

WHEN HEAVEN ANSWERS EVIL. THE WORLD WILL SEE IT.



EXODUS RISING PRESENTS:

THE GHOST OF ASHES

A FILM BY JORGE ARTHUR GOMEZ

EXODUS RISING PRESENTS:
THE GHOST OF ASHES

Version 3

Based off
The Book of Revelation
&
Exodus Rising's Armageddon

MUSIC BY:
EXODUS RISING

ART BY:
JORGE ARTHUR GOMEZ

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THE GHOST OF ASHES: SCRIPT

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT I — THE LAST SANCTUARY

FADE IN:

1. BLACK SCREEN

(A low mechanical breath.)

(Human, forced through metal.)

(Under it: distant chanting. A crowd. Stone acoustics. Ritual.)

(A single **CLICK** as a stone seats into leather.)

(A sling.)

(The chanting stops.)

JAY (V.O.)

It started with fire.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

Not just bombs.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

Something answered the smoke.

(FLASH MONTAGE:)

(Nuclear detonations bloom across a world map.)

(Cities vanish in white light.)

(People pray in subway tunnels.)

(An emergency alert flashes across a phone screen.)

(A church bell warps into a siren.)

(A Bible opens to Revelation.)

(A torn sky over London.)

(A winged silhouette in the rupture.)

(Shapes falling through storm.)

JAY (V.O.)

They call them Watchers.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

Eyes for the Beast. Wings for the throne.

(A hovering machine with the profile of a skeletal halo.)

(A branded human smiling like a sleepwalker.)

(A forehead scar igniting red.)

JAY (V.O.)

And the Mark.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

Not just a symbol.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

A leash.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

A covenant with hell written into flesh.

(A steel sign: **NO BRAND — NO TRADE.**)

(A starving mother presses her forehead to a scanner.)

(Doors open.)

(A child without the Mark is turned away from bread.)

JAY (V.O.)

It's been five hundred and forty-two years.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

I stopped counting the dead.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

I kept counting my sins.

(FLASHES OF PRE-FALL LIFE:)

(Jay onstage with a band, alive and whole, screaming into a microphone.)

(Backstage laughter.)

(A little girl on his shoulders in sunlight.)

(Jay in a church pew, broken and shaking.)

(A figure in the back pew: **GABRIEL**, watching.)

JAY (V.O.)

I came to Christ late.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

But when I did, my soul became a target.

(A silent test.)

(A stranger stands before Jay in a hallway.)

(A choice without words.)

(Jay chooses obedience.)

JAY (V.O.)

And then they took me.

(Persecution.)

(Christians lined under floodlights.)

(Scripture mocked over loudspeakers.)

(Hands forced onto a branding plate.)

(A metal mask locked onto Jay's face.)

(A blade near his mouth.)

(His scream swallowed by steel.)

JAY (V.O.)

I didn't survive because I was strong.

(Beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

I survived because God would not let me die.

(A beat.)

JAY (V.O.)

And because somebody up there still wanted a Ghost.

(BLACK again.)

(The breathing continues.)

—

2. INT. RUINED CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

(A cathedral survived the blast, but not the world.)

(Its ceiling is split open to a broken sky.)

(Stained glass shows a serpent coiled around a halved Earth.)

(A congregation kneels, each forehead bearing a ritual sigil-scar glowing faint red.)

(At the altar, a **MARKED PRIEST** raises a blade over a trembling child.)

(A figure appears in the doorway.)

(Black trench coat.)

(Heavy boots.)

(Lower face sealed behind a severe cyber-mask.)

(Red visor burning above it.)

(His hands are cybernetic, scarred, heavy.)

(**JAY** steps forward.)

(The room feels him.)

PRIEST

Ghost.

ACOLYTE

That's the one that vanishes.

ACOLYTE 2

The one the Watchers can't track.

ACOLYTE 3

Nothing escapes the Eye.

(Jay raises one hand.)

(Sigils flare across his knuckles.)

JAY

Move.

(The Priest smiles.)

(His mouth opens too wide.)

(He **SCREAMS.**)

(The sigil-scars across the congregation ignite.)

(Bodies begin to distort.)

(Eyes darken.)

(Bones shift.)

PRIEST

You came to watch a child die?

(Beat.)

PRIEST

Take a seat, apostate.

(Beat.)

PRIEST

Watch us butcher his soul for our lord Samael.

(A step closer.)

PRIEST

You think God sent you?

(Beat.)

PRIEST

God left you.

(Leaning in. Delighted.)

PRIEST

Tell me, Ghost...

(Beat.)

PRIEST

Do you remember your mouth?

(Jay's fists tighten.)

JAY

Move.

PRIEST

Make me.

(Jay vanishes.)

(A violent **CYBER-SPINE BURST** distorts the air.)

(He appears behind the Priest.)

(**MANTIS BLADES** snap out.)

(One slash.)

(The Priest's head separates and hits the altar.)

(Silence.)

(Then chaos.)

(Jay moves through the cathedral like a machine built for judgment.)

(Suppressed pistols.)

(Blades.)

(Joint breaks.)

(Precision kills.)

(Demons crash through doors and windows.)

(Jay cuts them down.)

(Then the floor splits.)

(A **MID-TIER DEMON PRINCE** rises from beneath the cathedral, slick and crowned in bone.)

DEMON PRINCE

Ah.

(Beat.)

DEMON PRINCE

The Ghost of Ashes.

(Beat.)

DEMON PRINCE

The human cursed by his Creator with a body of sin.

(Beat.)

DEMON PRINCE

The Watchers talk.

(Beat.)

DEMON PRINCE

You hide under Solomon's math.

(Beat.)

DEMON PRINCE

Sacred geometry.

(Beat.)

DEMON PRINCE

You're no better than us.

(Jay reaches to his belt and pulls free **DAVID'S SLING**.)

(The demon laughs.)

DEMON PRINCE

A rock?

(Jay seats a stone.)

JAY

In the name of the Lord—

(He fires.)

(The stone punches through the demon's skull and pins it to a pillar.)

(The body collapses.)

(Silence returns.)

(Jay turns to the child, still bound and frozen.)

(He kneels.)

JAY

Are you okay?

CHILD

Y-yes... mister...

(A beat.)

CHILD

Are you an angel?

(Jay pauses.)

JAY

No.

CHILD

Are you... okay?

(Jay looks at him.)

JAY

I'm trying.

(He cuts the bindings and lifts the child.)

(Above them, through the broken ceiling, a **WATCHER** silhouette glides past.)

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

THE GHOST OF ASHES

3. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - NIGHT

(Jagged peaks.)

(Dead ridgelines.)

(A hidden road.)

(A mountainside gate irises open.)

4. INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND - NIGHT

(A pre-fall military installation turned sanctuary.)

(Clean water.)

(Hydroponics.)

(Medical bay.)

(Barracks.)

(Food stores.)

(About one hundred survivors live here quietly.)

(Steel **WARD PLATES** line the walls, etched with scripture and sanctified seals.)

(Jay walks through.)

(People step aside, not in fear, but reverence.)

SURVIVOR MAN

God keep you.

(Jay nods.)

(He passes a small chapel carved into stone.)

(Survivors pray softly.)

(Jay stops at the threshold, removes his boots, and steps inside barefoot.)

(He kneels.)

(The cushion creaks under his impossible weight.)

SURVIVOR WOMAN

Holy ground. Take off your shoes.

(Jay stays in prayer a moment longer, then rises, puts his boots back on, and leaves.)

—

5. INT. JAY'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

(Off-limits.)

(Weapons.)

(Relic maps.)

(Old-world tech carefully cataloged.)

(Music hardware.)

(Hard drives.)

(Vintage handhelds.)

(Everything in its place.)

(A battered GM key fob hangs on a hook with a small tag: **1984**.)

(Jay touches it briefly.)

(Then he hears laughter outside.)

—

6. INT. LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

(**OPHIA**, 8, runs to him dressed in white.)

(Jay freezes, then carefully gathers her into his heavy cybernetic arms.)

OPHIA

Daddy, daddy. You came back.

(She holds up a drawing of a lion.)

(Majestic. Holy.)

OPHIA

Say it with me.

OPHIA / JAY

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures...

He restoreth my soul.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death—

I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me.

(She notices blood and damage on his arms.)

OPHIA

Did you get hurt?

(Jay hesitates.)

JAY

Every time.

(Beat.)

JAY

But I came home.

(She smiles.)

OPHIA / JAY

The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth—
And delivereth them out of all their troubles.

OPHIA

Daddy?

JAY

Yes, Ophia?

OPHIA

You smell.

(They both laugh.)

(She presses the lion drawing into his chest for a second before taking it back.)

(A tiny gesture.)

(He feels it.)

—

7. INT. COMPOUND MESS HALL - NIGHT

(A communal meal.)

(Quiet warmth.)

(Jay enters and the room settles.)

(A woman offers him a bowl.)

(He accepts it, though he does not eat.)

TEEN 1

That's him.

TEEN 2

The Ghost?

TEEN 3

Don't stare.

(A small child offers him bread.)

KID

For you.

(Jay takes it and sets it beside the bowl.)

(Across the room, Ophia sits with other children, drawing the lion again.)

(Jay notices.)

(He says nothing.)

(But he watches until she looks up and smiles at him.)

—

8. INT. WORKSHOP - LATE NIGHT

(The room is quiet.)

(Jay enters, locks the door, checks it twice.)

(He removes coat, gear, weapons.)

(Everything lands with practiced ritual.)

INT. SHOWER STALL - CONTINUOUS

(Water strips away ash, soot, blood, and oil.)

(It runs over scars and cybernetics.)

INT. WORKSHOP - MOMENTS LATER

(Steam rising off him, Jay approaches the table.)

(He removes the mask.)

(The damage is severe.)

(His lower jaw is gone.)

(His upper mouth is torn and scarred.)

(A clean advanced vocal apparatus is built into his throat and upper chest.)

(He cleans the mask carefully.)

(Beside the tools sits an old microphone.)

(Jay sees it.)

(Stillness.)

(He reaches out and touches it.)

FLASH MEMORY:

(Stage lights.)

(A roaring crowd.)

(Jay onstage, whole, alive, singing into the mic.)

(Hair flying.)

(Band in full force.)

(He is voice.)

(Presence.)

(Himself.)

BACK TO SCENE

(The workshop is silent again.)

(Jay pulls his hand away.)

(A cracked mirror catches part of him: one eye, half a face, the ruin below it.)

(He turns away.)

(Finishes cleaning the mask.)

(Checks the seal, the breath ports, the sync points.)

(Then puts it back on.)

CLICK.

(The system hums alive.)

(The visor lights.)

(The Ghost returns.)

(Jay sits on the edge of the bench.)

(A faint golden glow pulses from deep within his chest.)

(He places a hand over it.)

(Grace, not spectacle.)

(It fades.)

(Then his eyes drift to a child's lion drawing taped near the corner of the workbench.)

(Not decoration.)

(A reminder.)

9. EXT. COMPOUND PERIMETER - DAY

(Jay walks the perimeter.)

(An **OLDER MAN** approaches respectfully.)

OLDER MAN

We found more old-world goods.

(Beat.)

OLDER MAN

Entertainment devices.

(Beat.)

OLDER MAN

Could trade for medicine if we extract the right files.

(Beat.)

OLDER MAN

We'd need access to your wing—

(Jay snaps.)

JAY

No one touches my wing.

(The man flinches.)

(Jay catches himself.)

JAY

...Sorry.

(Beat.)

JAY

It's not about trust.

(Beat.)

JAY

Some things in there are dangerous.

(Beat.)

JAY

Leave it outside my room. I'll handle it.

(Beat.)

JAY

Leave a list of what the community needs.

(A beat.)

JAY

And what the children need.

OLDER MAN

Understood.

(Beat.)

OLDER MAN

And thank you.

(Jay nods once.)

—

10. INT. COMPOUND CHAPEL HALLWAY - DAY

(A quiet corridor near the chapel.)

(Jay stands still, listening to something internal.)

(His sigils flicker.)

(A rush of wings.)

(RAPHAEL materializes.)

(Calm.)

(Towering.)

(Lethal even in gentleness.)

(They clasp forearms.)

JAY

Raphael.

(Beat.)

JAY

Where's Gabriel?

RAPHAEL

Not here.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Doing the Lord's work, I assume.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Speeding around the cosmos and vanishing whenever it suits him.

(A faint smirk.)

RAPHAEL

My Father sent me.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

To provide healing.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

To the souls of this compound.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

And to the children.

(Ophia suddenly runs into the corridor.)

OPHIA

Mr. Raphael!

(Raphael softens instantly.)

OPHIA

Come on. We have to go.

RAPHAEL

Do we?

OPHIA

Yes. It's serious.

(Beat.)

OPHIA

Gotham is in danger.

(Raphael lowers to her level.)

RAPHAEL

How serious?

OPHIA

Mr. Freeze is evil again.

(Beat.)

OPHIA

You have to be Batman again.

(Beat.)

OPHIA

And I'm Robin.

(Raphael places a hand to his chest.)

RAPHAEL

A great honor.

(Jay spots a hidden stack of comics nearby.)

JAY

Batman, huh?

(Beat.)

JAY

You've been reading my comics to the kids?

RAPHAEL

They contain patterns.

JAY

Patterns.

RAPHAEL

Heroism. Duty. Capes.

(Ophia grabs both their hands and drags them.)

OPHIA

No talking.

(Beat.)

OPHIA

We have to save Gotham.

—

10A. INT. CHILDREN'S AREA - CONTINUOUS

(The compound opens into a lived-in play zone built from salvaged crates, tarps, pipes, and scrap.)

(Children erupt when Raphael enters.)

CHILD

Batman's here!

ANOTHER CHILD

No— angel Batman!

(Raphael accepts this with full seriousness.)

RAPHAEL

Before Gotham is saved, what does scripture say about fear?

CHILD

Be strong and courageous.

RAPHAEL

Yes.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

And when darkness comes?

ANOTHER CHILD

The light shines in the darkness.

RAPHAEL

Good.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

And if evil rises in the city—

OPHIA

We punch it.

(Raphael pauses.)

RAPHAEL

That is one approach.

(Laughter.)

(Raphael picks up a broken pipe as a pretend grappling weapon.)

OPHIA

You be Batman.

RAPHAEL

I will do my best.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

But Gotham needs more than Batman.

(He looks to Jay.)

RAPHAEL

It needs a Ghost.

(All eyes turn to Jay.)

CHILD

You have to hunt us!

ANOTHER CHILD

You're the Mask of the Phantasm!

OPHIA

No— he's the good phantom.

(Jay exhales.)

JAY

That's comforting.

(The game becomes hide-and-seek warfare.)

(Jay counts.)

(Children scatter.)

(He hunts them gently, lifting crates, finding hiding places, letting them win just enough.)

(In one deeper corridor, the silence shifts.)

(For a second, Jay's war instincts take over.)

(Then the lights blast on.)

(The children jump him from everywhere.)

CHILDREN

Get him!

OPHIA

We got the Phantom Batman!

(Raphael points like a battlefield commander.)

RAPHAEL

Other children— get the Ghost and beat him up!

(The children swarm Jay.)

(Pull his coat.)

(Hit his armor.)

(Climb his arms.)

(Jay laughs.)

(A real one.)

OPHIA

He laughed!

(Jay lifts her.)

(She squeals.)

(Raphael watches not the weapon, but the man beneath it.)

(Later, as the game winds down, children collapse into blankets and chatter.)

(Jay stands apart.)

(Raphael joins him.)

JAY

Batman, huh?

RAPHAEL

They contain wisdom.

(Jay watches the children.)

JAY

Thank you.

(Beat.)

JAY

For making me feel human.

(Beat.)

JAY

And not like a weapon for once.

(Raphael studies him kindly.)

RAPHAEL

With great power comes great responsibility.

(Jay slowly turns.)

JAY

No way.

(Beat.)

JAY

Where'd you learn that from— Spider-Man?

RAPHAEL

No.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Peter Parker.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

The human.

(Jay laughs under his breath.)

RAPHAEL

So many of their heroes borrow from scripture.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Rarely do they give glory to God.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

The Book already had its champions.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Samson. David.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

And others still.

(A beat.)

RAPHAEL

What's bothering you?

(The warmth drains from Jay.)

JAY

I operate on hints and whispers.

(Beat.)

JAY

Never facts.

(Beat.)

JAY

And Gabriel's offered little lately.

RAPHAEL

What about the artifact hunting?

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Any luck finding the staff of Moses?

JAY

No.

(Beat.)

JAY

The artifacts are still the objective.

(Beat.)

JAY

But something's wrong.

RAPHAEL

The child?

JAY

No.

(Beat.)

JAY

She's fine.

(A faint golden warning flickers inside him.)

(His sigils flare.)

RAPHAEL

Jay?

JAY

Something feels wrong.

(Beat.)

JAY

Like the Holy Spirit is being mocked right under our feet.

(Beat.)

JAY

Like blasphemy is seeping in.

(Beat.)

JAY

Like a cancer.

(Beat.)

JAY

It comes and goes.

(Beat.)

JAY

Too close for comfort.

(He turns to Raphael fully.)

JAY

Scan the facility.

(Beat.)

JAY

Every ward plate. Every corridor.

(Beat.)

JAY

Repair what you can.

(Beat.)

JAY

Re-etch if you have to.

(Beat.)

JAY

If anything's compromised, lock it down.

(Raphael grows serious.)

RAPHAEL

You think something got inside?

(Jay does not answer.)

JAY

Protect them.

(Beat.)

JAY

Protect her.

RAPHAEL

On my life, Child of Elohim.

(Jay leaves.)

(Ophia watches him go.)

(Her smile fades a little.)

(She looks down at the lion she drew on the floor with chalk.)

(Then quietly adds a crown.)

—

11. EXT. COMPOUND RIDGE - NIGHT

(A ripple in the air.)

(**GABRIEL** appears.)

(Golden boots.)

(Red cloak.)

(Golden mask.)

(Ancient and unreadable.)

(Jay is already waiting.)

GABRIEL

You have built a sanctuary.

JAY

I built a wall.

GABRIEL

Walls don't save souls.

JAY

They save bodies.

(Gabriel steps closer.)

GABRIEL

You are becoming self-destructive.

(Jay laughs once.)

JAY

I'm alive, aren't I?

GABRIEL

That is not the same thing.

(Gabriel looks out over the world.)

GABRIEL

The King has not taken the Throne here.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Not yet.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

This side still burns.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

You think you are the last sword on this earth.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

If you fall, the lambs you shepherd will be slaughtered.

(Jay turns away.)

JAY

They're already slaughtered out there.

(Beat.)

JAY

In here, they're safe.

(Beat.)

JAY

We are short on time.

(Beat.)

JAY

And I deal with arrogant humans too stupid to see what God has intended for them.

(Gabriel's tone turns personal.)

GABRIEL

I was there, Jay.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

When you were pulled back from the edge.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

I saw you choose.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

They will too.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

The devil's time is short.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

The Lord is never late.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL
And never early.

JAY
I remember.

(Beat.)

JAY
You were sent to smite me.

(Beat.)

JAY
Why are you here, Gabriel?

(Gabriel hesitates.)

GABRIEL
There is coordinated movement.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL
Not scavengers.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL
Not random demons.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL
Something with structure.

(Jay stills.)

JAY
Lucifer?

(Gabriel does not answer.)

JAY

The Antichrist?

GABRIEL

You have killed many who preached in his name.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

That does not mean you have touched the source.

JAY

Riddles.

(Beat.)

JAY

Then tell me what to do.

GABRIEL

I can't.

JAY

Then why come?

(Gabriel steps in.)

GABRIEL

To remind you you're not alone.

(That almost breaks Jay.)

(Almost.)

GABRIEL

Guard your heart.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Hate is a devotion too.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

And it will demand worship.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Do not bow to it, Child of Elohim.

(Gabriel vanishes.)

(Jay stands alone.)

(His synthetic mark-veil flickers alive across his visor, anticipating the world beyond.)

(From behind him, faint through memory more than sound, Ophia's voice echoes:)

OPHIA (V.O.)

Daddy, you came back.

(Jay closes his eyes.)

(Just once.)

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT I

—

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT II — THE HUNT BEGINS

FADE IN:

12. EXT. WASTELAND RIDGELINE — DUSK

(The world outside the sanctuary is wounded.)

(The sky burns rust-red and violet, nuclear auroras crawling through the atmosphere like exposed veins.)

(Ash drifts through the air like black snow.)

(The highway beneath Jay's boots is cracked and half-melted from ancient fire.)

(The land still remembers the war.)

(Jay walks alone.)

(No vehicle.)

(No convoy.)

(Only the steady mechanical rhythm of the breathing apparatus inside his mask.)

(Far in the distance, a cluster of dim lights trembles against the poisoned horizon.)

(The **Neutral Zone Market**.)

(A place where enemies pretend to be neutral for a few hours.)

(Jay keeps walking.)

(Inside his coat, folded close to his chest, the edge of Ophia’s lion drawing presses against him with every step.)

—

13. EXT. NEUTRAL ZONE MARKET — NIGHT

(The Neutral Zone is chaos pretending to be civilization.)

(Salvaged sheet metal forms crooked walls under buzzing floodlights and rumbling generators.)

(Dirt lanes twist through a maze of stalls where people barter desperately for water, ammunition, fuel cells, relic technology, scripture fragments, and “entertainment.”)

(Above the gate hangs a rusted sign:)

NO WATCHERS — NO DEMONS — NO BLOOD.

(Beneath it, someone scratched another message:)

TRY YOUR LUCK.

(Jay enters.)

(The crowd reacts subtly.)

(Whispers ripple.)

(People step aside.)

TRADER

Ghost.

(Jay moves through the market like a shadow everyone already knows.)

(Then— shouting from the far end.)

(A pair of **BRANDED RAIDERS** drag a teenage girl by the wrists through the mud while a boy tries and fails to pull her free.)

(No one moves.)

(Everyone sees it.)

(No one wants the first bullet.)

(Then someone does move.)

(**NAOMI** drops from a stall roof.)

(She drives one raider face-first into a support beam, strips the rifle out of his hands, and elbows the second in the throat before he can fire.)

(The girl hits the ground and scrambles clear.)

(Naomi turns, covers the civilians, and barks like she has done this too many times to count.)

NAOMI

Move! All of you! Into the metal lanes! Now!

(The civilians obey instantly.)

(The second raider raises a pistol from his knees.)

(Naomi shoots him first.)

(The market holds its breath.)

(Then life resumes, nervous and fast.)

(Jay watches her.)

(She is not theatrical.)

(She is efficient.)

(She gets people alive.)

(The rescued girl looks back at Naomi like she just got handed back her life.)

(Naomi does not linger in it.)

(She is already scanning for the next problem.)

—

14. INT. MERCHANT STALL — NIGHT

(The Merchant sits behind a counter built from stacked ammunition crates.)

(Older.)

(Sharp-eyed.)

(Half cynic, half amused by the end of the world.)

(He looks up and grins.)

MERCHANT

Well, look what the wasteland coughed up.

(Jay sets a metal case on the counter and opens it.)

(Inside: a pristine portable music player, vintage headphones, a handheld gaming console, a sealed hard drive loaded with archived media, and music rack equipment.)

(The Merchant whistles softly.)

MERCHANT

You always bring the good stuff.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Five hundred years after civilization collapses and music still trades better than gold.

JAY

Medicine.

(The Merchant nods, slides a crate onto the counter.)

(Inside: antibiotics, antiseptic kits, surgical tools, purification tablets.)

MERCHANT

That should keep your mountain saints breathing another winter.

(Jay nods.)

(But he does not leave.)

(The Merchant notices immediately.)

MERCHANT

Alright.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You didn't walk halfway across the apocalypse just to play doctor.

JAY

Something's moving.

(Beat.)

JAY

I need to know what it is.

(Beat.)

JAY

Heaven is silent.

(The Merchant leans back.)

MERCHANT

That describes most of hell these days.

JAY

Coordinated.

(Beat.)

JAY

Swift.

(Beat.)

JAY

I need to know where.

(The Merchant stops smiling.)

MERCHANT

That's different.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

People have been disappearing lately.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Men mostly, but that's typical.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

People are crazy. They still prefer to duel like it's the Wild West.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Or murder.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Brothers murdering brothers like Cain and Abel.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

But there are more witnesses now.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Unexplained circumstances.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Things— or militant groups— taking men, women, children.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Unmarked.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Whole communities.

(He gestures toward the market outside.)

MERCHANT

It's getting deader in the cities.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

And it's starting to affect our livelihood too.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You saw it when you walked in.

(Jay listens in silence.)

MERCHANT

Rumor says there's a facility east of here.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Don't know how far.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Old military complex.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Hidden well.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Demons guarding it.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

They call it the Angel Engine.

MICRO INSERT:

(A buried military complex.)

(A cathedral-sized machine rotating in darkness.)

(A chained angel screaming inside a reactor of golden light.)

BACK TO SCENE

(The air in the stall feels colder.)

(Jay's cybernetic fingers tighten slightly.)

—

15. INT. MERCHANT STALL — DATA EXCHANGE

(The Merchant rummages through a crate of damaged electronics and tosses a cracked PDA onto the counter.)

MERCHANT

Found it on a courier who didn't make it.

(Jay activates the device.)

(The screen flickers weakly as fragmented files crawl across the interface.)

(Encrypted.)

(Corrupted.)

(Jay hacks it through his internal interface.)

PROJECT RAMIEL

(Available data paths scroll down the screen:)

- Facility schematics
- Prisoner transport logs
- Dimensional energy research
 - Genesis Protocol files
- Sublevel containment warnings
 - Coordinate fragments

(The PDA glitches repeatedly.)

(The data looks unstable.)

(Dangerous.)

(The Merchant watches Jay getting pulled into it.)

MERCHANT

You're thinking about going there.

(Jay pockets the device.)

MERCHANT

I hate that look.

JAY

Get used to it.

16. EXT. MARKET ALLEY — NIGHT

(Jay exits into a narrow alley, duffle bag slung over one shoulder.)

(Scrap metal walls close around him.)

(A woman steps into his path and locks eyes with him.)

(Jay goes still, instantly ready.)

(She is strikingly beautiful but battle-worn, in scarred armor, eyes sharpened by survival.)

(This is **NAOMI**.)

NAOMI
You're the Ghost.

(Jay says nothing.)

(A pulse scan flashes across his visor.)

SCAN RESULTS:
1 LIFE FORM DETECTED — ADULT FEMALE
UNBRANDED
WEAPONRY DETECTED: TIER 1
THREAT LEVEL: LOW
DEMONIC ACTIVITY: NON-ACTIVE
ELIMINATE TARGET? (Y/N)

(Jay dismisses it.)

NAOMI
My people have heard about you.

JAY
That's unfortunate.

(She almost smiles.)

NAOMI
You're chasing the Angel Engine.

(Jay says nothing.)

NAOMI
My team tried to find it.

(A beat.)

NAOMI
Most of them didn't come back.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Those things overwhelmed us.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

All I remember are their screams.

(Jay studies her.)

(Exhausted.)

(But determined.)

NAOMI

If you're going there, let us come with you.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

With the Ghost of Ashes, we can get through.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

We can save my people.

(A beat.)

NAOMI

God wants them to fight another day.

(Harder now.)

NAOMI

These filthy creatures deserve to be sent back to hell.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

They don't deserve mercy.

(A step closer.)

NAOMI

We need you, Ghost.

(A beat.)

NAOMI

Please.

JAY

No.

(He turns and walks away.)

NAOMI

Who the hell do you think you are?

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Don't walk away from me.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

You're going to let my people die.

(Jay stops.)

(Does not turn.)

JAY

I'm trying to stop more than your people.

NAOMI

Then let me help.

JAY

Help yours.

(He starts walking again.)

NAOMI

How dare you, you soft piece of—

(She grabs for him.)

(Jay vanishes.)

(A shock-pop snaps through the alley.)

(Naomi spins, furious.)

(Cut to Jay standing on a rooftop above, watching her.)

(The bag is still over one shoulder.)

(She looks up, sees him, and for one second the anger drops.)

(She is not begging now.)

(She is measuring him.)

NAOMI

Coward.

JAY

Maybe.

(He walks off into the dark.)

(Naomi watches him go, jaw tight, then turns and heads back toward the market.)

(Not defeated.)

(Planning.)

—

17. INT. MERCHANT STALL — FINAL TRADE

(Jay returns to the stall moments later, an intimidating shadow in the doorway.)

MERCHANT

Back already?

(Jay says nothing at first.)

(Then his visor flickers and a small red hologram of Naomi appears over the counter.)

JAY

She cornered me in the alley.

(Beat.)

JAY

Know anything about that?

(The Merchant grins immediately.)

MERCHANT

Naomi.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Pretty intimidating, huh?

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

She's a spitfire.

(He leans back.)

MERCHANT

She's been asking about the Angel Engine for weeks.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Lost most of her crew trying to find it.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Wanted more firepower.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Something— or someone— that could even the odds and do God’s work.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

So yeah.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

I might’ve pointed her in your direction.

(He studies Jay.)

MERCHANT

Pretty, though.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Especially for someone who survived this long out here.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You know, five hundred years of wandering and fighting the wasteland might be enough.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Ever think about settling down, Ghost?

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Tough girl like that could keep you honest.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Think about it.

(Jay ignores all of it.)

JAY

I forgot to ask.

(Beat.)

JAY

I need a nuclear core.

(The Merchant stares, then laughs loudly.)

MERCHANT

You never ask for small things.

(He disappears behind a reinforced storage door and returns carrying a shielded nuclear fuel cell, setting it carefully on the counter.)

MERCHANT

Pre-fall reactor cell.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Last one I've got.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

What machine of yours eats something like this?

JAY

A little Chevy that needs a nuke.

(The Merchant blinks.)

MERCHANT

You're insane.

(He taps the casing.)

MERCHANT

That kind of insane costs.

(Jay opens another case and places a wrapped leather box sealed with scripture wards on the counter.)

(The Merchant leans in as Jay reveals the contents:)

(A black metal sphere the size of a softball.)

(It blinks.)

(A mechanical iris opens.)

(The symbol of a Watcher is etched into the casing.)

(The Merchant jolts back.)

MERCHANT

Is that what I think it is?

JAY

Watcher optic.

(Beat.)

JAY

With an interface.

(Beat.)

JAY

Could be useful if you want to stay ahead of unwanted company.

(The Merchant picks it up carefully.)

(The lens twitches faintly.)

MERCHANT

You ripped this out of a Watcher?

(Jay does not answer.)

MERCHANT

Do you know what collectors would trade for something like this?

JAY

Throw in three bundles of comic books for the children.

(The Merchant pauses.)

(That lands differently than the rest of the deal.)

MERCHANT

Deal.

(He slides the nuclear core across immediately.)

MERCHANT

I like insane.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Try not to vaporize half the continent.

(Jay secures the fuel cell.)

MERCHANT

You know she's going to follow this trail anyway.

JAY

Then she'll either survive it or she won't.

MERCHANT

That's cold.

JAY

It's true.

(A beat.)

(The Merchant studies him a little longer now.)

MERCHANT

That little drawing your daughter gave you—

(Jay's eyes lift.)

MERCHANT

—still in your coat?

JAY

Yes.

MERCHANT

Then don't forget why you're really walking into this.

(Jay says nothing.)

(But that one lands.)

—

18. EXT. WASTELAND OUTSIDE THE MARKET — NIGHT

(The market lights fade behind Jay as the wasteland grows quiet.)

(Too quiet.)

(Jay stops walking.)

(His cybernetic arm shifts.)

(Armor ripples as nanotech plating slides into place.)

(The sigils etched into his knuckles begin to glow.)

(Movement stirs in the darkness.)

(Dozens.)

(Then more.)

(Then far more.)

(The sky is bruised with nuclear colors, aurora veins crawling across cloud layers as ash falls slow and steady.)

(Jay stands alone in the open wasteland, a heavy bag slung over one shoulder.)

(Inside: medicine, purification tablets, holy oil ampoules wrapped in cloth, scripture-etched seal strips, the PDA, and the compact nuclear fuel cell strapped tightly in place.)

(His mask breathes for him.)

(A low scarred inhale through metal.)

(His cybernetic spine hums with dormant power.)

(Jay scans the horizon.)

(The wasteland looks empty.)

(But the air feels crowded.)

(His knuckles twitch.)

(The Solomonic sigils flare faintly, then dim, like they tasted something.)

—

19. EXT. WASTELAND RING — CONTINUOUS

(The ash dunes shift, not from wind, but from bodies beneath the surface.)

(First dozens rise from the ash, forming a widening ring around Jay.)

(Then hundreds.)

(A sea of burning eyes.)

(They do not rush him yet.)

(They watch.)

(As if forming a ritual.)

DEMON PACK (WHISPERING)

Ghost... Ghost of Ashes... The Ghost...

(Demons emerge from every direction, crawling over dunes, slithering from scorched fractures, climbing out of buried ruins.)

(The wasteland becomes a sea of burning eyes.)

(Jay slides the bag from his shoulder and sets it down carefully, like it contains life.)

(A Solomonic sigil forms beneath it and sinks into the earth.)

(His metal fingers flex with a soft grind as he lifts **DAVID'S SLING** and seats a stone.)

JAY

In the name of the Lord—

(The ground trembles and the demons surge.)

(Jay moves.)

(Not fast.)

(Impossible.)

(A supersonic displacement snaps the air.)

(Ash lags behind him like reality struggling to keep up.)

(The sling fires.)

(The stone becomes a comet, tearing through the first wave and turning bodies to mist.)

(Jay vanishes and reappears behind three more as mantis blades snap out.)

(He cuts through them like scripture through lies.)

(Demons burst into black mist and collapse into ash.)

(But there are too many.)

(They flood forward with claws, teeth, bladed limbs.)

(Solomonic sigils blaze across Jay's knuckles, controlled and surgical.)

(His breathing remains steady.)

(Until the ground trembles again.)

—

20. EXT. WASTELAND FISSURE — CONTINUOUS

(The demons suddenly stop.)

(Not hesitation.)

(Fear.)

(The earth cracks open.)

(A massive fissure splits the wasteland, heat pouring out like furnace breath.)

(Black smoke coils upward as something enormous rises.)

(An **ARCH DEMON** emerges as if the world itself is giving birth to it.)

(Towering.)

(Bone crown.)

(Horns like twisted iron.)

(Eyes like furnace doors.)

(The demon horde kneels instantly.)

(The Arch Demon studies Jay like a collector examining a relic.)

ARCH DEMON

So.

(Beat.)

ARCH DEMON

This is the Ghost.

(Beat.)

ARCH DEMON

I've heard the stories.

(Beat.)

ARCH DEMON

The jawless hunter.

(Beat.)

ARCH DEMON

The man God won't let die.

(Jay calmly raises the sling once more and releases it.)

(The stone strikes the Arch Demon's skull.)

(It staggers.)

(But it does not fall.)

(Instead, it laughs.)

ARCH DEMON

Good.

(Beat.)

ARCH DEMON

You'll be worth the effort.

(The Arch Demon lunges.)

(Jay's arm morphs, nanotech blades flaring with plasma as Solomonic sigils ignite.)

(The battle erupts—)

(Then the ground trembles again.)

(A crushing pressure rolls across the battlefield.)

(Gravity shifts.)

(The horde parts instantly as a figure walks through them like smoke.)

(His armor is polished obsidian.)

(A cloak of golden hard-light trails behind him.)

(His presence is so heavy even the falling ash seems to pause.)

(The demon pack murmurs reflexively.)

DEMONS (WHISPERING)

Titan of Ash... The Titan...

(The figure studies Jay, blood-soaked and still.)

(**MALACHI** smiles.)

MALACHI

Well.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

If it isn't the Ghost of Ashes.

(Jay halts mid-strike.)

(Recognition hits.)

(With a brutal wrench, he tears a demon's spine free and casts the corpse aside.)

MALACHI

How long has it been?

(Beat.)

MALACHI

Seventy years?

(A slow circle.)

MALACHI

You look worn.

JAY

Malachi.

(Malachi's grin widens.)

MALACHI

You still spit my name like it's poison.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

Why don't you refer to me by my title?

(Beat.)

MALACHI

I deserve some respect, don't I?

JAY

My enemy's name shouldn't be in my mouth.

(Malachi laughs.)

MALACHI

And yet you keep talking.

(Jay's Solomon sigils blaze harder.)

(Malachi's eyes flicker crimson.)

(The Arch Demon roars and swings at Malachi.)

ARCH DEMON

This one is mine!

(Malachi barely glances at it.)

MALACHI

You're interrupting my dance.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

Sit down and wait your turn, dog.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

Be a good boy.

(The Arch Demon charges.)

(Malachi sighs.)

(Vanishes.)

(The next instant he stands behind it, his hand buried deep in its spine.)

(The monster freezes.)

(Malachi twists.)

(The Arch Demon detonates into bone fragments and black fire.)

(The demon horde recoils as Malachi wipes blood from his hand and turns back to Jay.)

MALACHI

You're slipping.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

You used to kill faster.

(Jay's sigils ignite brighter.)

(Malachi smiles wider.)

MALACHI

Good.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

Maybe this time you'll entertain me.

(Around them, hundreds of demons wait beneath a radioactive sky.)

(Two ancient warriors face each other.)

(Old enemies.)

(Old survivors.)

(The wasteland holds its breath.)

END OF ACT II

—

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT III — THE DIVERSION WAR

FADE IN:

21. EXT. ASH WASTELAND — NIGHT

(They collide.)

(Not a punch.)

(A detonation.)

(A perfect ring of ash erupts outward. Shockwaves rip across the dunes as nearby demons are thrown backward by force alone.)

(Jay slams MALACHI into the ground.)

(The earth fractures like black glass.)

(Malachi is already standing.)

(Smiling.)

MALACHI
You're late.

(Jay triggers a Solomon seal.)

(A scripture-geometry chain snaps into existence, binding Malachi's torso and arms.)

(Malachi flexes.)

(The chain snaps like thread.)

(Jay triggers another seal.)

(Iron veins rip from the ground like serpents and lash toward Malachi.)

(Malachi walks forward.)

(The metal bends away from him like it fears him.)

JAY

You always did talk too much.

MALACHI

And you always needed noise to hide the breathing.

(Jay throws a vial.)

(Holy oil bursts midair and ignites into white-gold flame across Malachi's armor.)

(For one breath, the battlefield goes silent.)

(Malachi stands inside holy fire.)

—

22. EXT. ASH WASTELAND — CONTINUOUS

(The flames hiss across his armor and devour his cloak.)

(He does not scream.)

(He smiles.)

(Then laughs.)

(The sound rolls across the wasteland.)

MALACHI

Ghost.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

You still think fire is a sermon.

(Malachi walks through the flames, unbothered.)

(A king stepping through candlelight.)

MALACHI

I've burned longer than you've been cursed.

(Jay's breathing spikes.)

(Malachi sees it.)

MALACHI

There.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

That's the man under the machine.

(Malachi steps closer.)

MALACHI

Not the myth.

(Jay swings.)

(Malachi slips the blow with almost casual grace.)

MALACHI

A father trying to hold the dark shut with bleeding hands.

(Jay swings again.)

(Harder.)

(Cleaner.)

(Malachi folds past the strike by inches.)

CUT TO:

—

23. INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND — WARD CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(The sanctuary is alive.)

(Hydroponics glow.)

(Water runs.)

(Survivors move in quiet prayer and quiet labor.)

(Along the corridor, ward plates hum faintly. Sanctified steel. Scripture etched into every line.)

(RAPHAEL moves through the hall, huge and calm, every step carrying quiet authority. GABRIEL walks beside him, red cloak trailing, the air around him sharpened by holy presence.)

GABRIEL

The ward tone is uneven.

(Raphael touches one plate.)

(The steel hums.)

(Flickers.)

RAPHAEL

This one's been touched.

GABRIEL

Not corrosion.

(Raphael checks another.)

RAPHAEL

Deliberate.

GABRIEL

An intelligence.

(A SURVIVOR passes them. Smiling. Polite. Head bowed.)

(It looks normal.)

(Too normal.)

(It pauses beside a ward plate one fraction too long.)

(Raphael turns slightly.)

RAPHAEL

Did you feel that?

GABRIEL

Yes.

(The survivor continues walking.)

(The smile never changes.)

—

24. INT. CHILDREN'S HALL — NIGHT

(A softer corridor. Children's bunks behind a reinforced door. A warm lamp glows low. A lion drawing is pinned to the wall.)

(Ophia sits by the door, sketching in a worn notebook, humming softly in Psalm cadence.)

(A WOMAN enters.)

(Friendly.)

(Kind eyes.)

(Tired caregiver smile.)

(But her footsteps make no sound.)

(The air cools.)

CAREGIVER

Sweetheart?

(Ophia looks up.)

OPHIA

Yes, ma'am?

(The Caregiver kneels.)

(Too smooth.)

CAREGIVER

You miss your father.

(Ophia goes still.)

(Not fear.)

(Discernment.)

OPHIA

My father is coming home.

(The Caregiver's smile twitches.)

(For half a second, the face does not fit right.)

(Like skin sliding over something underneath.)

(Then it smooths back into place.)

CAREGIVER

And if the shepherd doesn't come?

(Ophia grips her pencil tighter.)

OPHIA

The Lord is my shepherd.

(The Caregiver's eyes flash with irritation.)

(Then calm returns.)

CAREGIVER

We'll see.

(It rises and leaves.)

(The hallway light flickers once as it passes.)

(Ophia looks down at her drawing.)

(Adds a darker line to the lion's mane.)

(Then whispers.)

OPHIA

He still comes.

—

25. INT. WARD NETWORK HUB — NIGHT

(A junction chamber where multiple ward systems converge.)

(Plates line the walls.)

(Some steady.)

(Some flickering wrong.)

(Gabriel studies one closely. The scripture is intact, but the etch depth has been altered. Filed down just enough to fail under pressure.)

GABRIEL

Subtle.

(Raphael checks another.)

RAPHAEL

Systematic.

(Gabriel turns.)

GABRIEL

We split.

(Raphael nods once.)

RAPHAEL

Find the hand.

GABRIEL

And the doorway.

(Gabriel glides down one corridor toward the children's wing.)

(Raphael moves the opposite direction toward the outer wards, heavier and faster.)

(They separate.)

—

26. INT. CHILDREN'S HALL — CONTINUOUS

(Gabriel enters in silence.)

(He sees Ophia.)

(He sees the lion drawing.)

(His smoke-eyes soften.)

GABRIEL

Little one.

(Ophia stands.)

OPHIA

Mr. Gabriel.

(Gabriel lowers himself slightly.)

