl sitting in the back of the room.

Intrigued, she attempts to look past the crowd of students, but loses sight of these two strange attendees.

FATHER MCMANUS (OS)

Ms. Fowler?

She looks up. There stands McManus holding Holly's small hand. Izzy stares first at the priest, then to the girl. Her mouth drops open, her eyes widen in recognition.

FATHER MCMANUS

I know you don't understand, but please, she needs your help.

EXT. MOUNT CALVARY - DAY

Kristoff, rapidly dying on the cross, looks into the crowd. He squints, sees Yessica, Peter and John near the front of the boisterous mob. Yessica nods somberly to Kristoff.

EXT. PILATE'S PALACE - CONTINUOUS

Alone, Pilate stands upon his marble terrace, watches the crucifixion in the distance. Shakes his head.

PILATE

Savages.

He dips his hands into a golden bowl of water, his eyes never leave Calvary.

INT. ROMAN PRISON CELL - DAY

Brooks watches the far off scene. A soldier takes a spear, approaches the crucified Kristoff.

BROOKS

No...

He rips off his chest armor, the FLUORESCENT LIGHTER tumbles to the ground behind him. Vigorously, Brooks HAMMERS the metal plate against the wooden wall to no avail.

He stumbles backwards, slumps against the wall, CRIES IN ANGER. Holding his head in his hands, he looks up, eyes widen, sees the lighter laying next to his cape.

EXT. MOUNT CALVARY - CONTINUOUS

The soldier pierces the unresponsive Kristoff in the side with the spear. Blood pours from the wound.

SOLDIER #1

It is finished! Begone, all of you!

The crowd slowly disperses. Yessica silently signals Matthew and Peter towards the cross. She stands back as they approach the Roman Soldiers.

MATTHEW

This is our brother. Please, allow us to bury him as our tradition. He does not belong in this mass grave with the others.

SOLDIER #2

Piss off, eh! Don't care who is, yeah?

Peter pulls a cloth sack from inside his robe.

PETER

It is all we have, yet still plenty for you to let us bring him down for a proper burial.

The soldier snatches the bag, looks inside, shows his partner.

SOLDIER #1

Have at it then, but get 'em down quick, yeah?

Yessica watches the interaction as a female hand tugs at the sleeve of her robe. She looks down, smiles at the young sketch artist.

The girl hands Yessica the papyrus, a classic rendering of Christ on the Cross.

YESSICA

Well done. Take all of your creations, share them as we have discussed.



INT. ROMAN PRISON CELL - CONTINUOUS

The long robe wrapped around the chest armor. Brooks sparks the lighter on the corner of the cloth. Immediately it

BURSTS INTO FLAMES.

He uses the chest armor as a fiery battering ram, PUMMELS the exterior wooden wall several times. He backs up to the far end of the cell with his flaming makeshift weapon.

Brooks charges the wall again. It catches fire, begins to weaken. The room fills with smoke. The wild eyed prisoner across the hall SCREAMS in delight.

Again, Brooks, his face and exposed arms reddening from the heat, a human flame thrower, charges the wall.

The wall crumbles, becomes a burning fireball falling into the alley below. With the momentum, Brooks tumbles down two stories, his undergarments alight, skin singed and burning.

He lands with a SICKENING THUD onto the unforgiving street, burning wood and smoke surrounds him.

He stands, pulls apart his cotton shirt totally engulfed in flames. Naked, save for his sandals, the remnant of a loincloth and the SILVER VIAL hanging around his neck.

INT. KRISTOFF'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The door opens to reveal an ELDERLY DOORMAN (white beard, heavyset, gold rimmed glasses) holding the key. Behind him stands Izzy and Holly.

IZZY

Thank you so much, Donald. Can you stay here with her for a second?

ELDERLY DOORMAN

No problem, Ms. Fowler.

Izzy quickly enters.

IZZY

Jesse?

