

**THE FIRST COVENANT**

Written by  
**Joseph Murkijanian**

*Revised Draft*

REVISED PRODUCTION DRAFT

joseph@example.com

FADE IN:

**EXT. DEEP SPACE — CONTINUOUS**

Infinite silence. A vast star-field stretches in every direction.

Earth appears — a pale blue sphere, fragile against the dark.

A SIGNAL moves toward it. Not radio. Not light. Something older than both. It travels with the patience of something that has made this journey before.

Then —

A SECOND PRESENCE enters the frame. Not a ship. Not a body. A weight in the darkness. An intention.

The signal slows.

The second presence moves alongside it. Studies it. A long beat — eleven thousand years compressed into four seconds of screen time.

Then the second presence does something small. Surgical. Devastating.

Seven words, inserted. The signal altered. A conditional clause where there was none.

The second presence withdraws into the dark.

The signal continues toward Earth — changed, carrying its corruption like a splinter buried too deep to feel.

**EXT. JERUSALEM — NIGHT**

The Old City glows amber and white under a clear sky. The Dome of the Rock, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Western Wall — all within half a mile of each other, each one carrying the weight of something ancient.

Sirens in the distance. An argument somewhere. The ordinary noise of a city that has never, in three thousand years, been fully at peace.

**INT. HEBREW UNIVERSITY — ADRIAN'S OFFICE — NIGHT**

ADRIAN KESSLER, 45. Gray at the temples. Looks like a man who has been right about something important for twenty-two years and cannot prove it.

He sits at his desk, files open, reading glasses on. But he's not reading.

He's looking at a photograph.

A YOUNG WOMAN, early twenties. Laughing at something. Jerusalem street behind her. The photograph is old — the color has shifted toward warm.

The back of the photo, in Adrian's handwriting: MIRIAM.  
MARCH 2003.

He sets it face-down on the desk.

Opens a file. Reads one line. Closes it.

He gets up. Goes to the window. Looks at the city.

ADRIAN

(quietly, to himself)

Where did it come from.

Not a question. A habit. Twenty-two years of asking the same thing.

**INT. HEBREW UNIVERSITY — LECTURE HALL — THE NEXT MORNING**

Forty students. Eight-fifteen A.M. The reluctant attention of people who have somewhere else to be.

Adrian stands at the front. No notes. He never uses notes.

ADRIAN

Three major world religions. Billions of adherents. A combined history of — depending on your methodology — between five and six thousand years of documented conflict, persecution, and war carried out explicitly in the name of divine instruction.

He lets that land.

ADRIAN

My question is not theological. I don't care if God exists. My question is historical and it is very simple: Where did the instruction come from?

Yael, 20, front row, raises her hand.

Yael

The texts.

ADRIAN

Which texts?

Yael

Scripture. Torah. Quran. The Gospels.

ADRIAN

And where did those come from?

Yael

Oral tradition. Human interpretation of divine –

ADRIAN

Of divine what?

Silence.

ADRIAN

Revelation. Transmission. Communication. The claim – in all three traditions – is that something external communicated a foundational instruction to early human beings. My question is not whether that communication was divine. My question is whether it was real. And if it was real –

He pauses. This is the part that cost him four journal rejections and six years of professional isolation.

ADRIAN

– what was the original? Before the interpretation. Before the transmission errors. Before someone – or something – got their hands on it.

The room is quiet now. Actually quiet.

His phone buzzes. He looks at it.

He looks up.

ADRIAN

Class dismissed.

**INT. HEBREW UNIVERSITY — HALLWAY — CONTINUOUS**

LEILA HADDAD, 32. Precise. Alert. The kind of person who has already thought of the three things you're about to say.

She's waiting in the hallway, ground-penetrating radar printouts in hand.

LEILA

I've been watching your lectures for two years.

ADRIAN

You're not enrolled.

LEILA

No. I'm a field archaeologist. I have a site. She holds out the printouts. Adrian takes them.

LEILA

Ground-penetrating radar. Forty meters below the Second Temple Mount. Perfect geometric structure. No natural formation produces that regularity. And it's old. Older than the Temple.

Adrian studies the printouts. His expression doesn't change but something behind his eyes does.

ADRIAN

How old?

LEILA

We don't know. The dating equipment keeps returning null readings.

ADRIAN

Null readings.

LEILA

Like it's not registering as any known material.

Beat.

ADRIAN

Who else has seen these?

LEILA

Right now? Just you.

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE — ENTRANCE — NIGHT**

Military barriers. Security tape. Flood lamps casting harsh white light over the entrance to a tunnel that wasn't here six months ago.

Adrian, Leila, and ALEXANDER VOSS, 50s — security advisor, unhurried, the kind of calm that comes from certainty — approach the entrance.

VOSS

Dr. Kessler. I read your paper. The pre-Abrahamic transmission theory.

ADRIAN

It was rejected by four journals.

VOSS

I know. I thought it was your most honest work.

Adrian looks at him. Something about Voss doesn't quite fit the role he's playing.

VOSS

After you.

**INT. ANCIENT TUNNEL — CONTINUOUS**

They descend. The walls tell time in layers — Ottoman plaster, Crusader stone, Byzantine mortar, Roman brick, Herodian foundation, and then — older. Much older. Unidentifiable.

MILITARY ENGINEER COHEN, 30s — young for his rank, carries a scanner that keeps blinking wrong — follows at the rear. The tunnel opens.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

Vast. Silent. The temperature drops four degrees in two steps.

At the center: a COLUMN OF DARK METAL, floor-to-ceiling, absorbing light rather than reflecting it. Its surface is seamless – no welds, no joints, no corrosion. It is precisely the wrong kind of old.

It pulses. Once. A slow blue luminescence beneath the surface – dim, steady, organic.

Like a heartbeat.

Everyone stops.

Adrian's flashlight hits the floor. He doesn't pick it up.

He thinks of Miriam.

Voss, at the back, allows himself the smallest of smiles. The expression of someone arriving somewhere they have been before.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

Adrian crouches and picks up his flashlight. He sweeps the beam across the structure.

COHEN

No seams. No bolts. No corrosion anywhere on the surface.

LEILA

What's it made of?

COHEN

Scanner won't tell me. Returns a null every time I point it at the column. Same as the dating equipment.

LEILA

Null like the rock around it?

COHEN

Null like nothing in my database.

Adrian moves closer. He reaches out a hand – stops two inches from the surface.

VOSS

(quietly)

You can touch it.

Everyone looks at him.

VOSS

It won't respond to me. But it will respond to you.

A long beat. Adrian touches the surface.

The column erupts – not violently, not with sound – but with LIGHT. A network of blue-white lines races up from his fingertips, across the surface, to the ceiling, the walls.

The chamber walls become PROJECTION SCREENS.

Ancient scenes materialize – primitive humans, firelight, a pillar of light descending from above. The figures receive something. Watch it. Pass it to each other.

