

Confessions

by  
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FADE IN:

EXT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH, TIJUANA - DAY

The hundred year-old, Catholic church overlooks a rough, Tijuana street. The noontime sun highlighting the layer of brown dust that covers everything.

DRAMATIC MUSIC plays.

PEDESTRIANS

walking here and there. Mostly, rough-looking Mexicans. A few brave, GRINGO tourists sightsee.

DOWN THE STREET

ONLOOKERS

gather around a street performance.

A wooden stage with elaborate puppets. A puppet show.

THREE PUPPETS

One wearing white, the likeness of GOD.

The other wearing black with horns and a pitchfork, a stereotypical DEVIL.

In the middle the SINNER. Torn between Good and Evil.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH

A heavily adorned, cold interior. Absent of any life. Small, flaming candles line the side, near the front. Sunlight penetrates the STAINED GLASS.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - STUDY

Floor to ceiling bookshelves filled with everything from Anatomy books to Paolo Coelho.

FATHER SANTIAGO, 40's, an erudite, Mexican priest, sits behind a large, antique desk handwriting a note. A LAPTOP open in front of him.

TIJUANA SIDEWALK

THE SICARIO

40's, tall with a demeanor hiding something sinister, watches the puppet show a moment. Towers over the shorter, Mexican crowd.

He turns and excuses himself through the crowd. Walks. A long, UMBRELLA hangs by his side.

As he passes, His lips part showing off his gold-trimmed front teeth.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - STUDY

Father Santiago folds the freshly-written letter and places it in an envelope.

TIJUANA SIDEWALK

THE DEVIL PUPPET

makes aggressive gestures towards the Sinner. Using his pitchfork in a stabbing motion.

THE SINNER

cows in fear.

THE ONLOOKERS

laugh at the scene.

DRAMATIC MUSIC

in the background getting intense.

DOWN THE BLOCK

The gold-teethed Sicario walking still. Gets to the front of Our Lady of Faith Church. Gives the surrounding area a casual once-over before going inside.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - STUDY

Father Santiago begins with the address, "San Diego Bureau of Investigation" on the Fed-Ex envelope.

He holds a small, clear vial in front of him, moves it back and forth. Viscous, red liquid moves within it. After a moment, he places the vial in the envelope.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH

The Sicario enters quiet, professionally. All business. Closes the large doors behind him. Uses the umbrella to lock the doors by wedging it within both handles.

The Sicario removes a PISTOL and a large SILENCER from his waistband. Attaches the silencer.

Without hesitation the priest makes his way towards the far end of the church.

SAINTLY EFFIGIES look down on the Sicario as he passes.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - STUDY

The Priest hurriedly and carelessly packs a small, travel bag with clothes and personal items.

TIJUANA SIDEWALK

THE DEVIL

over the Sinner.

His pitchfork ready to give an end to the Sinner.

Making outrageous movements.

GOD

allowing it. No match for the Devil.

THE AUDIENCE

reacting.

THE MUSIC

getting still more intense reaching a crescendo.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - STUDY

Father Santiago back at his desk. Grabs what he can from the drawers and packs them in the bag.

Something outside causes him to suddenly look up towards the partially opened, study door.

FATHER SANTIAGO

Tomas? Son? That you?

He sits dead still waiting for something.

TIJUANA SIDEWALK

THE DEVIL

over the Sinner still.

A PRIEST PUPPET

enters from God's side of the stage. He wields a large sword. Goes straight for the Devil with his sword. Gets him just before he can finish the Sinner.

THE DRAMATIC MUSIC

ends with a CRASH of symbols.

THE DEVIL

falls dead.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH

The room turned upside down.

The Sicario watches the envelope burn in the nearby, metal trash can. Holds the VIAL OF BLOOD in front of him inspecting it.

In the background, Father Santiago slumped backwards, dead from the priest's bullet.

Bits of BRAIN AND BLOOD stain the window.

TIJUANA SIDEWALK

God, the Priest and the Sinner rejoice. Do a dance.

Again, the audience reacts. Enjoying the finish.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - STUDY

The Sicario leaves unnoticed.

BEGIN MUSIC (Rage Against The Machine's "Killing in The Name of").

SERIES OF SHOTS

Of ornate Catholic Churches with statues of various MEXICAN SAINTS lining the walls. Each church an elaborate and expensive construction of gold and various metals.

One by one we get a good look at the faces of various saints... SANTO SANTIAGO on his white horse, SAN JAVIER, SAN FRANCISCO... their white faces looking more European than Mexican.

Juxtapose the beauty of the church against the desolate, dirty streets of Tijuana with its TAXIS, PIMPS, PROSTITUTES, DRUG DEALERS... All coexisting in the same space.

Finally a look at a statue of LA SANTA MUERTE (The death Saint). We hold on this for a moment and are taken to...

EXT. SAN DIEGO NEIGHBORHOOD, NEAR THE MEXICAN BORDER - DAY

Rows and rows of dilapidated, one-story, concrete homes. Homes looking as though they could have been lifted right off the streets of inner-city Mexico. Replete with tagged buildings, old cars, and CHOLOS hanging talking shit and drinking beer in the midday sun.

Without the English-named street signs one wouldn't know one location from the other.

We follow a MANGY PITBULL across the street and focus on a particularly rough-looking, house. A BUICK, minus the wheels, sits abandoned in the drive.

The Pitbull stops and takes a dump right in the middle of the street.

INT. SAN DIEGO HOME - DAY

Drawn curtains hide the sunshine begging to come in from the outside. Can't hide the mess, though. On the couch, the heap of a WOMAN lies dead still.

A TELENOVELA plays on the TV.

PILL BOTTLES (Xanax, Valium), A BAG OF WEED and SMOKING SUPPLIES sit on the coffee table nearby. A small statue of LA SANTA MUERTE (The Saint of Death) also sits nearby.

On the wall a similar painting of LA SANTA MUERTE. Next to it, a posed, family photograph of the sleeping woman, and TWO YOUNG CHILDREN.

The MUSIC plays from a connecting bedroom.

BEDROOM

Typical teenager's bedroom. Posters of rock-stars, half naked women hang on the walls. Piles of dirty and clean laundry lie unattended.

The MUSIC blares from a boombox on the floor.

A Mexican, punk teenager, TOMAS, 15, hair shaved on one side, long on the other, Nine Inch Nails tee shirt on, packs a backpack with clothes.

KITCHEN

Fridge door open.

Tomas stuffs several CANS OF BEER into the backpack.

LIVING AREA

Tomas enters carrying the backpack. Being sure not to wake the sleeping woman, he discreetly takes SEVERAL CIGARETTES from a pack on the table.

Before leaving, Tomas makes the sign of the cross in front of the picture of LA SANTA MUERTA hanging on the wall.

INT. SAN DIEGO TROLLEY - DAY

Full of YOUNG GRINGO STUDENTS and MEXICAN LABORERS.

Tomas sits next to two OLD TOURISTS. Their attention is on each other. Tomas eyes the closest old lady's unattended, open purse.

The Trolley slows to stop. As it does, Tomas casually reaches his hand into the open purse reaching for the lady's wallet.

STUDENT (O.S.)

Hey!

Tomas looks up to see a COLLEGE STUDENT eyeing him.

STUDENT

(to lady)

He's got his hand in your purse!

The lady looks at Tomas. Caught red handed. She pulls her purse close to her side.

Without waiting, Tomas makes a beeline for the exit, hops out the open door and disappears into the outside CROWD.

EXT. SAN YISIDRO BORDER CROSSING - DAY

Tomas crosses the bridge toward Mexico. Blends in with the CROWD of weekend pedestrians headed to Mexico for the day. He checks his back to make sure no one is following him.

On the bridge, Tomas bumps into a older man, POPS PHILEMON (40s), and keeps going without excusing himself. The younger son, YOUNG PHILEMON (10) holds his father's hand. Both heading into Mexico as well.

Tomas and the young boy's eyes meet for what seems like forever. Something familiar between the two.

The young Philemon follows Tomas until he disappears within the busy crowd.

EXT. SAN YISIDRO BORDER CROSSING - ENTRANCE

Tomas easily crosses into Mexico with his backpack.

END MUSIC.

EXT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - DAY

Several MEXICAN POLICE CARS sit at the front with lights going. MEXICAN POLICE OFFICERS stand around the front entrance talking to one another and smoking (You'd think they were taking a break).

A small CROWD has gathered outside to see what's going on.

Tomas rounds the corner and immediately notices the police presence. Hides himself.

EXT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH, AROUND BACK - DAY

A lone POLICEMAN chats it up with a PROSTITUTE.

Tomas sneaks to a small window near the ground, opens it and climbs in without notice from the policeman.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - BASEMENT

Tomas pulls himself inside via the small window - We no know, because of the position of the window and room, we are in the basement.

Inside, Tomas stops and listens to the VOICES speaking directly above him. Policeman.

He waits until the voices dissipate then gets moving.

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH - MAIN ROOM

From a hallway, Tomas watches the several POLICEMAN stand around the front of the church near the door. There's a lightness to their conversation.

Tomas sneaks past the policeman into the nearby

HALLWAY

Where he approaches the half-open door of Father Santiago's

STUDY

Tomas stands at the open door aghast at the large BLOOD STAIN on the far wall behind the desk. By the look on his face, Tomas knows what happened.

He checks behind him before entering then quickly moves to the priest's desk, lifts a rock from within a potted plant. Finds a HIDDEN KEY. He uses the key to unlock the drawer to the desk.

Approaching POLICE VOICES from the hallway cause Tomas to stop. His search becomes frantic until the VOICES are just outside the door.

Found it! Tomas holds up a necklace with a SQUARE LOCKET attached.

Several POLICEMAN CASUALLY ENTER and find...

Nothing but an open window. Tomas already gone.

EXT. MEXICAN PUEBLO - SMALL CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

Dirt roads, horses and LOCAL CHILDREN. A small Catholic style church with its large wooden front doors open to the public. The most well kept building in the pueblo.

A taxi pulls to the front. Stops.

Pops and the younger Philemon exit. Pops pulls his son by the hand into the church.

The local children watch the Gringos, curiously.

INT. SMALL CATHOLIC CHURCH

The younger Philemon sits in a pew by himself. Stares at the scary effigies staring back at him. One of Jesus on the Cross freaks him out the most.

Pops exits a confessional, calls his son. Both leave.

INT. SMALL CATHOLIC CHURCH - ENTRANCE

Pops, with son in hand stops at the offering box. Takes out a wad of cash, must be a month's salary, and forces it into the small opening. The younger Philemon can only watch.

YOUNG PHILEMON

How are we going to get home, dad?

POPS PHILEMON

We walk.

Pops gets going. The young Philemon stays for a moment, trying to absorb what he just heard.

EXT. TIJUANA STREETS - DAY

The sun a little lower in the sky. Tomas sits alone against an empty FOUNTAIN. PUFFS on a cigarette.

The necklace from the priest's office sways gently in front of him. His eyes filled with angry tears.

TITUS (O.S.)

Hey! Joto!

Tomas turns to see TITUS, 18, a dark-skinned, tattooed Mexican heading towards him. Two TEENAGE GIRLS, 14, tag along.

Composing himself, Tomas quickly places the necklace around his neck and tucks it beneath his shirt. Wipes away whatever tears are left.

TOMAS

Que hay, Wey?

They slap hands and bump fists.

TITUS

You see that shit? They fucked that priest up. That's what happens when you fuck with the Narcos.

Titus notices Tomas' red eyes.

TITUS

What's wrong with you?

TOMAS

Nothing.

TITUS

You fucking crying, joto?

(slaps Tomas' head)

You're like a little girl with that emotional shit. I should stab you for being such a bitch. I got two gallinas here who don't want to see fucking crying unless it's them.

Tomas looks over the girls before grabbing his backpack.

TITUS

We got some shit going down later, you down? Or you gonna be a joto?

TOMAS

Nah. I can't.

TITUS

Fuck that. You're going. As long as you don't cry like a joto and scare the gallinas off.

Titus looks back at the waiting girls. They smile.

Titus grabs Tomas around the back of the neck. Pulls him along.

TITUS

(low)

We'll go get high, forget about our  
problems, fuck these gallinas and  
make some money.

Reluctant, Tomas has no choice. He goes along with Titus and the girls.

INT. TITUS'S APARTMENT, LATER

A dealer's apartment. The two TEENAGE GIRLS lie passed out on the couch in panties and bra. DRUGS, BEER BOTTLES and WEIGHING SCALES on the coffee table.

IN THE CORNER

Tomas, too, lies passed out next to his backpack.

Titus enters from the kitchen shirtless with his jeans unbuttoned.

TITUS

Wake the fuck up.

Titus kicks at Tomas.

TITUS

Tomas, get the fuck up.

Tomas barely moves.

Titus kicks harder.

Tomas struggles to a sitting position.

TITUS

We got shit to do. Get the fuck up.  
Fucking joto.

Titus puts a sweatshirt on, gets ready to leave. Hides a PISTOL in his waistband.

Tomas wakes, struggles to his feet.

EXT. TIJUANA AFFLUENT AREA - NIGHT

In front of a two-story house surrounded by a concrete wall.  
BMW in the drive.

