

Tow Truck Driver
by
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EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

A long, empty highway stretches endlessly through the desert. The heat ripples in the distance, distorting the landscape. The sun is relentless, beating down on the cracked asphalt. Not a car in sight.

In the distance, a figure emerges—an old TOW TRUCK, rumbling down the road. It looks like a relic from the past, battered but functional, with a faded cross hand-painted on the side door. The white paint is chipped, as if it's been scrubbed off and redrawn over the years. Below it, faint lettering reads: "Deliverance Roadside."

The truck moves slowly, like a predator stalking its prey.

CLOSE ON the driver's side window.

Inside, we see ELIJAH (mid-40s), a gaunt man with piercing eyes and sun-hardened skin. His hands grip the steering wheel tightly, rosary beads wrapped around one wrist like a restraint. His calloused fingers slide over the worn leather.

On the dashboard, a cracked angel figurine is bolted beside a rusted crucifix nailed directly into the dash, not hanging-nailed. A yellowed strip of paper taped above it reads:

"The Lord helps those who help Him cleanse."

A leather-bound Bible rests on the passenger seat, worn to the point of near collapse, its pages bristling with paper-thin bookmarks made from cut-up photographs—faces removed.

Elijah's lips move silently, reciting scripture under his breath. A bead of sweat rolls down his cheek and drips onto the Bible.

He doesn't wipe it away.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK ELIJAH'S POV.

Suddenly, a hawk dives from the sky, wings tucked tight as it slices through the shimmering heat.

It swoops low across the asphalt, talons outstretched, and in a blink, snatches a field mouse scurrying across the road. Dust swirls as the predator rises again, its prey writhing briefly before going still.

Elijah watches it with calm intensity—his grip on the wheel tightening ever so slightly.

ELIJAH (SOFTLY)
 "The righteous shall flourish like
 the Hawk..."

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE ART EXHIBIT - DAY

We arrive at the art installation—Cadillac Ranch, but twisted. A series of 1950s Cadillacs buried nose-first into the ground, their tail fins pointing skyward, rusting under the desert sun. There is something eerie about them, like tombstones marking graves.

Elijah pulls his tow truck into the lot behind the exhibit—a makeshift garage, hidden from sight. He steps out of the truck, gazing at the cars with an almost reverent expression.

He walks toward one of the Cadillacs and steps behind it revealing the entrance to his workshop. He pushes open the door.

INT. ELIJAH'S WORKSHOP - DAY

The workshop is dark and cluttered, filled with tools, spare parts, and religious paraphernalia. Crosses hang from the walls, alongside faded Bible verses, handwritten and scrawled on paper.

In the corner, a HAMMER hangs, gleaming under a dim light. Beneath it, a stained WORKBENCH. There is something unsettling about the place, as if it holds secrets.

Elijah kneels before a small, hand-carved altar. A Bible lies open in front of him. He places a hand on the cover, closing his eyes.

ELIJAH
 (whispering)
 Forgive me, Lord, for I am your
 humble servant.
 (MORE)

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
Guide my hand today. Show me the
wicked, and I will cleanse them for
you.

He stands, crossing himself with slow, deliberate movements.
He turns to look at a painting placed above his altar

CLOSE UP ON THE PAINTING

The painting by Guido Reni, Saint Michael Defeating Satan,
portrays the archangel Michael triumphantly standing over a
defeated Satan. The dramatic contrast of light and shadow,
emphasizes the celestial battle and the ultimate triumph of
good over evil.

His gaze turns to a nearby PHONE. It's an old model, with a
landline receiver. The phone suddenly rings—loud and shrill
in the quiet space.

RING. RING.

Elijah picks up the receiver, calm, composed.

ELIJAH
Elijah's Roadside Assistance. How
can I help?

VOICE ON PHONE
(panicked)
Hi, uh, we're stranded. Car broke
down, somewhere past Barstow. Can
you—?

ELIJAH
(cutting them off, voice
serene)
I'll be there shortly. Stay calm.

He hangs up the phone, grabs his keys, and steps back
outside, heading for the tow truck. His face hardens as he
drives off, eyes scanning the horizon with a predatory
intensity.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

WIDE SHOT of the desert as Elijah's tow truck speeds down the barren highway, a small dot against the endless sands.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

A STATION WAGON sits stranded on the side of the highway. A man in his late 30s, JIM, paces nervously by the vehicle, sweating in the oppressive heat. His wife, LUCY, and two kids, EMMA (12) and JOSH (9), wait inside, fanning themselves.

The car's hood is up, steam billowing from the engine. Jim looks around desperately, shading his eyes from the sun. He spots a vehicle in the distance—a tow truck.

JIM

Finally.

The tow truck pulls up beside them. Elijah steps out, his presence almost calm amidst the chaos.

ELIJAH

Having some trouble?

JIM

Yeah, overheated. I didn't think we'd make it out here. Thank God you showed up.

Elijah gives Jim a long, searching look, as though assessing his soul.

ELIJAH

God is always watching over the righteous.

Jim seems a bit taken aback by the comment but smiles politely. Lucy gets out of the car, holding Josh's hand.

LUCY

We were worried we'd be stuck out here all day.

ELIJAH
(softly, nodding)
The Lord never leaves His flock
stranded.

Elijah moves toward the engine, glancing at the family. He works quickly, fixing the issue with ease.

JIM
How much do we owe you?

Elijah wipes his hands on a rag, looking at Jim and his family, then shakes his head.

ELIJAH
No charge. A small service for good
people.

JIM
(surprised)
Are you sure? We can-

ELIJAH
(interrupting, smiling
gently)
Your faith has already paid for it.

Jim nods, grateful but confused. Elijah watches as they pile back into their car. As they drive off, Elijah stands still, staring after them, his face calm but eyes unreadable.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - DAY

Elijah gets back into his truck, watching the station wagon disappear in the distance. He takes out a small NOTEBOOK from the glove box and writes down the family's license plate number.

He murmurs to himself, as though addressing God.

ELIJAH
Not today. These are good souls.

He puts the notebook away and drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S REPAIR SHOP - NIGHT

The shop is dimly lit, tools hanging neatly on the walls, shadows dancing across the cold metal surfaces. Elijah sits at a workbench, carefully cleaning a wrench. His movements are slow, methodical, almost ritualistic. The only sound is the faint hum of the shop's fluorescent lights.

Elijah's gaze shifts to a small worn Bible resting on the edge of the workbench. The leather cover is cracked and faded, the edges of the pages frayed from years of use. His hand hovers over it for a moment before he picks it up, opening it to a specific page. Pressed between the pages is a yellowed photograph.

The photo shows a younger Elijah—no older than ten—standing next to a tall, stern man in a preacher's robe. Behind them is a revival tent, the words "Salvation Through Fire" painted boldly across the canvas. Elijah stares at the photo, his grip tightening slightly.

The sound of the shop fades, replaced by distant whispers and the faint echo of a sermon. The voices grow louder as the screen transitions into—

FLASHBACK: INT. REVIVAL TENT - NIGHT

The tent is packed with an anxious crowd, their faces illuminated by the flickering light of torches and lanterns. The atmosphere is charged, the air thick with heat and sweat. At the center, a young Elijah (10 years old) sits on a wooden bench near the front, wide-eyed and fidgeting, his hands gripping the edge of his seat. Hanging over his head is the picture of Arch Angel Michael slaying the Devil.

On stage, Preacher Gideon—Elijah's father, a towering figure with piercing eyes and a booming voice—paces back and forth, his hands raised toward the heavens.

PREACHER GIDEON

(thundering)

The world is drowning in sin! Look
around you—liars, thieves, harlots,
all hiding behind the mask of
righteousness! But the Lord sees
all! He sees their wickedness,
their corruption!

The crowd murmurs in agreement, their voices rising like a wave. Gideon slams his fist against the wooden podium, making the congregation flinch.

PREACHER GIDEON (CONT'D)
(voice trembling with
passion)

And what does the Good Book say?
What does it demand of us? To purge
the unclean! To cleanse the sinners
with the holy fire of His judgment!

Gideon gestures toward a large metal brazier filled with burning coals at the center of the stage. The flames dance wildly, their light casting ominous shadows across the crowd.

Elijah's eyes are fixed on the fire, mesmerized and terrified at the same time. Gideon's voice softens, but his tone is no less intense.

PREACHER GIDEON (CONT'D)
But to cleanse the world, we must
be strong. We must be willing to
act when others will not. We must
carry out His will, no matter the
cost.

Gideon's gaze falls on Elijah, his voice softening even further.

PREACHER GIDEON (CONT'D)
My son... come here.

Young Elijah hesitates, his small hands gripping the bench tighter. The crowd falls silent, their eyes shifting to him. Gideon steps down from the stage, extending his hand.

PREACHER GIDEON (CONT'D)
Do you trust in the Lord, my boy?
Do you trust in His plan?

Elijah nods slowly, his feet moving toward his father almost as if pulled by an unseen force. Gideon places a firm hand on his shoulder, guiding him to the brazier.

PREACHER GIDEON (CONT'D)
Then show them. Show them that
faith is stronger than fear.

Gideon picks up a small metal rod from the side of the brazier, the tip glowing red-hot. He holds it out in front of Elijah, the flames casting a sinister light on both their faces.

The boy's wide eyes flicker between the rod and his father, his chest rising and falling in quick, shallow breaths. Gideon kneels, bringing himself to Elijah's level.

PREACHER GIDEON (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Faith, Elijah. True faith requires
sacrifice. This is his will.

Elijah reaches out with trembling hands, his fingers brushing against the rod. The camera lingers on his face, the terror mingled with a strange sense of awe. The screen fades to white as the sound of crackling fire and the murmurs of the crowd grow louder, blending into

BLEND TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S REPAIR SHOP NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Elijah's hand clenches the photograph, his knuckles white. He blinks, the distant look in his eyes slowly fading as he returns to the present. The whispers of the past linger faintly in the air before dissolving into silence.

Elijah places the photo back into the Bible and closes it, his face unreadable. He sets the Bible down on the workbench and picks up the wrench, his movements once again slow and deliberate.

In the dim light of the shop, the shadows seem to close in around him as he mutters softly to himself.

ELIJAH

Faith requires sacrifice... no
matter the cost.

The camera lingers on the Bible for a moment, the edges of the photo peeking out from the pages, before fading to black.

FADE OUT

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DUSK

The sun begins to dip below the horizon, casting long shadows across the desolate landscape. A CHRYSLER 300, flashy and gaudy with chrome rims, sits with a flat tire on the side of the road.

A man in his 30s, MARCUS, stands outside, wearing an oversized fur coat despite the desert heat. Gold rings on every finger, sunglasses on even at night. He paces angrily, a cell phone pressed to his ear.

In the backseat, two women—LEAH and JASMINE, both in their early 20s and scantily dressed—sit impatiently, the neon lights of Vegas still faint in the distance ahead of them.

MARCUS

(yelling into the phone)

Man, where the hell is this guy? We don't have all night!

He slams the phone shut, cursing under his breath.

INT BACK SEAT CONTINUOUS.

LEAH

I had this plan once. Thought I'd save up, go back to Texas, take care of my little sister. Thought if I could just get through a year of this, I could make it happen.

JASMINE

What happened?

LEAH

One year turned into four. Every time I get close, something pulls me back under.

Jasmine leans her head against the window, staring at her reflection.

JASMINE

Yeah, my feet are killing me. We need to get this car fixed.

LEAH

You said we'd be in Vegas by now, Marcus.

Marcus shoots them both an irritated glare.

Leah and Jasmine sit quietly in the back, their previous moment of connection now swallowed by Marcus' energy.

MARCUS

You know what your problem is?
Gratitude. Zero. I pull you two off
the sidewalk, I feed you, clothe
you, keep your little lives
rollin'—and I don't even get a damn
thank you.

Jasmine shifts uncomfortably. Leah stares daggers at the back
of his head.

LEAH

You don't "save" people, Marcus.
You own them.

Marcus laughs.

Just then, headlights appear in the distance. Slowly,
Elijah's tow truck rolls up beside them.

MARCUS

(grinning)
Finally.

The tow truck comes to a stop, and Elijah steps out, his
posture straight and composed. He takes in the scene, eyes
narrowing ever so slightly at the sight of Marcus's flashy
clothes and the women's appearance.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Took you long enough, man. We've
been sitting here for hours.

ELIJAH

(calm, almost a whisper)
Apologies for the delay.

Elijah walks around to the flat tire, inspecting it silently.
Marcus crosses his arms, tapping his foot impatiently.

LEAH

You can fix this, right?

ELIJAH

I'll have it patched in no time.

He begins working on the tire, but his eyes occasionally
flicker toward the women, then back to Marcus. There's an
underlying tension in the air, subtle but growing.

MARCUS
(rubbing his hands
together, eager)
Hey, we're headed to Vegas. Got
business to handle. You know what I
mean?

Elijah doesn't respond, focused on the task. Marcus pulls out
a roll of bills and flicks through them casually.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
How much for the fix, my man?

Elijah glances at the money, his expression blank.

ELIJAH
The price is your soul.

Marcus lets out a short laugh, thinking it's a joke. He slaps
Elijah on the back.

MARCUS
Man, you're funny. We're all just
tryin' to get by out here, you
know?

Elijah stands up slowly, staring at Marcus with piercing
intensity. The smile fades from Marcus's face as Elijah steps
closer.

ELIJAH
(low voice, almost a
sermon)
Not all souls are worthy of
redemption.

MARCUS
(frowning)
What the hell are you talking
about, man?

The atmosphere shifts as Elijah's eyes grow darker, his
posture rigid. He glances toward the women in the car, then
back at Marcus.

ELIJAH
The Lord sees your sins. He sees
all of you. The time for judgment
is near.

Marcus, confused, takes a step back, a flicker of unease
crossing his face.

MARCUS

Look, just fix the damn car,
alright? We don't have time for
this.

Elijah finishes the tire and stands, wiping his hands on his rag. His demeanor has shifted completely—calm, cold, and methodical.

ELIJAH

Why don't you follow me back to my
workshop? I can check under the
hood. Make sure everything's
working right for your trip.

Marcus hesitates but, needing the car fixed, finally nods.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE ART EXHIBIT - NIGHT

The sky has turned dark, only a sliver of moonlight illuminating the bizarre scene at Elijah's headquarters. The Cadillacs jut out of the earth like gravestones under a starless sky.

Elijah's tow truck pulls in, followed by Marcus's Chrysler. The headlights cut through the darkness as they roll to a stop.

INSIDE THE CAR

LEAH

This guy is fuckin weird!

Leah and Jasmine exchange nervous glances as they step out of the car, taking in the eerie surroundings. Marcus looks around, unsettled.

MARCUS

Where the hell are we?

Elijah walks toward the garage, unlocking the doors. The space beyond is dark and uninviting.

ELIJAH

My workshop. This won't take long.

Marcus reluctantly follows Elijah into the garage. Leah and Jasmine stay behind, leaning against the car, unease growing between them.

INT. ELIJAH'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

The inside of the garage is dimly lit, the shadows playing tricks on the walls. The sound of creaking metal fills the space as Elijah closes the door behind Marcus, locking them inside.

Marcus shifts uneasily, glancing around.

MARCUS

What's with all the crosses, man?
This some kinda church?

ELIJAH

A church of redemption. A place
where souls can be cleansed.

Marcus laughs nervously, eyeing the door.

MARCUS

Look, man, just get this over with,
alright? I don't know what kinda
crazy shit you're-

Elijah suddenly grabs a wrench from the table, his expression shifting into cold determination.

ELIJAH

(calm, controlled)
Your sins must be paid for.

Before Marcus can react, Elijah swings the wrench with brutal force, cracking it across Marcus's face. Blood splatters across the workshop floor as Marcus collapses to the ground, gasping in shock.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE ART EXHIBIT - NIGHT

Leah and Jasmine hear a loud THUD from inside the garage. They glance at each other, panic rising.

JASMINE

What was that?

LEAH

Maybe we should get out of here.

They start toward the car, but before they can reach it, the garage door swings open. Elijah steps out, his face covered in blood. He stares at them with cold, calculating eyes.

ELIJAH

The Lord sees your wickedness. But don't worry. You'll be cleansed.

Jasmine screams and bolts for the desert. Leah stands frozen in terror, unable to move. Elijah moves toward her slowly, his presence overwhelming.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

There is no escape from judgment.