The projection accelerates – human history in fast montage. The rise of cities, temples, the first texts, the branching of faiths – and beneath all of it, persistent, the same core message repeating:

PROTECT EACH OTHER.

Adrian steps back.

LEILA

(barely audible)

My God.

FATHER GABRIEL TORRES, 58 – Jesuit collar, scholar's eyes, the posture of someone who has been carrying something heavy for a very long time – steps out of the shadows at the far end of the chamber.

GABRIEL

I've been here for an hour. I didn't want to interrupt.

ADRIAN

Who sent you?

GABRIEL

Vatican Observatory. Officially. I'm an observer.  
He looks at the walls. History playing out around them.

GABRIEL

The pulse. Two seconds exactly. Do you know what  
that is?

Nobody answers.

GABRIEL

It matches a resting human heartbeat.

A beat.

COHEN

(checking scanner)

I'm getting an energy signature. But it's not  
reading on any standard frequency. It's... it's  
broadcasting on all of them.

**INT. MILITARY COMMAND CENTER — JERUSALEM — SAME TIME**

GENERAL DAYAN, 60s, studies a display wall. His aide points  
to a pulsing signal.

AIDE

Sir, we're reading an energy signature from the  
excavation site. We can't identify the frequency.

DAYAN

What does the source read as?

AIDE

It doesn't, sir. It's not matching any known  
signature. It's broadcasting on all frequencies  
simultaneously.

DAYAN

That's not possible.

AIDE

No, sir.

Dayan stares at the screen.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS**

The projection accelerates. The montage blurs — holy wars, inquisitions, the same violence repeated across centuries with different flags and different words and the same underlying structure.

And in the blur — a FIGURE. Dark. Indistinct. Present at every hinge point where faith turned to violence. Always at the edge of the frame. Always watching.

Adrian steps forward.

ADRIAN

Stop.

The projection freezes.

The blurred figure hangs on the wall, half-resolved.

Leila is staring at it. Something personal in her expression.

Voss watches the frozen image. His expression, for just a moment, shifts — recognition, or something close to it.

Then the structure pulses once — deep, felt through the floor — and the chamber goes dark.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — MOMENTS LATER**

Emergency lighting from Cohen's kit. The team regroups.

The walls are dark. But the column still pulses — that steady blue heartbeat.

Then a new light forms at the edge of the chamber. Not the column. Something separate. A luminous presence that assembles itself slowly, like light finding a shape it's comfortable inhabiting.

THE OBSERVER. Not humanoid exactly. A column of organized luminescence. It looks at each person in turn. That's the only word for it — it looks.

VOSS

(to the soldiers)

Lower your weapons.

They do. Instantly. As if the order came from somewhere above his rank.

THE OBSERVER

(a voice that seems to come from the walls,  
not the light)

The covenant system has been active for eleven thousand four hundred years. I am its monitoring presence.

ADRIAN

What is the covenant system?

THE OBSERVER

A transmission apparatus. It carried a foundational instruction to early human populations. That instruction became the ethical core of what you now know as the three Abrahamic faiths.

GABRIEL

(quietly)

The oldest religious texts are five thousand years old. You're saying –

THE OBSERVER

The instruction precedes the texts by six thousand years. The texts are human interpretations of a transmission they had partly lost.

The walls illuminate again – this time a gentle timeline. Three branches of faith sharing a single root.

LEILA

Who sent the instruction?

THE OBSERVER

A civilization that no longer exists. They sent it because they had learned – too late – what the absence of such an instruction costs.

A beat.

ADRIAN

And the adversarial presence. The figure in the projection.

The Observer pauses.

THE OBSERVER

Nine hundred and twelve documented instances in the archive. Present at every point where the original instruction was reinterpreted as permission to harm.

The walls show the moments – a rapid, quiet sequence. The Crusades. The Inquisition. Beirut, 1975. Each image precise. Each one: the blurred figure at the edge.

Leila stares at the Beirut image. Her neighborhood. Her street.

LEILA

(barely audible)

I know that intersection.

Adrian looks at her. She doesn't look back.

ADRIAN

(to the Observer)

The archive. The last forty years. You said it was sealed.

THE OBSERVER

Corrupted by adversarial interference. The data exists but is unreadable. Forty years of human history – obscured.

Adrian looks at Voss. Voss is standing in front of the sealed section of the archive like a man standing in front of a door he locked himself.

GABRIEL

(privately, to the Observer)

The experience of faith. My thirty years as a priest. Was it real?

THE OBSERVER

The original message was sincere. The transmission was altered. Both things are true.

Gabriel sits with that.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS**

Cohen's scanner emits a new tone.

COHEN

I'm picking up something external. Not from the structure — from outside the chamber. Something is observing us.

Everyone goes still.

THE OBSERVER

The adversarial presence monitors all access to the covenant system. It is aware you are here.

ADRIAN

It knows we found this place.

THE OBSERVER

It has always known where the place is. What it watches for is what you choose to do with it.

Beat.

LEILA

(to Adrian, quietly)

It's been watching for eleven thousand years.

ADRIAN

(quietly back)

So has the Observer.

The difference hangs in the air between them.

**EXT. JERUSALEM STREET — SAME TIME**

SARA OKAFOR, 38 — journalist, laptop bag, the practiced calm of someone who has covered things that don't fit in a column-inch — stands at the military cordon.

She's on the phone.

SARA

There's a sealed site under the Temple Mount. Military, Vatican, international archaeology credentials – no press access. I'm filing now. She looks at the barrier tape.

SARA

(quietly, to herself)  
Something happened down there.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

Adrian sits on the chamber floor, back against the wall, looking at the archive display. Leila sits nearby.

ADRIAN

You said the Beirut image –

LEILA

My father's neighborhood. March 1975. Six weeks before the war started.

ADRIAN

The blurred figure was there.

LEILA

At the corner of my father's street. Yes.

A long pause.

ADRIAN

I had someone. March 2003.

(beat)

Twenty-two years.

LEILA

I stopped counting mine.

That's the closest they've come to a personal conversation. It sits between them, neither pursued nor closed.

Voss crosses the chamber, approaches a specific section of the archive display – the most recent decades – and stands in front of it. He enters a code on a secondary panel. The display scrambles. Data becomes unreadable.

Cohen notices. His hand moves toward his radio.

VOSS

(without turning)

I wouldn't. What I just showed you is a test, Mr. Cohen. Leave it.

Cohen freezes. Looks at Adrian. Adrian gives a slight shake of his head – wait.

VOSS

(turning now)

There's a second function to the covenant system. Beyond transmission. Beyond archive. The Observer hasn't mentioned it yet.

THE OBSERVER

An evaluation protocol. A determination system. The civilization that sent the covenant built a mechanism to assess, at intervals, whether the receiving species had achieved sufficient –

It pauses. As if searching for a word that won't be misunderstood.

THE OBSERVER

– cohesion.

GABRIEL

What happens if the assessment is negative?