An UNUSUALLY BENT TREE in the front lawn.

Most houses on the street hidden behind the safety of  
concrete walls.

LIVING ROOM

Upper class living room with matching interior. PLASMA  
TELEVISION plays a telenovela.

The place trashed. Overturned bookshelves, chairs.

Untouched Family photos on the walls.

A CRASH

from the next room.

TITUS (O.S.)

(Spanish)

Where's it at!?

DINING ROOM

A HOUSEWIFE

30's, sits at the dining room table looking remarkably calm.

Titus stands over the woman carelessly wielding a pistol over her head. His face is covered with a ski mask.

Tomas stands against the far wall. Trying to stay awake. Too high to keep his eyes open. His ski mask is pulled up on his head, revealing his face.

Titus points the pistol at the woman's head.

TITUS

Where's it at!?

HOUSEWIFE

(Spanish)

My husband is going to cut your balls off and feed them to you.

Titus pulls the woman up by her hair. Slaps her.

TITUS

Shut up.

The woman recoils.

Titus stands over her quiet. Gets his mouth close to the woman's ear.

TITUS

(soft)

You believe in God?

Titus gets some distance between himself and the Housewife. Holds the end of the pistol to the her temple.

The woman holds her bleeding mouth. Stays quiet. Squeezes her eyes shut.

Finally the woman gives in...

HOUSEWIFE

It's upstairs in the far bedroom.  
In the closet.

TITUS

That's it. That a girl.

Titus smiles at the woman. Bends down and kisses her on the head. Strokes her hair. Turns to the passed-out Tomas.

TITUS

(to Tomas, English)  
What are you doing!? Pull your  
fucking mask down, joto!

Titus goes to his accomplice holding up the wall. Gets to him. Yanks his mask down over his face, shakes him awake.

TITUS

Watch her.

Tomas comes to. Looks at his friend.

TITUS

Stop acting all fucked up.

Titus slaps Tomas's face. Wakes him up a bit. Startles Tomas.

TOMAS

I have it.

Titus hesitates. Watches Tomas's face. Looks back at the cowed woman.

Finally, Titus hurries out of the room to whatever's waiting. Leaves Tomas alone with the woman.

Tomas looks at the her. She at him.

Tomas can't hold his heavy eyelids open any longer. Closes them. Moves his head slightly to some unheard song.

The woman watches intently. Sees her chance. Looks back towards Tomas's accomplice. Sees no one. Slides out of her chair slowly.

Tomas doesn't notice. In his own world.

The woman stands. Makes a move past Tomas. Gets to the next room.

Tomas opens his eyes. Notices the woman gone. Gets frantic.

LIVING ROOM

The woman is almost at her front door. Reaches for the door knob.

Tomas clumsily grabs her from behind.

She SCREAMS. Attempts to fight Tomas off.

Tomas holds her tight.

Both bodies fall to the carpet.

The woman SCREAMS for her life.

Tomas puts his hand over the woman's mouth to keep her from screaming.

Muffled SCREAMS from beneath Tomas's hand.

The woman continues to struggle. Almost gets Tomas off her.

Again, the woman SCREAMS loud enough for anyone outside to hear.

Tomas struggles to keep her quiet, on the ground.

Suddenly, Tomas holds his hands tight across the woman's neck, choking her. Leans over her face. Cutting off her air.

She struggles a bit. Then, falls silent.

Titus enters carrying a small, sleek black BAG. Sees Tomas over the dead woman.

TITUS

What the fuck!?

Titus rushes to Tomas. Pulls at his shirt sleeve.

Tomas rolls off the dead woman. Stares. Frozen at the sight of her.

A BABY CRIES from the next room.

Tomas looks towards the baby's cries. Shakes her dead body trying to wake her.

TOMAS

Wake up! I didn't mean it. God!

Tomas covers his mouth trying to prevent himself from vomiting.

It's no good. Vomit spews from his mouth and he leans over to let it all out.

His accomplice watches.

TITUS

Joto, motherfucker, you fucked up.  
I ain't taking the shit for this.  
You stay here and tell them what  
happened.

Titus points the pistol at Tomas.

Just as Tomas looks up and faces Titus...

BANG!

Shoots his partner in the chest.

Horrified, Tomas covers the wound with his hand. Pulls his hand back. Sees the blood covering it.

Falls backwards on the carpet next to the woman's body.

TOMAS

(to himself)

Why, God?

Titus leaves in a hurry. His job done.

Tomas looks up as if towards Heaven. Staring at nothing. The blank ceiling.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Sin is who we are. Truth,  
redemption is what we desire.

TOMAS  
(mumbling)  
God, please...

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
A miracle to save us from  
ourselves. Our misdeeds.

BRIGHT LIGHT

everywhere. Consumes the room and everything in it until...

NARRATOR(V.O.)  
If we look hard enough...

The light is the only thing left.

NARRATOR(V.O.)  
We will eventually find it.

It, too, is suddenly taken over by

BLACK SCREEN

NARRATOR(V.O.)  
They say God has a plan for all of  
us... I've been trying to get out  
ever since.

TITLE CARD: 15 YEARS LATER

BLACK VOID

A lone Television set from afar. On. The only light in the void.

Movement closer towards the television set. The light getting brighter. The picture becoming clear.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON, 25, gives a press conference on the television.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON (V.O.)

Pardon me for such short notice. My life and the lives of my department have come under threat of violence over the past few weeks. It is unfortunate that we have to adjust our daily activities but we feel it is necessary for the safety of everyone involved.

(beat)

Now to answer your question, No, I have nothing against the Church.

(pause)

But, the State has legal authority to question its leaders especially if they are suspected of wrongdoing. My department intends to do just that. Lawlessness has no immunity. My job is to investigate, whomever the suspect or suspects may be. We have to be willing to do whatever we have to in order to defeat this war on our streets.

REPORTER'S VOICES

Blending in all trying to ask a question.

Movement continues towards the television set. Closer. Until the Detective's head the only thing visible. Detective Philemon's head and mouth still moving. A glass image.

PULL BACK TO SHOW

The scope of a large, RIFLE which is now the viewing apparatus for the Detective's head.

A MAN takes aim behind the rifle from the cover of a few stories high building across from the press conference.

Detective Philemon's head sits squarely within the scope's cross hairs.

Steady.

A few seconds with the Detective's head in the cross hairs.

The man's finger squeezing the trigger.

Then, through the scope, Detective Philemon is disturbed by something next to him. Whatever it is interrupts his press conference. He bends down toward the disturbance.

The shooter hesitates. Moves the scope to get a look.

Detective Philemon shoos away his CRYING SON, 5, who has rushed to see his daddy.

The boy runs back to his waiting mother, the DETECTIVE'S WIFE, standing nearby.

The shooter gets the Detective back in the scope's cross hairs. Holds it a second.

FLASH OF IMAGES

The DEAD HOUSEWIFE and a BABY'S CRY.

BACK TO SCENE

Suddenly the man backs off, TOMAS, 30, fifteen rough years on his face, leans against a near wall.

Something has suddenly come over him producing a visceral, nauseating reaction. His face ghost white.

He hesitates. Waits a moment gathering himself.

With a professional air, he pulls the rifle back. Quickly takes it apart.

Places each piece in its place in a SILVER METAL CASE. Picks it up.

Walks.

Leaves the rooftop.

EXT. SAN DIEGO STREET - DAY

Tomas loads the briefcase into the trunk of an OLD MERCEDES. Gets in it and drives.

INT. CAR - DAY

Detective Philemon sits in the passenger seat while his wife drives.

Mrs. Philemon lights a cigarette and takes a drag. She blows the smoke out the cracked window.

His son rides quietly in the back looking over a coloring book. COUGHS from the smoke in the car.

Detective Philemon shakes his head, disgusted.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

I told you not to come to these things! Do you want to see your son with a bullet hole in his head!?

SON (O.S.)

Daddy, can you make me pancakes tomorrow?

MRS. PHILEMON (O.S.)

It's the only time your son gets to see you. You ever think about your family? Or is everything about you?

Detective Philemon continues staring.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

It's all about you! It irritates me when you have that sarcastic tone. I'm doing my job! Trying to protect you!

(easy)

Yes, son, I'll make pancakes tomorrow.

MRS. PHILEMON

Sarcastic tones get you going? At least something else besides playing Detective does. How could I forget? I'm sorry, Detective Philemon. Should I refer to you as "sir" when I address you in my most polite and submissive manner?

SON (O.S.)

Promise?

The son COUGHS again.

Detective Philemon hesitates.

MRS. PHILEMON

Daddy doesn't make promises, son.

She cuts him down with his eyes.

His lack of a verbal response shows that she is right.

SON (O.S.)

Mom, what does "sarcastic" mean?

MRS. PHILEMON

Ask your father. He seems to be the one so in tune to a person's tone of voice.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Mommy doesn't understand that Daddy has to work to protect people, son, including his family, so she uses words that hurt daddy.

SON

Is that true, Mommy?

Detective Philemon looks at his wife waiting for a response.

MRS. PHILEMON

Your daddy is hurting himself, baby by being stupid. Ask your daddy what stupid means.

SON

Daddy isn't "stupid" a bad word?

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Yes, Mommy shouldn't be using those words...

Detective Philemon takes the smoking cigarette from his wife's hand, rolls down the window and tosses it outside.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

...and neither should you.

MRS. PHILEMON

Hey! Asshole.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Don't smoke in the car. And don't put my son in harm's way again.

MRS. PHILEMON

I'll do what I want...

Mrs. Philemon's voice drowns out becoming a MUFFLED NOISE.

The Detective looks over at his wife who continues her rant. A MUFFLED NOISE is all he hears.

He glances back at his entertained son then back out the window at the passing landscape.

EXT. SAN DIEGO STREET - DAY

WORKERS, other PEDESTRIANS walking to somewhere. All in a hurry. Most wearing something warm.

A broad-shouldered priest, FATHER JEREMIAH, 50, walking amongst the lot. Wears a scar down the side of his cheek. A well-worn, smoker's face.

A few PASSERSBY acknowledge Jeremiah. Polite nodding and smiling.

Father Jeremiah ignores most courtesies. Indifferent. All business.

A street-side VENDOR up ahead.

Jeremiah stops. Orders something. Waits.

A pretty BLONDE, 20's, walks past. Not enough clothing for this time of year.

Father Jeremiah follows her path with his eyes (Like any mortal man would). Gets a good look. Turns back to the vendor.

The vendor holds out his cup of coffee.

VENDOR

Don't blame you. Hard not to.

The vendor smiles at the priest. Acknowledging his wandering eye.

Father Jeremiah just give the vendor a look. Pays for the coffee. Takes it. Leaves.

The vendor stays silent. Watches the priest leave. Back to his business.

EXT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH, SAN DIEGO - DAY

A simple church in a poverty stricken area.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

A run-down place in need of some housekeeping. Worn pews, paint peeling. Not the feel of a welcoming place of worship.

A LARGE ROACH

scurries across the dark, bare floor. Stops. Antennae twitch in the shadows. Continues on.

The roach gets to a door. Light from beneath it. The roach gets under it. Stops again.

From beneath the door, the entire room is revealed.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

A wood-lined room with furniture to match. One can smell the age of the place.

Tomas sits at a large desk. His attention is fixed on a made-up, cardboard box in front of him. The front and top exposed.

It's like he's talking to whatever's inside it.

Arts and crafts supplies take up space on the desk next to the modified cardboard box.

Glue, scissors, material. A recorked bottle of wine.

Tomas lifts the lid off a small tin container. He pulls up a large, writhing cockroach. Holds it gently between his forefinger and thumb with its back exposed.

Movement of the roach's antennae twitch and bend.

The insect squirms between the priest's fingers. A tough hold.

Tomas reaches for the small container of paper glue. He picks it up and holds the end over the back of the squirming insect and squeezes a drop of glue on its back.

He gently lowers the insect into the cardboard box revealing its contents:

Table and chairs in the middle. Draperies and linen. Some real effort put into it.

Tomas lowers the insect into a tiny hand-made, wooden chair.

Three identical, squirming roaches sit in adjacent chairs around a small table.

All sit upright with their backs firmly attached to their chairs.

Their legs and antennae move in concerted fashion.

Tomas sits back and inspects his work. Amused.

The silent, intimate moment is suddenly broken by a

KNOCK

At the study door.

Tomas hastily grabs his roach mansion and sets it on the ground next to him. Slides it beneath his desk, out of sight.

TOMAS

(irritated)

Yes?

The door to the study slowly opens.

Young JUDAUS, 15, the church's curate cautiously enters. He walks with an obvious, terrible, limp.

JUDAUS

Father, you have a visitor.

TOMAS

Five minutes all I ask. Another  
confession I...

Jeremiah gently pushes his way into Tomas's study.

Judaus doesn't put up a fight.

TOMAS

...Suppose.

Tomas stands to address his visitor.

JEREMIAH

Just a messenger, Tomas.

TOMAS

A messiah? Only one of those.

Tomas calmly watches the man.

Jeremiah slowly approaches the priest's desk. Stops just in  
front of it.

