

MINUTES AFTER: SEVEN SIGNS

Written by

Gary J Rose

Groser1@pacbell.net
(530) 613-9232

FADE IN:

EXT. GOLGOTHA - OUTSKIRTS OF JERUSALEM - DAY

A hill scarred with three rough-hewn crosses. We only see them from a distance - silhouettes against a blinding sun.

The CROWD gathers below. Pilgrims, beggars, mothers with children. Roman SOLDIERS keep order with spears and shields.

MARCUS (40S)

A centurion, scarred and battle-hardened, strides the line,

barking orders at his men. His face betrays nothing, but his eyes track every movement in the restless crowd.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Shields up! Keep them back! No gaps in the line!

CLOSE ON:

The dice roll in the dust. Soldiers LAUGH as they gamble for garments torn from the condemned.

In the crowd stands **MIRIAM (20s)**. Her face streaked with tears and dust, clutching a palm branch - dried and brittle from His entry into Jerusalem.

She stares up at the crosses, transfixed. We don't need to see Him directly. *Her reaction tells the story.*

JESUS (O.S.)

Father... forgive them...

The words carry down the hill. Miriam trembles, lips moving in prayer.

INT. TEMPLE - OUTER COURTYARD - DAY

ELIAB (50s), a Temple priest in immaculate robes, pushes through a knot of younger priests.

YOUNGER PRIEST

They say He called Himself the Son
of God. If He truly is, why doesn't
He save Himself?

Eliab hushes him sharply, though unease ripples under his
authority.

ELIAB

Quiet. Watch. When He breathes His
last, this talk dies with Him.

He turns toward the Holy Place, as though to reassure
himself.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - CONTINUOUS

The sun blazes high. The condemned moan, soldiers jeer, women
weep.

Miriam closes her eyes, remembering a voice from gentler days
— a sermon on a hillside, words of comfort, words of life.

She opens them again... and sees only the terrible present.

JESUS (O.S.)

It is finished...

The sound fractures her. She clutches the child beside her —
not her own, but a frightened boy she shields instinctively.

A silence falls. The air grows heavy, strange.

Marcus notices it too. His hand tightens on his sword hilt.

EXT. SKY OVER JERUSALEM - CONTINUOUS

The blazing gold of midday bleeds into shadow. The light dims
— first a haze, then a curtain of darkness.

The crowd GASPS. Mothers clutch children. Merchants whisper
prayers. SOLDIERS glance upward, unsettled.

MARCUS

Torches! Light the torches — now!

Sparks fly as flints are struck. Flames gutter against the
unnatural wind.

Eliab looks skyward, color draining from his face.

ELIAB
Lord... what have we done?

EXT. GOLGOTHA - DAY

The sky sinks darker still. Murmurs ripple through the crowd. Mothers pull children close.

Miriam lifts her eyes, lips trembling. Tears streak her dust-caked face as she clutches the palm branch to her chest.

MIRIAM
(whispering)
Don't leave us...

A SOLDIER laughs nervously, trying to mask his fear.

SOLDIER
Just a cloud. Nothing more.

But even he glances upward, unsettled.

EXT. JERUSALEM - MARKET STREETS - DAY

Merchants freeze in mid-bargain. Coins slip from hands. The shadows deepen, stretching unnaturally.

A GOAT bolts, knocking over a stall. The CROWD explodes into panic.

MERCHANT WOMAN
The end has come!

Pilgrims drop baskets of lambs, scattering. The bleating fills the air, eerie under the darkened sky.

EXT. JERUSALEM - TEMPLE COURTYARD - SAME

Torches are lit - fire glowing against unnatural night. The people press toward the priests, demanding answers.

WORSHIPER
What does it mean? What curse is this?

ANOTHER WORSHIPER
Is it the wrath of Rome?

Eliab ascends the steps, arms raised, straining for authority.

ELIAB
Hold fast! Hold fast! It is only a
storm! The Almighty tests His
people!

But his words are drowned out by shouts of terror. Even the younger priests look to him with doubt.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

Marcus moves among his men, forcing calm. They fumble with flint and steel - torches sputtering in the wind.

MARCUS
Light them! Keep the line!

The torches flare, painting the mob in orange light. The shadows of the crosses stretch long and grotesque across the hill.

Miriam shields the CHILD at her side, eyes wide as the last golden trace of sun is swallowed.

EXT. SKY OVER JERUSALEM - CONTINUOUS

The heavens are black. Stars prick faintly in midday.

The silence is suffocating - until, from deep within the earth, a low, ominous RUMBLE begins.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The ground TREMBLES. Pebbles scatter. The crowd GASPS in unison.