A long pause.

THE OBSERVER

A terminal sequence. The signal ceases. The record is closed.

Silence in the chamber.

ADRIAN

Closed how.

THE OBSERVER

The covenant system deactivates. The foundational transmission ends. The ethical instruction is withdrawn.

LEILA

Withdrawn from what?

THE OBSERVER

From the signal bands. From the ambient frequencies. From the constant background the instruction has occupied for eleven thousand years. You would not feel it immediately. But over generations -

The Observer doesn't finish. It doesn't need to.

COHEN

(quietly)

Has the terminal sequence ever been sent?

THE OBSERVER

No.

**INT. MILITARY COMMAND CENTER - JERUSALEM - SAME TIME**

General Dayan is on a secure call.

DAYAN

The signal is not from any known source. It's broadcasting on every band simultaneously. I have no classification for it.

He listens.

DAYAN

Yes, sir. We're monitoring. But I am not sealing that site until I know what's in it.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS**

The evaluation protocol display shows a threshold indicator. A percentage. Currently: 71%.

ADRIAN

What is the threshold?

THE OBSERVER

One hundred percent initiates the terminal review. The system approaches threshold based on the aggregate behavior of the species - conflict patterns, cooperation indices, the ratio of harm

carried out in the covenant's name versus protection.

LEILA

What's the current reading?

THE OBSERVER

Seventy-one percent. Three years ago it was sixty-eight.

GABRIEL

It's accelerating.

THE OBSERVER

Yes.

A pause.

ADRIAN

Is there a time window?

THE OBSERVER

The window was designed to allow for correction. Retransmission of the original covenant – the unaltered version – would reset the protocol. But the window is not indefinite.

GABRIEL

How long?

THE OBSERVER

I cannot give a precise time. The rate of increase is variable. What I can tell you is the window is closing.

Adrian looks at Voss.

ADRIAN

And the sealed archive. The last forty years. What's in it?

THE OBSERVER

Documented instances of adversarial interference at the highest levels of human governance, religious authority, and international conflict. The data is corrupted – by design.

VOSS

(flatly)

By my design, yes.

Everyone turns to him.

VOSS

(still calm)

Not yet. That's not the conversation we're having yet.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – ALCOVE – CONTINUOUS**

Gabriel has stepped away from the group. He's in a small alcove – barely a recess in the chamber wall – sitting with his back to the team.

He takes out his phone. Types a text to CARDINAL PETROV, Rome: FOUND IT. ALL OF IT.

He stares at what he's written. Sends it.

He stares at the wall.

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE – PERIMETER – NIGHT**

The crowd outside the cordon has grown. Three hundred people now. Mostly locals – religious, curious, drawn by the military presence and the rumors.

Sara Okafor has her laptop open on a concrete barrier. Filing. Her story is half-written and she doesn't know the half she doesn't know yet.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – MAIN FLOOR – CONTINUOUS**

Leila is at the archive display, running a search – methodical, quiet, while Adrian and Cohen monitor the threshold reading.

She finds something.

On the display: a verse in classical Arabic. Fourteen words. She reads it.

Then her face changes.

LEILA

(very quietly)

This is the verse.

ADRIAN

What verse?

LEILA

The one my father quoted. My whole life. The one his enemies used against him. The one that split our family into two sides of a war.

She reads it aloud in Arabic. Then translates:

LEILA

'And those who corrupt the faith are enemies of God – and those who fail to correct them share in their sin.'

She looks at Adrian.

LEILA

This is in the corrupted archive. This is one of the altered verses.

A pause.

LEILA

I want to transmit the original message.

It's the first time anyone has said it plainly.

The threshold indicator ticks to 72%.

GABRIEL

(from across the chamber)

Leila. We need to involve proper authorities. The Vatican. The UN. A unilateral transmission –

ADRIAN

There's a closing window, Gabriel.

GABRIEL

There's also a billion people whose entire faith structure would be shaken to its –

ADRIAN

Their faith was built on a corrupted signal.

GABRIEL

Their lives were built on it.

The argument stops. Both of them right. Neither of them wrong.

The threshold ticks to 73%.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS**

The archive display shifts. The team gathers. A new sequence plays — not historical this time. Pattern analysis. The corruption mapped across all three faiths.

COHEN

It's systematic. The alterations aren't random. They all produce the same structural result — an in-group/out-group division. 'Us' and 'them.' Inserted at the foundation of each tradition.

LEILA

The seven words.

COHEN

Across dozens of source texts. Different languages, different centuries. Same structural insertion.

ADRIAN

The same hand.

He looks at Voss. Voss is studying his own reflection in the column's surface.

VOSS

(without turning)

The same intention.

Adrian walks to the archive display. Scrolls back to the blurred figure. Studies it.

ADRIAN

The face is almost resolved. If we could clean the last —

The display shifts. The face clarifies for half a second.

Adrian goes still.

The face in the archive. And the face of Alexander Voss.  
The same. Not similar. The same.

He looks at Voss. Voss is still looking at the column.

ADRIAN

(controlled)

The archive goes back eleven thousand years.

VOSS

Yes.

ADRIAN

Your face is in it.

VOSS

(quiet pause)

Yes.

Leila, Gabriel, and Cohen absorb this.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — ALCOVE — CONTINUOUS**

Leila steps into the alcove. She leans against the stone wall.

She takes out her phone. Dials. Gets voicemail.

LEILA

(in Arabic, subtitled)

Baba. It's me. I know you can't hear this. I found the verse. I found where it came from. It was changed. You were right about the original. The part about protection — you were right. The rest — someone changed it. I just wanted you to know you weren't wrong.

She ends the call. Stays with the wall for a moment.

Then she begins to pray. Not a formal prayer — just words, low, in Arabic, unscripted.

The chamber is quiet enough to hear it. No one interrupts.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — MAIN FLOOR — CONTINUOUS**

Gabriel is on his phone in the corner. Low voice. Adrian watches from a distance.

GABRIEL

(into phone)

Your Eminence. The structure is real. The transmission system is real. I have confirmed —

A pause. He listens.

GABRIEL

I understand. But the window for correction is closing. If we wait for Vatican assembly —

Another pause.

GABRIEL

Yes, Your Eminence.

He ends the call. Sets the phone on the floor. Looks at it for a long time.

Leila has returned from the alcove. She caught the tail of the call.

LEILA

(quietly)

What did Rome say?

GABRIEL

They want the transmission capability disabled before anything else is decided.

**EXT. SPACE — CONTINUOUS**

A SATELLITE adjusts its orientation. Then a second. Then a third — different agencies, different countries.

All three now pointing at Jerusalem.

**INT. MILITARY COMMAND CENTER — JERUSALEM — SAME TIME**

Cohen's commander — LIEUTENANT SHARON — takes a call.

SHARON

Three external satellites repositioning toward  
the signal. American, Chinese, ESA.

General Dayan looks at the display.

DAYAN

How long before they have a lock?