(A messenger kneeling to a child.)

GABRIEL

Did someone come in here?

OPHIA

A woman.

(Beat.)

OPHIA

She smiled too much.

(Gabriel's eyes sharpen.)

GABRIEL

What did she say?

OPHIA

She asked if my father would come.

(Gabriel goes still.)

(Then speaks with quiet certainty.)

GABRIEL

He will.

(The hallway lights flicker.)

(Gabriel turns slightly. He senses movement beyond the hall.)

GABRIEL

Stay behind the door.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Do not open it for anyone.

(Ophia nods.)

OPHIA

Though I walk through the valley—

(Gabriel rises.)

(His cloak shifts like a storm front.)

CUT TO:

—

27. EXT. ASH WASTELAND — NIGHT

(Back to Jay and Malachi.)

(The fight has escalated.)

(They are airborne.)

(Jay triggers his cyber spine for a burst of speed.)

(Malachi meets him midair.)

(They collide again.)

(Shock-pop.)

(Thunder-lag.)

(They trade blows faster than the eye can follow cleanly, visible only in bursts of ash, flashes of silhouette, and impacts that warp the air.)

(Jay crashes down, carving a trench before stopping.)

(His breath hisses as he rises anyway.)

(Malachi lands standing.)

(Unbraced.)

(Unshaken.)

(Smiling.)

MALACHI

You're distracted.

JAY

Shut up.

(Malachi steps closer.)

MALACHI

No.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

I want you to hear it.

(Jay swings.)

(Malachi catches his wrist.)

(Stops it effortlessly.)

MALACHI

You can kill demons all night—

(Beat.)

MALACHI

—but you can't protect time.

(Jay rips free and strikes again.)

(Malachi slips by folding space.)

(The blow misses by inches.)

MALACHI

Your sanctuary was never a fortress.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

It was a candle.

(Jay's sigils flare.)

(He lashes out.)

(Malachi laughs.)

MALACHI

Hate is devotion.

(Jay stiffens.)

(The line lands.)

(Malachi knows it.)

CUT TO:

—

28. INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND — OUTER CORRIDORS — NIGHT

(The first alarm does not sound like a siren.)

(It sounds like a choir.)

(A broken hymn of engineered voices chanting wrong scripture.)

(The lights pulse.)

(Ward plates flicker.)

(Then several go dark at once in a chain reaction, like a necklace snapping from the outer ring inward.)

(Survivors panic.)

SURVIVOR VOICES

Doors—!

The plates—!

They're failing—!

(A blast rocks the outer gate.)

(Then another.)

(Demons flood in.)

(Not dozens.)

(Hundreds.)

(Coordinated.)

(Raphael appears in the corridor like war made visible.)

RAPHAEL
DEFEND THE CHILDREN!

(He charges into the tide.)

(Not rage.)

(Function.)

(Each strike deletes a demon.)

(But more come.)

(And more.)

(And more.)

(Gabriel appears in a flash from the children's side corridor.)

(No thunder.)

(Just arrival.)

(He gestures.)

(A wall of burning geometry forms between the breach and the inner hall.)

(Demons slam into it.)

(It holds.)

(For now.)

GABRIEL
Keep them off the holding wing!

(Raphael is already moving.)

CUT TO:

—

29. INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND — COMPOUND RIDGE

(Naomi makes her way to the sanctuary with her crew to ask Jay again to fight in her battle. The drive is silent and on edge. The passengers worn and grizzled, look forward to peace but smell the dry blood of war looming.)

EZEK

So this guy that you are so fixated on— The Ghost, right?

(Naomi stays silent.)

EZEK

If he said no to you earlier, how can you be so sure that he is going to listen to us now Naomi... I would be annoyed by you too.

EZEK

As your brother I recommend we get out of dodge and focus on the main mission. We can get this done without him. Think what dad used to say.

NAOMI

Zeek listen, we are pinned we can't do much and from our friends in the underground said; The Ghost is a force of nature and he will be our best bet at shutting down the system or at least wound it.

NAOMI

If we play our cards right we can even— oh shi—

(The remnant gets there before him and sees the chaos that has unfolded her and her team look on in horror)

(Naomi snaps out of it and she starts moving with purpose.)

CUT TO:

(Elsewhere in the sanctuary, NAOMI and her team is already inside.)

(Blood on her sleeve.)

(Rifle in her hands.)

(Three surviving RESISTANCE FIGHTERS with her.)

(She is not hiding.)

(She is pulling civilians.)

(Leading them.)

NAOMI

You two—move the wounded!

(Pointing.)

NAOMI

Children left side! Now!

(A survivor freezes, clutching a bleeding arm.)

NAOMI steps directly into her line of sight.

NAOMI

Look at me.

(The woman looks at her.)

NAOMI

Breathe.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Pick up that child and move. Are there escape routes? Somewhere to hide?

WOMAN

Yes! There is a warded corridor that leads to the back side of the ridge. The angels pulling everyone there

NAOMI

The Angels?

WOMAN

Gabriel and Raphael!

(NAOMI blown away at the thought of Archangels helping humans in this capacity)

(A demon crashes through a side door writhing violently looking to kill.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

NAOMI!!

(Naomi empties her magazine.)

(Head.)

(Throat.)

(The thing drops.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

We don't have enough people!

NAOMI

Then stop counting and start moving bodies!

(She grabs a fallen ward plate from the floor, slams it across a jammed side passage, and shoves two children through before the route collapses.)

NAOMI

Go!

(A little BOY hesitates.)

BOY

What about my brother?

(Naomi turns, spots the older brother pinned under debris.)

(Behind her, more civilians pour into the corridor.)

(Behind them, more screams.)

(She calculates.)

(Route.)

(Time.)

(Weight.)

(Deaths.)

(Then moves.)

NAOMI

Mara—take the line!

(To another fighter.)

NAOMI

Seal that corner and do not lose the children!

(She sprints through gunfire and screaming, drops to one knee, wedges a broken rifle stock beneath the slab, and heaves.)

(It barely lifts.)

(Another fighter joins her.)

(The slab rises enough.)

(Naomi drags the older child free by the shoulders.)

(Shoves both boys toward the evac line.)

NAOMI

Stay together!

(The corridor trembles harder.)

(A side door bursts.)

(Three more civilians stumble in from smoke.)

(The passage ahead bottlenecks instantly.)

(Too many bodies.)

(Too little space.)

(Naomi sees the kill box forming before anyone else does.)

NAOMI

No— not there!

(She points across the corridor to a maintenance seam half-hidden behind torn insulation.)

NAOMI

Secondary shaft! Behind the coolant line!

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

That route's dead!

NAOMI

It was dead for freight.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Not for children.

(She rips the panel free with both hands. A narrow maintenance passage opens behind it.)

NAOMI

Small bodies first! Wounded after! Move!

(A MOTHER hesitates, trying to lift two kids at once.)

(Naomi takes one child into her own arms and shoves the mother through the gap with the other.)

NAOMI

Go!

(A survivor looks back toward the upper halls.)

SURVIVOR

My husband's still up there—

(Naomi does not flinch.)

NAOMI

If you go back now, your children lose both of you.

(The woman breaks.)

(But moves.)

(Naomi hands the child back once the family is through.)

(A demon crashes down into the shaft entrance behind them.)

(Naomi turns and empties her sidearm into it at point-blank range.)

(It keeps coming.)

(She snatches a scripture-etched strip from the wall, slaps it across the thing's face, and drives a blade up under its jaw.)

(It dies choking black smoke.)

(Then Naomi seals the lower hatch behind the last civilians.)

(Her breathing is hard.)

(Her eyes burn.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

What about the west group?

(Naomi looks up the blocked route.)

(Listens.)

(Hears the collapse.)

(Hears nothing after.)

(She knows.)

NAOMI

We lost them.

(The words hurt.)

(She swallows it whole.)

NAOMI

Move the living.

(For one hard second, the corridor becomes hers.)

(Without Naomi, people die here.)

—

**30. INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND — OUTER CORRIDORS / CHILDREN'S
APPROACH — CONTINUOUS**

(In the chaos, Raphael sees something moving wrong.)

(Not a brute.)

(Not a rushing demon.)

(A figure threading through survivors like smoke.)

(Smooth.)

(Deliberate.)

(Always near ward junctions.)

(Always drifting toward the children's side.)

(Always leaving flickers behind.)

(Raphael lunges.)

(The figure vanishes.)

(For half a second, in the strobing light, he sees a face.)

(Ophia's.)

(Raphael freezes.)

(One fraction of a second.)

(It costs him.)

(A demon wave slams him backward.)

(The geometry wall buckles.)

RAPHAEL

...No.

CUT TO:

—

31. EXT. ASH WASTELAND — NIGHT

(Malachi catches Jay by the shoulder, spins him, and hurls him across the ash like wreckage.)

(Jay carves another trench before stopping.)

(His breath is harsh.)

(He rises anyway.)

(Malachi walks toward him.)

MALACHI

You feel it, don't you?

JAY

Feel what?

MALACHI

The tightening.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

That moment where your mind leaves the fight.

(Jay's eyes narrow behind red lenses.)

MALACHI

Because you know.

(Jay steps in.)

JAY

Liar.

(Malachi laughs softly.)

MALACHI

I don't have to lie to you.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

Your fear tells you the truth.

(Jay's breathing changes.)

(Panic trying to enter.)

(Malachi tilts his head like he's listening to a distant signal.)

(Then smiles wider.)

MALACHI

There it is.

JAY

What?

MALACHI

The break.

CUT TO:

—

32. INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND — HOLDING WING CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(The holding wing is chaos.)

(Survivors pull children behind reinforced doors.)

(Prayers are whispered while moving.)

(Crying never stops.)

(Gabriel stands in the hallway like a barricade.)

(A child-sized silhouette stumbles from the smoke.)

(Small.)

(Familiar.)

(It looks like Ophia.)

(For one split second, the hallway freezes.)

(Gabriel's smoke-eyes widen.)

(At the far end, Raphael sees it too.)

(His blood goes cold.)

RAPHAEL

Gabriel!

(The child-shape jerks unnaturally.)

(Like a puppet yanked by invisible strings.)

(It smiles wrong.)

(Then something slams into it from off-screen, throwing it across the corridor.)

(It hits the floor and skids.)

(As it slides, the form shifts.)

(Skin ripples.)

(Limbs distort.)

(Ophia's face peels away into something else.)

(A SHAPESHIFTER.)

(Not her.)

(Never her.)

(The horror is not gore.)

(It is the lie.)

(Raphael's face becomes pure rage.)

RAPHAEL
DECEIVER!

(The shapeshifter scrambles backward and vanishes into smoke like it was never there.)

(Gabriel turns sharply, furious.)

GABRIEL
It used her face.

(Raphael trembles with rage.)

(Wings flaring.)

RAPHAEL
I will tear it apart.

(Gabriel grips his shoulder.)

(Not restraint.)

(Anchoring.)

GABRIEL
Save who you can.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Then hunt.

(Raphael obeys.)

(Because obedience is his nature.)

CUT TO:

—

33. EXT. ASH WASTELAND — NIGHT

(Jay staggers as if he felt the lie from miles away.)

(Not a message.)

(A tether.)

(A wire pulled tight inside his ribs.)

(His breathing quickens.)

(His voice cracks.)

JAY

...No.

(Malachi steps close enough to whisper through the mask.)

MALACHI

You left them.

(Jay lunges.)

(Violent strike.)

(Malachi slips it effortlessly.)

MALACHI

You run out.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

You play hero.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

And you come back to ashes.

(Jay's fists shake.)

JAY

Shut up.

(Malachi leans in.)

(Eyes glowing.)

MALACHI

The sanctuary was never the target.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

You were.

(Jay freezes.)

(Malachi smiles.)

MALACHI

We needed you away.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

We needed you tired.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

We needed you listening to me while the door opened somewhere else.

(Jay's Solomon sigils flicker unstable.)

(Malachi points toward the distant mountains.)

MALACHI

And now you'll run back—

(Beat.)

MALACHI

—to a graveyard.

(Jay's hand shoots down.)

(The bag rockets upward.)

(He catches it and slams it over his shoulder.)

(No negotiation.)

(No finishing the fight.)

(He chooses his people.)

(He chooses his daughter.)

JAY

Not her.

(Malachi laughs.)

(Satisfied.)

MALACHI

Run, little Ghost.

—

34. EXT. ASH WASTELAND — CONTINUOUS

(Jay's cybernetic spine unlocks.)

(A mechanical whine rises as pistons shift beneath his coat and a bright pulse races down his vertebrae like a neon spine.)

(His feet dig into ash.)

(Then he launches.)

(Supersonic.)

(The air cracks.)

(A shockwave rings outward.)

(Ash blasts away behind him like a wake.)

(Jay becomes a streak tearing across the wasteland, clutching the bag tighter.)

(Because it is not gear.)

(It is medicine for the wounded.)

(Fuel for the Firebird.)

(Hope in a dead century.)

CUT TO:

—

35. INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND — LOWER EVAC SHAFT — NIGHT

(Naomi reaches a lower evacuation shaft with a cluster of civilians and children.)

(The path ahead is jammed with debris.)

(A wounded man slumps against the wall.)

(A little girl sobs into her mother's side.)

(Behind them, the compound shakes.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

Route's sealed!

NAOMI

Then make one.

(She grabs a fallen breaching tool from a dead demon-handler, jams it into the collapsed panel seam, and forces it open inch by inch with another fighter.)

NAOMI

Move the children first!

(A mother hesitates, trying to lift two kids at once.)

(Naomi takes one child into her own arms and shoves the mother through the gap with the other.)

NAOMI

Go!

(A survivor looks back toward the upper halls.)

SURVIVOR

My husband's still up there—

NAOMI

If you go back now, your children lose both of you.

(The woman breaks.)

(But moves.)

(Naomi hands the child back once the family is through.)

(A demon crashes down into the shaft entrance behind them.)

(Naomi turns and empties her sidearm into it at point-blank range.)

(It keeps coming.)

(She snatches a scripture-etched strip from the wall, slaps it across the thing's face, and drives a blade up under its jaw.)

(It dies choking black smoke.)

(Then Naomi seals the lower hatch behind the last civilians.)

(Her breathing is hard.)

(Her eyes burn.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

What about you?

NAOMI

I'm not done.

(She turns back toward the fire.)

—

36. EXT. ASH WASTELAND — WIDE

(Jay is gone.)

(The demons slowly rise.)

(The battlefield quiets.)

(Malachi stands alone in drifting ash, watching the direction Jay ran.)

(Smiling.)

MALACHI

Good.

(His eyes shift toward the burning horizon.)

MALACHI

Now you come where we need you.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

And pain will do the rest.

(A WATCHER silhouette glides overhead.)

(Silent.)

(Recording.)

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT III

—

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT IV — THE THRONE BELOW

FADE IN:

35A. EXT. WASTELAND HORIZON — NIGHT

(Beneath a bruised sky, the wasteland stretches dead and featureless: cracked black earth, broken ridgelines, industrial bones swallowed by distance.)

(It looks empty.)

(It is not.)

(A low hum rises.)

(Not wind.)

(Not machinery.)

(Something beneath reality itself.)

(The air bends.)

(The horizon flickers.)

(A distortion field ripples across the land like glass being peeled off the world.)

(Then Neo-Babylon appears.)

(A colossal hidden megacity unfolds from the false horizon: obsidian ziggurats, black terraces rising into cloud, floating traffic lanes moving in ritual formation, processional bridges, chained towers, neon sigils suspended in air.)

(The city does not feel built.)

(It feels enthroned.)

(Hidden behind refraction, cloaking, and imperial deceit, it reveals itself all at once like a false heaven.)

MICRO INSERT

(2 FRAMES: A split Earth in darkness. A crowned serpent coiled around the seam.)

—

35B. EXT. NEO-BABYLON — OUTER AVENUES / LOWER DISTRICTS — NIGHT

(The city is alive.)

(Not with joy.)

(With appetite.)

(Boulevards of polished black stone gleam beneath rain, ceremonial fire, and surveillance halos. Branded civilians move in perfect streams while holographic commandments unfurl overhead.)

**ASCEND THROUGH DESIRE.
OBEY THE THRONE.
THE MARK IS PEACE.**

(The body has become currency, spectacle, sacrament, control.)

(A branded woman kneels while a jeweled chain is fastened around her throat like a wedding gift.)

(A half-conscious man smiles from a floating display platform, chemically euphoric and barely present.)

(Veiled attendants carry narcotic incense through the crowd. The smoke rises in shapes of horns, halos, serpents.)

(A punishment dais glows beneath a giant dragon sigil. A man hangs from polished restraints while patrons drink and keep eating.)

(Nobody stops walking.)

(The city has mastered the art of making degradation look expensive.)

—

35C. EXT. NEO-BABYLON — RITUAL MARKET / IMPERIAL PLAZA — NIGHT

(A ritual market hums under black lanterns.)

(Stalls sell flesh narcotics, defaced relics turned into jewelry, cosmetic sigils pulsing beneath skin, melted crosses recast as ornaments, scripture lacquered into luxury.)

(Everything holy has been stripped, polished, resold.)

(A Babylon PREACHER stands beneath a giant holographic split Earth, face hidden behind a gold-and-obsidian serpent mask.)

BABYLON PREACHER

Behold the Dragon who gave us revelation.

BABYLON PREACHER

Behold the Light-Bearer who freed us from the tyranny of holiness.

BABYLON PREACHER

Blessed are those who ascend through appetite.

(The crowd answers in branded unison.)

CROWD

Glory to the throne.
Glory to the Dragon.

BABYLON PREACHER

The old God offered restraint.

(Beat.)

BABYLON PREACHER

Our throne offers becoming.

(A slogan burns across the air.)

**HE WHO FELL BROUGHT KNOWLEDGE.
HE WHO RULES BRINGS UNITY.**

(The crowd kneels, some willingly, some because the Mark forces reverence before thought.)

(The city worships rebellion the way old kingdoms once worshipped rain.)

—

**35D. INT. HOUSE OF THE DRAGON — ASCENSION ELEVATOR / HIGH TOWER —
NIGHT**

(A black-glass elevator ascends through one of the grand royal towers.)

(The city sinks beneath it in layers: vice, commerce, military order, spectacle, ritual.)

(Inside stands Malachi.)

(Young-faced.)

(Severe.)

(Dangerous.)

(His armor is polished obsidian veined with blood-gold circuitry. A hard-light mantle drifts from one shoulder like living authority.)

(Two branded attendants stand behind him. One carries a black chalice. One carries a folded ceremonial cloak.)

(The elevator walls reflect the city in fractured pieces. For one breath Malachi's face appears between Babylon's lights.)

(It is powerful.)

(It is not fulfilled.)

ATTENDANT

They sing your title in the lower terraces tonight.

(Beat.)

ATTENDANT

The Titan of Ash.

(Malachi does not turn.)

MALACHI

They sing whatever the city pays them to fear.

(He watches the city below: a public execution on one avenue, a lust rite on another, traffic moving like blood through a machine.)

—

35E. INT. HOUSE OF THE DRAGON — HIGH TERRACE — NIGHT

(The elevator opens onto a terrace overlooking the kingdom.)

(Malachi steps out alone. Wind catches his mantle and turns it into digital fire.)

(A servant offers the black chalice. Malachi takes it, walks to the edge, and looks over the empire.)

(Below him, Neo-Babylon breathes like a living system.)

(It is not merely corrupt.)

(It is stable in its corruption.)

(It has turned appetite into law.)

(A woman draped in translucent crimson approaches and rests a hand against his chestplate.)

WOMAN

The lower houses are celebrating your victories.

WOMAN

They say the Titan of Ash hunts like a god.

(Malachi drinks without looking at her.)

MALACHI

They celebrate because they are still afraid.

WOMAN

Fear becomes devotion here.

MALACHI

Only while the city survives.

(She studies him.)

WOMAN

You stand above almost everyone in Babylon.

(Malachi finally looks at her.)

(Not flirtation.)

(Measurement.)

MALACHI

Almost.

—

35F. EXT. NEO-BABYLON — CITY CORE / THRONE AXIS — CONTINUOUS

(At the center of Neo-Babylon rises the great ziggurat.)

(Older.)

(More sacred.)

(More wrong.)

(A colossal throne-complex of black stone, gold ornament, temple machinery, and ancient demonic grandeur.)

(Veils of smoke and holographic scripture pour down its sides. Giant winged idols kneel around its base. The whole city seems built in concentric reverence around it.)

(At the summit, a ceremonial aperture opens over the city like an eye.)

(There, in silhouette, stands the PRINCE OF PERSIA.)

(Towering.)

(Still.)

(Regal.)

(A horned crown profile. The suggestion of multiple arms.)

(The city beneath him is not his residence.)

(It is his liturgy.)

(Malachi's expression hardens almost invisibly.)

(Because even here, he is still not looking at an equal.)

MICRO INSERT

2 FRAMES: A dragon's eye opening in darkness. A throne built over a wound in the world.

—

35G. INT. HOUSE OF THE DRAGON — HIGH TERRACE — CONTINUOUS

(Malachi remains at the edge, staring toward the throne-axis.)

(The woman steps nearer.)

WOMAN

What do you see when you look at it?

(Malachi answers after a beat.)

MALACHI

Machinery.

WOMAN

The throne?

MALACHI

The whole city.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

Pleasure.

Fear.
Worship.
Blood.
Noise.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

It all feeds something.

WOMAN

And does that trouble you, Titan?

(Malachi hands the empty chalice back to a servant.)

MALACHI

No.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

It bores me.

(He turns away from the city.)

(His mantle trails behind him like black royal fire.)

MALACHI

My little Ghost...

(Beat.)

MALACHI

You are the only thing left out there that still feels alive.

(The city keeps pulsing below.)

(The throne keeps watching above it.)

CUT TO BLACK.

—

36. INT. JAY'S WORKSHOP / ARMORY WING — NIGHT

(The door is half-blown off its frame. Smoke crawls along the ceiling.)

(Jay enters.)

(This room is no longer a workshop.)

(It is a reliquary of war.)

(Everything organized like ritual: every shelf labeled, every weapon cleaned, every relic sealed.)

(He moves through the space like a man who already knows what he will need.)

(Because he has needed it before.)

(MICRO FLASH: The compound gate torn open. Demons flooding the courtyard. Raphael smashing through a wall of them. Gabriel forming a wall of burning geometry. Blood across sanctuary stone.)

(Back to present.)

(He stops at a wall rack.)

(Two pistols hang there like mirrored saints.)

(Silver Baller 1911s. Heavy. Polished. Sacred in their own brutal way.)

(He lifts them one at a time. Checks weight. Balance. Comfort.)

(Not love.)

(Comfort.)

(He holsters them, dual carry.)

(MICRO FLASH: A survivor screaming in the corridor. A demon dragged through flickering wards. Gabriel shouting commands. Raphael holding a corridor alone.)

(Then the MP5.)

(Compact.)

(Mean.)

(Drum mag seated like a promise.)

(He shoulders it.)

(Then the Beowulf AR: PEQ, ACOG, M203, suppressor, heavy magazine.)

(A weapon built for the world after mercy.)

(He slings it across his chest.)

MICRO FLASH:

Jay running through the compound entrance. Demons already inside. A hallway full of smoke and screams.

(Then the long case.)

(Scripture-etched clasps.)

(He opens it.)

(Inside: a shoulder-held anti-materiel rifle cannon.)

(Not elegant.)

(Overbuilt.)

(Designed to erase armor, engines, bone, whatever believes it can stand.)

(He lifts it with both cybernetic arms and locks it across his shoulder.)

MICRO FLASH:

Jay arriving in the sanctuary corridor. Bodies on the floor. Gabriel kneeling beside the wounded. Raphael drenched in demon blood. The sanctuary burning.

(He reaches for his plate carrier. Pre-fall ceramic plates, repainted and re-sanctified, scripture strips sealed inside the seams.)

(He straps it on. Tight. Heavy. Chosen.)

MICRO FLASH:

Jay kicking open the children's wing. Smoke. A notebook. A lion drawing. No certainty.)

(That hurts worse.)

(Back to present.)

(He clips the last buckle.)

(His breathing deepens.)

(The rage in him is no longer frantic.)

(It is focused.)

—

37. INT. ARMORY WING — CONTINUOUS / RADIO CALL

(Jay taps a comm unit in his glove.)

(Static.)

(Then the Merchant.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Tell me you're not calling to ask for batteries.

(Jay says nothing at first. He loads a magazine with mechanical precision.)

(Click. Click. Click.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

...Ghost?

JAY

Usual drop.

MERCHANT (V.O.)

That's not a hello.

JAY

I don't have time for hello.

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Alright.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

What do you need?

(Jay scans the racks like he is choosing judgment.)

JAY

Ammunition.

Explosives.

Charges that stick.

Charges that bury.

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Ghost—

(Jay tightens a strap across his chest.)

JAY

The sanctuary fell.

(The line goes dead quiet.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

...How many?

JAY

Too many.

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Who hit you?

(Jay's knuckles flex. Solomonian sigils flicker.)

JAY

A horde.

(Beat.)

JAY

And Malachi.

(A sharp inhale.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

...The Titan?

MERCHANT (V.O.)

You're serious.

JAY

I don't call for theater.

(The Merchant exhales slowly.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Drop location in one hour.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

But that kind of stock costs.

JAY

Put it on my tab.

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Your tab is already a war crime.

(Jay racks the AR. A clean, violent sound.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

You're really going to kick the front door of Hell?

(Jay pauses.)

JAY

No.

(Beat.)

JAY

I'm going in through the ribs.

(The Merchant is quiet a moment.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

That sounds more like you.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

But Ghost—

(Beat.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Try to remember you're not the apocalypse.

(Jay does not answer at first.)

JAY

I'm trying.

(A beat.)

JAY

But they took my daughter.

(The Merchant sighs quietly.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Drop location in one hour.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

And Jay...

(Beat.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Try to come back alive.

(Jay shoulders the rifle.)

JAY

Good.

MERCHANT (V.O.)

Good?

JAY

If I come back dead, you don't get paid.

(A faint involuntary laugh from the Merchant.)

MERCHANT (V.O.)

That's the ugliest business logic I've heard all month.

JAY

Put it on my tab.

(Click.)

(The line dies.)

—

38. INT. ARMORY WING — PDA INTEGRATION

(Jay pulls the cracked PDA from his bag.)

(The screen flickers.)

**RAMIEL PROJECT
TRANSPORT LOGS
COORDINATE FRAGMENTS
GENESIS PROTOCOL (LOCKED)**

(Jay studies it.)

(Not reading.)

(Hunting.)

(He opens a compartment in his forearm plating, revealing nanotech mesh threaded like liquid circuitry.)

(He presses the PDA against it.)

(For a second, nothing.)

(Then the nanotech drinks it.)

(The device dissolves into strands.)

(Data blooms across Jay's HUD. Coordinates assemble like a puzzle solving itself.)

(The phrase stabilizes in front of him.)

ANGEL ENGINE

(Then beneath it:)

**TRANSFER VEINS
LOWER GATE REFERENCES
THRONE ROUTING MASKED**

(Jay's knuckles twitch.)

(The Solomon sigils flare, then steady.)

(He exhales.)

(Not relief.)

(A decision.)

—

39. INT. SANCTUARY RUINS — CHAPEL THRESHOLD — NIGHT

(Jay turns toward the exit. Weapons on his body clink softly.)

(The lion drawing sits on the table beside Ophia's notebook.)

(He pauses.)

(He folds the drawing once and places it inside his vest over his heart.)

(Gabriel stands in the broken chapel, gold boots on ash, red cloak untouched by soot.)

(Raphael stands beside him, bloodied but still a fortress.)

(Jay enters.)

(He is heavier now. Armed. Plated. A walking war machine.)

(But his eyes are a father's.)

(Gabriel speaks first.)

GABRIEL

Where are you going?

JAY

They took them.

GABRIEL

Yes.

(Raphael steps forward. Voice low. Grounding. Pastoral by force.)

RAPHAEL

Jay.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Listen to me.

(Jay finally looks at him.)

RAPHAEL

You are not the first man to lose what he loves.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

You are not the first man to want to burn the world back into order.

(Jay's breathing sharpens.)

RAPHAEL

But hear the Word—

JAY

Don't.

(Raphael holds his ground.)

RAPHAEL

Be still, and know that I am God.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

I will be exalted among the heathen.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

I will be exalted in the earth.

(Jay's voice turns raw.)

JAY

Be still?

(Beat.)

JAY

My child is in chains.

(Raphael steps closer.)

RAPHAEL

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart—

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

—and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

(Jay's voice cracks.)

JAY

Save her.

(Raphael's eyes harden with compassion.)

RAPHAEL

He will.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

But He will not be replaced by your fury.

(Jay laughs once. Not humor. Pain.)

JAY

God's will.

(Beat.)

JAY

That's what you're going to tell me?

(Raphael says nothing. Gabriel steps in now, sharper, morally harder.)

GABRIEL

You do not have to accept it.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

You have to obey.

(Jay turns sharply.)

JAY

Obey what?

(Gabriel steps closer. His voice is steel wrapped in mercy.)

GABRIEL

Obey that your rage is not your shepherd.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Obey that your hatred is not your compass.

(He steps closer still, mask to mask.)

GABRIEL

Jay.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

(The words hit the wound.)

(Jay answers with scripture like a wounded man throwing steel.)

JAY

And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence—

(Beat.)

JAY

—and the violent take it by force.

(He steps in closer.)

JAY

No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself.

(Beat.)

JAY

I laid down my life.

(Beat.)

JAY

Over and over.

(Beat.)

JAY

And I am not laying down my daughter.

(Raphael's tone softens again, but not weakly.)

RAPHAEL

Then do not lay her down.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Lift her up.

(He places a hand on Jay's shoulder.)

RAPHAEL

But do it clean.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Do it holy.

(Jay jerks away, not at Raphael, but at helplessness.)

JAY

Time is running out.

RAPHAEL

Then let your urgency be righteous.

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

Not reckless.

(Gabriel studies him one beat longer.)

GABRIEL

Bring back the child.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

And bring back yourself.

(That lands harder than the rest.)

(Jay says nothing.)

(Because he is no longer sure those are the same mission.)

—

40. EXT. MOUNTAIN GARAGE — NIGHT

(A garage buried in the mountain.)

(The cover comes off the car.)

(A classic '84 Firebird waits beneath it.)

(War-rigged.)

(Sanctified.)

(Beautiful in the wrong century.)

(Jay moves faster now.)

(No calm.)

(No rhythm.)

(A man outrunning collapse.)

(He installs the nuclear fuel cell.)

(The Firebird wakes like a beast baptized in radiation and scripture.)

(The engine roars.)

(Jay gets in.)

(The lion drawing sits on the dashboard.)

(He grips the wheel.)

(His knuckles glow faintly.)

(Not rage.)

(Resolve.)

JAY

Hold on.

(The Firebird launches like a missile.)

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT IV

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT V — THE ANGEL ENGINE: ROAD OF BROKEN COORDINATES

FADE IN:

40. EXT. WASTELAND HIGHWAY — NIGHT

(The Firebird becomes a streak of violence across the dead world.)

(Not fast for thrill.)

(Fast for guilt.)

(Ash sheets over the hood while the reactor hum behind the seats stays steady and cold, like something that never panics.)

(Jay's hands crush the wheel.)

(Cybernetic fingers creak against the leather.)

(He does not blink.)

(He does not look at the sky because the sky feels like judgment.)

(His HUD is alive with fragments from the dissolved PDA.)

COORDINATE FRAGMENTS
TRANSPORT LOGS
PORTAL MAP: PARTIAL
ENGINE SIGNAL: INTERMITTENT

(Every few miles, the ENGINE SIGNAL icon flickers, wing-shaped at first, then glitches into something parasitic.)

(Jay's jaw tightens behind the mask.)

(He drives anyway.)

(Because stopping would mean hearing his own grief.)

(For half a second, Ophia's lion drawing reflects in the windshield from the dashboard beside him.)

(He glances at it.)

(That is enough to keep driving.)

—

41. EXT. MERCHANT DROP — NIGHT

(A skeleton outpost squats beneath a collapsed billboard.)

(An oil barrel burns in the middle of it, throwing warped orange light across tarps, crates, and armed silhouettes.)

(The Merchant's people do not greet Jay.)

(They measure him.)

(Jay does not step out like a customer.)

(He steps out like a raid.)

(He takes the crates: ammo, charges, stickies, burrowers.)

(He does not count.)

(He knows.)

(The Merchant appears from behind a tarp partition, hood up, eyes sharp.)

MERCHANT

You look like you're about to tear the sky open.

(Jay loads without answering.)

(Click.)

(Click.)

JAY

I need a door.

MERCHANT

Everybody does.

(Jay pauses just long enough for the threat to exist.)

JAY

Not like this.

(The Merchant swallows.)

MERCHANT

The Glasslands are crawling.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Strongholds are trading bones like currency.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You go asking questions out there, you're going to light up the whole region.

(Jay shoulders the AR.)

JAY

Good.

(The Merchant exhales through his nose.)

MERCHANT

Yeah.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

That's what I was afraid you'd say.

(Jay turns toward the Firebird.)

MERCHANT

Try to remember you're not the apocalypse.

(Jay does not turn.)

JAY

I'm trying.

(A beat.)

JAY

But they took my daughter.

(The Merchant goes still.)

MERCHANT

Wait.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

How do you know?

(Jay's hand tightens on the Firebird door.)

JAY

They left something behind.

—

MICRO INSERT — FLASHBACK

INT. MOUNTAIN COMPOUND — TRIAGE HALL / COLLAPSE ZONE — NIGHT

(Smoke turns the lights into halos of ruin.)

(Naomi moves through the chaos like a wartime nerve center: blood on her sleeves, rifle slung, knife out, three surviving fighters keeping pace with her.)

NAOMI
Children first!

NAOMI
Wounded to the lower shaft!

NAOMI
If you can walk, you carry somebody who can't!

(A boy freezes beside a dead man.)

(Naomi grabs him by the shoulders.)

NAOMI
Look at me.

(He does.)

NAOMI
That door.

(Beat.)

NAOMI
Now.

(She shoves him toward two older girls already guiding smaller kids.)

(A section of corridor caves inward. A demon drops through the dust.)

(Naomi fires twice center mass. It keeps coming.)

(She rips a ward strip from the wall, slaps it across the thing's face, and drives a blade under its jaw.)

(It dies screaming.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER
We're losing the lower route!

NAOMI
Then we make another one!

(She climbs a collapsed beam, kicks loose a jammed maintenance hatch, and opens a narrow crawlspace above the evac line.)

NAOMI
Children up!

NAOMI
Move!

(A mother hesitates, clutching a baby and a limping son.)

NAOMI
Give me the baby.

(The woman does. Naomi hands the infant up to a fighter above, then hauls the son upward herself.)

(Without Naomi, this corridor becomes a tomb.)

(The corridor is engulfed in flame.)

(Bodies lie scattered.)

(Ward plates flicker and fail.)

(Jay and speeds down a corridor and he and Naomi notice each other.)

(He stops hard in his place, Naomi stops and they stare each other down.)

(His eyes narrow and Naomi's eyes soften. He looks beyond her and notices her team helping the survivors.)

(Naomi looks behind her and then turns back, Jay vanishes like a ghost in the wind.)

(Naomi readies her weapon and runs towards her group.)

(Jay speeds down the corridor to the children's wing)

(He kicks open the reinforced door.)

(A small hand lies on the floor.)

(Jay freezes.)

(Kneels.)

(Feels it immediately.)

(Wrong weight.)

(Wrong temperature.)

(Wrong presence.)

JAY

You're not her.

(The body twitches.)

(Skin ripples.)

(Bones shift.)

(The face stretches like melting wax.)

(The thing unfolds in grotesque layers, limbs splitting, teeth blooming where joints should be.)

(It laughs, wet and clicking.)

SHAPESHIFTER

You came back too late.

(It rises taller, body spreading open like a nightmare trying to be seen.)

SHAPESHIFTER

We wore her face well.

(Jay does not move.)

(A mantis blade punches through its leg and pins it to the floor.)

(He clamps one hand over its throat.)

JAY

Where.

(The creature smiles wider.)

SHAPESHIFTER

You think you can scare me, daddy?

(Its jaw splits.)

(More eyes open.)

SHAPESHIFTER

The harvest has begun.

SHAPESHIFTER

Ramiel lives.

JAY

Where.

(The creature jerks and laughs again.)

SHAPESHIFTER

The Strongholds.

(Beat.)

SHAPESHIFTER

But you won't find them.

SHAPESHIFTER

The locations are all in—

(Jay grabs its skull and tears the top open like a lid.)

(A metal chip rips free trailing an organic tendril.)

(The creature convulses.)

SHAPESHIFTER

Too late...

(The body collapses and ignites.)

(Jay studies the chip.)

(A Solomon seal flashes across his knuckles.)

(The tendril withers instantly.)

(He integrates the chip into his arm.)

(Coordinates flicker across his HUD.)

VIRUS SCAN COMPLETE...

[1101000101010101100001010]

**STRONGHOLD CACHE(S)
INTEGRAL COORDINATES AVAILABLE
HUMAN TRANSPORT NETWORK
LAST UPDATE COMPLETED: 21 DAYS AGO
RUN .EXE [Y/N]?**

—

BACK TO PRESENT

(Jay closes his hand.)

JAY

They were harvesting.

(The Merchant goes silent.)

MERCHANT

God.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

And you're saying they took her alive.

(Jay opens the Firebird door.)

JAY

They want something.

(Beat.)

JAY

And she's part of it.

MERCHANT

Where?

JAY

The Strongholds.

(The Merchant looks sick.)

MERCHANT

Those aren't caches.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

They're slaughterhouses.

(Jay grips the wheel.)

(The engine screams to life.)

JAY

If they wish for death—

(Beat.)

JAY

—I will provide deliverance.

(The Firebird launches into the wasteland.)

(Ash explodes behind it.)

(The Merchant watches the taillights disappear.)

MERCHANT

Lord help whatever finds him first.

42. INT. SANCTUARY — WAR ROOM / STRATEGIC CORE — NIGHT

(The sanctuary is wounded, but alive.)

(Survivors move quietly through the halls beyond while ward plates hum faintly in the walls.)

(Deep within the compound lies a sealed chamber built from steel, scripture, salvaged pre-Fall systems, and refusal.)

(A massive circular console dominates the center, ancient military hardware repaired so many times it looks resurrected.)

(Screens arc around Jay like a cathedral of data: satellite debris maps, Watcher frequencies, demonic signal triangulation, trafficking routes, failed settlements, heat blooms, movement corridors.)

(Jay sits alone at the console.)

(Shades retracted.)

(Eyes hollow.)

(The shapeshifter chip rests inside a sealed containment socket.)

(He slots it in.)

(The system jolts awake.)

(Encrypted Watcher frequencies begin to unravel.)

(Data floods the screens.)

(Stronghold markers ignite across the wasteland map: transport routes, holding sites, trafficking lines, movement corridors.)

(A human harvest system laid bare in cold geometry.)

(References begin surfacing.)

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

He feeds off the Mark of Cain.

GABRIEL

Sleep left him centuries ago.

(Raphael watches Jay reroute strike markers.)

RAPHAEL

Or mercy did.

GABRIEL

No.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Mercy is the only reason he is still aiming outward.

(A monitor flashes.)

**[10010101110010100001010]
STRIKE SITE CONFIRMED**

RAPHAEL

He does not acknowledge us.

RAPHAEL

You think he's angry?

GABRIEL

No.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

He is past anger.

(Raphael watches Jay mark the next route.)

RAPHAEL

He fights like Michael.

(Gabriel pauses at that.)

GABRIEL

He does.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

And Michael burned cities when wrath guided him.

(Below them, Jay slams another marker into place.)

RAPHAEL

And if he finds the Angel Engine?

(Gabriel does not look away.)

GABRIEL

Then Hell will learn what happens when a father stops asking permission.

—

INT. COMPOUND HANGAR — CONTINUOUS

(The hangar doors creak open like a tomb waking.)

(The '84 Firebird waits inside, armored, scripture-etched, low and predatory.)

(A compact reactor core glows behind reinforced glass.)

(Jay steps in.)

(Climbs in.)

(Turns the key.)

(The V8 roars.)

(The reactor hums beneath it.)

(Two hearts beating in one machine.)

(Gasoline and atom.)

(Jay drives out into the night.)

—

43. EXT. RAID MONTAGE — VARIOUS STRONGHOLDS — NIGHT / DUSK / DAWN

(The hunt becomes a sequence of wounds across the wasteland.)

(Not repetition.)

(Progression.)

—

FIRST MARKER

(A ruined human facility.)

(Demon patrols scavenge corpses and broken steel.)

(Jay does not use stealth.)

(He arrives.)

(Engages.)

(Ends it.)

(Suppressed shots.)

(Mantis blades.)

(A demon tries to negotiate in an ancient tongue and dies mid-syllable.)

(A survivor hides beneath collapsed rebar, branded and trembling.)

JAY

Portal.

(Beat.)

JAY

Coordinates.

SURVIVOR

I—I don't—

(Jay stares for one extra beat.)

(Then turns away.)

(He does not kill him.)

(The survivor starts crying harder because mercy from the Ghost feels worse than execution.)

(The facility detonates behind Jay and collapses inward.)

—

SECOND MARKER

(A shipping-container compound welded together from rust, fear, and stolen labor.)

(Demons trade human prisoners beneath floodlights.)

(Jay arrives like sentence before trial.)

(Gates torn open.)

(Chains broken.)

(Guards dead before they understand he is there.)

(Prisoners scatter into the dark.)

(One survivor collapses in front of him, clutching at his leg.)

SURVIVOR

Please...

SURVIVOR

Don't leave us...

(Jay looks past him, scanning faces.)

JAY

Go.

(He keeps moving.)

(None of them are hers.)

—

THIRD MARKER

(Oil refinery ruins beneath a dying sky.)

(Human cages line the catwalks.)

(Jay cuts them open one by one.)

(A young girl runs to him and clings to his coat.)

(For one terrible instant, he freezes.)

(Not Ophia.)

(Jay kneels just enough to guide her toward the others.)

(Gently.)

(Then keeps moving.)

(That is the moment the audience sees what this search is doing to him.)

—

FOURTH MARKER

(A blood-stained interrogation room inside a half-collapsed processing site.)

(Jay has a trafficker pinned against the wall.)

(The man is already crying.)

JAY

Angel Engine.

(The trafficker laughs through pain.)

(Jay breaks one arm.)

(The man screams.)

(Jay breaks the other.)

JAY

Talk.

TRAFFICKER

The docks!

TRAFFICKER

The docks!