Leah tries to run, but Elijah grabs her by the wrist, dragging her toward the garage.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Leah is tied to the WORKBENCH, tears streaming down her face. Elijah methodically prepares his tools, humming a hymn softly to himself.

Leah's voice trembles as she pleads.

LEAH

Please... don't... I'll do anything...

ELIJAH

(softly, almost
comforting)

The Lord forgives. But only through sacrifice.

The garage door slowly closes, sealing the horror inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Jasmine runs blindly into the darkness, her breaths labored and uneven. The desert stretches endlessly around her, the sparse vegetation offering little cover.

The sound of Elijah's boots crunching against the dirt echoes faintly behind her, deliberate and unhurried. His silhouette appears in the glow of the truck's headlights, a shadowy figure moving with calm precision.

ELIJAH
 (calling out, his voice
 calm)
 You can't run from judgment,
 Jasmine. There's nowhere to hide.

Jasmine trips over a rock, sprawling onto the ground. She scrambles to her feet, her hands bloodied and shaking, and keeps running, tears streaming down her face.

Elijah continues after her, his pace steady, his figure looming larger as he closes the distance.

EXT. DESERT RIDGE - NIGHT

Jasmine reaches the top of a small ridge, her legs burning with exhaustion. She collapses to her knees, her chest heaving as she looks around wildly. There's nothing—just an expanse of darkness stretching out in every direction.

She hears Elijah's footsteps behind her, slow and deliberate. She turns, her eyes wide with terror as his shadow appears at the bottom of the ridge.

JASMINE
 (sobbing)
 Please... you don't have to do
 this. I'm sorry! Whatever you think
 I did... I'm sorry!

Elijah stops, his face illuminated by the faint moonlight. His expression is calm, almost compassionate, as he looks at her.

ELIJAH
 It's not about what I think,
 Jasmine. It's about what He sees.
 And He sees everything.

Jasmine shakes her head, her voice trembling.

JASMINE
 You don't have to do this! God
 doesn't want this!

Elijah tilts his head slightly, his voice soft but unyielding.

ELIJAH

The Lord's will is clear. The wages
of sin... are death.

He pulls a knife from his belt, the blade glinting in the moonlight. Jasmine's screams echo into the night as Elijah moves toward her with unrelenting purpose.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

The camera pans upward, the screams fading into silence as the desert stretches out beneath the night sky. The wind whispers through the barren landscape, carrying with it an eerie stillness.

The faint glimmer of Elijah's truck headlights remains in the distance, a lone beacon in the vast emptiness.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The sky is pitch black, the stars barely visible through the haze. A SHERIFF'S CRUISER idles on the side of the highway, its red and blue lights flashing, casting an ominous glow on the empty road.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (late 50s), a grizzled veteran with salt-and-pepper hair and a weathered face, leans against the cruiser, sipping coffee from a thermos. Beside him stands OFFICER ADAMS (late 20s), fresh-faced and eager, nervously scanning the highway.

In front of them, a stranded SUV sits with the hood up, no sign of the driver. The car door hangs open, swaying gently in the desert wind.

OFFICER ADAMS

(concerned)

Sheriff, you think we got another
missing person on our hands?

Thompson takes a long sip of his coffee, staring out into the dark distance, as if considering something far off.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Maybe. Or maybe just some tourist
who got lost chasin' a mirage.
Happens more than you'd think out
here.

He glances over at the open SUV, his expression hardening.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
But this one feels different.

Adams fidgets, the silence of the desert getting under his skin. The wind whistles through the night, eerie and unwelcoming.

OFFICER ADAMS
I've been hearing rumors about folks disappearing out here. People talking about a... pattern. Missing vehicles, no sign of struggle, nothing left behind but broken-down cars.

Thompson stares at the young deputy for a moment, then looks back at the abandoned SUV.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
People always talk. This highway's seen its fair share of bad luck. But if you want my gut feeling... something's been off these last few months.

He tosses the empty coffee cup into the cruiser and motions for Adams to follow him.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
C'mon. Let's call it in. I want a full search on this one. Get a tow truck out here too. Make sure we get every detail this time.

As they walk back to the cruiser, Adams takes one last look at the abandoned car, as if something is watching from the shadows.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - MORNING

The morning light seeps through dusty blinds, casting slats of gold across Sheriff Thompson, who sits behind a cluttered desk stacked with missing persons reports. His brow is furrowed, eyes scanning the same haunting details: broken-down cars, vanished drivers, no trace.

OFFICER ADAMS enters, holding a box of donuts.

OFFICER ADAMS
Brought peace offerings. Sugar and
fried guilt. Might keep us alive.

Thompson doesn't look up.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You're gonna need more than
sprinkles for this one.

He taps a report, then another—lining them up like a grim
deck of cards.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Same stretch of highway. Same kind
of car trouble. Six cases in two
months, all gone without a ripple.

Adams sets the box down, the smile fading from his face.

OFFICER ADAMS
Could just be bad luck. Highway's
cursed or something.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Luck doesn't leave this kind of
pattern.

He unfolds a map, spreading it across the desk. Red pins mark
the desert corridor between Los Angeles and Vegas—scattered
dots forming a tight cluster.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Wide-open space. No cameras. No
witnesses. Just heat, dust... and
opportunity.

Adams leans in, eyes narrowing.

OFFICER ADAMS
You thinking serial?

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Starting to.

He points to a list beside the map—names of tow truck drivers
and roadside responders.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
We start with the ones who work
this route. One guy shows up more
than anyone else—Elijah Kane. Runs
a small operation out of a junkyard
behind some roadside art display.

OFFICER ADAMS

Elijah? Yeah, I know him. Helped me change a tire once. Guy's like a mobile sermon. Quoting Psalms while tightening lug nuts.

Beat. Thompson watches him closely.

OFFICER ADAMS (CONT'D)

He gave me a free cross key and told me, "God bless the honest." I thought he was just eccentric.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Maybe he's been preaching over more than busted radiators.

Adams' tone shifts—more serious now.

OFFICER ADAMS

You know, I had a call a few months back—kid lifted a stereo out of a pawn shop. Barely seventeen. Store owner wanted to press charges, full ride. Could've booked the kid easy, cleared my shift early.

Thompson looks at him.

OFFICER ADAMS (CONT'D)

Instead, I called his mom. Sat in their living room for two hours while she sobbed and he shook. Made him return the stereo, apologize, and sign up for community service.

Beat.

OFFICER ADAMS (CONT'D)

Didn't make me a hero. Took up my whole night. But it felt like the right thing.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

You ever hear what happened to him?

OFFICER ADAMS

Yeah. He's flipping burgers off Route 9. Every time I drive by, he waves.

Thompson studies him a moment. Nods once. It lands.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Let's go see if Elijah believes in
second chances too.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELIJAH'S HQ - DAY

ESTABLISHING SHOT of Elijah's headquarters behind the eerie Cadillac Ranch. The Cadillacs glint in the sunlight, standing like silent sentinels over the barren landscape. Elijah's tow truck is parked outside, looking as if it hasn't moved since the night before.

The SHERIFF'S CRUISER pulls up next to it. Sheriff Thompson and Officer Adams step out, both scanning the strange scene.

OFFICER ADAMS

Hell of a place to set up shop.

Thompson doesn't respond. His eyes are locked on the garage doors, sensing something off. The two of them approach cautiously.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Thompson pushes open the garage door, and the two lawmen step inside. The air is thick with the smell of oil, metal, and something else... something darker.

They survey the room. Tools are neatly arranged, religious paraphernalia lines the walls, and the workbench is wiped clean. Almost too clean. Thompson notices the Angel painting he stares at for a moment.

Adams walks over to a TOOL RACK, noticing a HAMMER that's missing.

OFFICER ADAMS

Looks like he's been busy.

Thompson inspects the floor, his boot nudging a dark stain. He kneels down, rubbing his fingers over it.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
This... isn't oil.

He stands, eyes narrowed.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
We're going to need a search
warrant. Something's wrong here.

Suddenly, they hear a faint CREAKING SOUND coming from the back of the garage, like something shifting in the shadows. They both turn, hands instinctively moving to their holsters.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELIJAH'S HQ - DAY

Elijah stands outside his tow truck, watching the two officers from a distance, his eyes unreadable. He smiles faintly, as though amused by their presence.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Back at the office, Thompson sits alone in the dim light, poring over more reports. His phone rings, and he answers quickly.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Thompson.

A pause. The voice on the other end is urgent.

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Sheriff, we just got another call
about a missing car near Barstow.
Tow truck driver's on his way now.
Same route. Thompson stands up,
grabbing his hat.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Send the location to my cruiser.
We'll intercept.

He hangs up, his expression grim. The net is starting to close around Elijah.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELIJAH'S HQ - NIGHT

The desert night is still, with only the faint howl of the wind cutting through the quiet. The CADILLACS, half-buried in the ground, stand like silent guardians, casting long shadows under the pale moonlight.

INT. ELIJAH'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Inside the workshop, Elijah stands over his workbench, hands resting on the bloodstained wood. His NOTEBOOK lies open before him, filled with the names and details of his past victims—each one meticulously recorded.

He stares at the most recent entry—Marcus, Leah, Jasmine. The words blur as his mind spirals. His breathing is calm, methodical, but there's a storm behind his eyes.

FLASHBACK (Quick Cuts): LEAH struggling on the workbench, tears streaming down her face. MARCUS, lying on the floor, blood pooling beneath him. ELIJAH cleaning his tools, his face expressionless, as though performing a holy ritual.

BACK TO PRESENT

Elijah's hand tightens into a fist, knuckles white. He knows they're coming for him. The SHERIFF has been here. He could feel their suspicions, the way they looked at his workshop, at the stains he hadn't yet fully concealed.

He walks to the far end of the garage and pulls open a LATCH, revealing a hidden CELLAR DOOR. The darkness below is thick and suffocating. Elijah descends slowly, his feet making no sound as he moves.

INT. ELIJAH'S CELLAR - NIGHT

The cellar is small and cramped, lit by a single flickering bulb. Old NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS line the walls—stories of disappearances along the desert highway. In the center of the room stands a small ALTAR, with candles burning low, their flames dancing in the oppressive heat.

Elijah kneels before the altar, hands clasped in prayer. His voice is a whisper, intimate, as though speaking directly to God.

ELIJAH

(whispering)

They've come for me, Lord. But your will is not yet done. Show me the way... give me strength to cleanse this world of the wicked.

A sudden breeze blows through the cellar, flickering the candles. Elijah takes this as a sign. He opens his eyes, clarity settling in.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

(RESOLUTE)

I will not fail you.

He stands, methodically gathering his tools—rope, knives, and duct tape. His expression remains calm, but there's a growing intensity in his movements.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - NIGHT

Elijah drives down the empty highway, the darkness of the desert stretching endlessly around him. His fingers tap rhythmically on the steering wheel, a hymn playing quietly on the truck's old radio.

He glances at the NOTEPAD on the dashboard—next to the name of Marcus, he scribbles a new entry:

The Family.

Barstow. Highway 15.

His eyes narrow. He's planning something big.

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The truck rolls to a stop by the side of the road. Elijah steps out, looking up at the sky. The stars shine cold and indifferent. He walks to the back of his truck, pulling out his tools.

His next victim is already in his sights. But this time, he won't wait for them to break down.

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - LATER THAT NIGHT

Elijah spots a MINIVAN driving down the lonely stretch of highway. Inside, a middle-aged couple, GARY and SUSAN, with their teenage daughter AMY (17), are returning from a family trip to Vegas.

INT. MINIVAN - NIGHT

Gary is driving, tired but focused. Susan sits beside him, reading something on her phone, while Amy dozes in the back seat, earbuds in.

SUSAN

You think we should've stayed in Vegas one more night? I feel like we're rushing back.

GARY

Nah, better to get home before traffic picks up tomorrow. Plus, I've got that meeting first thing Monday.

Suddenly, their car begins to sputter. Gary frowns, checking the dashboard.

GARY (CONT'D)

What the hell...?

The minivan slows to a crawl, and Gary pulls over to the shoulder. He tries turning the key, but the engine won't respond.

SUSAN

That's just great. Out here? We're in the middle of nowhere.

GARY

I'll check the engine.

EXT. MINIVAN - NIGHT

Gary gets out and opens the hood, waving away the steam. He mutters to himself, checking the cables.

GARY

Damn thing's overheated.

Suddenly, headlights appear in the distance—growing larger as they approach.

Gary squints, stepping back toward the minivan. The lights pull up behind them, and a familiar tow truck rolls to a stop.

Elijah steps out, his face calm and almost friendly in the dim glow of the headlights.

ELIJAH
Need some help?

Gary looks relieved.

GARY
Yeah, car's overheated. Can't seem to get it started.

Elijah moves closer, his eyes drifting from Gary to the family sitting inside the van. There's a faint twitch at the corner of his mouth, like a predator sizing up its prey.

ELIJAH
I can tow you back to my shop. It's not far from here. I'll have you back on the road in no time.

Gary looks at the minivan, then at Susan, who gives him a hesitant look.

SUSAN
(whispers)
I don't know... maybe we should call a tow service we know.

Gary hesitates but nods.

GARY
I think we'll call someone, thanks though.

Elijah's eyes harden for a brief second before his smile returns.

ELIJAH
Suit yourself. But there's not much cell service out here. Might be a while before anyone else comes along.

Gary reaches for his phone, and sure enough, there's no signal. He frowns, looking back at Elijah, weighing the decision. Suddenly, a car horn blares from down the highway. Another vehicle passes, heading toward Barstow. Elijah watches it intently, his calm demeanor cracking for just a

moment. He steps back.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
Perhaps it's best you wait.

Elijah gets back into his tow truck, driving off slowly, but his eyes never leave the family as they watch him go. The family breathes a sigh of relief, unaware of how close they came to danger.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Sheriff Thompson and Officer Adams drive down the same stretch of highway. Their radio crackles as a dispatcher's voice comes through.

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Be advised, possible 10-98 near
Barstow. Tow truck was last seen
assisting stranded vehicle. Matches
description of subject.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
We need to catch him before he does
anything worse.

Adams grips the door handle, his nerves growing. The hunt is on. Thompson presses down on the accelerator pedal.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Sheriff Thompson's cruiser speeds down the empty highway, its headlights slicing through the dark desert. The air feels thick with anticipation.

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Thompson grips the wheel, eyes fixed on the road ahead. Officer Adams sits beside him, thumbing through a notepad with the details of the recent missing persons.

OFFICER ADAMS

That tow truck driver—Elijah—has
been spotted at or near at least
three of the last disappearances.
We're closing in, Sheriff.

Thompson nods, his expression hard and focused. He's been at this long enough to know the signs. But there's something about Elijah that's bothering him—something too calm, too controlled.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

If he's smart, he'll be long gone
by the time we catch up to him. But
if not... this ends tonight.

Suddenly, the cruiser jerks slightly, then again—a subtle but noticeable thud-thud.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)

What the hell?

The car shudders violently as Thompson struggles to keep control. He pulls to the side of the road, gravel crunching under the tires as they slow to a stop.

OFFICER ADAMS

Flat tire?

Thompson grumbles, stepping out of the cruiser with Adams following behind him. They approach the front of the car, and sure enough, the tire is completely flat, deflated in an instant.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

How the hell did that happen?

Adams kneels to inspect the tire, his flashlight revealing a sharp metal spike embedded deep in the rubber. He yanks it out, showing it to Thompson.

OFFICER ADAMS

Looks like we ran over something.

Thompson takes the spike, holding it up to the light. His brow furrows—this wasn't an accident.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

This isn't something you just run over. Someone put this here.

Adams looks around at the dark, empty highway, a chill running up his spine.

OFFICER ADAMS

You think it was him? Elijah?

Before Thompson can answer, the sound of an approaching engine breaks the silence. Both men turn to see headlights in the distance, growing closer. It's the familiar silhouette of Elijah's tow truck, gliding down the road like a predator in the night.

OFFICER ADAMS (CONT'D)

Speak of the devil.

Thompson watches as Elijah's truck pulls up beside them, stopping just a few feet away. The driver's door opens, and Elijah steps out, his face bathed in the cruiser's headlights, casting long shadows across his features.

He smiles, slow and easy, as if running into the sheriff and his deputy was the most natural thing in the world.

ELIJAH

Evening, Sheriff. Looks like you boys could use some help.