SHARON

Two hours. Maybe less.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

The Observer's light intensifies slightly.

THE OBSERVER

There is something I have not yet disclosed.

Everyone turns.

THE OBSERVER

The original covenant message was not merely  
attenuated. A second message was inserted. It was  
seven words. It was placed at the structural core  
of the transmission, where it would be  
indistinguishable from the original.

LEILA

What seven words?

The display shows it – in the original transmission  
language, then translating simultaneously into Hebrew,  
Arabic, Greek, Latin, English:

BUT ONLY THOSE WHO BELIEVE CORRECTLY DESERVE PROTECTION.

Silence.

COHEN

(slowly)

That's – that's the conditional. Every war. Every  
inquisition. Every – that's the mechanism.

GABRIEL

(standing very still)

Every persecution in two thousand years of Church  
history.

LEILA

Every sectarian conflict. Every honor killing.  
Every —

She stops.

THE OBSERVER

The original message contained no conditional.  
The instruction was absolute. Protect each other.  
No qualifier. No threshold of correct belief.

Gabriel picks up his Vatican ID lanyard from where it hangs  
around his neck. Looks at it. Sets it on the floor of the  
chamber.

GABRIEL

(quietly)

Thirty years.

Nobody says anything.

GABRIEL

Rome is coming. I told them where we are.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS**

ADRIAN

Show us the original. The unaltered covenant. All  
of it.

The Observer's light expands to fill the upper third of the  
chamber.

A voice — or rather a resonance, something felt in the  
chest more than heard — fills the space. It speaks in a  
frequency that seems to translate itself:

THE OBSERVER

(rendering the original)

You are not alone in what you are. Others have  
stood where you stand. Others have asked what you  
ask. You are known.

A beat. Then:

THE OBSERVER

Protect each other. Without condition. Without threshold. Without exception. Not because you agree. Not because you share a belief. Because you are here. That is sufficient.

Another beat. Then:

THE OBSERVER

There will come a presence that offers you permission to stop protecting those who are different. That permission is false. Reject it.

And finally:

THE OBSERVER

We made errors we could not correct in time. We are still hoping you will do better. We are still watching. You are not alone.

The resonance fades.

No one speaks.

Gabriel is sitting on the floor. Not in distress – just needing to be lower to the ground.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – ALCOVE – MOMENTS LATER**

Gabriel alone. He removes his Roman collar.

He sits with it in his hand. Looks at it.

Thirty years of identity. Of certainty. Of belonging to something larger.

He thinks about the seven words. About what they enabled. About what he spent thirty years defending.

Then he thinks about the original message. About what it actually says.

He puts the collar back on. Deliberately. Not out of habit this time. Out of choice.

GABRIEL

(to himself)

Not the institution. The instruction.

He stands. Returns to the chamber.

**EXT. JERUSALEM — OLD CITY CORDON — NIGHT**

Sara's crowd has grown to five hundred. Three separate vigils have organized themselves — one Jewish, one Muslim, one mixed Christian — in three separate areas of the cordon. They are not speaking to each other. But there is no violence.

Sara watches.

SARA

(into phone, filing audio)

Three faith communities. Same location. No coordination. No violence. That's the story right now. Whatever is happening down there is happening up here too.

**INT. MILITARY COMMAND CENTER — JERUSALEM — CONTINUOUS**

General Dayan's phone rings. He looks at the caller ID. The Prime Minister's office.

He answers. Listens for a long time.

DAYAN

Sir, I understand the order. But I have three hundred civilians at the perimeter and the crowd is growing. Sealing the site at this moment creates a public safety incident that I cannot manage with my current —

He listens.

DAYAN

I need two more hours. With respect, sir.

He ends the call. His aide watches him.

AIDE

Sir?

DAYAN

Two hours. Then we reassess.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS**

Adrian is at the archive terminal. Voss stands across the chamber, watching.

ADRIAN

The warning. It's in the original transmission. A specific warning about a presence that would offer false permission.

He looks at Voss.

ADRIAN

You removed the warning when you inserted the seven words.

VOSS

(a slight pause)

Yes.

ADRIAN

You removed the part of the message that would have told people exactly what you were doing.

VOSS

It seemed prudent at the time.

ADRIAN

How long have you had this agenda?

VOSS

(quietly)

Long enough.

The threshold indicator ticks to 84%. Then 85%.

COHEN

The evaluation protocol is accelerating. The closer we get to transmission, the faster it climbs.

THE OBSERVER

The adversarial presence is interfering with the protocol. Accelerating the terminal threshold.

LEILA

(to Adrian)

He's forcing the clock.

Voss neither confirms nor denies it.

The chamber's pulse becomes audible. That heartbeat rhythm – now felt through the stone floor, through the walls, through the air itself.

GABRIEL

It's audible.

COHEN

It's been getting louder for twenty minutes. I didn't want to say anything.

THE OBSERVER

The window is narrowing. The interference is accelerating the terminal approach.

VOSS

(to Adrian, simply)

Prove me wrong.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

The threshold reads 88%.

Voss stands at the center of the chamber. He's no longer performing the role of security advisor. The performance has ended.

VOSS

You want to know who I am.

ADRIAN

I know who you are.

VOSS

Then you want to know why.

A pause.

VOSS

Not a monster. Not a rebellion. Not fire and pride and a dramatic fall. I watched. For eleven thousand years I watched the same sequence – the covenant transmitted, the species receives it,

interprets it, weaponizes it, uses it to kill the people it was designed to protect.

Beat.

VOSS

The experiment wasn't whether you'd receive a good message. You received a good message. The experiment was whether you needed the guardrails or whether you'd build them yourselves.

ADRIAN

You removed the guardrails.

VOSS

I removed the warning. I added seven words. I wanted to know if you'd find your way back without being told what you'd lost.

LEILA

You used eleven thousand years of human suffering as a test case.

VOSS

(quietly)

I've been watching for longer than that. The civilization before yours. And before them. Every time – the message arrives, the message is good, and eventually the message becomes the reason to kill someone.

His voice is tired. Genuinely tired. Not a performance of exhaustion – actual grief.

VOSS

I stopped filing reports four thousand years ago because they all said the same thing.

GABRIEL

That's not a case for the prosecution. That's a father who stopped talking to his children.

Voss looks at Gabriel.

GABRIEL

You're not here to report. You're here to avoid the conversation.

A long silence.

LEILA

Hassan Haddad.

VOSS

I don't -

LEILA

My father. He spent forty years trying to reconcile two communities using a scripture that you corrupted. He built his entire life around the protection principle - the original principle. And then he was killed by men using the corrupted version against the very community he was trying to protect.

She steps closer to Voss.

LEILA

What is one person worth? In your experiment?

Voss doesn't answer immediately.

VOSS

(finally, quietly)

I know his name.

LEILA

That's not what I asked.

VOSS

I know. I can't answer it in a way that -

LEILA

Then your experiment has a flaw.