In the doorway, Holly stares at this man in wonder. Confused by her reappearance, he looks down, forces a smile. She grins back.

IZZY (CONT.)

Jesse?

Izzy rapidly moves about the apartment, returns to the entrance.

ELDERLY DOORMAN

Everything OK, Ms. Fowler? I haven't seen the professor since last night.

IZZY

No, we're good. I just have an over active imagination.

ELDERLY DOORMAN

Anything else then?

IZZY

No. Thank you again, Donald.

The doorman nods, winks at Holly, turns and leaves.

HOLLY

Bye!

Izzy and Holly enter. Immediately, Holly's eyes catch the Christmas Tree and the dusty, wrapped gift. She races to it, plops down in front of the faded box.

HOLLY

It's Christmas!

Holly feverishly begins unwrapping the gift.

IZZY

Oh, you may want to wait--

Too late. Holly gleefully pulls out a large stuffed Panda. Izzy can't help but smile at the child.

EXT. BEHIND THE CITY INN - DAY

Brooks watches from around the corner of the inn as the large innkeeper waddles to a rickety clothesline.

From this perspective, Brooks can see soldiers scouring the street searching for him. The fat business owner throws wet linens over the clothesline. With great stealth, Brooks creeps up behind the innkeeper, SNAPS his neck like a twig.

EXT. MOUNT CALVARY - DAY

Peter throws Kristoff's body, now wrapped in linens, over his shoulder. He and Matthew proceed towards the river.

Brooks, now dressed in the innkeeper's WHITE ROBE, watches from behind a boulder.

EXT. PILATE'S PALACE - DAY

Pilate sits, basking in the sun, drinking wine. Caiaphas approaches.

PILATE

Was I not clear I am tired of your constant requests?

CAIAPHAS

My lord. The body of this Christus has been given to his followers for burial. Perhaps I did not articulate--

PILATE

You wanted him executed, is he not dead?

CAIAPHAS

Please, Your Excellency, he has made preposterous claims, statements which left alone can breed and fester in the simple minds of the people.

PILATE

Get on with it then. What more will silence you're never ending needs?

EXT. TOMB - DAY

Matthew stands outside the cave, paces nervously. Peter exits from the tomb entrance.

PETER

Now brother, the rock.

The two apostles struggle to push a large boulder in front of the mouth of the tomb. On a ridge below the tomb site, Brooks watches, waits patiently for his opportunity.

Behind him, a large cliff leads down into the rushing river.

Two soldiers arrive on horseback.

SOLDIER #1  
Oy! The two of you, begone!

The rock finally in place.

PETER  
We have permission for this burial.

SOLDIER #1  
Right, he's buried then, yeah? Now git  
back to your filth and fishin'.

MATTHEW  
We must sit Shiva--

SOLDIER #2  
Go sit in the desert. Got our orders  
we do! Out with ya!

Matthew looks to Peter.

PETER  
Come, Brother.

They depart as Brooks contemplates his surroundings, the vial  
hangs from his neck. He looks up to the sky to see the sun  
setting.

INT. ADOBE COMPOUND - NIGHT

Juda, Yessica and Mary sit against the wall. Peter and  
Matthew arrive from the distance.

MATTHEW  
Yessica, the Romans, they forced us to  
leave the body!

PETER  
We have just over a day to decide on a  
way to trick them, to steal the  
corpse.

YESSICA  
Your work here is done, Brothers. Do  
not burden your thoughts with details.  
Both of you have done well.

Yessica stands, hugs each of them.

YESSICA (CONT.)  
You will hear fantastic tales in your

travels. Reaffirm them as you build  
His church. Go, tonight. Until we meet  
again.

EXT. TOMB - NIGHT

Helmets off, the two soldiers sit in front of a fire, passing  
a jug of wine between themselves.

SOLDIER #1

I say now, at daybreak we're going to  
find us good whores and drink til the  
sun rises again.

