

Shroud of Faith
by
(Joe Murkijanian)

Name Joe Murk

Address

Phone 323-253-6402

FADE IN:

EXT. VATICAN CITY - DAWN

The golden sun rises over St. Peter's Basilica, casting its ethereal glow upon the colonnades that embrace St. Peter's Square. Pilgrims and tourists move through the cobblestone plaza, their whispers lost in the grandeur of towering statues of saints. The sound of church bells tolling reverberates through the crisp morning air, blending with the distant chanting of monks.

The camera soars over the Vatican, gliding past the Dome of St. Peter's, revealing the vast Vatican Library and finally descending toward the Pontifical University, a fortress of theological wisdom where scholars debate the mysteries of the faith.

INT. PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY - MASTER LECTURE HALL - MORNING

A magnificent hall, adorned with frescoes of biblical history, vast bookshelves stacked with ancient texts, and a grand marble podium at the center. Young seminarians, dressed in black cassocks, sit in hushed anticipation.

At the podium stands MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS, an elderly theologian with piercing eyes and a weathered face, etched with years of contemplation. His voice is deep, resonant, commanding reverence.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(steadily, with gravity)

"For centuries, men have sought proof of the divine... tangible evidence of the miracle of resurrection. Some say faith needs no proof--yet, here in our hands, we possess a relic that has baffled science and stirred the soul of Christendom. The Shroud of Turin."

At the front row, leaning back in his chair with an air of skepticism, sits DR. REINHARDT, a sharp-eyed historian clad in a modern suit.

His presence is deliberate—an invited guest skeptic to challenge the narrative.

A murmur ripples through the recruits, a mixture of curiosity and skepticism. Reinhardt smirks slightly, tilting his head.

DR. REINHARDT

(leaning forward, bemused)

"And yet, carbon dating suggests it is no older than the 14th century. A most inconvenient contradiction, wouldn't you say, Monsignor?"

A tense silence. Augustinus clasps his hands behind his back, calm but firm.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"Science is a tool, Dr. Reinhardt, not an oracle. Tools are only as good as the hands that wield them. A flawed test does not undo a millennium of faith."

Reinhardt chuckles slightly, folding his arms.

DR. REINHARDT

"Ah yes, faith. The eternal shield against reason. But tell me, if we were to believe in miracles, how do you explain the historical inconsistencies? The missing years? The lack of documentation? If this relic is genuine, then let us follow it through history and see where it leads."

Augustinus steps forward, his eyes locking onto Reinhardt's.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"Then let us journey through time, Doctor. And I will show you how, despite wars, betrayals, and even fire, the Shroud endures."

The camera slowly pushes in on the flickering candlelight, illuminating the manuscript—its pages filled with faded ink, illustrations of ancient lands, and a delicate sketch of the Shroud itself.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. GOLGOTHA - NIGHT

The sky churns with ominous clouds, streaked with flashes of distant lightning. A soft rain drizzles over the lifeless body of JESUS CHRIST, taken down from the cross. His wounds, fresh and raw, glisten under the flickering torchlight of his mourners.

INT. TOMB OF JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA - NIGHT

The tomb is carved from solid rock, cold and still. JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA and NICODEMUS, their faces solemn, wrap Jesus' body in linen, carefully anointing it with aloes and myrrh.

The SHROUD is pristine, carefully laid out as they lower Jesus upon it. MARY MAGDALENE, weeping, watches as his face is covered.

CLOSE ON: The linen softly folding over his features, preserving the contours of his divine countenance.

As the stone is rolled into place, the chamber plunges into darkness.

TIME PASSES...

A faint glow emerges, barely perceptible at first. Then—

A SUDDEN BEAM OF LIGHT pierces through the rock walls, illuminating the tomb with an ethereal radiance. The linen trembles, as if reacting to an unseen force.

CLOSE ON: The fibers of the shroud begin to shimmer, absorbing the light.

A WAVE OF ENERGY ripples through the chamber, expanding outward. The wounds on Jesus' body begin to mend, the bruises fading, the torn flesh knitting itself together.

Then—

A BLINDING FLASH.

For an instant, everything is pure white, the entire tomb bathed in unearthly brilliance.

SLOW MOTION: The body LIFTS slightly from the stone slab. A glowing halo of light surrounds it, radiating from within.

Jesus' form begins to dissolve—not into nothingness, but into something greater. Flesh turns into pure, radiant energy, his divine essence transcending physical form.

The image of his face, serene and majestic, burns into the linen, imprinting the moment of transformation.

Then—

The light fades, leaving behind an empty tomb.

The shroud falls back onto the slab, now carrying a ghostly, detailed image of the man who once lay there.

Silence.

A gust of wind stirs the linen gently.

Then—a distant sound. Footsteps.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOMB ENTRANCE - DAWN

The stone covering the entrance has been rolled away.

MARY MAGDALENE arrives, breathless, her eyes wide with confusion and fear. Behind her, PETER and JOHN rush forward.

They hesitate before stepping inside.

INT. TOMB - CONTINUOUS

The tomb is empty—except for the shroud, lying undisturbed on the stone slab.

Peter picks it up, his hands trembling.

CLOSE ON: The faint but unmistakable image of a man"

The imprint of Jesus Christ.

Peter and John stare in awe, realization dawning.

PETER
(whispering)
"He is risen..."

Mary Magdalene steps forward, hesitant but drawn by an unseen force. She reaches out and delicately touches the linen, her fingers tracing the contours of the sacred imprint.

MARY MAGDALENE
(softly, awestruck))
"Master..."

John kneels beside the slab, running his fingers over the fabric, examining the faint traces of dried blood and the imprint of unearthly precision.

JOHN
(whispering to himself))
"It is... as if the light itself
captured Him."

Peter turns the fabric over in his hands, studying every detail. His breath catches as he notices the wounds clearly preserved in the image—the marks of the nails, the gash in the side. His grip tightens as he struggles to comprehend what he is seeing.

PETER
(voice thick with emotion)
"This is the work of the Lord."

The three stand in silence, their eyes locked on the sacred cloth. A profound sense of revelation washes over them.

Then, outside, a soft breeze stirs the trees, and in the distance, the golden light of dawn breaks over the horizon.

EXT. TOMB - DAY

A squad of ROMAN SOLDIERS, led by CENTURION MARCUS, arrive at the tomb, their faces hardened with suspicion. They stop abruptly, stunned by the massive stone rolled away.

They find a secluded grove, a place of refuge and quiet.

CENTURION MARCUS
(angrily))
"Search the tomb!"

Two soldiers step inside, only to find no body. They exchange nervous glances before emerging.

ROMAN SOLDIER
"The body is gone, Centurion.
Nothing remains."

Marcus' face tightens in frustration. He turns to PETER and JOHN, who stand nearby, wary but firm.

CENTURION MARCUS
"You! Where is the body? Tell me
now!"

Peter steadies himself, meeting the centurion's glare.

PETER
(calmly))
"He is not here. He has risen, just
as He said."

Marcus scoffs, shaking his head.

CENTURION MARCUS
"Blasphemers! You stole the body to
deceive the people."

John steps forward, his voice measured but resolute.

JOHN
Your guards have been just a few
feet away how would we sneak a body
past them! "We speak only the
truth. The world has changed this
day. You may not see it, but you
will."

Marcus clenches his fists, torn between disbelief and unease. He turns to his soldiers.

CENTURION MARCUS
"Search the area! We will not leave
until we find the body."

As the soldiers disperse, Peter and John exchange a knowing glance.

CUT TO:

INT. SECRET MEETING PLACE - NIGHT

A dimly lit chamber, candlelight flickering against the rough stone walls. PETER, JOHN, JAMES, THADDEUS, AND OTHER APOSTLES gather, their faces lined with tension. MARY MAGDALENE carefully unfolds the shroud, placing it before them.

A long silence. The air is heavy with the weight of the decision before them.

PETER
(gravely)
"The Romans are hunting us. The
high priests would see this
destroyed. We cannot let them take
it."

JOHN
(studying the image)
"This is a sign beyond any we have
seen. But where can we keep it
safe?"

JAMES
(leaning in)
"I have heard of believers in
Edessa—they are strong in faith and
would guard it with their lives."

THADDEUS
"But Edessa is far. Too dangerous
to travel now."

MARY MAGDALENE

(softly)

"Then we take it to Antioch. The brethren there have hidden us before. They will hide this."

The apostles murmur in agreement.

PETER

(firmly)

"It will travel in secret. Those who carry it must not speak of it."

John carefully wraps the shroud in another layer of cloth. He looks to Peter, seeking final approval.

PETER (CONT'D)

(nods)

"Thaddeus and Nathaniel will deliver it they leave before the sun rises."

The apostles exchange solemn glances. This is not just a relic—it is proof, a testament to all they have witnessed.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ROAD TO EDESSA - NIGHT

Two apostles, THADDEUS and NATHANIEL, ride on horseback through the rugged terrain. The SHROUD, wrapped tightly in protective fabric, is secured between them. The road is treacherous, flanked by towering cliffs and thick underbrush.

THADDEUS

(grimly)

"We must be cautious. If the Romans catch us, they will not hesitate to take it." (beat) I would have felt much better about this journey if Peter was here.

Suddenly, the distant sound of hooves echoes through the valley. A band of Roman scouts emerges from the darkness, swords drawn.

NATHANIEL
(urgent whisper))
"They've found us!"

The apostles kick their horses into a gallop, dirt flying beneath them. The Romans give chase, arrows whistling past. One arrow grazes Nathaniel's arm, causing him to wince in pain, but he holds on.

A sudden rolling fog descends over the valley, thick and impenetrable. The Romans falter, their vision obscured.

THADDEUS
(breathless, awed))
"The Lord shields us. Ride faster!"

They press forward through the fog. As they reach a raging river, the current seems too strong to cross. The Romans draw nearer.

NATHANIEL
(desperate))
"We are trapped!"

They jump off their horses Thaddeus quickly pulls the shroud from his saddle and straps it on his back.

Thaddeus raises his hands in silent prayer. Suddenly, a fallen tree collapses into the river, forming an impromptu bridge. The apostles waste no time, racing across as the logs creak beneath their weight.

The Romans arrive just as the tree, as if touched by divine force, splits and is carried away by the current, leaving the pursuers stranded on the far side.

Just when they think they are safe, a second group of Roman soldiers appears on the opposite bank, blocking their path.

THADDEUS
(whispering))
"We cannot fight them all."

Suddenly, a lightning bolt strikes a nearby tree, sending flames into the air. The startled soldiers recoil as burning branches collapse between them and the apostles, creating a wall of fire.

Panting, Nathaniel and Thaddeus exchange a glance—knowing, beyond doubt, that they are being guided.

THADDEUS (CONT'D)
(softly)
"He is with us."

They disappear into the safety of the forest as the frustrated cries of the Romans fade into the night.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. HIDDEN CHRISTIAN OUTPOST - DAWN

The apostles finally arrive at a concealed Christian hideout, where a group of believers awaits them. EZEKIEL, an elder, steps forward as they dismount, breathless.

EZEKIEL
"You have brought it?"

Thaddeus carefully unwraps the fabric, revealing the Shroud. Gasps ripple through the gathered disciples.

NATHANIEL
(weary, but firm))
"It must be protected at all costs."

A shadow moves in the distance. One of the believers, JOTHAM, eyes them suspiciously.

JOTHAM
(skeptical))
"How do we know you are not followed? The Romans would pay handsomely for what you carry."

A tense silence falls. Nathaniel grips his sword hilt. Trust is fragile here.

THADDEUS
(steadily))
"We risked our lives to bring this to Edessa. We all share the same faith."

Jotham studies them, then finally nods. The shroud is carried inside the refuge, disappearing into the dim candlelight.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CITY OF EDESSA - DAY (944 AD)

A grand procession moves through the bustling streets of Edessa. The Shroud, encased in a golden reliquary, is carried by Byzantine soldiers under the orders of Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos. A crowd gathers, watching in hushed reverence.

INT. PALACE OF EDESSA - NIGHT

Inside a candlelit chamber, high-ranking Byzantine officials and clergymen stand before the Shroud, discussing its fate.

BISHOP THEODORE

(solemnly)

"This relic is too great to remain here. It must reside where it can be protected."

GENERAL STEPHANOS

((nodding))

"The Emperor has decreed it shall be moved to Constantinople. The city will be its safest refuge."

MONK DAMASUS

(uneasy)

"But should we not seek divine counsel before moving such a sacred object?"

The bishop places a hand on the monk's shoulder.

BISHOP THEODORE

"God has already spoken through His miracles. We must obey."

EXT. ROAD TO CONSTANTINOPLE - NIGHT

A heavily guarded Byzantine caravan moves through treacherous mountain passes. The Shroud, now carried in a chest adorned with gold and jewels, is surrounded by elite warriors.

Suddenly—an ambush.

A group of bandits, clad in dark cloaks, emerge from the shadows, attacking the caravan. Swords clash, arrows fly. The Byzantine guards fight valiantly, forming a protective circle around the reliquary.

GENERAL STEPHANOS

(shouting))

"Defend the relic at all costs!"

A bandit lunges for the chest, but as his hand touches it, a blinding light erupts, throwing him backward. The attackers recoil, momentarily stunned.

The Byzantines seize the opportunity, cutting through their stunned foes. The remaining bandits flee into the darkness.

As they continue their journey, storm clouds gather. Thunder rumbles ominously. The path ahead is blocked by a landslide, the rocky debris making passage impossible.

GENERAL STEPHANOS

(grimly)

"We have no choice. We must find another route."