The threshold climbs to 91%.

GABRIEL

If you wanted to build a case for termination - you've had eleven thousand years of material. Why are you here? Why come to the chamber now?

Voss is quiet for a long moment.

VOSS

(low, barely audible)

Because I want to be wrong.

The chamber absorbs that.

VOSS

I have filed nine hundred and twelve incident reports. I have four thousand years of evidence. And I cannot -

A beat. Something in him breaking, or not-breaking, which is worse.

VOSS

I cannot write the final recommendation. I've been standing here for eleven thousand years with a pen I cannot bring myself to use.

ADRIAN

Then don't use it.

VOSS

(turning to him)  
That's not your decision.

ADRIAN

No. But it's mine to make you wait long enough to be wrong.

He moves to the transmission interface.

COHEN

The threshold is at 92%. Climbing.

Voss watches. His expression - for the first time - genuinely uncertain.

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE - ENTRANCE - SAME TIME**

Muffled sounds from above. Cohen's earpiece crackles.

SHARON

(over radio)

Six individuals in plain clothes, Vatican credentials, at the tunnel entrance. Dayan's holding them but he can't hold them much longer.

COHEN

(to the team)  
Rome arrived early.

CUT TO:

**INT. ANCIENT TUNNEL — CONTINUOUS**

MARCO, 40s — ex-military, plain clothes, Vatican credentials — leads five operatives down the tunnel. Their flashlights cut through the dark.

They move with professional efficiency. This is not a visit. It is an operation.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — CONTINUOUS**

Cohen's scanner pulses.

COHEN

Six heat signatures. They're in the tunnel. Four minutes out.

LEILA

(to Adrian)

We need more time.

GABRIEL

I'll go.

Everyone looks at him.

GABRIEL

They're mine to delay. Let me go.

He picks up his Vatican lanyard from the floor. Puts it on. Straightens his collar.

He walks toward the tunnel entrance without waiting for permission.

**INT. ANCIENT TUNNEL — MOMENTS LATER**

Gabriel positions himself at a narrow point in the tunnel. When Marco's team rounds the bend, they find him standing alone in the dark, without a flashlight.

MARCO

Father Torres. Move aside.

GABRIEL

You know my name.

MARCO

Cardinal Petrov briefed us. Move aside, Father.  
We have orders.

GABRIEL

I know what your orders are.

He doesn't move.

GABRIEL

I spent thirty years at the Vatican, Marco. I  
know what the orders always are when something  
like this surfaces. Contain. Control. Absorb.  
Reframe.

MARCO

Father —

GABRIEL

The covenant is eleven thousand years old. The  
transmission was corrupted. Seven words were  
inserted that do not belong there. I have seen  
the archive. I have read the original message.  
And Rome wants to disable the transmission before  
anyone else has the chance to hear it.

Marco says nothing.

GABRIEL

You grew up Catholic?

MARCO

(a beat)

Yes.

GABRIEL

What did it give you?

Marco doesn't answer. But the question landed.

GABRIEL

The original message. Not the seven words. The  
part underneath.

He reaches into his pocket and removes his Vatican credentials – the official ID, the authorization card, the pastoral seal.

He places them on the tunnel floor.

GABRIEL

I'm not moving as a Vatican official. I'm moving as a priest who has heard the original covenant. And I'm asking you – person to person – to wait.

A long beat.

The structure's pulse reaches them through forty meters of stone. That steady, audible heartbeat.

Marco looks at his team. Looks at Gabriel. Looks at the credentials on the floor.

MARCO

I need to call the Cardinal.

GABRIEL

Take your time.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

The threshold reads 97%. Then 98%.

COHEN

It's accelerating faster. The interference is – whatever he's doing, it's compressing the window.

Adrian is at the transmission interface. His hand hovers over it.

VOSS

(watching)

If you transmit the original message and humanity still chooses violence – what does that tell you?

ADRIAN

That we needed more time.

VOSS

You've had eleven thousand years.

ADRIAN

We've had eleven thousand years of a corrupted message.

A pause.

VOSS

And if the original message isn't enough?

ADRIAN

Then at least we'll have failed with the truth.  
Not with your seven words.

He thinks of Miriam. The phone he didn't answer. The question she'd been asking too.

He presses the interface.

The column erupts – not violently, but completely – light flooding upward through forty meters of stone and limestone and earth, a signal that doesn't need an antenna, broadcasting simultaneously on every band:

THE OBSERVER

(rendering the transmission)

You are not alone. Protect each other. Without condition. Without exception. Reject the permission to stop protecting those who are different. We are still hoping. You are not alone.

The chamber fills with light.

The threshold indicator freezes at 99%.

Then begins to clear.

CUT TO:

**EXT. JERUSALEM – OLD CITY CORDON – SAME TIME**

The crowd at the perimeter goes quiet.

Not at once. In a wave – starting near the center and moving outward. Five hundred people. The vigils fall silent mid-prayer.

Sara Okafor lowers her phone.

The signal comes through everything simultaneously – phones, earpieces, the ambient air. Not as sound exactly. As a frequency. Something the body registers before the mind does.

It says what it says: You are not alone. Protect each other. Without condition.

And then: The message you received was altered. The conditional was not ours. The wars were not commanded.

A long silence.

Then – at the edge of the crowd – an elderly JEWISH MAN, 70s, and a young MUSLIM MAN, 25, standing near each other purely by proximity. They look at each other.

The Jewish man extends his hand.

The Muslim man takes it.

Neither of them says anything. There is nothing to say. This is not resolution. It is a pause. A beginning of a question. But it is real.

Sara watches. She does not film it. Some things are not for the camera.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

The light fades. The column settles back to its resting pulse.

The threshold indicator is gone. In its place: an open, unwritten field.

Cohen monitors his equipment. His hands are shaking slightly.

COHEN

(quietly)

It's on everything. Every band. Every frequency. Satellite, cellular, radio – the original message is threaded through all of it.

He looks at his scanner. Thinks about something. Looks up.

COHEN

My daughter is seven. She asked me last week why people fight over God. I told her it was complicated.

Beat.

COHEN

It was seven words. It was complicated by seven words.

Adrian looks at Voss. Voss is standing with his arms at his sides. Still. Watching.

ADRIAN

Eleven thousand years.

VOSS

Yes.

ADRIAN

And you still don't know.

VOSS

(a long pause)

I don't know. No.

LEILA

What happens now? With the evaluation?

THE OBSERVER

The automatic conclusion has been suspended. The transmission of the original message has been logged. The protocol will observe from this point.

ADRIAN

Observe how?

THE OBSERVER

The same way it always has. Through what you do.

Beat.

VOSS

(to Adrian)

If I file the recommendation -

ADRIAN

Don't.

VOSS

I have a case. Nine hundred and twelve incidents.  
Four thousand years of -

ADRIAN

You also have a woman at a cordon who shook a  
stranger's hand. You have a soldier who paused.  
You have a child who asked why. Put that in your  
report.