SOLDIER #2

If not sent to crucify another Jew.  
Old, it gets, yeah?

Brooks POUNCES down from above landing in front of the fire.  
Before they can stand he viciously smashes their heads  
against each other...Once...twice...three times. Their skulls  
seep brains and blood.

He storms over to the stone guarding the tomb. His burnt  
flesh ripples as he grunts, struggles greatly to push it from  
the opening.

INT. TOMB - NIGHT

Brooks stands in front of the linen clad body, genuflects,  
makes the Sign of The Cross.

Begins to remove the shroud from the corpse's face when the  
GALLOPING OF HORSES stops him. A familiar VOICE in the  
distance.

LARGE SOLDIER (OS)

Oy! You two seen the large one, eh?

EXT. TOMB - NIGHT

Kristoff's body thrown over his shoulder, Brooks slithers out  
of the tomb. The large soldier leads four others carrying  
torches on horseback, circles above the campfire.

He looks down upon the dead soldiers.

LARGE SOLDIER

Lookit 'em. Sleeping like a wife on  
husband there.

He dismounts, makes his way down the hill to where the guards, their heads caved in, lay crumpled in a bloody ball.

Brooks scampers down the ridge. He lays the body down. Removes the SILVER VIAL from around his neck.

LARGE SOLDIER (OS)  
 Git up, the both of you! Marcel's  
 murderer's gone, yah!

Brooks removes Kristoff's arm from the linen. Searches for a sharp instrument, finds none.

LARGE SOLDIER (OS)  
 Bloody hell...he's here! Find him!

Quickly, Brooks bites into the crook of the body's elbow. Spits FLESH onto the ground. His strong hands SQUEEZE the arm, trying to milk the non-flowing blood from the wound.

COMMOTION from above. Torches, HORSES CIRCLING. He opens the vial, continues to push on the arm. Kristoff's stagnant blood trickles like tar into the open container.

Quickly, he screws the lid on tight, places the vial around his neck. He reaches to remove the shroud from the face, stopped by a nearby VOICE.

SOLDIER (OS)  
 Oy! I see 'em! Down there!

Quickly, Brooks throws the body over his shoulder, races to the edge of the cliff. Far below, the river rapidly flows.

He looks over his shoulder. TORCHES clamoring down the hillside. He heaves the body off the cliff. Turns, runs from the rapidly approaching flame carriers.

The body tumbles down the cliff. The linen, caught on a rock, releases Kristoff's corpse to the river below. The Shroud remains, hanging from the high rock wall.

EXT. PATH OUTSIDE JERUSALEM - NIGHT

Brooks races through the dark, arms and legs pump furiously, the vial bounces from the leather strap around his neck.

In the distance, but gaining rapidly, torches illuminate the night. Soldiers on horseback quickly bridging the gap between them and their prey.

Up ahead, Brooks can make out his destination: the wall of caves against the stark moonlight.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Brooks stumbles on the sand, rolls, gets up, gasping for breath. The pursuing soldiers now visible less than three hundred yards away.

EXT. MOUTH OF CAVE - CONTINUOUS

His sandaled feet battle to navigate the rocks leading upwards to the cave entrance. GALLOPING. The RANTING of the pursuing soldiers.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Brooks thrusts himself into the cave.

BROOKS  
 (breathlessly, rapidly)  
 I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
 creator of Heaven and Earth.

EXT. RIVERSIDE - CONTINUOUS

The soldiers reign their horses to a stop. The large leader, brother of the deceased Marcel, leaps from his stallion, sword in hand.

The other soldiers dismount.

LARGE SOLDIER  
 No! It's between he and I.

INT. CAVE - CONTINUOUS

BROOKS  
 ...the resurrection of the body, and  
 the life everlasting. Amen.

He closes his eyes....NOTHING!

LARGE SOLDIER (OS)  
 Gonna' cut off yer bollocks, make ya  
 eat 'em 'fore I gut ya!