Tomas stares silent at the man. Gives the waiting Judaus a  
look.

Judaus gets the hint and leaves graciously.

Tomas sits.

Jeremiah remains standing.

JEREMIAH

Sitting too long not good for the  
circulation.

Tomas lifts the bottle of wine from the desktop and pours a  
glass.

TOMAS

Good wine has amazing effect on  
vessels.

Jeremiah waves his hand, refusing.

JEREMIAH

See you're taking care of the  
place.

Jeremiah looks around at the peeling paint and dust laden  
wood.

TOMAS

No complaints.

Tomas finishes pouring and takes a large drink.

JEREMIAH

A complaining priest is a happy  
priest, right?

Tomas takes another drink.

JEREMIAH

And you could complain but who'd  
listen?

(pause)

The old man wants to see you.

Tomas takes another drink.

TOMAS

Big line of parishoners waiting for  
the same.

Tomas hesitates.

JEREMIAH

Your mark is still alive. He's not  
happy, Tomas. I have to take  
something back with me.

TOMAS

I can make myself disappear. Like  
that. You never seen me.

JEREMIAH

Friends do favors, Tomas. We have a working relationship. I can't go back without something to give him.

Both men stare down each other neither budging.

JEREMIAH

Let's not act like animals. Shall we? Animals do things like bite and scratch. Eat without cooking. Urinate it public. Having opposing thumbs brings with it a great responsibility. The kings of this great earth shouldn't stoop to the level of the rats

(pause)

eating one another because we're backed in a corner. Rats do things like urinating as they walk. You believe that? This is why they are somewhere at the bottom of the food chain. Not like us. We're professionals, Tomas.

A silent moment.

FLASH OF IMAGES

The Dead Housewife and a BABY'S CRY.

WHAT TOMAS SEES

The room and Jeremiah's image begin to blur. A dizzying vision.

BACK TO SCENE

Tomas in a cold sweat now. Trying to hide his sudden discomfort.

JEREMIAH

I guess you already know that.

Tomas takes a drink without taking his eyes off his guest. His hand visibly shaking.

TOMAS

I told you I'm thinking retirement.

JEREMIAH

Not unless you plan on changing your appearance. Getting a new face. Find a cheap surgeon you let me know.

(beat)

You'll end up urinating in public. Eating pig right out of the package. Like you don't appreciate this precious, gift anymore.

Jeremiah wriggles his own thumb, waits for a reaction from Tomas.

TOMAS

I'm done. Out. Go back with that.

Tomas wipes the sweat from his brow. His face now ghost white.

Tomas's response finally garners a CHUCKLE from Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH

I can't go back with that, Tomas. Not by myself. You have a debt that can't be forgiven. A lifetime of debt.

TOMAS

German cockroach, faced with certain demise releases a toxin the exact moment it dies, poisoning its predator even after its own death. Amazing creatures.

JEREMIAH

Disgusting things, roaches. I'll take that as an attempt at a threat. You'll never get rid of that pain, Tomas.

(beat)

You'll die with it.

Again, the two men stare down one another. Neither flinching.

TOMAS

Can't kill what's already dead.

A KNOCK at the study door. Interrupts the moment.

Tomas stands.

TOMAS

You'll excuse me. I still have a Church to attend to.

JEREMIAH

Makes my job more difficult. It's a debt that can't be forgiven, Tomas.

TOMAS

We all owe in the end.

Awkward silence.

The man gets the hint. Goes to leave. Opens the door to the priest's study, turns to Tomas.

JEREMIAH

Next time, Tomas, I *will* have something to confess.

Jeremiah leaves.

Tomas stands there a moment watching Jeremiah leave.

Judaus enters.

JUDAUS

It's time, Father.

Judaus leaves but turns around abruptly.

JUDAUS

Sorry, Father. I didn't know.

With that, Judaus leaves.

A silent moment.

Tomas suddenly gets weak, his legs buckling. He catches himself before he falls completely.

Gathering himself Tomas retrieves his black, priest garment.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

PARISHIONERS

Mostly Latinos, have lined up in the middle isle of the church waiting for communion.

Staring off into space Tomas, now dressed in black, priest's robe waits at the front ready to deliver the sacraments.

His face is off-white. Doesn't look well. Sweat collects on his brow.

Judaus prepares the offerings unaware of Tomas' condition.

Tomas fixates his eyes on the line of PARISHIONERS who've gathered for the night's service.

WHAT TOMAS SEES

The line looks more like a homeless shelter line. The parishioners look greedy. Animal-like.

BACK TO SCENE

Judaus prepares to hand Tomas the first cracker. Holds a large silver plate in his direction.

Tomas doesn't respond. Fixated on the distorting line in front of him.

Tomas wipes the sweat from his brow. Sweating profusely now.

JUDAUS

Father?

Suddenly, the interior of the church, including the parishioners, begins to swirl in a mess of vivid colors.

Tomas drops to the floor suddenly. Lies on his back in the silence. Stares at the ceiling.

Judaus hovers over him trying to wake him.

Silence.

DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. OUR LADY OF FAITH CHURCH

YOUNG TOMAS sneaking down the dark hallway. Sees the door to Father Santiago's study half open. The light from the room unusually bright.

Hesitantly, Tomas travels the long length of darkness. Gets to the open door.

Hesitates before peering inside.

Tomas smiles.

STUDY

Father Santiago sits at his desk doing paperwork. Looks up and sees Tomas standing in the door. Stops.

Tomas smiles. Exuberant happiness. Stays within the frame of the half-open door.

FATHER SANTIAGO

Remember what I told you, son?

Young Tomas nods.

FATHER SANTIAGO

Never confess your sins, again. To anyone.

Tomas's grin turns flat.

TOMAS

But why?

FATHER SANTIAGO

Confessions make you vulnerable. Punishable. God has selected a few to carry out the world's punishment for sins. I am one of them.

Father Santiago holds the CHAIN AND LOCKET in front of him.

FATHER SANTIAGO

I leave you with my secrets. It will be your responsibility to make them known when the time is right.

The SQUEAK of a door causes Tomas to turn around.

Nothing.

Looks back at Father Santiago - this time in horror at what he sees.

Again, Father Santiago slumped backwards. Blood splattered on the window. Bullet hole in his head.

ON THE FLOOR

THE HOUSEWIFE from the botched robbery fifteen years earlier lays dead.

A BABY sits at her feet. CRIES.

Young Tomas tries moving but can't. Stuck right where he stands. Holds his arm out towards the dead priest.

An agonizing look on his face.

DREAM SEQUENCE END

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

CLOSE ON

Tomas's face. Eyes closed.

His eyes come to life. Dart around. Alone.

Eerily Quiet.

WIDE SHOT

From the study sofa, Tomas sits up. Holds his temple.

A FLUSH from the study toilet.

The bathroom door opens and Judaus enters the study. Sees Tomas sitting. Hurries to his side.

JUDAUS

You feeling okay? You passed out.

Tomas looks at Judaus. Doesn't answer. Still trying to get his bearing.

Worried, the young Judaus gently places his hand on the priest's cheek.

Reflexively, Tomas removes the young man's hand.

TOMAS

Don't.

Taken back, Judaus creates some space.

Tomas walks to his desk. Removes his outer priest's garments. Casual dress beneath.

TOMAS

I want you to leave. Go home and stay away. It isn't safe anymore.

JUDAUS

This *is* my home, Father.

Tomas retrieves a hanging jacket from the coat stand.

JUDAUS

Maybe you shouldn't go out. You might have an accident. You're not well.

TOMAS

(firm)

Do as I say. Go home to your mother. Don't come back. I won't be here.

JUDAUS

But, Father...

TOMAS

Leave now!

Reluctantly, Judaus goes to the study door. Takes one last look at the priest. Leaves. Closes door behind him.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

Judaus extinguishes the last of the candles at the front of the church. Grabs jacket. Leaves the dark, cold space for the evening.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

Father Santiago goes to his desk. Pulls the top drawer open. Grabs a GLASS MEDICINE VIAL from it. Inspects its contents.

CLOSE ON BOTTLE

Reads METHADONE with dispensing instructions.

BACK TO SCENE

Tomas tips the bottle side.

Nothing left. Not even a drop.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - CLOSET

The walk-in type. Several hanging garments.

Tomas kneels down in the center. Pushes a carpet to the side revealing the outline of a hidden door in the floorboard. Pulls it open.

Pulls out two, identical metal briefcases, both similar to the one from the rooftop. Sets them to the side.

He reaches back inside the large, hidden space. Gets a carved, WOODEN BOX.

He pulls a chain from around his neck.

A key dangles from it.

Uses the key to unlock the box.

Inside, several stacks of FIFTY DOLLAR BILLS and MEXICAN AND U.S. PASSPORTS.

He takes a stack of bills and places them in his pocket. Doesn't bother to count them.

Having what he needs, he replaces the box and puts it in its hidden place. Places the two briefcases back. Closes the floor door and replaces the carpet.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

Tomas crosses the front of the church. On his way out.

The Virgin Mary, herself a dilapidated thing, stares down at the priest. Watching.

The priest looks up at the statue briefly.

Avoiding its gaze, he hurries to the front doors. Leaves.

EXT. FARMACIA - NIGHT

Not the pharmacy your grandmother goes to. Shady building on a shady street in a shady part of town near the border.

A neon FARMACIA sign hangs from the front.

INT. FARMACIA

Tomas waits behind an OLD HOMELESS JUNKIE at the counter.

The Junkie leaves and Tomas steps to the window.

Tomas hands the PHARMACIST, 30's, the empty MEDICINE VIAL.

The Pharmacist reviews the bottle's label. Eyes Tomas. Right away his face shows he's not comfortable.

A silent moment.

PHARMACIST

I'm sorry. Can't. Need a prescription.

TOMAS

Just this once.

PHARMACIST

Fraid not.

Tomas stares. The anger builds in his face.

PHARMACIST

Need your prescription. From a doctor.

TOMAS

Office is closed. Please.

PHARMACIST

I'm sure they open tomorrow.

TOMAS

I'm sick. You've never needed anything before?

A silent moment.

Tomas pleads with his eyes.

PHARMACIST

Need to have a doctor's order.  
Sorry.

With that, the Pharmacist pulls the metal blind closed.

PHARMACIST (O.S.)

Lots of other places in the city to get your dope.

Tomas looks around the store. No one around. He snatches the vial from the counter and leaves in a hurry.

INT. WRECK ROOM, TIJUANA

A small, word-of-mouth bar. A few MALE PATRONS sit around tables drinking.

Dominatrix whips, ball-gags and leather paraphernalia are displayed in areas of the bar. Some in glass cases.

Tomas sits at one end of the bar alone. Drinking something harsh. Sweat beads on his forehead even though it's 50 degrees inside.

At the other end of the bar two MEN sit. Talking, drinking.

A young GIGOLO(20's), attractive, high on something, takes his attention from his own conversation with an OLDER MAN, gazes down the bar at Tomas.

Tomas's only interest is his drink. Notices the averted stare but acts as though he doesn't.

Tomas finishes his drink. Orders another from the MALE BARTENDER(30's).

The bartender, bad lighting showing his face, pours a healthy shot. Smiles at the priest. An eerie smile.

Tomas returns a polite smile. Mental and physical suffering hiding somewhere beneath. Desperation.

TOMAS

Thanks.

Tomas looks down the bar momentarily. Catches the Gigolo's gaze.

The man smiles coyly at Tomas. Returns to his conversation. Half-listening.

The Gigolo can't keep his eyes off Tomas. Returns his eyes in Tomas's direction.

Tomas tries a half-smile. Back to his drink. Can feel the younger man's stare. Uncomfortable.

Down the bar, the Gigolo has excused himself from his friend. Moves toward Tomas. Gets near him. Takes a seat next to him.

Tomas stares straight ahead. Avoiding the young man's look.

The man looks at Tomas. Turns to face him.

GIGOLO

You been here before?

Tomas continues his straightforward stare.

TOMAS

No.

(drinks)

GIGOLO

Sure? You look familiar.

(drinks)

I'd remember those movie star looks  
anywhere.

TOMAS

(looks at man)

I'm sure.

(back to drink)

GIGOLO

You're an actor aren't you.

TOMAS

Sorry. Got me mixed up with someone  
else.

GIGOLO

Hmmm. I was sure of it.

(drinks)

By yourself?

TOMAS

Looks like it.

GIGOLO

(low)

You like to party?

Tomas gives the guy an affirmative look.

TOMAS

(to bartender)

Bathroom?

The bartender points to the rear of the bar.

The Gigolo smiles.

Tomas downs his drink in one gulp. Leaves.

INT. WRECK ROOM - RESTROOM

Horrible lighting reflects off porcelain walls. The décor not very well kept.

Tomas enters. Goes to the sink.

BAR PATRON #1 stands at a urinal, urinating. Minding his business.

Tomas stands at the sink. Washes his hands. Watches the restroom through the mirror's reflection.

Near the last stall, a BATHROOM CONCIERGE guards his bowl of paper towels and gum.

BAR PATRON #2 enters. Goes towards the last stall's closed door.