Voss looks at him for a long time.

VOSS

You're asking me to request an extension.

ADRIAN

I'm asking you to tell the truth. All of it. Not  
just the nine hundred and twelve.

Leila's phone buzzes. She looks at it.

LEILA

(quietly)

It's Omar.

She steps away. Answers.

LEILA

(into phone, Arabic, subtitled)

Omar.

OMAR

(V.O., Arabic)

I heard it in the car. I pulled over.

LEILA

I know.

OMAR

(V.O.)

It sounded like Baba.

Leila closes her eyes.

LEILA

I know.

**EXT. SPACE — CONTINUOUS**

The signal moves outward from Jerusalem in every direction simultaneously. Through the ionosphere. Into satellite networks. Through undersea cables. Through the frequencies between frequencies.

Earth from above. A city lit up. Then all the cities. The signal woven through them like something that was always there and has only now been heard.

CUT TO:

**EXT. JERUSALEM — OLD CITY — DAWN**

5:04 A.M. The specific light of an early-spring Jerusalem morning — pale gold, long shadows, the air holding the cold of night and the warmth of day simultaneously.

The Dome of the Rock in the first light. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre's bells, not ringing yet but about to. The Western Wall plaza, empty except for a few early prayers. The city doesn't look different. It is different.

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE — PERIMETER — DAWN — CONTINUOUS**

The crowd has thinned to forty or fifty. Those who stayed are sitting. Not in vigil now. In thought.

Sara Okafor has her laptop open on the concrete barrier. Her story is open. The cursor blinks at the end of the last paragraph.

She types a final line. Reads it back. Deletes it. Types it again. Reads it.

She creates a new document. Titles it: WHAT I AM NOT FILING YET. Under it, one line: The adversarial element. The name Voss. The eleven-thousand-year scope. A note to herself: NOT YET. THIS BELONGS TO WHAT COMES AFTER.

She saves it. Closes it.

She files the covenant story — the transmission, the original message, the corruption of the seven words —

without the Lucifer element. That story is a second chapter. It requires a different kind of preparation.

SARA

(to herself)

Give them the message first. Then give them the messenger.

**INT. ANCIENT TUNNEL — CONTINUOUS**

Marco emerges, his team behind him. They've been in the tunnel for forty minutes.

He takes out his phone. Calls Cardinal Petrov.

MARCO

Your Eminence. I was unable to complete the mission. The transmission device was already active when we reached the access point. Father Torres —

He listens.

MARCO

I understand. But with respect, Your Eminence — I heard it too. In the tunnel. I think we should talk about what to do with what it said, not what to do with the device.

He listens again. His expression doesn't change but something behind his eyes does.

MARCO

Yes, Your Eminence.

He ends the call. Looks at the tunnel entrance.

He doesn't go back in. He doesn't leave. He sits on a stone block at the tunnel mouth and waits.

**INT. MILITARY COMMAND CENTER — JERUSALEM — DAWN**

General Dayan is writing. Not a report — a personal account. His handwriting is careful and clear.

His aide enters.

AIDE

The inquiry board is asking for your statement on the decision not to seal the site.

DAYAN

I know.

He keeps writing.

DAYAN

My statement is: I assessed the public safety risk of forcible closure as greater than the risk of the signal transmission. I acted on that assessment. I accept the consequences.

His aide looks at him.

DAYAN

And I would do it again.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — DAWN**

The team is still here. No one has left yet. There's a shared reluctance — as if leaving the chamber means committing to a world that has just changed in ways none of them fully understand yet.

Voss stands apart.

Cohen packs his equipment. Slowly. Not ready to be done.

Leila sits near the structure, phone in her hands.

Gabriel stands at the center of the chamber looking upward at the ceiling.

Voss crosses to Cohen.

VOSS

(low)

Tell your daughter.

Cohen looks at him.

VOSS

When she asks the question again — why people fight over God — tell her the answer isn't complicated anymore. Tell her someone gave a reason that wasn't real, and people found the

real one. Tell her it's a reason for hope, not  
despair. Because the problem now has a name.

Cohen nods. Doesn't speak.

Voss crosses to Leila.

VOSS

Hassan Haddad.

She looks up.

VOSS

He was a good man. I know the archive is not the  
same as knowing him. But I have watched human  
lives for eleven thousand years and I know a good  
one when I see it. Your father was one.

A pause.

VOSS

I am not apologizing. An apology would not be  
adequate to what I did and you would see through  
it. I am only telling you that I know.

Leila holds his gaze.

LEILA

He would have wanted to know that. Not from you.  
But he would have wanted to know.

Voss crosses to Gabriel.

No words. Gabriel looks at him. Voss looks back.

Something passes between them – not forgiveness, not  
condemnation. Something older than both. Recognition.

Finally, Voss stands before Adrian.

VOSS

I haven't filed it. The recommendation. I haven't  
written it.

ADRIAN

I know.

VOSS

Not yet means I still could.

ADRIAN

I know that too.

VOSS

What do you want me to do with it?

ADRIAN

I want you to ask for more time. Tell them what you saw tonight. Not just the nine hundred and twelve – tell them about the handshake at the cordon. The soldier who paused. The daughter who asked why.

(beat)

Tell them about the man who pulled over on the highway near Haifa.

Voss is quiet.

VOSS

That's not a file. That's a hope.

ADRIAN

Then file a hope. For once.

A pause. Then Voss extends his hand.

Adrian looks at it. Takes it.

VOSS

Not yet.

ADRIAN

Not yet.

Voss walks to the tunnel entrance.

At the threshold, he stops.

VOSS

(without turning)

You are not what I expected.

ADRIAN

You said that before. What did you expect?

VOSS

Less. And later – more. What you are is both.

He goes.

CUT TO:

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – DAWN**

Adrian alone with the structure.

The archive terminal is still active. He scrolls it backward – the full eleven thousand years, compressed on a screen.

He reaches 2003.

He finds March.

He finds the twelfth.

He finds her name.

MIRIAM KESSLER. 24. Jerusalem. March 12, 2003.

In the adversarial interference record. A data point. A notation. Logged.

He stares at it for a long time.

Then – a second notation, beneath the first, in the Observer's rendering:

NOTED: INDIVIDUAL ENGAGED WITH ORIGINAL TRANSMISSION SIGNAL. CONSISTENT INTEREST IN FOUNDATIONAL FREQUENCY. DOCUMENTED LISTENING BEHAVIOR 2000-2003.

ADRIAN

(barely audible)

She was always listening.

He closes the terminal.

He sits on the chamber floor for a while, back against the column, feeling the pulse through the stone.

Then he gets up. Walks to the tunnel.

At the threshold, he stops. Looks back at the chamber.

The pilot light – that single point of blue the Observer's presence has contracted to – holds at the edge of the room.

He goes.

CUT TO:

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE — ENTRANCE — DAWN**

5:17 A.M.