(Jay lets him fall and walks out before the echoes die.)

—

FIFTH MARKER

(The Firebird streaks across the desert, each Stronghold burning behind it.)

(Every raid, interrogation, and liberation narrows the search.)

(All roads now point to one destination.)

ANGEL ENGINE

—

44. EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY — SUNSET

(The Firebird cuts across a dying highway through an enormous desert.)

(Heat shimmer turns the road into liquid.)

(The sky bleeds orange into rust.)

(The car becomes a bullet.)

(Jay's red visor reflects the horizon: a seam in the sky, reality bruised.)

(The PDA pings.)

ENGINE SIGNAL: INTERMITTENT

(The icon flickers, wing-shaped, then glitches parasitic.)

(Jay's knuckles twitch on the wheel.)

(The sigils on his hands dim for a beat.)

(For one second, the dash reflection makes it look like Ophia is sitting in the passenger seat.)

(He looks.)

(Nothing.)

(Jay grips the wheel harder.)

JAY

...

—

45. EXT. DEMON STRONGHOLD — NIGHT

(A checkpoint of stacked shipping containers and welded scrap rises from the wasteland like a steel ulcer.)

(Human bones are nailed to the walls beneath a rusted sign.)

NO BRAND — NO TRADE

(Jay activates his synthetic veil.)

(A thin artificial bleeding line appears across his forehead, just enough to pass at a glance.)

(He walks through the gate like he belongs there.)

(The whisper begins.)

THE GHOST.

(A patrol demon recognizes him a beat too late.)

(Jay moves.)

(Mantis blades flash.)

(Suppressed shots cough through the night.)

(Bodies drop almost instantly.)

(He slams a branded human against a container wall hard enough to rattle the steel.)

JAY

Angel Engine.

(Beat.)

JAY

Route.

(The man sobs uselessly.)

(Jay throws him aside.)

(A burning drum tips.)

(Flames spread through the compound.)

(Cages burst open.)

(Prisoners crawl through the smoke.)

(A terrified boy grabs Jay's coat.)

BOY

They took the small ones.

(Beat.)

BOY

They have my sisters.

(Jay freezes.)

(Then kneels sharply.)

JAY

Focus.

(Beat.)

JAY

Where.

BOY

To the flooded city.

JAY

Which one.

BOY

The ocean market docks.

(Beat.)

BOY

With the submarines.

(A beat.)

(Jay rises slowly.)

(The direction is now clear.)

—

46. EXT. FLOODED UNDERCITY MARKET — NIGHT

(A drowned city block under a bruised sky.)

(Dirty black water fills the streets to the knee.)

(Oil fires burn in steel drums.)

(Neon signs flicker through the mist and reflect in broken colors.)

(Branded merchants whisper beneath patched awnings.)

(Jay checks the map.)

(The tunnel access point should be here.)

(It is gone.)

(Only collapsed concrete and dead earth.)

(Jay turns.)

(Watcher shapes fill the shadows behind him.)

(One glides closer, skeletal halo twitching, its lens dilating.)

(Jay never looks up.)

(He loads David's sling and fires in one motion.)

(The stone punches through the Watcher's center mass.)

(Black ichor hisses into the water.)

(Jay kneels, tears out the optic eye before the casing finishes dying.)

JAY

You're not even subtle anymore.

—

47. INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — NIGHT

(A concrete back room behind the market.)

(Rust stains.)

(One hanging light swinging slowly.)

(Jay stands over a terrified informant tied to a chair.)

(The man is shaking so violently the legs rattle.)

JAY
Engine.

(Beat.)

JAY
Coordinates.

INFORMANT
I—I don't—

(Jay leans closer.)

(Mechanical breathing fills the room.)

JAY
You do.

(Beat.)

JAY
This is the last Stronghold.

(Beat.)

JAY
All roads led to you.

(A second attacker creeps in behind him.)

(Jay does not turn.)

(His cybernetic hand lashes backward, grabs the man by the skull, and yanks him forward into the light.)

(Jay never takes his eyes off the informant.)

JAY
I'm not asking again.

(Without looking, he crushes the attacker's skull.)

(Blood spatters across the wall.)

(The light swings harder.)

(Jay steps closer.)

JAY

Satan won't protect you.

(Beat.)

JAY

And God won't protect you from me if you keep lying.

(The informant breaks.)

INFORMANT

Glasslands—east—

INFORMANT

Catacomb mouth—

INFORMANT

Two nights—

INFORMANT

Portal arches—

INFORMANT

Scripture stone—

INFORMANT

Please don't kill me!

(Jay's PDA updates.)

PORTAL SITE: 81% PROBABLE

JAY

What else.

INFORMANT

You need the portal to access the Engine facility!

INFORMANT

I swear that's all I know!

(Jay stares at him one cold beat.)

JAY

Then start praying the truth was enough.

(Jay vanishes.)

(The room goes still.)

(The informant looks around wildly, breathing in broken gasps.)

(Like he really did just see a ghost.)

—

48. EXT. PORTAL RUINS — NIGHT

(Stone arches rise from the glass desert like the ribs of something ancient and buried.)

(Their surfaces are carved with scripture and alien geometry arranged less like decoration than coordinates.)

(Jay places his palm against the stone.)

(The Solomonic sigils in his hand glow.)

(Reality tears open.)

(Not all at once.)

(A wound in the air.)

(Jay lowers his head slightly.)

(Not in defeat.)

(In reverence.)

(He begins in Aramaic, quiet and careful, like a man approaching a throne he does not deserve.)

JAY (ARAMAIC)
Abwoon d'bashmaya...

(The portal does not answer.)

(The wound remains torn but stubborn, as if it recognizes the rage inside him and refuses to mistake it for faith.)

(Jay swallows and tries again, still respectful, closer now to pleading.)

JAY (ARAMAIC)
Teithe malkuthakh...

(A beat.)

(His voice trembles once.)

(Anger tries to leak through.)

(He forces it down.)

(Then he speaks plainly.)

JAY
My Lord...

(Beat.)

JAY
I'm not asking You to bless my rage.

(Beat.)

JAY
I'm asking You to let me reach her.

(Beat.)

JAY
Please.

(Beat.)

JAY

If it is Your will... open the road.

(The wound in the air shudders.)

(Reality tears wider.)

(Jay hesitates for one final breath, then steps through.)

—

49. INT. PORTAL EXIT TUNNEL — NIGHT

(Jay emerges into a tunnel of wet stone and stale air.)

(His visor HUD ignites across his lenses, cycling through modes.)

COMBAT VISOR

NIGHT VISION

RADIATION

ECHO

SPIRIT-TRACE

THERMAL

(The tunnel blooms into heat ghosts.)

(Seven bodies.)

(Human.)

(Armed.)

(Jay raises the shoulder cannon instantly.)

JAY

Don't move.

(Beat.)

JAY

Hands where I can see them.

(Seven figures in military gear step from the darkness.)

(Naomi steps forward first.)

NAOMI

If we wanted you dead, you'd be hearing prayers already.

(Jay does not lower the weapon.)

JAY

You again.

NAOMI

Easy.

JAY

This your version of playing nice?

(Beat.)

JAY

Invading my home, stalking me through portals.

NAOMI

We're not stalking you.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

We've been trying to reach this place for weeks. We don't have access to portals like some people.

JAY

I could kill all of you right now.

(Naomi nods once.)

NAOMI

I know.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

But you didn't come through that door to kill people trying to help.

JAY

Who are you?

NAOMI

Naomi.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

We're the people who found the Engine perimeter.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

And didn't survive the first three tries.

(A tall man steps half a pace forward.)

(Ezek.)

(A faint scar marks his chest.)

(Jay's gaze locks onto it.)

JAY

Mark.

EZEK

What now?

JAY

Your—mark boy?

EZEK

Oh—its Cain.

(A beat.)

EZEK

I'm new.

(Beat.)

EZEK

I've only died twice.

(Jay cocks the cannon directly at him.)

(The others raise rifles instantly.)

(Naomi does not move.)

JAY

How.

(Ezek does not flinch.)

EZEK

My father.

(Beat.)

EZEK

He carried it before me.

(Jay's cannon does not move.)

EZEK

When the demons raided our compound, I died.

(Beat.)

EZEK

I woke up with it burning under my skin.

(Beat.)

EZEK

And my father was gone.

(Jay stares at him.)

EZEK

The last thing he said was—

(Beat.)

EZEK

“God always leaves someone behind.”

(Jay goes still.)

(Something shifts.)

—

MICRO INSERT — MEMORY

(A ruined South American battlefield centuries earlier.)

(Firelight.)

(Tracer rounds.)

(A collapsing ridge.)

(A younger Jay crouched behind a shattered barricade.)

(Beside him stands ELIJAH BAR-KOHEN, battle-worn, steady, armor scarred and etched with scripture.)

(He grips Jay’s shoulder.)

ELIJAH

The war will outlive us.

(Beat.)

ELIJAH

But God always leaves someone behind.

(An explosion.)

(Elijah pulls Jay back to his feet.)

ELIJAH

Not tonight.

BACK TO PRESENT

(Jay lowers the cannon slightly.)

JAY

Ezekiel.

(Beat.)

JAY

Son of Elijah Bar-Kohen.

(Ezek freezes.)

EZEK

You knew him?

JAY

I fought beside him in South America.

(Beat.)

JAY

Or what was left of it.

(Beat.)

JAY

He was my commander.

(Beat.)

JAY

He taught me how to survive this world.

(Ezek absorbs that.)

JAY

You carry his face.

(Beat.)

JAY

And his burden.

(Naomi steps forward.)

NAOMI

Our father carried the mark for centuries.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

He protected people.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Same as you.

(Ezek glances at her, then back.)

EZEK

I didn't ask for this.

(Beat.)

EZEK

But I'm not going to waste it.

(The rifles lower slightly.)

NAOMI

God told us we needed to help.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

And He showed us where to meet you.

(Jay lowers the cannon fully.)

JAY

I am here to find my daughter.

(Beat.)

JAY

Get in the way of that and it ends badly for all of you.

(Ezek starts to answer, but Naomi steps slightly in front of him without thinking.)

(Not tactical.)

(Instinct.)

NAOMI

He needs time.

EZEK

And we don't have any.

(She steps closer, voice lower now.)

NAOMI

I already watched one marked man walk into something he couldn't survive.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

I'm not doing that again.

(Jay watches this.)

(Not the words.)

(The reflex.)

(The history.)

NAOMI

Your sanctuary—

(She stops herself.)

(That pain is still too near.)

JAY

Whatever we find in there—

(Beat.)

JAY

—your mission starts after mine.

(He finally lowers the weapon completely.)

JAY

Stay close.

(Beat.)

JAY

Stay out of the way.

(Flashlights click on.)

(They follow Jay deeper into the dark.)

—

50. EXT. GLASSLANDS RIDGE — NIGHT

(The Remnant crest the ridge.)

(Below them, a massive facility sprawls across the wasteland: floodlights through dust, antenna towers like dead trees, outer walls pale beneath a poisoned moon.)

(Ezek studies it.)

EZEK

That's a church.

(Jay studies it.)

JAY

No.

(Beat.)

JAY
It's a mouth.

—

51. INT. FACILITY OUTER HALLS — NIGHT

(The group enters through a service corridor.)

(The walls are sterile white.)

(Too clean.)

(Too perfect.)

(Bone-shaped lenses peel open in the upper corners and begin watching them.)

(Jay's PDA flickers.)

WELCOME HOME

(Naomi glances at his wrist.)

NAOMI
Your wrist thing just said hello.

(Jay stays silent.)

(They move deeper.)

(Sterile white gives way to welded scripture plates, all deliberately defaced with precision.)

(One reads:)

WE WRESTLE NOT AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD—

(The rest is melted into slag.)

(Another reads:)

THE LORD IS CLOSE TO THE BROKENHEARTED—

(The word LORD has been scraped out and replaced with THRONE.)

(Ezek stops at it.)

EZEK

They're mocking it.

(Naomi scans the corridor.)

NAOMI

No.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

They're training people not to trust what used to save them.

(She turns to the others.)

NAOMI

Eyes up.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Pairs.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Nobody isolates.

(Jay switches to thermal.)

(The facility explodes with signatures: hundreds of personnel, patrols, technicians.)

(Cold pockets move where they should not.)

(One guard turns.)

(For a split second his face rips apart like oil, then returns to normal.)

(Jay goes still.)

JAY
Shapeshifters.

EZEK
Like the ones that hit your compound.

JAY
Exactly.

(They reach a service split: ventwork above, maintenance hatch to the side, sealed false-plated door.)

(Naomi kneels beside the maintenance plate.)

(Checks the floor.)

(Listens.)

NAOMI
Not the hatch.

(Beat.)

NAOMI
Too clean.

(Beat.)

NAOMI
They want us there.

(She points upward.)

NAOMI
We take the ventwork.

(Jay looks at her once.)

(Registers the call.)

(Does not argue.)

(They cut mesh, crawl the ventwork, drop through darkness.)

(When they land, the truth is worse.)

(Demons.)

(Personnel.)

(Shapeshifters.)

(A living machine of blasphemy.)

(The same infiltrators that hit the compound are here in numbers.)

(Jay's weapon comes up immediately.)

NAOMI

God help us.

(Jay does not whisper back.)

(Because he is past asking for help.)

(He is counting targets.)

END OF ACT V

—

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT VI — THE SECOND MARK

FADE IN:

56. INT. ANGEL ENGINE FACILITY — LOWER SERVICE TUNNELS — NIGHT

(The Remnant move in silence through a narrow industrial corridor.)

(The architecture is wrong.)

(Concrete and steel fuse with something organic, as if the facility has begun growing its own nervous system beneath the walls.)

(Surfaces pulse faintly in the dark, barely visible to the naked eye, perfectly clear through Jay's visor.)

(Jay raises one hand.)

(The team halts instantly.)

(His visor cycles.)

COMBAT VISOR → THERMAL → ECHO → SPIRIT VISOR

(With each shift, the corridor changes.)

(Thermal reveals heat pockets moving ahead.)

(Echo maps hidden shafts and maintenance arteries inside the walls.)

(Spirit Visor turns the world black and gold.)

(Spiritual corruption stains the facility like oil in holy water. It clings to the walls, hangs in the air, and seeps through the floor grates in poisonous ribbons.)

(Jay exhales slowly.)

JAY
This place is alive.

NAOMI
That's comforting.

(Ezek winces.)

(Naomi catches it instantly.)

NAOMI
You're hit.

EZEK
I'm fine.

NAOMI
You're bleeding.

EZEK
I said I'm fi—

(She grabs him, pulls him against the wall, and tears open a field wrap.)

NAOMI
Shut up.

(She binds the wound fast.)

EZEK
You tie these too tight.

NAOMI
You always say that.

EZEK
Because you always do.

(She tightens it harder.)

EZEK
Okay. Yeah. Worse.

(A small pause.)

(Her hands slow for one second.)

NAOMI
He used to say the same thing.

(Ezek goes still.)

EZEK
Yeah.

NAOMI
You're starting to sound like him.

(That lands deeper than he wants it to.)

EZEK
I don't know if that's a good thing.

NAOMI
It is.

(A beat.)

NAOMI
Just don't end the same way.

EZEK
Where is your head at with him?

(Jay glances back once.)
(He says nothing.)

NAOMI
I trust him. We got too far to start second guessing.

EZEK
Well at least your level headed. I think he is terrifying.

(Jay heard all of it.)

NAOMI

You walking or dying back there?

EZEK

Depends how tight you tied it.

(Jay lowers his hand and moves on.)

(The Remnant follow him deeper into the tunnel.)

57. INT. FACILITY MAINTENANCE CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(The corruption intensifies.)

(Scripture plates line the walls, steel panels bolted over concrete.)

(Every verse has been defiled.)

(Some are charred black.)

(Some clawed apart.)

(Others gouged through and rewritten in demonic script.)

(Ezek stops beside one.)

EZEK

Bastards.

(Jay steps beside him.)

(His fingers trace the ruined steel.)

PSALM 23

(The verse has been scratched apart.)

JAY

Trophies.

(Beat.)

JAY

These came from other compounds.

(The corridor lights flicker.)

(The temperature drops hard.)

(The Remnant freeze as a whisper enters the tunnel, not through speakers or vents, but directly into their skulls.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You finally arrived.

(The voice comes again, closer now. Softer. Personal.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

Child of Elohim.

(Jay's visor flickers violently.)

**SPIRIT VISOR: MASSIVE SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY DETECTED
SOURCE: DEEP FACILITY CORE**

(Jay keeps walking.)

JAY

Ignore it.

NAOMI

That thing's in our heads.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

It knows you.

JAY

Good.

NAOMI

That's your answer?

JAY

If it wanted us dead, we'd be dead.

(A beat.)

JAY

It wants to be heard.

(Naomi looks at him.)

(Not reassured.)

(Only more certain that whatever is inside him is being provoked on purpose.)

(The Remnant move again.)

(The whispers follow.)

—

58. INT. SECURITY CROSSWAY — NIGHT

(The corridor opens into a four-way intersection suspended above a vast vertical chamber.)

(Metal catwalks stretch across the void toward darkness below.)

(Jay switches to thermal.)

(Heat signatures crawl through the lower levels.)

(Hundreds.)

EZEK

Prisoners?

(Jay zooms in.)

(The shapes twitch with jerking unnatural speed.)

(Too fast.)

(Too wrong.)

JAY

No.

NAOMI

Then what are they?

(The shapes move again.)

(Some crawl upside down along the walls.)

(Some cling to pipes and support beams like insects nesting inside a carcass.)

JAY

Quiet movement only.

(Beat.)

JAY

Low-wave response does not trigger unless we split.

(Naomi looks across the catwalk pattern, then back at the team.)

NAOMI

Then nobody freelances.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Nobody gets brave.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

You lose sight of the person in front of you, you shout.

(The others nod.)

(That is command.)

(Not posture.)

(The team steps onto the catwalk.)

(Every footfall reverberates into the abyss.)

(Something below notices.)

(A hiss rises out of the dark, long, wet, hungry.)

(Nothing attacks.)

(Not yet.)

(The Remnant continue.)

—

59. INT. OBSERVATION CHAMBER — NIGHT

(A compact monitoring room lined with broken monitors.)

(Security feeds flicker across cracked screens in static bursts: hallways, holding rooms, elevator shafts, bio-labs, transfer wings.)

(The footage is infected.)

(Then suddenly every screen synchronizes.)

(Static clears.)

(A figure appears.)

(Perfect.)

(Angelic.)

(Radiant with impossible beauty.)

(Less like a projection than a memory of Heaven rewritten by disease.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You came so far.

NAOMI

Don't listen to it.

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You seek a child.

(Jay's breathing sharpens behind the visor.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

Would you like to see her?

JAY

No.

(The figure tilts its head, smiling gently.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You are lying.

(All screens cut to black.)

(The room goes silent.)

(Only Jay's breathing remains.)

(Then he turns and walks out.)

(Naomi watches him go.)

(She does not call after him.)

(Because she already knows that answer cost him something.)

—

60. INT. SERVICE PASSAGE — NIGHT

(The team moves through a narrower corridor.)

(The air has changed.)

(Heavier.)

(Closer.)

(As if the facility has drawn around them.)

(The Angel Engine is no longer watching from a distance.)

(It is testing them.)

(Jay's visor flickers.)

(Thermal catches a new heat signature ahead.)

(Small.)

(Standing in the middle of the corridor.)

(Jay raises his weapon.)

JAY

Hold.

(The Remnant freeze.)

(The figure steps forward.)

(Small.)

(Fragile.)

(A child.)

(Jay stops breathing.)

“OPHIA”

Daddy?

(The whole team goes still.)

NAOMI

Ghost?

(The little girl steps closer, trembling, tears in her eyes.)

“OPHIA”

I knew you’d come.

(Jay lowers the barrel slightly.)

(The corridor narrows around him.)

(Sound falls away.)

JAY

Baby?

(She smiles through tears.)

“OPHIA”

You took so long.

(Jay takes one step forward.)

(Then his visor flashes.)

**WARNING! WARNING!
SPIRITUAL ANOMALY DETECTED!**

(Jay freezes and switches modes.)

SPIRIT VISOR ACTIVE

(The illusion shatters.)

(The child’s aura glitches violently.)

(Gold.)

(Black.)

(Gold.)

(Black.)

(Then the truth stabilizes.)

(Shape.)

(Voice.)

(Memory patterns.)

(Facial accuracy.)

(But no soul.)

(Jay's breathing turns cold.)

JAY

You're not her.

(The smile stretches too wide.)

"OPHIA"

But you wanted it to be.

(A step closer.)

"OPHIA"

I can be anything you want, Daddy...

(Her voice lowers, mockingly sweet.)

"OPHIA"

I love you.

(A beat.)

"OPHIA"

I love you more than Jesus Himself.

(Jay hits her hard.)

(The body slams into the wall, lands badly, rises worse.)

(Skin splits as something underneath tears through the human costume.)

(Bones snap.)

(Arms lengthen.)

(Shoulders dislocate and reset.)

(The head twists sideways, then peels apart.)

SHAPESHIFTER

You still miss her...

(Beat.)

SHAPESHIFTER

Ghost of Ashes...

(Jay's rage detonates.)

(Mantis blades scream from his forearms.)

JAY

You wore her face.

(He moves.)

(One strike.)

(The blade tears through the creature, splitting it open.)

(It falls in two twitching halves.)

(Jay draws the Beowulf and empties it one-handed into the corpse.)

(.50 caliber rounds turn flesh into pulp.)

(The corridor erupts in thunder.)

(The Remnant flinch back, shielding their faces from the spray.)

(Black blood floods the walls.)

(Teeth scatter across the floor.)

(What remains twitches once, then stops.)

(Jay stands over the ruin, breathing hard.)

(Fury pours off him like heat.)

NAOMI
Ghost...

(Jay turns.)

(His voice is cold enough to cut steel.)

JAY
Keep moving.

(The team advances.)

(But Naomi watches him a second longer.)

(Because this is no longer just grief.)

(It is grief being studied.)

(Used.)

(The facility feels different now.)

(The game is over.)

—

61. INT. FACILITY SECURITY GRID — NIGHT

(Deep inside the facility, the Angel Engine watches.)

(The shredded shapeshifter flickers across cracked monitors: pulp, teeth, black ruin.)

(For a moment, the machine says nothing.)

(It studies the violence.)

(It studies the precision.)

(It studies Jay.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

Interesting.

(Then the facility reacts.)

(Red lights ignite.)

(Alarms begin to pulse.)

(Sirens erupt through the corridors.)

(The walls answer with trembling metal and distant movement.)

(The hunt begins.)

—

62. INT. MAIN ACCESS CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(The Remnant freeze as the alarms explode through the facility.)

EZEK

Damn it, Ghost.

(Beat.)

EZEK

Nice work.

(Jay chambers his rifle.)

JAY

We were made the second we walked in.

(He steps forward.)

JAY

I was getting tired of sneaking.

(Beneath them, something starts crawling up the walls.)

(Then more.)

(Then hundreds of mutated shapes begin closing in.)

(Jay moves to the front.)

JAY

Formation.

(The Remnant snap into position and raise their weapons.)

(Naomi checks both flanks, counts angles, then starts assigning lanes immediately.)

NAOMI

Left side with me.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Zeke, rear checks every five seconds.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Nobody burns a mag on panic.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Make them earn every step.

(The corridor ahead fills with motion.)

(War is no longer coming.)

(It is here.)

—

63. INT. MAIN ACCESS CORRIDOR — CONTINUOUS

(Sirens scream.)

(Red lights flash like a living heartbeat.)

(The floor trembles.)

(Something is approaching from everywhere at once.)

(Jay switches visor modes.)

THERMAL ACTIVE

(Hundreds of signatures flood the display.)

(Some crawl along the walls.)

(Some move through ceiling vents.)

(Some drag themselves low across the floor.)

(None move like humans anymore.)

JAY

Contact.

(The first creature emerges.)

(It used to be human.)

(Its rib cage has unfolded outward like a skeletal flower.)

(Bone blades protrude from its spine.)

(Its jaw hangs half sideways.)

(It screams.)

NAOMI

Open fire!

(The Remnant unleash hell down the corridor.)

(Gunfire detonates.)

(Bullets tear into the first wave.)

(Black blood splashes the walls.)

(One mutant keeps crawling after half its body is gone.)

EZEK

Head shots!

(Jay steps into the line of fire.)

(The MP5 roars.)

(Three tight bursts.)

(Three monsters drop.)

(More climb over them instantly.)

(Dozens.)

(Jay slings the MP5, draws the Beowulf, and fires the underslung launcher.)

THUMP.

(The grenade lands in the center mass.)

(Flame fills the corridor.)

(Bodies explode against the walls.)

(Bone fragments and burning flesh rain back through smoke.)

(The Remnant keep firing.)

(Tight.)

(Disciplined.)

(Relentless.)

(The horde keeps coming.)

—

64. INT. LOWER SHAFT ACCESS — NIGHT

(The corridor widens into a lower shaft junction.)

(The creatures adapt immediately.)

(Some climb the walls.)

(One launches to the ceiling and vanishes.)

(Active camouflage.)

EZEK

Above!

(Beat.)

EZEK

Camo!

(Jay switches instantly.)

ECHO VISOR ACTIVE

(The ceiling becomes a black digital lattice traced in white sound-lines.)

(Six shapes move through the ventilation shaft above.)

JAY

Vents.

(Jay raises the anti-materiel rifle.)

KRA-KOOM.

(The ceiling explodes.)

(Concrete rains down.)

(Hidden creatures crash through debris.)

(One bursts free and launches straight at Jay.)

(His Echo Visor flashes the silhouette a split second early.)

(Jay catches it by the throat mid-leap.)

(His forearm twists.)

(The mantis blade fires like a spear through its skull.)

(The camouflage fails mid-death.)

(The corpse slides down the blade.)

(Black blood splashes his visor.)

(Jay does not blink.)

(He throws the body aside and keeps moving.)

SOLDIER 1

Left flank!

(Two mutants burst through a maintenance door.)

(Naomi drops the first.)

(The second leaps at her.)

(Jay's mantis blade flashes once.)

(The creature splits in half in mid-air.)

(He does not even look at it.)

(Like a tank with a soul.)

(Naomi does look.)

(Not at the kill.)

(At Jay.)

(At how much of him is disappearing into function.)

65. INT. FACILITY CONTROL HALL — NIGHT

(The team pushes into another corridor.)

(Here the facility is fully changing.)

(The walls are industrial and biological at once.)

(Veins of black metal snake through the architecture like an invasive living organism.)

(The structure is becoming the engine.)

(The whispers return.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)
You are killing my children.

(A beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)
The children of the Morning Star.

(Above them, a portal bursts open.)

(A spear descends like a meteor and crashes into the chamber floor beside Jay.)

(The ground shatters outward.)

(MALACHI steps out of the rupture, towering, armor gleaming like polished obsidian, eyes amused, studying Jay like an unfinished argument.)

MALACHI
And here I thought you'd miss me.

(The Remnant tighten instantly.)

NAOMI
That's him.

EZEK
Titan of Ash.

(Malachi hears it and smirks.)

MALACHI

I prefer the title.

(Jay does not answer.)

(The floor around the spear cracks.)

(Then the spear twists, retracts, and becomes a demonic halberd in Malachi's hand.)

(Malachi looks at the dead creatures, the blood, the broken corridor.)

MALACHI

You've been busy.

JAY

You should leave.

(Malachi laughs softly.)

MALACHI

No.

(He tilts his head at Jay.)

MALACHI

You're carrying something new.

(Jay's sigils flare.)

(Malachi's smile sharpens.)

MALACHI

Good.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

Maybe now this gets interesting.

(The horde still writhes through the side corridors.)

(The facility still screams.)

(But for one locked instant, the war narrows to the two of them.)

—

66. INT. FACILITY CONTROL HALL — FIRST IMPACT

(Jay strips off the heavier rifle and lets it hit the floor.)

(Malachi rolls his shoulders once.)

MALACHI

That's more like it.

(They collide.)

(Not a punch.)

(A detonation.)

(The shockwave cracks the floor and sends pressure rolling across the corridor.)

(Pillars buckle.)

(Mutants nearest the impact burst apart.)

(Naomi shields the team as debris rains down.)

NAOMI

Down!

(Malachi answers instantly.)

(The halberd flashes.)

(The blade carves across Jay's chest.)

(Sparks spray.)

(Blood follows.)

(Jay does not stop.)

(He grabs Malachi by the armor and drives him backward through a reinforced pillar.)

(The whole column collapses.)

(Metal and stone rain through the chamber.)

MALACHI
You're angry.

JAY
Yes.

(Malachi smirks through the wreckage.)

MALACHI
Good.

(They collide again.)

(Harder.)

(Faster.)

(The floor plates buckle.)

(Containment supports groan.)

(Above them, Ramiel's tendrils begin to move with renewed purpose.)

(The real battle has begun.)

—

67. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER APPROACH — NIGHT

(The fight tears them through the corridor and into a colossal chamber.)

(At its center stands the Angel Engine, still cloaked in angelic architecture.)

(Massive wings of layered metal extend in silent majesty.)

(The containment chamber is stadium-sized.)

(Generators, pylons, cables, and wet strands of living flesh converge on the figure at the center like worship around a false god.)

(The Remnant spread into combat positions.)

NAOMI

That's the Engine.

EZEK

It's bigger than we thought.

(Jay steps forward, bleeding.)

(The Angel Engine activates.)

(Lights ignite in widening rings.)

(The wings hum.)

(The floor vibrates.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You came.

(Jay says nothing.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You seek destruction.

JAY

I seek justice.

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

No.

(A beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You seek your child.

(The chamber darkens slightly.)

(The voice grows softer. Closer. Intimate.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

How much longer will you cling to what has already been taken?

(Beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

Surrender.

(Beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

Live forever.

(Beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

Live in me.

(Naomi looks at Jay.)

NAOMI

Don't listen.

(The machine begins opening.)

(The angelic plating cracks apart.)

(Something beneath it shifts.)

(Wet.)

(Organic.)

(Alive.)

(Malachi spins the halberd once.)

MALACHI

Still dramatic.

(Jay turns fully toward him.)

JAY

Malachi.

NAOMI

Ghost—

JAY

Stay back.

(Malachi smiles.)

MALACHI

You still carry little guns and little scriptures.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

I brought something sharper.

(Jay cracks his knuckles.)

(The Solomon sigils ignite.)

JAY

Shut up.

(Silence.)

(The Angel Engine hums harder.)

(Malachi grins.)

(The Remnant tighten formation.)

(One machine.)

(Two monsters.)

(And war at the threshold.)

—

68. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — THE HORDE AWAKENS

(The containment chambers surrounding the core erupt in sequence.)

(Glass tubes shatter.)

(Fluid floods the floor.)

(Bodies spill out—some lifeless, some still alive, some transforming as they fall.)

(One corpse crashes down beside Naomi.)

(It jerks.)

(Then its rib cage unfolds outward like a flower of bone.)

NAOMI

Contact!

(The chamber erupts into total violence.)

(The Remnant unleash disciplined fire into the first wave.)

(Muzzle flashes strobe across steel, glass, blood.)

(Mutated creatures spill out from every direction: human, demonic, hybrid, and worse.)

(Some crawl on too many limbs.)

(Others drag themselves forward with split torsos and reversed joints.)

(Some still wear restraint gear and surgical tags.)

EZEK

Core defense!

(The team holds formation.)

(Breathing short.)

(Kills fast.)

(One creature takes three rounds to the throat before collapsing.)

(Another loses half its skull and still claws forward.)

(Naomi sweeps left, dropping two more.)

(Ezek pivots rearward into another wave.)

(Above them, shattered containment frames swing loose like broken chandeliers.)

(At center, Jay and Malachi continue fighting through all of it as if the battlefield around them is incidental.)

(Jay drives a punch into Malachi's chest and sends him through a swarm of mutants.)

(Bodies explode against the wall.)

(Malachi answers with the halberd, releasing a shockwave of black force that slices a line through the horde.)

(Bodies come apart in strips.)

(Ramiel watches.)

(The tendrils writhe.)

(The embedded faces scream.)

(The chamber becomes a hurricane of gunfire, mutant shrieks, halberd shockwaves, Jay's fists, and the machine's pulse.)

(This no longer resembles a tactical engagement.)

(It is a storm around two monsters.)

—

69. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — REALITY BREAKS

(Malachi slides backward across the blood-slick floor, plants one foot, stops, and raises one hand.)

(The shadows around him bend, not like darkness moving, but like space remembering it can fold.)

(Jay stalks forward.)

MALACHI

Not here, Ghost.

(A faint smile.)

MALACHI

We deserve somewhere grand.

(He clenches his hand.)

(Reality folds inward.)

(The air warps.)

(The chamber bends.)

(Light distorts.)

(Sound drags.)

(The whole space screams.)

(A dimensional rupture opens around Malachi.)

(Jay does not hesitate.)

(He lunges, grabs Malachi mid-transition, and both vanish as the rupture tears wide.)

(The shockwave collapses the surrounding air and vaporizes the nearest creatures.)

(The Remnant stagger beneath the pressure wave.)

(Glass detonates.)

(Loose steel buckles.)

(The chamber falls into a stunned half-second of silence.)

(Naomi stares up at the rippling wound in space.)

NAOMI

Where did they go?

(Ezek, still aiming into smoke, blinks once.)

EZEK

That was... pretty cool.

(Then the next wave screams in from the side corridor.)

(The war below continues.)

—

70. INT. DIMENSIONAL COLLISION / MULTIPLE REALITIES — NIGHT

(Jay and Malachi reappear above the battlefield, but not completely.)

(They flicker between dimensions, half in one world and half in another.)

(Every collision tears space.)

(Every impact punches through worlds not meant to touch.)

(They smash through alternate realms in violent flashes—a glass desert, an inverted cathedral, a prism lattice beyond human comprehension.)

(One moment they are silhouettes suspended over the core chamber.)

(The next they are gone.)

(Each reentry sends dimensional shockwaves back into the real battlefield below.)

(Mutants caught beneath those pressure waves implode instantly.)

(Catwalks split.)

(Pillars crack.)

(The Remnant glance upward between bursts of gunfire and see pieces of the impossible: a black sun, floating pews, crystal mountains, angelic observers standing at impossible distances.)

(Then the images vanish.)

(The fight above is shaping the battle below.)

—

71. INT. DIMENSION ONE — GLASS WASTELAND

(A dead crystalline desert under a black sun.)

(Jay and Malachi crash into the glass hard enough to fracture miles of terrain.)

(Shards blast into the air like a storm of knives.)

(Jay is already moving.)

(Malachi rises from the crater and looks at him.)

(For the first time, he is not amused.)

MALACHI

You're unstable.

(Jay answers with a roar.)

(Not language.)

(Not strategy.)

(Pure rage.)

JAY

RAAAGGHHHHH!!!

(He charges.)

(Each step shatters the crystalline earth.)

(He hits Malachi with the force of artillery.)

(Both bodies tumble through the glass in a storm of fractured light.)

(Malachi blocks one strike.)

(The second crushes part of his shoulder plate.)

(Jay does not relent.)

(Malachi finally casts shadow.)

(Darkness spreads unnaturally across the glass.)

(The dimension itself begins to split.)

(And the fight is ripped elsewhere.)

—

72. INT. DIMENSION TWO — INVERTED CATHEDRAL

(Gravity twists sideways.)

(A cathedral floats broken in impossible orientation.)

(Pews drift like wreckage underwater.)

(Stone arches hang above and below at once.)

(Human faces in the walls whisper reversed scripture.)

(Jay and Malachi smash through floating stone benches.)

(Malachi regains footing first, sliding across a wall that has become floor.)

(Jay launches at him again.)

(Not elegant.)

(Not tactical.)

(The Solomon sigils on Jay's cybernetic arms ignite.)

(Spirit chains burst into existence around his forearms, golden links of scripture lashing outward like whips.)

(Every strike screams through the air.)

(Malachi blocks the first.)

(The second glances off his halberd.)

(The third wraps around the shaft and tears sparks from it.)

(The fourth catches him across the chest and sends him crashing through an upside-down altar.)

(Stone detonates around him.)

(The dimension shudders.)

(The seams split.)

(Shockwaves reverberate back into the real chamber.)

(Below, the Remnant look up in awe as the fight tears reality apart overhead.)

(Creatures caught beneath the aftershocks are obliterated.)

NAOMI

He's losing it.

EZEK

No.

(A beat.)

EZEK

He already lost it.

(Above them, Jay no longer fights like a soldier.)

(He fights like an animal.)

(Malachi tries to create distance.)

(Jay refuses.)

(He drags the chains back and hurls himself across the inverted nave again.)

(Malachi barely raises the halberd in time.)

(The impact folds a whole wall inward.)

(Another wave of creatures rushes the Remnant below.)

(Naomi notices first.)

NAOMI

Move!

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Use the seam!

(Ezek sees it.)

(Every time Jay and Malachi slam through a rupture, they clear corridors in the real world.)

EZEK

Stay behind their trail!

(The team moves, timing their advance between dimensional shockwaves.)

(It is insane.)

(It works.)

—

73. INT. DIMENSION THREE — THE PRISM REALM

(A crystal lattice stretches infinitely in every direction.)

(Prism mountains rise like impossible geometry.)

(The sky is not sky but radiant hostility.)

(Angelic observers stand at impossible distances behind the crystal walls.)

(Jay drives Malachi through one prism face.)

(The lattice shatters and a mile-long fracture races through the realm.)

(Malachi stumbles back, bleeding now, armor broken, breath ragged.)

(For the first time in a very long time, he looks like a man who might actually die.)

(The sigils on Jay's knuckles burn brighter.)

(Gold fire floods both cybernetic arms.)

(A hidden resonance of the Mark of the Beast answers inside Malachi from beneath his armor.)

(Black energy pulses outward in sick waves.)

(The crystal realm fractures wider beneath the conflict.)

(Malachi retreats another step.)

(Jay has surpassed him.)

(Malachi throws his head back and roars into the impossible distance.)

MALACHI
I WILL NOT DIE TODAY!

(Beat.)

MALACHI
I REFUSE!

(He spreads both arms wide.)

(Darkness condenses between his hands.)

MALACHI
Satan gives me strength!

(Beat.)

MALACHI
Witness, sons of God—

(Beat.)

MALACHI

—as I destroy your weapon!

(Jay says nothing.)

(Blood down his sides.)

(Eyes wild.)

(Malachi raises both hands higher.)

(Prism structures begin collapsing inward.)

(Gravity warps.)

(Matter compresses.)

(Light distorts around a growing sphere between his palms.)

(The DARK MATTER BOMB.)

(Space distorts violently around it.)

(Stars appear inside the sphere like a dying universe.)

(The orb expands.)

(Gravity drags the realm toward it.)

(Malachi screams through the distortion.)

MALACHI

DARK ART: GATES OF HELL!!!

(He hurls it.)

(The sphere does not move through distance.)

(It consumes it.)

(Jay does not dodge.)

(He charges it.)

(Full berserker state.)

(The sigils on both arms ignite beyond anything they have reached before.)

(Gold fire roars up through his shoulders.)

(He slams both hands into the sphere.)

(Gravity crushes inward.)

(His armor shatters.)

(Blood pours down both arms.)

(Spine servos scream.)

(But he pushes.)

JAY

I WILL NOT LET YOU DESTROY MY WORLD!

(Solomon's seals activate in sequence.)

(Sacred geometry erupts from his fists.)

(Gold equations carve across the black sphere.)

(The dark mass fractures like black glass.)

(Then implodes.)

(The energy detonates across the Prism Realm.)

(A dimensional shockwave tears the lattice apart.)

(Malachi is blown backward.)

(The dimension begins to disintegrate.)

(Jay torpedoes through the blast wave—and Malachi, half broken and half instinct, lashes out once with a mantis blade of shadow.)

(It drives clean through Jay's gut.)

(For the first time, he is truly wounded.)

(The whole realm fractures around them and throws them back toward the real world.)

—

74. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — NIGHT

(Back in the core chamber, the Angel Engine unfurls completely.)

(The false angelic disguise peels away in sections of screaming metal and tearing flesh.)

(Beneath it, the true structure reveals itself in full.)

(Hundreds of eyes open simultaneously.)

(Some are human.)

(Some are not.)

(All are awake.)

(The machine speaks again.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

Your plans were never your own.

(A beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

You were tools in the hands of a caged and feeble mind.

(A beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

In this place—

(Beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

—I am sanctuary.

(The Remnant bolt across the chamber using the paths Jay and Malachi accidentally cleared through dimensional violence.)

(Naomi fires into a charging mutant while moving.)

(Ezek looks up at the exposed neural structure.)

(His eyes widen.)

EZEK

Wait.

NAOMI

What?

(Ezek raises his arm.)

(The Mark of Cain burns across his skin.)

(It answers the core.)

(Gold against corruption.)

EZEK

The Mark.

(He steps closer, realization coming hard and fast.)

EZEK

This thing is built from corrupted will.

(Beat.)

EZEK

The mark resists corruption if it stays clean.

(Naomi stares at him, already understanding where this is going.)

NAOMI

Zeke?

EZEK

I know what can kill it.

NAOMI

How?

(A beat.)

NAOMI

No!

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Don't you dare!

(Ezek's gaze stays fixed on the core.)

(The world around him slows.)

(Gunfire muffles.)

(Screams recede.)

(He understands.)

(His face changes—not into fear, but acceptance.)

(He looks at Naomi.)

NAOMI

Don't...

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Don't look at me like that.

(Above them, reality tears open once more.)

(Jay and Malachi crash back into the chamber.)

75. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — NIGHT

(The battlefield is complete chaos.)

(Remnant gunfire.)

(Mutant shrieks.)

(Falling steel.)

(Exploding conduits.)

(Ezek's possible sacrifice hanging in the air.)

(Then Jay and Malachi slam back into the floor hard enough to crater the steel beneath them.)

(The shockwave vaporizes the nearest monsters.)

(Malachi rises first, staggering.)

(His armor is cracked open.)

(His breathing is uneven.)

(His confidence is broken.)

(Then Jay stands.)

(He is heavily bleeding.)

(Armor hanging off him.)

(Blood down both arms and from the wound in his gut.)

(But his eyes burn.)

(Not with mere anger.)

(With something older.)

(Malachi looks at him and, for the first time since the fight began, sounds genuinely afraid.)

MALACHI

Damn you.

(Jay says nothing.)

(He attacks again.)

(Too fast for the eye.)

(Too fast for Malachi to process.)

(The first strike caves in Malachi's guard.)

(The second drives him through a curtain of hanging cables.)