Thompson's eyes narrow, suspicion flickering behind them, but he keeps his voice calm.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Flat tire. Convenient timing, wouldn't you say?

Elijah walks over, kneeling beside the deflated tire, pretending to examine it. He runs his fingers over the spot where the spike punctured the rubber, his face an unreadable mask.

ELIJAH

Things like this happen out here. The desert doesn't play favorites. You want me to tow you back to my shop? I can have this patched up in no time.

Adams glances at Thompson, uneasy. The sheriff, sensing they don't have much choice, nods slowly.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Alright. Tow us in.

Elijah's smile widens ever so slightly as he stands, heading back to his truck. There's a quiet satisfaction in his movements—everything is going according to plan.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELIJAH'S HQ - NIGHT

Elijah's tow truck pulls up to his headquarters, the sheriff's cruiser in tow behind it. The Cadillacs loom in the background, ghostly figures in the moonlight. The whole scene feels like a trap, but with no other options, Thompson and Adams step out of the truck.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

How long will this take?

Elijah walks over to the cruiser, tools in hand, and kneels down to begin the repair. His calm demeanor never wavers.

ELIJAH

Not long. I'll have you back on the road soon.

Thompson and Adams stand a few feet away, exchanging glances.

OFFICER ADAMS

I don't like this, Sheriff. The whole setup feels wrong.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

I know. But we're playing it smart for now. We watch, we wait. If he's the guy, he'll slip up. They always do.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Elijah moves with precision, patching the tire in record time. But as he works, he's also watching them—sizing them up, calculating his next move.

Thompson wanders over to the workbench, glancing at the tools.

He notices something odd—an empty hook where a hammer should be. His eyes drift to the stains on the floor, the faint smell of something metallic in the air.

He looks at Elijah, suspicion growing.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Mind if I take a look around?

Elijah straightens, wiping his hands on a rag. He smiles, but there's a hint of tension beneath the surface.

ELIJAH
Nothing much to see, Sheriff. Just an honest man's workshop. But go ahead. Snoop around if it'll put your mind at ease.

Thompson steps further inside, eyes scanning the walls, the tools, the religious symbols. There's something too neat, too controlled about the place. It's like Elijah is hiding something in plain sight. As Sheriff Thompson scans the area he notices a black and white picture of Elijah and his Father wearing preacher robes.

Adams follows him in, his hand hovering near his holster. He's on edge, every instinct telling him this is a bad idea.

Suddenly, the radio in the sheriff's cruiser crackles to life, breaking the tension.

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Sheriff, we've got another call about a missing vehicle outside of Barstow. Possible connection to the previous cases. Over. Thompson's eyes snap to the radio. Elijah, still standing near the cruiser, suppresses a smile.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
(into the radio)
Copy that, Dispatch. We'll head there as soon as we're mobile. Over.

Elijah steps back from the cruiser, wiping his hands.

ELIJAH
All done. You boys should be good to go.

Thompson gives Elijah one last long look before heading back to the cruiser. Adams lingers for a moment, watching Elijah with suspicion, then follows the sheriff.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Back inside the cruiser, Thompson starts the engine, but his mind is racing. Something about this doesn't sit right. He watches Elijah through the rearview mirror as the tow truck driver stands, almost like a statue, watching them leave.

OFFICER ADAMS

What now?

Thompson glances at the map. The missing car near Barstow could be a distraction, or it could be the next step in Elijah's twisted game. Either way, they need to investigate.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

We go to Barstow. But I'm not done with him yet. I noticed an old picture of him and his father on the wall.

OFFICER ADAMS

Did you know his father?

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Twenty years ago when I first started as a Patrol officer we got a call from a preacher asking us to arrest one of the church patrons. I remember it was in a tent in the middle of nowhere. I think Elijah is the preachers son?

As the cruiser pulls away, Elijah watches from a distance, his calm mask slipping just for a moment, revealing the darkness underneath.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The sheriff's cruiser speeds down the highway, disappearing into the night, the radio crackling with updates about the latest missing vehicle.

CUT TO:

Elijah's HQ - NIGHT

The killer stands in the moonlight, watching the taillights fade.

He smiles—a cold, calculated smile.

ELIJAH

They'll be back, but by then, it'll
be too late.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The sheriff's cruiser barrels down the dark highway, the radio continuing to crackle with information about the missing vehicle near Barstow. Sheriff Thompson and Officer Adams sit in tense silence, the weight of the investigation pressing down on them.

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Thompson's knuckles are white on the steering wheel, his mind racing. He's piecing together a puzzle, and Elijah's face keeps surfacing in his thoughts.

OFFICER ADAMS

You think he's toying with us?

Thompson doesn't answer immediately. His eyes are fixed on the road ahead, his jaw clenched tight.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

He knew we were coming. That tire wasn't an accident. And the way he talked, the way he acted... he's not some good Samaritan. There's something darker underneath all that.

Adams fidgets, glancing out the window at the empty stretch of desert around them.

OFFICER ADAMS

If he's our guy, why didn't he make a move? Why not just get rid of us right there?

Thompson lets out a slow breath, shaking his head.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Because he's smart. He knew we were suspicious, but he also knew we didn't have enough to nail him. So, he played nice. Gave us just enough to let us walk away.

Adams stares at the dashboard, the glow of the instruments reflecting off his face.

OFFICER ADAMS

And now?

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Now we make sure he doesn't walk away again.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARSTOW OUTSKIRTS - NIGHT

The cruiser pulls off the highway and onto a narrow dirt road, barely visible under the dim light of the moon. Up ahead, faint headlights flicker in the distance, and as they draw closer, the outline of a minivan comes into view—broken down, stranded on the side of the road.

Thompson slows the cruiser to a stop, both men scanning the area.

OFFICER ADAMS

That's the one. Dispatch said the family called in a breakdown a couple of hours ago. No word since.

They step out of the car, approaching the minivan cautiously. The door is open, and the inside is empty. Thompson shines his flashlight through the windows—no sign of the family.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

They didn't just wander off into the desert.

Adams kneels down, inspecting the tire, then moves to the back of the van, where a small metal spike lies on the ground, identical to the one they ran over earlier. He picks it up, showing it to Thompson.

OFFICER ADAMS

He's been here. Same trick he pulled on us.

Thompson's face tightens with grim realization.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

This is his work. He's picking people off before they even have a chance to call for help.

Adams's breath quickens as he looks around the empty landscape, the vastness of the desert swallowing them whole.

OFFICER ADAMS

What now? We're hours behind him. If he took them...

Thompson turns back toward the cruiser, already forming a plan.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

We don't wait for him to make the next move. We get ahead of him.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - NIGHT

Elijah drives down the same desert highway, his truck blending into the darkness.

His face is calm, almost serene, but his fingers tap rhythmically on the steering wheel, an unconscious sign of his rising anticipation.

Beside him on the passenger seat is his notebook, open to the page with the family's name. He taps his finger on the page, smiling slightly.

ELIJAH
(murmuring to himself)
Soon.

He glances into the rearview mirror, the highway behind him empty and still. But Elijah's sharp instincts tell him that the sheriff isn't far behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The sheriff's cruiser speeds back onto the highway, heading toward the stretch where they last encountered Elijah. Thompson's face is set in hard lines, his mind churning.

OFFICER ADAMS
So we're just gonna find him and
hope he slips up?

Thompson shakes his head.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
We're not waiting for him to slip
up. We're going to flush him out.

He reaches for the radio, switching to a private channel.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
(into the radio)
Dispatch, this is Sheriff Thompson.
I need a perimeter set up along
Highway 15.

Block any exits to the west, and send units to check on all registered roadside assistance operators in the area. Focus on independent contractors.

There's a crackle on the other end before the dispatcher responds.

DISPATCH (V.O.)

Copy that, Sheriff. Units are in route. Thompson hangs up the radio, turning to Adams.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

He thinks he's invisible, operating out in the middle of nowhere. But we've got him cornered now. If he makes a move, we'll know.

Adams nods, but there's a tension in his posture—a nagging feeling that Elijah might be more dangerous than they realize.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE ART EXHIBIT - NIGHT

Elijah pulls his truck into the familiar Cadillac Ranch, the half-buried cars standing silent and foreboding in the moonlight. He steps out, scanning the area, his face calm but his eyes sharp.

He knows they're coming.

Elijah opens the door to his workshop, stepping inside. He moves swiftly, gathering his tools, organizing them with precise care. He pauses in front of the altar, where a single candle flickers in the darkness. He kneels down, closing his eyes, hands clasped in prayer.

(CONT'D)

ELIJAH

(SOFTLY)

They hunt me now, Lord. But I am your instrument. I will finish your work before they can stop me.

The candle flickers again, and Elijah opens his eyes, calm and determined.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The sheriff's cruiser pulls to a stop just outside of Elijah's headquarters. Thompson steps out, gun holstered, scanning the dark expanse of desert around him.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

He's here. I know it.

Adams steps out beside him, more cautious, his hand resting on his weapon.

OFFICER ADAMS

You really think he's going to let us take him in without a fight?

Thompson smirks, shaking his head.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

No. But we're not here to take him in just yet. We're here to catch him in the act.

They approach the Cadillacs, each one casting long shadows under the moonlight. The air is thick with tension, every sound amplified by the silence.

Suddenly, the distant sound of an engine roars to life. Thompson and Adams turn, spotting Elijah's tow truck speeding down the highway, its taillights disappearing into the night.

OFFICER ADAMS

He's running.

Thompson's face hardens.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Not for long.

They rush back to the cruiser, starting the engine and tearing off down the highway after Elijah. The chase has begun.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - NIGHT

Elijah glances into his rearview mirror, seeing the sheriff's cruiser gaining on him. His lips curl into a slight smile.

This is exactly how he wanted it.

He presses his foot down harder on the gas, the tow truck roaring as it speeds through the desert night. But there's no panic in his eyes—only calm determination.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Thompson floors it, the cruiser chasing after the tow truck, the distance between them shrinking.

OFFICER ADAMS

We've got him! He's got nowhere to go!

Thompson doesn't respond. His eyes are locked on the truck ahead, knowing full well that this is only the beginning of Elijah's game.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The two vehicles race through the empty highway, their engines the only sound cutting through the vast silence of the desert. But the real confrontation is still to come.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The sheriff's cruiser races down the empty stretch of highway, its lights flashing in pursuit of Elijah's tow truck. The desert blurs by in a dark, endless expanse, the sense of isolation pressing in on all sides.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Sheriff Thompson is laser-focused on the road ahead, his hands gripping the steering wheel tightly. Officer Adams is tense, adrenaline pulsing through him as he watches Elijah's truck swerving just ahead of them.

OFFICER ADAMS

He's not slowing down. Sheriff,
what's the plan here?

Thompson's face is set in hard lines. He knows that Elijah is leading them somewhere, but he can't afford to let him get away.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

We stay close. If he thinks he can
outrun us, he's dead wrong.

Adams shifts in his seat, his hand instinctively resting near his gun. Something about this pursuit feels off—too smooth, too planned.

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - NIGHT

Elijah keeps one hand on the steering wheel, his eyes flicking between the road ahead and the rearview mirror. He can see the sheriff's cruiser gaining on him, but there's no fear in his expression—just cold, calculated focus.

He knows exactly what he's doing.

Elijah's hand hovers over a switch on his dashboard. His eyes narrow as he watches the cruiser grow closer. With a quick, decisive motion, he flips the switch.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Behind Elijah's truck, hidden underneath the back bumper, a small device activates—a release mechanism.

The back of the truck opens, and a trail of sharp metal spikes spills out onto the highway, scattering across the asphalt like teeth in the mouth of a trap.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Thompson doesn't see the spikes until it's too late. The cruiser hits them head-on, the tires exploding with a deafening BANG. The vehicle jerks violently, careening out of control.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Hold on!

The steering wheel fights against him as he struggles to regain control, but the cruiser skids wildly, swerving from side to side.

OFFICER ADAMS

Sheriff! Look out!

Up ahead, the road curves sharply, leading toward a steep drop. The cruiser slams into the guardrail, the metal screeching as it bends under the force of the impact.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

In one terrifying moment, the sheriff's cruiser flips over the guardrail and plummets down the embankment, crashing into the rocky terrain below. The vehicle tumbles violently, rolling several times before finally coming to a stop, upside down in a cloud of dust and debris.

CUT TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S CRUISER - NIGHT

Inside the wrecked cruiser, everything is upside down. The airbag has deployed, but Thompson is barely conscious, his head bleeding from a gash on his forehead. Adams groans in pain, pinned by his seatbelt, his arm twisted awkwardly.

Smoke rises from the engine as the headlights flicker weakly.

OFFICER ADAMS

(weakly)

Sheriff... Sheriff, are you okay?

Thompson tries to respond, but his voice is faint, his vision blurred. The world is spinning, the sound of the crash still ringing in his ears.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Adams... can't... move...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY NIGHT

Elijah slows his truck to a crawl at the top of the embankment, watching the wreckage below with cold, unfeeling eyes. He steps out of the truck, standing by the edge of the road, silhouetted against the moonlit sky.

For a moment, he just stands there, listening to the sound of the sheriff's cruiser settling into the silence of the desert night. He tilts his head slightly, as if in prayer, and then turns back to his truck.

Without a word, Elijah gets back in and drives away, leaving the officers broken and stranded in the darkness.

FADE OUT:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

FADE IN to the sterile quiet of a hospital room. Sheriff Thompson lies in a hospital bed, his head bandaged, a sling supporting his arm. His eyes flutter open, adjusting to the bright light. Machines beep softly beside him, monitoring his vital signs.

Officer Adams lies in the bed next to him, unconscious, his arm in a cast, cuts and bruises covering his face. The room is thick with the scent of antiseptic, the low hum of medical equipment the only sound.

Thompson groans, trying to sit up, but the pain in his ribs forces him back down. A nurse rushes over, gently pushing him back onto the bed.

NURSE

Take it easy, Sheriff. You've been through a lot.

Thompson's mind is still foggy, but the memory of the crash starts to seep in. He turns his head, looking at Adams, who is still out cold.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Adams... is he okay?

NURSE

He's stable. They're keeping him sedated for now. You both were lucky to survive that crash.

Thompson grits his teeth, frustration boiling just beneath the surface.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

It wasn't luck. That son of a bitch set us up.

The nurse frowns, unsure what he's talking about, but she gently places a hand on his shoulder, calming him.

NURSE

You need to rest. There'll be time to figure things out later. Right now, focus on healing.

Thompson nods, but his eyes burn with determination. He won't let this go. Not after coming so close.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Back on the highway, DEPUTIES and EMERGENCY RESPONDERS surround the wreckage of the sheriff's cruiser. The sunlight glints off the twisted metal as investigators comb the area, picking up the pieces of what happened.

A deputy inspects the metal spikes scattered across the road, placing one into an evidence bag. They know this wasn't an accident.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Later that day, Sheriff Thompson sits up in his hospital bed, more alert now, his face etched with frustration and pain. A young DETECTIVE stands at his bedside, a notebook in hand.

DETECTIVE

Sheriff, we found the spikes.
Whoever did this wanted to take you
out, and they knew exactly how to
do it.

Thompson nods, wincing as he adjusts his position.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

It was Elijah. He knew we were onto
him, so he set us up. The bastard
baited us into that chase, then
made sure we'd never catch him.

The detective scribbles notes, nodding as Thompson speaks.

DETECTIVE

We've got units searching the area,
but so far, no sign of him. He's
gone off the grid.

Thompson's eyes narrow, his jaw tightening.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

He's not gone. He's out there, and
he's planning something worse. And
we're running out of time.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

Elijah in his new hideout, somewhere deep in the desert, far off the beaten path.

It's a small, rundown shack, barely visible from the road. Inside, he sits at a small table, his notebook in front of him, its pages filled with names, each one crossed off methodically.

Elijah looks up at the wall where a MAP of the desert is pinned, red circles marking specific locations. His eyes settle on one of the circles—his next target.

He stands, moving with slow, deliberate steps toward the door. Outside, the desert night is quiet, vast, and unforgiving.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

The bustling hospital corridor hums with activity—nurses wheel carts, doctors rush between patients, and the murmur of voices echoes through the sterile space. Amid the chaos, DETECTIVE EVELYN MARTIN strides purposefully down the hall, her sharp suit and no-nonsense demeanor cutting clean through the noise.