Marcus steadies himself, hand tightening on his sword. He scans the darkened horizon, jaw set.

MARCUS

Hold ranks! No one breaks!

Miriam's gaze never leaves the crosses. Her voice quivers but her prayer is fierce.

MIRIAM

Into Your hands... receive His spirit.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - DAY

The hilltop is chaos. Soldiers bark orders, but the crowd surges like a living tide. Torches flare, smoke rising against the blackened sky.

Marcus moves down the line, shoving men into position.

MARCUS

Shields locked! No retreat - none!

But his men's eyes betray them. This is no battle, no riot. It feels like the end of the world.

EXT. JERUSALEM - MARKET STREETS - SAME

The darkness thickens. Merchants abandon their stalls. A bread stand collapses under the press of bodies.

MERCHANT

To the Temple! Run to the Temple!

The CROWD tramples toward the gates, their screams echoing off stone.

EXT. TEMPLE - OUTER COURTYARD - SAME

Hundreds pound at the doors, priests struggling to hold them back. Torches cast frantic shadows across sacred walls.

WORSHIPER

What sin has brought this on us?

ANOTHER WORSHIPER

He was no man - He was a prophet!

Eliab forces his way to the front, robes disheveled, voice shaking.

ELIAB

Enough! Return to your homes! Do not blaspheme in the courts of the Lord!

But even as he speaks, his eyes flick skyward, haunted.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The three crosses loom above, grotesque silhouettes. Women wail at their base. Soldiers cast lots in silence now, the laughter gone.

Miriam clutches the CHILD to her chest. She looks up, lips moving as if trying to absorb every last sound.

JESUS (O.S.)

My God... my God... why have You forsaken Me?

The voice cuts through the darkness like a blade. Miriam sobs openly, her tears falling onto the boy's hair.

EXT. JERUSALEM - STREETS - CONTINUOUS

Animals panic. Oxen break free from yokes, stampeding through alleys. A mule crashes into a stall, scattering pottery in shards.

Torches topple. Fire licks at thatch roofs. Civilians drag buckets of water, tripping in the press of bodies.

The RUMBLE underfoot deepens - long, steady, unnatural. The city holds its breath.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

Marcus steadies himself, jaw clenched, eyes darting.

MARCUS

Hold steady! By Mars, hold steady!

The men look at him, desperate for strength, and for the first time Marcus has none to give.

Miriam stares upward, whispering with cracked lips.

MIRIAM

Do not forsake us, Lord...

EXT. GOLGOTHA - DAY

The sky is near black. Torches gutter, painting twisted shadows. A hush settles - eerie, unnatural - until a WOMAN SCREAMS.

The CROWD surges back, some dropping to their knees, others clawing toward the hill as if begging for mercy.

Marcus stands his ground, every muscle taut.

MARCUS

Hold the line! Nobody moves unless
I say!

But his men look to the heavens, more frightened of the sky than their commander.

EXT. JERUSALEM - CITY GATES - SAME

Pilgrims pour through the archway, pushing, trampling. An OLD MAN falls, nearly crushed, until two STRANGERS pull him up.

OLD MAN

The prophets spoke of this! The Day
of the Lord!

STRANGER

Then heaven itself is against us...

The press of bodies jams the gates, screams rising as the torches flicker and nearly die.

EXT. TEMPLE - OUTER COURTYARD - SAME

The sacred fire gutters, smoke streaming sideways. A PRIEST frantically shields it with his robe.

PRIEST

Keep it alive! Keep the flame
alive!

Eliab forces calm, but sweat drips down his face.

ELIAB

Hear me! This darkness will pass!

A WOMAN points upward at the black sky.

WOMAN

It is no storm. It is judgment!

The CROWD ROARS. Eliab falters, voice drowned in panic.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

Miriam looks up at the crosses, eyes locked, breath shallow.
The CHILD in her arms sobs into her shoulder.

JESUS (O.S.)

I thirst...

The words carry faintly down the hill. Miriam's tears spill
anew, her body shaking as she rocks the boy.

The crowd hushes, straining to hear.

A SOLDIER mutters a prayer in Latin under his breath, and
Marcus notices - but says nothing.

Marcus looks again to the dark sky "â€œ"

and for the first time in years of war, his jaw trembles.

EXT. JERUSALEM - MARKET STREETS - DAY

The unnatural twilight presses heavier with every breath.
Merchants abandon their goods. A wagon overturns, spilling
dates into the dust.

People stumble blindly, clutching one another. A MAN falls to
his knees, arms raised toward the sky.

MAN

Lord of Israel, have mercy!