Just as despair begins to settle over them, a flock of white doves suddenly rises from a nearby path, as if guiding them toward a hidden trail through the mountains.

BYZANTINE SOLDIER

(in awe))

"Look!"

They follow the doves, discovering a narrow passage—steep, but passable. As they make their way through, they glance back to see the original path they were meant to take collapse into the ravine below.

They exchange stunned glances, realizing they have been divinely led.

CUT TO:

INT. HAGIA SOPHIA - CONSTANTINOPLE - DAWN

The Shroud is carried into the majestic halls of Hagia Sophia, greeted by Emperor Romanos I Lekapenos himself. Incense fills the air, and monks chant solemn hymns.

The Emperor kneels before the reliquary, placing a hand on it reverently.

EMPEROR ROMANOS I LEKAPENOS
(softly, in awe))
"The image of our Lord, preserved
for eternity."

The golden light of dawn filters through the stained glass, casting radiant hues upon the relic. The monks bow their heads, whispering prayers of gratitude.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY - MASTER LECTURE HALL - PRESENT DAY

The flickering candlelight steadies as the camera fades back in, returning to Monsignor Augustinus, who now turns the page of the manuscript to reveal a medieval battle scene.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
(steadily, with gravity)
"The journey of the Shroud did not
end in Constantinople. For
centuries, it was revered,
displayed, and protected within the
heart of the Byzantine Empire. But
then, in the year 1204, disaster
struck."

The seminarians lean in as an illustration of knights in armor storming a grand cathedral is revealed.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS (CONT'D)
"The Fourth Crusade—a campaign
meant to reclaim the Holy Land—took
an unexpected and tragic turn.
(MORE)

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS (CONT'D)

Instead of marching to Jerusalem, the Crusaders, driven by greed and desperation, laid siege to Constantinople itself. In the chaos, countless relics were plundered... including, it is believed, the Shroud."

A murmur spreads through the hall, but Dr. Reinhardt interjects, his voice sharp and calculated.

DR. REINHARDT

(leaning forward, arms crossed)

"Or perhaps, Monsignor, it was not stolen at all. Perhaps it was merely another relic, another fabricated artifact swept away in the chaos of war. The Crusaders took many things, but none of them bear miraculous imprints."

Augustinus meets Reinhardt's gaze, undeterred.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"Many relics were stolen, yes. But among them, the Shroud was the most sacred. Its disappearance led to centuries of speculation. If it was simply a forgery, why was it hidden? Why did those who held it guard it with their lives?"

YOUNG SEMINARIAN

(skeptical, hesitant)

"But where did it go? Who took it?"

Reinhardt gestures dismissively, his voice laced with cynicism.

DR. REINHARDT

"Ah, the age-old question. And yet, history provides no clear answers. Some say the Knights Templar took it, others claim it was hidden in monasteries. But where is the evidence? Where is the truth?"

Monsignor Augustinus smiles knowingly, as if expecting the rebuttal.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"There are many theories. Some say it was taken to France, where it remained in obscurity until its rediscovery centuries later. Others suggest it was spirited away to Athens, then to various hidden sanctuaries before vanishing from recorded history for over a century. But you see, Dr. Reinhardt, history is not merely a record of what we can touch. It is a narrative of faith, sacrifice, and endurance."

Reinhardt leans forward, a predatory glint in his eyes.

DR. REINHARDT

"Faith? Faith is merely the story we tell ourselves when the evidence fails to support our beliefs. You weave a tale of men protecting a sacred object, but how many 'holy relics' were created in the same period to deceive the masses? What makes this one any different?"

The room is silent, the weight of history pressing down upon the young scholars. Augustinus pauses, considering his next words carefully.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(softly, but firm)

"Because, Dr. Reinhardt... it survived. Despite wars, destruction, and time itself, the Shroud endured. The fire could not consume it. The greed of men could not erase it. And your skepticism... will not dismiss it."

The camera zooms in on the manuscript once more, lingering on an illustration of knights carrying a mysterious bundle on horseback, vanishing into the mist.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. LIREY, FRANCE - 1350 A.D. - NIGHT

The medieval village of Lirey rests under a sky choked with thick, rolling clouds. A stone manor, adorned with the coat of arms of the noble de Charny family, looms atop a hill. Torches flicker against the cold stone walls, casting eerie shadows.

Inside, GEOFFROI DE CHARNY, a battle-worn knight with streaks of silver in his beard, kneels before a large wooden chest. His hands tremble as he unlocks it, revealing the Shroud of Turin, carefully wrapped in fine linen. The candlelight dances over the faint image of a man's face imprinted on the cloth.

Behind him, his wife, JEANNE DE VEREY, stands with a concerned expression.

JEANNE

(whispering))

"It has been with us for years,
yet... something stirs within this
house. The servants speak of
strange occurrences."

A sudden gust of wind howls through the manor, slamming the shutters open. Jeanne gasps, clutching her shawl tighter.

INT. LIREY MANOR - GREAT HALL - MOMENTS LATER

The Templar guards, stationed outside, notice the flickering torchlight vanishing within the castle. Their leader, SIR ROBERT DE BEAUMONT, a hardened warrior, raises a hand, signaling his men.

SIR ROBERT

(grimly))

"Something is amiss. We go in-now."

The guards storm into the castle, boots pounding against the stone floor as they rush toward the chamber of the Shroud. As they enter, a powerful gust of wind sweeps through the room, snuffing out every torch at once, leaving only darkness.

For a heartbeat, silence.

Then—one torch suddenly relights, its flames dancing unnaturally, casting a warm glow over the Shroud, now seeming almost luminescent.

GEOFFROI
(hoarse whisper)
"It's... alive."

The guards stare in awe and fear, the image on the Shroud appearing more defined than ever, as if breathing. Jeanne clutches Geoffroi's arm tightly.

SIR ROBERT
(firmly)

"We must move it. It is no longer safe here."

INT. LIREY MANOR - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Lit only by torchlight, the guards descend a narrow, spiraling stone staircase, deeper into the catacombs beneath the manor. The air grows heavy, damp with the weight of centuries.

SIR ROBERT
"Dig. We bury it deep beneath this castle. It must never fall into the wrong hands."

The knights pick up shovels, striking the dirt floor, carving out a hidden crypt. With each stroke, their breaths come heavier, sweat forming at their brows.

Suddenly, the ground trembles slightly, and a low hum echoes through the chamber. The knights pause, exchanging wary glances.

GEOFFROI
(whispering, shaken))
"God watches over us this night."

The screen fades to black as the last flickering torchlight illuminates the knights, their shadows stretching against the cold stone walls, burying the Shroud into history's depths.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CHAMBÉRY, FRANCE - 1453 - NIGHT

The rolling hills of Savoy glisten under the silver glow of the moon.

In the distance, the Château de Chambéry looms—an imposing medieval fortress with towering walls and watchful sentries. A covered carriage barrels through the winding roads, lanterns flickering as it approaches the castle gates.

INT. CHÂTEAU DE CHAMBÉRY - GRAND HALL - NIGHT

Inside the candlelit hall, DUKE LOUIS I OF SAVOY, a regal man with deep-set eyes and a heavy fur cloak, stands beside his wife, ANNE OF CYPRUS. Before them, flanked by armed guards, MARGARET DE CHARNY, an aging noblewoman draped in a heavy black veil, kneels.

In her trembling hands, she holds a wooden chest, its golden lock gleaming in the dim firelight.

DUKE LOUIS I
(softly, reverent)
"Is this truly it?"

Margaret nods, her voice barely above a whisper.

MARGARET DE CHARNY
"It has been hidden, protected by my family for generations. But the times grow dark, and I fear it will not be safe much longer. The House of Savoy has power, and faith... I entrust it to you, my Lord."

A tense silence fills the hall as the Duke gestures to his steward. The man steps forward and carefully unlatches the chest.

As the lid creaks open, the Shroud is revealed, resting within, wrapped in aged silk. The image of a man's face, faint yet unmistakable, seems to shimmer in the candlelight.

Anne gasps, taking a step back, while the Duke crosses himself, his lips moving in silent prayer.

ANNE OF CYPRUS
(whispering))
"It is... divine."

A sudden gust of wind sweeps through the chamber, extinguishing half the candles. The guards shift uneasily, gripping the hilts of their swords.

DUKE LOUIS I

(STEADY, BUT UNSETTLED)

"We must keep it safe.
This relic is too
precious.")

INT. CHÂTEAU DE CHAMBÉRY - UNDERGROUND CHAPEL - LATER

A group of monks and Templar-trained guards carry the Shroud deep beneath the castle, winding through ancient stone corridors lined with torches. Their footsteps echo against the cold walls as they reach a hidden chapel, its altar adorned with relics and golden chalices.

The head monk, FATHER ETIENNE, kneels before the altar, hands raised in solemn prayer.

FATHER ETIENNE

"Lord, we beseech thee, guard this
most sacred relic, that it may
endure through the ages and deliver
faith unto those who seek it."

The knights carefully place the Shroud within an iron chest, securing it within the depths of the chapel's sanctum. One of the guards hesitates, his face pale.

KNIGHT JEAN-MARC

(uneasy))

"My Lord... what if this relic is not
meant to be hidden? What if it is
meant to be seen?"

Duke Louis places a firm hand on his shoulder.

DUKE LOUIS I

"One day, the world will see it.
But for now, we must protect it. No
one must know it rests here."

The heavy iron doors swing shut, the sound of metal locks clanking into place. The torches flicker ominously, as if acknowledging the weight of the secret now buried within the stone walls of Chambéry.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CHÂTEAU DE CHAMBÉRY - PRIVATE CHAPEL - NIGHT

Five years later

Duke Louis stands before Father Etienne, the head monk who has overseen the relic's protection. The glow of candles flickers against the stained-glass windows.

CUT TO:

DUKE LOUIS I

(firmly))

"The time has come, Father. The world must see this relic with their own eyes. I will arrange for it to be displayed in Chambéry."

Father Etienne hesitates, his fingers gripping his wooden rosary tightly.

FATHER ETIENNE

((concerned))

"Your Grace... you risk drawing dangerous eyes upon it. There are those who would see it stolen, or worse... desecrated."

DUKE LOUIS I (resolute) "Faith must not hide in the shadows, Father. This is a gift for all who seek the truth."

The priest exhales slowly, stepping closer.

FATHER ETIENNE (CONT'D)

"Then allow me to oversee its safety. Let us place the Shroud in a fortified reliquary, under constant watch."

Louis considers for a long moment, then nods.

DUKE LOUIS

I "Very well. But know this, Father—one day, the world will not just see it... they will revere it."

Father Etienne turns, gazing toward the altar where the Shroud rests within its protective case. The flickering flames from the candles reflect off the glass, making the image appear as though it is watching them both.

The tension lingers—faith and caution at odds in the dim candlelight.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. CHAMBÉRY - CHAPEL GROUNDS - LATE AFTERNOON

A small group of young boys plays a lively game of kick ball in the courtyard just outside the Chapel of Chambéry. The warm hues of the setting sun cast long shadows across the stone pavement. Two Nobles with black, ornate, robes watch on from across the courtyard.

Among the boys is, MARCEL, a wiry boy with a temper, plays aggressively, shoving and pushing the others.

JEAN-PIERRE (laughing, dodging a shove) "Marcel, you play like a bull!"

Marcel grits his teeth, his frustration mounting. He sizes up the ball, steps back, and then kicks it with all his might—

INT. CHAMBÉRY CHAPEL - SAME MOMENT

The chapel's side door is ajar, a lone guard standing just inside. The ball sails through the entrance, bouncing across the stone floor.

The guard turns abruptly, his brow furrowing.

GUARD
((sighing, shaking his
head))
"Foolish boys..."

He moves forward to retrieve the ball—

But too late.

The ball collides with a table, knocking over a candelabra. A candle tumbles, striking the altar cloth. Within seconds, flames lick at the delicate fabric.

The guard's eyes widen in horror.

GUARD (CONT'D)
((alarmed, shouting))
("Fire! FIRE!")

EXT. CHAMBÉRY CHAPEL - CONTINUOUS

The boys freeze as smoke begins to billow from the open chapel door. Marcel's face turns pale as the other boys scatter in fear.

MARCEL
((whispering, terrified)
"No... no, no, no..."

INT. CHAMBÉRY CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

The fire spreads rapidly, engulfing the wooden beams and climbing up the walls. The flickering golden reliquary, containing the Shroud of Turin, sits at the altar—directly in the fire's path.

The heat intensifies, warping the silver reliquary as smoke fills the grand chamber.

The heavy chapel doors burst open, revealing Father Etienne and a group of Templar knights. Their faces are stricken with horror.

FATHER ETIENNE
((urgent, commanding)
"To the reliquary! NOW!"

The knights charge through the smoke, coughing as embers rain down upon them. The heat is unbearable, their leather armor beginning to smolder.

One knight, SIR GILLES, reaches the reliquary, but as he touches it, he recoils in pain.

SIR GILLES
((grimacing, gasping)
"It burns like the fires of hell!"

FATHER ETIENNE
(breathless, desperate))
"We must get it out before it is
lost forever!"

He grabs a pitcher of water and douses the reliquary, steam hissing violently as the metal cools just enough for the knights to grasp it.

Together, they lift the reliquary, staggering toward the exit. The flames roar behind them, hungry and relentless.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHAMBÉRY CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

The knights stumble out of the inferno, dragging the reliquary onto the damp grass. A massive crash echoes behind them as the roof of the chapel collapses, sending a plume of fire and embers into the sky.