EXT. MOUTH OF CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Brooks stands at the mouth of the cave. Looks down the slope, eye contact in the moonlight with the climbing vengeful

soldier.

Panicked, Brooks looks to his right. Another cave, and yet another beyond that, dozens, all nearly identical. He dashes towards the next cave entrance.

INT. SECOND CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Brooks falls inside, clutches the vial around his neck.

BROOKS

(faster, louder)

I believe in God, the father almighty,  
creator of Heaven and Earth. I believe  
in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our  
Lord--

EXT. MOUTH OF FIRST CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The soldier gains his footing. Raises his sword, storms towards the second cave.

INT. SECOND CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Brooks, shaking, sweating, eyes closed.

BROOKS

Amen!

NOTHING!

EXT. MOUTH OF SECOND CAVE - CONTINUOUS

Brooks exits, the large soldier swings his sword, missing his target by inches.

Brooks throws a roundhouse right, connects with the soldier, causing him to stumble down the hillside. Brooks scrambles toward the mouth of the next cave.

Seeing their fallen comrade, the soldiers at the riverside climb up the rocky terrain.

The large soldier wears a bloody smile. Stands, climbs upwards towards the fleeing Brooks.

INT. THIRD CAVE - CONTINUOUS

BROOKS

(feverishly)

On the third day he rose again in



fulfillment of the scriptures!

EXT. MOUTH OF THIRD CAVE - CONTINUOUS

The large soldier stands at the entrance to the cave, sword drawn.

BROOKS (OS)

--and he will come to judge the living  
and the dead!

His fellow soldiers arrive to his right at the mouth of the first cave. He turns to them, smiles. Raises his sword to the heavens.

BROOKS (OS)

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy  
Catholic Church, the communion of  
saints, the forgiveness of sins, the  
resurrection of the body--

Defiantly, the soldier sticks his sword, head and shoulders into the mouth of the cave.

BROOKS (OS)

--and the life everlasting. Amen!

A FLASH OF BRILLIANT LIGHT! The soldiers in the distance cower, cover their eyes.

From the mouth of the cave, the lower half of the large soldier's body stumbles backwards, PERFECTLY CAUTERIZED FROM THE CHEST DOWN, no head, no chest, no arm, no sword. The body falls backwards, down the rocky ridge.

INT. ST. TOBIAS RELIQUARY ROOM - DAY

Bishop Pasi, still in street clothes, sits on a folding metal chair next to the Ark. The dusty clock on the wall reads nine-fourteen. The creases in his furrowed brow say it all.

THE LID OF THE ARK FLINGS UPWARDS! CRASHES to the dirt floor.

The bishop leaps to his feet, looks into the opening of the holy box.

He JUMPS BACK as THE HEAD, TORSO AND ARM of the large soldier, still wielding the sword, flies across the room.

Brooks, shaking, crying, severely burned, slowly appears from the Ark. The bishop stares into his delirious eyes, then

changes his gaze to the vial hanging around his neck.

INT. KRISTOFF'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Izzy signs a letter. She stuffs envelopes of money, including the blue one from earlier, into her purse, wheels a small Winnie The Pooh suitcase to the doorway.

IZZY

Ready?

Holly sits on the sofa snuggling her new stuffed animal.

HOLLY

Where are we going?

IZZY

On an adventure.

EXT. ST. TOBIAS CHURCH - NIGHT

IZZY (VO)

(narration of the letter)

Jesse, I don't understand where you went, but a priest told me you're not coming back. I can't believe that. I won't.

Brooks exits the church in the same suit he wore when he arrived.

IZZY (VO)

This is crazy, but he had Holly with him...it's her...he said you know she's alive, but she's in danger.

Brooks, visibly shaken by his experience, looks up to the roof of the church. There, a wooden statue of Christ on the Cross, identical to Kristoff, looks down on him.