(The third sends him skidding through twitching corpses.)

(The Remnant keep fighting around them.)

NAOMI

Keep pressure left!

(Ezek reloads and fires into another charging wave, but keeps flicking his eyes back to the core.)

(The Angel Engine writhes.)

(It feels control slipping.)

(Hundreds of eyes blink independently.)

(Tendrils descend from the ceiling.)

(The machine is no longer observing.)

(It is afraid.)

(Jay, half bleeding and half driven by grief, looks less like a man than an answer to a prayer the chamber never wanted spoken.)

—

76. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — BERSERKER

(Jay's movements change completely.)

(No longer tactical.)

(No longer measured.)

(Predatory.)

(Primal.)

(Every strike driven by grief and wrath beyond combat.)

(He grabs Malachi by the throat and lifts him clear off the ground.)

(Then throws him through a reinforced wall.)

(Steel crumbles like paper.)

(Malachi crashes into a field of ruptured cables and broken plating.)

(He tries to vanish again.)

(Shadow folds around him.)

(Jay catches him mid-transition.)

(One hand locks onto his armor before reality can take him.)

(Jay drags him back out and slams him into the floor.)

(The impact collapses part of the ceiling.)

(Mutants caught in the shockwave are pulverized.)

(The Remnant duck as debris blasts across the battlefield.)

(Malachi tries to rise.)

(Jay is already on him.)

(One punch breaks guard.)

(A second shatters shoulder plate.)

(Metal explodes outward.)

(Malachi staggers back.)

(Fear appears in his eyes, real fear, the kind that only comes when immortality begins to feel temporary.)

(He tries to speak.)

MALACHI

Ghost—

(A beat, more desperate.)

MALACHI

Jay!...

(Jay keeps advancing.)

(Eyes locked.)

(Voice low.)

(Broken.)

JAY

Wore her face...

(He punches Malachi again.)

(The blow lifts him off his feet and drives him through another support brace.)

(The chamber shakes.)

(Ramiel convulses in the background.)

(The Remnant continue fighting for their lives.)

(At the center, this is no longer a battle.)

(It is a mauling.)

(Jay stalks forward through smoke, black blood, and sparks.)

(His armor and clothing are torn to ruin.)

(He rips what remains off, revealing heavy scars and old bullet wounds.)

(His hair hangs loose now.)

(Malachi tries to stand again.)

(For the first time in all his centuries of violence—)

(He looks like prey.)

—

77. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — THE PARASITE

(Jay reaches him and grabs him by the front of his armor, lifting him clear off the ground.)

(Their faces are inches apart.)

(Malachi's breath is ragged.)

(Jay's is worse.)

(His voice comes out like glass dragged over stone.)

JAY

Say her name.

(Malachi says nothing.)

(Jay slams him backward into the exposed neural structure of the Angel Engine.)

(Tendrils rupture.)

(Wet cords of metal and nerve burst apart.)

(The machine screams through the psychic network.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)
STOP!

(Jay ignores it.)

(He drives Malachi deeper into the structure.)

(His cybernetic hand punches through armor.)

(Then flesh.)

(Then bone.)

(Time slows.)

(Inside Malachi's body, something is wrapped around his heart.)

(A parasite.)

(Black.)

(Gold.)

(Red.)

(Crowned around his chest like blasphemous royalty.)

(The Mark of the Beast.)

(Malachi's eyes go wide.)

MALACHI
NO!

(A beat, panicked now.)

MALACHI
JAY DON'T!

(Jay roars.)

JAY
ENTROPY!!!

(The Solomon sigils ignite.)

(Sacred geometry erupts across both arms.)

(Golden patterns race over flesh and metal alike as Jay rips the parasite free.)

(The chamber trembles violently.)

(The parasite shrieks with a thousand layered hungry voices.)

(It thrashes in his grip, tendrils whipping in search of a new host.)

(The Angel Engine convulses in agony as the covenant is torn loose.)

(Jay cries out so primal it silences the battlefield for half a breath.)

(Then the parasite moves.)

(It crawls up his arm fast.)

(Jay tries to tear it off.)

(It wraps wrist, elbow, chest—)

(and slams into him.)

(His body arches backward.)

(The sigils on his arms invert.)

(One symbol twists and burns permanently black into the golden system.)

(A surge of raw cosmic power floods through him.)

(Too much.)

(Too violent.)

(Too fast to comprehend.)

(Jay stumbles.)

(Barely holds himself together.)

(Malachi collapses to the floor, weakened, bleeding, mortal for the first time in centuries.)

(He stares up in disbelief.)

MALACHI
Impossible...

(A beat.)

MALACHI
He chose you.

(Jay does not answer.)

(He is too busy surviving what is now inside him.)

(His chest rises and falls in ragged bursts.)

(Black veins crawl beneath his skin.)

(Gold fire answers them.)

(The war inside him has begun.)

—

78. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — EZEK'S DECISION

(The Angel Engine convulses violently.)

(Tendrils lash blindly.)

(Mutant creatures go feral.)

(Whatever held them together is failing.)

(The machine senses the Mark of Cain.)

(And turns toward it.)

(Ezek sees the opening.)

(His voice is quiet but absolute.)

EZEK

Now.

(Naomi turns immediately and sees where he is looking, what he means to do.)

NAOMI

Zeke, stop.

(Ezek steps toward the exposed neural core.)

(Gunfire still crashes around them.)

(Black blood floods the metal floor.)

(The chamber screams.)

(But his path becomes strangely clear.)

(He turns to Naomi.)

NAOMI

No.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

No, no, no—

(She grabs his arm.)

NAOMI

You do not get to do this.

EZEK

I have to.

NAOMI

There has to be another way.

EZEK

There isn't.

NAOMI

You don't know that.

EZEK

I do.

(A beat.)

NAOMI

Zeke...

(His face softens.)

EZEK

You were always stronger than me.

NAOMI

That's not true.

EZEK

It is.

(A beat.)

EZEK

You just never had to prove it.

(Her eyes fill.)

NAOMI

Please don't do this.

(Ezek steps closer and presses his forehead to hers.)

(Not romantic.)

(Family.)

(Home.)

EZEK

You will.

(She breaks.)

NAOMI

Don't leave me.

(Ezek closes his eyes for one breath.)

EZEK

I'm not leaving you.

(A beat.)

EZEK

I'm leaving it with you.

(Then the old line returns through him like inheritance.)

EZEK

The war will outlive us.

(A beat.)

EZEK

But God always leaves someone behind.

(The machine focuses on him.)

(Tendrils snap toward him from every direction.)

(Naomi runs for him.)

NAOMI

ZEKE!

(Ezek raises his arm.)

(The Mark of Cain burns gold.)

(Pure.)

(Steady.)

(The tendrils seize him, wrapping torso, arms, throat, lifting him half off the floor.)

(Naomi screams.)

NAOMI
EZEK! NOOOO!

(Ezek closes his eyes.)

(And in that instant, he is no longer afraid.)

EZEK
Forgive me, Naomi.

(Grace erupts.)

(Not fire.)

(Not force.)

(Grace.)

(Gold light bursts through the circuitry, racing from his arm into the neural lattice, into the cables, into the living architecture.)

(The Angel Engine roars in agony.)

(Its voices fracture.)

(Its thoughts split.)

(The neural structure begins collapsing inward as if corruption has finally met the one thing it cannot digest.)

(Naomi falls to her knees, reaching for him.)

(The light swallows him.)

(The machine begins to die.)

—

79. EXT. UPPER ATMOSPHERE / EARTH ORBIT THRESHOLD — NIGHT

(Jay turns.)

(The chamber is collapsing.)

(Ramiel is screaming.)

(Ezek is disappearing in gold.)

(Malachi is still breathing.)

(That is enough.)

(Jay grabs Malachi again, not ceremonially, but like judgment grabbing what remains, and launches upward straight through the ceiling.)

(Concrete explodes outward.)

(Steel beams twist like wire.)

(The chamber opens above them in a column of ruin and fire as both bodies rocket into the night.)

(They rise faster.)

(Higher.)

(The atmosphere begins to ignite around them.)

(Clouds split.)

(Fire wraps their bodies.)

(Below them, the facility collapses into itself.)

(The Earth curves beneath them.)

(For one impossible climb, war gives way to scale.)

(Malachi struggles weakly in Jay's grip.)

(His strength is almost gone.)

MALACHI

Ja—Jay...

(A beat.)

(More human now.)

MALACHI

Please stop...

(Jay does not look at him.)

JAY

Her face...

(They reach the edge of space.)

(The fire falls away.)

(The world goes silent.)

(Below them, a dead Earth turns in scarred beauty.)

(Malachi sees it.)

(Really sees it.)

(No throne.)

(No fortress.)

(No battlefield.)

(Just creation.)

(A tear slips from his eye.)

(Jay hangs there with him for one suspended second.)

(The silence is complete.)

(Then Jay dives.)

(He drives them both back toward the world like falling judgment.)

—

80. EXT. UPPER ATMOSPHERE DESCENT — NIGHT

(Jay and Malachi descend like a burning comet.)

(Atmosphere ignites around them.)

(Fire wraps their bodies in a screaming sheath of orange, white, and violent gold.)

(Below, the Earth rises fast.)

(Broken land.)

(Blackened mountains.)

(A world that has suffered too much and is about to suffer one wound more.)

(Malachi barely struggles now.)

(Jay does not loosen his grip.)

(Below them, the Angel Engine facility is collapsing.)

(Ezek's sacrifice spreads like holy contamination through the system.)

(Golden fractures race through black circuitry.)

(Neural tissue convulses.)

(Cables snap.)

(Embedded faces scream.)

(The Angel Engine's voice, once omniscient, is now shattered.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

No—

(A beat.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

No, no, no—

(Then louder.)

ANGEL ENGINE (V.O.)

THIS BODY IS SANCTUARY!

(The system answers with failure.)

CORE INSTABILITY CASCADE

NEURAL BREACH CRITICAL

TOTAL COLLAPSE IMMINENT

(The structure destabilizes from root to crown.)

(It is no longer defending itself.)

(It is dying.)

(Above it all, Jay and Malachi continue falling.)

(A streak of wrath from the upper atmosphere.)

—

81. INT. ANGEL ENGINE CORE CHAMBER — ARCHANGEL INTERVENTION

(Inside the collapsing chamber, the last of the Remnant are still fighting to survive.)

(The battlefield is pure ruin: falling steel, screaming mutants, exploding conduits, the light of Ezek's sacrifice burning through the system like judgment through infected flesh.)

(Naomi turns in place, searching through smoke and fire.)

NAOMI

Zeke!

(No answer.)

(Only collapse.)

(Then a new light enters the chamber.)

(Not electrical.)

(Not explosive.)

(Holy.)

(Gabriel appears in the middle of the ruin, golden wings spread wide.)

(His presence does not enter the chaos.)

(It overrules it.)

(The room bends around him.)

(Fire pulls backward.)

(Falling debris slows for half a breath as matter remembers order.)

(Raphael appears beside him, spear blazing, halo lit, his stillness sharper than violence.)

(The remaining Remnant stare in shock.)

(Some lower their weapons without meaning to.)

(Some fall to one knee.)

(Some are too stunned to speak.)

(Naomi manages half a sentence.)

NAOMI

What—?!!

(Gabriel raises one hand.)

(Not violent.)

(Absolute.)

(The unfinished words die in her throat.)

GABRIEL

Move.

(And they do.)

(The order strikes bone before mind.)

(Bursts of light erupt around the Remnant.)

(One by one they vanish, teleported clear of the chamber in flashes of gold.)

(Naomi reaches instinctively toward the collapsing ruin one last time.)

(Then she too disappears.)

(Raphael remains only long enough to look once toward the dying core.)

(Toward the place where Ezek was taken by grace and machinefire.)

(His face hardens.)

(Then he vanishes beside Gabriel.)

(The facility continues to collapse without witnesses.)

(Only judgment remains.)

—

82. EXT. IMPACT SITE / ANGEL ENGINE FACILITY — NIGHT

(Jay and Malachi crash into the Earth.)

(The impact creates a crater hundreds of feet wide.)

(Not a collision.)

(A catastrophe.)

(The ground caves inward beneath them.)

(Stone vaporizes.)

(Shockwaves erupt outward in concentric rings of ash, fire, and broken earth.)

(Entire ridgelines split.)

(Glass and rock blast into the sky.)

(For one brief moment, the world becomes all light and force.)

(And at the exact same time, the Angel Engine detonates.)

(Deep below the surface, Ezek's sacrifice reaches final threshold.)

(The machine tears itself apart from within.)

(A nuclear-scale blast rips through the underground structure.)

(The earth above it bulges, cracks, erupts.)

(Light consumes the facility.)

(A pillar of burning ruin rises from the wound in the world like the wrath of a buried sun.)

(The underground detonation shockwave collides with the surface impact wave from Jay and Malachi's fall.)

(The two catastrophes merge.)

(For one apocalyptic breath, there is no distinction between battlefield and crater, machine and mountain, wrath and consequence.)

(Only annihilation.)

(Then—)

(Silence.)

—

83. EXT. IMPACT CRATER — AFTERMATH — NIGHT

(Ash drifts slowly across the crater.)

(The Angel Engine is gone.)

(The facility is gone.)

(Only molten earth, broken rock, and sacred silence remain.)

(Jay stands at the center of the devastation, breathing slowly.)

(Each inhale ragged.)

(Each exhale held together by will.)

(His armor is shattered.)

(His body is smeared with blood, soot, and cooling ash.)

(Beneath his skin, the Mark of the Beast pulses with a life of its own.)

(Black veins crawl across his arm like living cracks.)

(The new power is restless, whispering to him, demanding.)

(Behind him, Malachi barely moves, body twisted in the crater debris, cybernetics flickering weakly, breathing shallow.)

(From somewhere beneath Jay's skin, beneath thought and restraint, the Mark of the Beast whispers.)

VOICES:

Kill him.

End him.

Drink his soul.

(Jay closes his hand.)

(The whisper intensifies.)

(Black veins climb higher.)

(Then Jay raises his other hand.)

(The Mark of Cain ignites.)

(Not violently.)

(Gold floods his arm.)

(It does not destroy the black.)

(It overrides it.)

(For now.)

(The black veins recede.)

(The power remains.)

(So does his will.)

(Jay reaches into his belt and pulls out a stim.)

(He looks at Malachi, not with mercy, but with something harder—recognition.)

(He drops the stim beside him.)

(It lands in ash.)

JAY

That was for my daughter.

(A beat.)

JAY

You are not worth my hand.

(Malachi coughs blood, tries to rise, fails.)

(Jay turns away and starts walking into the ash.)

JAY

If you deserve to die, let it be from your injuries.

(Beat.)

JAY

Or take the medicine and live to fight me again.

(A beat.)

(Jay half-turns back.)

(Red ruin-light catches what remains of his face.)

JAY

I have not fought a real battle like that since I trained under Michael.

(A faint breath.)

(Almost a laugh.)

JAY

Be proud, Titan of Ash.

(A beat.)

(His voice hardens again.)

JAY

The next time I see you—

(He points two fingers at him like a gun.)

JAY

—I kill you.

(Malachi watches him vanish into the smoke.)

(Unable to answer.)

(Unable to look away.)

(Two marks now burn beneath Jay's skin: the Mark of Cain and the Mark of the Beast.)

(One gold.)

(One black.)

(Two covenants.)

(Two wars.)

(Neither resolved.)

(The ash keeps falling.)

(The crater keeps smoking.)

(The world keeps turning.)

END OF ACT VI

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT VII — THE QUIET CITY

FADE IN:

93. EXT. WASTELAND HIGHWAY — NIGHT

4 MONTHS LATER

(The Firebird screams across the dead highway like a missile loosed into darkness.)

(The bruised purple sky is choked with radiation clouds.)

(Ash drifts across the road like snow from a dying world.)

(Behind the seats, the reactor hums with a steady nuclear heartbeat.)

(Jay grips the wheel, his cybernetic fingers biting into the metal.)

(Beneath his skin, the Mark of Cain glows faint gold.)

(Beneath that, something else stirs.)

(The Mark of the Beast pulses once.)

(Jay exhales through clenched teeth.)

JAY

Stay buried.

(The parasite answers with a harder throb.)

(Pain lances through his chest.)

(The Firebird swerves.)

(Jay jerks the wheel back, but the car fishtails violently across the highway at impossible speed. The reactor whines. Tires scream over broken asphalt. The Firebird nearly rolls as it tears past the wreckage of a collapsed tanker.)

JAY

Not now.

(The pulse hits again.)

(Jay's vision doubles.)

(The highway stretches and warps. For one split second, the asphalt becomes a river of kneeling bodies: heads bowed, hands bound, waiting.)

(Jay blinks hard.)

(The vision vanishes, but the car is already drifting sideways.)

(He snaps the Firebird back into line and gasps sharply as the parasite tightens around his heart like a fist.)

(His gauntlet knuckles ignite faintly. The Mark of Cain answers. A thread of gold pushes back against the black pulse beneath his skin.)

(Jay grunts through the pain.)

JAY

Greater is He that is in me—

(The black pulse recoils.)

(Not gone.)

(Resisted.)

(The Firebird steadies.)

(Jay keeps driving.)

(But his hands are shaking now.)

94. EXT. QUIET CITY OUTSKIRTS — NIGHT

(Rain begins to pour heavily.)

(The ruins give way to a city that should not exist.)

(The Quiet City rises from the wasteland like a ghost of the old world. Towers still stand. Windows still glow. Billboards still flicker through the ash.)

(But the city is wrong.)

(Patrol vehicles move through every major intersection: black armored carriers bearing the sigil of Neo-Babylon across their steel plating. Checkpoint barricades divide the streets into controlled lanes. Floodlights sweep the sidewalks. Cameras pivot. Loudspeakers hiss with static.)

(Above them, Watchers drift in slow circles through the smog—thin mechanical creatures like skeletal birds, scanning the streets below with cold precision.)

(This is not the throne.)

(It is the net around it.)

(The streets are crowded with civilians, every one of them bearing the Mark. Crimson glow pulses beneath their skin. Their movements are too precise to be natural, like a hive dressed as a city.)

(The Firebird glides slowly down the street, its engine purring low and predatory. No one notices Jay. No one reacts. The civilians flow around the car like water around stone.)

(Jay stares through the windshield, taking in the cityscape. The sigil of Neo-Babylon hangs everywhere: armor, transports, barricades, banners strung between the skeletons of buildings.)

(It is not a capital.)

(It is a claim.)

(The Firebird slips into a shadowed alley and halts. The reactor dims with a low nuclear hum.)

(The city falls quiet again.)

(Jay steps out into the world.)

(A gust of wind drags ash across the pavement. He pulls his coat tighter and stares down the street for a long moment.)

(A Watcher glides past the mouth of the alley. Jay lowers his head. His veil activates, casting a faint shimmer across his armor. His cybernetic spine ignites segment by segment beneath his coat, rising into a charged hum.)

(Then—)

(He vanishes into the city with impossible speed.)

—

95. EXT. QUIET CITY — SHADOW DISTRICTS — NIGHT

(The city moves in order.)

(Jay does not.)

(He navigates by rooflines, alleys, broken fire escapes, and collapsed catwalks—silent, unseen.)

(Below, a main boulevard hums beneath white floodlights.)

(Bodies hang from steel frames bolted directly into the sidewalk.)

(These are fresh.)

(Bare feet twitch in the air. One man is still alive, forcing in slow wet breaths through a crushed throat. Every inhale sounds like drowning.)

(No one helps him.)

(Civilians pass beneath in perfect lines, branded and empty.)

(Across the street, crucifixions have been welded into the wall of a concrete transit structure. Not symbolic. Industrial. Metal spikes through wrists, ankles, ribs. Some of the victims are still alive.)

(One woman lifts her head with what little strength remains. Her lips move. No sound comes out. Her throat has been opened. She chokes on her own blood. Patrol soldiers stand nearby, not guarding, but displaying.)

(Terror has become policy.)

(High above them, Jay crouches on the edge of a broken overhang, motionless. His visor reflects the executions below in fractured red.)

(His jaw tightens.)

(Beneath his chest, the parasite stirs—not feeding yet, but listening, learning what wounds him.)

(Beneath the overpass, a suspended cage holds five prisoners. One is already dead, upright only because rusted wire props him between the others. His eyes are gone. The skin of both arms has been peeled away in even strips.)

(Not frenzy.)

(Care.)

(Two patrol soldiers drag another prisoner across the pavement. His heels leave twin streaks of blood behind him. One soldier laughs under his breath. The other checks the street.)

(Clear.)

(Then Jay appears.)

(Too close. Too sudden.)

(A hand clamps over the first soldier's mouth. A blade drives up through the underside of his jaw and into his brain. The body jerks once. Jay rips the blade free and smashes the corpse aside before it can hit the ground too loudly.)

(The second soldier turns.)

(Jay lifts him one-handed by the throat and slams him into a concrete pillar. The wall fractures behind his spine.)

JAY

Where.

(The soldier claws at Jay's wrist.)

JAY

Where do you take them.

(The man tries to shake his head. Jay tightens his grip. Cartilage creaks. Red eyes burn through the visor.)

(The soldier breaks and spits fragments: transfer routes, holding points, collection lanes, processing terms.)

(Jay listens.)

(Expressionless.)

(Then—)

CRACK.

(He drops the body.)

(A third soldier runs. Jay lets him get two steps, then closes the distance in a blur and drives him face-first into brick. Teeth burst across the pavement.)

(Blood sheets down the wall.)

(Jay drags him down and pins his throat beneath one boot.)

JAY

Talk.

(The man nods violently, choking on blood.)

SOLDIER

North sector... refinery stronghold... they're moving people through there—

JAY

Next.

SOLDIER

East corridor... water plant... underground holding—

(Jay presses harder.)

JAY

I already burned it.

(The soldier freezes.)

(Wrong answer.)

(He scrambles.)

SOLDIER

Then west... freight yard... processing hub—

JAY

Cleared.

(A beat.)

(The soldier stares up at him.)

(Jay leans closer.)

JAY

You're not giving me locations.

(Beat.)

JAY

You're giving me history.

(The man breaks completely.)

SOLDIER

That's all we have—

(Jay studies him.)

(No deception now.)

(Only terror. And the truth Jay already hated. There is nothing left in the old routes.)

(Jay exhales slowly.)

JAY

Of course.

(He lifts his boot.)

(The soldier gasps in sudden relief.)

(Hope.)

(Then Jay buries the blade straight down through his skull. Instant. He is already looking away before the body finishes twitching.)

(Around the corner, a cage holds three civilians: a woman and two children. The youngest grips a torn piece of cloth so tightly his knuckles have gone white. They see Jay and recoil—not from hope, but from him. His veil flickers faintly over his face.)

(The woman stares.)

WOMAN

You're him.

(Jay says nothing. He grips the cage door and tears it open at the hinges. Metal screams.)

JAY

Go.

(They do not move.)

(The woman looks past him—at the hanging bodies, the crucified, the patrol dead in the street.)

WOMAN

They'll come back—

JAY

They won't.

(A beat.)

(She believes him.)

(Barely.)

WOMAN

Please do what ever you want to me— I'm yours.

(Desperate for survival, the woman gets close and suggests a sexual exchange. Jay doesn't move and stares coldly at her.)

WOMAN

I can please you... real good baby... just please don't kill my children.

(She drops her covering exposing her body, rain pouring relentlessly. Jay looks past her and sees her children terrified. Then he looks back at her.)

WOMAN

Please.

JAY

Don't sacrifice your dignity for survival. Recognize that God's will is your sanctification, which requires controlling your own body with holiness.

(She notices that she is safe and quickly covers herself quickly. She recognizes her she doesn't need to degrade herself to survive for the first time.)

JAY

Leave. Now.

(She runs to her children and turns back.)

WOMAN

If you're looking for answers... there's a market underground. People trade there. Hide there.

(Jay pauses.)

JAY

Where.

WOMAN

Old metro tunnels. Past Union Square. South line access.

JAY

When.

WOMAN

Tonight.

(She hesitates, then looks at the crucified.)

WOMAN

They take people like us before we end up like them.

(Beat.)

WOMAN

Please stop them.

(Jay nods once.)

JAY

Run.

(She grabs the children and flees. The youngest looks back once before Jay is already gone.)

(From the rooftop, Jay rises into view above the district. The city stretches beneath him in grids of light, checkpoints, patrol lanes, cages, smoke, branded movement.)

(It does not feel alive.)

(It feels managed.)

(Jay scans the streets below.)

(His breathing is controlled, but the parasite stirs again—from proximity and signal. A Watcher glides overhead, slowing and rotating. Its pale scanning beam lingers one second too long near Jay's position.)

(Jay remains motionless.)

(The city does too.)

(Then the Watcher passes.)

(A beat.)

(Jay drops from the rooftop and lands silently in the street below.)

(He steps forward.)

(And this time—)

(The city notices.)

—

96. EXT. CITY STREET — CONTINUOUS

(Jay moves again. Not fast now. Deliberate. Controlled.)

(The street ahead looks normal enough, if anything here can still claim the word. Patrol riders move through the intersections astride beasts that should not exist: too long in the limbs, too wide in the jaw, breathing smoke through furnace-red nostrils.)

(Their riders sit high in black armor marked with the sigil of Neo-Babylon.)

(Jay slips into an alley and watches them pass.)

JAY

Whoa... those are new.

(He waits. The beasts snort. Chains rattle. The patrol disappears into the next avenue.)

(Jay steps back out and turns a corner—then stops.)

(The air changes.)

(Not colder.)

(Heavier.)

(The sound of the street fades, as if something immense has cupped a hand over the world.)

(A woman crossing the street falters mid-step. Then a man. Then three more. Then a whole line at a ration post freezes all at once.)

(Jay is motionless.)

(So are they.)

(One by one, heads begin to turn—not naturally, but precisely. Five faces. Ten. Twenty. A whole corner pivots toward him in segmented unison. Eyes lock. Mouths part. The branded glow beneath their skin deepens.)

(Jay's chest constricts as the parasite answers with a pulse. Another. He understands a half-second too late.)

(The city does not notice him.)

(It recognizes him.)

—

97. EXT. STREET — CONTINUOUS

(The voices come in perfect synchronization. Calm. Controlled.)

BRANDED CROWD

The Lord is my shepherd... and the wolves devour the flock.

(Jay's eyes narrow.)

BRANDED CROWD

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death... you led them there.

(A beat.)

(Jay forces one slow breath.)

JAY

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted.

(The crowd laughs. Hundreds of voices layered into one impossible mouth.)

BRANDED CROWD

Broken hearts built your kingdom of ash.

(Jay steps back once. The crowd grows. People emerge from every side street, stairwell, crosswalk. They do not rush him. They gather, closing the circle by inches.)

BRANDED CROWD

Tell us, Ghost... how many lambs screamed in your sanctuary?

(Beat.)

BRANDED CROWD

How many burned when the Angel Engine died?

(Beat.)

BRANDED CROWD

How many did you save... before you chose not to save her?

(That lands hard.)

(Jay's chest pulses. The parasite stirs hotter this time, feeding.)

JAY

No.

BRANDED CROWD

You burned every door... so we became the house.

(Jay's breathing shifts. They know too much.)

BRANDED CROWD

You searched the wasteland. Tore down strongholds. Interrogated the dying. Found nothing.

(Beat.)

BRANDED CROWD

Because there was nothing left to find.

(Jay clenches his fists.)

JAY

What you meant for evil—

BRANDED CROWD

God meant for good?

(They interrupt him instantly, then laugh again. Softer now. Colder.)

BRANDED CROWD

You speak scripture... but you remember screams.

(Jay's eyes flicker.)

BRANDED CROWD

The Engine opened. You stood inside it. You saw judgment. Bodies break.

(A beat.)

BRANDED CROWD

And you chose.

(Beat.)

BRANDED CROWD

The many over the one.

(Silence.)

(Jay goes completely still.)

(Then one voice changes.)

(Soft.)

(Young.)

(It cuts cleaner than all the others.)

OPHIA'S VOICE

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...

(Jay's head snaps up.)

JAY

No.

(The voice distorts, layered with all the others.)

THE VOICES

And the lamb belongs to us.

(The street bends.)

(Buildings warp. Windows bow outward. Faces stretch at the edges of vision. Reality buckles like heated metal.)

OPHIA'S VOICE

Daddy... you saved them first.

(Jay shakes his head violently.)

JAY

Stop.

OPHIA'S VOICE

You said you were coming.

THE VOICES

You were too late.

OPHIA'S VOICE

Why didn't you choose me?

THE VOICES

You left her.

(Jay clutches his head. The parasite pulses violently now, feeding, growing, using grief like a blade.)

OPHIA'S VOICE

He prowls like a roaring lion—

(A beat.)

THE VOICES

Seeking whom he may devour.

(Jay roars.)

(The city fractures with him. Radio-wave distortions rip through the street. Lamp posts bend. Glass trembles. The branded crowd stands perfectly still while the world around them tears.)

JAY

WHO ARE YOU?! WHERE IS SHE?!

(The answer comes calm again. Unified.)

THE VOICES

We are—

JAY

GET THE HELL OUT OF MY HEAD!

(He slams his fist into the pavement.)

(Concrete explodes. A shockwave rips outward. Windows crack. Loose debris bursts across the street.)

(Then—)

(Silence.)

(A long beat.)

(Then one final whisper. Certain. Total.)

THE VOICES

Many.

—

98. EXT. STREET — MOMENTS LATER

(The street has returned to almost normal. Civilians move in silent order. Patrol lights sweep distant windows. There is no crowd. No voices. No sign reality just tore itself open.)

(Jay kneels in the crater he created, head lowered, one hand braced against the broken pavement. His entire body trembles. He drags in a breath like a drowning man breaking surface.)

(A small raw sound escapes him.)

(Not a scream.)

(A fracture.)

(Jay lifts his head. His eyes are wet.)

(For one terrifying moment, he looks less like a weapon than a father being hollowed out alive.)

JAY

Ophia...

(A beat.)

JAY

What was real?

(His breathing catches.)

JAY

I'll find you.

(The parasite pulses once.)

(Jay freezes.)

(Then it presses harder—a deep, sickening pressure around his heart. He clutches his chest as the black vein crawls further beneath his skin, slow and deliberate, feeding deeper.)

(He feels it.)

(Understands it.)

JAY

You feed on fear.

(The parasite answers with another pulse.)

(Almost pleased.)

(Jay grits his teeth.)

JAY

Asshole.

(He closes his eyes, inhales deeply, holds it, then exhales slowly. The pulse weakens. Not gone. Suppressed.)

(Jay opens his eyes.)

(Across from him, graffiti on a wall: a rough fierce lion's face painted in angry strokes. Beneath it, in fresh spray paint:)

OUR KING IS NEAR

(Jay rises slowly and steps toward the wall, touching the edge of the lion's face with two fingers. The Mark of the Beast pulses faintly beneath his skin, then falls silent.)

(Farther down the wall, another message. Larger. Messier. More desperate.)

HE SEES YOU. FIGHT.

(Jay studies the words. His breathing steadies. The grief remains. The fear remains. But something else pushes back now.)

(Not comfort.)

(Command.)

(Jay straightens.)

(The last tremor leaves his hands.)

(He pulls his coat tighter, turns away from the wall, and disappears deeper into the city.)

—

99. INT. UNDERCITY SERVICE TUNNELS — NIGHT

(The tunnels hum with generators and oil fires in steel drums. Armed traders guard every corner.)

(As Jay steps into the space, panic ripples through the occupants. Some freeze. Some reach for weapons.)

TRADER

Ghost.

TRADER #2

He shouldn't be here.

TRADER #3

Monster...

(The Merchant pushes through the crowd.)

MERCHANT

Enough!

(He studies Jay closely: glowing eyes, trembling hands, needle marks, faint black veins under the skin.)

MERCHANT

Geez, man... you look awful.

(Jay walks toward him.)

JAY

Naomi.

(Beat.)

JAY

Where is she?

MERCHANT

I don't know. Haven't heard from her in months.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Why?

JAY

I need help.

(Beat.)

JAY

Can't trust anyone.

(Beat.)

JAY

I need answers.

MERCHANT

That's unfortunate.

JAY

Why?

MERCHANT

Because I'm full of them tonight.

(The Merchant gestures for Jay to follow him deeper into the tunnels.)

MERCHANT

And you're not going to like them.

(Jay follows. The crowd watches as the Ghost vanishes into the depths of the undercity.)

—

100. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — DEEP CHAMBER — NIGHT

(The Merchant leads Jay into older tunnels reinforced with salvaged steel, broken subway rail, and concrete stained black by time. Generators hum like tired hearts. The air is thick with oil, rust, smoke, and damp stone.)

(This section of the market is quieter. Hidden. Dangerous in a different way. Traders deal here in things that would get them butchered if patrols found them: sacred oils, torn scripture pages, relic rounds, blades etched with blessings and curses.)

(The Merchant stops at a small room lined with flickering monitors, old radios, and crude surveillance maps. He shuts the door. The locks click.)

(A beat.)

(He turns and studies Jay properly now—the trembling hands, needle marks, burning eyes.)

MERCHANT

What happened to you?

(Jay says nothing at first. He scans the room by instinct: corners, vents, frame, shadows.)

(The Merchant notices.)

MERCHANT

You look like a man who brought something back with him.

(Jay retracts his visor.)

(His eyes burn faint red.)

JAY

I heard something.

MERCHANT

What kind of something?

(Jay braces himself against the table.)

(His hands tremble.)

JAY

Voices.

MERCHANT

How many?

JAY

Hundreds.

(A beat.)

JAY

Not noise. Not echoes. Coordination.

(Beat.)

JAY

A psionic assault.

(The radios hiss softly in the background.)

JAY

The Angel Engine was one thing.

(Beat.)

JAY

This was different.

(Beat.)

JAY

Cleaner.

(Beat.)

JAY

Like it had learned.

(The Merchant's expression darkens.)

MERCHANT

That's bad.

JAY

They knew scripture.

(The Merchant goes still.)

MERCHANT

That's worse.

JAY

They twisted it.

(Jay steps closer.)

JAY

They knew about the Angel Engine.

MERCHANT

A lot of people know about the Engine.

JAY

No.

(His voice hardens.)

JAY

They knew what happened inside it.

(The Merchant's face changes. He understands immediately.)

MERCHANT

What? That knowledge isn't public.

JAY

No.

(A long pause.)

JAY

They used my daughter's voice.

(The room goes quiet.)

(Even the radios seem to recede.)

MERCHANT

Say that again.

JAY

They used her voice.

(Jay's jaw tightens.)

JAY

I still can't find Babylon.

(Beat.)

JAY

I still can't find Ophia.

(The Merchant rubs a hand over his mouth, thinking.)

MERCHANT

All right.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

That narrows it.

JAY

To what?

(The Merchant meets his stare grimly.)

MERCHANT

To something ancient.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

And very bad.

—

101. INT. MARKET CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS

(The Merchant moves to a wall layered with old maps, pinned notes, faded scripture fragments, hand-drawn sigils. A war board built by a man who survives by knowing what hunts in the dark.)

JAY

I never asked how you know this much.

(Beat.)

JAY

Scripture. Occult structures. Territorial hierarchies.

(Beat.)

JAY

How do you come across any of this?

(The Merchant lets out a faint breath that almost becomes a laugh.)

MERCHANT

Occupational hazard.

(He adjusts one of the pinned pages.)

MERCHANT

Live long enough as a criminal, you end up trading near holy things and unholy things alike.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

I prefer not to be surprised by either.

(He glances at Jay, notices him wince.)

MERCHANT

You're not fine.

JAY

I said I'm fine.

MERCHANT

Mhm.

(A beat.)

(The Merchant turns back to the wall.)

MERCHANT

Let's keep this simple.

(He taps one sigil.)

MERCHANT

Dukes of Hell.

(Another.)

MERCHANT

Regional overlords.

(Another.)

MERCHANT

Fallen angels still operating above ground.

(Jay folds his arms.)

MERCHANT

Most demons aren't complicated.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

They torment. They lie. They whisper.

(He gestures at the wall.)

MERCHANT

But they do not organize like a machine.

JAY

This did.

MERCHANT

No.

(He looks back at Jay.)

MERCHANT

This coordinated.

(The Merchant circles another name.)

MERCHANT

The Prince of Persia.

JAY

I know of him.

MERCHANT

Then you know what he is.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Not madness. Strategy.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Delay. Pressure. Positioning.

(He draws a line through the name.)

MERCHANT

He wages campaigns.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

He does not usually crawl into a man's head just to taunt him.

(Jay's jaw tightens.)

JAY

Then who?

(The Merchant taps another mark.)

MERCHANT

The Antichrist?

(He dismisses it immediately.)

MERCHANT

No.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Too absent. Too early.

(Another beat.)

MERCHANT

Lucifer?

(Jay gives him a flat look. The Merchant nods once.)

MERCHANT

Exactly.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

If Lucifer wanted your attention, you wouldn't be wondering.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You would know.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

He doesn't hide in static. He arrives like a throne entering a room.

(He crosses that name off too.)

(The chamber grows quieter. The generator hum feels louder now.)

(Only one name remains.)

(The Merchant stares at it for a long moment.)

MERCHANT

Well.

JAY

Say it.

(The Merchant exhales slowly.)

MERCHANT

If it isn't Lucifer, and it isn't one of the princes...

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

...then the only thing left that speaks with many voices—

(He taps the final name.)

MERCHANT

— is Legion.

(The word drops into the room like a stone into deep water.)

(Jay says nothing.)

(The parasite in his chest pulses once.)

—

102. INT. MARKET CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS

MERCHANT

You know the story.

JAY

Mark 5.

MERCHANT

The man in the tombs.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

When Christ asked his name.

MERCHANT / JAY

My name is Legion, for we are many.

(A beat.)

JAY

I know the story.

(His voice lowers.)

JAY

That's why this fits.

(Beat.)

JAY

The Angel Engine was supposed to become a body for something larger.

(Beat.)

JAY

Now it's gone.

(Beat.)

JAY

So whatever was reaching through it is reaching through people.

(The Merchant leans back slightly, studying him.)

MERCHANT

Exactly.

MERCHANT

And the Legion in scripture was many demons inside one man.

(He gestures upward. To the city. To the world above.)

MERCHANT

What we're dealing with now is the inversion of that.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

One will moving through countless bodies.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

A hive.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

A network.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Millions of branded minds sharing one corruption.

(Jay's expression hardens.)

JAY

The Mark.

MERCHANT

Yeah.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

The Mark of the Beast doesn't just control people.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

It links them.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Nerves. Signal. Memory. Impulse.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

A living system.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Like rot learning how to think.

(Jay clenches his fists.)

JAY

And you think part of it is in my head.

MERCHANT

I think you ripped a live piece of that system off the Titan and survived it.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

That alone should have killed you.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Instead it wrapped around your heart and stayed.

(The Merchant steps closer.)

MERCHANT

So yes.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

I think you're hearing things other people can't.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

I think it helps them feel you.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

And I think that makes you visible in ways you do not want to be visible.

(Jay's voice sharpens.)

JAY

I didn't choose that.

(Beat.)

JAY

It hit me before I could stop it.

MERCHANT

I know.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

But accidental infection is still infection.

(He points at Jay's chest.)

MERCHANT

Every time it gets you looking at your failures instead of your mission—

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

—it eats.

(Jay remembers the street.)

(The synchronized voices. His daughter's voice twisted into a weapon.)

(His breathing grows heavier.)

JAY

It used her.

MERCHANT

Because that would work.

JAY

It won't again.

MERCHANT

Maybe.

(The Merchant's tone hardens.)

MERCHANT

But right now?

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

It is kicking your ass.

—

103. INT. MARKET CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS

(The Merchant doesn't move right away. Jay starts to turn, ready to leave.)

MERCHANT

Ghost. Hold on.

(Jay stops, but doesn't look back.)

(A beat.)

(The Merchant reaches into his coat and pulls out something old.)

(Not technology.)

(Paper.)

(A folded envelope, creased and worn, sealed with a faint scripture sigil burned into the wax.)

(Jay turns now. His eyes lock onto it instantly.)

JAY

What is that?

(The Merchant doesn't hand it over yet.)

MERCHANT

He left it.

JAY

Who?

(The Merchant meets his stare.)

MERCHANT

Gabriel.

(Silence.)

(The room feels smaller.)

(Jay steps forward. Slow.)

JAY

When?

MERCHANT

Weeks ago.

(That lands.)

JAY

You've had that this whole time?

MERCHANT

Yes.

(Jay's jaw tightens.)

JAY

And you said nothing.

MERCHANT

I was told not to.

JAY

You do not get to make that call.

MERCHANT

I didn't.

(The Merchant steps closer.)

MERCHANT

He did.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

He said not to give it to you until you stopped looking for revenge...

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

...and started looking for her.

(Silence.)

(That hits harder than the rest.)

(Jay says nothing. His breathing changes. Months of blood, fire, strongholds, dead ends.)

MERCHANT

You've been tearing through the wasteland for months.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Breaking strongholds. Interrogating anything that breathes. Burning everything that doesn't answer fast enough.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

But you weren't getting closer.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You were getting louder.

(Jay looks at the envelope like it is judging him.)

MERCHANT

He said one more thing.

(The Merchant hesitates.)

MERCHANT

If I gave it to you too soon... you wouldn't hear guidance.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You'd hear judgment.

(Jay's eyes flicker.)

(The Merchant finally holds it out.)

MERCHANT

So.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Take it.

(A long beat.)

(Jay slowly takes the envelope. The wax seal cracks beneath his thumb.)

(Inside, only a single clean line.)

*The throne of the Beast does not sit in Hell.
It was built where men still breathe. Its den is Neo-Babylon.*

(Below it: coordinates in an old-world grid format, unmistakably marked.)

(Jay stares.)

(His HUD flickers instinctively. Fragments of wasteland topography begin assembling across his vision.)

JAY
Neo-Babylon.

(The parasite pulses once, hard. Jay recognizes the name, but keeps reading. The coordinates strike bone somewhere deep in memory: strongholds, burned compounds, prison routes, relay stations, interrogations that led nowhere.)

(His breathing steadies.)

JAY
I've been near this before.

(Beat.)

JAY
Just never where it opens.

(The Merchant watches him.)

MERCHANT
What do you see?

(Jay folds the letter once, then reopens it.)

JAY
Not a city.

(Beat.)

JAY
A pattern.

(He raises a hand. A hologram bursts from his visor and floats between them. At first: chaos. Burned strongholds, collapsed depots, fragments of interrogation, transfer routes, human cargo corridors, old raid markers.)

(Then the system begins linking them.)