Villagers and noblemen rush to the scene. Duke Louis I arrives, his eyes widening at the sight of his burning chapel.

Father Etienne, drenched in sweat and soot, kneels beside the reliquary, his hands trembling as he unlocks it.

The lid creaks open—

The Shroud of Turin remains intact... but burned. Dark triangular scorch marks line the once-pristine cloth, forever altering its appearance.

DUKE LOUIS I
(breathless, in shock))
"Dear God... it bears the scars of
fire..."

Father Etienne's eyes well with tears, his fingers tracing the damaged fabric.

FATHER ETIENNE
((whispering, in awe)
"And yet it survives."

The gathered crowd watches in reverent silence, as the smoke swirls around the sacred relic, preserved by what seems like divine intervention.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. CHAMBÉRY - CHAPEL RUINS - DAWN (1534)

A cold mist clings to the charred remains of the chapel. The once-grand structure stands in ruins, its blackened stone walls barely holding. Embers still smolder beneath the collapsed roof. The air is thick with the scent of ash and damp earth.

CUT TO:

INT. CHAMBÉRY CASTLE - GREAT HALL - MORNING

A long wooden table, covered with the damaged Shroud, sits in the center of the dimly lit hall. A group of Poor Clare nuns, dressed in simple wool habits, kneel in solemn prayer before their task begins.

At the head of the table stands MOTHER AGNES, an elderly nun with a face lined by years of devotion. Beside her, SISTER MARIE, a frail young nun with a pale complexion, watches in awe, her hands trembling as she touches the charred edges of the sacred cloth. Nearby, FATHER ETIENNE, his face weary from the burden of responsibility, observes with solemn intensity.

MOTHER AGNES
(softly, reverent)
"Our Lord has spared it... but it
bears the wounds of fire. We must
tend to it as we would tend to His
own flesh."

Father Etienne steps forward, his voice heavy with reverence.

FATHER ETIENNE

"This is no ordinary relic. It has survived wars, persecution, and now fire. The burden of its preservation falls upon us. We must not fail."

The nuns and clerics nod solemnly. They begin their work—

Carefully, they cut fresh linen patches, their fingers deft and precise. The Shroud, still faintly marked with the image of Christ, lays before them like a holy relic on an altar.

SISTER MARIE

(whispering, in awe)

"I feel... as though He is watching us."

Father Etienne folds his hands in prayer before gently placing them over the edges of the cloth, whispering Latin blessings as the nuns begin stitching the burned edges onto a new backing cloth.

INT. CHAMBÉRY CASTLE - LATER THAT NIGHT

The hall is lit only by candlelight, the soft sound of needle and thread punctuating the heavy silence. Hours have gone by the candles have burned down to their core.

Sister Marie, exhausted, wipes her brow. Her breathing is labored, her hands shaking uncontrollably as she struggles to pull a stitch through the delicate fabric.

SISTER MARIE

(weakly)

"Mother... I—I cannot... my hands..."

Father Etienne, noticing her distress, moves to her side. He knows of her affliction, the pain that has plagued her hands since childhood.

FATHER ETIENNE

(softly, encouraging)

"Place your faith in Him, child. His hands have been pierced, but His spirit remains whole."

The Shroud rests beneath her trembling fingers. The candlelight flickers violently, as though a sudden breeze has disturbed it.

Then—

A warm glow radiates from the fabric.

Sister Marie gasps. A gentle but unseen force seems to envelop her hands, and the pain that has plagued her for years vanishes.

She flexes her fingers in shock.

SISTER MARIE
(whispering, disbelieving)
"My hands... I can move them... I feel
no pain!"

The other nuns pause, eyes widening in awe.

MOTHER AGNES
(whispering, breathless)
"A miracle..."

Father Etienne watches, his expression a mix of awe and devotion. He kneels beside Sister Marie, grasping her hands, which now move freely, fully restored.

FATHER ETIENNE
(softly, humbled)
"He has touched you, Sister Marie.
You are healed."

Tears stream down Marie's face as she clasps her once-crippled hands together, now strong and steady. The Shroud lays beneath her, its image unmoved, unchanged—yet something in the air feels divine.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CHAMBÉRY CASTLE - COURTYARD - 1578 - NIGHT

The castle courtyard is alive with torches. Knights in heavy armor stand in formation, guarding a large, gilded carriage. The Shroud, encased in a new reliquary, is being prepared for its journey to Turin.

Father Etienne, now older, stands beside Duke EMANUEL PHILIBERT OF SAVOY and Bishop Armand de Rochefort, overseeing the preparations.

BISHOP ARMAND

(gravely)

"The road is perilous, Your Grace. Bandits and war still haunt these lands."

DUKE EMANUEL

"Then we shall guard it with our lives. This relic belongs to the faithful, and in Turin, it will be seen by all."

Father Etienne steps forward, his expression concerned.

FATHER ETIENNE

"Your Grace, the journey will be long and treacherous. We must ensure it is protected with more than steel. We must travel in secret, under God's guidance."

Duke Emanuel nods, sensing the weight of the decision.

EXT. CHAMBERY CASTLE - STABLES - NIGHT

Knights prepare horses, checking their weapons and supplies. A covered wagon is fortified with iron reinforcements, draped in dark fabric to conceal its precious cargo.

Father Etienne blesses each knight in turn, touching their foreheads with holy water.

FATHER ETIENNE

(softly, with conviction)

"Ride with faith, for what you carry is beyond earthly value."

The lead knight, SIR ALBERT DE NORMANDY, grips his sword hilt.

SIR ALBERT

"We shall see it to Turin or die in its defense."

INT. CHAMBÉRY CASTLE - CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

Inside the small remaining chapel, Sister Marie kneels before the Shroud one final time, now fully healed and strong. Her fingers brush the linen, her heart heavy.

Father Etienne watches her in silence before stepping forward.

FATHER ETIENNE

"You have been touched by God,
Sister Marie. It is not for us to
question His miracles, only to
serve His will."

She looks up at him, nodding solemnly.

SISTER MARIE

(softly, to herself)

"Go where you are needed, Holy One.
I will always remember..."

The reliquary is sealed, the weight of centuries carried within it.

EXT. ROAD TO TURIN - NIGHT

The carriage moves swiftly, torches lighting the dark road. Knights flank it on all sides, their swords ready, their gazes sharp.

Father Etienne rides alongside the carriage, his face shadowed in thought. The wind picks up, and distant hoofbeats echo in the darkness.

A storm brews in the distance. Thunder rumbles ominously. The road to Turin is long, and dangers lurk in the shadows... but the Shroud will endure.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. ROAD TO TURIN - NIGHT

A violent thunderstorm rages over the rugged countryside. Sheets of rain lash against the earth, turning the dirt path into a treacherous muddy trail.

The gilded carriage bearing the Shroud of Turin lurches forward, pulled by powerful warhorses struggling against the elements.

FLASH!

A bolt of lightning streaks across the sky, illuminating the towering Alpine cliffs that loom on either side of the winding road. The guards riding alongside the carriage pull their cloaks tighter, water dripping from their helmets.

FATHER ETIENNE rides at the front, his hands gripping the reins of his horse. His hooded cloak is soaked, but his gaze remains fixed on the road ahead. Beside him, SIR ALBERT DE NORMANDY, the lead knight, scans the darkness warily.

SIR ALBERT

(shouting over the wind)

"The storm is against us! We should take shelter in the trees!"

FATHER ETIENNE

(firm, unwavering)

"No! The Shroud must not stop! We press on!"

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - CONTINUOUS

The caravan climbs a narrow ridge, the wheels of the carriage slipping in the thickening mud. The howling wind shrieks through the canyon walls, masking an ominous sound—

A whistle.

Then—

ARROWS WHISTLE THROUGH THE AIR.

THUNK! A knight at the rear cries out and falls from his horse, an arrow buried in his chest.

BANDITS EMERGE FROM THE ROCKS!

Drenched in rain, their scarred faces are twisted with greed. Armed with rusted swords and crossbows, they rush the caravan from all sides.

SIR ALBERT
(unsheathing his sword)
Ambush! Take your positions!

The knights form a defensive line around the carriage, blades gleaming in the storm-lit night. Steel clashes against steel as the bandits attack, mud splashing beneath their boots.

A bandit leader, a towering brute with a jagged scar, swings his blade at Father Etienne—

But before the strike lands, a deafening clap of thunder shakes the heavens.

CRACK!

A lightning bolt erupts from the sky, striking the earth directly between the bandits and the knights.

For a moment, the battle halts—both sides frozen, eyes wide with disbelief. The ground smokes and sizzles, the air charged with electricity.

Then—

Another bolt descends—striking a bandit clean in the chest!

He is hurled backward, his lifeless body landing in the mud. Panic erupts among the outlaws as another strike crashes down, splitting a nearby tree in half, sending splintered wood flying into the air.

SIR ALBERT
(whispering, awestruck)
"God's wrath..."

The surviving bandits stumble backward, their faces filled with terror. One of them drops his weapon, crossing himself before fleeing into the night.

The remaining knights cut down the last of the stragglers. The battlefield falls into silence, save for the relentless pounding rain.

Father Etienne, still gripping his sword, looks toward the Shroud's carriage, untouched, unscathed.

He kneels in the mud, eyes toward the heavens.

FATHER ETIENNE
(softly, awed)
Thank you!

Sir Albert steps forward, his expression both shaken and reverent.

SIR ALBERT
(breathless)
"We ride, now. Before another test
comes upon us."

CUT TO:

INT. LUCIFERIAN TEMPLE - UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - NIGHT

A dark, candle-lit chamber lies beneath the city of Turin. Hooded figures in black ceremonial robes form a circle around a towering altar of black stone. At its center, an upside-down cross is mounted above a burning brazier, the flames casting long, flickering shadows across the cavernous space.

A Satanic priest, clad in a black robe with a deep red hood, steps forward. His face is hidden beneath the cowl, but his voice carries with a chilling authority.

He raises his hands over the fire, his voice growing louder, chanting in a rhythmic, almost hypnotic manner.

SATANIC PRIEST
(chanting)
"Out of dark and fire red,
Comes a man of living dead. I only
walk the earth at night, I only
burn out the light. Fire, fire,
burn and burn, Burn out the light,
Come, my evil friends, alike."

The flames suddenly roar higher, licking the air as if responding to his words. The gathered figures bow their heads in unison, murmuring dark prayers in a guttural, unholy tongue.

SATANIC PRIEST (CONT'D)

(raising his arms)

"The mass is complete! The time of reckoning is near!"

The gathered followers remain silent as the fire flares one final time, then dies down to glowing embers. One by one, they begin to disperse, slipping into the shadows of the chamber's corridors, their whispers echoing ominously.

A few remain behind, lingering near the altar. Slowly, they lower their hoods, revealing hardened faces of noblemen and clergymen, their expressions grim.

At the center of the group stands COUNT LUCIO VARETTO, his sharp features illuminated by the dying flames. Beside him, a grizzled military officer, and a pale, thin man in monastic robes—a Vatican defector.

COUNT VARETTO

(quietly, to the group)

"The Shroud reaches the cathedral by sunrise. Once it is enshrined, it will be beyond our grasp."

The monk, FATHER MALDINI, his voice brittle and laced with disdain, steps closer.

FATHER MALDINI

"That relic is an affront to the true knowledge. A deception, a fraud. It must be erased from history."

The military officer, CAPTAIN SEVERO, crosses his arms, his expression unreadable.

CAPTAIN SEVERO

"I do not share your faith in the dark arts, Varetto. But I know this—should the people believe in that cloth, their faith will fuel an army of crusaders. And war will follow."

Count Varetto smirks, turning his gaze toward the altar.

COUNT VARETTO

"Then let us ensure that faith does
not take hold. The Shroud will
never reach the cathedral."

Father Maldini steps forward, his fingers brushing over the
black altar, his lips curling into a sinister smile.

FATHER MALDINI

"We have agents in the procession.
The relic will never see the light
of day."

Varetto nods, his eyes gleaming with malicious intent.

COUNT VARETTO

"Then we move before dawn. Prepare
the men. The fire that burns here
tonight will soon consume the last
hope of the Church."

The remaining cultists extinguish their candles, the room
plunging into darkness as their footsteps fade into the
underground tunnels.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ROAD TO TURIN - DAWN

The storm has passed. The golden rays of sunrise pierce
through the retreating clouds, casting a soft glow over the
blood-stained road. The caravan, battered but victorious,
presses forward toward Turin, the Shroud safe once more.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. TURIN - ROYAL PALACE - NIGHT

A grand chamber inside Duke Emmanuel Philibert's palace. The
atmosphere is tense. A massive stone fireplace crackles with
warmth, but the faces of the gathered nobles, guards, and
clergy remain cold with worry.

At the head of the chamber, DUKE EMMANUEL PHILIBERT, regal
and imposing, sits in a high-backed chair. Beside him stands
ARCHBISHOP CHARLES BORROMEO, his hands folded in quiet
contemplation.

A messenger, soaked from the storm, stands before them, breathless.

MESSENGER

(panting)

"Your Grace... grave news. The Shroud has not yet arrived. There are... rumors."

The duke's jaw tightens. His fingers dig into the armrest of his chair.

DUKE EMMANUEL

"Rumors? Speak plainly."

The messenger hesitates, then lowers his voice.

MESSENGER

"It is said that the Shroud was... taken. Stolen in the night by thieves seeking ransom."

Gasps ripple through the court. The bishop clutches his rosary tighter.

ARCHBISHOP BORROMEO

(gravely)

"God help us... if it is true."

Duke Emmanuel rises to his feet, his eyes burning with determination.