EXT. TEMPLE - COURTYARD - SAME

The sacred trumpets BLARE in confusion, priests blowing at random. The sound is harsh, chaotic, not worship but terror.

Eliab shoves past them, trying to keep order.

ELIAB

Do not dishonor His house! Be still!

His voice cracks – and the younger priests notice.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

Torches hiss in the wind, flames straining sideways. Marcus grips a soldier's arm, forcing him back into position.

MARCUS

Stand firm, damn you! Stand!

The soldier nods, but his eyes are wild. All discipline is unraveling.

Miriam trembles, staring at the crosses. Her lips move in prayer we can barely hear.

JESUS (O.S.)

Father... into Your hands I commit
My spirit.

A silence follows. Heavy. Endless. Even the wind dies.

Miriam's sobs break the stillness.

Then – the first deep, rolling RUMBLE underfoot.

Pebbles scatter down the hillside.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - DAY

The sky is black. Torches flicker, barely holding against the wind. The CROWD has fallen into terrified silence.

Miriam clutches the CHILD, rocking him gently, her eyes locked on the silhouette of the crosses.

JESUS (O.S.)

It... is finished.

The words ripple across the hilltop. Some fall to their knees. Others cover their faces.

Marcus freezes. Even his soldiers bow their heads, not in discipline – but fear.

For a moment, time itself seems to stop.

Then – a long, low RUMBLE beneath their feet. Dust trickles from the rocks. A spear CLATTERS from a soldier's hand.

Miriam looks to Marcus – eyes wide with terror.

The ground heaves again. Stronger. Louder.

The first stones BREAK FREE and tumble down the slope.

EXT. JERUSALEM – MARKET STREETS – DAY

The ground BUCKLES. Stalls COLLAPSE like children's toys. Barrels roll free, smashing into fleeing merchants.

A FISSURE splits the cobblestones, racing down the lane. People SCREAM, leaping aside as a wagon disappears into the gap.

WOMAN

God's hand! His judgment!

EXT. TEMPLE – OUTER COURTYARD – SAME

The marble pavement CRACKS. Priests tumble from their feet. The bronze doors SLAM OPEN on their own, crashing into stone.

Worshipers scatter in terror, some crawling on hands and knees.

Eliab grabs the altar for balance. His staff CLATTERS to the floor.

ELIAB

(shaking, to himself)

The Holy One... He rends the earth...

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The hillside HEAVES. Soldiers collapse, shields clattering like thunder. The three CROSSES shudder violently in their sockets.

Marcus is nearly thrown, catching himself against a soldier.

MARCUS
Hold fast! Hold-

The ground splits at his feet - a jagged black wound opening wide. He drags the man back just before the fissure swallows him whole.

Miriam SCREAMS, pulling the CHILD tight as stones rain from above.

She falls to her knees, shielding him with her body.

EXT. JERUSALEM - MARKET STREETS - DAY

The ground BUCKLES. Stalls COLLAPSE like children's toys. Barrels roll free, smashing into fleeing merchants.

A FISSURE splits the cobblestones, racing down the lane. People SCREAM, leaping aside as a wagon disappears into the gap.

WOMAN
God's hand! His judgment!

EXT. TEMPLE - OUTER COURTYARD - SAME

The marble pavement CRACKS. Priests tumble from their feet. The bronze doors SLAM OPEN on their own, crashing into stone.

Worshippers scatter in terror, some crawling on hands and knees.

Eliab grabs the altar for balance. His staff CLATTERS to the floor.

ELIAB
(shaking, to himself)
The Holy One... He rends the
earth...

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The hillside HEAVES. Soldiers collapse, shields clattering like thunder. The three CROSSES shudder violently in their sockets.

Marcus is nearly thrown, catching himself against a soldier.

MARCUS
Hold fast! Hold-

The ground splits at his feet - a jagged black wound opening wide. He drags the man back just before the fissure swallows him whole.

Miriam SCREAMS, pulling the CHILD tight as stones rain from above.

She falls to her knees, shielding him with her body.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - DAY

The quake THUNDERS beneath the hilltop. CROSSES rattle violently in their sockets.

Marcus grips the shaft of his spear, fighting to stay upright as another fissure tears through the earth.

MARCUS
Hold fast! Form ranks - now!

But his men are broken, scattered by fear. Their discipline collapses like the ground beneath them.

Miriam crouches low, clutching the CHILD, shielding him with her body as stones tumble down the slope.

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE - DAY

Dust rains from the ceiling as the walls SHUDDER. PRIESTS stumble across the chamber, clutching sacred vessels.