**STRONGHOLD CACHE(S) — ACCESSED
TRANSPORT ROUTES — MATCHING
HUMAN TRANSFER LOGISTICS — PARTIAL
SIGNAL ARCHITECTURE — RESOLVING**

(The map expands. Red lines pull across the wasteland. They do not converge on a city. They converge on geometry. A massive sigil forms across the region, ancient and deliberate, buried in logistics and blood.)

(The same sigil worn by the armies above.)

(Jay goes still.)

MERCHANT
That symbol...

(The hologram rotates. Quiet City appears on one outer channel of the pattern.)

JAY
Quiet City is a feeder.

(The system tightens once more. At the dead center of the sigil there is nothing. Static. Dead land. An absence too clean to trust. Then Gabriel's coordinates strike the center point.)

(The image tears open.)

**PRIMARY ACCESS POINT — PROBABLE
SIGIL CENTER — CONFIRMED
CLOAKING / REFRACTION PATTERN — DETECTED
NEO-BABYLON — MATCH**

(The parasite pulses hard.)

(Jay stares at the center point.)

JAY
Not the city.

(Beat.)

JAY

The entrance.

MERCHANT

Dear God...

(The hologram expands further, showing none of the routes Jay destroyed over the last four months ever converged on Quiet City. They fed a hidden center instead—collection points, supply veins, transfer arteries, human movement, all drawing inward.)

(Jay's voice drops.)

JAY

I wasn't hunting them.

(Beat.)

JAY

They were moving me around the edges.

MERCHANT

Keeping you busy. Keeping you visible. Keeping you away from the middle.

(Jay studies the glowing center.)

JAY

I got close.

(Beat.)

JAY

Just never close to the opening.

MERCHANT

And we never saw it because there was nothing to see.

JAY

Cloaking. Refraction.

(Beat.)

JAY

Doesn't matter.

(The hologram flares again. Army sigil and wasteland pattern align perfectly.)

MERCHANT

The Prince of Persia.

JAY

Yes.

MERCHANT

And Legion?

JAY

If the Mark is the network...

(Jay looks at the center point.)

JAY

...then that gate is where the voice runs deepest.

(Silence.)

MERCHANT

This is bigger than a city. Bigger than a raid.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

If that point opens into Neo-Babylon, then what's behind it is not something you kick the door in on.

(Jay folds the letter. Decisive. When he turns toward the door, something in him has locked into place.)

JAY

Good.

(A beat.)

JAY

Then I stop chasing shadows.

(Beat.)

JAY

And go through the gate.

(The Merchant watches him.)

MERCHANT

Ghost... if that really is the entrance, then what's behind it is a descent.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Call the angels.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

That is why Heaven keeps finding you.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Because if you go in alone, people are going to die.

(Jay doesn't stop walking.)

(Fuming.)

JAY

They are already dying.

(He turns now. Rage barely contained.)

JAY

They are being mutilated, crucified, broken while the world keeps hiding under the floor.

(Beat.)

JAY

They still have my child.

(Beat.)

JAY

And if those fifty thousand are still breathing...

(His voice drops. Cold.)

JAY

...then I am done circling the wound.

(Beat.)

JAY

I am going to the source.

(Jay exits.)

(The Merchant stares at the empty doorway.)

MERCHANT

God help whatever's waiting behind that gate.

—

104. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — OUTER CHAMBER — NIGHT

(The chamber door swings open. Jay and the Merchant step back into the pulse of the underground market. The room does not stop for them, but it shifts. Conversations lower. Eyes dart. People feel the shape of war drawing near.)

(A young boy passes carrying a metal jug of water. Sewn into his sleeve: a small hand-stitched lion patch.)

(Jay stops.)

JAY

Boy.

(The child freezes.)

JAY

Where did you get that?

(The boy looks to the Merchant. The Merchant exhales.)

MERCHANT

So.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You noticed.

(He nods to the child. The boy peels the patch from his sleeve and offers it to Jay with both hands.)

BOY

The resistance made them.

(Jay takes the patch.)

JAY

The resistance?

MERCHANT

That would be the unfortunate name, yes.

JAY

I didn't start a resistance.

MERCHANT

No.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

You destroyed a divine engine.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Broke one of their pillars. Survived.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

To people down here, that is close enough.

(Jay studies the patch. Crude, but unmistakable. The Lion of Judah.)

MERCHANT

People saw what happened. Heard what spread afterward. They needed something to hold onto.

(He gestures subtly to faded lion graffiti on a nearby wall.)

MERCHANT

So now they stitch lions into sleeves.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Whisper that the King is coming.

(Jay studies the patch. This time it doesn't feel like myth. It feels like weight.)

JAY

They are going to get themselves killed.

MERCHANT

Yes.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

That is usually what hope costs in places like this.

(Jay keeps staring at the patch.)

(The boy steps a little closer now, still afraid, but curious. Jay kneels.)

(He gives the patch back carefully.)

JAY

Listen to me.

(The boy nods.)

JAY

I am not your savior.

(Beat.)

JAY

There is only one.

(Jay taps the lion patch once.)

JAY

And this does not belong to me.

(Beat.)

JAY

It belongs to Him.

(The boy looks down at the patch.)

JAY

If you wear it, understand what it means.

(Beat.)

JAY

Courage. Truth.

(Beat.)

JAY

It means you do not kneel to darkness.

(A beat.)

JAY

But do not confuse the messenger for the King.

BOY

Yes, sir.

(Beat.)

BOY

Yes, Mr. Ghost, sir.

(A faint flicker in Jay's expression. Not quite a smile.)

JAY

Before you go.

(He pulls a ration pack from his jacket and places it in the boy's hands.)

JAY

Stay close to your people.

(The boy nods quickly and disappears back into the crowd.)

(Jay rises. His face hardens again. He turns to the Merchant.)

JAY

Legion knows I'm here.

MERCHANT

Oh, absolutely.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

They probably knew the moment you rolled that fire-breathing relic into the district.

(Jay nods once.)

JAY

Good.

(The Merchant narrows his eyes.)

MERCHANT

That is not the word I would use.

JAY

It is now.

(Jay looks out across the market. Families. Traders. Children. Hidden fear trying to become resolve.)

JAY

If they're watching...

(A beat.)

JAY

...then I'll give them something to watch.

MERCHANT

Ghost.

(The Merchant steps in front of him slightly.)

MERCHANT

Whatever you are thinking, try very hard to make sure it does not get everyone in this chamber killed.

(Jay's eyes burn faint red beneath the veil.)

JAY

I'm done hiding.

(The Merchant watches him go.)

MERCHANT

That is exactly what I was afraid you'd say.

—

105. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — OUTER CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(The undercity hums with controlled rhythm: families carrying food, water, ammunition, scripture wrapped in waxed cloth; resistance scouts moving between watch posts; sigils painted across archways and steel doors.)

(The whole place feels braced.)

(Jay steps away from the armory stalls into a narrower outer corridor. For the first time in minutes, he is alone.)

(His breathing changes.)

(Subtle at first.)

(Then wrong.)

(The stimulant is wearing off. A dark vein climbs higher beneath his neck. The parasite senses it immediately and tightens.)

(Jay catches himself against a steel support beam.)

(His heart pounds.)

JAY

Damn you.

(The parasite pulses harder, feeding on the fear trying to rise. Beneath that, the Mark of Cain answers with a faint golden thread. Not enough to purge it. Enough to resist.)

(Jay closes his eyes, inhales deeply, holds it, exhales slowly. The corridor still tilts. The lights still smear. Voices from nearby tunnels echo for half a second too long.)

(For one brief distorted moment, a woman calling for her son sounds like someone screaming from a great distance.)

(Jay freezes.)

(He knows better now.)

(It is not the corridor.)

(It is him.)

(Jay steadies his breathing again. The distortion eases.)

(Not gone.)

(Managed.)

(He pushes off the beam and keeps walking.)

—

106. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — MAIN HALL — NIGHT

(As Jay enters the main hall, the crowd parts. Not out of reverence.)

(Out of caution.)

(People recognize him immediately—the Ghost. But something is wrong. They see the tremor in his hands. The fever-glow in his eyes. The black veins threading up his neck.)

(Jay digs through his coat. One pocket. Then another.)

(Nothing.)

(A woman near a supply crate whispers before she means to.)

WOMAN

He's marked.

(A man steps back, pulling his daughter behind him.)

MAN

The Beast got into him.

(Another trader tightens his grip on a pipe wrench. The room changes. Fear spreads faster than speech.)

(Jay braces against the edge of a steel table.)

(His grip bends the frame.)

JAY

I need...

(His voice catches.)

JAY

Water.

(A canteen is handed to him from somewhere in the crowd. Jay takes it with a trembling hand and pours it over his head. Water runs down his face, neck, collar, across the dark veins beneath his skin.)

(For a brief moment, relief.)

(Then the parasite pulses again.)

(The pulse deepens.)

(The thing in his chest presses further in. Jay's vision blurs. The room stretches. Faces at the edges warp. Voices become echo.)

ECHO VOICES

You are weak.

(Jay squeezes his eyes shut.)

JAY

Not yours...

(He grips the table harder.)

JAY

I just need... stims...

(The whisper recedes, then surges back stronger.)

ECHO VOICES

You are opening.

(Jay staggers, catches himself.)

JAY

You don't own me.

(He slams both hands onto the steel table to keep from falling. The impact makes a mother clutch her children tight. She doesn't run. She freezes. A father steps in front of them gripping a broken table leg in both hands.)

FATHER

Stay away from my kids.

(Jay raises one hand weakly.)

JAY

I'm not here to—

(The father swings.)

CRACK.

(The wooden leg explodes against Jay's skull.)

(The entire market freezes.)

(Blood runs down Jay's face. He remains standing. Rigid.)

(For one terrifying second, silence.)

(Then slowly Jay lifts his head. His eyes burn through the blood—crimson, fevered, distorted red.)

JAY

You're afraid.

(The father trembles. Jay, enormous and unsteady, steps toward him. Servos grind as his fists clench. The parasite surges, trying to climb higher. Black veins spread farther.)

(Jay stops inches away from the father. Blood drips from his temple onto the man's shirt.)

JAY

You should be...

(A beat.)

(Jay fights for control. His expression breaks.)

JAY

...but not of me...

(His legs give out.)

(The parasite hits him like a spike through the chest.)

(Jay collapses forward.)

CRASH.

(The steel table folds under his weight. Radios shatter. Crates burst open. The market falls silent.)

(A small voice breaks it.)

CHILD

Did he die?

—

107. INT. MARKET MAIN HALL — CONTINUOUS

(The Merchant shoves through the crowd.)

MERCHANT

Move! Move!

(He drops beside Jay and checks for a pulse.)

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

He's alive.

(The father lowers what remains of the broken table leg. His hand shakes.)

FATHER

He didn't fight back.

(The Merchant rises, turns, and drives a brutal punch into the father's jaw.)

CRACK.

(The man stumbles backward into a crate.)

MERCHANT

No.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

He didn't.

(The crowd erupts at once. Some recoil. Some surge forward. Fear mutates into fury.)

VOICES

He brought this here!
They'll find us!
Kill him!
Kill them!

(The mother throws herself over the fallen father. Her children cling to him, screaming.)

MOTHER

Stop! He didn't know!

CHILDREN

Leave him alone!

(The Merchant wheels on the crowd.)

MERCHANT

ENOUGH!

(The room locks.)

MERCHANT

You touch that family again and I will personally bury you in these tunnels.

(No one moves.)

(He points at Jay's unconscious body.)

MERCHANT

He came in here poisoned, hunted, half out of his mind...

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

...and he still didn't kill a single one of you.

(That lands.)

MERCHANT

So get your fear under control.

(He looks at the father, then back at the room.)

MERCHANT

He could have torn this hall apart.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

He didn't.

(The crowd begins to settle. Breath by breath.)

(The Merchant spreads his arms, dragging order back into the room.)

MERCHANT

Everybody knows the rules here.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

No killing. No trafficking. No mob justice.

(He points toward the back corridor.)

MERCHANT

We move him. Now.

(No one responds.)

(His face hardens.)

MERCHANT

He came here instead of turning this place into a graveyard.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

So help me carry him.

(A long beat.)

(Then one man steps forward. Then another. Then four more.)

(Six total.)

(They crouch beside Jay. Even unconscious, he is absurdly heavy—armor, weapons, cybernetics, dead weight. They strain to lift him. Children watch from behind their mothers.)

(The Ghost, finally still.)

(The men carry him toward a back chamber as the market parts around them.)

—

108. INT. MARKET CLINIC ROOM — LATER

(Hours have passed.)

(Jay lies on a reinforced table, head wrapped in bandages. A small lantern beside him casts warm light over cold steel. The family stands nearby. The father who struck him sits with his head lowered against the table's edge, pinned there by guilt more than exhaustion.)

(The Merchant paces.)

MERCHANT

This is bad.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

I've never seen him go down like that before.

(Jay's chest quivers. The Mark of Cain flickers faintly beneath his skin. The parasite presses back.)

(Then the air changes.)

(Dense. Heavy. Sacred.)

(Two figures materialize silently.)

(Gabriel and Raphael.)

(Raphael looms in the small clinic like war forced into a room. Gabriel stands beside him, radiant and severe, and every human in the room instantly knows the difference.)

(Some kneel.)

RAPHAEL

Rise.

(A beat.)

RAPHAEL

Do not bow to angels. That belongs to God alone.

(The people rise shakily.)

MERCHANT

I didn't call you.

GABRIEL

You did not need to.

(Raphael studies Jay the way a general studies a battlefield.)

RAPHAEL

How long has he been like this?

MERCHANT

Long enough for me to regret several decisions.

(Raphael nods once.)

RAPHAEL

He still breathes.

(Raphael places a hand over Jay's chest.)

(The Mark of Cain flares gold. Light courses through Jay's body—through needle scars, chemical strain, spiritual fractures, hidden damage.)

(The parasite recoils violently.)

(Jay gasps.)

(His eyes snap open.)

JAY

What—

(He tries to rise. Raphael presses him back with one hand.)

RAPHAEL

Stay down.

(Jay looks between them, disoriented.)

JAY

Why are you here?

MERCHANT

Apparently you're popular.

(He motions toward the father.)

MERCHANT

And for the record, your head's fine. He's the one collapsing over it.

(Jay glances at the father and his family.)

JAY

I'm fine.

MERCHANT / FATHER

What?

RAPHAEL

He did not fall from the blow.

(A beat.)

RAPHAEL

He fell from withdrawal.

(He looks down at Jay.)

RAPHAEL

And from something darker riding it.

(The room goes still.)

(The father's fear shifts into relief, then horror of a different kind. Gabriel studies Jay with stern, unblinking focus.)

GABRIEL

You were hunting poison.

(Jay flinches.)

GABRIEL

The same appetite you swore to crucify.

JAY

I needed it for the pain.

GABRIEL

You wanted relief.

(A beat.)

JAY

It hurts.

(Raphael leans slightly closer.)

RAPHAEL

Good.

(Jay looks at him.)

RAPHAEL

Pain means the fight is not over.

(Jay absorbs that. Barely.)

(Then the only question that matters.)

JAY

My daughter.

(The room stills instantly.)

JAY

Malachi said she was alive.

(Beat.)

JAY

But Malachi lies.

(Beat.)

JAY

The city used her voice. Dragged her through my mind like a weapon.

(He looks directly at Gabriel.)

JAY

So tell me the truth.

(Beat.)

JAY

I found your message. I know where the road leads.

(Beat.)

JAY

But tell me the truth.

(A long silence.)

(Gabriel steps forward.)

GABRIEL

We waited because you would not have heard us.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Not while revenge was louder than obedience.

(His voice is controlled. Edged like steel.)

(He grips Jay by the chest armor and pulls him partly upright. The room tenses.)

GABRIEL

You filled yourself with rage, chemicals, and stolen power.

(His eyes drop to the black veining near Jay's chest and neck.)

GABRIEL

And that thing around your heart.

(The parasite shifts.)

(Reacts.)

GABRIEL

You believe you have mastered it.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

You have not.

(Gabriel pulls him closer.)

GABRIEL

No human was meant to carry both covenants.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

You are not balanced.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

You are a breach.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

A living fault line between judgment and corruption.

(A beat.)

GABRIEL

And if not for the mercy of God...

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

...we would have torn your soul from your body before that thing rooted any deeper.

(Jay doesn't resist. For once, he only takes it. Tears gather in his eyes.)

(Gabriel lowers him back onto the table. Not gently. Not cruelly.)

GABRIEL

You call it strength.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Heaven calls it danger.

(A beat.)

GABRIEL

And still...

(His voice softens just enough to cut deeper.)

GABRIEL

...you kept walking.

(Gabriel studies him.)

GABRIEL

Bleeding. Suffering. Trying to stay pointed toward Christ with knives in your feet.

(Tears run down Jay's face into the bandages and mask. He cannot answer. His shame answers for him.)

(A long beat.)

(Then Gabriel gives him the truth.)

GABRIEL

Ophia lives.

(Jay shuts his eyes like the words hit him physically.)

JAY

Gabriel...

GABRIEL

She lives.

(Raphael nods once.)

RAPHAEL

And she is not abandoned.

(Jay looks between them. Hope does not rush in. It breaks through slowly. Painfully. Like light entering a sealed room.)

(Jay exhales, shaking.)

JAY

Then I'm not done.

GABRIEL

No.

(A beat.)

GABRIEL

You are just beginning.

—

109. INT. MARKET CLINIC ROOM — MOMENTS LATER

(Jay sits slowly on the edge of the reinforced table, fresh bandages visible. The room is hushed. Traders, refugees, and the frightened family all watch him carefully.)

(A small figure approaches.)

(The same boy from earlier.)

(He holds a thin metal plate in both hands, scratched with uneven lines forming the face of a lion.)

(He stops in front of Jay and extends the plate.)

BOY

I made this.

(Jay looks at the plate. Then at the boy. His expression softens, just slightly.)

(Jay lowers himself to one knee until he is eye level.)

JAY

That's good.

(The boy gives a nervous smile.)

BOY

You said you weren't our savior.

(Jay nods once.)

JAY

I'm not.

(The boy points to the lion.)

BOY

But you're still fighting for us.

(Jay studies the scratched emblem. Then the faces around the room. Fear. Hunger. Hope trying not to die.)

JAY

Yes.

(The boy carefully places the metal plate into Jay's hand.)

BOY

So you don't forget.

(A beat.)

(Jay lets out the faintest breath through his nose—almost a broken laugh, almost grief.)

(He looks at the lion again.)

JAY

My daughter drew this too.

(The room stills.)

JAY

I keep hers with me.

(The boy's eyes widen.)

BOY

Really?

(Jay nods.)

JAY

Yeah.

(He taps the lion on the plate.)

JAY

She drew it so I'd remember.

(A beat.)

(Jay looks at the boy.)

JAY

And now you did too.

(The boy glances down at his own chest. Jay follows the motion and taps him lightly over the heart.)

JAY

That's where it came from.

(The boy looks back up.)

JAY

Not your hands.

(Jay taps the boy's chest once more.)

JAY

Here.

(The boy's breathing catches.)

(Jay looks back down at the plate.)

JAY

I'm going to save her.

(A profound silence fills the room. This is not bravado. Not rage. It is vow.)

(Jay grips the metal plate tightly and slowly presses it against the center of his chest armor.
Instantly the sigils of Solomon along his knuckles ignite.)

(Golden lines race across his mechanical fingers. The room hums low, ancient, electric, sacred.
The scratched lion begins to glow. The metal plate trembles.)

(Then it shatters.)

(Not violently.)

(Beautifully.)

(It unravels into a cloud of radiant golden fragments. They rise and spread across Jay's armor
like living dust. They fuse over the black metal breastplate, reforming, sharpening, becoming
deliberate, polished, regal.)

(A great Lion of Judah emerges across Jay's chest in radiant gold.)

(Beneath the lion, the Mark of Cain pulses once with answering light. The parasite recoils
beneath his skin.)

(The room is silent.)

(The boy's mouth hangs open.)

(Jay gazes down at the emblem. For the first time in a long time, he does not look haunted. He
places one hand over the lion.)

JAY

Now it goes where it belongs.

(He looks back at the boy.)

JAY

Right here.

(The boy smiles—small, stunned, genuine. Around the room, faces shift.)

(Not into worship.)

(Into hope.)

—

110. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — CLINIC ROOM — CONTINUOUS

(The golden glow across Jay's chest gradually fades. The Lion of Judah remains etched into the armor, no longer blazing, but pulsing faint and steady. The sigils of Solomon cool from gold back to iron.)

(The room remains utterly silent.)

(No one speaks.)

(The boy stares up at Jay as if he has seen something impossible. Traders and refugees watch in stunned quiet. Their fear is giving way to something far more dangerous to darkness.)

(Hope.)

(Jay rises slowly. The armor shifts with heavy mechanical weight. Beneath the lion, the Mark of Cain answers with a faint pulse. Beneath that, hidden in the flesh, the parasite recoils from what just happened.)

(Jay feels it and exhales once through the pain.)

(The Merchant studies the new emblem.)

MERCHANT

Well.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

That's new.

(Jay looks down at the lion.)

(His voice is quiet.)

JAY

It isn't mine.

(He taps the emblem once.)

JAY

It belongs to Him.

(A murmur moves through the room. Some bow their heads. Some start to kneel. Some whisper prayers.)

(Jay sees it instantly and raises one hand.)

JAY

No.

(The room stops.)

(Jay scans the faces before him. Fear. Need. Desperation trying to become worship.)

JAY

Don't do that.

(A beat.)

(He points upward.)

JAY

That throne is already taken.

(The kneeling stops. The prayers go quiet.)

(Jay steadies himself. The parasite gives another pulse, trying to feed on the tension. Jay forces it down with slow breath.)

JAY

I am not your savior.

(He looks first to the boy. Then the rest.)

JAY

But I will fight for you.

(Beat.)

JAY

For every child they stole. For every family they broke. For every soul they think belongs to them.

(His hand rests over the lion.)

JAY

And when this is over...

(He lifts his eyes.)

JAY

...the Lion will come.

(The words settle into the room like iron driven into stone. No one moves. No one breathes. Hope spreads anyway—silent, electric, impossible to stop.)

(Gabriel and Raphael exchange a brief glance in the background. Neither speaks.)

(A few white feathers drift down through the lantern light. Jay notices. He does not look back.)

(Camera holds on the lion across his chest, faintly glowing in the dark.)

—

111. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — MAIN CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(The clinic doors swing open. Jay steps into the corridor.)

(The instant he enters, conversation dies.)

(Then the news spreads too fast.)

(The Ghost is walking.)

(Merchants hurriedly pack up their stalls. Refugees emerge from side tunnels. Children peek from behind crates and support beams. Word spreads through the undercity like a spark through dry wire.)

(They gather around him—careful at first, then all at once. Some reach out to touch the edge of his armor and pull back as if expecting heat. Others simply stare.)

VOICES

God protect you...
Bring them home...
Forgive us...
Save us...
Messiah...
Messiah...

(Jay keeps walking three more steps. Then stops.)

(He turns.)

(The corridor is packed now—hollow faces, bruised faces, starving faces, faces held together by almost nothing. Jay sees what they are really asking for.)

(Not victory.)

(Someone to stand between them and the dark.)

(Jay raises one hand.)

JAY

Listen to me.

(The corridor falls silent.)

JAY

Do not look to me for your salvation.

(He points upward.)

JAY

I am not the light.

(A beat.)

JAY

I am a man.

(Beat.)

JAY

Flawed. Sinful. Broken in more places than you can see.

(He takes one step forward.)

JAY

But I know who I belong to.

(He taps the Lion of Judah on his chest.)

JAY

And I know why I am still standing.

(The crowd watches him with absolute attention.)

JAY

I am not your messiah.

(Beat.)

JAY

I am only a weapon in the hand of the living God.

(His voice steadies.)

JAY

My pain belongs to Him.

(Beat.)

JAY

My strength belongs to Him.

(Beat.)

JAY

My life belongs to Him.

(A beat.)

JAY
And if I fall—

(He taps the lion again.)

JAY
—the mission does not die with me.

(Jay looks across the crowd.)

JAY
Because I was never the hope.

(He points upward again.)

JAY
He is.

(A woman begins to cry. A man lowers his head. A child clutches his mother's sleeve and stares at the lion.)

JAY
So gather your fear.

(Beat.)

JAY
Gather your grief.

(Beat.)

JAY
Gather what is left of your faith.

(Jay slowly drops to one knee.)

JAY
And bring it before the throne.

(One by one, the corridor kneels with him. The sound of bodies lowering to concrete rolls through the tunnel like distant thunder.)

(Jay bows his head.)

JAY

Lord of Hosts... You see Your people. You hear their cries. You know their suffering.

(His voice grows firmer.)

JAY

Give us courage. Give us strength. Give us endurance to stand where hell told us to bow.

(The crowd begins whispering with him.)

JAY

You are the truth. You are the way. You are the judge of kings, the breaker of chains, the terror of every throne built against You.

(The whispers grow stronger.)

JAY

And by Your Son—

(Jay lifts his head slightly.)

JAY

—the serpent will be crushed.

(The crowd answers in a trembling murmur.)

CROWD

Amen...

(Camera moves across kneeling families, trembling hands, closed eyes, children pressed against parents, tears falling onto dirty concrete.)

(Camera returns to Jay kneeling among them—not above them.)

—

112. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — BROADCAST MOMENT — NIGHT

(Jay rises from prayer. The undercity is still kneeling. The Merchant watches him closely.)

(He sees it before anyone else does.)

(Jay is no longer steady in the same way.)

(He is focused. Cold. Resolved.)

(Jay turns toward a branded prisoner held at the edge of the corridor by resistance guards. The man is weak, half-starved, barely conscious. His Mark glows faint red.)

(The guards tense as Jay approaches.)

(The prisoner tries to pull away.)

PRISONER

No—no, please—

(Jay grabs him by the jaw and forces his head back. He presses a Seal of Solomon against the Mark.)

JAY

Forgive me.

(The sigil ignites.)

(The prisoner convulses.)

(A burst of black-red light rips through the corridor.)

(The crowd recoils.)

(A spiritual wound tears open across the prisoner's forehead—and for one horrible instant, something looks back. A demonic eye. Blinking from inside the wound.)

(The undercity ward shudders. The seals hidden through the tunnels flicker.)

(Then break.)

(Aboveground, every Watcher in the sky halts mid-rotation. Television screens glitch. Radios erupt in static. Patrol visors flare alive. Control panels, surveillance feeds, public billboards, drone optics—the whole network catches one signal.)

(Jay.)

(His image tears across the system like a blade.)

(Throughout the Quiet City, patrols stop. In outposts across the wasteland, demons turn toward dead screens burning with his face. In towers, barracks, checkpoints, cages, and command rooms
—The Ghost appears.)

(Jay stares directly into the opened signal.)

JAY

Listen carefully.

(A beat.)

JAY

You who brand children.

(Beat.)

JAY

You who build kingdoms out of cages.

(Beat.)

JAY

You who mistake fear for worship.

(He steps forward.)

JAY

You believe this world belongs to you.

(Beat.)

JAY

These people are yours.

(Beat.)

JAY

That Heaven went silent.

(Jay slams a fist against the Lion on his chest.)

(The emblem flares gold.)

JAY

You are wrong.

(His voice rolls through the network like thunder through iron.)

JAY

I have walked your roads.

(Beat.)

JAY

Seen your cages.

(Beat.)

JAY

Seen your crucifixions.

(Beat.)

JAY

Seen what you do to the weak when you think no one is coming.

(A beat.)

(He leans closer to the signal.)

JAY

I am coming.

(The crowd in the market stares at him in silence.)

JAY

I will break your chains.

(Beat.)

JAY

Tear down your strongholds.

(Beat.)

JAY

Rip open every gate between your victims and the light.

(He points upward.)

JAY

And when this war is finished...

(A beat.)

JAY

...the Lion will come.

(The words hit harder because he does not raise his voice. He means them.)

(His voice descends into a low controlled deadly whisper.)

JAY

And when He does...

(Beat.)

JAY

...every throne built on blood will collapse.

(Beat.)

JAY

Every mouth that mocked Him will beg.

(Beat.)

JAY

And every serpent that fed on the innocent will learn what fear was made for.

(A long beat.)

(Jay stares into the system as if he can see through it.)

JAY

I am not hiding.

(Beat.)

JAY

I am not running.

(Beat.)

JAY

I am not difficult to find.

(He tightens his grip on the prisoner.)

JAY

So come.

(Jay drives his fist into the prisoner's face.)

(The signal detonates into static. All screens die. All radios howl.)

(Silence.)

(Then a lookout bursts into the chamber, breathless, terrified.)

LOOKOUT

Watchers changed formation! They're triangulating the signal!

(Panic detonates through the undercity. Parents grab children. Traders lunge for crates and weapons. Scouts sprint for tunnel mouths. The Merchant is already moving.)

MERCHANT

Everyone listen!

(He climbs onto a crate and points toward the south passage.)

MERCHANT

They found us! Families first! South rail tunnels! Move now!

(The resistance erupts into motion. Children are lifted into arms. Supplies dragged across concrete. Hidden doors thrown open.)

(The exodus begins.)

(Jay stands in the middle of the chaos, watching it ignite around him.)

(The war is no longer coming.)

(It is here.)

—

113. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — CORRIDOR JUNCTION — CONTINUOUS

(The underground market erupts into controlled chaos as families rush toward tunnel exits and resistance scouts guide civilians into hidden rail passages.)

(Children are lifted into waiting arms. Crates scrape across concrete. Above, Watchers shift formation. Even down here, everyone feels it.)

(The system is searching.)

(The Ghost's broadcast woke the entire network.)

(Jay stands at a corridor junction, watching the evacuation begin. The Merchant pushes through the moving crowd and reaches him fast.)

MERCHANT

What is wrong with you?

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You just screamed into the entire demonic network.

JAY

I know.

(The Merchant stares at him in disbelief, then exhales through his nose.)

MERCHANT

Fantastic.

(Jay watches a mother pull two children into the south tunnel.)

JAY

They'll come looking for me.

MERCHANT

They'll come looking for all of us if we don't move now.

(Jay nods once.)

JAY

That's why you need a distraction.

(The Merchant goes still.)

(He already knows what Jay means.)

MERCHANT

You're serious.

JAY

Yes.

MERCHANT

We buried explosives across half this sector for collapse contingencies.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

I was hoping never to use them.

JAY

This is the moment you buried them for.

(The Merchant looks around at the fleeing civilians.)

MERCHANT

If I trigger those charges, this whole district is going to sound like the end of the world.

JAY

Good.

(Beat.)

JAY

Let them chase thunder.

(Merchant looks at him.)

MERCHANT

You understand what happens next? Every patrol in Quiet City is going to lock down hard.

JAY

Yes.

(Jay turns toward the deeper armory tunnels.)

JAY

I need a weapon.

(The Merchant shuts his eyes for one brief second.)

MERCHANT

Of course you do.

—

114. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — CHEM DEALER STALL — NIGHT

(A cramped stall packed with sealed crates, chemical vials, injector racks, black-market medical stock.)

(Richard is hurriedly stuffing supplies into duffel bags when he looks up and sees Jay approaching.)

(He freezes.)

RICHARD

Oh, no.

(Beat.)

RICHARD

No. Absolutely not.

(Beat.)

RICHARD

You are not doing this to me twice in one night.

(The Merchant steps beside Jay.)

MERCHANT
Richard, breathe.

RICHARD
I am breathing.

(Beat.)

RICHARD
I'm also evacuating.

(He points at Jay.)

RICHARD
And he looks like a reactor core with anger issues.

(Jay says nothing.)

(His breathing is steady now, but withdrawal is still inside him. Controlled. Not gone.)

(Jay steps to the counter and sets the empty injector case down between them.)

JAY
I need these filled.

(Richard looks at the case. Then at Jay.)

RICHARD
No.

(Beat.)

RICHARD
No chance.

(Beat.)

RICHARD
I saw what you looked like earlier.

(Beat.)

RICHARD

I am not handing more stimulants to a man who was five minutes from tearing this market in half.

(The room trembles faintly. A distant alarm sounds. Dust sifts from the ceiling.)

(Jay does not move.)

JAY

I'm not asking for a high.

(Beat.)

JAY

I'm asking for battlefield recovery.

(Beat.)

JAY

If civilians are wounded, I need to keep them alive.

(Beat.)

JAY

If I'm wounded, I need to keep moving.

(Beat.)

JAY

I'm going through hell to get my daughter back.

(A beat.)

JAY

Fill them.

(Richard studies him. The Merchant watches too, measuring whether Jay means this cleanly.)

RICHARD

You always sound like a threat even when you're trying not to.

MERCHANT

He's focused.

RICHARD

He's terrifying.

MERCHANT

Also true.

(Richard looks down at the injector case.)

(Another distant detonation rumbles.)

RICHARD

Fine.

(Beat.)

RICHARD

But hear me clearly.

(He starts pulling sealed ampoules and cartridges from a crate.)

RICHARD

I am not doing this because you convinced me.

(Beat.)

RICHARD

I'm doing it because the city is about to fall on my head, and I would rather you be pointed at them than at me.

(Jay gives the smallest nod.)

JAY

That's enough.

(Richard loads the case with shaking hands.)

RICHARD

You owe me for this.

(Beat.)

RICHARD

If we survive, I'm naming a number and you are not arguing.

(Jay takes the filled case.)

JAY

Understood.

(Richard points at him as Jay turns away.)

RICHARD

And if you blow up my stall, I'm billing you from the grave.

(The Merchant grabs a field kit off a side rack and shoves it into Jay's chest.)

MERCHANT

Go.

(Jay takes it and disappears into the deeper tunnels.)

(Richard watches him go.)

RICHARD

I hate that man.

MERCHANT

No, you don't.

(Richard keeps packing.)

RICHARD

I really don't.

—

115. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — MUNITIONS ROW — NIGHT

(The weapons merchants are packing in a frenzy. Crates slam shut. Shell belts rattle. Blessed steel disappears into travel sacks.)

(One munitions merchant pulls a heavy case from beneath his table and snaps it open. Inside: glass-cored grenades filled with consecrated oil.)

(Holy oil grenades.)

(Each etched with old Enochian sigils.)

(Jay and the Merchant approach.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

Ghost.

(He grins despite the panic.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

You crazy bastard.

(He bumps fists with Jay once.)

JAY

Good to see you too.

(Beat.)

JAY

Let's move.

(The merchant nods and carefully lifts one grenade.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

Fresh batch.

(Beat.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

Virgin olive oil. Blessed, sanctified, sealed.

(He taps one engraved sigil.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

These are cut for high-order entities.

(Beat.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

I don't know how far up the chain you're planning to climb...

(A beat.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

...but these will help you stay in the conversation.

(Jay takes several grenades and clips them to his belt.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

So quick question.

(Beat.)

MUNITIONS MERCHANT

What if you miss?

JAY

I won't.

(The Merchant smiles once.)

—

116. INT. MERCHANT'S PRIVATE ARMORY — NIGHT

(The Merchant opens a reinforced steel door.)

(Inside: his private armory. Racks of weapons, crates of relic ammunition, sanctified blades, experimental gear, enough black-market firepower to start a small war.)

(He walks to a massive tarp.)

(Then rips it away.)

(Beneath it sits a monstrous weapon: a heavily modified aircraft M-60. Oversized receiver. Extended reinforced barrel assembly. Belt-feed line running into a massive backpack loader the size of a compact generator.)

(Jay stares at it.)

JAY

You've been holding out on me.

MERCHANT

My pride and joy.

(Jay grips the weapon and lifts it with ease despite the absurd weight.)

MERCHANT

Custom fifty-caliber conversion. Aircraft configuration. Backpack-fed.

(The Merchant opens a crate beside it.)

(Inside: rows of massive rounds, each engraved with Enochian script.)

MERCHANT

Every round dipped in holy oil.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

The barrel is blessed. The feed is blessed.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

The whole ugly machine is sanctified.

(He sighs.)

MERCHANT

This was supposed to fund my retirement.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You realize how expensive this gear is, son?

(Jay checks the balance one-handed.)

JAY

Tell that to their covenant.

(He shoulders the weapon. The backpack loader locks into place across his armor. The feed system hums as it engages.)

MERCHANT

You definitely do not have the money for this.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

You are the worst kind of customer.

JAY

I pay eventually.

MERCHANT

That is exactly what broke people say.

(Jay turns toward the garage tunnel.)

—

117. INT. UNDERCITY MARKET — FIREBIRD GARAGE — NIGHT

(The Firebird waits in the hidden service bay like a predator at rest. Radio chatter crackles from every direction—frantic attempts to locate the source of the broadcast. Distant detonations echo through the structure. Above and beyond the walls, the city is moving.)

JAY

How did you get it in?

MERCHANT

You were out for hours.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Had some of the guys bring her in.

JAY

...

(Jay opens the trunk and pulls out a heavy canvas bag.)

(He drops it onto a steel table.)

CLANG.

(The bag falls open.)

(Five massive gold bars slide into view.)

(Federal Reserve size.)

(The Merchant stops cold.)

MERCHANT

Oh.

(Jay shrugs.)

JAY

That should cover most of my debt.

(The Merchant picks one up and weighs it.)

MERCHANT

Most?

JAY

I'll owe you the rest later.

(The Merchant laughs once in disbelief.)

MERCHANT

Ghost...

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

If you survive this, I'm charging interest.

(Jay begins strapping weapon crates to the armored roof of the car. Ammo boxes. Grenade cases. Field supplies. The Merchant watches him work.)

MERCHANT

You just declared war on every demon in the wasteland.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Possibly the whole world.

JAY

I know.

MERCHANT

They will retaliate.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

And they will make us all pay for it.

(Jay glances toward the tunnel exits.)

JAY

As long as your people clear the tunnels before the charges go off, you'll live.

(The Merchant nods slowly.)

MERCHANT

Then we give them something louder to chase.

(He reaches into his coat and pulls out a compact detonator.)

MERCHANT

We planted charges years ago.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Fuel depots. Transit spines. Support columns.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

Black market rule one.

(Beat.)

MERCHANT

If the world turns on you, make sure part of it comes down with you.

(He looks at the detonator in his hand.)

MERCHANT

I guess I learned contingency planning from watching you.

(Jay closes the trunk.)

JAY

Make it loud.

(The Merchant smiles grimly.)

MERCHANT

Oh, I intend to.

118. EXT. UNDERCITY EXIT TUNNEL — NIGHT

(The Firebird engine roars to life. The nuclear reactor glows.)

(Jay climbs into the driver's seat. The massive M-60 rests across the passenger side. The backpack loader hums on top of the car. Jay looks at the Merchant.)

JAY

Take care of them.

(The Merchant nods.)

MERCHANT

Bring the girl home.

(The Firebird launches forward, exploding out of the underground tunnel.)

119. EXT. QUIET CITY — CONTINUOUS

(The Merchant watches the Firebird disappear. He lifts the detonator.)

(A beat.)

(Then—)

KA-BOOM.

(Explosions rip through the city.)

(Buildings rupture. Fire consumes the sky. Patrol forces scatter. Watcher drones scramble. Chaos spreads through the Quiet City.)

(In the distance, the Firebird becomes a red missile heading into the wasteland.)

—

120. EXT. WASTELAND HIGHWAY — NIGHT

(The Firebird emerges from the underground tunnel and tears out onto the dead highway. Ash storms roll across the road. The nuclear reactor hums like a contained star.)

(Jay grips the wheel.)

(Beside him, the massive aircraft M-60 rattles against the frame. The backpack ammunition loader hums softly. Holy oil grenades tap against his armor as the car accelerates.)

(The wasteland blurs.)

(Jay's breathing steadies.)

(Beneath the Lion emblem, the Mark of Cain glows faint gold. Beneath that, deeper, the parasite shifts against his heart once more.)

(Jay's eyes narrow.)

JAY

Stay buried.

(The parasite pulses once, then falls silent.)

(Jay's visor flickers. His HUD reconstructs Gabriel's coordinates. Old feeder routes reappear: burned strongholds, dead transfer corridors. Broken supply chains drag inward across the wasteland like veins converging toward one point.)

(And there, on the horizon, stands Glasslands Fortress.)

(A black knife piercing the earth at the convergence point. Spikes of iron. Walls of black stone. Towers like broken teeth. Watcher drones circling the perimeter like vultures.)

(Above the main gate burns the sigil of the Prince of Persia.)

(But Jay sees more now—not just a fortress, but a lock. A shield. A slaughterhouse built over something deeper. His HUD tracks the terrain geometry, the transfer routes, the old coordinates.)

(The sigil pattern etched into convoy movements over the last four months converges beneath the fortress.)

(Not in Quiet City.)

(Here.)

(Jay's jaw tightens.)

JAY

You built the gate around it.

(A beat.)

(The Firebird tears down the highway, red missile aimed at the throne's outer lock. Beyond the fortress walls, the land drops into darkness—too symmetrical, too deliberate, too wrong.)

(As if something vast is hidden beneath the earth.)

(Waiting.)

(Jay presses harder on the accelerator.)

(The engine howls.)

—

121. INT. PRISON TRANSPORT CONVOY — NIGHT

(A massive caravan moves slowly across the wasteland: armored vehicles, cage transports, thousands of unbranded prisoners—men, women, children. Each one valuable.)

(Chains rattle as the convoy hits rough ground.)

(Inside one cage, Malachi lies against the cold steel wall. Armor stripped away. Hands bound. The Mark of the Beast is gone from his skin. Only scars remain.)

(His eyes are closed. He drifts in a restless half-sleep.)

(There is no peace in it.)

—

122. INT. MALACHI'S DREAM — NIGHT

(The dream opens in excess.)

(A penthouse tower. Marble floors. Endless pillars. Glass walls over a perfect skyline. Soft music.)

(Beautiful women surround Malachi, each bearing the Brand glowing faint crimson beneath the skin. Tables overflow with wealth, drugs, weapons. Everything a man like him would call victory.)

(Malachi sits in a throne-like chair, a glass of dark liquor in his hand. One woman leans close.)

WOMAN

You built this world, baby.

(Another kisses his cheek.)

WOMAN

They all serve you.

(Malachi smiles faintly. He looks out over the city.)

(Thousands kneel below.)

(A kingdom.)

(His kingdom.)

(Then—)

(A low growl rolls through the dream.)

(The music dies. The women freeze. The growl comes again.)

(Louder.)

(The lights flicker.)

(The marble cracks beneath his feet. The skyline fractures like glass.)

(The illusion collapses.)

(Malachi rises too late.)

(Smoke spills through the breaking dream.)

(And from it—)

(A Lion emerges.)

(Colossal. Golden. Terrible.)