DUKE EMMANUEL

"Send riders. Dispatch troops. I will not allow this sacred relic to vanish into the hands of heretics and criminals."

ARCHBISHOP BORROMEO

(nodding)

"We must pray... but we must also act."

The doors burst open as captains of the Savoyard Guard enter, awaiting orders.

DUKE EMMANUEL

(firmly)

"Ride south."

(MORE)

DUKE EMMANUEL (CONT'D)

If they were attacked, they may have sought refuge in a monastery or fortress. Bring word back at once. If thieves have taken it... they will know the price of their blasphemy."

The knights bow and exit swiftly. Tension thickens in the chamber as the storm outside rages on, mirroring the uncertainty in their hearts.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. LUCIFERIAN TEMPLE - UNDERGROUND CHAMBER - NIGHT

A dark, candle-lit chamber lies beneath the city of Turin. Hooded figures in black ceremonial robes form a circle around a towering altar of black stone. At its center, an upside-down cross is mounted above a burning brazier, the flames casting long, flickering shadows across the cavernous space.

A Satanic priest, clad in a black robe with a deep red hood, steps forward. His face is hidden beneath the cowl, but his voice carries with a chilling authority.

He raises his hands over the fire, his voice growing louder, chanting in a rhythmic, almost hypnotic manner.

SATANIC PRIEST

(chanting)

"Out of dark and fire red,
Comes a man of living dead. I only
walk the earth at night, I only
burn out the light. Fire, fire,
burn and burn, Burn out the light,
Come, my evil friends, alike."

The flames suddenly roar higher, licking the air as if responding to his words. The gathered figures bow their heads in unison, murmuring dark prayers in a guttural, unholy tongue.

SATANIC PRIEST (CONT'D)

(raising his arms)

"The mass is complete! The time of
reckoning is near!"

The gathered followers remain silent as the fire flares one final time, then dies down to glowing embers.

One by one, they begin to disperse, slipping into the shadows of the chamber's corridors, their whispers echoing ominously.

A few remain behind, lingering near the altar. Slowly, they lower their hoods, revealing hardened faces of noblemen and clergymen, their expressions grim.

At the center of the group stands COUNT LUCIO VARETTO, his sharp features illuminated by the dying flames. Beside him, a grizzled military officer, and a pale, thin man in monastic robes—a Vatican defector.

COUNT VARETTO

(quietly, to the group)

"The Shroud reaches the cathedral by sunrise. Once it is enshrined, it will be beyond our grasp."

The monk, FATHER MALDINI, his voice brittle and laced with disdain, steps closer.

FATHER MALDINI

"That relic is an affront to the true knowledge. A deception, a fraud. It must be erased from history."

The military officer, CAPTAIN SEVERO, crosses his arms, his expression unreadable.

CAPTAIN SEVERO

"I do not share your faith in the dark arts, Varetto. But I know this—should the people believe in that cloth, their faith will fuel an army of crusaders. And war will follow."

Count Varetto smirks, turning his gaze toward the altar.

COUNT VARETTO

"Then let us ensure that faith does not take hold. The Shroud will never reach the cathedral."

Father Maldini steps forward, his fingers brushing over the black altar, his lips curling into a sinister smile.

FATHER MALDINI

"We have agents in the procession.
The relic will never see the light
of day."

Varetto nods, his eyes gleaming with malicious intent.

COUNT VARETTO

"Then we move before dawn. Prepare
the men. The fire that burns here
tonight will soon consume the last
hope of the Church."

The remaining cultists extinguish their candles, the room plunging into darkness as their footsteps fade into the underground tunnels.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - LUCIFERIAN AMBUSH SITE - NIGHT

A desolate, narrow pass winds between towering cliffs. A caravan of torches flickers in the distance—Father Etienne and his escort transporting the Shroud under heavy guard.

Hidden among the thick brush and jagged rocks, the Luciferian cultists lie in wait. Their black-cloaked figures blend into the darkness, barely visible beneath the shifting moonlight.

In the center of their makeshift encampment, a cannon sits concealed beneath layers of dry branches, its barrel carefully positioned toward the approaching road.

COUNT VARETTO

(low, commanding)

"Hold your fire until they reach
the marker. The first shot will
splinter the cart. The second will
ensure its destruction."

CAPTAIN SEVERO kneels beside the cannon, running his fingers along the cold iron surface.

CAPTAIN SEVERO

(quietly)

"A single well-placed shot, and the
relic will be ash. The world will
never see it again."

Father Maldini smirks, his hands clasped in twisted reverence.

FATHER MALDINI
(whispering, almost
gleeful)
"Not even their God will save them
now."

The cultists murmur dark prayers, their voices barely audible over the wind howling through the canyon.

The caravan moves closer.

The gunner lights the fuse.

FLICKERING FLAME. HISSING SPARKS.

COUNT VARETTO
"Steady... steady..."

Then—

A distant rumbling sound.

The cultists freeze. The ground shudders beneath them. At first, it seems like the wind, but then—

THUNDEROUS HOOVES. A CHARGE.

From the opposite side of the ridge, a column of Savoyard cavalry erupts from the darkness, their armor glinting under the moonlight. At their head—DUKE EMMANUEL PHILIBERT HIMSELF.

The Luciferians barely have time to react before the cavalry crashes into them, swords drawn, horses trampling through the brush. The ambush has been discovered.

COUNT VARETTO
(snarling)

"FIRE THE CANNON! NOW!"

The gunner lunges for the fuse, but before he can reach it—

A CROSSBOW BOLT STRIKES HIM IN THE THROAT.

The cannon detonates prematurely, the explosion sending flaming shrapnel into the cultists' ranks. Screams echo as fire engulfs the brush, illuminating the battlefield in a fiery glow.

DUKE EMMANUEL
(roaring)

"FOR SAVOY! PROTECT THE SHROUD!"

The knights crash into the enemy lines, their swords flashing, cutting down Luciferian assassins as the surviving cultists scatter into the night.

Father Maldini, blood running down his temple, crawls toward the burning cannon, his fingers reaching desperately toward the barrel, as if praying for fire to consume the relic.

Before he can reach it, Sir Albert drives his sword through the priest's back, pinning him to the earth.

Count Varetto, seeing the battle lost, stumbles away into the darkness, disappearing into the canyon's shadows.

As the last cultist falls, silence settles over the battlefield, broken only by the dying crackle of fire.

The Shroud's caravan moves forward once more, now protected by the full might of Savoy's finest.

Duke Emmanuel dismounts, turning to Father Etienne. The priest, covered in dust and sweat, bows his head in gratitude.

DUKE EMMANUEL
(breathless, but resolute)
"God's will prevails."

The caravan resumes its course toward Turin.

The Shroud will endure.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. TURIN - CATHEDRAL SQUARE - DAY

A vast gathering of nobles, clergy, and commoners fill the square outside the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist. A grand procession has formed, awaiting the arrival of the Shroud of Turin.

At the forefront, DUKE EMMANUEL PHILIBERT stands in full ceremonial regalia, his mantle embroidered with the emblem of the House of Savoy. Beside him, ARCHBISHOP CHARLES BORROMEO, dressed in a flowing red robe, grips his staff firmly, his expression a mixture of anticipation and humility.

The crowd murmurs, anxious whispers carrying through the air.

Then—

A distant horn blast. A procession of mounted knights appears on the horizon, escorting a large covered reliquary draped in deep crimson cloth, adorned with gold filigree.

A hushed reverence sweeps over the crowd.

The procession advances slowly, flanked by torchbearers and chanting monks swinging incense burners. The heavy scent of myrrh and frankincense lingers in the cool air.

As the reliquary reaches the steps of the cathedral, the guards dismount, and Father Etienne, exhausted yet triumphant, steps forward.

He bows before Duke Emmanuel and Archbishop Borromeo, then speaks, his voice filled with reverence.

FATHER ETIENNE
(hoarse but resolute)
"The Lord has willed it. The Shroud
is delivered."

The crowd erupts in cheers and gasps, many falling to their knees in prayer.

Archbishop Borromeo steps forward, his fingers trembling as he reaches for the silken covering of the reliquary. The guards unfasten the locks, and the lid is slowly lifted.

INT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - CONTINUOUS

The procession moves inside the grand cathedral. The light of a thousand candles flickers against the high stone arches as the Shroud is carried to the altar.

As the reliquary is opened fully, the Shroud of Turin is revealed, its faint but unmistakable image of Christ illuminated by the soft glow of candlelight.

A hush falls over the cathedral. Even Duke Emmanuel, a man of power and war, bows his head in silent reverence.

The Shroud is home.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES - LECTURE HALL - DAY

Back at the grand lecture hall within the Vatican. Marble columns line the room, casting long shadows under the dim glow of candlelight. A massive ancient map of Jerusalem hangs on the far wall, its edges curling from age.

A heated debate rages at the center of the room.

At one side, MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS, dressed in formal clerical robes, his voice steady but firm. On the other side, DR. REINHARDT.

A small group of scholars, cardinals, and Vatican officials watch in tense silence.

DR. REINHARDT
(leaning forward,
pressing)
"The world has evolved, Monsignor.
Science has evolved! We now have
atomic mass spectrometry,
technology so precise that it can
measure the very breath of history!
And yet--"
(gesturing, exasperated)
(MORE)

DR. REINHARDT (CONT'D)

"The Vatican still refuses to authorize a new dating test on the Shroud! Why? What is the Church so afraid of?"

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(smooth, measured)

"Afraid, Doctor? The Church has safeguarded the Shroud for centuries—not as a mere artifact but as a testament of faith. Science, you say, has evolved. But faith is eternal."

DR. REINHARDT

(scoffing)

"Faith without reason is blind obedience. The 1988 carbon dating was flawed! Contaminated samples, inconsistent protocols—"

(slamming the table)

"Give us another chance! Let us apply modern technology to uncover the truth!"

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(narrowing his eyes)

"And what would you do if the results did not favor your expectations? Would you accept that which cannot be explained? Or would you bend truth to fit your agenda?"

DR. REINHARDT

(defiantly)

"Truth has no agenda! Only fear fears the truth."

A hush falls over the room. The tension is thick, palpable.

DR. REINHARDT (CONT'D)

(taking a deep breath,
measured)

"Monsignor, if you are truly open to knowledge, I would like to introduce someone. A colleague. Someone whose expertise lies not just in science, but in religion's impact on the masses."

A ripple of murmurs spreads through the audience as a woman steps forward from the side of the hall.

DR. REINHARDT (CONT'D)
(gesturing toward her)
"May I present Professor Isabella Moreau, historian, archaeologist, and one of the foremost scholars on religious relics and their influence on civilizations."

The room grows still as ISABELLA MOREAU, a striking woman in her late forties with an air of quiet confidence, steps forward. Dressed in an elegant yet professional suit, her presence commands attention.

PROFESSOR MOREAU
(soft, yet firm)
"Monsignor, I have spent my career studying relics like the Shroud. From the Veil of Veronica to the Holy Lance, relics have shaped empires, justified wars, and sustained faith across centuries. The Shroud is no exception."

She steps closer to the center of the debate, her eyes locking onto Monsignor Augustinus.

PROFESSOR MOREAU (CONT'D)
"But the Shroud of Turin is different. Unlike other relics, it has remained here for hundreds of years, waiting. And now, in an age where science and faith can finally meet, it has the opportunity to prove itself."

Monsignor Augustinus watches her, unmoving.

PROFESSOR MOREAU (CONT'D)
(earnest, unwavering)
"If the Shroud is real, should it not be able to withstand scrutiny? Does faith not triumph when it is challenged? We do not seek to destroy it, Monsignor. We seek to confirm what you already believe."

The hall remains silent.

Dr. Reinhardt steps forward, seizing the moment.

DR. REINHARDT

"For centuries, the Vatican has protected the Shroud. And for centuries, skeptics have questioned it. But now, we have the means to end the debate once and for all."

He takes a deep breath, his voice pleading.

DR. REINHARDT (CONT'D)

"Give us permission. Let us test the Shroud, here in Turin, where it has rested for hundreds of years. Let it prove itself to the world."

Monsignor Augustinus exhales, glancing toward the assembled cardinals. Their expressions are unreadable. He turns back to Professor Moreau and Dr. Reinhardt, his gaze heavy with thought he looks up at his students.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

Lets continue the shrouds journey
up until the testing part.

He glances at Dr. Reinhardt and Professor Moreau with a bit of annoyance.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. ROAD TO TURIN - DUSTY PATH - DAY (1578)

A long winding road cuts through the hills, leading towards the grand city of Turin. The summer sun beats down upon a procession of pilgrims, clergy, and nobles, all making their way toward the holy relic.

At the head of the group, SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO, his robes dusty and tattered from the 100-mile pilgrimage from Milan, walks barefoot in solemn reverence. Sweat drips from his brow, feet swollen, bleeding but his eyes burn with devotion.

Beside him, DUKE EMMANUEL PHILIBERT OF SAVOY rides on horseback, glancing over at the exhausted but determined Borromeo.

DUKE EMMANUEL
You would have me send a carriage
for you, yet you refuse.

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO
(soft, unwavering)"
This journey must be taken in
humility. I come to venerate
Christ's image, not in comfort, but
in suffering, as He did."

The crowd parts as a caravan approaches, carrying the silver reliquary containing the Shroud of Turin.

The people drop to their knees, murmuring prayers and crossing themselves.

Borromeo falls to his knees as well, his fingers reaching out toward the sacred cloth, though it remains locked within its protective case.

Tears stream down his face.

SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO (CONT'D)
(whispering)
"I have walked these miles to
witness Your light, O Lord."