Martin, an experienced and well-known Vegas Homicide Detective, walks with quiet authority. Her badge hangs from her belt, and a case file rests under her arm. Her eyes scan everything—quick, assessing, never resting. She nods to a nurse, but her mind is elsewhere.

A SECURITY GUARD spots her and straightens immediately.

SECURITY GUARD

Detective Martin? Thought you'd still be tangled in that Henderson case.

Martin doesn't break stride. Her voice is cool, but clipped.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

I was. But Sheriff Thompson asked for me directly, and when a good man does that, you show up.

The guard steps aside with a respectful nod.

SECURITY GUARD

Room 214.

Martin stops just outside the door, takes a breath, adjusts the case file, and steels her expression. She knocks lightly, then enters.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

SHERIFF THOMPSON sits up in bed, wincing slightly, his face bruised and bandaged. His arm is in a sling, but his eyes burn with clarity and quiet rage. He stares out the window, jaw clenched.

Beside him, OFFICER ADAMS lies unconscious, pale and still, IV lines running into his arms.

Martin steps in, placing a stack of evidence bags and a case file on the tray table. She glances at Adams for a long moment, then at Thompson.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

We found this at the crash site.
Buried just under the shoulder
line.

She holds up a sealed plastic bag with a metal spike, jagged and coated with desert dust.

DETECTIVE MARTIN (CONT'D)

This wasn't a blowout. He set a
trap.

Thompson doesn't even look at it.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Elijah.

He closes his eyes for a beat, jaw tightening. Then he looks at Martin—tired but focused.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)

He's not improvising. Every move he
makes is deliberate.

Martin watches him carefully. Her voice softens just slightly.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

You think this is personal?

SHERIFF THOMPSON

I know it is. I had a couple of run ins with his father once he asked me to arrest one of his followers. The second time I arrested his father it was twenty-years ago—shut down a tent revival outside Laughlin. His old man was preaching to a crowd of strung-out drifters, calling fire down on kids. And Elijah was there—just a boy, sitting in the front row. Staring at me like I was the devil.

Martin's jaw tightens. She's seen what trauma like that can do. But this is different. More dangerous.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

And now he's picking up where his father left off.

Thompson nods slowly.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Only this time, no tent. Just desert, steel, and blood.

Martin takes out her notebook, flipping through pages.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

We've expanded the perimeter. Set up checkpoints. We're combing through his business records, client lists—everything.

Thompson leans forward slightly, wincing from the effort.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

It won't be enough. He's not hiding in a cabin or crawling through alleys. He believes he's doing God's work. That makes him patient. Focused. Willing to bleed for it.

Martin glances down, then back up. There's something unresolved behind her eyes.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

I've seen belief like that. It's not faith. It's a weapon disguised as righteousness. And people follow it.

She taps her fingers against the notebook—thinking.

DETECTIVE MARTIN (CONT'D)
I lost a partner to someone like
him. Smart, charming, and
completely gone inside. Had half
the department fooled. I swore I'd
never miss that kind of evil again.

Beat. She looks at Adams—so still, so vulnerable.

DETECTIVE MARTIN (CONT'D)
And now another officer's in a
coma. I'm not letting it happen
again.

Thompson meets her eyes, seeing the fire behind her words.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You and me both. But don't box him
in. Elijah doesn't run. He waits.
He watches. And when he sees the
opening—he strikes.

Martin nods.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
Then we don't give him an opening.

She moves to leave, but Thompson's voice stops her.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You ever wonder if we make people
like him worse? Pushing them.
Ignoring the signs?

Martin doesn't turn around right away. When she does, her
voice is calm—but weighted.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
I think the world breaks people,
Sheriff. Some try to heal. Others
learn to sharpen the pieces.

She leaves, her heels clicking down the hallway. Thompson
watches her go, then looks out the window again, his
reflection staring back at him. Older. Wiser. But far from
finished.

CUTO:

EXT. DESERT ROADS - DAY

Wide shot of a long, empty desert road stretching toward the
horizon.

A few patrol cars comb the highway, their lights flashing as they search for any sign of Elijah or his truck. The vastness of the desert feels suffocating, each minute that passes without a lead making the task seem more impossible.

INT. DETECTIVE MARTIN'S CAR - DAY

Detective Martin drives along a remote road, scanning the area carefully. Her radio crackles to life.

DISPATCH (V.O.)
Units, be advised, no new sightings
of Elijah's vehicle. All
checkpoints clear so far. Continue
with your patrols.

Detective Martin has a file folder open on the passenger seat. She stops on a photo of the Christian family who had been stranded before the crash. Something clicks in her mind, and she dials Sheriff Thompson's number.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Thompson, still lying in his hospital bed, picks up his phone when it rings. He sees

Martin's number on the screen and answers.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Martin, what do you got?

DETECTIVE MARTIN (V.O.)
It's a hunch, but I've been
thinking about the families
Elijah's targeted. They're spread
out along a specific stretch of
highway. What if he's not just
picking people off at random? What
if there's something symbolic about
where he's taking them?

Thompson's eyes narrow as he considers her theory.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You think he's got a pattern with
the locations?

DETECTIVE MARTIN (V.O.)
Yeah. What if he's not just driving
them into the middle of nowhere,
but to places that mean something
to him? Religious symbols, places
of judgment...

Thompson shifts in his bed, a look of realization crossing
his face.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
The Cadillac exhibit. The way those
cars are half-buried, like
tombstones... it's a sign to him.
He's using places like that as
staging grounds for his kills.

DETECTIVE MARTIN (V.O.)
Exactly. And there's more. There's
another spot just like that,
further down the road toward Death
Valley. Another weird roadside
installation—a giant cross,
forgotten by most people. But it's
the kind of place he'd see as a
symbol.

Thompson clenches the phone tighter, his heart pounding with
a mix of fear and anticipation.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You think he's setting up there for
his next kill?

DETECTIVE MARTIN (V.O.)
I can't be sure, but it's worth
checking out. I'm heading there
now. I'll keep you updated.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Be careful, Martin. He's more
dangerous than we thought.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE CROSS INSTALLATION - DUSK

Detective Martin's car pulls off the highway and onto a
narrow dirt road. Up ahead, she can see the faint silhouette
of a massive cross, a strange relic from a forgotten time,
standing alone in the vast desert. The sun is setting,
casting long shadows across the barren landscape.

She steps out of the car, her hand resting on her holstered gun, her eyes scanning the area.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
(muttering to herself)
Let's hope you're right, Sheriff.

The wind kicks up dust around her as she cautiously approaches the installation. The silence is unnerving, and every step she takes feels heavy with the weight of anticipation.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S HIDEOUT - DUSK

Elijah sits in his hideout, carefully preparing for his next move. His tools are laid out in front of him, everything organized with meticulous precision. The notebook lies open beside him, the name of his next target written at the top of the page.

He closes his eyes, whispering a quiet prayer to himself.

ELIJAH
(softly)
I am your servant, Lord. Guide me
as I deliver judgment upon the
wicked.

He stands, gathering his tools, and heads toward the door. Outside, the sun is dipping below the horizon, casting the desert in a deep red glow. It's almost time.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE CROSS INSTALLATION - NIGHT

Martin carefully walks around the massive cross, her flashlight illuminating the weathered structure. The air is thick with tension as she circles the area, her instincts telling her that something is off, but she hasn't found anything yet.

Suddenly, she hears the faint sound of an engine. Her heart skips a beat as she ducks behind a nearby rock, peeking out to see a pair of headlights in the distance, slowly approaching the installation.

Her hand tightens around her gun as she watches the vehicle come closer.

It's Elijah's tow truck.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

Elijah is preparing for his next move, meticulously placing his tools in a duffel bag. The dim light in the hideout flickers as he works in silence, his mind focused and clear. Just as he zips up the bag, his phone buzzes on the table, breaking the stillness.

He glances down at the screen. It's a number he doesn't recognize. For a moment, he considers ignoring it, but something compels him to answer.

Elijah picks up the phone, his voice calm and composed.

ELIJAH

Elijah's Roadside Assistance. How
can I help you?

There's a pause on the other end, followed by the sound of heavy breathing and a shaky, desperate voice.

VOICE ON PHONE

(nervous, slightly
slurred)

Hey, uh, yeah... I've got a
situation out here. Car's busted on
the highway—heading out of Vegas.
Can you come get me? I... I don't
want to be stuck out here all
night.

Elijah listens carefully, his brow furrowing slightly. There's something familiar about the voice, but it's off, muddled by what sounds like intoxication. He waits for the caller to continue.

ELIJAH

Where exactly are you?

VOICE ON PHONE

Mile marker 207... right off
Highway 15. I'll pay whatever you
want, man. I just need to get out
of here. And, uh... maybe we can
keep it discreet?

That last word piques Elijah's interest. He pauses, his mind working over the details. Then it clicks—the voice belongs to REVEREND AUSTIN LOCKE.

Locke is a famous celebrity preacher, known for his lavish lifestyle, massive congregation, and frequent television appearances. Once beloved, his reputation has been tarnished by a series of damning allegations—whispers of pedophilia, drug use, and scandals hidden behind the facade of his holy persona.

Elijah's lips curl into a thin smile. He knows exactly who this man is and what he represents.

ELIJAH

I'll be there soon. Stay right
where you are.

Locke lets out a sigh of relief, his voice filled with gratitude, unaware of the danger heading his way.

LOCKE (V.O.)

Thanks, man. I really appreciate
it.

Elijah ends the call, staring at the phone for a moment, his smile fading into something darker, more sinister. The preacher's voice echoes in his mind, a reminder of the hypocrisy and sin he's been sent to cleanse from the world.

ELIJAH

(softly, to himself)
Even wolves come dressed as
shepherds.

He picks up his duffel bag, slinging it over his shoulder. This isn't just another stranded soul. This is a mission, a divine judgment waiting to be delivered.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Wide shot of Elijah's tow truck as it glides down the desolate highway, the faint glow of Vegas long behind him. The sky is pitch black, the stars swallowed by the desert's vast emptiness.

The headlights of the truck cut through the dark, and in the distance, Elijah spots a luxury Mercedes-Benz SUV sitting on the shoulder of the road, its hazard lights blinking weakly.

As Elijah pulls up behind the vehicle, the faint outline of a man steps out. Even from a distance, it's clear that this is Reverend Austin Locke—once a figure of purity and righteousness, now disheveled, wearing sunglasses even at night, his face pale and sweaty.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Elijah steps out of his truck, walking toward Locke with slow, deliberate steps. The preacher stands by his SUV, nervously fidgeting with his phone, looking around as if afraid someone might see him. His clothes are wrinkled, his once-pristine suit jacket hanging loosely off his shoulders.

Locke lowers his sunglasses, squinting at Elijah as he approaches.

LOCKE

You're Elijah, right? Thanks for coming so fast. I, uh... I can't afford to have anyone see me out here, you know? People like to talk, and I've already got enough on my plate.

Elijah's eyes narrow as he takes in the sight of the preacher. He can smell the alcohol on Locke's breath, the faint trace of cocaine still dusting his nose. This man, who once preached about righteousness and purity, now stands before him, reeking of sin and desperation.

ELIJAH

You've fallen far from grace,
Reverend.

Locke stiffens, his eyes darting nervously as he forces a shaky laugh.

LOCKE

Yeah, well... nobody's perfect, right? You know how it is. The world just keeps pushing, and sometimes you... stumble.

Elijah says nothing, just stares at Locke with cold, unblinking eyes. The silence stretches between them, thick and heavy. Locke, sensing the judgment in Elijah's gaze, clears his throat and reaches for his wallet, pulling out a wad of cash.

LOCKE (CONT'D)

Look, I can pay you—whatever it takes. Just... just tow me to the next stop, and we'll call it even. No need to make a big deal out of this.

Elijah doesn't take the money. He steps closer to Locke, his voice low and steady.

ELIJAH

Money won't save you from what's coming. You've led people astray, wrapped in the robes of false piety. But the Lord sees through the disguise.

Locke's face pales, and for the first time, true fear creeps into his expression.

LOCKE

Hey, man, let's not get all religious on me. I just need a tow, alright?

Elijah's smile returns, but it's cold, devoid of any warmth.

ELIJAH

The Lord's judgment is swift, Reverend. And your sins are many.

Locke steps back, his hands trembling as he realizes he's not dealing with an ordinary tow truck driver. His voice rises, desperation leaking through.

LOCKE

I don't know what you're talking about, okay? This is crazy—I'm just trying to get home!

But Elijah is already moving toward the back of his truck, preparing the tow chain. His movements are calm, methodical,

as if this is all part of a larger plan. Locke watches, panic growing with each passing second.

LOCKE (CONT'D)

Wait... what are you doing? I-I'm sorry, alright? Whatever you think I've done... it's not what it looks like!

Elijah doesn't respond. He hooks the SUV to the back of his truck, securing it tightly. Locke's breathing becomes ragged, his pulse racing. He glances around, hoping for another car, another person—anyone who might save him from what's coming. But the road is empty. There's no one but Elijah.

ELIJAH

(softly, as if reciting scripture)

There is no salvation for the wicked, Reverend.

Locke's eyes widen in terror as Elijah climbs back into his truck. The engine roars to life, and Locke stumbles back, realizing too late that he's been caught in something far beyond his understanding.

As Elijah begins to drive, towing Locke's SUV behind him, the preacher's last hope fades into the dark, empty highway.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - NIGHT

Elijah drives in silence, his expression serene, almost peaceful. Beside him, the notebook lies open, Locke's name now neatly written at the top of the next page.

ELIJAH

(whispering to himself)

One more soul to cleanse.

His eyes flick to the rearview mirror, where Locke's SUV follows behind him, like a lamb being led to slaughter.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The tow truck rumbles down the dark, deserted highway with Locke's luxury SUV in tow.

The desert seems even more desolate in the blackness, the endless road a metaphor for the preacher's descent into an unknown fate. Locke, inside his SUV, begins to panic, realizing that something is terribly wrong. He fumbles with his phone, but there's no signal. He's trapped.

INT. LOCKE'S SUV - NIGHT

Locke breathes heavily, sweat dripping down his forehead. His hands tremble as he tries to open the door, but the truck's motion and the tight chains keep him from escaping. The dread builds, and his muttered prayers for deliverance go unanswered.

LOCKE
(muttering to himself)
God, please... I can change... I'll
do better...

CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE CROSS INSTALLATION - NIGHT

Elijah's tow truck pulls up to the eerie, abandoned cross installation. The massive wooden cross stands against the night sky, a lonely symbol of forgotten faith. The installation feels otherworldly, with the old wood creaking in the breeze and the desert wind swirling dust around it.

Elijah steps out of the truck, calm and controlled, like a priest preparing for a ritual. He unhooks Locke's SUV from the tow, watching with cold eyes as the preacher stumbles out of the vehicle, disoriented and frightened.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSS INSTALLATION - NIGHT

Locke staggers toward Elijah, desperation dripping from every movement. His bravado is long gone, replaced by sheer terror.

He falls to his knees in front of Elijah, grasping at the hem of his jacket.

LOCKE

Please... I'll pay you... whatever you want. Just let me go. I can explain everything. It's not what you think--those rumors... they're all lies.

Elijah looks down at Locke with quiet disdain, his voice a low, steady murmur.

ELIJAH

You've deceived too many for too long. Your false sermons, your wickedness... You've hidden behind your lies, but now... you will be judged.

Locke's eyes widen as he backs away, fear seeping into his every word.

LOCKE

No, no, no... You don't understand. I'm a man of God. I'm... I'm His servant.

Elijah takes a step forward, his presence towering over the trembling preacher.

ELIJAH

You've led the flock astray. A shepherd turned wolf. And now, you will face the consequences.

Locke tries to scramble to his feet, but before he can, headlights appear in the distance, piercing the darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Detective Martin's car approaches the installation, the headlights cutting through the swirling dust. She slows down, immediately sensing that something isn't right.

She spots Elijah standing in front of the massive cross, with Locke on his knees, cowering like a broken man.

Martin pulls her gun and exits the vehicle, her eyes locked on Elijah, her heartbeat quickening as she realizes how dangerous the situation is.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
(yelling)
Elijah! Step away from him!

Elijah looks up, meeting Martin's eyes. His calm expression barely shifts, but there's a flicker of recognition as he steps back from Locke, raising his hands slightly in a gesture of surrender. He knows exactly who Martin is—she's the hunter who's been tracking him.