The BATHROOM CONCIERGE stops him. Advises him to go to another stall.

Bar Patron #1 finishes. Leaves.

MEN'S LAUGHTER from the closest stall. Door closed.

Bar Patron #2 goes to knock on the stall door when

The bathroom stall door BANGS open. Two YOUNG MEN(20's) exit. Hanging on each other, Intoxicated. Just miss Bar Patron #2.

The Young Men smile at Tomas's reflection in the mirror on their way out.

As they exit, the Gigolo enters. Looks at Tomas's reflection.

As he walks past he watches Tomas. Goes into the furthest stall.

He says something to the Bathroom Concierge then passes him a TWENTY.

The Bathroom Concierge smiles politely, opens the stall door allowing the Gigolo to pass.

Tomas watches the Gigolo disappear into the stall. Stares at his own reflection considering.

BATHROOM STALL

A cushioned seat where a toilet should be.

The Gigolo prepares a baggie of HEROIN and INJECTING SUPPLIES.

OUTSIDE

Tomas stares at the reflection of the open stall. Stares at his face, searching.

GIGOLO (O.S.)

Don't be shy.

Tomas suddenly leaves.

BATHROOM STALL

The Gigolo sits eyes closes, head leaned back.

EXT. TIJUANA AFFLUENT NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Rows of houses hiding behind tall, concrete walls.

TOMAS'S MERCEDES

sits curbside directly in front of one of the houses.

A two-story house with a familiar, strangely BENT TREE in the front lawn.

A single light on behind closed curtains of the house.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Tomas sits in the still, darkness of the vehicle. He takes a swig from a liquor bottle.

He looks toward the source of the light in the house. Takes another reckless drink from his bottle. Looks ahead at nothing. Considering.

Closes his eyes.

A THIN WIRE

is instantly around his neck.

Tomas immediately reacts. Struggles.

With space from the headrest, Tomas gets a hand in between the wire and his neck.

The liquor bottle falls from his lap to the passenger-side floorboard. The Liquid spilling out.

From the back seat

JEREMIAH

from the earlier visit, pulls on the wire's ends. Choking Tomas. (The only thing saving Tomas is his hand between the flesh of his neck and the metal.)

Tomas continues to struggle. Pushes himself back towards the back seat.

He reaches for his only weapon, the liquor bottle.

Just out of reach.

Jeremiah struggles to hold on. More difficult than expected. Continues to pull backwards.

Tomas kicks at the dashboard. Hits the cigarette lighter in with his foot.

The thin wire cutting into his hand.

Blood oozes from the wound.

Tomas grabs at the wire with his free hand.

EXT. TIJUANA AFFLUENT NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Quiet.

A street lamp illuminates a portion of the street.

The Mercedes sits in the silence of the shadows.

Shadowy movements of the struggle the only evidence of something wrong.

INT. MERCEDES

Tomas and Jeremiah continue to struggle.

The RUSTLING of body parts the only noise.

A CLICK from the cigarette lighter.

Tomas notices. Reaches for the thing.

Closer.

Closer.

Finally, grabs the lighter.

The thing glows red.

Tomas blindly shoves it towards his aggressor. Gets him in the face.

Flesh SIZZLES.

Immediately, Jeremiah pulls back. Releases the wire to protect his face.

Free, Tomas instinctively goes for the distracted man.

From the front seat Tomas grabs the man. Goes for his neck.

The blood from his hand smearing Jeremiah's face.

Jeremiah retreats backwards revealing a 9MM PISTOL within his coat.

Tomas instantly goes for the gun. Gets it easily. In control now.

The struggling stops.

Jeremiah knows he's got the short end.

He CHUCKLES. Puts his hands up.

Both take a moment. Catch their breaths. Both breathing heavily.

JEREMIAH

Don't shoot the messenger.

(snorts)

Death isn't the worst thing, you should know that, Tomas. It's what's after that really hurts.

(beat)

Do it and you can't go back. I won't be the only one after you. You will have to kill us all.

Tomas hesitates.

TOMAS

Then I will.

EXT. TIJUANA AFFLUENT NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Still quiet.

The outline of Tomas's car.

Suddenly, a silent burst of gunfire lights up the interior.

The back door to the vehicle opens.

The Jeremiah's body is pushed out onto the dark street.

INT. MERCEDES - NIGHT

Blood stains cover the back seat and portions of the window.

Tomas pulls the back door to. Lays the bloodied gun on the seat next to him. Looks down at his bloodied shirt, his wounded hand.

EXT. TIJUANA AFFLUENT NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Tomas' car quickly pulls off.

Jeremiah's dead body a heap of shadows in the street.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

Tomas enters frantic still carrying the PISTOL. Goes to

BATHROOM

Where he wraps his bleeding hand in a towel.

STUDY

After locking the study door, Tomas goes to the coat closet and after a brief moment brings back the two, METAL BRIEFCASES. Takes them to his desk.

Back to the closet and brings back the wooden box.

He flips the first briefcase's latches. Unlocks it. Opens the lid.

Several pieces of the sniper rifle surrounded by Styrofoam padding.

He visually inspects the first briefcase.

Satisfied, closes it.

He opens the second, identical briefcase.

Two large, silver DESERT EAGLE PISTOLS held within Styrofoam molding.

Slowly he lifts one of the large, shiny pistols. Turns it over several times inspecting it.

With an air of experience, Tomas loads the pistol.

Done, he puts it back in its place.

Closes the briefcase lid.

Tomas sets both briefcases on the floor.

He then pulls the key from around his neck and unlocks the wooden box then removes all of the chest's contents and lays them on his desk.

The newly minted, STACKS OF MONEY, passports.

He then begins to fill the chest with his personal papers and notes from the office. Fills the container with all the traces of his personal life.

As a final gesture, he takes his white, priest's collar from around his neck and throws it in. Closes it and locks it.

STUDY - LATER

Tomas sits in his chair in front of a now blazing fire in the fireplace. Plays with the NECKLACE AND LOCKET around his neck.

The large wooden chest now supplies the fuel for the fire.

Taking his last drink of wine, he watches the box crumble to what will soon be ashes.

The light of the fire giving the priest an eerie glow.

He looks more assassin than priest.

Behind the priest, in the shadows, Judaus watches Tomas from a cracked office door. Silent.

STUDY, EVEN LATER

Tomas takes his metal briefcase and leaves the study.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

Sunlight shines through a large, framed window onto Tomas's wooden desk.

The desk is littered with papers and an empty bottle of wine.

CLOSE ON FLOOR

reveals a large, singular COCKROACH alone in the shadows of the sofa.

Antennae twitch and bend.

WIDER SHOT

Laying just above the insect, Tomas's head lies still. Dead maybe.

A sign of life beneath the closed lids of the priest. Eyes move in rhythm with the roach's antennae.

From nowhere, an unidentified HAND moves close to Tomas's head. Almost touching him.

Feeling the person's presence, Tomas's eyes jut open wide. Fear still in them.

In between dreaming and reality, Tomas jerks his head off the old sofa.

EVEN WIDER SHOT

Reveals Detective Philemon who pulls his hand back away from the startled priest.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Can't be comfortable sleeping with that on.

His partner, Detective ZOE AMOS, 30's, fresher, with looks too pretty to be a cop, stands behind.

Tomas, sitting now, looks down at his attire - black, priest's robe.

TOMAS

You get used to it.

Tomas rises from the sofa. Straightens his clothing. His mind.

His face grimaces, like its hiding pain.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Sorry to bother you, Father.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Rough night?

Tomas moves towards his guests to greet them. Every movement he makes causes some kind of discomfort.

TOMAS

Trouble sleeping's all. Who let you in?

Philemon's demeanor is cold.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

(reaches hand out)

Detective Philemon, Special Investigative Unit.

Tomas hesitates. Remembers his bandaged hand. Keeps it close to his side.

Philemon notices. Pulls is own hand back.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

(motions to Amos)

Detective Amos. Do you have a few minutes, Father?

TOMAS

Sit.

Tomas motions to the two chairs sitting in front of his desk. Goes to sit behind the desk in his chair.

Detective Amos sits.

Philemon continues to stand. Keeps his distance between himself and the priest.

Tomas notices Philemon's coldness.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Father, we're investigating a homicide. Like to ask you some questions.

TOMAS

Of course. What does a murder have to do with the Church?

DETECTIVE AMOS

The victim was a local priest. Found dead in a Tijuana street last night.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Narco.

TOMAS

Excuse me?

The priest is caught off guard.

DETECTIVE AMOS

We suspect the victim had ties with  
Narcotraficantes in the area. Had a  
history we think. Father Jeremiah.

TOMAS

(sits back in chair)

Father Jeremiah?

(thinks)

My God.

DETECTIVE AMOS

You know him?

TOMAS

The priesthood is a small  
community.

Tomas rises, turns toward the window, his back towards his  
guests.

FLASH OF IMAGES

The DEAD HOUSEWIFE and a BABY'S CRY.

CLOSE ON TOMAS'S FACE

Trying to subdue the intense internal pains.

TOMAS

Anything I can do, I certainly  
will.

BACK TO SCENE

Both Detectives look at each other. Suspecting something.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Everything okay, Father?

Tomas turns back around. His composure intact.

TOMAS

Stomach flu is all. I'll be fine.

Tomas sits. Fidgets.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Can we get you anything?

TOMAS

I'm fine. Thank you.

DETECTIVE AMOS

We think the killer may be a parishioner. Someone local. Anyone you've been worried about? A confession perhaps?

TOMAS

No. Nothing particular.

(beat)

Man's confession is between him and God. I'm just the conduit.

(smiles)

Awkward silence.

Tomas smiles at Philemon. Gets nothing. Looks at the gentler Detective Amos.

TOMAS

No. I haven't heard anything particularly disturbing.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Well, if He

(points towards the  
Heavens)

gets wind of anything, you think He could let us know?

Philemon stares down Tomas. Suspicious. Tomas smiles at Philemon. Looks at the gentler Detective Amos.

TOMAS

I'll do everything within my power.  
(gets up)  
If you'll excuse me. I have some  
work to do.

Detective Amos rises.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Of course.

Detective Amos reaches in her jacket pocket and takes out a  
business card. Hands it to the priest.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Father, if you hear anything of  
interest would you give us a call?

Tomas takes the card with his good hand. Looks at it.

TOMAS

(smiles)  
If I hear anything.

Detective Amos holds her hand toward the priest.

Again, the priest refuses the handshake. His badly bandaged  
hand. Blood stained.

Detective Amos notices. Pulls back the invitation.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Better get that looked at.

TOMAS

I intend to. Thanks.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Well...

The two Detectives turn to leave.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Hate to keep you. Thanks for your  
time, Father.

TOMAS

What's a special investigator's  
interest in a homicide?

This gets Philemon's attention. Turns towards the priest.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

The deceased is a ranking member of  
the Church. I'm investigating the  
Church.

(beat)

Maybe he deserved it. Who knows?

TOMAS

Only one judge and jury. Not in  
this room, though.

Polite smile from Tomas.

Philemon gives a wink and a point of his finger.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Exactly.

Detective Amos's demeanor a little hesitant with her  
partner's words.

The priest sees his guests to the door.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Thank you for your time, Father.

TOMAS

Sure. Stay for Mass?

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Not religious. Allergic.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Next time, Father.

Both turn to leave.

Detective Philemon stops and turns to face Tomas.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
You own an old Mercedes?

Tomas holds his composure.

TOMAS  
Why?

A silent, tense moment.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
Got a boot put on it. Parked  
illegally. Gotta pay your parking  
tickets, Father. Even the Church  
has to follow the rules sometimes.

A sense of relief from Tomas.

TOMAS  
Not going to arrest me, are you?

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
I don't work traffic. We'll be in  
touch.

Without waiting for a response, Detective Philemon leaves.

Detective Amos gives an apologetic smile.

DETECTIVE AMOS  
He's stopped smoking. You'll have  
to forgive his attitude, Father.

TOMAS  
Understandable. No harm. Have a  
good day.

DETECTIVE AMOS  
Good day, Father.

Detective Amos leaves.

The priest closes the door to his office. Stands there  
thinking about his visit. Goes to his desk. Sits.

Suddenly, gets up. Goes to the window.

From his study window

TOMAS'S POV

After a few seconds, Detective Philemon exits the church and heads toward the street.

After a moment, Detective Amos follows.

STREETSIDE

The two Detectives look over the hood of the car at each other before getting in.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

I don't like him.

A CELLPHONE RINGS.

Detective Philemon answers it.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Detective Philemon.

DETECTIVE AMOS

(sighs)

Jesus. The man has the flu. Not every priest is crooked.

(rolls eyes)

I'm gonna go buy you a pack of cigarettes.

Philemon gives his partner a look after hearing the news on his cellphone.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Inside the church? Jesus. Okay. We're heading over there.

Detective Philemon hangs up.

DETECTIVE AMOS

What now?

Philemon slides into the passenger seat.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Buy me a pack of cigarettes and  
I'll tell you.

Detective Amos stands there. Looks back at church.

She turns around after a moment, opens the door and gets in  
the car.

DETECTIVE AMOS

I've changed my mind. You need to  
suffer.