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - PUBLIC DISPLAY - NIGHT (1578)

A massive gathering of thousands fills the square outside Turin Cathedral, torches illuminating the sea of faces. The Shroud is raised onto a grand altar, where priests chant in Latin.

The crowd gasps as the image on the cloth becomes visible in the flickering firelight.

Duke Emmanuel and other noblemen stand atop a balcony, observing the religious spectacle below.

Among the commoners, a mother lifts her sick child, praying desperately.

MOTHER

Bless my son, O Lord! Let him be
healed!

A hush spreads. The child's labored breathing steadies.
Murmurs ripple through the crowd.

"A miracle..."

The moment cements the legend of the Shroud's power.

CUT TO:

INT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SHROUD - NIGHT
(1598)

A majestic golden glow fills the newly completed Chapel of the Holy Shroud. The vast chamber, adorned with towering marble columns, gilded frescoes, and intricate stained glass, glows under the light of a thousand flickering candles.

The House of Savoy, dressed in full ceremonial regalia, stands in attendance. Nobles in silken robes embroidered with gold line the marble aisles, their faces alight with awe.

The Shroud of Turin, housed in an ornate golden reliquary, rests upon a raised altar, flanked by incense-bearing clergy swaying in rhythmic procession. The air is thick with the scent of myrrh and frankincense, curling into the vaulted ceiling above.

At the center of it all, DUKE CHARLES EMMANUEL I, draped in a deep crimson cloak, holds a jeweled scepter, signifying his family's role as the Shroud's protectors.

The choir begins, their voices echoing in celestial harmony, singing Deus, Tu Rex Gloriam.

A cardinal in golden vestments approaches the reliquary, lifting his arms. His voice booms through the chamber.

CARDINAL

With this sacred cloth, a relic
beyond time, we affirm our faith
and devotion! Let it stand as the
beacon of our Lord's sacrifice!"

The congregation responds in unison, their voices filling the cavernous space.

The Shroud is carefully lifted by white-gloved priests and carried toward its final resting place within the marble tomb. The golden doors of the reliquary chamber creak open, revealing a sanctuary lined with gemstones and holy scripture.

The congregation gasps as the reliquary is lowered into place. The final stone is brought forward, its surface etched with Latin scripture:

"Hic requiescit Sacrum Sudarium, in Lumine Fidei." (Here rests the Holy Shroud, in the Light of Faith.)

A PRIEST steps forward, chanting a final blessing.

(CARDINAL)

Here shall it rest, a beacon of
faith for all generations to come.

As the marble chamber is sealed, the bells of Turin Cathedral ring out, their sound carrying through the night.

From the shadows, a figure watches with narrowed eyes. A man in a noble's attire, his expression unreadable.

The Shroud is protected... for now.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING SHOT - TURIN SKYLINE - DUSK (1694)

TITLE CARD: 96 YEARS LATER

The skyline of Turin shimmers under the fading golden sun. The Chapel of the Holy Shroud, newly designed by Guarino Guarini, stands as a marvel of architecture, its dome rising high, bathed in the glow of torches and candlelight. The streets surrounding the cathedral overflow with people—nobles, clergy, and commoners—all gathered for the grand enshrinement of the Shroud.

MOVE IN:

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - GRAND PROCESSION - NIGHT

A majestic procession winds its way through the square, led by gold-robed cardinals, incense bearers, and a choir of young boys, their voices lifting angelic hymns into the night. At the center of it all, the Shroud of Turin, encased in a crystalline reliquary, is carried on a golden platform by a group of white-robed monks.

The House of Savoy, resplendent in silken garments embroidered with gold, marches in solemn formation behind them. DUKE VICTOR AMADEUS II, dressed in deep crimson and silver armor, carries the royal scepter of Savoy, symbolizing his family's sacred duty as protectors of the relic.

The gathered crowds kneel, murmuring prayers and blessings as the reliquary passes by.

A young girl in tattered clothes watches in awe, her hands clasped together. Her mother whispers to her, her voice trembling with devotion.

MOTHER

(softly, in reverence)

"Behold, my child... the face of
Christ..."

The girl's eyes widen, reflecting the glow of torches dancing upon the reliquary.

INT. CHAPEL OF THE HOLY SHROUD - GRAND CEREMONY - NIGHT

The interior of the chapel is breathtaking—gold and white marble gleam under the soft light of chandeliers, casting long shadows on the ornate frescoes above, depicting the Passion of Christ.

The Papal Legate, sent by Pope Innocent XII, stands at the altar, dressed in opulent gold and crimson vestments. He lifts his arms, his voice reverberating through the hallowed chamber.

PAPAL LEGATE

"By the will of His Holiness, Pope Innocent XII, and in reverence to Our Lord, this sacred relic shall forever rest within this hallowed chamber."

The monks lower the reliquary onto the jeweled altar, surrounded by golden candlesticks and sacred relics.

The choir swells, their voices rising to the high domes of the chapel, accompanied by a grand ensemble of violins and organs.

A cardinal approaches, bearing a scroll sealed with the Pope's insignia. He unfurls it and reads aloud:

CARDINAL

"In the name of our Holy Father, let this cloth remain a testament to His sacrifice and our salvation."

The Shroud is carefully lifted by white-gloved priests and carried toward its final resting place within the marble shrine. The golden doors of the reliquary chamber creak open, revealing a sanctuary lined with gemstones and holy scripture.

The gathered clergy bow their heads, and a final hymn fills the chamber as the doors slowly close, locking the relic away forever.

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Outside, the bells of Turin Cathedral ring out, their sound carrying across the city.

The crowd erupts into cheers and reverent applause, some openly weeping at the moment's significance.

High above, a lone figure watches from the shadows of a palace balcony. His face is partially obscured beneath the hood of a noble cloak.

His lips curl into a smirk.

The Shroud is protected... for now.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING SHOT - TURIN FORTIFICATIONS - DAWN (1706)

TITLE CARD: THE SIEGE OF TURIN - WAR OF SPANISH SUCCESSION

A chilling mist blankets the walls of Turin's fortress, the city's ancient stone defenses lined with cannon crews and weary soldiers. The French army, a vast sea of banners and steel, stretches across the horizon, their cannons glinting beneath the rising sun.

The Duke of Savoy, VICTOR AMADEUS II, clad in ornate silver-plated armor, stands atop the city walls, his face grim. Beside him, GENERAL LEOPOLDO CAVOUR, his most trusted commander, scans the enemy lines.

GENERAL CAVOUR
(smirking, dryly)
"They outnumber us five to one. A
fine morning for a miracle."

DUKE VICTOR AMADEUS II
(steadfast, unshaken)
"Then let us give them one."

He turns to his officers, their expressions tense.

DUKE VICTOR AMADEUS II (CONT'D)
"No retreat. No surrender. We fight
for our city, for our people, and
for the Shroud. If we stand, Turin
stands. If we fall..."

His voice falters for a brief moment as he looks toward the distant spires of the Turin Cathedral, where the Shroud of Turin rests.

DUKE VICTOR AMADEUS II (CONT'D)
(renewed, fierce)
"We do not fall!"

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - FRENCH CAMP - DAWN

The French general, LOUIS D'AUBIGNY, surveys the city through a spyglass. He lowers it, turning to his officers.

GENERAL D'AUBIGNY
"Break their walls by nightfall.
Leave nothing standing."

A signal is given. A deafening blast.

The first cannon fire roars, shaking the earth. Turin trembles.

CUT TO:

EXT. TURIN FORTRESS - BATTLE BEGINS

BOOM!

Cannonballs rip into the stone walls, shattering battlements. Turin's defenders brace as the enemy advances with siege ladders and artillery.

Duke Victor draws his sword, the Savoyan standard whipping in the wind.

DUKE VICTOR AMADEUS II
(shouting)
"HOLD THE LINE! FOR TURIN! FOR THE
SHROUD!"

The gates are breached. French grenadiers charge, their muskets firing blinding flashes. Savoyan cavalry thunder through, slicing through enemy ranks.

SWORDS CLASH. MUSKETS FIRE. SCREAMS ECHO.

A French officer climbs a siege ladder, reaching the wall—

An arrow pierces his throat. He topples backward, crashing into the mass of soldiers below.

CUT TO:

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

As battle rages, a group of monks hurry into the chapel, their robes flaring behind them. They kneel before the Shroud of Turin, their hands trembling in prayer.

MONK LEADER

"Lord, hear our plea. If this cloth
bears your image, let it be our
shield."

Thunder rumbles overhead, but inside the cathedral, a strange calm settles.

CUT TO:

EXT. TURIN FORTRESS - FINAL STAND

The city burns. The French soldiers push forward, overwhelming the defenders. The gates begin to buckle.

DUKE VICTOR AMADEUS II

(roaring)

"We hold this ground! No matter the
cost!"

From within the smoke, a miraculous sight emerges—

A powerful tornado wind howls through the battlefield, scattering torches, banners, and even pushing the French forces back. The sky darkens, and suddenly, a blinding flash of lightning strikes just outside the cathedral.

The French forces falter.

GENERAL D'AUBIGNY
(fearful, whispering)
"It is a sign... a curse upon us."

Panic spreads through the French ranks.

EXT. TURIN FORTRESS - DAWN BREAKS

The French army retreats, their forces shattered. The Savoyan flag still flies high above Turin's walls.

Victor Amadeus, exhausted and bloodied, looks to the rising sun.

DUKE VICTOR AMADEUS II
(softly, in awe)
"The Shroud endures... and so do we."

The bells of the cathedral ring triumphantly.

The city is saved.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. TURIN - SECOND PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO - NIGHT (1898)

The studio is dimly lit, filled with shelves of glass plates, chemicals, and large wooden camera equipment.

A single oil lamp flickers, casting elongated shadows across the walls, making them seem alive.

At the center, SECONDO PIA (mid-40s, meticulous, bespectacled) leans over his camera, adjusting the large wooden box-like apparatus, its lens fixed on an easel holding the photographic plate of the Shroud of Turin.

His assistant, GIUSEPPE (late 20s, eager but skeptical) watches as Pia carefully lifts the exposed plate from the camera, his hands steady but tense.

GIUSEPPE

"A relic or not, this is just a negative, Signor Pia. It will show what is already there."

Pia does not respond, his eyes focused as he places the plate into a tray of developer solution. He swirls the liquid gently.

For a moment, there is nothing but chemical fumes and silence.

Then—

A face begins to emerge.

Not just any face—a fully detailed, three-dimensional image of Christ, clearer than the cloth itself.

Pia stiffens. His breath catches. His hands begin to shake.

GIUSEPPE (CONT'D)

(stunned, whispering)

"Madonna Santa... That is not possible."

The image sharpens. Every wound, every crease of flesh, every drop of what appears to be dried blood becomes visible in stark relief.

Pia stumbles backward, knocking over a bottle of developing fluid.

SECONDO PIA

(shaken, breathless)

"This... this is not an illusion. This is... something else."

The oil lamp flickers violently, the room suddenly feeling oppressively cold.

CUT TO:

INT. VATICAN - PAPAL CHAMBER - NIGHT

The grand chamber is lined with golden candelabras and deep crimson drapery. A large mahogany table stands at the center, where POPE LEO XIII (elderly, wise, deeply devout) sits in contemplative prayer.

The large double doors open, revealing Secondo Pia, holding the developed photograph tightly in his trembling hands.

Pia kneels before the Pope, his voice unsteady.

SECONDO PIA

"Your Holiness... I have seen
something that no human hands could
have created."

He carefully hands the photograph to the Pope. Pope Leo XIII takes the image, holding it gently but firmly. His eyes widen, his breath hitching.

Tears well in the Pope's eyes as he gazes at the image.

POPE LEO XIII

(barely a whisper)

"The face of Christ... revealed."

His hands shake as he holds the photograph, his lips trembling in silent reverence.

A deep silence fills the chamber, heavy with meaning.

Beyond the flickering candlelight, a shadowed figure watches from the darkness.

FADE TO BLACK.

ESTABLISHING SHOT - VATICAN CITY - NIGHT (1943)

The Vatican stands solemn and still beneath a moonlit sky, its grand architecture shadowed in secrecy. The streets are eerily quiet, save for the distant hum of a military vehicle patrolling Rome. In the distance, a bell tolls, its sound swallowed by the oppressive weight of war.

A black-robed cardinal, his expression tense, hurries across the Vatican courtyard, his footsteps echoing off the stone walls. The air is thick with urgency.

INT. VATICAN SECRET CHAMBER - NIGHT

A dimly lit room deep within the Vatican. Flickering candlelight illuminates a large wooden crate, its surface bearing an ancient emblem—the House of Savoy's crest. Several priests and Vatican officials gather around it, their faces etched with concern.

CARDINAL GIOVANNI MONTINI

(whispering, urgent)

"We must move it tonight. If the Reich learns it is still here, it will be lost."

A younger priest, FATHER LUCA, hesitates, his hands trembling over the crate's worn edges.

FATHER LUCA

(uncertain)

"And if they catch us?"

Montini turns to him, his eyes steely.

CARDINAL MONTINI

"Then we shall pray they do not."

A distant knock on the chamber door—sharp and deliberate. The men freeze, exchanging wary glances. A guard unlocks the door, revealing a cloaked figure—BISHOP ENRICO DELLA TORRE, one of the Vatican's most trusted envoys.

BISHOP DELLA TORRE

"The train is ready. We leave at once."

The priests nod in silent understanding. They lift the crate, straining under its weight, and move swiftly into the underground corridors of the Vatican.