ELIJAH
(calmly)
Detective. You're just in time for
the final judgment.

Martin keeps her gun trained on Elijah, advancing carefully. Her eyes dart between Locke and Elijah, trying to assess the situation. Locke, sensing a glimmer of hope, stumbles toward her.

LOCKE
Help me! This man... he's crazy!

Elijah's eyes shift to Locke, his voice chillingly calm.

ELIJAH
You cannot escape judgment,
Reverend. Not even now.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
(sternly, to Locke)
Get back. Stay behind me.

Locke hesitates but scrambles behind Martin, cowering as she keeps her focus on Elijah. Martin's voice hardens as she takes a step closer.

DETECTIVE MARTIN (CONT'D)
It's over, Elijah. You're done. No
more running. No more victims.

Elijah tilts his head, studying her. There's no panic, no desperation in him—only the eerie calm of a man who believes he is in the right. His voice is soft, but his conviction is unshakable.

ELIJAH

I don't run, Detective. The Lord
has shown me the path. You...
you're here for a reason.

Martin tightens her grip on her gun, every muscle in her body
tense.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Don't make this harder than it has
to be. Let him go. Put your hands
on your head.

Elijah doesn't move. Instead, he looks at the cross behind
him, its towering presence a silent witness to the scene. He
speaks almost as if to the sky.

ELIJAH

There are so many lost souls,
Detective. So many in need of
cleansing. This man... he has led
thousands into darkness. And you
would stop me? You would stop God's
work?

Martin's pulse races, her instincts screaming that this
situation could spiral out of control at any moment.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

God's work doesn't involve murder,
Elijah. You're not a savior. You're
a killer.

For the first time, a flicker of something crosses Elijah's
face—perhaps disappointment, perhaps anger—but it passes
quickly, replaced by his usual stoic calm.

ELIJAH

No, Detective. I am the instrument
of His will. You don't understand
now, but you will.

Without warning, Elijah takes a step back toward the cross,
as if preparing to make some final move. Martin's heart
pounds in her chest as she raises her gun, the tension
snapping into action.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Don't do it!

Elijah pauses, looking directly at her, his voice softer now.

ELIJAH

You'll see, Detective. You'll understand soon enough.

Before Martin can react, Elijah reaches for something behind the cross—a trigger he had set up earlier, connected to a series of hidden gas cans rigged to explode. He's been prepared for this moment all along.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

(yelling)

No!

But it's too late. Elijah pulls the trigger.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSS INSTALLATION - NIGHT

A massive explosion erupts from behind the cross, sending fire and debris into the air. The force of the blast knocks Martin to the ground, her gun flying from her hand. Locke screams, covering his face as the world around them erupts into chaos.

The cross itself is engulfed in flames, the wooden structure creaking and cracking as it burns. The shockwave leaves a ringing in Martin's ears as she struggles to push herself up from the ground, coughing and disoriented.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

Through the smoke and fire, Martin sees a shadow moving—Elijah, walking away into the desert, disappearing into the night. He's gone, leaving only destruction in his wake.

CUT TO:

INT. DESERT - LATER

As the flames die down, Martin stands, battered and bruised but alive. She looks out into the empty desert, her heart sinking with the realization that Elijah has escaped once again.

Locke, trembling and in shock, stares at the burning cross, his once-flawless image shattered forever.

Martin watches the fire, determination etched into her face. This isn't over. She's closer now, and she knows Elijah's mission is far from complete.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSS INSTALLATION - NIGHT

The last remnants of the explosion's fire flicker weakly as fire trucks and police cars now surround the scene. The towering cross is little more than charred wood, still crackling as the fire dies out. EMTs attend to a visibly shaken Reverend Austin Locke, wrapping him in a blanket as he sits on the ground, staring blankly into the distance.

Detective Martin, covered in dirt and scratches, stands with her arms crossed, watching as firefighters finish extinguishing the last flames. The scene feels surreal—her target, Elijah, vanished into the night after unleashing his deadly trap. Despite the chaos, her mind is laser-focused on the next steps.

CUT TO:

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

Locke sits on the edge of the ambulance, his hands shaking uncontrollably. An EMT offers him water, but he barely notices. His mind is elsewhere, consumed by the realization that his life was nearly taken by a man who saw through his carefully constructed facade.

Locke's gaze darts nervously around the scene, his voice trembling as he speaks to the EMT.

LOCKE

(stammering)

He—he said it was judgment. He...
he knows everything. The drugs...

(MORE)

LOCKE (CONT'D)
the rumors. I thought I could keep
it all hidden, but he... he knew.

The EMT offers a weak smile, trying to calm him.

EMT
Just relax, sir. You're safe now.

Locke grips the blanket tightly, his eyes hollow. His once-great reputation is in ruins, and he knows it's only a matter of time before the media catches wind of everything.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSS INSTALLATION - NIGHT

Detective Martin walks over to Detective Martin's car, which has survived the explosion. She pulls out her phone, dialing Sheriff Thompson's number, her hands still shaking slightly from the adrenaline of the confrontation.

CUT TO :

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sheriff Thompson, still bedridden, picks up the phone with his good hand. He's pale but alert, his eyes lighting up when he sees it's Martin calling. He quickly answers.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Martin. What happened?

Martin's voice is low, filled with frustration and exhaustion.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
He got away, Sheriff. He had the
whole place rigged to blow.
He's been two steps ahead of us
this entire time.

There's a pause on the other end as Thompson processes her words, the weight of the situation sinking in.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Damn it. How many more people have
to die before we catch him?

Martin glances back at the smoldering wreckage, her jaw tightening.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

I don't know. But Locke... he was Elijah's target tonight. That preacher. I think Elijah saw him as the ultimate sinner—someone who used God's name to cover up some pretty dark stuff. He was going to kill him, and he won't stop until every person he sees as corrupt is wiped out.

Thompson's voice hardens.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Then we need to turn up the heat. No more waiting for him to make the first move. We bring him down before he even has the chance to pick his next victim.

Martin nods, determination settling back into her features.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

I'll track him down, Sheriff. Whatever it takes.

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. CROSS INSTALLATION - LATER THAT NIGHT

The emergency services begin to clear out as the investigation winds down. Martin watches as Locke is loaded into the back of an ambulance, still in shock. She steps over to Detective Martin, one of the LEAD INVESTIGATORS on-site, briefing him on the next steps.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

We need to get ahead of him. Pull up every record we can on Elijah—his past, his family, his business contacts. I want every location he's ever been connected to under surveillance. No one makes a move without us knowing about it.

Martin glances at the horizon, where Elijah disappeared into the night.

DETECTIVE MARTIN (CONT'D)
He's planning something bigger. I
can feel it.

CUT TO:

INT. ELIJAH'S HIDEOUT - NIGHT

Elijah's new hideout, a small, barely visible shack in the middle of the desert. Inside, Elijah sits at a table, meticulously flipping through his notebook. He pauses, staring at Locke's name, now crossed out, and then at the next empty page.

A map of the surrounding area lies on the table, with circles marking key points—highways, religious institutions, and areas of isolation. Each mark represents a potential future victim, a new "sinner" in Elijah's twisted eyes.

He breathes in slowly, speaking to himself in a soft, reverent tone.

ELIJAH
(quietly)
The work is not done. The wolves
are still out there, hiding among
the flock.

His eyes darken as he picks up his pen, moving toward the next target. His mission of "cleansing" is far from over, and he's prepared to take it to new heights.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

The next morning, Detective Martin sits at her desk, reviewing files and reports on Elijah's past. The office is buzzing with activity as law enforcement intensifies their search for the elusive killer. Martin rubs her tired eyes, the weight of the previous night still pressing heavily on her. A JUNIOR OFFICER drops a folder on her desk.

OFFICER
I pulled up everything I could on
Elijah's past. There's not
much—he's kept a pretty low
profile.

(MORE)

OFFICER (CONT'D)

But there's something strange about his family background. His father was a preacher too. A small church in a rural town, real fire-and-brimstone stuff. But there's more...

Martin flips through the folder, finding photos of the church and Elijah's father. The resemblance is striking—an older version of Elijah, with the same piercing eyes and fanatical expression. A wave of realization washes over her.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

This is where it all started.

The junior officer nods.

OFFICER

Yeah, and here's the kicker—his father disappeared when Elijah was just a kid. Some kind of fire at the church, but the body was never found. Locals said he was preaching about cleansing the town of sin just before it all went down.

Martin stares at the file, piecing together the puzzle.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Elijah's following in his father's footsteps. This isn't just about some random kills. This is a legacy.

She looks up, her mind racing.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

We need to find out where that church is. If Elijah's planning something big, that could be where he makes his final stand.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Wide shot of the barren desert highway, the sun blazing overhead as police cars and helicopters scour the area for any trace of Elijah.

Every mile of road feels heavier with the possibility that Elijah is out there, planning his next move.

FADEOUT

FADE IN

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Martin sits at her desk, the weight of her discovery heavy in the air. She stares at the old, grainy photos of Elijah's father, the preacher who vanished under mysterious circumstances. The file in front of her contains details about the fire at the church and rumors from the small, isolated town where Elijah grew up.

A map of the region is spread across her desk, with pins marking key locations linked to Elijah's movements. The pieces are coming together, but the final answer still eludes her.

Her phone rings, snapping her out of her thoughts. She picks it up.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Martin.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (V.O.)

Martin, any updates?

Thompson's voice sounds stronger, though still strained from his injuries. He's eager to get back in the fight.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

I'm piecing together Elijah's background. His father was a preacher, obsessed with fire-and-brimstone sermons. There was a fire at the church when Elijah was a kid, and his father vanished. No body was ever found, and the locals had a lot of stories about that family. They were known for being... extreme.

There's a pause on the line as Thompson process the information.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (V.O.)

I met his father on a call years ago the man was very creepy a real religious fanatic, So this is generational. He's carrying on his father's mission—cleansing sinners, following some twisted family legacy.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Exactly. And I think his father's church is the key. If we can find it, we might have a shot at predicting Elijah's next move.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (V.O.)

Do you know where it is?

Martin pulls out an old document from the file, an address scrawled on the bottom in faded ink.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

I think I've got it. Small town about fifty miles from here, deep in the desert. The place was practically wiped off the map after the fire. No one talks about it anymore. If Elijah's hiding there, it's the perfect place to disappear.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (V.O.)

Send me the details. I'm heading out of here as soon as I'm cleared. We'll meet up and end this.

Martin nods, though the doubt still lingers in her mind. Elijah has always been one step ahead, and she knows this confrontation won't be simple.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Stay safe, Sheriff. I'll update you as soon as I get more intel.

She hangs up, staring at the map. There's a growing urgency in her gut, a sense that time is running out.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT TOWN - DAY

Wide shot of a small, nearly abandoned town in the middle of the desert.

The sun hangs high, casting long shadows over the cracked asphalt. Dust kicks up in the wind, and most of the buildings are boarded up, remnants of a place forgotten by time.

Detective Martin's car pulls into town, the engine the only sound for miles. She steps out, her eyes scanning the area. The eerie quiet hangs over everything.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH DAY

At the edge of town, an abandoned church stands tall, its once-white walls now peeling and worn. The steeple is crooked, casting a jagged shadow over the surrounding desert. The building is a husk of what it once was, the windows shattered, and the doors barely hanging on their hinges.

Martin approaches cautiously, her heart pounding. She knows this place is important—this is where Elijah's father preached his apocalyptic sermons, where the fire that consumed the church started.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - DAY

Martin pushes the creaking door open, stepping inside. The interior is dark and covered in dust, but there are signs of recent activity. Footprints in the dust, scattered papers, and old, crumbling religious symbols line the walls.

In the center of the room, a large wooden altar still stands, burned and scarred from the fire that took place years ago. Behind it, a massive cross hangs, charred at the edges but still standing tall.

Martin walks toward the altar, her flashlight illuminating the area. She notices something strange—a collection of newspapers, carefully arranged on the floor. She kneels down, picking one up.

It's a story about Reverend Austin Locke, the preacher Elijah almost killed the night before. Other papers feature headlines about prominent religious figures, all with some form of scandal attached—hypocrisy, abuse, corruption. These are the sinners Elijah has been targeting.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
(whispering to herself)
He's collecting them.

Martin's eyes narrow as she flips through the papers. They're all connected to the people Elijah believes are hiding behind a false veil of righteousness. He's choosing his targets carefully, and this church is his war room.

Suddenly, she hears a creak behind her. She spins around, her hand instinctively moving toward her holster. The door swings open, and a young boy (10 or 11 years old) stands in the doorway, wide-eyed and trembling.

BOY
You're not supposed to be here.

Martin takes a step forward, her voice calm but firm.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
Who are you? The boy shifts nervously, his dirty clothes hanging loosely off his frame. His eyes flicker toward the altar.

BOY
You have to leave. He's coming back soon.

Martin's heart skips a beat. She crouches down, trying to connect with the boy.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
Who's coming back? Elijah? The boy nods, fear etched across his face.

BOY
He said he's got work to finish. That he's almost ready.

Martin's blood runs cold. Elijah isn't done. He's planning something much larger, something final.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
Do you know where he is?

The boy shakes his head, glancing behind him nervously as if he expects Elijah to appear any moment.

BOY
He doesn't stay long. Always moving.

(MORE)

BOY (CONT'D)
But he said the next one is
important. Bigger than the others.

Martin stands up, her mind racing. Elijah is escalating. If she doesn't act fast, there will be more blood, and this time it could be on a much larger scale. She reaches into her pocket, pulling out her phone to text Sheriff Thompson the location. Just as she's about to hit send, the phone vibrates—another incoming call from an unknown number. Her pulse quickens as she answers.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
Martin.

The voice on the other end is soft, familiar—Elijah.

ELIJAH (V.O.)
Detective. I see you've found my
father's church. You're getting
closer.

Martin's heart pounds as she steps toward the door, scanning the horizon outside. She can't see him, but she knows he's nearby.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
This ends now, Elijah. We're not
letting you hurt anyone else.

There's a pause, and when Elijah speaks again, there's a strange calm in his voice.

ELIJAH (V.O.)
You're wrong, Detective. It's only
just begun. There are still so many
to cleanse. You can't stop what's
coming.

Martin's grip tightens on her phone, her voice sharp.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
We'll stop you. You're not the
instrument of God—you're a
murderer.

Elijah's voice remains steady, unshaken by her accusation.

ELIJAH (V.O.)
We'll see. I have one more message
to deliver. You'll find me... when
the time is right.

The call disconnects, leaving Martin standing in the empty church, her heart racing. She looks down at the boy, who now

stands silent and scared. Elijah is preparing for something bigger than anything he's done before. And time is running out.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Wide shot of Martin driving away from the abandoned church, dust kicking up behind her. The boy watches from the doorway as she speeds down the empty road, heading toward the final confrontation.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Detective Martin's car speeds down the dusty highway, a cloud of dirt trailing behind her. She's on edge, adrenaline pumping through her veins as she processes Elijah's cryptic message. She knows now that something catastrophic is about to happen. Elijah isn't finished—he's planning something much larger, more deadly.

Her phone buzzes in the passenger seat. She glances over—it's Sheriff Thompson. She puts it on speaker as she drives, her voice tight with urgency.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Thompson, I'm closing in. Elijah called me, said he has "one more message to deliver." He's planning something big. We need to move now.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (V.O.)

I'm on my way. Any idea where he's headed? Martin swerves around a curve, the desert flying past her windows.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

His father's church—it's part of a bigger plan. He's been using these religious landmarks as stages for his "cleansings," but this last one... I think it's going to be massive. He's ramping up.

(MORE)

DETECTIVE MARTIN (CONT'D)
He wants to make a statement.
There's a pause on the other end,
the sound of Thompson shifting in
his hospital bed.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (V.O.)
Then we stop him before he gets the
chance.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT TOWN - DAY

Sheriff Thompson, bruised but determined, steps out of his car in front of the small-town sheriff's office. His body is still recovering from the crash, but he's not going to sit out any longer. His mind is set. He hobbles inside, where Deputy Reyes and Officer Adams, still with his arm in a cast, are waiting.

Adams looks concerned as he sees the sheriff.

OFFICER ADAMS
Sheriff, you should still be
resting. You took a hell of a hit-

SHERIFF THOMPSON
No time, Adams. Elijah's making his
final move. We don't have the
luxury of waiting.