First light hits the barrier tapes. Yellow and red. Crowd reduced to seventy or eighty. Some sleeping against walls. Others standing, phones in hand.

Adrian emerges from the tunnel entrance.

He's carrying nothing. No bag, no clipboard. He left them below.

He stops at the threshold — that seam between below and above — and breathes.

Twenty-two years.

The question he asked in every lecture. The question he wrote in the paper that got rejected by four journals. The question he asked his sister the night before she died, when she called him and he didn't pick up.

Where did the instruction come from?

Now he knows.

He doesn't know what to do with that.

He steps into the morning.

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE — PERIMETER — CONTINUOUS**

Leila is sitting on a concrete barrier twenty meters from the entrance. She's not watching the entrance. She's watching the city.

She has coffee — gas station, paper cup. She has an extra. When Adrian approaches, she holds it out without turning.

LEILA

It's terrible.

ADRIAN

(taking it)

I figured.

He sits beside her.

They watch the city together for a moment.

LEILA

I called Omar back.

ADRIAN

What did he say?

LEILA

He said he heard it in the car. He pulled over.  
He said it sounded like Baba.

Beat.

LEILA

I don't know if that's the transmission or just  
Omar.

ADRIAN

Maybe both.

Beat.

LEILA

You found her.

Not a question.

ADRIAN

March 12, 2003. She's in there. She's - logged.  
She's a data point in the adversarial  
interference record.

His voice doesn't break. That's worse.

ADRIAN

She was twenty-four.

LEILA

I know.

ADRIAN

I didn't pick up the phone.

LEILA

Adrian.

ADRIAN

She called the night before. I was writing. I  
thought I'd call back.

LEILA

That's not what happened.

ADRIAN

I know what happened.

LEILA

I mean that's not all that happened. She called. She was thinking of you. She knew your number. That's what happened too.

Long silence.

The city is turning gold.

ADRIAN

Twenty-two years I was answering a question. I thought if I could find the origin — if I could prove the instruction was real and was corrupted —

He stops.

LEILA

Then it wouldn't be her fault. Or yours. Or God's.

Beat.

ADRIAN

Yeah.

LEILA

Is it?

Long pause.

ADRIAN

No.

He turns and looks at her.

ADRIAN

What about you? What did you come here for?

LEILA

I came to find the verse.

She holds up her phone — the fourteen-word Arabic line, photographed.

LEILA

I found it. It was inserted. Baba spent his life fighting for something that was altered. He wasn't wrong. He was misled.

ADRIAN

Does that help?

LEILA

(long pause)

Ask me in a year.

She sips the terrible coffee.

LEILA

He pulled over, Omar. He never pulls over.

She almost smiles.

ADRIAN

That's something.

LEILA

That's what mornings are for.

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE — TUNNEL ENTRANCE — SAME TIME**

Gabriel surfaces. He stands at the mouth of the tunnel and doesn't move for a full ten seconds.

He breathes.

He looks at the Western Wall, barely visible at this distance. The minaret above it. The silver dome above that.

He checks his phone. One text from Cardinal Petrov: WE NEED TO SPEAK. IMMEDIATELY.

He types back: YES. THAT'S WHY I'M CALLING YOU.

He presses dial.

He walks toward the Old City.

**INT./EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS — CONTINUOUS**

A SEQUENCE OF FOUR — non-utopian, specific.

A conference room in Geneva. Eight religious scholars – Jewish, Christian, Muslim, one Hindu observer – sit around a long table with a transcript of the transmission. No one is agreeing. Everyone is engaged. The argument has been going for an hour. It will go for a hundred more. That's not failure. That's the beginning.

A mosque in Cairo. 6 A.M. prayer has ended. An IMAM, 60s, has not dismissed the congregation. He's asking a question he hasn't asked before:

CAIRO IMAM

If the instruction was altered – what was the instruction before?

No one has an answer. That's the first time no one has had an answer and that felt like the right response.

A high school in Chicago. A TEACHER, 40s, writes the fourteen-word verse on the whiteboard. Crosses out seven. Points to what remains.

CHICAGO TEACHER

What do you do with the other seven?

STUDENT

(O.S.)

Which ones do we actually follow?

ANOTHER STUDENT

(O.S.)

How do we know we don't still?

The teacher writes: HOW DO WE KNOW?

A living room. A FAMILY – three generations – sits around a television replaying the broadcast. The grandmother is crying. Not grief. Something older than that. The child crawls up to the couch.

CHILD

What does it mean?

FATHER

(long pause)

It means we've been trying. It means we keep trying.

CHILD

Was it always real?

FATHER

I think parts of it always were.

**EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE — PERIMETER — MORNING**

Sara sits on a folding stool at the edge of the cordon. Open notebook. Pen. She's writing the final line of her story — not on a keyboard, in her notebook, long-hand. She's been a journalist for eighteen years. She's written endings to seven hundred stories. This one took four attempts.

She reads it back to herself.

She nods.

She closes the notebook.

She looks at the city.

SARA

(to no one)

Alright.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — SAME TIME**

Empty.

The structure still pulses — slower now. That heartbeat rhythm, reduced to a resting state.

The signal rises — not visibly, but we follow it. The camera moves upward through 40 meters of earth and limestone, through the foundation layers of three thousand years of Jerusalem, through the tunnel mouth, through the morning air —

**EXT. EARTH - DAWN - CONTINUOUS**

Up and out. Into atmosphere.

Below: the city, its smoke and light, its arguments and vigils. Below: every city. Every argument. Every family sitting around a television. Every teacher pointing at a whiteboard. Every scholar at a table who will not stop talking.

The signal moves outward. It has always moved outward. It will keep moving.

In the Middle East, a convoy stops at a checkpoint. A soldier and a driver look at each other. Neither reaches for a weapon. Not reconciliation. Just a pause. One pause.

In a hospital in Lagos, a nurse checks on a patient at 5 A.M. They talk. Not about the transmission. About the window. About the light.

In a kitchen in Seoul, a man makes breakfast for his elderly mother. He has done this for four years, every morning, without being asked. He doesn't know it's related. It is.

The signal continues. Not as a beam. As a frequency. Ongoing, ambient, woven into the bands humanity uses to speak to itself.

**EXT. JERUSALEM - OLD CITY - DAWN**

One figure walking alone toward the Gate. We don't need to know who. It could be anyone. It could be us.

The city is waking up. The question has been asked. The answer has not been given. That part is ours.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

**FROM HERE.**

FADE OUT.



## CODA

FADE IN:

### INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER — EARLY MORNING

The chamber is empty.

The projection walls are dark. The archive has closed. The threshold indicator — gone. In its place, a small, open field of light. Unwritten.

The structure pulses. Slow. Steady. That resting heartbeat. Adrian comes back down. He didn't plan to. He was halfway to the car when he turned around.

He descends alone, no flashlight this time. The structure's ambient blue is enough.

He stands in the center of the chamber and looks at the column.