EXT. VATICAN CATACOMBS - SECRET PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

The shadows stretch endlessly as the men navigate a labyrinth of ancient tunnels, their torches flickering against damp stone walls. The air is thick with dust and secrecy.

Father Luca wipes his brow, glancing over his shoulder.

FATHER LUCA

(whispering)

"This path--where does it lead?"

CARDINAL MONTINI

"To the heart of Rome. From there,
we take the relic to Montevergine."

A sudden clattering of boots echoes from behind them.

The men stop dead in their tracks.

GERMAN VOICE (O.S.)

(angry, in German)

"Halt!"

Torches flare. A squad of Nazi officers emerges from an adjacent tunnel, their weapons raised.

The Vatican officials stiffen, shielding the crate with their bodies.

NAZI COMMANDER

(stepping forward)

"What is in the box?"

Cardinal Montini, ever composed, takes a step forward.

CARDINAL MONTINI

"A sacred relic, nothing more."

The Nazi commander narrows his eyes, stepping closer.

NAZI COMMANDER

"Sacred or not, the Reich claims
what it pleases. Open it."

A tense silence. The Vatican guards grip their concealed weapons.

Before the moment explodes, a deep rumble shakes the tunnel.

A low, eerie wind howls through the passage—an unnatural force. The Nazi soldiers glance around, unease creeping into their features.

Suddenly, the candles along the tunnel flicker wildly, their flames twisting as if resisting an unseen presence. The torches in the Nazi soldiers' hands sputter out.

FATHER LUCA
(breathless, whispering)
"It is protecting itself..."

The ground trembles, loose stones falling from the walls. A gust of icy wind surges through the tunnel, extinguishing every light.

The Nazi commander shouts orders, but his men stumble backward, terror flashing in their eyes.

Then—

A blinding flash illuminates the crate for just a moment. The faint outline of a face—the face of the Shroud—seems to flicker across the wooden planks.

The Nazi soldiers scramble away in panic, their weapons forgotten. The commander, frozen in place, watches in horror.

NAZI COMMANDER
(whispering, terrified)
"What is this sorcery...?"

Montini does not answer. He seizes the moment.

CARDINAL MONTINI
"Go! Now!"

The priests and Vatican guards surge forward, pushing past the disoriented Nazis. The crate is rushed through the tunnels, emerging into the open Roman night.

EXT. TRAIN YARD - SECRET TRANSPORT - NIGHT

A steam engine idles in the distance, thick plumes of smoke rising into the dark sky. The crate is loaded onto the train, the monks and guards boarding swiftly.

Cardinal Montini watches as the train pulls away from the station, disappearing into the night, bound for the Monastery of Montevergine.

A sigh of relief escapes him-

But as he turns, the shadows shift behind him.

A lone figure in a dark trench coat watches from afar, half-hidden in the alleyway, eyes gleaming with something dangerous and knowing.

EXT. MONASTERY OF MONTEVERGINE - MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN - NIGHT

The train arrives at a small, isolated station at the base of the mountain. A group of Benedictine monks, dressed in brown robes, waits with torches in hand.

The crate is carefully unloaded, and the monks carry it up the steep, winding path to the monastery, their breath visible in the cold night air.

Inside the monastery, the crate is lowered into an underground vault, behind a hidden stone wall, where it will remain untouched.

One of the monks, BROTHER MATTEO, places his hand against the relic, his eyes welling with tears.

BROTHER MATTEO
(whispering, reverent)
"We are its keepers now."

As the stone wall is sealed, a final rumble echoes through the monastery, as if the very earth acknowledges the relic's new sanctuary.

The Shroud is safe... for now.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES - LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

A grand, dimly lit lecture hall within the Vatican. Ornate wooden paneling, towering bookcases, and the flickering glow of candlelight cast deep shadows across the room.

At the center, MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS, his aged face filled with solemnity, stands at the podium. Before him, DR. REINHARDT, arms crossed, eyes sharp with skepticism. Around them, a group of young theologians and scientists sit in stiff silence, watching the confrontation unfold.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(steady, foreboding)

"The Nazi attack on the Shroud was the last great assault upon it. Since then, it has endured in silence... but the forces that sought to claim it have not disappeared. More calamities are yet to come."

Reinhardt smirks, leaning forward.

DR. REINHARDT

"More calamities? Monsignor, do you believe the devil himself is waiting in the wings, plotting to strike once again?"

Augustinus' piercing eyes narrow.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"Lucifer does not wait. He acts, subtly and without rest. Wars may have ceased, but now his hand moves through doubt, through deception, through the corruption of truth. You would have the Shroud subjected to another trial--this time, not by fire or sword, but by the blade of skepticism."

Reinhardt straightens, his voice growing more forceful.

DR. REINHARDT

"Then let it be tested! If you fear deception, then bring it into the light."

(MORE)

DR. REINHARDT (CONT'D)

If the Shroud is truly what you believe it to be, then it will withstand the scrutiny of modern science. Or do you fear the results? Do you fear that the relic, so long protected, may turn to dust when the truth is finally revealed?"

A murmur ripples through the hall. The candle flames flicker, as if stirred by an unseen force. A cold breeze rolls through the chamber.

Augustinus does not flinch.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(soft, but powerful)

"I do not fear truth, Dr. Reinhardt. I fear what mankind will do with it. The devil does not need to destroy the Shroud; he need only make men stop believing in it."

Reinhardt's smirk falters for a moment, but he recovers.

DR. REINHARDT

(intense, pressing)

"Then prove it. Before the world, before history repeats itself—before another enemy comes, not with swords, but with scandal, corruption, and the weight of disbelief."

The room is silent, the weight of history pressing down on both men. The flames of the candles flicker more violently now. A faint whisper, a soundless presence, seems to fill the space between them.

Augustinus slowly exhales, looking toward the painting of the Shroud behind him. The candlelight gives the impression that the image moves, its faint outline shifting as if alive.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(soft, yet firm)

"The devil's greatest trick was convincing the world he did not exist. His second was convincing men that they alone hold the power to reveal God."

A pause. Reinhardt clenches his jaw, fists tightening at his sides.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS (CONT'D)

"The Shroud does not need to be proven, Doctor. It needs to be protected."

The hall remains silent.

A distant roll of thunder rumbles outside.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING SHOT - VATICAN RESEARCH LAB - 1950s

Title: 1950 Testing Begins

A dimly lit room, filled with stacks of research papers, microscopes, and cameras. The air is thick with dust and quiet urgency. A group of scientists in lab coats huddle around a glass display case, containing a piece of linen under high magnification.

At the center, DR. ALBERTO ROCCHI, a forensic pathologist, adjusts his magnifying lens, the reflection of his eyes visible in the glass. Beside him, DR. MARIE LEDOUX, a textile expert, runs her fingers over a sheet of parchment, taking meticulous notes.

DR. ROCCHI (MURMURING, FASCINATED)

"It's organic... but unlike any blood pattern I've studied before. It's almost as if... the wounds bled onto the fabric in perfect anatomical precision."

Marie frowns, studying the microscopic fibers under another lens.

DR. LEDOUX

And yet, the weave is unmistakably ancient. A herringbone pattern, rare for medieval Europe but common in Judea.

(MORE)

DR. LEDOUX (CONT'D)
It shouldn't exist in both
periods--unless the relic is
authentic."

A young assistant bursts in, breathless, holding a new set of photographic negatives, his hands shaking.

ASSISTANT(URGENT, BREATHLESS)
"Doctor... you need to see this."

They gather around as he places the negatives under a light projector. The room dims as the negative image of the Shroud emerges in startling clarity--the face of a man, etched with agonized detail, every wound, every fold of skin perfectly preserved.

A stunned silence. Dr. Rocchi grips the edge of the table.

DR. ROCCHI
(whispering, awestruck)
"This... this is not paint. This is
something else."

Marie, eyes wide, covers her mouth with her gloved hand.

DR. LEDOUX
(softly)
"Then how was it made?"

CUT TO:

INT. VATICAN CONFERENCE ROOM - 1960s

Title:1960 Testing continues.

A massive wooden table sits at the center, surrounded by Vatican officials and leading scientists. The walls are lined with gold-framed paintings of past Popes, their watchful eyes seeming to judge the debate that unfolds.

At one end, CARDINAL FERRANTE, a senior Vatican authority, sits with his hands folded, a silver cross resting against his crimson robes. Across from him, DR. MARCO KAPLAN, a physicist, leans forward, an array of X-ray scans and radiation charts spread out in front of him.

DR. KAPLAN
(leaning in, voice low and urgent)

"Cardinal, I am telling you—the image is unlike any known artistic technique. There are no brush strokes, no pigments embedded in the fibers. Something burned this image into the cloth, but we have no idea what."

Cardinal Ferrante steeples his fingers, his expression unreadable.

CARDINAL FERRANTE
And yet, you offer no proof that it is divine. Only that it is unexplained."

Kaplan exhales, frustrated, and gestures to the X-ray scans of the Shroud, revealing anomalous energy readings, a faint glow of radiation signatures.

DR. KAPLAN
(PRESSING FORWARD)
"There are traces of radiation exposure. Some of my colleagues believe the image could have been formed by a sudden, intense burst of light—akin to a nuclear reaction."

The cardinal tilts his head, his expression hardening.

CARDINAL FERRANTE
And what do you propose? That the Resurrection left an atomic signature? That Christ's body emitted an unknown form of radiation?"

A thick silence. Kaplan's face twitches with emotion before he finally speaks.

DR. KAPLAN"
I propose that something extraordinary happened to this fabric. And we must understand it."

The cardinal rises, the room's candlelight casting his shadow like a specter against the marble walls.

CARDINAL FERRANTE
(coldly)
Understand, Doctor? Or control?

CUT TO:

EXT. PRIVATE LABORATORY - 1970s

Title: 1970 More testing.

A small university laboratory, where a group of scientists from the Shroud of Turin Research Project (STURP) gather. They are surrounded by high-tech spectrometers, carbon dating equipment, and digital imaging devices.

The hum of machines fills the air as a scientist in gloves delicately places a microscopic fiber of the Shroud into a testing chamber.

DR. JOHN JACKSON, a physicist, types commands into a computer, his face tense as the laser pulses over the fibers.

SCIENTIST
(murmuring, nervous)

"If it's organic, it should react..."

The room darkens as the laser passes through the fibers—and a three-dimensional image emerges on the monitor, glowing with eerie clarity.

Gasps.

DR. JACKSON
(breathless, staring at
the screen)
This image isn't two-dimensional—it
has depth. It contains information
about the shape of the body. No
known art technique can do this."

A scientist, DR. REBECCA FIELDS, places a trembling hand on her chin.

DR. FIELDS

(whispering)

You're saying the image isn't just
an imprint—it's an encoded map of a
physical body?

Jackson nods, his fingers tapping the keyboard.

DR. JACKSON

(softly)

Yes. As if it was created in an
instant, from an energy burst."

The room is silent. Then another scientist murmurs, almost to
himself.

SCIENTIST

Like an explosion of light.

INT. VATICAN MEETING HALL - NIGHT

A formal Vatican assembly, attended by bishops, cardinals,
and the STURP scientists. The tension in the room is
palpable. The long table is lined with candles that flicker
with every breath taken.

At the head, MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS stands, his expression
unreadable. DR. KAPLAN stands beside him, preparing to speak.

DR. KAPLAN(URGENTLY)

"Your Eminences, we have studied
the Shroud for years. What we know
is this—there is no evidence of
artistic forgery, no brushwork, no
paint, no means of replication. The
image appears to have been formed
by a phenomenon we cannot explain."

A murmur spreads through the clergy. CARDINAL ROMANO, a
staunch critic, interjects.

CARDINAL ROMANO(SCOFFING)

"Cannot explain? Or refuse to
explain? You scientists deal in
data, not in faith. Do you claim
you have found proof of the
Resurrection?"

Kaplan exhales, his voice steady but charged.

DR. KAPLAN "No. We claim we have found proof of something we have never encountered before. Something that defies all known science."

A candle flickers violently. Augustinus exhales, looking toward the painting of the Shroud, its image shifting slightly in the dim light.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
(WHISPERING, OMINOUS)

"The devil's greatest trick was convincing the world he did not exist. His second was convincing men that they alone hold the power to reveal God."

A distant roll of thunder rumbles outside.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

1988 - CONTROVERSIAL RADIOCARBON DATING

INT. OXFORD UNIVERSITY - RADIATION LAB - DAY

The lab is buzzing with activity. Sterile white walls, humming machines, and the constant clicking of scientific instruments. DR. ELEANOR PARKER stands with her team, including DR. LARS MEYER (Zurich) and DR. MICHAEL TURNER (Tucson).

A sealed container holds a small, precious fragment of the Shroud of Turin. It's treated like radioactive material—handled with tweezers and reverence, yet scrutinized under harsh fluorescent lights.

DR. PARKER (calm, authoritative) "Initiating carbon-14 analysis. Three labs. Three results. This will end the debate once and for all."

The machine hums louder, pulling the fragment into its chamber. A tense silence follows. The rhythmic beeping of the machine echoes like a heartbeat.

CUT TO:

INT. OXFORD CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

The room is packed with scientists, clergy, and media representatives. The results are projected onto a large screen.

DR. MEYER steps forward, adjusting his glasses, his voice steady but strained.

DR. MEYER"
The results from Oxford, Tucson,
and Zurich are consistent. The
Shroud dates between..."

He pauses, the tension thick. The room holds its breath.

DR. MEYER
(softly)
"1260 and 1390 A.D."