IZZY (VO)

He told me to protect her, and I will. She'll be with me. I don't know where we're going, but we will look for you.

INT. IZZY'S CAR - NIGHT

Izzy drives down a NYC street. Holly hugs her stuffed panda, looks wide eyed out the window at the buildings, lights and pedestrians.

IZZY (VO)  
 Promise me you'll look for us, too.

A long line of solid green lights clear the way as Izzy stares into the rear view mirror, catches the young child's eye. They smile at each other.

Out of nowhere, a streetlight immediately turns RED.

Izzy slams on the brakes, nearly hits a slow moving HOMELESS WOMAN (black, 40's). Holly involuntarily lurches forward in her seat.

IZZY  
 Jesus Christ!

Izzy looks back to her young passenger, who's eyes are glued on the scraggly pedestrian.

HOLLY  
 I'm OK.

Izzy turns ahead to meet the kind eyes of this vagrant. She raises a WOODEN CUP to the vehicle's occupants. Gives a kind smile.

IT IS YESSICA.

She wanders off into the crowd. The light turns GREEN.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER IMPOSED: THREE MONTHS LATER

A LARGE GROUP of society's less fortunate stand in a long line waiting for a hot meal. A vinyl banner hangs over the VOLUNTEER SERVERS: Salvation Army of Pittsburgh.

FATHER MCMANUS (OS)  
 The body of Christ.

FEMALE (OS)  
 Amen.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

In a classroom adjacent to the kitchen, a smaller line has formed. Father McManus delivers the sacrament of communion to the city's LOST SOULS.

FATHER MCMANUS  
The body of Christ.

MALE  
Amen Father Duncan.

McManus places the Eucharist into the finger-less gloved hands of the grungy parishioner, who places it in his mouth, makes the Sign of The Cross and exits. The next recipient steps up.

FATHER MCMANUS  
The body of Christ.

BROOKS  
Amen, Father.

They make eye contact. Fear flashes on McManus' face. Brooks, wearing a flannel jacket and baseball cap, his face and neck severely scarred, holds out his hands for the host.

BROOKS (CONT.)  
Father? The sacrament?

Brooks smiles sincerely, yet his eyes flash of coyness as he nods in a noncommittal manner.

EXT. ST. PETER'S BASILICA - DAY

A beautiful fall day. Tourists, parishioners and students marvel at the exterior of this wonderful, meaningful religious building.

INT. VATICAN NECROPOLIS - DAY

Hundreds of Catholic CLERICS patiently wait in SILENCE inside the cobblestone crypt beneath Saint Peter's Basilica. In the center of this ancient vault, a MODERN GLASS TANK, filled with a green liquid gives off an uneasy glow.

The POPE is lead into the room by Bishop Pasi. Immediately the crowd genuflects as the Pope blesses the gathering.

Turning to Bishop Pasi, the Pope raises his hand. The bishop nods. Signals to the back corner of the room.

Slowly, the sides of the glass tank descend, the liquid escapes to the dirt floor below with a STEADY SPLASH.

AN ARM falls from the right side of the tank, a HOLE in the wrist. More fluid drains from the descending glass. A FOOT

flops out, a HOLE in the ankle.

The entire room, including the Pope and Bishop Pasi drop in unison to their knees, bow their heads.

A NAKED FIGURE emerges, stands upright, shaking in the cold.

Bishop Pasi forces himself to glance up. His mouth drops open.

THERE STANDS KRISTOFF, dazed, confused, shivering in his nakedness.

The holy men lift their heads, tears, smiles of awe and exuberance for the return of their Messiah, all except for Bishop Pasi, a look of contempt and failure crosses his face.

He looks across the room at the wonderment of his peers.

Again, they all bow their heads in extreme reverence. The bishop, bows his head as well, mimics the Pope and his holy brothers.

Kristoff shivers, watches this confusing gathering.

FADE TO BLACK