At the far end looms the VEIL - towering SIXTY FEET HIGH, woven thick as a man's hand, four inches through.

It sways with the tremor, massive as a wall of stone.

Eliab stumbles into the Holy Place, his voice trembling.

ELIAB

Steady it! Brace the lampstands!

A YOUNGER PRIEST gapes upward at the curtain.

YOUNGER PRIEST

That veil – no horse team could
rend it. Only the hand of God...

The words die in his throat as the quake crescendos.

The VEIL SHUDDERS violently. A deafening RIP echoes – from
the top down, the impossible begins.

Threads SNAP like thunder. The priests SCREAM, some falling
to the floor.

Eliab watches, paralyzed, as the great barrier TEARS IN TWO.
The forbidden Holy of Holies is suddenly laid bare.

A flood of light bursts into the chamber, illuminating their
terror.

PRIEST

No man could do this!
No man!

EXT. JERUSALEM – MARKET DISTRICT – DAY

The quake peaks. A TOWER collapses into the street, burying a
dozen stalls in stone and dust.

People SCREAM, scattering like ants. Torches topple, fires
break out. The air is thick with smoke.

WOMAN

The wrath of heaven!

EXT. GOLGOTHA – SAME

The hillside lurches. A massive BOULDER shears away, smashing
into the crowd below.

Marcus is thrown to his knees, catching himself with his
spear. His men stumble, some dropping shields, others fleeing
outright.

MARCUS

Hold ranks! Stand—

His words vanish in the ROAR of the earth. A jagged FISSURE rips past his feet, swallowing a cart whole.

Nearby, Miriam clutches the CHILD, rocking him as dust rains down. Her lips tremble with a desperate prayer.

MIRIAM
Do not forsake us...

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE - SAME

The entire chamber trembles. Priests fall flat, faces pressed to the floor in terror.

The VEIL looms before them - sixty feet high, four inches thick, woven for centuries.

Eliab stares upward, his voice cracking.

ELIAB
No hand of man... no beast of
burden could move it...

The fabric begins to SHUDDER. A sound like distant thunder - threads STRAINING.

The younger priests cry out, some crawling for the doors.

YOUNGER PRIEST
It's rending... from the top!

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The quake crashes to a crescendo. The three crosses SHUDDER violently, silhouetted against a sky black as night.

Marcus looks up, stunned. His lips part - the words slip out before he can stop them.

MARCUS
Surely... surely this was the Son
of God.

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE - DAY

The VEIL quivers like a living thing. Threads SNAP with thunderclaps, echoing through the chamber.

The priests SHRIEK, some cowering on the floor, others scrambling for the doors.

Eliab stands rooted, staring upward in horror.

ELIAB

It cannot be...

The TEAR rips downward from the very top, sixty feet above their heads.

Centuries of woven linen, four inches thick, parting like parchment before a storm.

YOUNGER PRIEST

No man could do this! Not even teams of horses!

The VEIL CRASHES apart. Two halves sag lifeless, revealing the sacred chamber beyond – the Holy of Holies, open to profane eyes.

Light floods in where none should ever shine. The priests wail, covering their faces.

Eliab's staff CLATTERS from his hand. He sinks to his knees, whispering –

ELIAB

Forgive us... Lord, forgive us...

screenplay Copy code

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The quake subsides into uneasy silence. Dust settles like ash over the hill.

Marcus kneels in the dirt, breathing hard, his men scattered and broken around him.

He looks up at the crosses – rattling no more, standing defiant against the black sky.

The words slip from his lips, almost against his will.

MARCUS

Truly... this man was the Son of God.

A few soldiers hear. None dare answer. But fear glimmers in their eyes – fear that their commander has spoken truth.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - BASE OF THE HILL - SAME

Miriam holds the CHILD close, eyes red from weeping. She stumbles to her feet as the crowd begins to scatter.

Whispers ripple among them - rumors of the Temple veil torn, of God's wrath loosed.

Miriam looks toward the city, face stricken with both dread... and a fragile, burning hope.

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE - DAY

The sound grows - deafening, unearthly. A RENDING from above, like the heavens themselves splitting.

The priests wail, crawling backward on hands and knees. One clings to the menorah, eyes wild.

PRIEST

Stop it! By the Almighty, stop it!

But no human hand moves. The VEIL continues to rip, the tear racing downward, THREADS SNAPPING like whips.

CLOSE ON the VEIL: Four inches thick. Generations of priests guarded it. Legends told that even horses yoked in teams could not tear it.

Now it splits like cloth before a sword.

Eliab stares upward, voice breaking.

ELIAB

It is the hand of God...