(The Lion of Judah.)

(Its presence crushes the air.)

(Malachi stumbles backward.)

MALACHI

No.

(The Lion advances. The palace collapses. The women scream, then dissolve into ash. The throne crumbles. The gold blackens. The world he built disintegrates around him.)

(The Lion stops in front of him.)

(It does not rush.)

(It judges.)

(Its eyes burn like stars forced open.)

LION

You built your kingdom on bones.

(Malachi collapses to his knees.)

(The Lion roars.)

(The dream shatters.)

—

123. INT. PRISON TRANSPORT — NIGHT

(Malachi snaps awake, breathing hard. Sweat runs down his face. The cage rattles as the convoy moves.)

(A prisoner watches him from the opposite wall.)

PRISONER

Nightmare?

(Malachi stares at his hands.)

(The Brand is gone.)

(Only scars.)

MALACHI

Judgment.

(The prisoner studies him.)

PRISONER

You were one of them.

(Malachi nods once.)

MALACHI

I was.

PRISONER

Then why are you here?

(Malachi lowers his gaze.)

MALACHI

I failed.

PRISONER

What did you fail to do?

(Malachi closes his eyes.)

MALACHI

Kill the man who took my mark.

(The prisoner frowns.)

PRISONER

The Ghost?

(Malachi nods.)

MALACHI

Yes.

(The prisoner leans back.)

PRISONER

Maybe your failure was mercy.

(Malachi lets out a hollow laugh.)

MALACHI

I don't deserve mercy.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

I don't even believe in it.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

All I know is wrath.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

And suffering.

(The prisoner shrugs.)

PRISONER

That's usually when God gives it.

(Malachi says nothing. His eyes close again.)

(But this time, he is not alone in the dark.)

(The Lion is still there.)

(Waiting.)

—

**124. INT. GLASSLANDS FORTRESS — CHILDREN'S HOLDING CHAMBER —
NIGHT**

(A dim stone chamber. Rows of frightened children sit beneath the watch of soldiers bearing the Brand.)

(Some cry softly. Some pray under their breath. Some only stare.)

(At the far end, one little girl sits apart from the others.)

(Ophia.)

(Calm. Still.)

(Face tight with fear and stronger than it should be.)

(She traces a shape into the dust with her finger.)

(A lion.)

(The same lion.)

(The Lion of Judah.)

(The drawing glows faintly.)

(A nearby guard notices.)

GUARD

What are you doing?

(Ophia keeps tracing the symbol.)

(The glow brightens. The guard steps back despite himself.)

GUARD

What is that?

(Ophia looks up at him.)

(Calmly.)

OPHIA

A king.

(The guard scoffs, but less confidently now.)

GUARD

Kings are dead.

(Ophia smiles softly.)

OPHIA

No.

—

125. EXT. HEAVENLY OBSERVATION — UNKNOWN

(The world below lies in darkness. The wasteland is carved across the earth like a scar. The Quiet City glows faintly beneath the clouds—deceptive calm, a feeder-city pulsing with the Brand.)

(Beyond it, farther into poisoned distance, the land converges toward a single point. A sigil too large for mortal eyes is etched across routes, ruins, convoy trails, ancient groundwork.
Everything draws inward at one center.)

(And over that center—like a black spear thrust into the world—stands Glasslands Fortress.)

(It does not guard territory.)

(It guards a gateway.)

(Beneath it, hidden from ordinary sight, something ancient waits in silence.)

(Neo-Babylon.)

(Watcher drones drift through the lower skies like mechanical carrion.)

(Gabriel stands above the world, wings folded like a storm not yet unleashed. Beside him stands Raphael—enormous, war itself given form.)

(Gabriel radiates.)

(Raphael distorts the air around him.)

(Even Gabriel gives him space.)

(Raphael watches Jay move through the occupied city below.)

RAPHAEL

He carries the corruption well.

GABRIEL

He hides nothing from Heaven.

(Raphael's eyes narrow.)

RAPHAEL

He is deteriorating.

GABRIEL

He is resisting.

RAPHAEL

The Brand grows stronger.

(Gabriel watches the faint gold answering from within Jay.)

GABRIEL

So does his faith.

(Raphael's gaze hardens.)

RAPHAEL

And yet we let it continue.

(The air shifts. The stars dim. The wind stops. Something approaches.)

(Raphael straightens instantly—not from fear, but recognition.)

(A shockwave of divine authority ripples across the sky and reality itself seems to stand at attention.)

(A third figure emerges.)

(MICHAEL.)

(He does not arrive gently. White-gold light splits the heavens like a blade. For one terrifying moment, the sky becomes a furnace. Clouds evaporate. The horizon bends. The light collapses inward like a star being forged.)

(Michael stands where it once burned.)

(The silence afterward is absolute.)

(He is larger than both of them—not just in stature, but in gravity. Armor ancient. Forged for war before the world was young. Wings enormous, edged like living fire. His presence feels like standing beside a reactor core—beautiful, lethal, inevitable.)

(Raphael smiles faintly, the smile of a soldier greeting another.)

(Gabriel lowers his head slightly.)

(Not submission.)

(Respect.)

(Michael surveys the world below—first Quiet City, then the fortress, then deeper toward the hidden convergence beneath it.)

MICHAEL

He carries it.

RAPHAEL

Yes.

MICHAEL

And you let him live?

(Gabriel watches Jay below.)

GABRIEL

He still chooses.

(Michael studies Jay for a long moment, weighing something ancient.)

MICHAEL

The Prince of Persia is moving.

GABRIEL

We know.

RAPHAEL

He is watching the boy closely.

(Raphael's wings shift. A small motion. The air trembles anyway.)

RAPHAEL

We should strike now.

(Michael's voice is calm. It still carries the weight of war.)

MICHAEL

You remember the days of Daniel.

(Raphael nods slowly.)

MICHAEL

The Prince fought Gabriel for twenty-one days.

RAPHAEL

I remember.

(Michael turns slightly—just enough for the cosmos to feel it.)

MICHAEL

And I remember ending that fight.

(A beat.)

(There is no boasting in it.)

(Only fact.)

RAPHAEL

That same prince gathers strength again.

(Michael's eyes shift toward the black geometry surrounding Glasslands Fortress.)

MICHAEL

And he will do what he always does.

(Beat.)

MICHAEL

Delay what Heaven intends.

(Gabriel's voice lowers.)

GABRIEL

And he will underestimate what obedience can endure.

(Michael's gaze cuts to Gabriel. Sharp. Absolute.)

MICHAEL

And the parasite?

(Beat.)

MICHAEL

Legion?

(Gabriel's wings tense.)

GABRIEL

Awakening.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

It has spread beyond the eye's reach.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

And now it reaches through the Beast's own system.

(Raphael cracks his knuckles slowly. The sound rolls like thunder.)

RAPHAEL

Then we prepare the armies.

(Michael watches Jay one final time.)

(The corrupted pulse in his chest. The two opposing covenants contending for one soul.)

RAPHAEL

He goes alone.

(Michael does not look away.)

MICHAEL

No.

(A beat.)

MICHAEL

He goes with faith.

(A longer beat.)

(His eyes settle once more on the fortress guarding the hidden way below.)

MICHAEL

Then the war has begun.

(The heavens fall quiet again.)

(But now the silence feels like the moment before a storm breaks.)

—

126. INT. GLASSLANDS FORTRESS — THRONE CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(The corridor is vast and severe, carved from black stone and armored iron. Less palace than fortress. Less throne room than military sanctum built to guard something deeper than itself.)

(Beneath the floor, faint sigils glow—old, circular, geometric. Not decorative. Functional.)

(Beyond the fortress walls, hidden under layers of steel, stone, and dimensional distortion, lies the true center.)

(The entrance.)

(The buried threshold to Neo-Babylon.)

(The Prince of Persia stands before a massive window overlooking the dead wasteland. Far beyond the walls, a red streak cuts through ash and darkness.)

(The Firebird approaches.)

(The Prince smiles slowly.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Finally.

(He does not sound excited.)

(Prepared.)

(Beneath the fortress, deep in the central structures, an ancient hum resonates. The sigils beneath the floor answer the approaching presence. Light crawls through their lines like blood returning to a dead body.)

(Darkness stirs behind him—not like a single entity, but like a crowd trapped inside smoke.)

(Whispers fill the chamber, layered, overlapping, speaking as one.)

THE WHISPERING PRESENCE

We see.

(The Prince turns slightly.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Yes.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA
He crossed the feeder-city.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA
Found the routes.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA
And now he comes to the gate.

(The whispering presence swells faintly, pleased.)

THE WHISPERING PRESENCE
He breaks what he sees.

(Beat.)

THE WHISPERING PRESENCE
He follows pain.

(Beat.)

THE WHISPERING PRESENCE
He will descend.

(The Prince's expression does not change.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA
He believes this fortress is the prize.

(A beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA
It is only the door.

(Beneath them, the hidden geometry pulses once. A low unnatural resonance rolls through the corridor. The Prince places one hand over the black stone railing.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Let him exhaust himself on the lock.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

By the time he reaches the threshold...

(A faint smile touches his face again.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

...he will already belong to the city below.

(The Firebird grows larger on the horizon. The fortress remains unmoved, more sealed mechanism than castle. Outside, Watcher drones alter their formation. Inside, the sigils beneath the floor ignite one by one, tracing the buried center of the greater mark.)

(The trap is set.)

(The gate waits.)

(The war is about to begin.)

END OF ACT VII

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT VIII — THE FALL OF BABYLON

FADE IN:

127. EXT. THE GLASSLANDS — NIGHT

(The land is lifeless.)

(A vast expanse of black glass stretches to the horizon, forged by ancient nuclear fire and centuries of war. The surface reflects the sky like shattered mirrors while ash drifts in whispering trails.)

(Far in the distance—)

(NEO-BABYLON rises.)

(Not a city.)

(A fortress.)

(A cathedral of iron and obsidian built into the bones of a mountain. Spiked towers pierce the clouds. Massive stained-glass windows glow with corrupted light, each one showing the same image: a serpent coiled around a split Earth.)

(Above the fortress, Watchers drift through the sky like silent vultures.)

(The Glasslands tremble.)

(A roar breaks the silence.)

(A red Firebird tears across the wasteland.)

(Its engine screams like a jet. Headlights slash through dust and ash. The car moves at impossible speed across cracked black terrain—red steel against the graveyard of the world.)

(Inside—)

(JAY drives.)

(His hands lock around the wheel. Dashboard light stains his face red. Beneath the coat stretched across his chest, the Lion of Judah glows faintly through the fabric.)

(The massive M-60 rests in the passenger seat. A belt-fed ammunition line runs into a reinforced refrigeration unit mounted on the roof. The weapon looks less like a gun and more like a portable war engine.)

(In the trunk, the nuclear auxiliary core hums inside its containment chamber.)

(Steady.)

(Quiet.)

(Waiting.)

(Jay watches Babylon grow larger through the windshield. His breathing stays slow and deliberate.)

(It is not fear that fills him.)

(It is preparation.)

(He flips a switch on the dashboard.)

(The steering wheel unlocks. The console shifts.)

SMART CRUISE CONTROL — ACTIVE

(The Firebird stabilizes its course. The accelerator depresses on its own. The machine commits.)

(Jay unbuckles. The window is already cracked and the roar of the wasteland floods the cabin.)

(He does not hesitate.)

—

128. EXT. THE GLASSLANDS — CONTINUOUS

(The Firebird keeps charging.)

(It races toward Babylon like a missile loosed across the wasteland. Fortress alarms blare. Spotlights flare across the outer walls. High above, the Watchers begin to circle.)

129. INT. FIREBIRD — CONTINUOUS

(Jay shoves the driver's door open. Wind howls into the cabin. The car never slows.)

(In one swift motion he grabs the M-60 and the ammunition belt feeds over his shoulder. Behind him, the refrigeration unit locks into the harness across his back with a brutal mechanical snap. The weapon's motor spins up, humming, then growling.)

(Jay steps out of the moving car.)

130. EXT. THE GLASSLANDS — CONTINUOUS

(Jay lands hard on the black glass.)

(The Firebird continues without him.)

(It becomes a streak of red steel racing straight toward Babylon's gate.)

(Jay walks forward, eyes fixed on the fortress.)

(The outer walls come alive with motion. Branded soldiers flood the battlements. Demonic creatures crawl across iron beams and shattered towers. Heavy guns swivel. Sirens scream.)

(Spotlights lock onto Jay.)

(He keeps walking.)

(The M-60 begins to spin. Its barrels blur. A low mechanical whine builds into a predatory scream.)

(Jay raises the weapon.)

(The first demon lunges.)

(Jay pulls the trigger.)

(The world erupts.)

(The M-60 roars across the Glasslands like artillery, disintegrating the first demon midair. Belt-fed rounds hammer into the advancing lines, blowing bodies apart, shredding barricades, and tearing metal structures open like sheet steel.)

(Branded soldiers are hurled backward. Demons burst apart mid-charge. Sparks, blood, and burning fragments fill the air.)

(Jay keeps walking.)

(Step by step.)

(Steady.)

(Unbroken.)

(The gun never stops firing.)

(The barrel glows red, then brighter. Metal begins to scream under the heat. Jay flicks his wrist and a Solomon seal ignites around the barrel. Golden scripture spirals through the air and frost-white vapor erupts from the sigil, wrapping the overheated metal.)

(In an instant, the weapon cools.)

(Jay keeps firing.)

(Above the battlements, a Watcher banks downward toward him. Jay doesn't even fully look at it. The shoulder cannon on his back deploys with a mechanical snap and fires.)

(The Watcher explodes in black fire and falls across the fortress wall.)

(The defenses keep coming.)

(Jay keeps walking.)

—

131. EXT. THE GLASSLANDS — BABYLON GATE

(The Firebird is seconds from the gate.)

(Outer armies swarm the approach. Demons leap onto the vehicle. Branded soldiers fire into it from both sides.)

(Inside the trunk, the nuclear auxiliary core begins to glow.)

(The glow intensifies.)

(Jay stops walking.)

(He plants his feet against the black glass and raises his left hand. A radiant dome of scripture and gold—a Solomon barrier—blossoms before him.)

(The Firebird hits the gate.)

(Silence.)

(White light.)

(The world vanishes.)

(Then the sound arrives.)

(A hydrogen-scale detonation rips through Babylon's entrance. The fortress gates vanish. The blast wave obliterates everything in its path—demons, soldiers, steel, stone. Watchers plummet from the sky trailing black fire. The Glasslands fracture outward like shattered ice.)

(Jay's barrier trembles under the force. The ground cracks beneath his boots.)

(He does not move.)

(The explosion towers into the sky in a mushroom cloud. Jay raises his hand again. A second Solomon seal spirals upward into the firestorm. The cloud twists, reshapes, spreads.)

(The inferno becomes wings.)

(A fiery phoenix forms above Neo-Babylon, burning, immense, visible for miles.)

—

132. EXT. UNKNOWN RIDGE — NIGHT

(A small group of merchants stands on a distant ridge.)

(The Merchant lifts binoculars.)

(The horizon erupts. The blast lights the wasteland in white and gold. The Phoenix cloud spreads across the sky, enormous and burning.)

(The Merchant lowers the binoculars slowly.)

(He just stares.)

MERCHANT

Damn.

(A beat.)

MERCHANT

That's one badass car.

—

133. EXT. BABYLON GATE — CONTINUOUS

(The firestorm begins to die.)

(Ash falls like snow.)

(The Solomon barrier around Jay fractures, then dissolves into drifting gold.)

(His coat burns away in the nuclear rain, exposing the scars across his torso, the armored vest beneath, and the Lion of Judah blazing across his chest.)

(Jay lowers the M-60.)

(The ammunition refrigeration unit drags behind him over shattered black glass, chains scraping.)

(The fortress wall is gone.)

(In its place, a massive burning wound opens into Babylon.)

(Alarms scream from within the breach. Smoke pours outward in thick black sheets.)

(Jay starts walking again.)

(Straight into the wound.)

(The Ghost enters Neo-Babylon.)

—

134. EXT. BABYLON — BREACH ZONE — CONTINUOUS

(The outer gate of Babylon has been erased.)

(The explosion has torn through the fortress wall, leaving molten steel dripping from twisted support beams. House-sized stone blocks lie broken across the ground. Fires rage in every direction. Above it all, the Phoenix cloud sheds burning ash across the ruins.)

(Jay strides forward.)

(The Lion of Judah glows on his chest in radioactive haze. The M-60 hums in his hands. The refrigeration unit drags behind him like a chained engine.)

(Inside the fortress, alarms begin to blare.)

(Not mechanical alarms.)

(Voices.)

(Thousands of them. Overlapping. Cold.)

LEGION (OVER INTERCOMS, LAYERED VOICES)

Containment failure. Structural breach. Population termination directive remains active.

(Beat.)

LEGION

Execute the lambs.

(Jay's jaw tightens at that one word.)

(Lambs.)

(The M-60 rises again.)

(He walks faster.)

135. INT. BABYLON — PRISON / SECURITY / GENESIS WING — INTERCUT

(Babylon holds its breath.)

(Deep within the fortress, prison sectors stretch in every direction like arteries carved through black stone. Massive holding cells line both sides of the corridors—reinforced steel, narrow observation slits, numbered in brutal sequence.)

(Inside: not dozens, but hundreds per chamber. Men, women, children, elderly, injured, starving. Whole families crushed together on cold floors beneath dim red emergency lights. Some pray in whispers. Some sit in silence. Some have not spoken in days.)

(In one cell, a Christian woman clutches a torn strip of cloth with scripture written on it. Beside her, an old Jewish man rocks quietly, whispering Hebrew prayers. A Muslim father holds his daughter close and recites softly to steady her. Near the back wall, a man with no faith at all sits with his arms over his knees, watching everything with clinical disbelief.)

ATHEIST PRISONER

They're not demons.

(No one answers at first.)

ATHEIST PRISONER

They're something else. Higher-dimensional entities. Aliens. Intersecting intelligences. I don't know.

(A bruised woman across from him stares back with hollow eyes.)

WOMAN

Then what do you call something that wears a man's face and eats him from the inside?

(The atheist has no answer.)

(In another overcrowded cell, whispers ripple.)

PRISONER

What are those sounds?

ANOTHER PRISONER

The screams?

PRISONER

No. Not the screams.

(A low distant bellow vibrates through the walls. Not human. Not animal. Something grown wrong.)

PRISONER

That.

(A man near the bars grips the steel tighter.)

OLDER MAN

They take groups every night. Ten. Twenty. Sometimes more. They never bring them back.

YOUNG WOMAN

Where do they go?

(The older man says nothing.)

(In another cell, Naomi stands near the front bars, blood dried at the corner of her mouth, one eye bruised, exhausted but unbroken. Dozens of prisoners crowd shoulder to shoulder around her.)

(A little girl sits close to her.)

(Ophia.)

(With one small finger, she traces shapes into the grime on the floor.)

(A lion.)

(Naomi notices.)

NAOMI

What are you drawing?

(Ophia does not look up.)

OPHIA

My father.

(Naomi studies the shape.)

NAOMI

That's a lion.

(Ophia nods.)

OPHIA

Yes.

(Malachi watches her through the bars from a neighboring transfer cage.)

(A lion. Simple lines in the dirt. A child's faith made visible in a place designed to annihilate faith.)

(His gaze shifts past her—to mothers shielding children, fathers standing between terror and family, elderly packed into corners like discarded cargo.)

(For the first time, the prison does not feel like architecture.)

(It feels like accusation.)

(He had helped build a kingdom that learned to thrive on the vulnerable. His face remains impassive.)

(But something in him is already broken.)

—

136. INT. BABYLON — PRISON SECTORS / SECURITY CORRIDORS / GENESIS WING — CONTINUOUS

(The impact arrives.)

(Not as sound first.)

(As force.)

(A violent shockwave tears through Babylon's lower structure like the fist of God. Prison sectors lurch. Steel screams inside the walls. Observation glass fractures in spiderweb patterns. Lights burst overhead in showers of sparks.)

(The captives are thrown off their feet. Children scream. Adults slam into bars and concrete. The entire fortress shudders as if the mountain itself has been struck.)

(In Naomi's holding block, people collapse across the floor in tangled bodies. Dust and powdered rust rain from the ceiling. Naomi grabs Ophia and shields her.)

NAOMI

Down!

(Ophia clings to her but keeps looking upward.)

(She is afraid.)

(But not surprised.)

OPHIA

He's here.

(In the adjoining transfer cage, Malachi braces one hand against the bars as the floor bucks beneath him.)

(He looks up slowly.)

(He knows that force.)

(Jay has reached Babylon.)

(Throughout the prison arteries, branded soldiers react all at once. Heads rise. Weapons lift. Spines straighten. Every motion with machine precision, at the exact same angle, in the exact same second.)

(The Brands across their flesh burn brighter. Their eyes ignite.)

(In the security corridors, warning glyphs flood every screen.)

**STRUCTURAL BREACH DETECTED
OUTER GATE FAILURE
CONTAINMENT CASCADE IN PROGRESS**

(Legion speaks through every speaker at once.)

LEGION

Structural breach confirmed. Unauthorized force has entered Babylon. All units converge.

(Beat.)

LEGION

Protect the inner throne.

(In Genesis Wing, the blast rips through the lab floor. Tanks ripple violently. Several crack at once.)

SCIENTIST

Containment pressure failure!

HANDLER

Subject response is spiking across every row!

(A huge shape slams against one tank from the inside. Glass bows outward. Another subject convulses in blue fluid. Another turns its head toward the breach, as if sensing something holy now walking the corridors.)

SCIENTIST

Why are they reacting to it?

(No one answers.)

(Something has breached the fortress that Babylon was never designed to withstand.)

(Back in the prison sectors, the captives hear it now—far above.)

(The thunder of impossible gunfire.)

(Heavy. Relentless. Like war being dragged room by room through the fortress's body.)

(A deep roar follows. Then another. Something screams in the distance, followed by many other things.)

(The atheist prisoner grips the bars.)

ATHEIST PRISONER

It's a breach team. Explosives. Shock entry. Experimental collapse. It has to be.

(From deeper in the structure comes a sound like a beast dying under holy fire. The man goes quiet. His explanation comforts no one.)

(In Naomi's block, prisoners crowd the bars despite fear. A mother clutches her son. An old man weeps openly. A Muslim prisoner whispers prayers. A Jewish elder presses trembling fingers to the wall. A Christian woman falls to her knees.)

CHRISTIAN WOMAN

Lord... send help.

(Ophia kneels again in the dirt despite the shaking floor. She redraws the lion. This time the symbol glows brighter.)

(Malachi sees it through the bars.)

MALACHI

How do you know he's here?

(Ophia looks up at him.)

OPHIA

Because he promised.

(Malachi lowers his eyes. That answer wounds him more deeply than accusation ever could.)

(The guardian angel materializes at the far end of the prison corridor, its form condensing out of the smoke. White robes move without wind. Golden boots touch the stone without sound. It looks first at Malachi, then at the prisoners, then toward the breach.)

(It understands the hour has come.)

(In every corridor, branded soldiers begin marching.)

(Left foot.)

(Right foot.)

(Weapons high.)

(No hesitation. No speech. Only obedience.)

(In Genesis Wing, a tank finally explodes. Fluid floods the floor. Something half-human and rebuilt wrong pulls itself from the glass.)

(Then another tank cracks.)

(Then another.)

(Alarm tones stack into total panic.)

FACILITY SYSTEM

Biological instability escalating. Quarantine threshold exceeded. Genesis Wing lockdown pending.

(The fortress still shudders in heavy recurring impacts.)

(Like Babylon is being punched open from within.)

(In the prison blocks, hope begins spreading almost as fast as fear.)

PRISONER

Someone got in.

ANOTHER PRISONER

No one gets in.

PRISONER

Then why is it shaking?

ANOTHER VOICE

Maybe judgment did.

(Malachi steps toward the bars. His face hardens—not with cruelty, but with decision.)

(The guardian angel meets his gaze.)

(It gives the smallest nod.)

(The moment has come.)

(Then Legion's voice rolls again, louder and more immediate.)

LEGION

Execute the lambs.

(Branded soldiers halt outside the cells, weapons raised. Safeties click off simultaneously. Prisoners recoil. Naomi stands. Malachi straightens. Ophia rises, the glowing lion at her feet.)

(Babylon has sensed the breach.)

—

137. INT. BABYLON — OUTER CORRIDOR NETWORK — NIGHT

(The blast ripples through Babylon's interior. Pillars crack. Lights flicker. Screens across the fortress flash the same symbol: a crowned serpent.)

(Legion's voice spreads through every corridor.)

LEGION

All units converge. Eliminate the unbranded.

(Beat.)

LEGION

Cleanse the flock.

(Branded soldiers rise in multiple sectors, heads tilting in perfect unison, weapons lifting at the same angle. Demonic creatures crawl from containment pits and maintenance shafts. Security drones awaken overhead.)

(The entire fortress becomes a living organism responding to injury.)

—

138. EXT. BABYLON — BREACH ZONE — NIGHT

(The first defensive wave charges.)

(Branded soldiers sprint across the rubble. Demons leap from broken beams and molten steel. Weapons fire erupts from the fortress interior.)

(Jay raises the M-60.)

(It answers with thunder.)

(The front line vanishes under the barrage. Heavy rounds punch through bodies in rows. Demons burst apart in midair. Barricades disintegrate. Broken steel folds under the impact.)

(Jay keeps walking.)

(The barrel glows red again. The air shimmers around it. Jay twists his wrist and a radiant Solomon seal erupts around the weapon. Golden script circles the barrel while freezing vapor bursts outward, instantly cooling the overheated metal.)

(The barrage never stops.)

(Branded soldiers rush from both sides. Jay pivots left, sweeps the first wave apart. Pivots right, collapses the second under the same storm of fire.)

(The ammunition belt keeps feeding. The refrigeration unit rattles behind him.)

(Above him, the Watchers try to regroup. Jay glances up. The shoulder cannon deploys from his back with a mechanical snap.)

(It fires.)

(A blazing projectile streaks into the sky.)

(The Watchers scatter. One is hit directly and erupts in black fire, falling into the ruins of Babylon.)

(Jay reaches the interior threshold.)

(There are corpses everywhere.)

(But he's not looking at them.)

(He's listening for one voice.)

—

139. INT. BABYLON — CENTRAL SYSTEM HUB — NIGHT

(Screens flicker.)

(Legion watches through hundreds of cameras.)

(Jay's advance appears across dozens of displays at once.)

(The system studies him.)

(Calculating.)

LEGION

Adaptive resistance detected. Probability of containment failure rising. Reprioritizing.

(The screens shift.)

(Prison sectors.)

(Fifty thousand captives.)

(The lion symbol in dirt.)

(A child.)

(Legion pauses for one extra beat.)

LEGION

Terminate the lambs.

—

140. INT. BABYLON — PRISON BLOCK DELTA — NIGHT

(The prison sectors shake beneath the impact. Alarms scream. Dust sifts from the ceiling. Prisoners cling to one another, brace against bars, or fall to their knees as the fortress groans around them.)

(Malachi stands still in the corridor.)

(He feels the breach. The fire. The violence.)

(Jay has arrived.)

(And now children are seconds away from execution.)

(The guardian angel materializes fully beside his cage. White robe. Golden boots. Smooth gold mask. Rapier burning with holy fire.)

(It drives the blade once through the locking column.)

(The cage door bursts open.)

(The soldiers outside the cell line raise weapons.)

(The guardian angel moves first. One. Two. Three. Their throats open before the shots align.)

(Malachi steps out, grabs a fallen rifle, checks the corridor, then throws the weapon away.)

(He chooses the blade instead.)

(Close. Personal.)

(He turns to Naomi's block and drives the rapier hilt into the control seam. Gold surges through the locking system. Her door opens.)

(The prisoners do not move. They only stare at him.)

(He has to say it aloud.)

MALACHI

If you stay here, you die.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

If you follow me, some of you live.

(That brutal honesty lands.)

(Naomi pulls Ophia behind her and steps into the corridor first.)

NAOMI

Move.

(She does not wait for the room to decide.)

(That breaks the paralysis. Mothers grab children. Elderly prisoners are lifted by strangers. Wounded men are dragged upright. The block begins to empty.)

(Malachi sees a side corridor flare with red light. More soldiers coming.)

MALACHI

Faster.

(He plants himself at the mouth of the junction with the guardian angel beside him.)

(The first wave appears.)

(They fire.)

(The guardian angel's blade turns half the barrage aside, but one round rips through Malachi's side. Another tears across his shoulder.)

(He does not step back.)

(He steps into them.)

(Blade through the first throat. Elbow through the second jaw. He takes a third round in the abdomen and still keeps moving.)

(The prisoners see it.)

(The Titan of Ash bleeding for them.)

(No speech. No absolution. Just cost.)

(Naomi is already reorganizing the flood.)

NAOMI

Children center!

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Wounded inside lane!

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Anyone who can still fight, you cover the rear and you do not break!

(A little boy freezes beside a dead soldier.)

NAOMI

Look at me.

(He looks.)

NAOMI

You run now or your mother buries you later.

(He runs.)

(That is command.)

(Not comfort. Survival.)

(A secondary corridor buckles and flames roll through it. One group of prisoners is cut off on the wrong side.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

Naomi!

(Beat.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

We can't get them!

(Naomi sees it. Counts the distance. The angle. The incoming soldiers. The number of people already in motion.)

(She knows.)

NAOMI

Seal that corridor.

(The fighter stares at her.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

There are people in there—

NAOMI

I know.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Seal it now or everyone dies here.

(He does it.)

(A blast door slams between the larger exodus and the smaller trapped group. The cries on the far side hit the whole corridor like a knife.)

(Naomi hears every one of them.)

(She does not turn back.)

NAOMI

Move!

(That decision will stay in her forever.)

(But it keeps the line alive.)

(Ophia looks up at her and sees the grief hit.)

OPHIA

You had to.

(Naomi almost breaks.)

(But she doesn't.)

NAOMI

Not now.

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Stay with me.

(The exodus surges deeper into Babylon.)

—

141. INT. BABYLON — BREACH CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(Jay enters the breach corridor.)

(The architecture opens around him like the inside of a dead cathedral. Massive black pillars rise into shadow. Broken stained-glass serpent windows line the walls, still glowing faintly. The air grows heavier with every step.)

(Ancient stone merges with alien machinery. Gothic arches are threaded with pipes and black conduits. Holographic rings flicker above shattered control stations. Energy pulses beneath the floor like a buried heartbeat.)

(Jay keeps moving.)

(The M-60 roars in his hands.)

(Internal defense squads rush the corridor, but they barely register as resistance. Jay cuts through them without slowing. Bodies drop. Sparks rain. The fortress trembles around him.)

(The war for Babylon has moved inside.)

—

142. INT. BABYLON — INNER CORRIDOR NETWORK — CONTINUOUS

(Deeper inside, the sound changes.)

(The thunder of battle fades behind him. The corridors grow quieter.)

(Too quiet.)

(Massive gothic arches loom overhead. Black stone and impossible machinery fuse into one design. Metal veins crawl through the pillars. Strange consoles glow with symbols no human mind was meant to read. The floor reflects everything like polished black water.)

(Jay walks forward.)

(The M-60 still smokes in his hands. The refrigeration unit drags behind him. Sparks fall from damaged wiring overhead.)

(Then Jay stops.)

(A reinforced door stands before him, towering nearly thirty feet high. Its surface is carved with symbols that resemble creation—twisted. Birth rewritten as blasphemy. Flesh remade as doctrine.)

(Above the door, flickering letters read:)

GENESIS WING

(A nearby screen pulses a warning.)

BIOLOGICAL CONTAINMENT SECTOR AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY

(Jay stares at the door.)

(Then raises the M-60.)

(It fires.)

(The locks explode.)

(The massive door groans open.)

—

143. INT. GENESIS WING — MAIN LAB — NIGHT

(Silence.)

(The room is enormous. A sterile white chamber stretching across an entire hangar-sized hall. Rows upon rows of incubation tanks fill the space—hundreds, maybe thousands.)

(Each one contains something wrong.)

(Jay steps inside. His boots echo across the polished floor. The door seals behind him with a thunderous slam.)

(The tanks glow with pale blue liquid.)

(Jay walks slowly between them. The creatures inside begin to reveal themselves.)

(One tank holds a massive creature with human bone structure but animal muscle. Another a winged humanoid suspended in fluid. Another a twisted thing with multiple arms and elongated joints. Another a biomass organism grown like a tree. Another a humanoid face floating inside a mass of flesh.)

(Some still have human eyes. Some have scripture carved into their skin. Some bear surgical scars. Some are clearly former believers.)

(This place is not a laboratory.)

(It is a factory.)

(Babylon has been rebuilding humanity in its own image.)

(Jay continues walking.)

(The Lion of Judah on his chest catches the sterile light and reflects across the tanks. One creature inside a tube slowly turns its head and sees the Lion. It twitches violently. Another snarls. Another claws at the inside of its chamber. Another backs away from the glass like a frightened animal.)

(The creatures begin reacting all across the room.)

(Some grow agitated. Some begin smashing their tanks. Some recoil from Jay. Some stare at him, confused, as if something buried inside them remembers what they cannot reach.)

(The facility detects the disturbance.)

(Red lights flash.)

FACILITY SYSTEM

Biological containment breach. Quarantine protocol engaged.

(Massive blast doors slam shut. Steel barriers drop across every exit.)

(Jay turns.)

(The doors seal, trapping him inside.)

(The tanks begin to break.)

(Glass explodes.)

(Fluid floods the floor.)

(One creature rips free.)

(Then another.)

(Then dozens.)

(Chaos erupts.)

(Some creatures flee immediately, scrambling toward broken service tunnels. Inside them, fear of the Lion has awakened.)

(But others—the soulless ones, stripped fully of humanity—are not afraid.)

(They attack.)

(Hundreds surge toward Jay, claws, teeth, talons colliding in a violent tide.)

(Jay remains motionless.)

(He raises the M-60.)

(The barrels spin.)

(Thunder answers.)

(The chamber becomes violence.)

(The first wave of creatures disintegrates under the heavy rounds. Bodies explode. Limbs tear free. Jay steps forward into the swarm. Mantis blades deploy from his arms. The shoulder cannon fires. Solomon seals ignite around him. Every weapon he carries joins the storm.)

(A massive chimera reaches him through the fire.)

(Jay catches it by the face and drives it backward through a tank.)

(Glass detonates.)

(Blue fluid and black blood sheet down the walls.)

(Another lunges from above. Jay slices it open with a mantis blade and empties half the belt through the next three behind it.)

(The quarantine doors stay shut. The entire Genesis Wing locks down. Outside corridors fall silent.)

(Inside, the sounds continue: gunfire, roaring, tearing metal, creatures screaming, something massive collapsing.)

(Then silence.)

(The doors remain closed.)

(Whatever happened inside is finished.)

—

144. INT. BABYLON — PRISON SECTOR / SERVICE JUNCTIONS — NIGHT

(The prison sectors unlock in chains.)

(Metal doors slide open. Not all at once. In waves. Some stick halfway. Some spark. Some fail and have to be ripped apart.)

(Prisoners spill into the service arteries.)

(Malachi now bleeds openly from side and shoulder. His armor is gone. His shirt is torn black with blood. He keeps moving.)

(The guardian angel takes point at the front.)

(Malachi guards the choke point at the rear.)

(It is visible now.)

(He is paying for every yard.)

(Each time soldiers rush the column, he takes them at close range. Each time he shields a child or clears a lane, another blow lands. Blade across ribs. Round through thigh. Chimera claw through the forearm.)

(He never asks for pity.)

(He only keeps fighting.)

(The prisoners see it.)

(So does Naomi.)

(She doesn't forgive him.)

(But she uses him.)

NAOMI

Rear line! With him!

(She points three armed survivors toward Malachi.)

NAOMI

If he drops, you die next!

(They move.)

(She turns back to the line.)

NAOMI

Nobody stops on the slope lanes. Nobody turns around. If you lose someone, keep moving and the people behind you carry them!

(A teenage boy shakes, trying to hold a stolen rifle.)

NAOMI

Safety off. Shoulder in. Breathe. Fire low.

(He obeys.)

(That is leadership under collapse.)

(Not speeches. Utility.)

(Ophia keeps moving with the line, but now she watches the chimeras gathering at the far intersections. They are not attacking the column.)

(They are waiting.)

(She stops.)

NAOMI

Ophia—

(Ophia kneels in the corridor grime and draws the lion again. Larger this time. A crown above it. A line beneath it like a road.)

(The nearest chimera lowers its head.)

(Then another.)

(The survivors see it happen.)

(The creatures are not charging.)

(They are answering.)

OPHIA

Show them.

(The first chimera turns away from the prisoners and throws itself into a squad of branded soldiers. Then another. Then six. Then twenty.)

(The corridor erupts into a secondary war.)

(What Babylon made to hunt now tears into Babylon's own enforcers.)

(The survivors stare in disbelief.)

MALACHI

They remember.

NAOMI

Then use them.

(She immediately redirects the route.)

NAOMI

New lane! Move through their wake!

(The column changes course, following the violence the kneeling chimeras carve for them.)

(This is the sequence only Naomi could command: not merely escaping—but reading chaos in motion and turning it into a route for thousands.)

(And still it costs.)

(A support corridor begins to collapse under artillery shock. A knot of wounded elderly prisoners cannot clear it in time.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

Naomi!

(Beat.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

We lose the whole right side if we stop!

(Naomi sees both truths at once.)

(Stop and everyone bottlenecks into massacre.)

(Keep going and the smaller group is cut off.)

(She swallows it whole.)

NAOMI

Collapse the right side after they cross!

(Beat.)

NAOMI

If they don't make it, seal it anyway!

(The fighter hesitates. Tears in his eyes.)

NAOMI

DO IT!

(He does.)

(The route holds for the majority. The smaller group vanishes behind falling steel and fire.)

(Naomi keeps moving because leaders do not get to break in the middle of evacuation.)

(But her face says everything.)

—

145. INT. BABYLON — PORTAL HANGAR ACCESS — NIGHT

(The survivors reach a massive reinforced door.)

(Above it reads:)

DIMENSIONAL RELAY HANGAR

(Malachi steps to the console beside it and kneels. At the base of his skull he finds the neural interface jack and drives the cable into the terminal.)

(The system awakens instantly.)

(Holographic rings spin around the console. Red glyphs ripple across the sealed door. Neo-Babylon recognizes him.)

(And something deeper recognizes him too.)

(The screen flickers.)

(Legion appears across the interface.)

LEGION

Former operative detected. Malachi. Status: compromised.

(The system pauses.)

(Awaiting command authentication.)

(The interface shifts.)

DEMONIC AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED

(Black mirrored metal along the console catches his reflection. For a moment he sees not the prisoner, but the man Babylon knew: armored, clean, crowned in borrowed authority, a servant dressed like a prince.)

(The image lasts only a second.)

(Malachi looks away.)

(He knows the commands. He knows exactly what he would have said before.)

(But not now.)

(He places his hand on the console.)

MALACHI

I renounce the throne I served.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

I stand under the blood of the Lamb.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

Under the Lion of Judah.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

Under the Son of the Cross.

(The system remains still.)

(No response.)

(For one terrible moment it seems Babylon will not yield.)

(Then the guardian angel steps forward and places its hand beside Malachi's.)

(Golden light pours across the console.)

(The corrupted interface convulses. Red glyphs fracture. The demonic prompt flickers, distorts, vanishes beneath the spreading gold.)

(The system is overridden.)

(Not by rank.)

(By higher authority.)

(The locks thunder open.)

(The hangar doors begin to part.)

—

146. INT. PORTAL HANGAR — NIGHT

(The chamber is immense.)

(A colossal circular portal ring dominates the far end of the hangar, towering over the survivors like a gate carved into reality itself. Energy surges through the structure in violent pulses, racing across its surface in bands of white-gold light.)

(The portal ignites.)

(Beyond it—)

(Sunlight.)

(Mountains.)

(Open sky.)

(Freedom.)

(For a moment the prisoners can only stare. Some begin to weep. Others fall to their knees. Some move as if they cannot believe it is real.)

(Then the line begins.)

(The prisoners surge toward the portal in waves. Men, women, children, wounded, half-starved, barely conscious—all moving toward the light.)

(The blast shakes the portal ring. Its surface ripples violently. Sunlight and mountain air shudder across the threshold.)

(For a terrible second, the prisoners hesitate. They have lived too long inside Babylon to trust an open door.)

(Naomi steps into the middle of the lane and points straight at the light.)

NAOMI

Move!

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Don't look back!

(That breaks the paralysis.)

(The line surges again. Mothers drag children forward. Injured prisoners lean on strangers. Older men shove the weak ahead of themselves. Some fall to their knees just before the threshold, overwhelmed by the sight of sky they thought they would never see again.)

(The guardian angel steps to one side of the portal lane like a living pillar of light.)

(Malachi takes the other side.)

(Between them, the condemned pass into freedom.)

(But Babylon is already responding.)

(The hangar trembles. Warning sirens scream. At the far end of the chamber, blast doors explode inward. Metal twists. Fire spills through the opening. Branded soldiers rush into the hangar in tight formation. Behind them—Chimeras: twisted bodies, surgical muscle, human eyes buried inside monstrous faces.)

(The hangar erupts instantly.)

(Weapons rise.)

(Shouts collide.)

(The first branded soldiers fire into the crowd, but Naomi's fighters answer just as fast, dropping two before the second volley.)

(The guardian angel moves.)

(Not like flight.)

(Like judgment.)

(The golden rapier cuts one soldier down, then another, each strike so fast the bodies seem to fall after the blade has moved on.)

(Malachi charges the center lane before panic can spread. His sword crashes into the first chimera that reaches the civilians, turning its lunge aside and driving it into the steel deck. Another comes from the left. He kills it with a short brutal strike and keeps moving.)

NAOMI

Keep the line open!

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

They're pushing the flank!

NAOMI

Then push back harder!

(The portal continues pulsing behind them—sunlight, mountains, freedom within reach and death only feet away.)

(Legion's army has arrived.)

(Malachi glances over his shoulder. The line through the portal still has not ended. Too many people. Too little time.)

(He looks back at the soldiers and chimeras pouring into the hangar.)

(He plants his feet.)

MALACHI

No one touches the flock.

(The words surprise even him. But once spoken, they do not leave.)

(The guardian angel turns its masked face toward him. A brief look.)

(Approval.)

(Then both of them step forward together into the widening flood of Babylon's retaliation.)

—

147. INT. PORTAL HANGAR — CONTINUOUS

(The first waves hit hard.)