Thompson points to a map spread across the table, detailing the area surrounding Elijah's father's old church.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Get units to cover every road out
of town. We're going to create a
perimeter, flush him out. If
Elijah's coming back here, we'll
trap him.

Adam's nods, already gathering
officers and preparing a plan.

INT. ELIJAH'S HIDEOUT - DAY

In the dark, isolated shack deep in the desert, Elijah sits quietly at a small wooden table, surrounded by the remnants of his father's sermons and symbols of religious judgment. His eyes are calm, even serene, as he meticulously writes in his notebook, his fingers moving with precision and purpose.

He flips to a new page, inscribing a new name with care. The final name.

Elijah rises, moving to a small mirror hanging on the wall. He looks at himself, his expression unreadable. In the reflection, the outline of his tools can be seen in the background—tools that will soon be used for his "final cleansing."

He whispers softly, a prayer more to himself than to anyone else.

ELIJAH

The wolves will be exposed... the
sinners cleansed. This is the last
judgment.

Elijah picks up his bag of tools and steps outside into the scorching desert heat, his next destination set. His movements are methodical, calm. He is a man with a mission—one that he believes is divinely ordained.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. DESERT TOWN - DAY

Wide shot of multiple police vehicles scattered across the desert roads, forming a perimeter around the town and the abandoned church. Helicopters hover in the sky, their searchlights sweeping the vast emptiness.

Martin pulls up to the edge of the perimeter, stepping out and walking briskly toward Sheriff Thompson, who stands at the center of the operation, a map spread out on the hood of his cruiser.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

You think this'll hold him?
Thompson nods grimly, his eyes
scanning the horizon.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

If he's coming this way, we'll catch him. No way out once he's inside the perimeter.

Martin sighs, but her gaze remains fixed on the distant mountains, knowing Elijah's cunning too well to feel fully secure.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

I have a feeling he'll try something bigger than just another target. He's not done with Locke and those like him. He's going after something more symbolic.

Thompson turns to her, frowning.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

What are you thinking?

Martin pulls out a series of photos from her pocket—each one of religious gatherings, including Reverend Locke's megachurch, an enormous building with tens of thousands of followers, many of whom remain loyal despite the rumors.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

This is bigger than personal vendettas. Elijah wants to send a message to the world. He's going after Locke's followers. If we don't stop him here, I think he's going to target a mass gathering—something where he can make a statement in front of thousands.

Thompson curses under his breath, realizing the gravity of the situation.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

We can't let him get that far.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - SUNSET

Elijah drives silently, his tow truck kicking up dust as the sun sets over the horizon, casting an orange glow across the desert. His eyes are focused, his grip on the steering wheel tight but controlled.

Ahead, he spots the first checkpoint—a police car blocking the road. He slows down, a slight smile forming on his lips. He knows they're trying to stop him, but he's already planned for this.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE CHECKPOINT - SUNSET

OFFICER REYES stands beside the patrol car, watching as Elijah's tow truck approaches. He raises a hand, signaling for Elijah to stop. The truck slows down, coming to a halt a few feet in front of the checkpoint.

Reyes steps toward the driver's window, his hand resting on his holstered gun.

OFFICER REYES

Evening. We're conducting a routine check. Mind stepping out of the vehicle?

Elijah looks up at Reyes, calm and composed. He nods, but as he opens the door and steps out, his hand moves swiftly to the side of the truck, releasing a hidden trigger.

Reyes barely has time to react before a blast of smoke erupts from beneath the truck, filling the air with a thick, choking cloud. He stumbles back, coughing and trying to regain his bearings, but by the time the smoke clears, Elijah is gone—his truck speeding off into the desert, bypassing the roadblocks.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE COMMAND CENTER - SUNSET

The radio crackles to life as reports of the smoke bomb and Elijah's escape flood in. Martin and Thompson rush to the control center, frustration etched across their faces.

DISPATCH (V.O.)

Suspect has evaded the checkpoint.
Tow truck headed northwest—repeat,
suspect has bypassed the perimeter.

Thompson slams his hand on the table.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Damn it! He's slipping right
through our fingers!

Martin steps forward, her mind working quickly.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

We need to figure out where he's
going. He's not running away—he's
moving toward something. Something
big.

Thompson looks at her, then at the map of the area.

DETECTIVE MARTIN (CONT'D)

There's only one major location
that fits the bill—Reverend Locke's
megachurch, where a massive service
is scheduled for tomorrow, despite
the controversy.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Locke's megachurch... It's the
perfect target. Thousands of
people, most of them still loyal to
him.

Martin's eyes widen with realization.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

That's it. That's his endgame. He's
going to make a spectacle of it. We
need to move now—Locke might be the
only one who knows Elijah's plan.

EXT. DESERT NIGHT - NIGHT

Elijah's truck speeds through the desert, heading toward his
final destination. The road ahead is clear, and his mind is
set. His mission will soon be complete.

As the lights of the distant city come into view, Elijah's lips curl into a cold, determined smile.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGACHURCH - NIGHT

The enormous Reverend Locke's megachurch stands illuminated against the night sky, its towering cross casting a long shadow over the massive parking lot. Cars stream in as thousands of loyal followers gather for a special service, despite the scandal surrounding Locke. The controversy only seems to have strengthened their faith, and tonight's event has drawn even more attention than usual.

Inside, the sound of voices praying and singing hymns fills the vast space. The atmosphere is thick with emotion, a mix of devotion and desperation.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT

Back at the mobile command center set up outside of town, Sheriff Thompson and Detective Martin stand over a map of the city, detailing the layout of the megachurch and the surrounding area. Officers rush around, preparing for the operation.

DISPATCH (V.O.)

Units are in position at all exits.
Roadblocks are set.

If Elijah shows up, he's not getting out. Thompson nods but doesn't look convinced. He knows how clever Elijah is—he's always one step ahead. His eyes flicker to Martin.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

We can't underestimate him. This is bigger than anything he's done before. He wants to send a message, and Locke's church is the perfect stage.

Martin tightens her grip on the edge of the table, her mind

racing. They know where Elijah is headed, but the question remains: how will he strike? She looks up at Thompson, determination burning in her eyes.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

We can't let him turn this into a bloodbath. I'm going inside to get Locke. He might know how Elijah plans to get in.

Thompson nods, understanding the gravity of the situation.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Be careful. He'll be watching for you.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGACHURCH - NIGHT

Detective Martin pulls into the parking lot, slipping through the crowd as people file into the massive building. The glow of television cameras and media crews hangs in the air—this service is being broadcast live to millions of viewers around the world, adding another layer of complexity to the situation.

Martin keeps her head low, scanning the area for any sign of Elijah or his tow truck, but nothing stands out. The church is too big, the crowd too thick. She pushes forward, determined.

CUT TO:

INT. MEGACHURCH - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Inside the cavernous church, Reverend Austin Locke is pacing nervously backstage, sweat dripping down his brow. His once-polished demeanor has cracked under the weight of his recent scandals, and tonight is his desperate attempt at redemption. He knows his followers still believe in him, but he's also haunted by the thought of Elijah lurking somewhere in the shadows.

Locke is surrounded by assistants and security, but none of them seem to ease his growing anxiety.

Suddenly, there's a knock at the door. Locke flinches, then nods to one of the security guards to answer it. The door swings open, and Detective Martin steps in, her face serious.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Reverend Locke, we need to talk.
Locke stares at her, his nervous energy intensifying.

LOCKE

I—I've already told the police everything I know. Elijah... he's deranged. He's obsessed with me. Martin steps forward, lowering her voice.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

He's more than obsessed. He's coming here tonight, and we need to know what he's planning. You've dealt with him personally—what does he want from you? Locke swallows hard, looking down at the floor.

LOCKE

He thinks I'm a false prophet. A hypocrite. He's made it his mission to cleanse me, to make an example of me in front of everyone. He's delusional, but I can't predict what he'll do next. I'm just... trying to survive this.

Martin leans in closer, her eyes sharp.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

If he's coming for you, he won't just target you. He's going to go after your followers, too. This whole event—it's the perfect stage for him. A chance to send his final message.

Locke's face pales, realizing the gravity of the situation.

LOCKE

You think he's going to attack the congregation?

Martin doesn't answer, but the look in her eyes is enough.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGACHURCH - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Outside the church, the parking lot has mostly cleared as the service begins inside. The distant hum of prayers and hymns can be heard faintly through the thick walls. But at the far end of the lot, a pair of headlights slowly flicker on.

Elijah's tow truck sits hidden in the shadows, unnoticed among the sea of cars. The engine purrs quietly as Elijah watches the church from a distance, his expression unreadable. He reaches into the glove compartment, pulling out a small remote detonator.

Elijah's plan is simple but devastating. He has rigged explosives inside multiple vehicles parked close to the church's main entrance. His goal isn't just to kill Locke—it's to bring the entire congregation to their knees, to send a message to the world.

He grips the remote tightly, his eyes fixed on the entrance of the church.

CUT TO:

INT. MEGACHURCH - STAGE - NIGHT

Inside, the service is in full swing. Reverend Locke stands at the podium, his voice shaky but determined as he speaks to the sea of people. The audience hangs on his every word, desperate to hear his message of salvation and redemption.

LOCKE

(voice trembling)

We are all sinners in the eyes of
the Lord, but we are also His
children. We must seek forgiveness,
seek the light in the darkness...

Detective Martin watches from backstage, her heart pounding. She knows Elijah is somewhere outside, waiting to strike. Every second that passes feels like a countdown to disaster. Suddenly, her phone buzzes in her pocket. She pulls it out, seeing a text from Sheriff Thompson.

TEXT FROM SHERIFF THOMPSON

Elijah's truck spotted in the parking lot. We're moving in. Stay sharp.

Martin's pulse quickens. It's happening. She rushes toward the back exit, slipping out into the parking lot just as the police converge on the area.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGACHURCH - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Martin emerges into the dark lot, scanning the rows of parked cars for any sign of Elijah. The faint glow of the church's lights illuminates the scene, but everything feels eerily quiet.

Suddenly, she spots it—Elijah's tow truck parked near the far end of the lot, its engine running.

She moves quickly, ducking between cars as she approaches the truck. Her hand hovers over her gun, ready for anything.

INT. ELIJAH'S TOW TRUCK - NIGHT

Elijah sits behind the wheel, staring at the detonator in his hand. His expression is cold, resolute. This is his moment—the final act in his mission of judgment.

But as his thumb hovers over the button, something catches his eye.

Martin, moving toward the truck, her gun drawn.

Elijah's eyes narrow. He places the detonator carefully on the seat beside him and steps out of the truck, his movements slow and deliberate.

EXT. MEGACHURCH - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Martin steps out from behind the car, her gun aimed directly at Elijah. The two stand across from each other, the weight of the moment pressing down on them.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

It's over, Elijah. Put your hands in the air.

Elijah looks at her, unafraid. His eyes flicker with something almost like pity.

ELIJAH

You don't understand, Detective.
This isn't about revenge. This is
about salvation.

Martin tightens her grip on her gun, her voice sharp.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

This is about murder. You're not
saving anyone—you're killing
innocent people. It ends now.

Elijah tilts his head, studying her. There's a strange calm
in his voice as he responds.

ELIJAH

Innocent? You've seen their faces.
You know the truth. This world is
drowning in sin, and I am the
instrument to cleanse it.

Martin takes a step closer, her heart pounding in her chest.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

You're wrong, Elijah. And I won't
let you hurt anyone else.

Elijah's smile fades, replaced by a quiet, dangerous
intensity.

ELIJAH

You can't stop what's coming. The
judgment has already begun.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Your Father brainwashed you! Don't
do it!

Without warning, Elijah reaches for the detonator. Martin's
eyes widen as she reacts, firing her gun just as Elijah's
thumb presses down on the button.

BOOM.

EXT. MEGACHURCH - EXPLOSION - NIGHT

A massive explosion rocks the parking lot, sending cars flying and flames roaring into the sky. The shockwave knocks Martin off her feet, throwing her back into the rows of parked vehicles. Fire and debris rain down, lighting up the night in a horrific blaze.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE CHURCH, - NIGHT

The congregation erupts into panic, screams filling the air as people rush toward the exits, desperate to escape the chaos outside.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Martin struggles to her feet, coughing through the smoke and dust. Her ears ring, and her vision is blurry, but she forces herself to move. She staggers forward, her eyes searching through the fire and wreckage.

In the distance, she sees Elijah, standing amidst the flames, his body battered but still standing. His face is calm, his eyes locked on hers.

He smiles—a small, eerie smile—as the flames rage around him.

CUT TO:

INT. MEGACHURCH - NIGHT

Inside the church, police officers storm through the doors, guiding people out as the fire spreads. Reverend Locke is dragged off stage by his security, his face pale and shaken.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGACHURCH - NIGHT

Outside, Martin limps toward Elijah, her gun raised once again. She's exhausted, bruised, and bleeding, but she won't stop. Not now.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

You no good son of a bitch!

Elijah stares at her, the smile never leaving his face. His voice is soft, almost peaceful.

ELIJAH

It's already over, Detective. The cleansing has begun.

Martin's finger tightens on the trigger.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGACHURCH - NIGHT

The fire from the explosion burns bright in the background, illuminating the parking lot where Detective Martin stands, her gun trained on Elijah. Her body aches from the blast, but her resolve is unshakable. This is the end.

Elijah stands amidst the flames, his smile eerie and calm, as if the chaos around him is part of some grand design. His eyes lock with Martin's, the intensity of his gaze unbroken.

ELIJAH

You can kill me, Detective, but you can't stop this. The world will see. The judgment is already upon them.

Martin breathes heavily, her hand steady despite the tremors in her body. Every instinct tells her to pull the trigger, to end this once and for all. But something in Elijah's voice gives her pause. There's a depth to his delusion that frightens her, a belief so absolute that even now, after the destruction he's caused, he feels victorious. She takes a step closer, her voice hard.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

This isn't judgment, Elijah. This is murder. You're not cleansing anything—you're just leaving a trail of destruction. People will remember you as a killer, not a savior.

Elijah's smile falters, but only for a moment. He tilts his head, almost curious.

ELIJAH

You still don't understand, do you? I'm not here to be remembered. I'm here to carry out His will. I am nothing... but an instrument.

Martin's grip on her gun tightens. She knows this won't end with words. Elijah is too far gone, lost in his own fanaticism. She takes another step forward, her voice low.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

It ends here.

Before Elijah can respond, the sound of sirens and police radios crackle in the distance. Backup has arrived, the flashing blue and red lights cutting through the smoke. Martin glances over her shoulder as Sheriff Thompson and his team move in, weapons drawn, securing the scene.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Martin! Step back!

Martin hesitates for a moment but then lowers her gun, taking a step back as officers rush in to surround Elijah. His calm demeanor never falters, even as they close in on him, weapons aimed. His hands raise slowly, almost gracefully.

ELIJAH

You think this is over. But you'll see. The world will see. The sins of man are too great to ignore.

Thompson approaches cautiously, his eyes scanning Elijah for any sign of another trick, another device. But Elijah is done fighting. His mission is complete in his mind, and he offers no resistance as they take him into custody.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Get him out of here. Your father was wrong Elijah. God doesn't want you to kill sinners. He wants you to forgive them and lead them to their redemption.

Officers move in, cuffing Elijah and leading him away. His eyes remain fixed on Thompson, that eerie smile still etched on his face.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEGACHURCH - NIGHT

As Elijah is taken to the police cars, the remaining officers work to contain the fire and evacuate the remaining congregation members. The area is a mix of chaos and relief—people sobbing, media crews scrambling to capture the aftermath, and police cordoning off the wreckage.

Martin stands still for a moment, watching the flames flicker and die in the distance. Her body feels heavy with exhaustion, but there's a quiet sense of victory. Elijah is finally in custody, his reign of terror over.

Thompson walks over to her, his face worn but relieved.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

You did good, Martin. You stopped him before he could do more damage.

Martin doesn't say anything for a moment. She looks out at the destruction, the lives forever changed by Elijah's twisted mission.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

Not soon enough.

Thompson nods, understanding the weight of her words. The damage Elijah has caused can't be undone, but at least there will be no more victims.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

You saved lives tonight. Don't forget that. Martin turns to face him, her expression softening.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
We stopped him. Together.

Thompson offers her a small smile, then gestures toward the approaching paramedics.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Get yourself checked out. You've earned a break.