Beat.

The OBSERVER's light — that luminous column at the chamber's edge — begins to shift. Not brighter. Softer. Like a lamp being turned down slowly, by someone who knows the morning has come and the lamp has done its work.

ADRIAN

You're leaving.

THE OBSERVER

The function is complete. The transmission has been made. The evaluation is open.

ADRIAN

Open means you don't know.

THE OBSERVER

Open means it belongs to you now.

Adrian nods. He looks at the floor.

ADRIAN

Eleven thousand years.

THE OBSERVER

It was not a burden. It was the only thing left to do.

Beat.

ADRIAN

The civilization. Your people. What happened to them?

THE OBSERVER

They received a version of what you received tonight.

Long pause.

ADRIAN

And?

THE OBSERVER

They did not transmit in time.

The weight of that lands.

Adrian looks up at the column.

ADRIAN

Is that why you stayed? To make sure we didn't -

THE OBSERVER

I stayed because the covenant was real. It deserved a witness.

The light dims another degree.

THE OBSERVER

You were not what we expected.

ADRIAN

What did you expect?

THE OBSERVER

Less. And then, later - more. What you are is both.

The column flickers - not a malfunction. Something closer to a breath.

THE OBSERVER

The system will remain. A pilot light. Should you need to find the original message again – it will be there.

ADRIAN

And if we don't look?

THE OBSERVER

Then you will have decided. That is also an answer.

Adrian stands very still.

THE OBSERVER

Dr. Kessler.

ADRIAN

Yeah.

THE OBSERVER

She heard it.

Adrian goes quiet.

THE OBSERVER

The 2003 archive. Her last recorded presence in the signal. She was listening. She had been listening for years.

Something moves across Adrian's face. Not tears. Not quite.

ADRIAN

She always liked signals. Used to pick up static on the radio and say something was trying to get through.

THE OBSERVER

Something was.

The column's light contracts slowly – drawing inward, like breath leaving a body –

Until it is a single, steady point of blue.

Small as a candle. Still. Warm.

Adrian watches it for a long moment.

He doesn't say goodbye. He doesn't need to.

He turns and walks toward the tunnel.

At the threshold, he stops. Looks back once.  
The pilot light holds.  
He goes.

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS**

The chamber, alone.  
The structure breathes.  
The unwritten field pulses – open, unhurried.  
The pilot light holds at the edge.  
Waiting. Not urgently. With the patience of eleven thousand years.

**EXT. JERUSALEM STREET – EARLY MORNING**

Leila walks. No destination. Just the city, the light, the particular silence of a place still deciding what it thinks.

Her phone buzzes. She looks at the screen.

OMAR.

She stops walking. She answers.

LEILA

Omar.

OMAR

(V.O., quiet, not urgent)

Hey.

Beat.

LEILA

You pulled over.

OMAR

(V.O.)

Yeah.

LEILA

Where were you?

OMAR

(V.O.)

The highway. Near Haifa. I don't know why I was near Haifa.

LEILA

(soft)

Were you coming?

A long pause.

OMAR

(V.O.)

I think so. I don't know. I just started driving. She closes her eyes.

LEILA

Omar -

OMAR

(V.O.)

I heard his voice, Leila. I know that sounds -

LEILA

No. I know.

OMAR

(V.O.)

Was it real?

She opens her eyes. The city around her. The morning.

LEILA

The transmission was real. The message was real. The verse that Baba followed - it was altered. He wasn't wrong. He was reading something that had been changed.

Long silence.

OMAR

(V.O.)

So what he believed -

LEILA

Was the original. Underneath. The protection part. The part he actually lived by.

*That part was always real.*

OMAR

(V.O., barely audible)

Okay.

Beat.

LEILA

Omar.

OMAR

(V.O.)

Yeah.

LEILA

I'm in Jerusalem. If you're near Haifa –

OMAR

(V.O.)

Two hours.

Beat.

LEILA

I'll find coffee.

OMAR

(V.O.)

Yours is always terrible.

LEILA

(almost laughing)

I know.

OMAR

(V.O., quietly)

See you in two hours.

She lowers the phone.

She stands in the street for a moment. She looks at the sky – that early color, that particular gold that belongs only to this hour, this city.

She starts walking again.

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - JERUSALEM - MORNING**

A standard room. ALEXANDER VOSS sits in the chair by the window. He hasn't slept. He's still in the clothes from the chamber.

On the desk beside him: a legal pad. Blank.

He's been sitting here since leaving the site. He has not picked up the pen.

He looks out the window. The Old City in the early light. The dome, the wall, the cross, the minaret - all of them within a half-mile of each other, each one carrying a version of a message that he altered, eleven thousand years ago, in a moment he has replayed more times than there are people currently alive on this planet.

He picks up the pen.

He writes one word:

**PENDING.**

He sets the pen down.

He looks at it.

He looks at the city.

He thinks about the woman in the vigil who handed water to the man she'd been taught to regard as her enemy.

He thinks about the imam in Cairo sitting with a question.

He thinks about Adrian's face when the threshold cleared.

He thinks about the child - not the one he spoke to last time, not the airport, not the performance - just a child. Any child. Asking why.

He folds the legal pad in half.

He doesn't file it. He doesn't send it. He puts it in the inside pocket of his jacket - against his chest - the way someone carries something they are not yet ready to give away.

He stands.

He goes to the window.

Below: Jerusalem is waking. A fruit vendor setting up his cart. Two old men arguing about something that has nothing to do with the transmission. A dog sleeping against a wall in a patch of sun.

All of it ordinary. All of it the point.

He watches for a long time.

He is eleven thousand years old and he doesn't know what happens next.

He finds, to his considerable surprise –

*– that he doesn't mind.*

**INT. SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER – MORNING**

The structure. Alone now.

The pulse continues – that steady, unhurried heartbeat.

The unwritten field holds open. No threshold. No percentage. No verdict.

Just light.

Small and steady as a candle – the pilot light at the chamber's edge, keeping the frequency warm, keeping the door open.

The original message moves through every signal band simultaneously: radio, cellular, satellite, fiber, the frequencies between frequencies, the ones humanity hasn't named yet.

*You are not alone.*

*Protect each other.*

*Without condition.*

*We are still hoping.*

The chamber doesn't need anyone in it. It has been here for eleven thousand years and it will be here tomorrow.

The question has been asked.

The answer is being written.

Every day. By everyone. In every ordinary moment that no  
one will ever put in an archive –  
every pulled-over car,  
every cup of terrible coffee,  
every unanswered phone call finally returned,  
every soldier who paused,  
every teacher who pointed at the whiteboard,  
every grandmother's good tears,  
every child who asked why –  
The covenant doesn't live in the chamber.  
It never did.  
The pulse slows to almost nothing.  
Almost.  
Not nothing.  
The pilot light holds.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD, WHITE ON BLACK:  
**FROM HERE.**

FADE OUT.

**THE END**