Gasps ripple through the room. Some whisper prayers, others scribble frantically in notebooks. Monsignor Augustinus stands in the back, his expression dark and unreadable.

DR. PARKER
(trying to control the
room)"
This suggests a medieval origin.
Possibly a forgery."

Augustinus steps forward, his voice cutting through the noise.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
(firm, defiant)
"Or... you tested the wrong piece.
Contaminated. Altered. The Shroud
has survived fire, water, and human
hands for centuries. Science sees
numbers. Faith sees truth."

The room falls into silence as he exits, leaving doubt lingering in the air.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF ROME - NIGHT (1996)

Title: 1996

A moonlit hillside, the dark silhouette of ancient ruins blending into the rugged terrain. Cicadas hum in the distance. The camera slowly pans to a hidden entrance, partially obscured by overgrown vines and crumbling stone—a secret doorway carved into the hillside.

INT. CATACOMBS - CONTINUOUS

Descending into narrow, torch-lit tunnels, the camera moves through labyrinthine passages. The walls are etched with ancient symbols, some sacred, others disturbingly profane.

The flickering torches reveal a large underground chamber, transformed into a twisted sanctuary—the Devil's Church. At the center stands an altar made of bones, adorned with an inverted cross, surrounded by black candles dripping red wax.

Hooded figures in black ceremonial robes form a circle. Their leader, MALACHI (50s, cold and charismatic), stands at the altar, his face partially obscured by shadows. An aura of malevolence surrounds him.

MALACHI

(whispers with fervor)

"The Vatican's relic... their so-called 'Shroud of Turin'... a cloth woven with lies. Its existence weakens the will of man, binding them to false hope."

The followers murmur in agreement, their voices a low, ominous chant.

MALACHI slams a dagger into the altar, its blade stained dark with time.

MALACHI (CONT'D)

"We will take it and sacrifice it to our master!"

A follower steps forward, revealing blueprints of the Turin Cathedral, with routes marked in red.

FOLLOWER

"The security shifts change every three hours. We strike after midnight Mass."

The camera pans back, revealing the same shadowy figure from 1988, now watching the cult's gathering from the darkness, smiling faintly—an observer or perhaps something more.

MALACHI

"Let the world believe in nothing.
And from that emptiness, we will
rise." Hail Satan!

The flames from the altar roar higher, casting demonic shapes against the ancient stone walls, as the chanting grows louder.

Chant: Hail Satan! Hail Satan!

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. VATICAN WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Dim lights cast long shadows over the ancient stone walls adorned with maps, sacred relics, and strategic plans. A large crucifix dominates the room, its presence a stark contrast to the modern technology buzzing beneath it.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS stands at the center, flanked by Swiss Guard Commanders and Vatican intelligence operatives. A large digital screen displays satellite images of known Luciferian cult locations across Europe.

SWISS GUARD COMMANDER LUCIANO (50s, battle-hardened) points to a highlighted area near Rome.

COMMANDER LUCIANO

"Intelligence confirms cult
activity here. They've infiltrated
deeper than we anticipated. Their
network spans beyond Italy—into
France, Germany, and even the
Middle East."

Augustinus's face is a mask of resolve, his voice cutting through the tense air.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"We've fought them in shadows for
too long. No more. This isn't just
about the Shroud—it's about our
very souls."

He slams his fist on the table.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
"Mobilize the Swiss Guard. Deploy
covert operatives. We strike at
dawn. No quarter. No mercy."

The room fills with determined murmurs as officers relay
orders through encrypted radios.

CUT TO:

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A full moon casts an eerie glow over the Cathedral.
ALESSANDRO, the double agent, stands on the rooftop, speaking
softly into a secure earpiece.

ALESSANDRO
"They're preparing for war. The
Shroud is vulnerable. Malachi will
know what to do."

He steps back into the shadows as the camera pans up to the
glowing moon, transitioning to—

CUT TO:

INT. LUCIFERIAN CULT LAIR - CATACOMBS - NIGHT

MALACHI stands before his followers, flames flickering
against his cold, determined face. The walls are covered with
ancient symbols and unholy scriptures.

A cultist rushes in, breathless.

CULTIST"
The Vatican is mobilizing.
Augustinus is coming for us."

Malachi's eyes burn with fervor.

MALACHI
"Let him come. Faith is a fragile
thing—one spark, and it burns. We
will be that spark."

He lifts his dagger, its blade catching the firelight.

MALACHI (CONT'D)

"Prepare the sacred rites. We'll
greet them not with fear—but with
fire."

The cultists erupt into chants, their voices growing louder,
echoing through the catacombs.

CUT TO:

INT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - SECRET CHAMBER - NIGHT

The dim flicker of candlelight dances across ancient stone
walls. MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS, clad in ceremonial robes with
armor hidden beneath, kneels before the Shroud of Turin, his
hands clasped tightly in prayer.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(whispers)

"Lord, grant us the strength to
protect Your sacred truth. Let our
faith be the shield against
darkness."

Suddenly, a Vatican operative bursts in, breathless.

VATICAN OPERATIVE

"Monsignor! The cult has been
spotted near the perimeter. They're
advancing fast."

Augustinus rises, his face steeled with determination.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"Sound the alarm. Lock down the
Cathedral. The Shroud must not fall
into their hands."

CUT TO:

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - COURTYARD - NIGHT

The Swiss Guard, armed with modern weaponry blended with
ancient armor, mobilizes swiftly. Searchlights pierce the
night as shadows shift along the perimeter.

From the darkness, masked cultists emerge, wielding weapons
laced with dark symbols.

They clash with the guards in a brutal battle, the sacred and the profane colliding under the moonlit sky.

CUT TO:

INT. CATACOMBS - SECRET PASSAGE - NIGHT

ALESSANDRO leads a group of cultists through a hidden underground passage, his eyes filled with dark purpose.

ALESSANDRO

"The Shroud is near. Nothing will stop us now."

Suddenly, a squad of Swiss Guards ambushes them. A fierce gunfight erupts in the narrow corridor. Cult members fall, some shot, others captured.

CUT TO:

EXT. LUCIFERIAN CULT LAIR - NIGHT

Back in the catacombs, MALACHI receives a report from a bloodied, trembling cultist.

CULTIST

"We've been overrun. Most of our brothers are dead or captured."

Malachi's eyes narrow, his calm demeanor turning icy.

MALACHI

"Augustinus thinks he's won. But victory breeds complacency. We will wait. We will strike when their guard is down."

He steps toward a flickering flame, his shadow casting a monstrous figure on the wall.

MALACHI (CONT'D)

"And when the time is right, we will burn their Cathedral—and their precious Shroud—with it."

The camera pulls back, revealing the cult regrouping in the dark, plotting their next move.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - NIGHT (1997)

Title: 1997 Cathedral Fire.

DARKNESS. Then the faint flicker of motion detector light turning on reveals the vast interior of the Cathedral, under renovation. Scaffolding climbs the stone walls, and construction tools are scattered—gas canisters, paint thinners, and wooden planks.

INT. CATHEDRAL DOME - NIGHT

Shadows move among the beams. THREE LUCIFERIAN AGENTS, clad in black, scale the scaffolding with stealthy precision. Their faces are partially hidden, expressions cold and resolute.

AGENT 1

(whispers)

"This place will burn like paper."

They silently open metal canisters, pouring accelerant across the wooden structures and trailing it down to the nave below. They rig makeshift incendiary devices using leftover tools.

AGENT 2

(lighting a fuse)

"Let their faith crumble in ash."

The fuse ignites—flames race along the accelerant trail, devouring the wood with terrifying speed.

CUT TO:

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - COURTYARD - NIGHT

The agents emerge from a side door, now dressed as average civilians. They casually blend into the sparse crowd, hiding their satisfaction as the flames burst from the Cathedral windows.

INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

FIRE ALARMS BLARE. The inferno roars, licking the sacred walls. Stained glass shatters, casting colorful fragments onto the blazing floor. Smoke thickens, choking the holy air.

FIREFIGHTERS storm in—axes in hand, coughing through the smoke. Their leader, CAPTAIN LUCAS FERRARA, spots the reliquary, encased in a thick glass enclosure.

CAPTAIN FERRARA
(shouting)
"There it is! Move! We don't have
much time!"

They charge through the chaos, dodging falling debris. The flames roar closer.

CAPTAIN FERRARA (CONT'D)
(pointing)
"Break the glass! Axes—NOW!"

Firefighters swing their axes with all their strength. The glass cracks—then shatters with a deafening crash. Shards scatter across the floor, reflecting the dancing flames.

As the reliquary is freed, AN EERIE GLOW bursts from within. Golden light pulses, parting the smoke like a divine force. Whispers echo, though no one speaks. The flames hesitate—as if repelled by an unseen power.

The firefighters freeze, awe-struck. Then Ferrara snaps out of it.

CAPTAIN FERRARA (CONT'D)
"Move! NOW!"

They heave the reliquary onto their shoulders. As they carry it out, the flames seem to recoil, creating a clear path through the inferno.

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

A crowd gathers, eyes wide as the reliquary emerges—untouched by soot or ash.

WITNESS #1
(awestruck)
"It's... glowing."

WITNESS #2
(whispers)
"A miracle."

Across the courtyard, the Luciferian agents watch, hidden behind casual disguises. Their leader, AGENT 1, clenches his fists, rage masked under a calm smile.

AGENT 1
(softly)
"Not today. But soon."

Behind them, the Cathedral collapses in a final explosion of fire and embers—but the Shroud remains, miraculously unharmed.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. VATICAN OFFICE - DAY (MONTHS LATER)

Sunlight filters through the tall windows, casting long, solemn shadows across MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS's modest yet distinguished office. The walls are adorned with ancient texts, religious artifacts, and a large crucifix hanging above his desk.

Augustinus sits at his desk, deep in thought, thumbing a worn rosary. The peace is interrupted as VATICAN AGENT RENZO enters, holding a manila folder with urgency.

AGENT RENZO
"Monsignor, we've intercepted new intelligence. You need to see this."

Renzo places a photograph on the desk. It's a grainy surveillance image of a man—his face partially obscured, but unmistakable to Augustinus.

Augustinus stares, his expression shifting from curiosity to shock.

(MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
(whispers, breathless)
"I know this man. He sits on the Board of directors for Archbasilica of Saint John the mother of all churches. This can't be?

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. SEMINARY COURTYARD - DAY (YEARS EARLIER)

A serene, sun-drenched courtyard filled with the laughter of young seminarians. Two students, YOUNG AUGUSTINUS and YOUNG MALACHI, sit beneath an ancient oak tree, their theology books scattered around them.

Malachi's face is vibrant yet carries a hint of darkness, his eyes searching beyond the surface.

YOUNG MALACHI

"Do you ever wonder, Augustinus...
what if we're wrong? What if
everything we've been taught is
just... stories?"

Augustinus, calm and composed, closes his book, considering the question.

YOUNG AUGUSTINUS

"Faith isn't about certainty,
Malachi. It's about trust—trust in
what you cannot see."

Malachi laughs softly, shaking his head.

YOUNG MALACHI

"Or maybe it's fear. Fear of the
truth—that we're alone in the
universe, and no one's watching."

Augustinus leans in, his eyes filled with conviction.

YOUNG AUGUSTINUS

"Or maybe it's courage. To believe
despite the darkness. To hope when
hope seems lost."

Malachi falls silent, staring into the distance, his mind wrestling with doubts that would one day consume him.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. VATICAN OFFICE - DAY (PRESENT)

Augustinus's gaze remains fixed on the photograph, his jaw clenched with a mix of sorrow and resolve.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
(softly, to himself)
"You never found peace, did you,
old friend?"

He stands, his expression hardened with new purpose.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS (CONT'D)
(to Agent Renzo)
"Find him. Wherever he is... this
isn't over."

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. VATICAN LECTURE HALL - PRESENT DAY

The grand hall is filled with dim, reverent light, cascading through tall stained-glass windows. Wooden pews creak softly as young seminarians shift in their seats, their faces eager yet skeptical. Dr. REINHARDT, sharp-suited, stands at the podium, his posture confident, eyes reflecting both intellect and doubt.

Opposite him, MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS stands, his figure calm and composed, radiating an authority not born from position but from unshakeable faith.

DR. REINHARDT
(firmly, his voice echoing
slightly)
"You speak of faith as if it's an
absolute, Monsignor. But faith
without evidence—isn't that just
blind hope? How can one believe in
what cannot be proven?"

A murmur ripples through the hall. Augustinus steps forward, his eyes locking with Reinhardt's, not with defiance, but with a quiet intensity.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
(softly, yet with a
gravity that silences the
room)
"Because faith isn't born from what
we see. It's forged in what we
cannot see, yet still feel burning
within us."

Reinhardt smirks slightly, skeptical.

DR. REINHARDT"

A poetic sentiment, but hardly
convincing. How can you expect
reason to surrender to something so
intangible?"

Augustinus steps down from the podium, walking slowly toward
the center of the hall, his voice lowering yet somehow
growing stronger.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"Faith isn't about surrendering
reason. It's about transcending it.
Not rejecting questions, but
holding them in the light of
something greater than ourselves."

He pauses, looking around at the young faces, then back at
Reinhardt.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS (CONT'D)

"Let me show you something."

The hall dims as Augustinus's voice softens, his words
pulling the room into silence.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS (CONT'D)

(whispers, almost to
himself)

"There was a moment... when the words
of Christ pierced the hearts of men
like a blade—not with violence, but
with truth."