Door closes cutting off her voice.

The Detective's vehicle drives off.

As they pass we see Tomas's Mercedes badly parked streetside.  
A YELLOW WHEEL BOOT on the front tire.

Next to it, a "No Parking" sign.

CLOSE ON MERCEDES

Shows a blanket covering the back seat hiding any evidence of  
blood. The rest has been cleaned.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

Tomas stands at the window watching the Detective's vehicle  
pull off.

He goes into the

BATHROOM

Where he stands in front of the sink mirror examining his  
reflection.

Finally, opens the medicine cabinet. Removes a pair of scissors and a disposable razor.

He lays the items on the edge of the sink.

The priest looks towards the ceiling. Closes his eyes for a moment. In a trance.

Finally, the priest lowers his head and looks at his reflection once more. As if to say goodbye.

He takes the scissors off the sink edge. Grabs a large chunk of hair from his head and cuts it carelessly with the scissors.

Does it again.

And again.

BATHROOM - LATER

Water RUNS into the sink.

Tomas raises his head from the sink revealing his new look.

He inspects his shiny, bald head in the mirror.

Blood trickles down the side. Razor cuts.

He leans down and rinses his head again. Raises. Grabs a hanging towel and dries his head. Satisfied.

Throws the towel into the hair-filled sink.

INT. ST. JOSEPH'S CHAPEL, SAN DIEGO

CLOSE ON

The pale skin of a man's forearm. Too much hair to be a woman's.

A MOSQUITO

lands on the flesh of the arm.

The arm dead still.

The mosquito probes the surface of the arm. Finally gets its proboscis in. Taking a blood meal.

WIDE SHOT

shows Detective Philemon holding his arm in front of him. Curiously watching the mosquito go to work.

Several crime scene INVESTIGATORS walking here and there. Most carrying bags of gear to and from the prayer room.

Two INVESTIGATORS push a gurney with a filled, black body bag through the church's main chapel past Detective Philemon.

Detective Amos stands in the background interviewing a HOMELESS MAN.

The Homeless Man responding. Mouth moving. Hands and arms providing a description.

Detective Amos leaves the man. Goes towards her partner.

Detective Philemon standing still. Full concentration on his arm. The mosquito.

Again, a close look at the mosquito shows it feeding. Its back-end nice and swollen now with its host's blood.

Detective Amos gets near her partner.

DETECTIVE AMOS

You're not going to believe...

Philemon stops his partner mid-sentence. Raises his hand with forefinger held up. A "give me a minute" sign. An important moment.

Detective Amos waits, annoyed.

Philemon slowly reaches for his other forearm. Gets close to the mosquito. Almost touching.

Suddenly, Philemon grabs beneath his forearm just below the mosquito. Pulls his skin taught.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

In order for a female mosquito to lay its eggs it must first take a blood meal. Otherwise it won't reproduce. Species will die off. Funny thing is...

Detective Amos listens. Watches her partner. Curious to what the hell he's up to.

Philemon pulls the skin around his arm tighter.

The mosquito squirming a little. Its belly getting fuller and fuller with the viscous, red liquid.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

The funny thing is, is that in order for a female mosquito to quit feeding she must detach herself from the host first. Otherwise, reflexively she'll keep feeding.

The mosquito's belly as big as it possibly can get. Getting bigger...bigger...

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

If you pull the skin around her tight the female mosquito can't pull out. She's stuck. Without another mechanism to stop the reflexive feeding, she'll keep sucking. Feeding until...

The mosquito's belly so big now one can see the light through it. Finally, the thing bursts from the pressure. Spilling blood on Philemon's skin.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Until she pops.

Satisfied, Philemon smiles. Wipes the dead thing from his arm. The blood.

DETECTIVE AMOS

(rolls eyes)

God.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

A major flaw in the design of such a simple creature. Far from perfect.

Philemon looks at his waiting partner.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Like priests.

(pause)

Wonder if God anticipated it?

(looks around)

This. So much money and effort put into a place of worship only to be used as a cover for drug dealers, organized crime.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Not even God could anticipate you.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

The female mosquito is just one of many examples of imperfection, flawed design.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Yeah? What about the male?

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Oh he doesn't feed on a host. Leaves all the work up to the woman. Closer to being perfect, the male.

Philemon smiles at his partner.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

What'd the old man have to say?

DETECTIVE AMOS

Swears he saw a priest come out of there. Said something spooky about his face.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Funny word to describe something. Spooky.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Said he was wearing a black trenchcoat looked like a priest's gown. Hand was bandaged with a white cloth.

With that, Philemon gives his partner a look to confirm what the other is thinking. Squints.

Suddenly, Detective Philemon looks at his watch.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Shoot.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Seriously? Right now? We're on to something.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

I can't miss this. Can you start the paperwork on this?

Without waiting for a 'yes', Detective Philemon rushes towards the Church's front doors.

His partner HUFFS.

DETECTIVE AMOS

(to herself)

He's not going to know if you're late, anyway.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Thanks. This is why I have this hidden attraction to you. Beautiful and kind.

This draws a smile, the kind you try to hide, from Detective Amos.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

(continuing)

Meet you back at the office.

Detective Philemon waves to his partner on his way out.

INT. THE PROPHET EZEKIEL'S CHURCH

Gold trim everywhere. One of the more elaborate cathedrals.

PROPHET EZEKIEL, 40, a dark, handsome man by any standard, stands in front of the large, adorned effigy of the Virgin Mary.

He watches the statue for a moment. Stands still. Runs a Rosary between the fingers of his free hand.

With an air of dissatisfaction, pushes the young Gigolo - the one from the bar - servicing him from his knees.

Disappointed, the Gigolo wipes his mouth and pulls himself to his feet.

Without a word, the Gigolo obeys some silent order. Gets out of the priest's sight.

Ezekiel hurries to another part of the church.

His flowing robe trailing behind. Still carrying the Rosary.

## INT. THE PROPHET EZEKIEL'S CHURCH

The statue of a Saint at one end. The object of attention.

Ezekiel enters. Goes to the wall. Touches a panel. A secret door pushes open. He enters. The door closes behind him.

## SECRET ROOM

The walls lined with various weapons. SWORDS, GUNS, more guns. On a table, BRICKS OF COCAINE, pounds and pounds of it.

Ezekiel enters. Goes straight for a table. Gets a briefcase. One identical to Tomas's. Lays it on the table. Opens it.

The briefcase contains several KNIVES. All different sizes. All sharp. Professional looking.

Ezekiel takes one out. Inspects it. Turns it over feeling its razor sharp edge.

Suddenly, he throws the knife at a wall. The thing sticks tight.

He grins.

## INT. CONTINUING LIFE SANITORIUM

White everywhere.

NURSES in all white uniforms wandering the white hallways carrying white trays of food and medication. Not a spec of dirt anywhere.

A NUN paces the hallways.

## INT. CONTINUING LIFE SANITORIUM - QUARTERS

A resident's quarters lined with religious items.

Crosses on the walls, statues of Jesus. Every inch of space taken up by something to do with the Church.

POPS PHILEMON, 70, watches a religious program on a small, outdated television set.

The sound up real loud.

The PREACHER preaching ostentatiously.

At the bottom of the television screen, a banner reading: To Make a Donation call: 888-456-9083

Pops Philemon stares at the television blankly. A half-smile on his face. His eyes proof of his identity lost within his own mind.

A MALE NURSE, 25, in all white enters. Carries a small medicine cup and glass of water.

MALE NURSE

Time for your medicine, Pops.

Pops Philemon cuts the sound down. Turns to see his visitor.

POPS PHILEMON

Oh?

The nurse hands his patient the medicine cup. Several pills sit inside. Pops Philemon inspects them.

POPS PHILEMON

What are these for?

MALE NURSE

They're to help calm you, remember?  
(smiles)

POPS PHILEMON

Course.

Pops takes the pills without an argument. Takes the glass from the nurse and washes them down. Hands the items back to the nurse.

POPS PHILEMON

Seen my son anywhere?

MALE NURSE

No, but I will let you know if I do.

(smiles)

POPS PHILEMON

Hmm. There a phone I could use?

The nurse notices the donation number on the television screen. Hesitates.

MALE NURSE

I'll go see if I can find one. How 'bout that?

(smiles)

INT. CONTINUING LIFE SANITORIUM - QUARTERS, LATER

Pops Philemon still sitting in front of the television.

The religious program on, blaring.

The Male Nurse enters again.

MALE NURSE

Rudy, somebody here to see you.

Pops Philemon turns. Smiles at the nurse. The blank, unknowing smile.

EXT. CONTINUING LIFE SANITORIUM - GARDEN - DAY

A peaceful garden. Birds CHIRP in the distance. Green, cut grass. A tempting play area for any child. Several empty park benches lining concrete walkways.

The backs of two men sitting alone - Detective Philemon and Pops Philemon. Both looking straight ahead at nothing in particular.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

How're the nurses treating you?

No answer from Pops.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
Looks like you're eating okay.

Again, no response. Detective Philemon lowers his head.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
You want to go back inside?

Detective Philemon raises his head. Looks over at the elder Philemon.

POPS PHILEMON  
Mass. I need to tithe. It'll help me.

Detective Philemon SIGHS. Frustrated.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
Pop, you've already given your share.

POPS PHILEMON  
Haven't gone this week. I need to go. Need to give. The Church needs it.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
(stern)  
Pop, you gave them everything you had. We had.  
(pause)  
You don't have anymore to give them. There's nothing left, Pop.

A silent moment.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
Why do you insist betting everything on some fantasy? There is no Heaven you can pay your way into.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON(cont'd)

There is nothing after we die,  
Pops. Nothing except the cold dirt  
surrounding us. It doesn't exist.  
I'm sorry.

Detective Philemon looks at his father.

Pops' face brightens. Like the veil of dementia has been  
lifted.

POPS PHILEMON

Course it doesn't exist. You think  
there are streets paved with gold?  
Thousand virgins waiting for you?  
You wish. Not whether anything  
exists, stupid. It's about hope.  
Hope can do anything. Don't you get  
it? This is what it's about. Hope.

By the look of Detective Philemon's face, he has a moment of  
clarity. He gets it. Smiles.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Hope.

Again, Pops is lost in his own mind.

POPS PHILEMON

You people. Don't know what the  
Church can do for you.

(pause)

If my retarded son were here he'd  
take me. What do you want from me?

Detective Philemon bends down to tie his father's loose shoe  
string.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Nothing, Pop. I just want to sit.

POPS PHILEMON

Take me inside. I'll wait for my  
son inside. He'll take me to get  
some money.

The elder Philemon struggles to stand. His old bones barely holding him up. Shuffles off down the concrete path.

Detective Philemon sits for a moment. Watches his father. Shakes his head. Disappointed.

Finally, Detective Philemon gets up. Looks after his father.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

So how're they treating you here,  
Pop?

(pause)

How's the food?

Detective Philemon gently puts his arm within his father's. Helps him along.

Father and son walk arm in arm.

INT. PROPHET EZEKIEL'S CHURCH - HALLWAY

Ezekiel quickly exits the secret door. Closes it behind him. He carries the briefcase near his side.

The Gigolo enters.

GIGOLO

Somebody here. Wants a confession.

PROPHET EZEKIEL

(irritated)

Not now.

GIGOLO

But he insisted. Said you'd be expecting him.

With this, Ezekiel understands. Looks at his helper.

PROPHET EZEKIEL

Keep him around.

The Gigolo gives a half-bow. Leaves.

Ezekiel lays the briefcase on the floor. Opens it. Pulls out his best two throwing knives.

INT. THE PROPHET EZEKIEL'S CHURCH

Tomas sits in the front pew with his bald head bowed. Waiting for something.

The Gigolo talks to Tomas.

HALLWAY

Ezekiel cautiously inspects the church. Sees what looks like a harmless old, bald man sitting, waiting for a confession.

The Gigolo leaves Tomas sitting.

Not who Ezekiel expected. Pulls back without being seen.

Ezekiel replaces his knives back into their proper place. Closes the briefcase. Takes it with him.

INT. THE PROPHET EZEKIEL'S CHURCH

Tomas gone.

Ezekiel enters carrying his briefcase.

Without hesitation goes straight for the confessional. Pulls the curtain back.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - PRIEST'S SIDE

Ezekiel slides in. Sets the briefcase at his feet.

CONFESSOR'S SIDE

A dark, silent place. The dividing partition slides back.

Ezekiel's outline on the other side.

PROPHET EZEKIEL(O.S.)  
Go ahead, good sir.

PRIEST'S SIDE

Ezekiel waits for a response. Nothing.

Tries again.

PROPHET EZEKIEL  
What is your confession?

TOMAS (O.S.)  
I want *your* confession.

PROPHET EZEKIEL  
Excuse me?

Ezekiel gets closer to the dividing partition to get a better look.

TOMAS (O.S.)  
You murder and promote your vile habits all in His name. Confess now or do it when you get to the gates.

Suddenly, Ezekiel realizes. Looks down at his briefcase. Back up at the dividing partition.

PROPHET EZEKIEL  
Funny how things come together,  
Tomas.