The two halves sag apart, revealing the shadowed interior. The HOLY OF HOLIES - the most forbidden sight in all Israel.

The chamber shimmers with light where none should ever shine. The priests SCREAM, throwing themselves face down.

Eliab drops to his knees, whispering through tears.

ELIAB (CONT'D)

Forgive us... Lord, forgive us...

screenplay Copy code

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The quake subsides to silence. Dust drifts like smoke. The crowd sits stunned, too afraid even to wail.

Marcus kneels in the dirt, blood on his lip, spear still clutched in his fist.

He looks to the crosses silhouetted against the black sky. For the first time, his voice cracks.

MARCUS

Surely... this man was the Son of
God.

A hush spreads among the nearest soldiers. Some bow their heads. Others avert their eyes.

EXT. JERUSALEM - CITY STREETS - SAME

Miriam clutches the CHILD, stumbling among the crowd. People cry out, desperate, frightened.

WOMAN

The veil is torn! The Temple is
ruined!

MAN

The Holy Place - opened to all!

The rumors spread like wildfire. Miriam hears them, eyes wide, heart pounding.

She whispers, not sure if it is fear or hope-

MIRIAM

It has begun...

EXT. JERUSALEM - MARKET DISTRICT - DAY

The tremors fade. The city lies in ruins - toppled stalls, shattered walls, fires smoldering.

CIVILIANS stumble through the haze, coughing, eyes wild. Some cry out prayers. Others mutter prophecies in terror.

MAN

The graves have split open! I saw
it with my own eyes!

WOMAN

The end of days... it is upon us!

The rumors swirl faster than the smoke.

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE - SAME

The VEIL hangs in two shredded halves, the Holy of Holies exposed for the first time.

Priests wail on their faces, pounding the floor with their fists. One dares not even look up.

Eliab kneels amid the ruin, eyes fixed on the torn fabric. His hands tremble violently.

ELIAB

(hoarse)

If God Himself rends the veil... what priest dares to stand before Him?

Tears streak his face. His faith - once rigid - is unraveling.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The crowd scatters down the hill, desperate to escape. Roman SOLDIERS stagger to their feet, battered and shaken.

Marcus forces himself upright, blood at his temple. He surveys his broken men - discipline gone, fear etched deep.

MARCUS

Reform the line! Move them back to the city!

But few obey. His command carries little weight now.

Marcus looks again at the crosses, jaw tight. The words linger on his lips: *Son of God.*

EXT. JERUSALEM - ALLEYWAY - SAME

Miriam carries the CHILD through the panicked throng.
Whispers swirl around her - whispers of the Temple veil torn,
of graves splitting open, of judgment.

VOICE (O.S.)

The dead walk! The dead are
walking!

Miriam freezes, clutching the boy tighter.

Her eyes brim with tears - but not only fear.

A fragile, dangerous hope flickers within her.

EXT. JERUSALEM - MARKET DISTRICT - DAY

The tremors fade. The city lies in ruins - toppled stalls,
shattered walls, fires smoldering.

CIVILIANS stumble through the haze, coughing, eyes wild. Some
cry out prayers. Others mutter prophecies in terror.

MAN

The graves have split open! I saw
it with my own eyes!

WOMAN

The end of days... it is upon us!

The rumors swirl faster than the smoke.

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE - SAME

The VEIL hangs in two shredded halves, the Holy of Holies
exposed for the first time.

Priests wail on their faces, pounding the floor with their
fists. One dares not even look up.

Eliab kneels amid the ruin, eyes fixed on the torn fabric.
His hands tremble violently.

ELIAB

(hoarse)

If God Himself rends the veil... what
priest dares to stand before Him?

Tears streak his face. His faith – once rigid – is unraveling.

EXT. GOLGOTHA - SAME

The crowd scatters down the hill, desperate to escape. Roman SOLDIERS stagger to their feet, battered and shaken.

Marcus forces himself upright, blood at his temple. He surveys his broken men – discipline gone, fear etched deep.

MARCUS

Reform the line! Move them back to the city!

But few obey. His command carries little weight now.

Marcus looks again at the crosses, jaw tight. The words linger on his lips: *Son of God.*

EXT. JERUSALEM - ALLEYWAY - SAME

Miriam carries the CHILD through the panicked throng. Whispers swirl around her – whispers of the Temple veil torn, of graves splitting open, of judgment.

VOICE (O.S.)

The dead walk! The dead are walking!

Miriam freezes, clutching the boy tighter.

Her eyes brim with tears – but not only fear.

A fragile, dangerous hope flickers within her.