Martin nods, but before she walks away, she looks back at the scene one last time—the smoking wreckage, the flashing lights, and Elijah being loaded into a police car, still calm, still smiling.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

Elijah sits in the back of the squad car, his hands cuffed behind his back. He stares straight ahead, his expression serene. The sound of the chaos outside fades as the car doors close, sealing him inside.

For the first time, Elijah closes his eyes, leaning back against the seat. His lips move in silent prayer, as if the flames, the destruction, and the arrests were all part of a larger plan—a plan only he could see.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The police cars pull away from the church, the flashing lights growing smaller as they disappear down the long desert highway. The night is quiet once again, the fires slowly dying down as the first signs of dawn creep over the horizon.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

One week later, Martin sits in a hospital room, her arm in a sling, recovering from her injuries. She stares out of the window at the clear blue sky, her mind still replaying the events of that night.

A soft knock at the door interrupts her thoughts, and Sheriff Thompson steps inside, carrying a coffee. He gives her a nod and sits down beside her bed.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
How're you feeling? Martin shrugs.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
Better. Physically, at least.

Thompson hands her the coffee, and she takes it with a small smile. There's a moment of silence between them, both of them processing everything that's happened.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Elijah's trial starts soon. They're already calling him the "Highway Prophet" in the papers.

Martin shakes her head, her expression darkening.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
He wanted that. To be remembered, to be seen as more than just a murderer. He thought he was doing God's work.

Thompson nods, understanding the frustration in her voice.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
He's not a prophet. He's just a man, Martin. A man who will spend the rest of his life in a cell. And that's because of you.

Martin sips her coffee, her mind drifting back to that final confrontation in the parking lot.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
It's not over, though. There are people out there who believed him, who think he was right.

Thompson leans forward, his voice steady.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
There will always be people like that. But you did your job.
(MORE)

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
You stopped him from killing more
people. That's what matters.

Martin nods, though the weight of it all still lingers. She looks out the window again, her voice softer now.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
Maybe. But I'm not sure if this is
over—not really. Not for the people
who lost someone. Not for the ones
who still think he was right.
Thompson stands up, giving her a
reassuring pat on the shoulder.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
That's something they'll have to
face. You've done your part. Now,
it's time to rest.

He walks toward the door, pausing just before he leaves.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Get some sleep, Martin. You've
earned it.

As Thompson leaves, Martin leans back in her bed, the sunlight streaming in through the window. The world outside is quiet, peaceful, but she knows there are still battles to be fought—battles beyond the desert, beyond Elijah. But for now, she closes her eyes, letting herself rest.

FADE OUT

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The courtroom is packed, the air thick with anticipation. Lawyers whisper to their clients, reporters scribble in their notebooks, and the faint hum of the gallery fills the room. At the front, the Judge sits in his imposing chair, his expression neutral as he shuffles through papers.

In the back of the room, Officer Grady stands with his arms crossed, his uniform crisp, his face tight with suppressed frustration. His eyes are locked on the defendant: Vincent "Slick" Moreno, a smug drug dealer with a cocky grin and an expensive suit. Slick sits at the defense table, flanked by his high-powered attorney, exuding confidence.

The judge clears his throat, and the room falls silent.

JUDGE

After reviewing the evidence and arguments presented, it is the court's conclusion that the defendant's constitutional rights were violated during the collection of key evidence. As such, this evidence is inadmissible, and the charges against Mr. Moreno are dismissed.

The words hang in the air like a bomb. A murmur ripples through the gallery, a mix of disbelief and outrage. Slick smirks, leaning back in his chair, as his attorney pats him on the shoulder.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

(sternly)

Mr. Moreno, you are free to go.

Grady's jaw clenches, his hands forming fists at his sides. He watches as Slick rises, flashing a smug grin to his supporters. The man walks out of the courtroom like a free man, leaving behind a wake of despair and injustice.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - DAY

Grady storms out of the courtroom, his face a storm cloud of fury. A younger officer, Deputy Ortiz, jogs after him, struggling to keep up.

DEPUTY ORTIZ

Grady, wait! You can't take this personally, man. It's just the system. You did your job—sometimes this happens.

Grady spins around, his eyes blazing.

OFFICER GRADY

"The system"? That system just let a murderer walk free. You know how many people Moreno's poison has killed? How many lives he's ruined? And now he gets to walk out of here laughing, because some lawyer found a loophole?

Ortiz hesitates, his expression uneasy.

DEPUTY ORTIZ

I get it, but there's nothing we
can do now. It's over.

Grady shakes his head, his voice low and bitter.

OFFICER GRADY

No. It's not over. Guys like
Moreno—they don't stop. They don't
care about laws or lives. And every
time the system fails, they just
get bolder.

He turns away, his jaw tightening as he stares out the
courthouse window at the city streets below.

OFFICER GRADY (CONT'D)

Someone needs to stop them. For
good.

Ortiz watches him carefully, unsure how to respond. After a
long pause, he speaks softly.

DEPUTY ORTIZ

You're talking like there's another
way. You don't mean that... right?

Grady doesn't answer. His gaze remains fixed on the streets
below, his mind racing. The memory of Moreno's smug grin
burns into his mind like a brand.

CUT TO:

INT. GRADY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Grady sits alone in his dimly lit apartment, a bottle of beer
untouched on the table in front of him. His uniform shirt is
draped over the back of a chair, and his badge lies next to
it.

On the TV, a news report plays a reel of Reverend Locke's
scandals, linking the disgraced preacher to drugs and
exploitation. The anchor mentions Locke's connection to
Vincent Moreno, describing an underworld network protected by
legal technicalities.

Grady leans forward, his elbows on his knees, his face grim. He picks up the remote and shuts off the TV, plunging the room into silence.

He whispers to himself, his voice heavy with conviction.

OFFICER GRADY
The law isn't enough anymore.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY (LATER)

Grady sits at his desk, flipping through case files when a familiar name catches his eye: Elijah Kane. The words "Highway Prophet" and "cleansing" jump out at him. His eyes narrow as he reads, his focus sharpening.

A small smile creeps onto his face—not one of joy, but of grim understanding.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT VAN - DAY

The interior of the prison transport van rattles as it speeds down the highway, heading toward the federal penitentiary. The sun blazes outside, casting harsh shadows through the small, barred windows. The van's interior is cramped and sterile, metal benches bolted to the sides, and a thick wire mesh separating the back from the driver's cab.

Elijah sits shackled and cuffed in the center seat, his posture relaxed despite the restraints. His eyes are closed, lips moving silently as if in prayer. He looks calm, almost serene, his mind somewhere far away.

Two guards sit across from him, both dressed in standard correctional uniforms—Officer Harris (late 30s, stocky, and stern) and Officer Grady (early 40s, lean, and thoughtful). They glance at Elijah with a mix of wariness and curiosity, the silence between them heavy and expectant.

Grady shifts in his seat, breaking the silence.

OFFICER GRADY
So, you're the infamous "Highway Prophet," huh? Can't say I expected to meet you in person.

Elijah opens his eyes slowly, turning his gaze to Grady. His expression is calm, and there's a faint smile at the corner of his lips.

ELIJAH

I'm just a man. A servant carrying
out His will.

Harris snorts, shaking his head.

OFFICER HARRIS

Yeah, that's what they all say.
I've seen plenty of so-called
'messiahs' in my time. Most of 'em
break down the moment they see
those prison walls.

Elijah's smile doesn't waver. He leans back slightly, his eyes drifting between the two guards.

ELIJAH

Those who truly believe never
break. The world is blind to its
own sins. People like you... you
see it, don't you? The corruption,
the lies. They say I'm a monster,
but I've only revealed the truth.

Grady's gaze flickers with a hint of curiosity. He's been reading about Elijah, following the news, and though he won't admit it, something about Elijah's calm, unwavering conviction has drawn him in.

OFFICER GRADY

The world is a messed up place,
I'll give you that. But your way of
fixing it... doesn't seem like it's
done any good. You think killing
people makes you some kind of
savior?

Elijah's eyes soften, almost as if he pities Grady's lack of understanding.

ELIJAH

It's not about killing. It's about
cleansing. Bringing light to the
darkness. The wolves among the
sheep have always hidden their true
nature. People like Reverend
Locke—men who used faith to hide
their own depravity. The world
needed to see the truth.

Harris shifts uncomfortably, his face tightening in annoyance.

OFFICER HARRIS

Enough of that crap. You're going away for a long time, pal. No more preaching, no more killing. Just four walls and a cell.

Elijah's smile widens slightly, his voice lowering to a whisper.

ELIJAH

Prison walls can't contain the truth, Officer. There are others who see it too. You'd be surprised how many people are waking up.

Grady leans forward slightly, his interest piqued despite himself.

OFFICER GRADY

Others?

Elijah's gaze locks with Grady's, his smile fading into something more serious.

ELIJAH

They'll come to know the truth, just like you're starting to. You see it, don't you? The injustice, the hypocrisy. You're just waiting for a sign. Waiting for someone to show you the way.

Harris scoffs, but Grady remains silent, his mind clearly turning over Elijah's words. The van hits a bump, and the jolt brings everyone back to the present.

CUT TO:

INT. DRIVER'S CAB OF THE PRISON VAN - DAY

Officer Jenkins (mid-50s, gruff, a no-nonsense type) drives the van, his eyes fixed on the road ahead. Next to him, Officer Ramirez (early 30s, quiet and observant) is scrolling through a report on his tablet.

Jenkins glances in the rearview mirror at the shadowed outline of Elijah sitting in the back.

OFFICER JENKINS

You hearin' what's going on back there? Damn loony's got them talking like he's the second coming or something.

Ramirez shakes his head, unimpressed.

OFFICER RAMIREZ

They all do. Doesn't matter what they believe—prison has a way of bringing them back to reality.

Jenkins grunts, keeping his eyes on the road. In the distance, the federal penitentiary comes into view—its massive walls towering over the flat desert landscape like a fortress. The sight of it usually silences any prisoner, no matter how defiant.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT VAN - DAY

Grady stares at Elijah, something unspoken passing between them. Elijah's gaze is calm, unwavering, like he can see right through the guard's hardened exterior.

OFFICER GRADY

((low voice))

And what if... what if you're right? What if the system is corrupt? What if the people you've gone after were just as guilty as you said?

Harris shoots Grady a sharp look, disbelief etched across his face.

OFFICER HARRIS

What the hell are you saying, Grady? You can't seriously be buying into this guy's garbage.

Grady leans back, crossing his arms, but his eyes remain locked on Elijah's.

OFFICER GRADY

I'm just saying... maybe he's not entirely wrong. Look at everything that's come out about Locke.

The drugs, the money, the... kids. We all knew something was off, but nobody ever did a damn thing about it. Elijah's the one who exposed it all.

Elijah's voice is soft, persuasive.

ELIJAH

The truth is always there. People like me, we're just willing to act on it. You could be, too.

Harris shakes his head, his expression a mix of anger and disbelief.

OFFICER HARRIS

Don't listen to him, Grady. He's just trying to get in your head. We're almost there. Couple more miles and he's out of our hands for good.

But Grady's gaze remains fixed on Elijah, something shifting behind his eyes.

OFFICER GRADY

What if... it didn't have to end like this?

Elijah's smile returns, and there's a flicker of something triumphant in his eyes.

ELIJAH

It doesn't. It can begin again. This isn't the end of the road—it's just a new beginning. And you can help bring it to life.

Harris stands up, his face flushed with anger.

OFFICER HARRIS

You're outta your damn mind,

GRADY.

Jenkins! Pull over. We need to shut this down.

Grady moves suddenly, shoving Harris back against the wall. Elijah watches, his smile fading as the tension in the van escalates.

OFFICER GRADY

No. You don't get it, Harris. I'm tired of looking the other way.

(MORE)

OFFICER GRADY (CONT'D)
Tired of watching people like Locke
get away with everything. Maybe
it's time for a change.

Harris struggles, his voice strained.

OFFICER HARRIS
(You're gonna throw your
career away for this
psycho?)

Grady's face hardens, his mind made up.

OFFICER GRADY
No. I'm making sure justice gets
served. Real justice.

Elijah's voice cuts through the chaos, calm and clear.

ELIJAH
It's time, Grady. You know what to
do.

Grady nods, and before Harris can react, Grady reaches into his pocket and pulls out a set of keys. He unlocks Elijah's cuffs, the metal clinking softly as they fall away.

Harris's eyes widen in shock, but Grady is already moving. He grabs the radio and shouts into it.

OFFICER GRADY
Jenkins! Stop the van! Now!

CUT TO:

INT. DRIVER'S CAB OF THE PRISON VAN - DAY

Jenkins and Ramirez exchange confused looks as they hear the commotion through the radio. Jenkins reaches for the brakes, but before he can respond, the back door of the van swings open.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

The van screeches to a halt, kicking up dust as it skids to a stop on the side of the road. The back doors fly open, and Elijah leaps out, landing with surprising agility. Grady follows, his eyes wild with a mix of adrenaline and determination.

Harris stumbles out after them, shouting.

OFFICER HARRIS

You're making a mistake, Grady!
This guy is dangerous!

But Grady is already shoving Elijah toward a small, unmarked car parked just off the road—it's been waiting there the whole time, part of a plan that's been unfolding right under everyone's nose.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Elijah slides into the back seat of the small, unmarked car as Grady jumps into the driver's seat. He slams the door shut, adrenaline surging through him. His hands tremble slightly on the steering wheel, the weight of his decision crashing down on him, but he's committed now—there's no turning back.

Officer Harris stumbles out of the van, clutching his side where Grady shoved him. His voice is strained as he yells at them, disbelief etched across his face.

OFFICER HARRIS

You're out of your damn mind,
Grady! You think they won't catch
you both? You're finished!

But Grady ignores him. He turns the key in the ignition, and the car roars to life. He throws it into gear, his eyes flickering to Elijah in the rearview mirror. For a split second, doubt clouds his face, but then he sets his jaw, determination taking hold.

OFFICER GRADY

We're not finished. We're just
getting started. The justice system
doesn't work we're going to fix it!

The car lurches forward, kicking up a plume of dust as it speeds off down the deserted highway, leaving Harris behind. Elijah leans back, the faintest smile playing on his lips as the landscape blurs past.

Fade to black

FLASHBACK: ONE WEEK EARLIER

INT. COUNTY JAIL - VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

Elijah sits alone in a small visitation room, shackled and cuffed. The room is stark and empty, a single table and two chairs the only furnishings. The door creaks open, and Officer Grady steps inside, a conflicted look on his face.

Grady hesitates, then takes a seat across from Elijah. He glances at the camera in the corner of the room before leaning forward, his voice low.

OFFICER GRADY

I've been thinking about what you said... about the truth and the people who need to see it. And... I can't stop wondering... what if you're right?

Elijah's eyes narrow, studying Grady closely. There's a vulnerability in the guard's gaze, a desperate need for something Elijah has been offering: meaning, purpose, a higher cause.

ELIJAH

It's not about being right or wrong. It's about seeing what others can't. The world is full of darkness, but you and I—we see the light. You know it too, don't you?

OFFICER GRADY

You were right about the pimp and prostitutes very bad people! LAPD told me he was involved in human trafficking and his girls were selling drugs to high school kids.

Grady swallows hard, nodding almost imperceptibly. He glances at the camera again, then reaches into his pocket, pulling out a small keycard.

OFFICER GRADY (CONT'D)

There's a van scheduled to transfer you to the federal penitentiary next week. I'll be on that transport. I can make sure the cuffs are loose, give you a window to escape...

Elijah's smile is subtle, but it reaches his eyes. He leans forward, his voice soft and persuasive.

ELIJAH

I knew you'd see it. But you'll need a way to get past the checkpoints. There's an old friend who can help us with that.

Grady raises an eyebrow, curiosity mingled with caution.

OFFICER GRADY

Who?

Elijah's smile deepens.

ELIJAH

A man named Luther Gray. You'll find him at the Red Sands Motel on Route 56. He owes me a favor. Tell him the "Highway Prophet" sent you.

CUT TO:

EXT. RED SANDS MOTEL - DAY

A run-down, dusty motel stands in the middle of nowhere, its neon sign flickering faintly in the scorching sun. Grady pulls into the parking lot, his gaze scanning the area. The place is nearly deserted—an ideal spot for shady deals and hidden arrangements.

He steps out of his car and heads inside, the bell above the door jingling softly. The interior is dimly lit, the air thick with the smell of cigarette smoke and cheap perfume.