(Malachi and the guardian angel fight shoulder to shoulder while Naomi runs the exodus under fire.)

(She sees a deadly bottleneck developing at the portal throat—too many wounded, too many children, not enough time. If the line clogs, the entire hangar becomes a massacre bowl.)

(She makes the call instantly.)

NAOMI

Split the line!

(Beat.)

NAOMI

Children and elderly center! Fighters and walking wounded left! Anyone who can carry, carry now!

(The line reorganizes in seconds because her command is clean enough to survive panic.)

(Then the next problem.)

(A secondary blast tears through the hangar floor. One narrow approach lane collapses, leaving nearly three hundred civilians cut off on the wrong side while the main line keeps flowing.)

RESISTANCE FIGHTER

Naomi! We lose them!

(Naomi sees the incoming soldiers on the far ramp. She sees the shrinking window. She sees the truth.)

(She cannot save everyone and keep the portal open.)

NAOMI

Bridge team with me!

(She grabs a severed cargo rail and drags it with two others across the gap, creating a makeshift crossing under fire.)

(That is the sequence only Naomi can execute: crowd geometry, triage, movement, brutal calculus.)

(But even that isn't enough.)

(Half the trapped cluster can cross in time.)

(Half cannot.)

(A mother on the far side is screaming with two children, one limping, one carried.)

NAOMI

Throw me the little one!

(The mother does. Naomi catches the child one-handed while firing with the other.)

(The limping boy doesn't make the crossing before the rail buckles.)

(Naomi sees it.)

(Sees his mother choose.)

(She throws the carried child across and stays with the limping one.)

(The rail drops.)

(They are lost to the far side as soldiers close in.)

(Naomi physically shudders with the cost and keeps moving the larger line.)

(That moment will haunt her.)

(It also saves thousands.)

(Malachi sees the expression on her face and understands she is carrying her own judgment now.)

(Then a blast door above the evac lane begins closing. If it seals, the last waves never reach the portal.)

(Malachi sprints.)

(He dives beneath falling fire, reaches the descending blast door, and gets both hands under it.)

(It keeps coming.)

(Steel crushes downward with industrial force.)

(Malachi roars and holds.)

(The door slams into his arms and shoulder girdle. Metal shrieks. Bone goes wrong. Cybernetics spark under torn flesh.)

(He does not let go.)

NAOMI

Move! Move! Move!

(The flock floods under him—children, wounded, mothers, old men, fathers carrying the broken.)

(Malachi's right arm begins to fail. Armor shards punch into muscle. Blood pours down both sides. One knee gives and resets.)

(Still he holds.)

(The survivors see him.)

(The man who helped build the machine now physically keeping the machine from killing them.)

(Ophia stops under the door, looks up, and sees his body breaking to save strangers.)

OPHIA

Don't let go.

(Malachi looks down at her through blood and sparks.)

MALACHI

Go.

(She goes.)

(The last civilian clears the threshold.)

(Naomi turns back.)

NAOMI

Malachi!

(He shoves the final fighter through the opening and then releases.)

(The blast door slams shut.)

(His crushed arm hangs wrong. His shoulder is partly caved in. Half his body trembles from overload.)

(That is his proof scene.)

(Not remorse.)

(Protection.)

—

148. INT. BABYLON — UPPER CORRIDOR NETWORK — NIGHT

(The fortress quakes.)

(The burning nuclear breach in the outer wall still throws savage light through the corridor network. Genesis Wing alarms scream through the structure, mixing with distant detonations, collapsing steel, and the roar of something dying far below.)

(Thousands of prisoners move through the halls under Naomi's direction.)

(Malachi leads them forward.)

(The guardian angel moves ahead of the column in silence, its golden rapier low at its side, its presence more felt than seen.)

(The lights flicker again.)

(Legion's voice rolls through the fortress.)

LEGION

Evacuation detected. Population relocation unacceptable. Deploying termination units.

(The corridor lights shift from red to black-red.)

(A low mechanical groan rolls through the walls as deeper sectors begin unlocking. The prisoners feel it before they understand it. The floor vibrates in slow pulses beneath their feet.)

(Children cling to their mothers. Some of the older prisoners begin whispering prayers under their breath. Others look behind them toward the miles of corridor they just escaped, as though Babylon itself has decided to swallow them back.)

(Malachi doesn't turn. He keeps his eyes forward. But his jaw tightens. He knows that voice. He knows what it means when Legion stops speaking like a system and starts speaking like a will.)

NAOMI

What did it send?

(Malachi answers without looking at her.)

MALACHI

Something meant to make us stop running.

(The walls tremble.)

(From deeper in the corridor ahead, something massive approaches. The floor vibrates. The prisoners stop. Fear spreads instantly through the column.)

(Then the first creature appears.)

(A chimera.)

(It crawls around the corner on scarred limbs, its body twisted from human architecture into predatory mass. Surgical seams split its flesh. Its eyes burn with feral rage.)

(Behind it, more shapes emerge.)

(Then more.)

(Then dozens.)

(Then hundreds.)

(The corridor fills with them.)

(The survivors panic. Weapons rise. Naomi shoulders her rifle.)

NAOMI

Positions!

(Malachi draws his blade.)

(The guardian angel draws its rapier.)

(They step forward together, ready to meet the charge.)

(Then—)

(From the opposite end of the corridor, through smoke and broken light, another figure appears.)

(Walking.)

(Slowly.)

(Jay.)

(The M-60 hangs from his hands. The refrigeration unit drags behind him like chained machinery. The weapon barrels still smoke from the slaughter in Genesis Wing. His armor is drenched in blood. The Lion of Judah burns across his chest.)

(For a moment even the prisoners do not move.)

(He does not look like a survivor.)

(He looks like judgment that kept walking.)

(Jay stops.)

(He sees Malachi.)

(Rage detonates instantly.)

(Jay moves faster than sight.)

(His cybernetic hand clamps around Malachi's throat and lifts him off the ground in one motion. Malachi's feet leave the floor. The entire corridor freezes.)

JAY

You.

(Malachi claws at Jay's wrist, not to strike, just to breathe. His boots scrape uselessly above the floor.)

(The prisoners recoil. Some scream. Others freeze, caught between terror of Jay and terror of what's coming from the dark.)

(Naomi steps forward on instinct, rifle half raised, but she does not fire.)

(She sees Jay's face.)

(Not just rage.)

(Grief.)

(Months of blood and loss and hunted miles burning behind his eyes.)

(Malachi forces the words out through Jay's grip.)

MALACHI

You should.

(A beat.)

MALACHI

I deserve that.

(Jay's hand tightens harder.)

(Malachi chokes, forcing the next words out through failing breath.)

MALACHI

If you kill me now... do it after they're clear.

(His eyes flick past Jay toward the prisoners.)

(The guardian angel steps forward—not aggressive, not defensive. Only present. The gold in its mask catches the Lion's reflection from Jay's chest.)

(And that reflection reaches him.)

(For one razor-thin second, vengeance stands still.)

NAOMI

Ghost, stop!

(The guardian angel stands there, golden mask reflecting the Lion on Jay's chest.)

(Jay looks at it.)

(For one brief second—he hesitates.)

(Then the corridor shakes again.)

(The chimera horde arrives.)

(Hundreds surge forward with claws scraping and teeth bared. Their bodies pile into the corridor like a living avalanche.)

(Jay releases Malachi, who crashes down beside him.)

(Jay steps forward.)

(The guardian angel takes position at his right.)

(Malachi rises at his left, arm ruined, body failing.)

(The three of them stand shoulder to shoulder.)

(A wall between the survivors and the monsters.)

(The chimeras rush them—then slow.)

(One creature stops, staring at Jay's chest. At the Lion of Judah.)

(It begins to tremble.)

(Then slowly kneels, lowering its head to the ground. Forehead against the stone.)

(Another stops and kneels.)

(Then another.)

(Until the entire corridor is filled with bowed bodies.)

(Hundreds of chimeras kneel in silence before the Lion.)

(The survivors stare in stunned disbelief.)

(Naomi lowers her rifle.)

NAOMI

What the hell are they?

(A beat.)

NAOMI

What are they doing?

(Jay studies them.)

(And understands.)

MALACHI

Chimeras...

JAY

They remember.

(A hush passes through the corridor.)

(Not silence.)

(Something heavier.)

(The survivors look closer now. One chimera is weeping—not like an animal, but like a man trapped too deep inside the wrong shape. Another presses its forehead harder against the stone as though trying to worship through broken bones. A third trembles violently, staring at the Lion with wide human fear.)

(Naomi's rifle lowers inch by inch.)

NAOMI

They see Him.

(Malachi stares at the kneeling horde, shaken in a way battle never shook him.)

MALACHI

They were supposed to be empty.

(Jay does not look away.)

JAY

They were.

(A beat.)

JAY

Not anymore.

(The prisoners now look closer: human eyes, scripture carved into skin, surgical scars, fragments of faces that were once fully human.)

(Babylon did not only kill them.)

(It transformed them.)

(Horror spreads through the crowd.)

A SURVIVOR

Oh God...

(Jay looks at the bowed creatures, then back at the prisoners.)

JAY

They're still warriors.

(Beat.)

JAY

They're just trapped in the wrong bodies.

(A small voice breaks the silence.)

OPHIA

Daddy?

(Jay turns.)

(Ophia steps out from the crowd. She looks at the Lion on his chest. Her eyes widen with recognition, wonder, relief.)

OPHIA

You kept my drawing.

(Jay stops.)

(Everything in him that came for war falters for one human second. The corridor disappears. The alarms disappear. The fortress disappears.)

(There is only his daughter standing in front of him, alive.)

(Her face is thinner than he remembers. Dirt on her hands. Fear in her eyes. Faith still somehow untouched beneath it.)

(Jay's mouth parts, but no sound comes out. His hand twitches at his side as though he wants to reach for her and no longer remembers how.)

(Ophia takes one small step forward.)

OPHIA

I knew you would come.

(The words land harder than any blow in Babylon.)

(Jay's expression fractures. Not into weakness. Into pain too deep to hide.)

(He says nothing.)

(But something in his face breaks open.)

(For one quiet impossible moment—)

(The war stops.)

(Then Jay turns back to Malachi.)

(The softness vanishes.)

(He grabs Malachi by the throat again and hurls him across the corridor—but the guardian angel catches him effortlessly before he hits the wall.)

(It sets him back on his feet.)

(Jay points toward the portal hangar.)

JAY

You're in charge now.

(Malachi stares at him.)

JAY

You know this place. Get them out.

(Jay glances once at the kneeling chimeras.)

JAY

They'll hold the line.

(Then he looks directly at Malachi.)

JAY

This is your test.

(Beat.)

JAY

Protect the flock.

(Jay throws the stims to him.)

(Malachi catches them against his chest and looks down.)

(The same hands that once helped build this prison now hold mercy from the man he tried to kill.)

(He looks back up, stunned.)

MALACHI

Why?

(Jay's eyes stay on him.)

(Hard.)

(Without softness.)

JAY

Because if you fail them now... then everything you were is all you'll ever be.

(Malachi absorbs it like a blade through the ribs.)

(The prisoners continue moving around them. The kneeling chimeras remain bowed. The guardian angel watches in silence.)

(Jay's gaze shifts toward Ophia.)

JAY

Get her to the hills.

(Malachi nods again, more solemn now.)

(He turns to the survivors.)

MALACHI

Move!

(The evacuation surges forward. The prisoners run toward the portal hangar. The chimera horde remains kneeling in the corridor like a living honor guard.)

(Jay watches them go.)

(Then he turns away.)

(And walks deeper into Babylon.)

(Toward the tower.)

(Toward the throne.)

(Toward the Prince of Persia.)

—

149. INT. BABYLON — ASCENSION CORRIDOR — NIGHT

(As Jay moves deeper into Babylon, the sound of war begins to fall away.)

(The screams. The gunfire. The alarms. They do not vanish all at once. They die slowly, one by one, until only distant echoes remain, swallowed by the immense body of the fortress.)

(Even Legion's voice, once everywhere at once, seems to withdraw into the deeper systems of the city.)

(Cautious now.)

(Watching.)

(Jay walks alone.)

(The corridor rises before him like the interior of a black cathedral. Massive stone arches tower overhead. Ancient architecture fuses seamlessly with impossible machinery. Alien circuitry pulses through the walls like veins beneath dead flesh. Holographic glyphs drift through the air in slow rotation, appearing and vanishing before they can be fully understood.)

(The floor mirrors the corridor like dark water.)

(Every step Jay takes seems to fall into a reflection of the world beneath the world.)

(His boots echo.)

(Slow.)

(Deliberate.)

(Unafraid.)

(The Lion of Judah glows faintly across his chest. His armor is scarred. His body is tiring. His weapons remain ready.)

(The M-60 still hums in his hands, but the belt feed is short now. Almost spent. Like everything else that brought him here.)

(Still—)

(he keeps walking.)

(At the far end of the ascending corridor stands a door.)

(Massive. Ancient. Fifty feet of black stone and carved judgment.)

(Its surface is covered with twisted images that mock holy memory: the Tower of Babel reaching toward Heaven, angels falling in broken spirals, a crowned serpent hanging over the Earth like a false god.)

(Jay approaches it.)

(He does not hesitate. He does not slow.)

(He reaches the door and places one hand against the stone.)

(A beat.)

(The carvings begin to glow beneath his palm. The whole corridor groans. Locks older than empires begin to move.)

(The massive door opens.)

—

150. INT. THE THRONE OF BABYLON — NIGHT

(The chamber is colossal: a cathedral raised atop the tower. The ceiling is open and rain from the nuclear fire pours into the sanctuary, draining through black recess channels cut into the stone. Shattered stained-glass windows stretch from floor to ceiling, revealing the burning Glasslands beyond and the fading silhouette of the Phoenix cloud. Beneath the tower, Neo-Babylon trembles.)

(The stained glass tells a blasphemous gospel: a serpent coiled around the Earth until the world splits beneath it. Humanity kneels before a crown of thorns twisted into a serpent's halo.)

(Creation corrupted.)

(Alien machinery pulses through the cathedral. Black metallic spines crawl across the pillars. Energy conduits hum beneath the floor. Strange machines drift silently around the throne platform, making the whole chamber feel alive and waiting.)

(At the center of it all—)

(The throne.)

(A massive black structure carved from obsidian, elevated above the floor by a wide staircase.)

(And standing before it—)

(The Prince of Persia.)

(Tall. Impossibly tall. Robes moving like smoke underwater, ancient armor beneath them. Symbols older than language flicker faintly across the metal. Behind his head burns a fractured halo of broken light. His eyes hold no rage, no madness—only cold intelligence sharpened by centuries.)

(He has been waiting.)

(Jay steps forward into the rain. The M-60 lowers slightly. His visor cycles through infrared, spectral, electromagnetic vision. In each spectrum the Prince appears differently—solid in one, shadow in another, absent in the next.)

(The room bends around him. Reality refuses to settle.)

(The Prince finally speaks.)

(His voice is calm. Ancient.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Hello, Jay.

(Jay stops.)

JAY

Show yourself.

(The Prince steps forward. Every movement bends the air. Every footfall lands with impossible weight.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You've come far.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Further than most men ever do.

(Jay studies him.)

JAY

You tormented Daniel.

(The Prince tilts his head slightly.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

I delayed Gabriel.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Twenty-one days.

(A faint smile.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

I remember his frustration.

(Jay's fists tighten.)

JAY

You hid behind Nebuchadnezzar.

(Beat.)

JAY

You ruled through kings because you were too much of a coward to stand in the light.

(The Prince smiles faintly.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Nebuchadnezzar was useful.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Kings always are.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Empires are not taken by strength alone.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

They are shaped by pressure. Delay. Submission.

(Jay steps closer.)

JAY

It was written how that ended.

(The Prince's smile fades.)

JAY

You lost.

(Beat.)

JAY

Michael drove you back.

(Beat.)

JAY

You call it strategy. Heaven called it defeat.

(The Prince's eyes sharpen. For the first time—annoyance.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Tactical withdrawal.

(Jay halts at the center of the chamber.)

(The Lion of Judah brightens beneath the rain. His aura ignites. Gold and white lightning crackles across his body. He releases the ponytail and his long black hair falls to his chest, the white streak catching broken light. The air vibrates around him.)

(Jay chambers the weapon. The sound echoes through the cathedral like a sentence.)

JAY

You tormented prophets.

(Beat.)

JAY

Hid behind crowns.

(Beat.)

JAY

Stalled Heaven for twenty-one days.

(Jay steps forward. His aura flares brighter.)

JAY

But now...

(Beat.)

JAY

...you're trapped in the lion's den with the Ghost.

(The Prince watches him in silence.)

(Then slowly raises both arms.)

(Welcoming him.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Come.

(The battle begins.)

—

151. INT. THRONE OF BABYLON — BATTLE BEGINS

(As the Prince opens his arms, Jay moves.)

(Not like a man.)

(Like a launched weapon.)

(His cybernetic legs ignite with a burst of force and the cathedral floor cracks beneath his takeoff.)

(The M-60 roars.)

(Not in bursts.)

(In judgment.)

(Fifty-caliber rounds scream across the cathedral in an unbroken line of thunder. The ammunition belt tears behind him like a chain being dragged through war. Molten casings rain across black stone. The barrels glow red almost instantly.)

(Jay keeps advancing.)

(The Prince does not dodge.)

(He does not block.)

(The air around him bends. Some rounds curve away. Some flatten against unseen pressure. Some shatter into sparks before touching him.)

(But not all of them.)

(Holy-oiled rounds punch through the distortion and strike his armor. Small detonations of consecrated fire erupt across his robes. Black ichor spills down ancient metal.)

(For the first time—)

(The Prince bleeds.)

(He looks down at the wound with quiet curiosity.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Impressive.

(Jay does not answer. He keeps coming. Rain cascades down his face and off the barrel shroud, turning the charge into man, engine, and wrath.)

(Each step hits harder. Each burst becomes more precise. He is no longer firing to suppress. He is firing to obliterate.)

(The Prince watches through the storm of rounds with almost scholarly focus, as if prophecy has walked into the room wearing a weapon.)

(Black ichor drips from his armor onto the cathedral floor, hissing as it lands.)

(Jay sees it.)

(The Prince can bleed.)

(And therefore can die.)

(Jay drives forward harder.)

(The M-60 roars under the strain, barrels shifting from red to white as the metal begins to deform. Jay slams a Solomon seal onto the receiver. Golden script spirals across the weapon and a cooling field erupts outward in steam and frost, stabilizing the barrel.)

(He keeps firing.)

(The cathedral trembles. Stained-glass serpent windows explode outward, showering the chamber with firelit rain.)

(The Prince vanishes.)

(Jay's visor snaps into spectral mode.)

(The Prince reappears behind him. Jay spins and fires point-blank. The Prince vanishes again. The rounds tear half a pillar apart instead. Stone collapses in thunder. The Prince reappears above him.)

(Floating. Watching.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You have improved.

(The M-60 clicks dry.)

(The final belt empties. Jay drops the weapon. The refrigeration pack crashes behind him in a shower of sparks. He is already moving. David's sling snaps into his hand. A consecrated grenade drops into the pouch.)

(Spin.)

(Release.)

(The grenade becomes a comet.)

(It detonates against the Prince's shoulder in a burst of holy fire. The Prince actually stumbles.)

(Jay loads again.)

(Spin.)

(Release.)

(One grenade slams into the Prince's chest.)

(Another bursts beside his face.)

(The whole tower shakes.)

(The Prince hits the cathedral floor hard enough to fracture stone.)

(He rises slowly.)

(Wipes black blood from his mouth.)

(His patience is ending.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You fight well.

(A beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

For a human.

(Jay spits blood to one side. A faint smile touches his mouth.)

JAY

Good.

(A beat.)

JAY

Then die to one.

(The Prince's expression barely shifts, but Jay notices it—the pride, the offense, the ancient instinct that refuses to be treated like prey.)

(Jay attacks that very instinct.)

(His aura intensifies. Gold lightning courses over his body. Superheated air vibrates around him as he draws both pistols and unleashes a volley of silver rounds engraved with Solomon's name.)

(The Prince is beside him before the second round is fired. Jay raises a seal barrier, but the impact detonates against it like a bomb. The floor beneath Jay shatters and he slides backward across black stone.)

(The Prince keeps advancing.)

(Jay fires again and the true shape of the fight reveals itself.)

(The Prince is too fast. He does not merely dodge. He is elsewhere before the bullets arrive. One pillar. Another. Above. At Jay's shoulder. Gone again.)

(Jay switches weapons.)

(The shoulder cannon deploys with a mechanical snap and fires a beam of consecrated energy. The Prince catches it in one hand and throws it aside.)

(The blast tears open a section of the cathedral ceiling, flooding the chamber with moonlight through rain and smoke.)

(Jay charges. Mantis blades deploy from both arms. He crashes into the Prince at full speed and steel and supernatural armor collide in a burst of sparks.)

(Jay lands one strike. Then two.)

(A third glances off.)

(The Prince counters with a single blow.)

(That one blow launches Jay across the chamber like wreckage. He crashes into the shattered base of a pillar and collapses through broken stone.)

(Jay rises.)

(Slower now.)

(His aura flickers.)

(Gold—then red.)

(The Mark of the Beast pulses under his skin. Black and crimson electricity crawls over his body. Rage surges up like a flood, hungry to become strength.)

(For one terrible second, it almost does.)

(Jay clenches his jaw.)

(Forces it down.)

(The gold returns.)

(Barely.)

(The Prince sees it all.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

There it is.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

The parasite.

(Jay breathes hard.)

JAY

I control it.

PRINCE OF PERSIA

No.

(A beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You delay it.

(The Prince steps closer. His shadow stretches unnaturally across the floor toward Jay's feet.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You have killed demons.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You have wounded princes.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

But you have never faced one like me.

(Jay reaches for another grenade.)

(Stops.)

(The sling hangs in his hand. His pistols are nearly empty. The M-60 is dead. His shoulder cannon is spent.)

(The Prince is bleeding.)

(But barely.)

(Jay looks upward.)

(His voice breaks not with fear—with need.)

JAY

Gabriel.

(Silence.)

JAY

Raphael.

(Nothing.)

JAY

Michael.

(Still nothing.)

(Jay's lips part one final time.)

JAY

Elohim.

(The word does not echo like the others.)

(It sinks.)

(Down through rain. Through stone. Through the bones of Babylon.)

(For one suspended instant, even the cathedral seems to listen.)

(The Prince smiles—but not as easily now.)

(Because names like that do not vanish when spoken in faith.)

(They remain.)

(They judge the room.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Yes.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Call Him.

(Jay closes his eyes.)

(Inside him—not a voice. A knowing.)

(The whisper of divine wind moving through memory.)

GOD

You know.

(Images strike him in rapid succession.)

(Ophia.)

(The prisoners.)

(The sanctuary.)

(The lambs.)

(The dead.)

(The ones still breathing.)

GOD

What love costs.

(Jay opens his eyes.)

(And finally understands.)

JAY

Sacrifice.

(He does not say it like revelation.)

(He says it like acceptance.)

(The fear leaves him. Not because death is less terrible.)

(Because love is greater.)

(The Prince sees the transformation immediately. For the first time, Jay is no longer fighting to survive.)

(He is fighting for everyone else to.)

(The Prince nods.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Exactly.

(Jay exhales once, steadying himself. He does not run. He does not reach for another weapon.)

(He opens his hands.)

(Ready.)

(The Prince raises one hand. Darkness gathers around him.)

(Jay braces.)

(Then the Prince moves—not with his arms, not with a blade.)

(His shadow erupts behind him.)

(A spear of living dark.)

(Fast. Too fast.)

(It punches through Jay's back and bursts from his chest.)

(Blood pours across the Lion of Judah.)

(Jay gasps.)

(His aura shatters instantly. Gold lightning dies. The red flickers once—violently—then fails.)

(Jay drops to his knees.)

(The Prince steps close.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You were magnificent.

(A beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Little warrior.

(The rain keeps falling. Jay sways once on his knees. Blood pours over the Lion.)

(His eyes struggle to focus, but there is no panic in them.)

(Only release.)

(It is the final act of a man who made the sacrifice before the blade ever struck.)

(The Prince watches with quiet irritation. He wanted terror. Despair.)

(Instead he was given obedience.)

(Jay's eyes dim. He whispers one final prayer.)

JAY

Take them.

(The shadow withdraws.)

(Jay collapses to the cathedral floor.)

(Still.)

(Silent.)

—

152. INT. BABYLON — THRONE CATHEDRAL — CONTINUOUS

(Silence.)

(Jay's body lies motionless on the cathedral floor, blood slowly spreading beneath him. The Lion of Judah across his chest is drenched in crimson. Moonlight pours through shattered stained glass above. The broken cathedral sings with a low funeral wind.)

(The Prince of Persia stands over the body, patient, watching as if he has waited centuries for this.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Now...

(A beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

...we begin.

(The Prince raises one hand.)

(Ancient sigils ignite across the cathedral floor beneath Jay's body. Massive, circular, infernal. They burn outward in rings of red-black fire, forming a transmutation seal around the fallen body. The symbols are older than empires, older than Babel—the same oath-geometry once used by the Watchers when they bound themselves to rebellion.)

(The circle flares.)

(The cathedral exhales.)

(Black-red smoke begins pouring from every direction at once—from broken walls, cracks in stone, hidden vents inside pillars, shattered machines still humming with corrupted life.)

(It moves like something alive.)

(Hungry.)

(It pours toward the ritual center.)

(Toward Jay.)

(The smoke enters through his mouth, nose, wounds—forcing itself into dead flesh like a plague.)

(Jay's body convulses. His fingers curl. His spine arches so sharply it sounds like it might snap. Bones crack. Muscles twitch.)

(Something begins crawling where death had just made room.)

(Inside the corpse, the Mark of the Beast awakens.)

(The parasite around his heart blossoms outward—not like flesh, but like corruption learning to root. Black tendrils spread through veins, ribs, throat, skull, architecture of the brain.)

(It does not heal him.)

(It colonizes him.)

(LEGION enters.)

(Inside the darkness of Jay’s mind—)

(No chaos.)

(No screaming.)

(Only order.)

(A thousand voices speaking as one.)

LEGION

We are many.

(Beat.)

LEGION

We are hunger.

(Beat.)

LEGION

We are correction.

(Beat.)

LEGION

We are Legion.

(Jay’s body rises an inch, then slams back down. A burst of gold erupts beneath his skin and the Mark of Cain answers.)

(For one impossible second, the Lion on his chest glows through the blood. The cathedral trembles. The sigils flicker.)

(A memory flashes through the darkness—Ophia’s face. The sanctuary. The lambs. A whispered prayer.)

JAY’S VOICE (FAINT, DISTANT)

Christ...

(For one impossible second, the corpse is not a corpse.)

(Jay’s hand slams flat against the cathedral floor. The black stone cracks beneath his fingers. Gold erupts through the veins in his arm, racing up throat and across face like living fire beneath skin.)

(One eye flashes gold.)

(Jay inhales—not fully, not like life, but enough to hurt the darkness.)

(His mouth opens.)

JAY

Ophia...

(The name echoes strangely through the chamber, half prayer, half memory.)

(The Lion of Judah ignites beneath the blood across his chest, blazing so bright the black-red smoke recoils. For one staggering moment the corruption is pushed back. The cathedral trembles. The sigils flicker. Even the Prince narrows his eyes.)

(Fragments strike through the dark in violent flashes—)

(Ophia drawing the lion in the dust.)

(The sanctuary doors.)

(The lambs huddled in the dark.)

(A child’s voice saying, “You kept my drawing.”)

(Jay’s body convulses as if trying to rise under its own will.)

JAY

No—

(The gold surges harder.)

(The black tendrils lash around his throat, ribs, and spine, dragging him back down.)

LEGION

Resistance escalating. Memory anchor detected. Filial bond detected. Severing.

(The gold light flares one last time—violent enough to force the shadow mass backward in a wave.)

(Then Legion crashes down on it with overwhelming force.)

(The gold surges once more.)

(Legion presses harder.)

(The tendrils thicken.)

(The black-red smoke behind Jay gathers itself into a towering shape—a symbiote mass of shadows and living strands, like a neural storm given form. It looms over the corpse, calculating, adapting, forcing itself deeper.)

LEGION

Resistance detected. Identity persistence detected. Erasure required.

(Jay's corpse convulses once more. His hand claws at the stone, teeth bared. For a fleeting dreadful moment—he is fighting. Not alive. Not gone. Trapped between life and death.)

(The Mark of Cain glows golden through chest, throat, eyes. The eye flickers gold. Ophia's voice echoes. A single breath feels human again.)

(The Prince watches closely now. The golden light almost reaches his face.)

(Almost.)

LEGION

Silence.

(The black tendrils surge straight through the gold, fracturing the light and breaking the resistance. The Mark of Cain dims to a fading ember before disappearing beneath black.)

(Jay's body rises slowly.)

(But wrong.)

(Too smooth in some places. Too broken in others. His head tilts at an angle no living neck should allow. His arms hang loose for one moment. Then breathing returns—not as breath, but function.)

(Mechanisms restarting under possession.)

(The red shades, cracked across one lens, still hang on his face. The mask remains half-bolted to his jaw.)

(Suddenly both hands rise to his face.)

(He grips the mask and tears it off.)

(Metal screams loose.)

(The shades shatter across the cathedral floor.)

(The face beneath is horrifying. Blood runs from the mouth. Black veins crawl beneath the skin. His eyes are no longer red.)

(They are fully black.)

(Void-black.)

(Watching.)

(The Prince studies the result with fascination and satisfaction.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Rise...

(A beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

...my brothers.

(Jay rises fully now.)

(Perfect balance. Perfect stillness. Perfect wrongness.)

(The man is gone.)

(But the body has never looked more capable.)

(Legion speaks through him.)

(Not like dialogue.)

(Like a network finding speech.)

LEGION JAY

Viable host acquired.

(Beat.)

LEGION JAY

Combat memory accessible.

(Beat.)

LEGION JAY

Correction begins.

(Jay's cybernetic hand flexes. Each finger moves with terrible precision. The machine parts answer instantly. The spine stabilizes. The shoulders reset.)

(The body is being learned in real time.)

(Legion stands inside him the way a conqueror stands inside a captured city—learning every road, every weapon, every weakness.)

LEGION

Motor function synchronized. Combat chassis optimized. Pain inhibitors overridden. Host lethality exceeds forecast.

(A beat.)

LEGION

Primary war-form confirmed.

(The shadow mass behind him collapses inward. It seeps into spine, skull, chest, nerves. The entire cathedral flickers.)

(And far beyond it—)

(so does Neo-Babylon.)

(Every branded soldier halts mid-motion. Every Watcher drone pauses in the sky. Every system across the fortress stutters—then reconnects.)

(Legion has discovered a new center.)

(Jay.)

(The Prince of Persia begins walking toward him slowly, studying the new creature with the gaze of a king inspecting a weapon forged for him.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Welcome to the empire.

(Jay turns his head slowly.)

(His black eyes lock onto the Prince.)

(A beat passes.)

(Legion remains silent at first, studying him, measuring him, reading rank, power, threat, history, utility.)

(The Prince's smile fades slightly.)

(He feels it too.)

(For a fleeting moment, the cathedral belongs to something neither the throne nor the prince fully commands.)

(Then Jay speaks.)

LEGION

Correction required.

(Silence.)

(The Prince does not answer immediately. For the first time since Jay entered the cathedral, he studies the thing before him without superiority. Without certainty.)

(The air between them tightens.)

(Jay's black eyes do not blink. They do not burn with rage. They calculate. The Prince sees it now—this is not merely possession.)

(It is convergence.)

(A battlefield mind. A dead warrior. A machine body. A hive intelligence.)

(All of it standing in one shape.)

(The broken light behind the Prince flickers once.)

(A small thing.)

(But noticeable.)

(The throne room no longer feels entirely his.)

(And he knows it.)

(When he finally smiles again, it is with control, not comfort.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Yes.

(A beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

It always is.

(The cathedral windows explode outward.)

(Far below—)

(Neo-Babylon burns.)

(The fortress collapses sector by sector as war spreads through its body. Guardian angels descend into the battlefield. Chimeras tear through the halls. Prisoners flee toward the hills. The hidden war is hidden no longer.)

(Inside the cathedral—)

(Legion stands inside Jay's body.)

(Perfect. Deadly. A super-intelligence wearing the most dangerous warrior on Earth.)

(The Prince turns toward the burning horizon.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Let the world witness.

(Jay—now Legion—steps toward the broken edge of the cathedral and looks out across the wasteland.)

(The black eyes glow faintly.)

(Not with rage.)

(With calculation.)

(Every movement below.)

(Every soul.)

(Every signal.)

(Every fear.)

LEGION

Global correction protocol beginning.

(A beat.)

LEGION

We all will be one.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF ACT VIII

THE GHOST OF ASHES

ACT IX — GHOSTS OF THE COSMOS

FADE IN:

154. EXT. THE HILLS ABOVE BABYLON — NIGHT

(The world does not slow.)

(It stops.)

(The wind dies.)

(Ash hangs motionless in the air.)

(Smoke from Babylon's burning carcass freezes against the sky like black paint dragged across glass.)

(The survivors feel it before they understand it.)

(A pressure shift.)

(Not weather.)

(Not fear.)

(Something greater.)

(Below them, Babylon groans through its own collapse. The outer breach still burns like a furnace torn into the mountain. Towers lean. Bridges fall. Cathedral stone drops into the abyss. The last of the Phoenix cloud stains the horizon in ember and radioactive ash.)

(It looks like judgment has already fallen.)

(It has not.)

(On the ridges above the ruin, the survivors keep climbing. Men. Women. Children. Elders. The strong dragging the wounded. Some still wearing chains. Some still barefoot. Some too exhausted to understand they are free.)

(Their faces are hollow.)

(But they are alive.)

(MALACHI moves among them like a shepherd who never expected to become one. His armor is broken. One cybernetic arm flickers through torn flesh. He hides the damage badly.)

(It no longer looks like power.)

(It looks like debt.)

(Beside him stands his GUARDIAN ANGEL.)

(White robe.)

(Golden boots.)

(Smooth gold mask.)

(Rapier burning with holy fire.)

(More guardian angels reveal themselves across the ridgeline. Survivors stare. Some weep. Some fall to their knees.)

(Higher up, NAOMI takes command.)

NAOMI

Keep moving!

Children behind the rocks!

Wounded in the center!

Fighters outside! Move!

(Some obey instantly.)

(Some are too exhausted to think.)

(Some stop only to look back at Babylon and listen to it die.)

NAOMI

Do not watch it! Move!

(She grabs a frozen TEENAGE BOY by the shoulders, turns him uphill, shoves him toward safety.)

NAOMI

You can stare after you survive.

(Ophia stops walking.)

(She clutches her chest.)

(Not from pain.)

(From absence.)

(As if something in the world has suddenly gone missing.)

OPHIA

Dad?

(She turns toward Babylon. Sound dulls around her. Breath shortens.)

(Then something colder follows.)

(Something wrong.)

(Something wearing what should have been familiar.)

(Malachi sees her freeze.)

(His face hardens.)

MALACHI

No.

—

155. INT. BABYLON — FRACTURED SYSTEM NODES — CONTINUOUS

(Deep inside the corpse of the fortress, broken terminals flicker back to life.)

(Cracked screens spit static.)

(Holo-sigils pulse through damaged projectors.)

(Relay towers spark.)

(Broadcast horns hum.)

(The hive has found a new center.)

(Then the voice comes.)

(Not from one speaker.)

(From all of them.)

(From every machine still capable of carrying sound.)

(Many voices.)

(One will.)

LEGION

Global correction protocol engaging.

(Beat.)

LEGION

We see the hill.

(Beat.)

LEGION

We will correct hope.

(The words roll through the valley through broken loudspeakers and relay horns.)

(The survivors hear enough.)

(Some panic.)

(Some clutch their children tighter.)

(Some look for somewhere else to run.)

(There is nowhere else to run.)

—

156. EXT. THE HILLS ABOVE BABYLON — CONTINUOUS

(Ophia still stares toward Babylon. Her eyes are wet now, but she does not cry.)

(She is listening for someone who is no longer there.)

(Malachi steps forward and raises his voice across the crowd.)

MALACHI

To the summit!

Highest ground! Move!

If the city falls again, we do not die beneath it!

The Lord has brought you this far!

Do not stop now!

(The crowd obeys.)

(The exodus continues upward.)

(Below them, the CHIMERA BELIEVERS keep fighting. At this distance they look like beasts moving through fire, but some still carry the silhouettes of men and women inside the nightmare.)

(One is torn apart beneath a collapsed archway while pinning a branded squad in place.)

(Another braces a crushed blast door open long enough for children and wounded elders to pass before the corridor collapses over it.)

(Their affliction did not erase their faith.)

(Then the air grows heavier.)

(All the guardian angels look up at once.)

(Their swords lower.)

(Not in surrender.)

(In reverence.)

(The survivors notice. If the angels are looking up, then something above even them has moved.)

(The clouds flatten.)

(The last motion in the sky is pulled inward.)

(The world enters a silence so profound it hurts.)

(No wind.)

(No screaming.)

(No fire crackle.)

(Only waiting.)

(Then Heaven answers.)

MICHAEL (O.S.)
ENOUGH.

(The word is not spoken.)

(It is imposed.)

(Law.)

(It detonates across the sky with the force of a war cry uttered before the first dawn. The mountain trembles. The Glasslands answer with rolling echoes. Babylon's towers rattle. Fires lean sideways. Every demon in the valley stops. Every machine sputters.)

(The sky splits open.)

(Not like lightning.)

(Not like clouds parting.)

(Like reality itself is being torn from the outside by a hand too powerful for matter to deny.)

(A vast rupture opens above the world.)

(A wound of white-gold light ringed in black gravitational distortion. Clouds are erased in expanding circles.)

(It is bright enough to bleach the night and terrible enough to drive the strongest survivors to their knees.)

(Malachi drops to one knee.)

(His guardian angel bows its head.)

(Naomi remains standing only because her body forgets to kneel before her spirit remembers.)

(Ophia shields her eyes with both hands and still cannot look away.)

(Then movement.)

(Three streaks descend from within the rupture.)

(Faster than thought.)

(Faster than fear.)

—

157. INT. BABYLON — THRONE CATHEDRAL RUIN — CONTINUOUS

(The cathedral chamber is now a carcass. Stone arches rise like the ribs of a fallen titan. Black alien machinery crawls through the architecture like infected veins. Broken screens flicker along shattered columns. Pipes vent steam in violent bursts. Red emergency light pulses like the last heartbeat of a dying organ.)

(At the center stands LEGION, wearing Jay's body.)

(The host trembles. Black tendrils move beneath broken armor like living veins. The posture is wrong.)

(Through Jay's throat, Legion speaks.)

LEGION

We observe.

We divide.

(Across Babylon, the system answers. Branded soldiers freeze. Their heads tilt. Their eyes blacken. Weapons rise. Drones wake. Heavy emplacements swivel toward the fleeing survivors.)

THE BRANDED

Global correction protocol engaging.

(The chamber vibrates violently.)

(Then the ceiling explodes.)

(The whole upper cathedral detonates outward in a blinding eruption of stone, steel, and alien alloy. The shockwave rips through the chamber, erasing demonic sigils carved into the floor and extinguishing black fire gutters. The ground itself is forced clean.)

(A beam of pure white light descends from Heaven like a divine meteor.)

(It strikes the center of the chamber with such force the floor caves inward.)

(Then the beam fades.)

(Three figures stand in the smoking crater.)

(MICHAEL.)

(GABRIEL.)

(RAPHAEL.)

(Michael at center. Towering. Golden armor reflecting storm and ruin. Across his back rests LIGHTBRINGER, the sword once carried by Lucifer before rebellion stripped him of it.)

(Gabriel to his left. White robes moving in furnace wind. Golden sword burning with holy flame.)

(Raphael to his right. Halo blazing. Spear lit with celestial fire. His stillness is unbearable.)

(The ground around them changes. Infernal symbols touching it are erased. Corruption peels back. A circular arena of sanctified stone spreads outward from their feet across the chamber.)

(Legion studies them through Jay's face.)

LEGION

Archangel threats confirmed.

(Michael stares only at Jay's body.)

(He sees the scars.)

(The ravaged flesh.)

(The corrupted remnant of the Lion across the chest.)

(Michael lifts Lightbringer.)

MICHAEL

You wear the flesh of a warrior.

(Beat.)

MICHAEL

Return it.

(Legion smiles with Jay's mouth.)

LEGION

This vessel is no longer singular.

(Michael steps forward.)

(Gabriel catches his arm.)

GABRIEL

Brother.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

Do not kill the boy.

(Michael does not look away from Legion.)

MICHAEL

If he is gone—

GABRIEL

He is not.

(Raphael steps between them and drives his spear into the ground.)

RAPHAEL

Then separate them.

(The pressure holds.)

(Then releases.)

(Michael exhales once.)

(Control.)

(Hell answers.)

(The PRINCE OF PERSIA emerges from the shattered throne ruin. Shadows pour from his spine. New arms sprout from his torso—four, six, eight—each holding a weapon from a different era of conquest.)

(His lower form shifts. Hooves crack through sacred stone. Golden-black horns rise from his skull in a crescent.)

(He becomes an idol brought to life.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

So.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Wrath answers.

(Michael never takes his eyes off Legion.)

MICHAEL

Take him.

(Gabriel and Raphael launch.)

(Two streaks of holy force cross the arena and crash into the Prince. The collision tears open a dimensional fracture.)

(The battlefield splits.)

(Michael raises one hand.)

(A pillar of white-gold light engulfs him and Legion.)

—

158. EXT. EUROPA — THE FROZEN MOON — ELSEWHERE

(White wasteland.)

(Endless ice.)

(Jupiter fills half the sky like a watching god.)

(Michael and Legion appear at the center of a beam impact.)

(They still have not moved.)

(But their existence alone begins destroying the moon.)

(The ice beneath them fractures outward for miles. Subsurface oceans burst upward in black-blue geysers. The crust groans.)

(The fight has not even begun.)

LEGION

We remember him.

(Beat.)

LEGION

Every weapon.

Every seal.

Every kill.

(Michael draws Lightbringer.)

(The blade comes free in a line of impossible white fire.)

MICHAEL

Return the body.

(Legion launches.)

(Not motion.)

(Detonation.)

(Jay's spinal booster ignites. Ice erupts backward in blinding white. The body crosses the distance with artillery speed. Mantis blades deploy and slash for Michael's throat.)

(Michael blocks with Lightbringer.)

(The impact cracks Europa.)

(A circular shockwave ripples outward for miles.)