EXT. JERUSALEM - GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - DAY

Another violent AFTERSHOCK ripples through the ground. A second tomb stone SHEARS from its place and CRASHES into the dirt.

The CRACK widens across the hillside, dust boiling from the seams.

A SHEPHERD, leading his flock past the graves, drops his staff in terror.

SHEPHERD

The dead will not stay buried...

He runs, leaving his sheep scattering behind him.

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE - SAME

The ruined VEIL hangs in tatters. Light cuts into the chamber where only shadow should reign.

Eliab kneels, shoulders hunched, head bowed low. His fellow priests back away, whispering.

PRIEST

He let it fall... the veil... he
angered God.

ANOTHER PRIEST

No man tore it. It was His doing!

The argument swells, voices breaking into screams. Eliab stays on his knees, eyes fixed on the dust where the veil once touched the floor.

ELIAB

We are judged already...

EXT. JERUSALEM - STREETS - SAME

Marcus and his remaining men force their way through the panic. Civilians scream at them, pointing toward the hills.

CIVILIAN

The graves split! The dead are
walking!

ANOTHER

They walk among us!

The soldiers recoil, crossing themselves, muttering prayers. Marcus glares, forcing them forward.

MARCUS

Hold ranks! Rome bows to no ghost!

But even as he shouts it, he isn't sure he believes.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - SAME

Miriam pulls the CHILD into a shadowed alcove. Around them, neighbors bolt doors, bar windows.

WOMAN (O.S.)
Seal your homes! Do not let the
dead inside!

The boy's eyes are wide, terrified.

CHILD
Is it true? Are they... here?

Miriam pulls him close, voice firm though her body trembles.

MIRIAM
Do not fear. He said death itself
would lose its power.
I will believe Him. Even now.

EXT. JERUSALEM - GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - DAY

A group of VILLAGERS gather, drawn by whispers. They point toward a cracked tomb - its stone rolled half clear.

Inside, something stirs in the shadows. A collective GASP - then the crowd SCATTERS in terror, screaming down the slope.

EXT. TEMPLE - OUTER COURTYARD - SAME

The priests are in uproar. Some call for sacrifices, others cry to flee.

Eliab staggers from the Holy Place, face gray, robe torn.

PRIEST
What did you see? Tell us!

Eliab lifts his trembling hands.

ELIAB
I saw His presence unleashed. The
Holy One will not dwell with us
again.

The younger priests recoil as though struck. Eliab drops to the steps, head in his hands.

EXT. JERUSALEM - STREETS - SAME

Marcus leads his men through fire-lit alleys. Civilians hurl questions at him, desperate for control.

CIVILIAN

If Rome cannot stop the dead, who
can?

ANOTHER

Was He truly the Son of God?

Marcus barks back, trying to smother his doubt.

MARCUS

Silence! Back to your homes!

But his voice rings hollow - more plea than command.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - SAME

Miriam crouches with the CHILD as panicked citizens rush by.
A WOMAN clutches her arm, frantic.

WOMAN

Graves broken open! I saw them -
walking, speaking!

Miriam pulls free, clutching the boy tighter.

MIRIAM

Do not listen. Fear is their
master, not truth.

Yet her own eyes dart toward the hills, betraying doubt.

She kneels, holding the boy's face in her hands.

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

Remember His words.
Life is stronger than death.

EXT. JERUSALEM - GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - DAY

The CRACK widens across another tomb. The great stone
shudders, then rolls aside with a groan.

Villagers shriek, sprinting down the path. One man trips,
looks back- and sees a SHADOW shift within the tomb.

VILLAGER

They live... the dead live!

He scrambles away, leaving his staff behind.

EXT. TEMPLE - COURTYARD - SAME

Eliab sits slumped on the steps, dust covering his robes. His eyes are hollow, lips cracked from whispered prayers.

Around him, priests argue, some insisting they must cover the torn veil, others insisting the Temple is defiled forever.

PRIEST

We must bind it! Sew it at once!

ANOTHER PRIEST

No hand may touch what God has
torn!

Eliab presses his palms to his ears, as though the very sound of their voices condemns him.

ELIAB

Silence... silence! Do you not see?
We are abandoned...

The words hush them. Even the boldest priest recoils.

EXT. JERUSALEM - STREETS - SAME

Marcus and his men march through the chaos. But the formation is fraying. Two soldiers break ranks, darting into alleys, muttering prayers.

Marcus wheels on the rest, fury in his eyes.

MARCUS

You will stand! Rome does not run!

His words echo, but his men exchange looks - their commander is shaken, their empire powerless.