Luther Gray (mid-50s, rugged and wiry with a permanent scowl) leans against the front desk, flipping through an old magazine. He looks up as Grady approaches, his eyes narrowing.

LUTHER

What's a cop like you doing here?
You lost?

Grady takes a deep breath, steadying himself. He knows what's at stake. He reaches into his pocket, pulling out a small piece of paper with Elijah's handwriting on it. He hands it to Luther.

Luther glances at the note, and his scowl deepens. His eyes flick back to Grady.

LUTHER (CONT'D)

"Highway Prophet," huh? Didn't think I'd be hearing that name again. What's he want?

Grady shifts his weight, lowering his voice.

OFFICER GRADY

He needs a car. Something unmarked, no plates. Needs it waiting near the penitentiary route—someplace isolated.

Luther's eyes flicker with recognition. He leans back, crossing his arms.

LUTHER

So he's planning a breakout. I figured he'd end up back behind bars eventually, but... what makes you think I'll help you?

Grady holds Luther's gaze, his voice steady.

OFFICER GRADY

Because he's helped you before. And because if you don't, he's got more than enough dirt on you to ruin whatever quiet little life you've managed to build out here.

There's a tense silence as Luther considers the offer. Finally, he grunts, shaking his head in reluctant agreement.

LUTHER

Fine. There's an old dirt road about ten miles from the last checkpoint, leads out to a ridge overlooking the highway. I'll leave the car there, gassed up and ready. But you tell Elijah—after this, we're even. I don't want to hear from him again.

Grady nods, relief washing over him.

OFFICER GRADY

He'll know.

Luther shoves the piece of paper back at Grady and turns away, muttering under his breath.

CUT TO:

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT VAN - BACK TO PRESENT

The plan falls into place. Grady's arrangement with Luther has come through, and the unmarked car was waiting exactly where it needed to be. The moment Grady and Elijah exited the van, the car was there, hidden behind a small ridge.

Grady glances over at Elijah as he speeds down the highway, his mind racing. His loyalty has been tested, and he's crossed a line he can't uncross. Elijah seems to sense the turmoil, his voice calm.

ELIJAH

You did the right thing, Grady.
You're part of something bigger
now.

Grady swallows, his eyes fixed on the road ahead. The reality of what he's done—helping a dangerous fugitive escape—crashes down on him, but a strange sense of purpose keeps him steady.

OFFICER GRADY

Where to now?

Elijah's gaze drifts to the horizon, a strange light in his eyes.

ELIJAH

There's a place I need to be. An
old church, just outside the city.
You'll know it when you see it.

Grady's fingers tighten on the wheel. He nods, focusing on the task at hand.

OFFICER GRADY

We'll get you there.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

The unmarked car barrels down the deserted highway, the landscape blurring past. In the distance, the massive walls of the federal penitentiary disappear into the rearview mirror, shrinking until they're just a memory.

Elijah leans back, his eyes closing for a moment. The getaway was perfectly executed, and now he's free once again—free to continue his mission.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN :

INT. FEDERAL PENITENTIARY - WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Back at the federal penitentiary, chaos erupts as the news of Elijah's escape reaches the warden. Warden Phillips (late 50s, stern and authoritative) stands behind his desk, staring at the frantic officers and agents rushing around him.

The phone in his hand shakes slightly as he speaks.

WARDEN PHILLIPS

How the hell did this happen? He was supposed to be secured! Get every unit on this—search the entire perimeter! I want that man found!

But as the officers scatter, there's a sinking feeling in the warden's gut. Elijah is gone, and the repercussions of his escape are only just beginning to unfold.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT CHURCH - DAY

The car pulls up to a small, abandoned church at the edge of the desert. It's old and crumbling, the paint peeling off the walls, but there's a strange air of reverence about it.

Elijah steps out, his eyes scanning the building. He turns to Grady, who watches him with a mixture of awe and fear.

ELIJAH

Wait here. There's something I need to do.

Grady nods, his heart still racing. As Elijah walks toward the church, his posture calm and unhurried, Grady glances around, the reality of what they've done still sinking in.

Elijah disappears into the church, leaving Grady alone with his thoughts. The escape is complete, but what comes next is unknown—something Grady both fears and is strangely drawn to.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - DAY

Elijah steps inside the empty church, the wooden floor creaking under his boots. Dust hangs in the air, catching the light filtering through the broken windows.

He moves to the front, standing before the old, cracked altar. Slowly, he kneels, closing his eyes in silent prayer.

His mission isn't over. It's only just begun.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED CHURCH - DAY

The inside of the church is silent and hauntingly still. Dust motes float through the beams of sunlight streaming in through shattered stained glass windows. The pews, long abandoned, are covered in a thin layer of dirt and decay. The altar stands at the front, cracked and worn, its once-polished wood marred by time.

Elijah kneels before the altar, his head bowed, hands clasped in prayer. There's a profound stillness in his posture—a man who believes he's in communion with something far greater than himself. His whispered voice fills the empty space, his words a fervent plea, a reconfirmation of his purpose.

ELIJAH

(softly, almost
reverently)

Lord, I stand before you, humbled
and grateful. You have guided me
through the fire, delivered me from
the hands of the unworthy.

(MORE)

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
I am your servant... your
instrument. Use me as you see fit.

His eyes open slowly, glancing up at the cracked ceiling above. The light filters down on him, casting eerie patterns across his face.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
I have not faltered. The world may see me as a monster, but you see the truth. You know that I am here to purge the wickedness that has taken root. I will cleanse it, as you have commanded. I will bring your judgment to those who hide behind false righteousness.

He rises to his feet, the intensity in his eyes unwavering. He turns, his gaze sweeping across the empty church as if envisioning the future—a future only he can see, a future that involves a mission far greater than anything he's done so far.

Elijah's voice grows stronger, echoing off the walls.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
I am ready. Whatever trials await me, I will face them. I will not stop until your will is done. Even in the darkness, I will be your light. Even when I am hunted, I will be your messenger.

He takes a deep breath, his expression calm, resolute.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
There are more out there—more who hide their sins behind the mask of piety. I will find them. I will show the world their true faces. And when the time comes... they will know that they are being judged.

Elijah closes his eyes, his voice dropping to a whisper again.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)
You have shown me the way. I will not fail.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED CHURCH - DAY

Grady sits in the car, his foot tapping nervously on the floorboard. He glances at the church, watching Elijah's silhouette through the broken windows. Despite everything, a strange sense of peace emanates from the building, almost as if the place itself has been sanctified by Elijah's presence.

Grady swallows hard, his thoughts racing. He's gone too far to turn back now. He's seen the world's corruption firsthand—seen people like Reverend Locke get away with horrors that were swept under the rug. And now, sitting here, waiting for Elijah to emerge, he can't shake the feeling that maybe... just maybe, Elijah is right.

The church door creaks open, and Elijah steps out, his face a mask of calm certainty. He moves toward the car with measured steps, his gaze locking with Grady's.

Grady lowers the window as Elijah approaches. There's a long moment of silence between them—no words are necessary. Grady sees the resolve in Elijah's eyes, the unshakable faith that drives him forward.

Finally, Grady speaks, his voice barely more than a whisper.

OFFICER GRADY

What now?

Elijah's smile is almost serene, a look of quiet triumph.

ELIJAH

Now... we continue the work. The
wolves still hide among the flock.
But they won't hide for long.

Grady nods slowly, feeling the weight of Elijah's words settle into his bones. He's in this now—part of something far larger than himself.

OFFICER GRADY

I'm with you. Whatever you need.

Elijah places a hand on Grady's shoulder, his touch light but firm.

ELIJAH

Your faith will be rewarded, Grady.
You've seen the truth. Together, we
will bring the light to those who
refuse to see it.

Elijah steps back, his eyes drifting to the horizon, where the sun is beginning to set, casting long shadows across the desert. The wind picks up, carrying the scent of dust and sand.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

There is a storm coming—a reckoning. But first, we must prepare. There are still many more lost souls to reach. The next stage of our mission begins now.

Grady swallows hard, feeling both fear and exhilaration course through him. He grips the steering wheel tightly, nodding once more.

OFFICER GRADY

Where to?

Elijah's gaze shifts back to the distant horizon, his eyes filled with a strange, almost holy fire.

ELIJAH

Head north. There's a town there—a place where the darkness has taken root. I've seen it in my dreams. It's time to shine the light once more.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - SUNSET

The unmarked car speeds away from the abandoned church, leaving it standing alone in the fading light. The desert stretches out endlessly, the wind whispering secrets through the empty expanse.

CUT TO:

INT. UNMARKED CAR - SUNSET

Elijah sits in the backseat, staring out at the open road ahead. He's calm, collected, a man with a renewed sense of purpose. The shackles are gone, and with them, the constraints of law and society.

He whispers softly, almost as if speaking to someone unseen.

ELIJAH

The world thinks it has defeated me, but I am still here. Still carrying out your will. The next chapter is about to begin. The wolves will be exposed. The true believers will rise. And those who continue to hide their sins... they will face your judgment.

He leans back, closing his eyes, a small smile tugging at his lips.

ELIJAH (CONT'D)

I am ready, Lord. Guide me to where you need me most. I will not fail you.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DUSK

The car disappears over a distant hill, the sky painted in hues of deep orange and purple. The desert falls silent once more, the church's broken silhouette standing like a monument to something long forgotten.

But Elijah's words linger, hanging in the air like a prophecy yet to be fulfilled.

FADE OUT

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The station is quiet, the low hum of fluorescent lights the only sound as Detective Martin stands at a bulletin board covered with photos, maps, and documents. Elijah's face stares back at her from a mugshot pinned to the center, circled in red. Around it, clippings of his crimes and his victims' faces form a grim collage.

Martin's hands tremble slightly as she stares at the board, her eyes red from lack of sleep. She clutches a copy of the incident report detailing Elijah's escape and Officer Grady's involvement.

Sheriff Thompson enters, his face weary but composed. He holds a steaming cup of coffee, offering it to Martin without a word. She takes it with a small nod, her eyes never leaving the board.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

He's gone. Just like that.

Thompson exhales heavily, pulling out a chair and sinking into it.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Not just gone. Helped. One of our own. Grady knew what he was doing. He planned this.

Martin sits beside him, setting the coffee down without taking a sip. Her voice is quiet, but laced with frustration.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

How does that happen? How does someone like Grady... someone who wore the same badge as us... end up helping a monster like Elijah?

Thompson shakes his head, rubbing his temple as he processes the question.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

He believed in something. Or at least, he thought he did. Same way Elijah believes he's carrying out God's will. People like that... they don't just break. They're already cracked.

Martin leans back, running a hand through her hair.

DETECTIVE MARTIN

And now they're out there. Together. Elijah's free, with someone who knows the system. He's more dangerous than ever.

Thompson sighs, leaning forward and resting his elbows on his knees.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

He'll slip up. They always do. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow... but we'll find him.

Martin looks over at Thompson, her expression dark.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
You sound confident.

Thompson meets her gaze, his voice steady.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
It's not confidence. It's reality.
Men like Elijah—they don't stop.
And men like Grady... they learn
too late what they've gotten
themselves into.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE MARTIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Martin sits alone at her kitchen table, the faint glow of a desk lamp illuminating a stack of files. Elijah's case file sits open in front of her, his mugshot staring back. Next to it is a report on Officer Grady—his personnel file, commendations, and photos of him alongside his colleagues.

Martin flips through Grady's file, stopping at a picture of him smiling in his uniform. She shakes her head, her voice a low murmur.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
What did you see in him?

She leans back, staring at the ceiling as the weight of her failure presses down on her. Her phone buzzes on the table, the screen lighting up with an incoming news alert. The headline reads: "Highway Prophet Still at Large—Search Intensifies."

Martin doesn't pick up the phone. She simply stares at it, her jaw tightening.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Sheriff Thompson drives his patrol car down an empty stretch of highway, the distant lights of the city fading behind him. He glances over to the side of the road and sees a tow truck driver helping a family with their broken down SUV.

The hum of his engine is steady, but his mind races. On the passenger seat lies Elijah's photo, along with a map marked with potential escape routes.

Thompson grips the wheel tighter, his knuckles white.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

You're out there somewhere, Elijah.
But you won't stay hidden. Not
forever.

He glances at the empty road ahead, the darkness swallowing the horizon. His reflection in the windshield looks worn, older than he remembers, but his resolve is unshaken.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - NIGHT

Elijah and Officer Grady walk side by side through the darkness, their figures silhouetted against the faint glow of a fire in the distance. Grady's posture is stiff, unsure, while Elijah strides with calm purpose.

Ahead, the outline of a crumbling church comes into view, its steeple barely standing. The firelight flickers from within, casting eerie shadows across the desert sand.

Grady hesitates, looking at Elijah.

OFFICER GRADY

You really think this is going to
change anything? The world doesn't
just... bend to your will.

Elijah stops, turning to face him. His expression is calm but intense, his eyes alight with conviction.

ELIJAH

It's not about bending the world,
Grady. It's about showing it the
truth. And you're part of that now.

Grady looks at him, a flicker of doubt in his eyes, but he nods slowly, following Elijah toward the firelight.

INT. DETECTIVE MARTIN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Martin sits at her window, staring out at the Vegas skyline. The city lights twinkle in the distance, but her gaze is unfocused, her mind far away.

She mutters softly to herself, almost a prayer.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
I'll find you.

FADE OUT.

EXT ABANDONED CHURCH. SUNRISE

The Front door of the church opens Elijah and Officer Grady exit adjusting their eyes to the bright sunlight.

OFFICER GRADY'S POV.

The Hawk is now perched on the hood of Grady's car staring intently at Elijah and Officer Grady.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. LAS VEGAS NEWSROOM - NIGHT

A NEWS ANCHOR sits under bright studio lights, her expression solemn. Behind her, B-ROLL plays: aerial shots of FORENSIC CREWS digging behind the Cadillac art exhibit.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
...this morning's excavation confirms the discovery of at least ten vehicles containing human remains. Authorities believe the site may be linked to the suspect dubbed "The Highway Prophet" - responsible for multiple disappearances between Los Angeles and Las Vegas...

EXT. CADILLAC GRAVE SITE - NIGHT

Flashing lights. Police floodlamps. Yellow tape flaps in the wind. A dozen FORENSIC TECHS, REPORTERS, and ONLOOKERS gather around the eerie field of buried Cadillacs.

DETECTIVE MARTIN stands at the perimeter with SHERIFF THOMPSON, arms folded, gaze locked on the spectacle.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
They wanted this kept quiet. But
Elijah made sure it wouldn't be.

DETECTIVE MARTIN
It's not just a message. It's a
sermon.

Nearby, a REPORTER interviews a shaken WITNESS.

REPORTER (O.S.)
...and what did you see?

WITNESS (O.S.)
All those cars... all those
bones... like they were planted
there. Like he wanted 'em to be
found.

Martin turns and walks away, jaw tight.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. DETECTIVE MARTIN'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dim, quiet. Martin sits at her kitchen table, the glow of her laptop lighting her face. On the screen: Elijah's case file. A MAP OF LAS VEGAS is filled with red markers.

She hovers the mouse over one: THE STRIP. A note reads:
"IDOLS OF BABYLON."

Her jaw tightens. She hits PLAY on her cell phone voicemail.

VOICEMAIL (V.O.)
Hey Ev. Brown here, your partner
remember me? Just checking in.
Don't forget about that burrito
place on Charleston. You owe me a
lunch, remember? Also... you were
right about the guy last week. You
always are. Be safe. Call me back.

Beep.

Martin closes her eyes. Breathes.

She opens a drawer and takes out a SILVER BADGE – not hers. She places it beside her own. She pulls out an old news paper front page it reads Las Vegas Times: Vegas Police officer Victor Brown fatally shot by Serial killer "The Desert Jackal".

DETECTIVE MARTIN

You were right, too.

She shuts her laptop, grabs her case file and weapon, and heads for the door.

INT. MOTEL ROOM – SAME NIGHT

A dim, dingy space. ELIJAH kneels before a crude altar made of stacked motel furniture. The TV flickers with news footage of the dig site.

He stares at the screen – a CLOSE-UP of Detective Martin appears.

He smiles.

ELIJAH

And the hour of judgment draws near.

He opens his worn Bible. One page is marked in red ink: "WOE UNTO THE CITY OF SIN."

FADE OUT.