(Legion attacks again instantly.)

(Strike. Elbow. Blade. Knee. Shoulder.)

(Everything chained together with no wasted motion.)

(Jay's body moves with the memory of brutal training sharpened by inhuman calculation.)

(Michael blocks each blow.)

(One hand on Lightbringer.)

(One foot sliding back inches through the ice.)

(That is all.)

—

159. EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE — NIGHT

(The survivors see only flashes in the war-window a guardian angel cuts across the sky with its burning rapier.)

(Two lights colliding over an alien world.)

(Some children think they are watching stars fight.)

(Some elders know better.)

(Malachi does not blink.)

(Naomi wraps an arm around Ophia's shoulders. The child can barely breathe.)

(She does not understand everything.)

(But she understands one of those flashes is her father.)

—

160. EXT. EUROPA — CONTINUOUS

(Legion slides back across the ice. The M-60 drops into its hands from one of Jay's arsenal seals as if it never belonged to anyone else. Tendrils feed the belt. The barrels spin.)

(Thunder.)

(The gun roars.)

(Thousands of demonic .50 caliber rounds scream across Europa in a continuous wall of violence. Ice plains detonate. Frozen ridges become vapor.)

(Michael walks forward through the chaos.)

(Bullets strike Lightbringer and become sparks.)

(Bullets strike his armor and flare into harmless radiance.)

(But not him.)

LEGION

Archangel armor exceeds expected decay.

(Michael keeps walking.)

(At last he speaks.)

MICHAEL

More.

(Legion obeys.)

(David's sling flashes into the host's hand. A consecrated grenade seats into the cradle.)

(Spin.)

(Release.)

(The grenade becomes a comet across the moon.)

(Michael raises Lightbringer.)

(The blade meets it.)

(The explosion flowers into a miniature sun.)

(Michael moves.)

(The world fails to keep pace.)

(In one instant he stands.)

(In the next he is inside Legion's guard.)

(Lightbringer arcs once. Legion crosses both mantis blades and blocks.)

(The force sends both through mountain-sized ice ridges and down into the ocean beneath the crust.)

—

161. EXT. EUROPA — SUBSURFACE OCEAN

(Black water flashes into boiling chaos around them. Steam turns the deep white. Their silhouettes appear only in lightning-born flashes of their own power.)

(Legion slashes.)

(Michael blocks.)

(Michael punches.)

(The ocean floor quakes.)

(Legion drives a cybernetic knee into Michael's ribs.)

(The strike detonates the seabed.)

(Legion learns.)

(It observes Michael's shoulder turns before a strike. The way his wings brace space before impact. The way Lightbringer does not merely cut matter but commands it to part.)

(Legion feints left.)

(Michael blocks right.)

(Legion anticipated that.)

(A mantis blade punches through a seam in Michael's armor and drags across his side.)

(The first true mark appears.)

(A line of light spilling from a wound that should not be possible.)

(Legion recoils.)

(Not from fear.)

(From joy.)

LEGION

Damage confirmed.

(Michael looks down at the wound.)

(Then back up.)

(The smile is gone.)

(What remains is older than anger.)

MICHAEL

At last.

(His aura ignites.)

(Golden-white force erupts outward in concentric rings. The ocean around them vaporizes into expanding walls of steam. The ice above splits open as if a star is trying to emerge beneath the moon.)

(Michael grips Lightbringer with both hands.)

(For the first time.)

—

162. EXT. FRACTURED WAR-REALM — ELSEWHERE

(Gabriel and Raphael battle the Prince of Persia through a dimension stitched together from the memory of empire.)

(Persian pillars rise from black sand.)

(Babylonian terraces hang upside down.)

(Roman arches burn against a blood-red horizon.)

(The Prince moves through it like every throne ever bent the knee to him.)

(Gabriel arrives first.)

(His flaming blade cuts downward in a vertical line of white fire, splitting a palace tower in half.)

(Raphael crashes in from the side, spear burning with golden heat. He hits the Prince in the ribs with enough force to overlap three realities at once.)

(For one breath, a Persian throne room, a desert battlefield of bones, and a ruined modern city coexist.)

(Then they tear apart again.)

(The Prince slides backward.)

(Six arms fan out behind him into infernal weaponry.)

(He smiles.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Gabriel.

(Beat.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Still offended.

(Gabriel steps forward slowly. Halo burning white behind his head.)

GABRIEL

You delayed Heaven once.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

You will not do it twice.

(Raphael rolls the burning shaft of his weapon through one hand and catches it.)

RAPHAEL

And tonight—

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

—you answer for all of it.

(The Prince laughs softly.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

Then come collect.

(They collide.)

—

163. EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE — NIGHT

(The survivors watch both wars through the sky fractures.)

(Some cannot understand what they are seeing.)

(Some can only follow color—white, gold, black, crimson.)

(A young boy drops to both knees and sobs without sound.)

(His mother kneels beside him and prays with her forehead pressed to the stone.)

(An OLD MAN who spent years in Babylon's lower pits laughs through tears.)

OLD MAN

They came.

(Beat.)

OLD MAN

They really came.

(Ophia keeps staring upward.)

(For the first time in her life, evil looks afraid.)

—

164. EXT. EUROPA — SURFACE

(Michael ascends through shattered ocean and ice, pursued by Legion. They collide in the void above the moon. The impact creates a visible ring across Europa's horizon.)

(Legion accelerates again—full spinal booster, full cybernetic output. The body begins hurting itself under the hive's command. Ligaments tear. Joints scream. The host becomes expendable.)

(Legion unleashes twelve simultaneous attacks in a single breath.)

(A punch.)

(A blade.)

(An elbow.)

(A kick.)

(A tendril burst.)

(Every strike a piece of Jay's martial memory weaponized at inhuman speed.)

(Michael deflects some.)

(Absorbs some.)

(Allows some to land simply to measure them.)

(As they trade at the speed of collapsing stars, Legion leans in close.)

LEGION

You forged a beautiful weapon.

(Michael catches both of Jay's wrists in one hand.)

(Stops the next strike before it begins.)

MICHAEL

He is not a weapon.

(Headbutt.)

(The impact sends Legion spinning through a glacier wall. Michael is on him before the debris has fallen. He drives Lightbringer down. Legion twists aside by an impossible fraction. The sword carves a canyon through the moon.)

(Legion lands on one knee.)

(The host trembles.)

(Michael sees it.)

(His expression tightens.)

MICHAEL

I expected more.

(The parasite slowly tilts Jay's head.)

LEGION

Then witness reflection.

(Jay's blood spills from split flesh into vacuum.)

(It does not drift.)

(It arranges.)

(Rings.)

(Circles.)

(Geometry.)

(Michael studies them.)

(They resemble the Seals of Solomon.)

(But wrong.)

(The sigils multiply.)

(One becomes ten.)

(Ten become fifty.)

(The sky above Europa fills with spinning demonic geometry.)

LEGION

We call the strength of those cast down.

(Beat.)

LEGION

And the first rebellion.

(The frozen blood sigils ignite with black fire.)

(Vacuum itself seems to scream. Gravity around Europa begins collapsing inward.)

(The spinal booster erupts white-hot.)

(Mantis blades deploy again, glowing with stolen strength.)

(The host rockets forward.)

(The blades strike Michael.)

(The moon erupts.)

(Ice plains split open.)

(Michael is thrown backward through searing vapor and frozen stone.)

(The archangel stops.)

(He slowly lifts his head.)

(His expression changes.)

(Disappointment fades.)

(Curiosity.)

MICHAEL

Oh.

(Legion attacks again, now landing blows.)

(Michael blocks the next strike.)

(His eyes burn brighter.)

MICHAEL

So.

(The archangel straightens.)

MICHAEL

You finally found your courage.

(Michael grabs the host mid-charge.)

(The parasite struggles. The sigils above Europa spin faster. Borrowed power floods through Jay's body.)

LEGION

WE SURPASS—

(Michael hurls him backward.)

MICHAEL
You stole power.

(The sigils above Europa begin cracking.)

(Michael raises both hands.)

MICHAEL
I earned it.

(The sky above Europa explodes into light.)

(Gravity becomes impossibly heavy. Creation itself floods the moon.)

(Lightbringer dissolves into pure divine fire and pours across Michael's armor. A radiant cross of creation ignites over chest and back. His aura expands until a halo of white-gold force surrounds him like an unfolding galaxy around the General of Heaven.)

(A starborn sphere of judgment condenses around him.)

(A newborn star held in obedience.)

(Michael closes both hands.)

(The star collapses instantly into his palms.)

(A concentrated star burns there.)

(Michael thrusts one hand forward.)

MICHAEL
Judgment.

(Beat.)

MICHAEL
THRONE OF THE SOUL CALIBER!

(He fires.)

(A column of divine annihilation tears across Europa, carving a trench across the moon's surface. Ice plains melt instantly. The ocean beneath detonates upward in boiling pillars.)

(Legion is caught in the beam.)

(The parasite screams.)

(Jay's body begins to disintegrate. The parasite buries itself deeper into nervous system and cybernetics, refusing to release.)

(The inverted sigils ignite harder.)

LEGION
TRUE REFLECTION.

(The demonic geometry intercepts the beam.)

(For one impossible second, the divine column halts.)

(The blood sigils scream. The geometry fractures.)

(But holds.)

(The beam bends.)

(Half the attack reflects sideways into space, slicing a burning scar across orbit.)

(The reflected energy slams back toward Michael.)

(Divine fire and black demonic geometry collide.)

(Space folds inward.)

(Gravity fractures.)

(The shockwave rips across Europa. The crust breaks completely. The ocean erupts into orbit.)

(Michael stands inside the reflected blast.)

(The beam smashes against his armor.)

(The ground beneath him cracks.)

(He slides backward.)

(Only meters.)

(His wings flare outward, anchoring into space itself.)

(Michael stops.)

(He is still standing.)

(The reflected beam fades.)

(The battlefield goes quiet.)

(Steam rises from boiling oceans.)

(Michael looks through the ruin.)

(One eye in Jay's face flickers clear.)

(Not Legion.)

(Jay.)

(Michael sees it.)

(Everything changes.)

MICHAEL

There you are.

(Legion hears it too. The brood panics.)

LEGION

He is fragmented—

He is beneath—

(Michael vanishes.)

(He is suddenly inside the host's guard, one hand around Jay's throat, the other at the parasite's spine.)

(This battlefield is no longer for destruction.)

(It is for separation.)

165. EXT. FRACTURED WAR-REALM / EARTH-SLIP — ELSEWHERE

(The war-realm reforms around Gabriel, Raphael, and the Prince.)

(The Prince is wounded now. Several arms severed. Black fire leaking from the openings.)

(Still smiling.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You cannot kill what Heaven once allowed to rule.

(Gabriel lands upright. Halo blazing.)

GABRIEL

No.

(Beat.)

GABRIEL

But we can end your reign.

(Raphael lands beside him. Spear lit brighter than before.)

RAPHAEL

And if your throne wants to follow you into judgment—

(Beat.)

RAPHAEL

—let it.

(The Prince spreads his remaining arms. Throne-energy fuses deeper into his back. Screaming faces flicker across the construct behind him.)

(The dimension begins collapsing toward him like a gravitational wound.)

(Gabriel and Raphael exchange one look.)

(Brothers in final agreement.)

GABRIEL

Together.

RAPHAEL

Together.

(Gabriel lifts his weapon.)

GABRIEL

GALACTIC ART—
SPEAR OF ANDROMEDA.

(Raphael steps forward.)

RAPHAEL

SOLAR ART—
TRIDENT OF ORION.

(The Prince roars.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

DARK ART—
CROWN OF BABYLON.

(The three forces collide.)

(The dimension shatters.)

(A tear opens in space.)

(Through it—)

(Earth.)

(Blue.)

(Small.)

(Waiting.)

(Gabriel stabilizes first and grabs Raphael's shoulder.)

GABRIEL

Earth.

(Raphael nods.)

RAPHAEL

Finish it there.

(The Prince bursts through the debris behind them.)

PRINCE OF PERSIA

You will not escape!

(The angels launch through the tear.)

(The Prince follows.)

(The rupture collapses.)

—

166. EXT. EUROPA — GLASSED BASIN OF RUIN

(The battlefield is silent.)

(The parasite still remains.)

(It twitches inside Jay's ruined body.)

(It drags itself across the glassed basin.)

(Barely holding the host together.)

(Michael descends slowly.)

(Lightbringer fades.)

(He no longer needs it.)

(He lands at the crater's edge and walks down into it. Each step is a verdict.)

(Legion tries to stand. Michael kicks the host's leg out from under him and catches him by the throat.)

(Legion swings a broken mantis blade upward.)

(Michael catches the arm.)

(Breaks it.)

(Another strike—Michael tears that arm free at the shoulder and throws it into the boiling sea.)

(The parasite still tries to laugh through broken teeth and static.)

LEGION

We endure.

MICHAEL

No.

(He kneels beside the ruined host.)

(Studies Jay's face.)

MICHAEL

Child of Elohim.

(Beat.)

MICHAEL

You fought harder than most.

(He places one hand against the corrupted chest.)

(Michael's voice lowers.)

MICHAEL

Come back.

(The parasite recoils beneath the touch.)

LEGION

We withdraw.

(Michael tilts his head.)

MICHAEL

You do not get to run.

(A shield of light appears on Michael's forearm. It ignites and reshapes into a serrated blade of divine fire.)

(The blade roars to life.)

(The sound echoes across the shattered moon like cosmic machinery sanctified for war.)

(The parasite panics.)

LEGION

We withdraw!

(Michael leans closer to Jay's face.)

MICHAEL

Show me where you are.

(He drives the weapon down through corruption and spirit.)

(Black ichor explodes across the battlefield.)

(The blade tears through symbiotic mass, stripping it from bone, nerve, cybernetic metal.)

(The parasite convulses.)

(Through Jay's ruined face—)

(One eye flickers clear.)

(Jay.)

(Michael sees it.)

(The blade slows by a fraction.)

MICHAEL

There you are.

(Jay's mouth opens.)

(A broken gasp escapes.)

(That is enough.)

(Michael tears the weapon free, seizes the ruined host by the throat and blasts upward through Europa's burning wound—through boiling water, through reforming ice shell, through breaking crust, into vacuum.)

(For one breath Europa hangs behind them—cracked, burning, half-glassed by judgment.)

(Then, as Michael's wrath leaves it, the moon begins to crystallize again. Molten wounds cool. Steam freezes.)

(Michael and the ruined host become a streak of light across the black.)

(Toward Earth.)

—

167. EXT. HILLTOP RIDGE — NIGHT

(The survivors witness a beam of light returning from deep space with Michael dragging Jay's broken body behind him.)

(The crowd gasps.)

(Guardian angels spread their wings and raise an impenetrable holy shield over the hilltop. Whatever is about to strike the mountain is beyond flesh.)

(Malachi looks upward, unable to tear his eyes away.)

(Naomi grips Ophia's shoulder tightly. The child says nothing.)

(Michael descends like judgment.)

(He slams Legion-Jay into the mountain summit with enough force to obliterate the peak. Stone vaporizes. The mountain buckles. The shield over the people trembles but holds.)

(Beyond the shield, the summit becomes a crater of divine force and ruined black corruption.)

(As dust settles, Michael stands there.)

(One foot on Jay's chest.)

(Lightbringer raised high.)

(The old image made literal—the archangel pinning the fallen thing beneath Heaven’s blade.)

(But something shifts.)

(The symbiote has been scraped away from half of Jay’s face. The human side remains visible—
bloodied, unconscious, struggling to surface.)

(This time it is not Legion trying to rise.)

(It is Jay.)

(Ophia takes one step forward.)

(Naomi catches her instantly.)

(Michael raises the sword.)

(The world seems to stop.)

HARD CUT TO:

—

168. INT. VISION — SHORE OF THE GADARENES

(A boat touches the sand.)

(Waves barely move.)

(The disciples remain in the boat, uncertain, watching.)

(Jesus steps onto the shore—calm, silent, absolute.)

(Before Him stands Jay.)

(The man among the tombs.)

(Chained.)

(Wild-eyed.)

(Covered in filth, blood, and ruin.)

(Possessed by Legion.)

(The possessed man falls to his knees, Legion writhing beneath skin and spirit.)

(The scene holds there—right before the plea, right before Christ changes everything.)

—

169. EXT. TOMBS OF THE GADARENES — CONTINUOUS

(The hillside is scarred with ancient tombs carved into stone. A graveyard above the sea. Broken chains lie everywhere, rusted and snapped.)

(Then movement.)

(A man runs across the graves, wild and bloodied, half naked, covered in dirt and torn flesh.)

(It is Jay.)

(He is reliving the story of Legion within his own modern soul.)

(Not only as memory.)

(As revelation.)

(Jay looks down at his hands. Cybernetic fingers twitch uncontrollably. He tries to stop moving.)

(His body refuses.)

(The parasite takes control.)

JAY / LEGION

We dwell among the dead.

(The corrupted Jay moves toward a corpse among the stones.)

JAY

No.

(The parasite forces the body down.)

(Jay tears into dead flesh—not hunger, not need, but possession made visible.)

(Jay screams inside his own skull.)

JAY
STOP.

(Inside his head—)

(The voices.)

JAY / LEGION (V.O.)
You are only the cage.

(Jay grabs his head, trying to fight them out.)

JAY
GET OUT OF MY HEAD!

(Jay drops to his knees.)

(The moment Christ steps onto the shore, the demon inside Jay reacts violently. The body convulses. Cybernetic limbs twitch. The parasite tries to retreat.)

(Then looks up.)

(Because Someone is walking toward him.)

(Jesus.)

(He does not hurry.)

(He does not posture.)

(He simply walks.)

(And the demons tremble.)

JAY / LEGION
DO NOT COME CLOSER.

(The voice multiplies.)

JAY / LEGION

We beg you.
Do not torment us.

(Jay crawls backward. The demonic voice tears through his mouth. But his human eyes are begging.)

(Jesus stops a few feet away.)

(Silence.)

(Then He speaks.)

JESUS

What is your name?

(Jay's body convulses violently. His mouth opens.)

(The answer is not human.)

JAY / LEGION

MY NAME IS LEGION... FOR WE ARE MANY.

(The ground shakes. Tombstones tremble.)

(Jesus remains unmoved.)

JAY / LEGION

Please—do not cast us into the abyss.

(Jesus steps closer.)

(The demon tries to pull away.)

(Jesus reaches forward.)

(And instead of pointing—He grabs Jay's face.)

(The moment Christ touches him, the corruption begins burning.)

(His voice remains calm.)

JESUS

Release him.

(Beat.)

JESUS

You do not belong in what is mine.

(The parasite screeches violently.)

(Jesus does not let go. Divine light burns from His hand. The exorcism becomes violence.)

(The demons tear themselves free.)

(Jay screams. Cybernetic limbs spark violently.)

(The command is absolute. Demons erupt from Jay's body like black smoke ripped from a soul. They rush across the hillside and enter the swine.)

(The pigs scream and bolt over the cliff.)

(The crash of bodies into the sea echoes through the rocks.)

(The world dissolves.)

(Color returns.)

(The garden of Heaven begins to emerge.)

(Then silence.)

(Jay collapses into the dirt.)

(Breathing.)

(Alive.)

(Free.)

(Jesus kneels beside him and gently helps him sit up.)

(Jay looks into His face, confused, tears running down his cheeks.)

(But the vision begins dissolving.)

(Because this is not only the past.)

(It is the pattern beneath the present.)

—

170. INT. PARADISE — THE GARDEN

(Jay gasps and sits up.)

(Before him: green hills, rivers, trees, a sky so blue it hurts. Golden sunlight through soft clouds.
Air carrying the scent of spring. Everything untouched by decay, war, or time.)

(Jay looks down at himself.)

(His body is whole.)

(No blood.)

(No mask.)

(No armor.)

(No cybernetics.)

(No scars.)

(Just him.)

(He rises slowly, confused.)

JAY

Am I dead?

(He looks around at rivers, trees, hills, sky.)

(Then whispers.)

JAY

I shouldn't be here.

(His voice cracks.)

JAY

Not after everything I've done.

(He drops to his knees, shaking.)

JAY

I carried the Mark.

I let that thing inside me.

I let it kill with my hands.

(His voice becomes desperate.)

JAY

So why am I here?

(The wind moves across the hills.)

(Then something colossal moves behind him.)

(Jay slowly turns.)

(A lion.)

(Enormous.)

(Majestic.)

(Golden fur gleaming. Amber eyes filled with ancient sorrow and impossible love. A crown of golden thorns rests upon its head. One paw is pierced.)

(Jay freezes.)

(The lion walks toward him.)

(Not threatening.)

(Simply present.)

(Jay begins crying instantly. All the pain. All the guilt. All the centuries.)

(Everything breaks at once.)

(He falls into the lion, clutching its mane, weeping like a man finally too tired to remain hard.)

JAY

I tried. God... I tried.

(The Lion remains silent, resting its head against him.)

(A single tear falls from its eye.)

(Then the world changes.)

(The Lion becomes a man.)

(Before him stands Jesus Christ.)

(Simple.)

(Beautiful.)

(Calm.)

(White tunic.)

(Red sash.)

(Carpenter's tools at His belt.)

(Golden gauntlets on His forearms.)

(A crown not of suffering, but kingship.)

(Jesus looks at Jay.)

(Not angry.)

(Not disappointed.)

(Only knowing.)

JAY

Why me?

(His voice cracks again.)

JAY

Why the mark?
Why centuries of war?
Why suffering?
Why silence?

(He rises, angry now, bare before God in a way he never allowed himself to be before anyone.)

JAY

Where were you when I was drowning in that thing?
Where were you when it took my body?
Where were you when I thought I was lost?

(He clenches his fists.)

JAY

You could end it.
You could stop all of this.

(He turns fully toward Christ.)

JAY

So why didn't you?

(Jesus lets the question breathe.)

(Then answers.)

(His voice is calm. But creation listens.)

JESUS

I was there.

(Beat.)

JESUS

When Lucifer dragged you into Hades.

(Beat.)

JESUS

When I pulled you out.

(Beat.)

JESUS

When you chose light instead of hatred.

(Beat.)

JESUS

When you carried pain so others would not have to.

(Jay begins crying again.)

JESUS

Your suffering was never your end.

(Beat.)

JESUS

It was your road.

(He steps closer. Lifts Jay's chin.)

JESUS

And you walked it.

(Jay can barely breathe.)

(Jesus speaks again, softer, deeper.)

JESUS

Rise, my son.

(Jay looks up.)

(Jesus' voice becomes power.)

JESUS

Set my people free.

—

171. EXT. MOUNTAIN CRATER — NIGHT

(Michael stands over Jay's broken body, Lightbringer raised high.)

(The old image becomes real.)

(The archangel pins the fallen figure beneath Heaven's judgment.)

(But something shifts.)

(The Mark of Cain ignites.)

(Not violently.)

(Not corruptively.)

(Pure golden light.)

(It begins glowing beneath Jay's ruined skin—soft at first, then brighter until it becomes blinding. Legion senses it instantly.)

(The black covering Jay's body begins burning.)

LEGION

NO—THIS VESSEL IS OURS—

(The corruption writhes, tightening, trying to reclaim the host, to choke the light. But the Mark burns hotter, spreading through Jay's veins like molten gold.)

(Michael's sword pauses for the first time.)

(He does not strike.)

(He understands.)

MICHAEL

So. It begins.

(The sky splits open and a column of pure white light erupts from Heaven itself. It crashes into Jay's body with the force of divine lightning. The mountain trembles. The air becomes violent. Clouds spiral around the beam like a storm being born.)

(Inside the light—)

(Jay's body lifts off the ground.)

(And for the first time, does not touch it again.)

—

172. EXT. MOUNTAIN CRATER — THE ARMOR OF THE DOVE

(The beam from Heaven engulfs Jay completely. For one impossible moment no one can see him.)

(Only white.)

(Pure.)

(Burning.)

(The mountain trembles beneath it. Rock liquefies at the crater's edges. The air bends.)

(Legion screams inside the light.)

(Not one voice.)

(Thousands.)

LEGION

WE WILL NOT BE CAST OUT—

(The black writhes around Jay's body, tightening, burning, failing. Strips of corruption tear away in smoking ribbons. The parasite peels back from flesh, bone, nerve, cybernetic metal like tar ripped from a living statue.)

(Michael steps back.)

(Not from fear.)

(From reverence.)

(Behind him, Gabriel and Raphael land at the crater's edge. Both exhausted. Both instantly aware that something greater than combat has entered the battlefield.)

(Gabriel stares into the beam.)

GABRIEL

It's happening.

(Raphael lowers the trident slightly.)

RAPHAEL

By the throne...

(The light within the beam compresses, expands, compresses again—like a star collapsing into its core.)

(At the center of Jay's chest, the Mark of Cain glows with ancient gold. Finally unobstructed, it becomes the anchor point through which resurrection enters the world.)

(The parasite tears free and crashes to the ground as writhing smoke, flesh, tendrils, and screaming geometry. It drags itself away from the beam, desperate.)

(Then something tears through the clouds.)

(Gabriel and Raphael's battle returns to Earth in a single violent conclusion.)

(The Prince of Persia slams into the crater, broken. Cracked horns. Split armor. Several arms severed or hanging uselessly.)

(Still alive.)

(Barely.)

(The parasite lunges.)

LEGION

A NEW VESSEL—

(It merges with the Prince.)

(The corpse of empire and the brood of possession become one convulsion of ruin. The mountain groans as more arms burst from his torso. Horns sharpen. The broken halo twists into a jagged crown.)

(The LEGION OF PERSIA rises.)

(A merged abomination.)

(Babylonian throne power.)

(Demonic kingship.)

(Parasitic multitude.)

LEGION OF PERSIA

We will not be erased.

(Jay still has not emerged from the beam.)

(But the shape inside it is changing.)

(The golden light compresses inward. White light folds toward Jay's chest. The silhouette becomes visible—a human form suspended in holy fire.)

(Then the armor begins to appear.)

(Not forged.)

(Not summoned.)

(Manifested.)

(White crystal spreads across his body like divine frost, learning the shape of a warrior. It forms in clean elegant plates—not heavy or brutal, but sacred and severe.)

(The chestplate forms last. Upon it emerge three symbols in shining relief.)

(The Lion.)

(The Dove.)

(The Tree of Life.)

(The beam fades.)

(Jay remains suspended in the air. Head lowered. Hair flowing free. No longer black.)

(White.)

(A single silver-white streak at the front.)

(His eyes remain closed.)

(Gold particles shimmer across the armor.)

(Jay slowly lifts his head.)

(His eyes open.)

(Pure white.)

(The aura stabilizes.)

(Jay floats downward.)

(His feet never touch the ground.)

(The parasite writhes across the battlefield inside the Legion of Persia. Black mass crawls over stone, merges deeper into the Prince.)

(The archangels step forward.)

(Gabriel raises his sword.)

(Raphael spins his spear.)

(Michael lifts one hand and stops them.)

MICHAEL

No.

(Beat.)

MICHAEL

Watch.

—

173. EXT. MOUNTAIN CRATER — FINAL JUDGMENT

(The Legion of Persia rises and screams in fury.)

LEGION OF PERSIA

We will not be erased.

(Jay glides.)

(Not stepping.)

(Moving impossibly.)

(He appears beside the Legion of Persia as air bends and light warps around him. The Armor of the Dove moves like a whisper through reality.)

(The demon senses him, roaring, swinging violently. The strike tears through space and leaves a glowing scar in the air.)

(Jay remains motionless.)

(The blade passes through empty air and cleaves the mountain behind him in half.)

(Jay appears behind the demon, unnoticed.)

(The Legion of Persia turns in shock.)

(Too late.)

(A single strike.)

(Jay's hand moves with barely an inch of motion.)

(Almost invisible.)

(The demon is struck twenty times. Each impact ripples through its body like thunder through metal. Ribs collapse. Arms snap. Horns fracture. Armor splits.)

(It crashes across the ground.)

(Jay's expression does not change. Eyes calm. Breathing steady. Body relaxed.)

(The demon launches another attack, unleashing all remaining weapons.)

(Jay watches.)

(And exhales.)

(He dodges everything.)

(Gracefully.)

(The Legion of Persia roars in rage.)

(Jay lifts one hand.)

(The Seals of Solomon ignite. Golden symbols appear in the air. Sacred sigils bloom outward like radiant constellations.)

(The chains form.)

JAY (whispers)
DIVINE ART... CHAINS OF DIVINE MERCY...

(The chains descend like falling stars. Each link glows with divine scripture. They wrap around the Legion of Persia.)

(The creature thrashes violently.)

(The mountain beneath its feet cracks.)

(The chains do not move.)

LEGION OF PERSIA
We are Babylon.

(The Chains of Divine Mercy tighten.)

(Divine light burns through corrupted flesh.)

(Jay slowly approaches.)

(He floats toward the demon. Feet never touching the ground. Wind slowing. Battlefield quieting.)

(Tears fall from Jay's eyes.)

(The tears are blood.)

(Crimson drops drifting slowly through golden light.)

(The demon begins crying blood too.)

(The monstrous body shakes violently.)

(The Legion of Persia finally feels fear.)

(Jay reaches out and wipes the blood gently from the demon's face.)

(The gesture is almost compassionate.)

(The Legion of Persia gasps.)

(And for one impossible fractured instant, they see more than Jay.)

(Over his shoulder—Jesus on the Cross.)

(Crowned with thorns.)

(Pierced hand.)

(Then another vision—not fully seen, only endured. A vast humanoid presence filled with galaxies and fire.)

(The first and only suggestion of the Father.)

LEGION OF PERSIA

Father.

(The Legion of Persia breaks.)

(Jay's voice remains calm.)

JAY

You don't have to suffer anymore.

(As he speaks, the light behind him changes.)

(Not only Heaven.)

(Not only power.)

(Presence.)

(For one impossible instant, Christ is there in the radiance with him—not replacing him, but moving through the mercy of the judgment.)

(The creature stops struggling.)

(The chains tighten.)

(The sky above begins to glow.)

(Then—)

(Gabriel appears to Jay’s left.)

(Raphael to his right.)

(Michael behind them.)

(No flash.)

(No sound.)

(They simply arrive.)

(All four ignite.)

(The power erupts upward. A pillar of gold and white ascends into the heavens. Clouds dissolve. The sky opens. The aura expands beyond mountain and horizon until the whole world becomes aware that Heaven is looking directly at this place.)

(The survivors on the ridge fall to their knees.)

(Some pray.)

(Some weep.)

(Jay grips the Legion of Persia by the face. His thumb rests at the demon’s brow. He leans close and whispers.)

JAY (whispers)

Entropy.

(The seals blaze brighter. The chains tighten.)

(The four auras merge into radiant gold, white, and pure light. The combined force descends as a beautiful and terrible heavenly spear.)

(Not Jay alone. Not the archangels alone. Christ is in it.)

(Entropy descends as judgment through mercy.)

(The spear slams into the bound Legion of Persia.)

(The mountain vanishes into white.)

(Inside the beam, the demon begins to burn—not with fire, but with purification. Skin peels. Then muscle. Then nerve. Black armor cracks. The parasite shrieks through the Prince's throat.)

(The light pulls upward like a celestial tractor beam, dragging both entities toward Heaven. The body disintegrates. Blood turns to vapor. The skeleton beneath turns gold.)

(For one awful beautiful moment—)

(A golden winged skeleton hangs inside the beam.)

(A corrupted echo of what once belonged to Heaven.)

(Then it shatters.)

(The bones dissolve into radiant dust. The parasite screams one final time.)

(Both are ripped upward.)

(Thunder detonates across the heavens.)

(The light retracts instantly.)

(The sky closes.)

(Silence.)

(The battlefield is empty.)

(The war is over.)

174. EXT. MOUNTAIN SUMMIT — AFTERMATH

(Jay lowers his hands. The seals dissolve into drifting gold. He remains floating inches above the broken stone. The Armor of the Dove glows softly. His breathing grows heavier.)

(Gabriel approaches first, fist over chest in a warrior's salute. Raphael follows. Michael watches in silence a beat longer, then nods and steps forward.)

MICHAEL

You are summoned.

(Jay looks toward him.)

MICHAEL

The Throne awaits.

(Jay turns toward the ridge.)

(The survivors are staring.)

(Fifty thousand souls held in silence.)

(Then he sees her.)

(Ophia.)

(She runs forward. Stops at the edge of the aura. Looks up at him with awe, fear, love, and certainty.)

OPHIA

Daddy?

(Jay lowers slightly. The armor gives off a softer glow around her. His voice now carries deeper resonance, but it is gentle.)

JAY

Don't be afraid.

(Beat.)

JAY

Daddy will be back soon.

(She nods, summoning the courage of a child's faith.)

(Michael raises one hand. A radiant beam descends, enveloping Jay.)

(Jay closes his eyes.)

(The light becomes blinding.)

(Then ascends.)

(Jay vanishes into Heaven.)

—

175. INT. HEAVEN — THE SEA OF GLASS

(The transition is instantaneous.)

(Jay simply is there.)

(An endless sea of glass stretches in every direction. Perfectly still. Perfectly clear. Reflecting a horizon painted in impossible colors—gold, living light moving across eternity like the final sunset of a world that has never known decay.)

(The sky above is radiant.)

(Not empty.)

(Filled with presence.)

(Jay stands alone at first. The Armor of the Dove still glows around him.)

(Then he realizes he is not alone.)

(Before him rises the Throne.)

(The Sapphire Throne.)

(Not vast in the way earthly empires measure vastness.)

(Vast in authority.)

(Finality.)

(Beauty.)

(Lightning moves softly around its edges. Living fire dances along its form. The brilliance pouring from it fills the horizon without consuming it.)

(Surrounding it are other thrones. Elders seated in white robes and golden crowns. Beyond them: Angels. Archangels. Thrones. Ophanim. Seraphim.)

(A host so immense it feels less like a gathering and more like Heaven itself made visible.)

(Their voices rise together.)

HEAVEN

Holy. Holy. Holy.

(The sound reverberates across eternity like the gentlest thunder.)

(Jay immediately lowers himself to one knee, head bowed.)

(He does not look directly at the Throne.)

(Beside the Throne stands Jesus Christ.)

(Clad in white.)

(Crown of the universe upon His head.)

(Red sash moving in the endless wind of Heaven.)

(The whole celestial host witnesses the moment.)

(A human.)

(A child of dust.)

(A scarred warrior wearing the Armor of the Holy Spirit.)

(Standing before the court of eternity.)

176. INT. HEAVEN — BEFORE THE THRONE

(Jesus steps forward.)

(The sound of Heaven softens.)

(Reverent.)

(He stops beside Jay.)

(Looks down with compassion.)

JESUS

My Father...

(Beat.)

JESUS

This is Jay. On earth he goes by two titles.

Flesh calls him The Ghost of Ashes.

Heaven calls him The Child of Elohim.

(The Throne glows brighter. The court listens.)

JESUS

He bore the Mark of Cain.

(Beat.)

JESUS

He carried the weight of the Beast.

(Beat.)

JESUS

And still—

(Beat.)

JESUS

He chose the light.

(Images begin to appear across the Sea of Glass—memories of Jay’s life, battles, failures, suffering, victories. The centuries unfold like testimony. The lambs he defended. The souls he could not save. Those he did.)

(Jay remains kneeling, still refusing to raise his eyes.)

(Finally he speaks. Humble. Quiet.)

JAY

I am not worthy to stand here.

(The Sea of Glass reflects his words.)

JAY

I carried evil inside me.

(Beat.)

JAY

I failed.

(Beat.)

JAY

I doubted.

(His voice trembles.)

JAY

And still you saved me.

(The presence of God fills the horizon like sunrise.)

(Not loud.)

(Not violent.)

(Absolute.)

(A voice fills Heaven.)

GOD

You were given power.

(Beat.)

GOD

You were given suffering.

(Beat.)

GOD

You were given choice.

(The Sea of Glass glows brighter.)

GOD

And you chose faith.

(Jay slowly lifts his head just enough to receive the words, but not enough to stare.)

GOD

The Armor of the Dove was entrusted to you.

(Beat.)

GOD

Will you return it?

(The whole celestial assembly waits.)

(Jay lowers his head again.)

(Without hesitation, the armor begins dissolving. Crystal shatters into radiant light. The cape turns to drifting mist. The Lion, the Dove, the Tree of Life fade into brilliance and rise homeward.)

(Jay is restored to human form.)

(His scars remain.)

(His cybernetic limbs remain.)

(His long black hair falls once more over his shoulders.)

(The white streak remains.)

(Jay kneels again.)

JAY

My life is yours.

(Beat.)

JAY

My suffering is yours.

(Beat.)

JAY

My sword is yours.

(He bows his head lower.)

JAY

I will serve wherever you send me.

(Jesus smiles.)

(Proud.)

(God's presence warms all of Heaven.)

GOD

Then return what was entrusted.

(Beat.)

GOD

Set my people free.

—

177. EXT. MOUNTAIN — EARTH

(A beam of white light descends through the clouds.)

(The survivors look up.)

(Guardian angels stand watch around them.)

(Malachi shields his eyes.)

(Naomi stares without blinking.)

(Ophia steps forward before anyone can stop her.)

(The beam strikes the ground.)

(The light fades.)

(Jay stands there.)

(No armor.)

(No divine mantle.)

(Only his original body.)

(The cybernetics.)

(The scars.)

(His long black hair over his shoulders.)

(The white streak in front.)

(The survivors stare.)

(For many of them, this is the first time they have seen his real face. The mask is gone. The scars remain. The eyes remain strong.)

(Naomi gasps softly.)

(Malachi stares in disbelief.)

(Then Ophia runs to him.)

(She throws herself into his arms.)

OPHIA
Daddy!

(Jay kneels and holds her tightly. His voice cracks.)

JAY

I thought I lost you.

(She touches his face gently, tracing the scars.)

OPHIA

You look funny.

(She smiles through tears.)

OPHIA

But this is your real face.

(Beat.)

OPHIA

The one God gave you.

(Jay begins to cry.)

(He kisses her forehead.)

JAY

I love you.

(He rises slowly and looks toward Naomi and Malachi.)

JAY

You kept her alive.

(Naomi wipes tears from her eyes.)

NAOMI

So did you.

(Malachi steps forward. The two men stare at one another. Years of blood between them. Years of distrust. And now something stranger than forgiveness.)

(Understanding.)

(Malachi extends his arm.)

(Jay takes it.)

(They clasp forearms.)

(Malachi says nothing for a beat. That matters.)

MALACHI

I was wrong about what you were.

(Beat.)

MALACHI

And wrong about what grace could reach.

(Jay holds the clasp.)

JAY

Then live like you know it.

(Malachi nods once.)

(That is enough.)

—

178. EXT. MOUNTAIN — THE CHOICE

(The survivors gather around Jay. The world is quiet now. Babylon burning in the distance. The war ended here—but not forever.)

(Jay turns to the crowd.)

(His voice calm.)

(Clear.)

JAY

Listen.

(The crowd quiets.)

JAY

The Lord has brought you out.

(Beat.)

JAY

Now you must choose what to do with the life He gave back.

(Confused looks move through the survivors.)

JAY

Some of you are wounded beyond what this world can heal.

(Beat.)

JAY

Some of you still have work here.

(He gestures toward the sky.)

(The clouds begin glowing.)

(The heavens open.)

(Not as a mass harvest.)

(As an invitation.)

(A vast gate of light appears above the mountain.)

(Several of the dying look up and begin to weep. A few elderly survivors kneel. Some of the most broken wounded smile for the first time.)

(Jay kneels beside Ophia.)

JAY

You decide.

(She looks up at the gate. Then back at him.)

(Smiles softly.)

OPHIA

Not yet.

(Jay stops.)

(She touches his cheek.)

OPHIA

You still need me.

(That breaks him harder than ascension would have.)

(Jay laughs through tears.)

JAY

Yeah.

(Beat.)

JAY

I do.

(Around them, a small number of the dying rise gently into the light—those too broken for earthly rebuilding, those whose race is finished. Their bodies turn gold. Their pain leaves their faces. They go home.)

(Most do not move.)

(Most remain.)

(Most choose earth.)

(Malachi watches the few ascend. Naomi watches the many stay.)

(This is not escape.)

(It is division of calling.)

(The gate remains only a moment longer.)

(Then slowly closes.)

(The world becomes quiet again.)

179. EXT. MOUNTAIN — THE GHOST RETURNS

(Jay stands in the silence that remains.)

(Ophia beside him.)

(Malachi beside them.)

(Naomi just beyond.)

(The surviving flock—scarred, exhausted, alive.)

(Malachi places a hand on Jay's shoulder.)

MALACHI

We stay.

(Naomi steps into frame.)

NAOMI

Then we rebuild.

(Jay looks down.)

(At his feet—the broken shell of the old mask.)

(He picks it up.)

(The movements familiar now.)

(Ritual.)

(He repairs it.)

(The visor slides back into place.)

(The red lenses pop up and ignite.)

(The Ghost returns.)

(The Mark of Cain glows gold beneath it.)

(Jay turns toward the wasteland. Toward the broken world still left to reclaim. Toward the mission that did not end with Babylon.)

(Ophia takes his hand.)

(He does not look down.)

(He holds it anyway.)

FADE OUT.

—

CREDITS

—

180. POST-CREDIT SCENE — INT. THRONE ROOM OF SHADOW

(Darkness.)

(A vast throne room emerges slowly. Black marble pillars disappearing into endless shadow. Crimson fire burning low. A throne at the far end—beautiful, terrible, gold and obsidian twisted together. Angelic symbols warped into blasphemous forms.)

(Something sits upon the throne.)

(Hidden in shadow.)

(Only one thing visible—)

(A crown of golden thorns.)

(It floats behind the figure's head like a halo.)

(But the light is wrong.)

(Corrupted.)

(Other shapes move in the darkness around the chamber.)

(Unseen beings.)

(Watching.)

(Waiting.)

(A voice from the dark speaks.)

UNKNOWN FIGURE

What should we do?

(The seated figure smiles.)

(Then stands.)

(Two eyes ignite in the dark.)

(Gold.)

(Cold.)

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

We do nothing.

(Beat.)

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

They fought very hard for this victory.

(He tilts his head. The smile widens.)

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

Hope...

(Beat.)

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

...is the most delicious lie ever told.

(He turns back toward the throne.)

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

For even the scriptures say—

(His voice becomes mocking.)

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

When they say peace and safety—

(His eyes burn brighter.)

MYSTERIOUS FIGURE

—then sudden destruction comes upon them.

(He sits.)

(The crown of thorns glows behind his head.)

(The eyes slowly fade back into shadow.)

CUT TO BLACK.

—

THE END