Marcus clenches his jaw, refusing to admit the tremor in his hand.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - SAME

Miriam and the CHILD move through the shadows. Citizens slam doors, sealing homes.

WOMAN (O.S.)
They will come for us! The graves
cannot hold them!

The boy buries his face in Miriam's side.

CHILD
Are they coming?

Miriam kneels, forcing her voice to steady.

MIRIAM
Look at me. Even if the dead rise,
I will not leave you.

She strokes his hair, whispering-

MIRIAM (CONT'D)
Death has no power here... not
anymore.

EXT. JERUSALEM - GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - DAY

The CRACK widens across another tomb. The great stone shudders, then rolls aside with a groan.

Villagers shriek, sprinting down the path. One man trips, looks back- and sees a SHADOW shift within the tomb.

VILLAGER
They live... the dead live!

He scrambles away, leaving his staff behind.

EXT. TEMPLE - COURTYARD - SAME

Eliab sits slumped on the steps, dust covering his robes. His eyes are hollow, lips cracked from whispered prayers.

Around him, priests argue, some insisting they must cover the torn veil, others insisting the Temple is defiled forever.

PRIEST
We must bind it! Sew it at once!

ANOTHER PRIEST

No hand may touch what God has
torn!

Eliab presses his palms to his ears, as though the very sound
of their voices condemns him.

ELIAB

Silence... silence! Do you not see?
We are abandoned...

The words hush them. Even the boldest priest recoils.

EXT. JERUSALEM - STREETS - SAME

Marcus and his men march through the chaos. But the formation
is fraying. Two soldiers break ranks, darting into alleys,
muttering prayers.

Marcus wheels on the rest, fury in his eyes.

MARCUS

You will stand! Rome does not run!

His words echo, but his men exchange looks - their commander
is shaken, their empire powerless.

Marcus clenches his jaw, refusing to admit the tremor in his
hand.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - SAME

Miriam and the CHILD move through the shadows. Citizens slam
doors, sealing homes.

WOMAN (O.S.)

They will come for us! The graves
cannot hold them!

The boy buries his face in Miriam's side.

CHILD

Are they coming?

Miriam kneels, forcing her voice to steady.

MIRIAM

Look at me. Even if the dead rise,
I will not leave you.

She strokes his hair, whispering-

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

Death has no power here... not
anymore.

EXT. JERUSALEM - GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - LATE DAY

Wind scrapes across broken stone. A SECOND TOMB STONE has
shifted, listing in its groove.

Three VILLAGERS crouch behind a fig tree, watching.

VILLAGER #1

It moved again... I swear it moved.

VILLAGER #2

Don't look. Don't look and it can't
see you.

VILLAGER #3

The end of days...

They bolt, dropping a clay lamp that shatters in the dust.
screenplay Copy code

EXT. JERUSALEM - STREETS / ALLEYS - SAME

Marcus drives his men forward through the clogged lanes.
Their formation is ragged; fear eats the edges.

A SOLDIER peels off, crossing himself, whispering in Latin.

MARCUS

Back in line!

The soldier hesitates-then obeys, eyes averted.

A MERCHANT grabs Marcus's arm.

MERCHANT

Centurion! The tombs- they're
opening!

MARCUS

Get to your home. Bar your doors.

MERCHANT

Will your doors keep them out?

Marcus has no answer. He jerks free, pushing on. screenplay
Copy code

INT. TEMPLE - COURTYARD - SAME

The courtyard swarms with PRIESTS, their robes streaked with dust. Some argue. Some weep. Some pray with their faces to the stones.

Eliab sits at the base of a pillar, stunned, hands shaking.

A SENIOR PRIEST crouches beside him, voice low.

SENIOR PRIEST

Say it was a quake. Say the veil
tore by accident.

Eliab looks at him as if at a stranger.

ELIAB

Tell a lie in God's house if you
dare.

SENIOR PRIEST

You would leave the people without
a shepherd?

ELIAB

The Shepherd has torn down the
fence Himself.

The Senior Priest recoils, horrified. He stands, calling to others.

SENIOR PRIEST

Seal the Holy Place! Do it now!

Eliab stares after them, broken. screenplay Copy code

EXT. BACK ALLEY - SAME

Miriam hustles the CHILD along the wall. A DOOR opens— an OLD WOMAN peers out, thrusting a small cup of water.

OLD WOMAN

For the boy. Quickly.

Miriam takes it, nods grateful.

MIRIAM

Bless you.

From the alley mouth, a MAN sprints past, wild-eyed.

MAN

I saw one— I saw one of them! On
the road!

The OLD WOMAN slams her door. Bolts drop.

Miriam kneels, offering the boy a sip.