A SHOT goes off and at the same time

Ezekiel ducks out of the confessional.

The wood partition is splintered where his head was. The bullet just missing.

OUTSIDE

Tomas steps out of the confessional, pistols at the ready.

Nothing there.

Across the room Ezekiel moves.

Without hesitation, Tomas takes two shots hitting the far wall.

Again, Ezekiel is gone.

HALLWAY

The Gigolo hides staying silent. He slowly moves to the edge of the wall to get a look.

GIGOLO POV

Shows the confessional at the other end. Otherwise the place is eerily empty.

The barrel of Tomas's pistol is suddenly against the Gigolo's nose.

Tomas pushes the gun further pushing him back.

The Gigolo raises his hands. The only thing that speaks is his horrified face.

Tomas motions with his head for the gigolo to get lost. Removes the pistol from his nose.

The Gigolo does just that. Gets lost.

Tomas slowly moves down the empty corridor towards a closed door.

On the floor, Ezekiel's opened, silver briefcase.

CLOSE ON BRIEFCASE

Empty spaces where knives should be.

BACK TO SCENE

As Tomas reaches the door he reaches for the handle. Leans his head backwards as two KNIVES hit the door just in front.

THUMP. THUMP.

Behind him nothing. Ezekiel nowhere.

MAIN ROOM

Tomas cautiously moves. In the corner, Ezekiel's shadow moves. Tomas goes towards it.

From behind

A YELL as the Gigolo runs up on Tomas and knocks him down with a hit from a wooden staff.

Tomas hits the ground. His pistol slides across the church floor away from him.

Ezekiel approaches the defenseless Tomas. He wields an ancient-looking sword. Takes a few swings in the air showing his ability.

The Gigolo retrieves Tomas's pistol from the floor. Points it at him.

PROPHET EZEKIEL

Beaten by a weak servant. A servant  
who is worthless. Disposable.

The Gigolo eyes Ezekiel. His face shows he doesn't like what his master is saying.

Tomas hurries to his feet into a defensive position. Nothing to use as a weapon except his own hands.

Ezekiel comes at him taking a swing with the sword.

Tomas ducks and backs in between the rows of wooden pews.

PROPHET EZEKIEL

Not many things lower than a  
servant, huh, Tomas? Disgusting  
things really.

Ezekiel follows, takes another swing cutting into Tomas's  
arm.

PROPHET EZEKIEL

My only wish in this lifetime is to  
rid the earth of all disgusting,  
pathetic things.

Takes another swing hits a prayer book that Tomas has taken  
as defense. The sword shreds it.

The Gigolo, his aim on Tomas, now moves it to Ezekiel.

PROPHET EZEKIEL

It is His will that the earth is  
cleansed.

With that, Ezekiel raises his sword for a final swing.

BANG!

A bullet strikes Ezekiel in the side just beneath the armpit.

The Gigolo holds his aim. The end of the pistol smokes.

Ezekiel falls over dead. The metal sword hitting the floor  
with a CLANG.

Stunned, Tomas looks over at the Gigolo who immediately puts  
the end of the pistol in his mouth and pulls the trigger.  
Blows the back of his head off and falls to the floor.

INT. POLICE STATION - DETECTIVE'S OFFICE

Several open desk spaces.

Detective Philemon sits at a desk sifting through a pile of  
disorganized papers.

Detective Amos enters carrying a manila folder.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Drug convictions. Petty theft...

Detective Amos sits down next to her partner.

Philemon leans back in his chair listening.

DETECTIVE AMOS

Interesting. Was found shot along with a dead woman strangled to death. Paramedics had to bring him back. Nothing came of it. No record after that. Clean.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

(sarcastic)

Then he found God. God saved him and in return for a second chance, he was inscripted as an assassin to punish the sinners. Like that angel, what's his name? Somewhere along the way he grew a conscious... And is now an independent contractor.

Detective Philemon gives his partner a "yeah, right" look.

DETECTIVE AMOS

So Father Tomas is an assassin? The church a mafia like the Godfather? You've lost it.

A pause considering.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

An God is the mafia boss.

(serious)

Look, they put their pants on one leg at a time just like you and me. They're a business, they can be influenced by money just like anyone else.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON(cont'd)

They're human, they bleed. Let's stop by and see him again. I'm interested to see where he's been the last few days.

Philemon gets up. Grabs jacket off the chair.

DETECTIVE AMOS

You're serious? Don't let your personal shit get in the way of your judgment. They'll have you committed next.

Philemon's cell phone RINGS. He answers it.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

(to Amos)

Low blow. Nothing personal. My job. I do take pleasure in it, though.

(into phone)

Why did you tell the policeman to leave?

(listens)

He's there to protect you.

(listens)

No, won't be home.

(listens)

Tell him I'll see him tomorrow.

(pulls phone away from ear)

Tell me again how bad of a father I am for trying to protect you. Just a bad husband today?

Detective Amos tries not listening in. Can't help herself.

Philemon looks up at Detective Amos. Again he pulls the phone away from his ear.

Muffled SHOUTS coming from the receiver.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Just because you speak louder doesn't mean I hear you any better.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON(cont'd)  
(sarcastic)  
Love you, too.

Detective Philemon hangs up.

DETECTIVE AMOS  
Who says love doesn't last forever?

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
Me. The witch ordered the security  
I sent to leave. Unbelievable. She  
has no idea.

DETECTIVE AMOS  
You'll hate all women soon.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
Just the one's like my wife. You  
want to know something? Sometimes I  
daydream about how my life would be  
without my wife and son. Every time  
they take a trip I envision the  
airplane crumbling in the air,  
killing everyone on board. I go  
through my mind what I would do the  
days immediately following. I get  
this feeling of relief like a truck  
has been taken off me. Is that  
wrong? Selfish bastard, I know.

DETECTIVE AMOS  
I don't think you're selfish but  
you are a bastard.  
(grins)  
What are you eating tonight after  
work? I'm buying.

Detective Philemon hesitates his body language avoiding the  
subject.

DETECTIVE AMOS  
What? Just food. Can't eat with  
your partner now?

Suddenly, Detective BENDER, 35, enters breaking the uneasy tension that has formed.

DETECTIVE BENDER  
Another one. Actually two.

Bender goes to Amos. Hands her another folder.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
Two? You're kidding me? Priests?  
Under the Archbishop?

Detective Amos looks over the information in the folder.

DETECTIVE AMOS  
One is. The other is unidentified.

Detective Amos shakes her head.

DETECTIVE BENDER  
Local boys handling it.  
(beat)  
Guy's on a roll. Same caliber  
weapon except for the one in  
Tijuana. One execution style right  
up close. In church. Not very  
religious, this guy.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
(to himself)  
Investigate the Church for  
racketeering and it turns into a  
murder investigation. What is going  
on?  
(to Detective Amos)  
We need histories on all our  
victims. Back to their childhoods.  
Everything. Talk to family.  
Friends. Medical records. Get  
everything you can on them. I'm  
going see our friend.

EXT. TIJUANA COAST, MANSION - DAY

An isolated, expansive mansion sits overlooking the coast.

INT. MODERN PALACE - FORMAL DINING AREA

Large bay windows outlining the large, expensively decorated eating room. A view of the Tijuana coastline with an infinity pool in front just outside one of the windows.

The early morning air permeates the place.

The naked back of a well-built figure sits at the table for twenty. An overabundance of food on expensive silver at the man's disposal.

The man's uncouth presence out of place in the white room.

A SERVANT stands silently to the side. Awaiting the man's orders.

A close look at the man's back shows large wing tattoos taking up a majority of the man's muscular flesh.

The man eats his food in the silence of the morning.

A cell phone RINGS on the table next to the man, breaking the silence.

Casually, he wipes his mouth with a white linen cloth before answering.

A look at the man's face reveals his identity. His gold front teeth showing just enough - Father Tomas's assassin, The Sicario.

SICARIO

(Spanish)

Yes, Highness?

(listens)

Very kind, thank you.

(listens)

I'm not surprised.

SICARIO(cont'd)

He was one of our best.

(listens)

The other one is a nuisance. The only way to get his attention is take away what he loves most.

(listens)

I agree. Consider it done.

With that, the Sicario casually hangs up the phone. Lays it on the table next to his plate. Eats some more.

The servant continues standing, unflinching.

SICARIO

Bring me my robe and case.

The servant obeys. Moves from his spot. Within a moment, the servant returns with a black, priest's gown and silver briefcase. Stands awaiting further orders.

Allowing the servant to stand a moment, The Sicario finally stands and allows the servant to drape his shoulders.

The Sicario finishes dressing. Buttons the gown completely. Places the white priest's collar on. Lifts the waiting case from the ground.

The Sicario prepares to leave.

SERVANT

And for dinner, Father?

The Sicario pauses.

SICARIO

Grilled duck sounds tempting.

SERVANT

As you wish.

The Sicario leaves taking the case with him.

EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

The late afternoon hangs a misty fog in the air. The water on the lake like ice.

On the sandy bank, several plain-dressed BAPTIST WORSHIPERS are gathered. A few carry black-bound Bibles. Some with shoes and sock off, pants rolled.

Behind the worshipers, high on the hill sits Tomas's old Mercedes.

INT. MERCEDES

Tomas sits alone in the driver's seat. Looks pale. Sickly.

FLASH OF IMAGES

Showing the DEAD HOUSEWIFE on the floor.

A BABY crawling, crying.

HOUSEWIFE now up and alive staring directly at us. Her face a pale, ghostly white.

A BABY'S CRY.

BACK TO SCENE

Tomas's undoing the several day's old bandage from around his wounded hand.

His silver pistol lays on the seat next to him.

Tomas winces at each turn of the blood soaked bandage. Mostly dried blood.

Finally, he gets to the last turn. Pulls at the thing a little. Won't budge. Stuck to the dried blood.

With a wince, he pulls the bloody rag free revealing the festering, INFECTED WOUND of his palm. Gangrenous.

Tomas leans his head back on the seat. Closes his eyes. Waits for the relief.

FATHER SANTIAGO (O.S.)  
Son, they have no idea what they're  
doing.

Startled, Tomas looks towards the source of the familiar voice.

FATHER SANTIAGO

sits across from Tomas. Watches the worshipers from the passenger-side window.

OUTSIDE

a few of the Worshipers have entered the water.

The BAPTIST MINISTER with the bible open in front of him.

All are waist deep in the chilly water.

INT. MERCEDES

FATHER SANTIAGO  
Always thought baptism was an  
archaic ritual. Look at them. In  
that dirty water.  
(chuckles)

Father Santiago turns, looks at Tomas then at the pistol on the seat.

Tomas watches the priest. Not responding.

FATHER SANTIAGO  
I know what you're trying to do,  
Tomas.

Tomas doesn't respond. Looks down at his lap like a child being scolded.

FATHER SANTIAGO

You think they have any more choice  
than you do? It wasn't your fault  
and neither is it theirs.

Tomas looks up. Out the front windshield at those being  
baptized.

TOMAS

I was your son.

Tomas sadly looks at Father Santiago.

Guilty, Father Santiago turns from Tomas. Out the window  
towards the Worshipers.

FATHER SANTIAGO

You were the illegitimate child of  
a priest. I was going to betray  
them.

Father Santiago looks at Tomas. Tears welled up in Tomas'  
eyes.

TOMAS

You betrayed me. Look at me. What  
they did.

(beat)

You were my world. Everything. I  
had nothing after that.

Tomas cries.

FATHER SANTIAGO

I'm sorry, son. I was wrong.

(beat)

It's going to kill you, Tomas, this  
hatred. You can't beat them with  
violence, son.

A silent moment. Both men considering.

Finally...

## FATHER SANTIAGO

You can't stop it by killing. If you cut the head off the snake, it will grow a new one. There are a thousand heads waiting for their turn. You must expose them all at once. Without sacrificing yourself.

Tomas turns to his side window. Looking at nothing in particular.

Another silent moment. Tomas attempts to collect himself.

## TOMAS

I'm the only one that can make things right. A life without meaning, without integrity is meaningless. Isn't that what you told me, Father?

Tomas turns back towards his father. Gone. Nothing there.

Only thing seen are the Worshipers in the distance. In the water down the hill. Tomas focus his attention on them.

He considers before opening the car door and getting out.

## EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY

The minister leans a MALE WORSHIPER(20's) backwards into the water. Dunks him then pulls him back.

The other Worshipers begin PRAISING. Holding hands and bibles high in the air. All in a state of religious ecstasy.

One by one the parishioners all look towards the hill leading to the water.

## WHAT THEY SEE

Tomas approaches.

The Worshipers stop, wait for Tomas.

Tomas seeking an answer with his eyes. Eyes move from one Parishioner to the other, finally stopping at the Minister.

The Minister gives Tomas a welcoming smile and raises his hand for Tomas to take.

Tomas enters the water and allows the Minister to take him and baptize him.

Again, the Worshipers raise their hands in praise.

EXT. MODERN PALACE - DAY

A blacked-out, SUV exits the gated drive. The Sicario in the driver's seat.

The car gets going down the dirt road.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

The cold, empty interior.

A hand slowly runs along one of the pews. Feeling its texture.