CUT TO: FLASHBACK - EXT. MOUNT OF OLIVES - DUSK

The sun dips low, casting an orange and crimson glow over the
rugged hills of Jerusalem. A gentle breeze rustles through
the sparse olive trees, their twisted trunks casting long,
jagged shadows across the dry, cracked earth. The faint sound
of distant city life echoes below—market traders closing for
the day, the occasional call of a shepherd.

JESUS sits upon a large stone, His gaze distant, fixed on the
horizon where the sky meets the earth. His expression is
serene yet solemn, as if seeing beyond the world itself.

Surrounding Him are the twelve disciples, seated on the ground, forming a tight circle. Their faces reflect a mixture of exhaustion from the day's journey and anxious anticipation, sensing that their Teacher's words tonight will carry a weight beyond simple lessons.

Jesus slowly stands, His silhouette outlined against the fading sun. The gentle rustle of robes is the only sound as all eyes turn to Him.

JESUS

(His voice calm but
commanding, resonating
with an authority that
silences the restless
wind)

"Do not be afraid of those who kill
the body but cannot kill the soul.
Rather, be afraid of the One who
can destroy both soul and body in
hell."

The words hang in the air like a stone dropped into still water, rippling through the hearts of His followers.

PETER, rugged and passionate, leans forward, his brow furrowed in confusion and fear.

PETER

(earnestly)

"Master, how can we not fear those with swords, those who hunt us like wolves? Their power feels real, their threats close."

Jesus turns His piercing gaze toward Peter, His eyes reflecting both compassion and unshakable truth.

JESUS

(softly, yet with
undeniable force)

"Because their power ends where
your soul begins. They can strike
the flesh, yes. But your soul..."

(He places His hand gently over His heart)

"...belongs to the One who breathed
it into you. Fear not the blade
that ends breath. Fear the darkness
that seeks to claim the eternal."

The disciples exchange uneasy glances. THOMAS, ever the skeptic, speaks, his voice low but urgent.

THOMAS

"But what of our families? Our mothers, our children? How do we protect them from such evil?"

Jesus steps closer, His face illuminated by the last golden sliver of sunlight. His expression softens, and a rare, tender smile touches His lips.

JESUS

"You protect them with truth. You shield them with faith. And when the darkness presses in, remember—light does not fear the night. It shines because the night exists."

Silence falls. The disciples sit, their hearts heavy yet strangely lightened. JOHN, the youngest, with tears welling in his eyes, whispers to himself:

JOHN

"Light does not fear the night..."

The wind picks up again, as if carrying Jesus's words across the valley, beyond the hills, into the very soul of time itself.

CUT BACK TO: INT. VATICAN LECTURE HALL - PRESENT DAY

The hall remains silent, the weight of the flashback lingering in the air.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(softly, looking directly
at Reinhardt)

"That's what faith is, Doctor. Not blindness. Not ignorance. But light... shining because darkness exists."

Reinhardt doesn't respond immediately. His usual sharp demeanor is softened, his skepticism tempered by something deeper—contemplation.

FADE OUT.

INT. AUGUSTINUS'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The flickering light from a desk lamp casts long shadows across shelves stacked with ancient texts and relics. MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS sits at his desk, deep in thought, as AGENT RENZO enters, his expression grave.

AGENT RENZO

(placing a file on the desk)

Monsignor Augustinus, Father Malachi's name keeps surfacing—indirectly tied to crimes against the Church. Stolen funds, secret meetings with high-ranking officials, whispers of scandals buried deep within the hierarchy."

Augustinus's face hardens, his fingers tightening around his rosary.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"If Malachi's darkness runs this deep, we'll root it out. Call in the Swiss Guard. It's time we visited an old friend."

EXT. ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

The imposing silhouette of St. John's Cathedral rises against the moonlit sky, its Gothic spires piercing the night. A convoy of Swiss Guards arrives silently, their presence both formidable and discreet.

Renzo steps forward, issuing crisp orders.

AGENT RENZO

(to the guards)

"Surround the cathedral. Secure all exits. No one leaves without my order."

The guards disperse, disappearing into the shadows.

INT. ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

The vast nave is bathed in dim candlelight, casting eerie reflections off the stone columns. Augustinus and Renzo step inside, the echo of their footsteps filling the sacred space.

From the shadows emerges FATHER LUCIAN, an old friend and confidant from seminary days.

FATHER LUCIAN
(with a forced smile)
Monsignor Augustinus... it's been a long time. What brings you here at this hour?"

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
"I'm here for Malachi. Where is he?"

Father Lucian hesitates, his gaze darting nervously.

FATHER LUCIAN
"He keeps a private office in the basement. He vanishes down there for hours. I suspect... there's more to that place than meets the eye."

INT. CATHEDRAL BASEMENT - NIGHT

The stone walls are cold and damp as Augustinus, Renzo, and Lucian descend the narrow staircase, torches casting flickering shadows.

They reach Malachi's office—a dim, cluttered room filled with ancient texts, strange artifacts, and ominous symbols etched into the walls.

The office is empty.

FATHER LUCIAN
"He was here earlier. But when he disappears... it's like he vanishes into the walls."

Renzo begins searching, his keen eyes scanning every detail. He notices something odd—a faint outline on the wall behind a bookshelf.

Renzo shifts the shelf, revealing a hidden compartment. Inside, he finds an ancient map, yellowed and brittle, marked with labyrinthine catacomb routes.

AGENT RENZO
(holding up the map)
"This isn't just an office. It's a gateway."

Augustinus nods grimly.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
"Call in the guard. We're going in."

INT. CATHEDRAL CATACOMBS - NIGHT

The catacombs are dark and oppressive, lined with bones and ancient carvings. Renzo leads the way, Augustinus close behind, flanked by armed Swiss Guards.

Their flashlights cut through the darkness, revealing unsettling symbols etched into the walls—both sacred and profane.

Suddenly, faint whispers echo from deeper within the tunnels.

AGENT RENZO
(tense, whispering)
"He's close. I can feel it."

The team pushes forward, deeper into the heart of the ancient labyrinth, unaware of the shadowed figures silently watching them from the darkness.

Renzo takes out his phone, quickly snapping photos of the ancient map detailing the catacombs. His brow furrows with suspicion as he dials his lead operative.

AGENT RENZO (CONT'D)
(urgent, hushed)
"We've found a map—catacomb layouts under the cathedral. Cover all known exits. No one escapes."

He ends the call, slipping his phone back into his pocket as he exchanges a tense glance with Augustinus.

INT. MALACHI'S SECRET MEETING ROOM - SAME TIME

A dark, cavernous chamber illuminated by the faint glow of red candles. Father Malachi stands at the head of a large stone table, surrounded by high-ranking church officials, their faces shadowed, their expressions grave.

Malachi's cold eyes flicker to a series of security monitors mounted discreetly on the wall. The screens display grainy footage—Augustinus and the Swiss Guard advancing through the tunnels.

Malachi's jaw tightens. He slams his fist onto the table.

FATHER MALACHI

(low, venomous)

"They're here. Move. Use the secret passages. Now."

The officials scramble, slipping through hidden exits masked by ancient stonework. Malachi pulls out a burner phone, dialing quickly.

FATHER MALACHI (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

(commanding)

"Activate the guards. Bring them to me. Now."

As he hangs up, the heavy door bursts open. Augustinus steps through, Renzo and the Swiss Guard right behind him. The room crackles with tension.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(coldly)

"We need to talk, Malachi."

Malachi slowly turns, his face twisting into a sinister smile, his eyes burning with dark intent.

FATHER MALACHI

(calmly)

"Ah, Augustinus. Always the faithful hound. But you're too late. The wheels are already in motion."

Augustinus steps forward, his grip tightening around his rosary, Renzo's hand hovering near his weapon.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
"Then we'll stop them. And you."

Malachi's laughter echoes through the chamber, dark and hollow as the walls around them seem to close in.

FATHER MALACHI
(mocking)
"Stop me? You never understood, did you? This isn't about power or rebellion. This is about freedom—freedom from the lies we were fed. I was always in your shadow, Augustinus. Always second, always overlooked. But now? Now I command legions. Now they kneel to me."

Augustinus's eyes soften slightly, tinged with sorrow beneath his stern resolve.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS
(softly, with conviction)
"You were never in my shadow, Malachi. You chose to stand in darkness. You let pride and envy devour you. The devil didn't infiltrate the Church—he infiltrated your heart. You traded your soul for illusions of power and prestige, and now you're nothing but a hollow vessel."

Malachi's smile falters, replaced by a flicker of rage.

FATHER MALACHI
(snarling)
"And you? Still the obedient servant, clinging to a faith that's crumbling under its own hypocrisy. I saw the truth—you just refused to look."

Augustinus steps closer, the tension unbearable, his voice low but unwavering.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"The truth? The truth is, you were broken—not by the Church, but by your own refusal to believe you were enough. Recognition doesn't define a soul, Malachi. Faith does."

Malachi's face twists with conflict—a brief flash of doubt before he buries it under fury.

FATHER MALACHI

(hissing)

"Spare me your sermons. I will watch this Church burn, and I'll smile knowing I was the spark."

Augustinus raises his rosary, his voice filled with both authority and heartbreak.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"And I will pray for you—even as you try to drown in darkness."

The room pulses with tension, seconds before chaos erupts.

FADE OUT.

FINAL CONFRONTATION - INT. CATHEDRAL CATACOMBS - NIGHT

Suddenly, the catacomb walls explode with gunfire. Malachi's dark-cloaked minions emerge from the shadows, wielding automatic weapons and blades. The Swiss Guard responds immediately—gunfire erupts, echoing like thunder in the confined stone corridors.

EXPLOSIONS rock the catacombs, dust and debris raining from the ceiling. The sacred and profane clash as the Swiss Guard engages in brutal close-quarters combat, their halberds clashing against blades and fists.

Renzo fights with precision, using his firearm and engaging in hand-to-hand combat, while Augustinus moves with determination, wielding his rosary like a talisman of light against the darkness.

In the chaos, Malachi tries to escape through a hidden tunnel.

INT. SECRET PASSAGEWAY - NIGHT

Augustinus spots Malachi fleeing. Fueled by righteous fury, he gives chase. The narrow corridor flickers with the glow of nearby fires.

Suddenly, a supernatural force surges through the tunnel—a blinding light emanates from Augustinus's rosary, illuminating the darkness. Malachi stumbles, glancing back with fear in his eyes.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

(shouting)

"You can't outrun the light,
Malachi!"

Augustinus tackles Malachi to the ground. They struggle fiercely, exchanging brutal punches. Malachi reaches for a dagger, but Augustinus reacts swiftly, knocking it aside.

As Malachi tries to escape again, a sudden blast of ethereal energy—as if from an unseen, divine source—throws him backward against the wall. His body crumples to the floor.

INT. CATHEDRAL BASEMENT - AFTERMATH

The battle ends. The Swiss Guard stands victorious amidst the wreckage. Renzo helps Augustinus to his feet.

They approach Malachi's motionless form. His face, once twisted with rage, now shows a faint, haunting expression of regret.

AGENT RENZO

(breathless)

"It's over."

Augustinus shakes his head solemnly.

MONSIGNOR AUGUSTINUS

"For now. But darkness never truly
dies. It waits... in the hearts of
the lost."

FADE OUT.

EXT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - DAY (2015)

An establishing shot reveals an even larger sea of pilgrims, stretching across the vast square in front of the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist. Thousands stand shoulder-to-shoulder, their faces lifted with anticipation and reverence. The air hums with quiet prayers and the occasional murmur of awe.

A giant screen towers above the crowd, displaying a live video feed of the Shroud of Turin. The faint, ethereal image of the crucified figure flickers slightly, magnified for all to witness.

The camera zooms in, gliding over the sea of faces—families holding hands, elderly pilgrims clutching rosaries, and children perched on shoulders, wide-eyed with curiosity.

INT. TURIN CATHEDRAL - CONTINUOUS

Inside, the sacred atmosphere is thick with incense smoke, rays of sunlight filtering through towering stained-glass windows like divine beams touching down from heaven.

A long line of pilgrims snakes through the grand hall, waiting patiently to witness the Shroud in person. Among them are the sick, the disabled, and the hopeful, some in wheelchairs, others leaning on crutches, their faces etched with both suffering and hope.

In the midst of the crowd, a MOTHER holds the hand of her BLIND YOUNG DAUGHTER, about eight years old, her eyes clouded with blindness but her face radiant with anticipation.

YOUNG GIRL

(excitedly, tugging at her
mother's hand)

"Are we there yet? I can feel it!"

MOTHER

(smiling through tears)

"Yes, my love. We're standing right
in front of it."

The camera shifts to the girl's point of view—complete darkness. Then, slowly, a sliver of light pierces the darkness, growing wider and brighter. As the light expands, the image of the Shroud emerges, faint at first, then becoming clearer.

Suddenly, the faint X-ray-like image of Jesus's face begins to transform—morphing into a life-like visage of Christ, filled with warmth and compassion.

YOUNG GIRL
(in awe, her voice
trembling)
"I can see Him, Mom.. I see Jesus."

The mother gasps, her face a mixture of disbelief and overwhelming joy.

MOTHER
(through tears)
"Can you see me?"

The girl turns, her eyes now filled with light, tears glistening.

YOUNG GIRL
(smiling brightly)
"Yes... I can see you. You're
beautiful, Mom."

The mother collapses to her knees, sobbing, hugging her daughter tightly, overcome with gratitude and wonder. Onlookers are amazed and brought to tears. Murmurs begin: "It's a miracle!"

The camera pulls back, capturing the sacred moment as the Shroud of Turin glows softly in the background, surrounded by the prayers and hopes of humanity.

FADE OUT.