CHILD

Are they... angry?

MIRIAM

I don't know.
(then, firm)
But we will not be afraid.

She rises, leading him on. screenplay Copy code

EXT. JERUSALEM - GRAVEYARD EDGE / ROAD - DUSK

Marcus and a half-dozen men crest a rise overlooking the tomb field. Fires blink in the city behind them. The sky is still wrong.

They halt. Listen. Only wind.

SOLDIER

Sir... we shouldn't—

MARCUS

Hold.

A STONE CREAKS down below. Another tomb shifts in its niche.

The men tense, hands white on spear shafts.

SOLDIER

Spirits—

MARCUS

Enough. We fear no man.

SOLDIER

And what of no man at all?

Marcus's jaw flinches. He steps forward anyway. screenplay
Copy code

INT. TEMPLE - HOLY PLACE THRESHOLD - DUSK

Ropes are being dragged. Boards carried. A frantic effort to "seal" what has been opened.

A YOUNG PRIEST approaches Eliab, hushed.

YOUNG PRIEST
Master... if the Almighty tore it
Himself... then to bind it is-

ELIAB
To bind His will.

The young priest waits.

Eliab looks toward the torn veil- two heavy, defeated curtains sagging on either side, the shadowed chamber beyond.

ELIAB (CONT'D)
We have lived behind a curtain so
long... we forgot to fear what it
hid.

He rises on unsteady legs, turns away from the work.
screenplay Copy code

EXT. JERUSALEM - LANE NEAR DISCIPLES' QUARTER - DUSK

Miriam and the CHILD reach a nondescript door. She knocks a pattern- urgent, remembered.

A SLAT slides. EYES peer out.

VOICE (O.S.)
Who sent you?

MIRIAM
He did.

A beat. The bolt withdraws. The door opens.

As Miriam ushers the child in, a distant SCREAM cuts the air. She freezes- looks back down the lane.

Silence. Just the wind. screenplay Copy code

EXT. GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Wind keens through broken stone.

Marcus signals— two men angle left, two right. He advances with the last soldier toward the tomb that shifted.

They stop ten paces off. The opening is a black mouth.

MARCUS
Show yourself.

Only wind.

SOLDIER
Sir... please—

A SOFT SOUND from within. Like cloth against stone.

Marcus steps one pace closer. He swallows.

MARCUS
In the name of Rome, and by the
gods— show yourself.

From inside the darkness... a SHAPE edges near the threshold. Pale. Human. Still as a memory.

The soldier beside Marcus takes an involuntary step back.

SOLDIER (WHISPER)
Mother of—

The SHAPE stops at the line between shadow and moonlight, as if unwilling to cross.

Marcus doesn't breathe. screenplay Copy code

INT. DISCIPLES' QUARTER - CONTINUOUS

The door thuds shut. A small room. Faces in the gloom. Women. Two men. All red-eyed, fearful.

Miriam cups the CHILD's head, looks to the others.

MIRIAM
He said death would lose its power.

The men glance at one another— battered hope flickers.

WOMAN
Then why are we hiding?

A distant ripple of shouts rides the wind. The room stills.

Miriam moves to the shutter, cracks it, peering toward the hills. screenplay Copy code

EXT. GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - NIGHT

Closer now. Marcus's eyes adjust. The SHAPE is a MAN- ragged burial wrappings hanging from his arms, face half-shadowed. Not monstrous. Not ravening. Simply... there.

Marcus lowers his spear- just a fraction.

MARCUS

Who are you?

The MAN lifts his face. We do not see it fully. Only the suggestion: age, grief, a strange, impossible calm.

His voice is dry stone and gentle water.

THE MAN

Do not fear.

Behind Marcus, one soldier breaks and runs.

The MAN looks past Marcus toward the city- as if listening for a voice only he can hear.

He does not step into the light. screenplay Copy code

EXT. GRAVEYARD - ANOTHER TOMB - SAME

A second doorway. A second shadow. A HAND- pale, trembling- finds the jamb, steadying itself.

Far below, faint cries carry from the road. Torches bob.

The wind falls to a hush, as if the whole hill is listening. screenplay Copy code

EXT. GRAVEYARD HILLSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Marcus stands as if rooted- soldier, skeptic, witness.

His lips move- a private echo of earlier words.

MARCUS

Son of God...

The MAN in the doorway closes his eyes, as if in prayer.

From somewhere in the city, a TRUMPET sounds- uncertain, tremulous.

Marcus does not raise his spear.

He takes one careful step back.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Hold your places.

The MAN remains in shadow.

Silence. Breath. Wind.

CUT TO BLACK.