Alone, Detective Philemon walks along the rows of pews. Not in a hurry. Quietly inspecting the church he looks around at the majestic, carved effigies.

He gets to the front.

The dilapidated Virgin Mary waiting.

Detective Philemon gets to her. Stands beneath her looking up. A long quiet look.

He moves from the front of the church and goes to inspect the

HALLWAY

Philemon silently moves. Gets to Tomas's closed office door.

EXT. SAN YISIDRO BORDER CROSSING - DAY

A line of cars three to four wide with several lanes merging into one another. MEXICAN KIDS and OLD MEN selling everything to anyone who will listen.

The Sicario's SUV pulls behind the line of vehicles then moves to a separate "FAST LANE". Moves along it easily.

It pulls quickly to the GUARD POST and comes to a stop.

The BORDER GUARD asks for something.

The Sicario shows some Identification.

The Border Guard smiles and waves him through.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - HALLWAY

The Detective looks behind him to see if anybody's around. Gets close to the door. Touches the handle. Turns it gently.

JUDAUS (O.S.)

He's not here. He left.

Startled, Detective Philemon turns around to meet the voice.

Judaus stands at the entrance of the hallway.

Judaus takes a few uneven steps towards the Detective.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Know where he is? I need to talk to him.

JUDAUS

He's lost his way.

This peaks the Detective's interest.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

How so?

Again, Judaus limps towards the Detective.

JUDAUS

Take away the ritual, the dress and  
he's a man, like all of us.  
Disappointed alot of people,  
including me.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Somebody after him? Trying to hurt  
him?

JUDAUS

Maybe.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Know where he might be?

JUDAUS

Afraid he's gone for good.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Can I have a look around, then?

Philemon motions to the priest's office door.

Judaus gives a "not-so-sure" look.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Should do what you have to,  
sometimes even if feel it's wrong,  
to protect those you love.

The Detective looks at Judaus a moment then slowly opens the  
door.

INT. PHILEMON RESIDENCE - HALLWAY

The motion of an opening door continues. Casts light from the  
exterior into a long hallway entering into someone's home.

Loud cartoon SOUNDS coming from somewhere.

At the end, the room opens up into the kitchen. Sink and  
fridge visible.

Slow movement through the dimmed hallway.

THE SICARIO

moves unnoticed towards the kitchen.

Family photos of DETECTIVE PHILEMON, HIS WIFE and CHILD hang on the wall within the hallway.

The Sicario stops at a door to the right. The noise of the cartoons coming from there.

INT. PHILEMON RESIDENCE - TELEVISION ROOM

Detective Philemon's son sits on a beanbag on the floor in front of the blaring television.

The Sicario stands in the doorway. Watches the boy.

The boy realizes a presence. Looks. Unafraid, the boy just stares.

The Sicario smiles. His gold teeth showing.

Comfortable, the boy returns the smile.

INT. PHILEMON RESIDENCE - HALLWAY

Still standing, the Sicario lifts his silenced pistol in the boy's direction. Without hesitation, fires a muffled shot.

Continues down the hallway towards the kitchen.

The music from the cartoons covering any sounds.

MRS. PHILEMON (O.S.)

You'd better not be up to no good!

Suddenly, Mrs. Philemon moves into view within the kitchen. Looks directly at the Sicario coming towards her.

The woman's eyes grow big. Covers her mouth. Frozen in place by fear. She looks past the Sicario and down the hall at her son's open door.

SICARIO

Where is he?

MRS. PHILEMON

Who?

SICARIO

Your husband.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

The sun fills the entire room. Not such a gloomy place with the sunlight pouring in.

Philemon stands just inside the doorway. Scans the place. Moves along the length of the wall towards the fireplace.

Moves past a bookshelf full of old books. Runs his fingers along their spines. Pulls one. Looks at its old cover then replaces it.

The Detective gets to the fireplace. Remanence of the recent fire.

Philemon gets the fire poker. Pushes the ash and material around. Gets close. Sees something. Fishes it out with the poker.

Judaus watches from the door. Not fully entered.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

What ate your leg?

Detective Philemon pulls the poker back. Gets a good look at the half burnt object on the end.

JUDAUS

My father ran me over when I was  
six.

JUDAUS(cont'd)

Thought going to get high was more important than his son having a leg.

The priest's, white collar hangs from the poker's end (What's left of it).

Philemon puts it back in the fireplace. Rummages through the ash some more. Nothing else identifiable.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Father's don't usually mean to be assholes. We just are sometimes. It's like God made us that way.

Philemon continues his pass along the room's wall arriving at the priest's desk. Opens a drawer. Another. Goes through each one.

Nothing.

JUDAUS

God has a plan for us all be sure, Detective. Even with our inadequacies... Our sins. We still have a choice.

Something catches the Detective's eye. Something on the floor near the desk. Kneels down.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

God have a plan for your father?

Detective Philemon gets face to face with Tomas's roach house. Marvels at it. Takes a second to look at the thing.

A roach scurries from the cardboard house to find a better hiding spot.

Philemon flinches.

JUDAUS

It's a destination, not how we get there.

JUDAUS(cont'd)

God doesn't control us, we control ourselves. We are responsible for the journey.

Finally, Philemon continues.

A small, circular trash can near the desk.

Philemon inspects it. Some wadded paper. An empty bottle of wine. Nothing much. Continues. To the bathroom door. Opens it.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Your father make it to the pearly gates? Pedophiles and murderers can still get their golden ticket to heaven.

JUDAUS

God is too lenient to punish those who need it. Man has to do it.

This causes Philemon to stop what he was doing and face Judaus for a moment.

He then continues into

BATHROOM

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Least we agree on something.

Philemon stands in the doorway. Looks around.

Gets to the sink first. Immediately his attention is caught by what's in it.

In the sink lays the remanence of what was once Tomas's head of hair.

CLOSET

Detective Philemon stands at the entrance. Enters slowly.

Runs his hand along the hanging garments. Pushes them to the side.

A CREAK in the flooring causes Philemon to pause. Takes a step back then forward again.

Again, the same CREAK in the floorboard directly over the carpet hiding the secret door.

He pushes the carpet with his foot revealing the outline of the hidden door in the floor.

Philemon finds the handle and lifts it open.

INSIDE

The two, silver briefcases sit.

Taking a handkerchief, the Detective retrieves a 9MM PISTOL, looks it over taking care not to contaminate the evidence with his own fingerprints. Sets it aside then pulls out one of the SILVER BRIEFCASES.

He opens it revealing the padded outline of where the two pistols sat. Nothing now.

He sets the first case to the side then gets the second. Opens it.

In it, the disassembled SNIPER'S RIFLE sits.

Satisfied, he puts everything back the way it was.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

Judaus still at the door waiting patiently.

Suddenly, the Detective rushes out of the closet. Goes straight past the waiting Judaus, almost pushing him out of the way to get out.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

I suggest you get out of here.  
Don't touch anything.

EXT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - DAY

The unmarked police car by the curb.

Detective Philemon hurries towards his vehicle. Talks on his cell phone.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Listen, he's our guy. I found weapons at the Church. A Nine millimeter that I bet will match the ballistics on our guy in Tijuana.

(listens)

Something happened to him.

(listens)

I don't know. We're gonna need a warrant to do anything else. What'd you find on our other priests?

(listens)

Okay. If he's in the area I want him found. We need to find the common thread between our Priests. Find the next one before he does.

(listens)

Okay. Call me when you get something. Bye.

Philemon gets in the car. Looks towards the church. Waits. Settles in for a long night.

EXT. LAKESIDE - NIGHT

The Mercedes in flames on the hill. No one around.

## INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

The flame of the burning Mercedes is replaced by a candle's flame.

From the rear of the church darkness except for flames of candlelight coming from the front. Around the Virgin Mary.

Judaus, in hooded robe, CHANTS on his knees before the Holy statue.

## INT. CADILLAC

Tomas sits shotgun in the old beat up car. Tomas's face is pasty white from illness.

The Baptist Minister from the earlier, lakeside baptism drives.

A large silver cross hangs from the rear view mirror.

Tomas stares blankly out the window. Consumed by thought.

The Minister takes his eyes off the road for several seconds looking the priest over.

MINISTER

What takes you south?

Tomas continues looking out the window.

TOMAS

Fate.

## OUTSIDE

The Cadillac passes through the Mexican Border into Mexico without problem.

INSIDE

The gentleman notices Tomas's ill appearance. Sees his bandaged hand.

MINISTER

You Okay? Need a doctor? I know a fine Gringo doctor in town. Cheap.

TOMAS

I'm fine.

The Gentleman continues looking over Tomas.

MINISTER

You a man of God? I mean before today?

Tomas looks at the obnoxious, dangling cross on the mirror. Then to the gentleman.

TOMAS

No.

Tomas turns back towards the window.

Still, the gentleman surveys his strange-looking passenger.

MINISTER

Never go to church?

TOMAS

No.

Tomas is doing his best to avoid conversation. Keeps his attention on the passing pavement.

MINISTER (O.S.)

You will.

(preachy)

And call upon me in the day of trouble. I will deliver thee and thou shall glorify me. Psam fifty-fifteen.

MINISTER(cont'd)

(shakes finger)

God works in mysterious ways, my  
friend. Today is the start of a new  
day.

Tomas glances over at the man. Back to the road.

TOMAS

God is not who you think he is.

INT. UNDERCOVER POLICE CAR

Detective Philemon sits quietly. Patiently. Looks at Father  
Tomas's church every now and then.

His cell phone RINGS.

Philemon finds it. Answers it.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Yeah?

INT. POLICE STATION - DETECTIVE'S OFFICE

Late. Most lights off except around Detective Philemon's  
desk.

Detective Amos on her cell phone. Paces back and forth  
besides her desk.

DETECTIVE AMOS

I found something. Not sure what it  
has to do with anything.

POLICE CAR

Detective Philemon on the phone.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

What is it?

STATION

Detective Amos stops. Looks over folders she's collected.

DETECTIVE AMOS

All of our victims. All have similar histories, criminal records at an early age, prior convictions, theft, assault before becoming priests. Thing is, all were seriously injured during a crime. All had to be brought back by paramedics. After that no record. Everyone with the same thing. Just like our priest.

POLICE CAR

Philemon listens. Squints his eyes. Lifts his head thinking about what his partner's saying. What it all means.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

(to himself)

What does it mean?

(to cell phone)

What's the motive? Why kill them now? Doesn't make sense.

STATION

Detective Amos on the phone.

DETECTIVE AMOS

He's playing vigilante. You were right.

POLICE CAR

Philemon on his cell phone.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Why? What did they do? What do they owe? Nothing else connecting him to the victims?

STATION

DETECTIVE AMOS

Besides all of them belonging to the Church? Being priests under the same Diocese. No.

(listens)

No. Nothing about our next one. Can't get a hold of a list of priest's names.

(listens)

Like talking to the mob. Yeah. I'll keep trying. Stay put until you get some backup?

(listens)

Okay. Hey. Be careful, please.

Detective Amos hangs up her cell phone.

POLICE CAR

Detective Philemon sitting. Hangs up his cell phone. Looks towards the church. No sign of anyone.

LIGHTNING lights up the dark sky. A storm coming.

Philemon dials a number on his cell. Waits for an answer.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Anyone home? Don't tell me you've left the country.

INT. PHILEMON RESIDENCE - KITCHEN

The wife in a pool of her own blood on the kitchen floor.

Her husband's voice on the answering machine somewhere in the house.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON (V.O.)

What we had is over and you think  
I'm the worst person that ever  
lived but...

POLICE CAR

Detective Philemon on the phone.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

To be honest with you, I'm angry  
that you think I don't care. I do.  
I just don't show it. Right now is  
a bad time for all of us. I'll try  
from now on, I promise. Tell our  
son that I love him and miss him. I  
love you too. I can hear you  
laughing now. I'll make pancakes in  
the morning. Blueberry.

(pause)

Promise.

Philemon hangs up. Takes a second to look at the phone  
unsure. Forgets about the thought.

A BEEP from his phone.

Philemon looks at the display. It shows the battery dead. He  
throws it on the seat next to him.

Another FLASH of lightning.

A little unsettled, the Detective pulls out his car ashtray.  
Filled with old cigarette butts. Philemon pushes the ashes  
and butts around looking for something salvageable.

Finding a squashed, mostly smoked butt, Philemon straightens  
the thing out. Finds a lighter in his pocket and lights the  
end. Puffs hard to get a drag.

Nothing but filter.

The Detective makes a sour face.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Shit.

Philemon gives up. Smashes the butt back into the ashtray.

His craving unsatisfied, the Detective shifts uncomfortably. Notices an all-night MINIMART just down the road with its interior lights on.

Philemon checks his pockets. Finds some bills. Counts them. Just enough.

Leaving the keys in the ignition, he gets out and makes a beeline for the Minimart across the road, down the street.

EXT. TIJUANA CITY STREET - NIGHT

A harsh urban setting.

The Minister's car pulls up to a curb. A business district.

INT. CADILLAC

Tomas goes to open the door.

MINISTER

You sure bout this? This ain't a good area. I wouldn't be going round here during the day.

Tomas gets out. He closes the door and leans in the window towards

BACK SEAT

A BIKE LOCK, the kind that looks like a metal rope, sits on the back seat.

TOMAS

That bike lock. How much?

The old driver looks toward the back seat.

MINISTER

That ol' thing? Ain't for sale.

Tomas throws a neat STACK OF TWENTIES on the seat next to the gentleman - a thousand dollars, at least.

The Gentleman looks it over before scooping it up.

TOMAS

Now?

The Gentleman reaches in the back seat and retrieves the lock, hands it over to Tomas.

GENTLEMAN

Mister, I learnt a long time ago  
not to ask too many questions. Even  
a holy man can keep his mouth shut.

TOMAS

Wise man. And a gentleman.

Tomas leaves the car near the curb.

MINISTER (O.S.)

God bless you!

Tomas continues to walk without responding to the gentleman.

GENTLEMAN

(out window)

God blesses those who give in his  
name!

The man's words seem to echo through the empty evening streets. Then silence.

TOMAS

(to himself)

Won't do me any good.

EXT. MINIMART - NIGHT

Detective Philemon exits the minimart. Stops in the street. He immediately unwraps the cigarette pack. Tosses the plastic on the ground.

A loud THUNDERCLAP overhead.

The Detective looks up at the ominous sky. Taps a cigarette from the pack and puts it in his mouth.

Lightning and another THUNDERCLAP following immediately after. The storm quickly approaching.

Philemon finds his lighter and attempts to light his cigarette.

As the cigarette takes the flame, the first raindrop hits directly on the cigarette in his mouth, ruining it.

Philemon removes the cigarette and looks at its wet end.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

(towards sky)

Oh C'mon. I don't need saving.

THUNDER comes immediately, as though someone above is answering him.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Alright, already.

A heavy DOWNPOUR follows the first raindrop. Catches Philemon in the street, soaking him.

Raining buckets now.

The Detective rushes under a storefront canopy, getting himself out of the rain for now. Inspects his new pack of smokes. All wet, ruined.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Shit.

With that he throws the pack on the sidewalk, frustrated.

Looks in the direction of the church. The rain providing a blurry foreground.

The outline of a dark FIGURE at the front of the church.

Philemon notices. Stands still. Squints to get a good look.

The figure goes to the front doors of the church. Pulls on them. Disappears inside.

Detective Philemon watches the figure disappear into the church.

Philemon waits a second. Runs across the street to his vehicle. The rain soaking him and everything around him.

He pulls on the car's handle to get in. Locked.

Philemon checks his pockets for keys. Finds nothing. Peers into the front windshield at the ignition. Keys sitting in the ignition.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Gonna be one of those nights.

Philemon turns to face the church. Hesitates trying to decide. Makes a cautious move towards the front.

At the front of the church, Philemon draws his weapon. He pulls on the heavy wooden doors. Unlocked.

The Detective hesitates. Takes a couple of preparing breaths. Quickly opens the door and takes an offensive position just inside.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - NIGHT

Glowing candle light glows near the front.

A HOODED FIGURE

sits in the front pew with its head bowed. Prayer perhaps.

The Detective immediately notices. Trains his weapon on the figure. Moves against the wall silently towards it.

Sound of the RAIN on the roof the only sound.

As the Detective moves closer, he passes the statues of the Saints on the walls. Philemon can't help but look up at each one as he passes.

Each face of the statues within the wall resembling one of the priests killed by Tomas.

Philemon gets closer to the sitting figure. Almost to the front now.

A black hood covering the figure's head making the person unidentifiable.

The Detective only meters away from the figure.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Don't move.

With that, the hooded figure turns his head. Judaus.

A THUD and Philemon falls to the floor in a heap. Knocked unconscious from behind.

The Sicario stands menacing over him. Points a PISTOL at his chest. Lets one round go into his chest.

EXT. LORD'S CLUB - NIGHT

The facade of a church. A free standing building as old as the rest of the buildings on the street.

A green, NEON CROSS is perched on top. Gives The front a green glow.

A close look at the ground in front, near the door reveals the DOOR GUARD with a neat bullet hole in his forehead. Tomas's work.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Tomas struggles with a large, wheeled dumpster and pushes it against the rear exit of the place. Places a LARGE STONE against the wheels preventing it from rolling. No way anyone is getting out.

INT. THE LORD'S CLUB

The interior of the place has been converted into a nightclub with the main chapel a sitting area for PATRONS.

The windowless décor is mechanistic, almost futuristic though it still has remnants of a church.

A large, round table near the rear is swarmed by beautiful, YOUNG WOMEN. Several smoke from a large, communal hookah pipe that resembles an octopus.

DOMINUS, 50, a striking Middle-Easterner who eerily resembles Jesus - long hair, good looks - is flanked by a young woman who has his attention.

Dominus gives a congratulatory clap.

DOMINUS

(accent)

Have to admit, you've done well.  
Better than expected. How's  
Gringoland treating you?

TOMAS (O.S.)

Dominus.

Dominus continues his task without looking up.

DOMINUS

No one here calls me that, Tomas.  
Santa Muerta, El Flaco I hear all  
the time. No one knows me by that  
old name.

Tomas stands in front of Dominus's table.

DOMINUS

Why would they? Look around.  
Pathetic, most of them.

(beat)

Were once like that, Tomas.  
Remember?

No response.

DOMINUS

That is until I found you. Your  
savior.

(to the room)

All of you!

With this, Tomas glances around at the patrons.

WHAT TOMAS SEES

A sturdy-looking MAN in the distance with a drawn, tired look catches Tomas's eye.

The man gives Tomas a knowing smile revealing sickly, rotting teeth. The man's face appears to warp causing his features to distort slightly.

DOMINUS (O.S.)

A handsome lot here.

BACK TO SCENE

Dominus is suddenly standing behind Tomas, his hands on his shoulders. The table is now empty.

DOMINUS

Great personalities, too. Have a  
seat, Tomas. Hard man to get a hold  
of. Surprised to see you in the  
flesh.

(smiles)

Composed, Tomas takes a seat.

Dominus sits at the now empty table next to him. He scoots uncomfortably close to Tomas. Rubs his bald head.

DOMINUS

You look like heck, Tomas. All that killing takes it out of you.

Tomas pulls his head away from Dominus's hand.

Dominus LAUGHS. Moves back across the table to his original spot. Pours two glasses full of whiskey. Slides one close to Tomas.

Tomas doesn't even look at it. Keeps his stare on Dominus.

DOMINUS

C'mon, Tomas. A priest refusing a drink?

(mocking)

I won't stand for it, Tomas.

(drinks)

Next you're going to tell me you're retiring. You want a dispensation.

(smiles)

Where has your gratitude gone, Tomas? Has it been that long that your memory's failed you?

Tomas doesn't respond. Stone-faced.

DOMINUS

Yeah?

With that, a video projection of unknown origin plays on the far wall of the club.

The club patrons turn to watch.

ON SCREEN

shows young Tomas straddling the young HOUSEWIFE.

On screen, Tomas puts his hand over the woman's mouth to keep her from screaming. Muffled SCREAMS from beneath Tomas's hand.

The woman continues to struggle. Almost gets Tomas off her.

Again, she SCREAMS.

Tomas holds his hand tight across the woman's neck. Leans over her face. Cutting off her air.

The woman falls silent. Dead beneath Tomas.

Titus appears on the projection carrying a small, sleek black bag. Sees Tomas over the now dead woman.

TITUS (V.O.)

What the fuck!

Titus rushes to Tomas. Pulls at his shirt sleeve. Tomas rolls off the dead woman.

Tomas stares. Frozen at the sight of the dead woman.

Tomas cries. Lowers his head in disgust. Gets close to the woman. Shakes her dead body trying to wake her.

TOMAS (V.O.)

Wake up! I didn't mean it. Oh, God!

Tomas covers his mouth trying to prevent himself from vomiting. It's no good. Vomit spews from his mouth and he leans over to let it all out.

His accomplice watches.

BACK TO SCENE

Watching, Tomas gets uncomfortable. Fidgets in his seat. The nausea returning.

Dominus CHUCKLES. Amused at the video of the younger Tomas.

The patrons LAUGH. Occasionally point at the playing video.

TITUS (V.O.)  
...You're staying here.

ON SCREEN

Titus points the pistol at Tomas. Without hesitation...BANG!  
Shoots his partner in the chest.

Tomas covers the wound with his hand. Pulls his hand back.  
Sees the blood covering it. Falls backwards on the carpet  
next to the Housewife's body.

TOMAS (V.O.)  
(to himself)  
Why? God, why? Oh God.

Titus leaves in a hurry.

BACK TO SCENE

Tomas takes the glass of whiskey. Downs it in one gulp. The  
sweat collects on his forehead. His face turning white.

Dominus notices. Smiles at the priest.

ON SCREEN

shows Tomas looking up as if towards Heaven. Staring at  
nothing. The blank ceiling.

TOMAS (V.O.)  
(mumbling)  
God. Please...

BACK TO SCENE

Dominus pours himself and his guest another drink.

DOMINUS  
(mocking)  
Oh God. Oh God.  
(preachy)

DOMINUS(cont'd)

Call upon me in the day of trouble.

(takes drink)

I forget which one wrote that one.  
It's the content not the scribe.  
Right, Tomas? Ask and ye shall  
receive. One up one down. Lay down  
and we're at your sides, stand on  
your head and the whole notion is  
upside down. I know you think He's  
forgotten you. I've just become  
more resourceful, is all. He's lost  
touch, the old man, still  
handwriting letters while his  
teenage sons are asking for I-pods.  
I'm the rich Uncle that gives you  
what you want. I know what you  
want, you want something to make  
you feel good. Something that takes  
away the pain. Like everybody.

Dominus produces a brand new METHADONE VIAL and pushes it in  
front of Tomas.

DOMINUS

That's why the business works.  
Economy bad? Who cares. No job? No  
worries. More business than a  
doctor performing colonoscopies.  
I'll give you whatever you need to  
help you feel better. You know  
that.

Tomas's eyes focus on the bottle. One can almost feel his  
heart racing.

TOMAS

Don't need it anymore.

Tomas takes a drink from his glass.

DOMINUS

You want this nonsense to play in  
your head forever?

Dominus motions to the now paused video on the wall.

Tomas reluctantly looks at himself on screen.

TOMAS

Take it off.

Dominus stares at Tomas. The video remains a moment.

TOMAS

Please.

DOMINUS

'Atta boy. Nothing like a softer  
tone to get what you want.

Then, as quick as it appeared, the video footage disappears.

The patrons continue as if nothing happened.

TOMAS

What about seeing others in pain  
gives you satisfaction?

DOMINUS

Ha! I buy you books and send you to  
school and you eat the paper,  
Tomas. Still don't get it. Quite  
possibly one of the greatest gifts  
you have. Pain. Still you don't  
have the vision to see that.

(drinks)

How's that hand?

Dominus motions to Tomas's bandaged hand.

Tomas looks at it. Curls his fingers. Reminded of the pain  
there. The infection.

DOMINUS

That precious feeling that lets you  
know you're alive! It's only when  
you don't answer it. Ignore it.

(drinks)

DOMINUS (cont'd)

I'm afraid you don't know what real pain is, Tomas.

TOMAS

All I know.

Dominus SCOFFS.

DOMINUS

Pain? All that you've created, Tomas. I didn't cross the border, put you in that house. Force you to be there. How do you think that poor lady felt under your weight unable to take a breath?

(drinks)

You people think free will is a token to do as you please.

He leans back in his chair.

DOMINUS

I gave you life, Tomas. A second chance. More than He ever gave you. Don't you see that? Why are you the only one unhappy for what you've been given? Graciousness breeds maturity.

Tomas remains still, head slightly bowed.

DOMINUS

Now you want out?

TOMAS

I've paid what I owe.

DOMINUS

The only priest I know with a conscience.

(claps)

You are ready for a promotion. I'm getting old, tired. I need a son to take over the business. You're the closest thing I have.

TOMAS

Find another one.

DOMINUS

(laughs)

You expect me to just forget everything? If I let everyone out of their obligations who'd I get to do confessions? Pass judgment?

(pause)

Nuns? Bunch of lesbian assassins? Come on, Tomas.

(drinks)

That was your father's problem...

Tomas doesn't respond.

DOMINUS

He was also a murdering, cheating, drug addict who was left with his testicles cut off by the woman he forced himself upon. Who forgave him? Gave him a second chance?

Dominus points to himself.

DOMINUS

How does he repay me? By betraying the Church?

Dominus waits to let the insult sink in.

DOMINUS

I took you in like you were my own!

Dominus SLAMS his fist on the table.

Now Tomas looks like he's about to explode.

DOMINUS

Let me let you in on a little secret, Tomas.

Dominus leans in close to Tomas. Speaks low.

DOMINUS

There is nothing after this. This is it. The promised land. You're in it.

Dominus leans back in his chair. Smiles.

DOMINUS

You'll be like those guys who, after years in prison all the while longing to get out eventually do get out. Before long they're right back in that place they tried so hard to get away from realizing the other side wasn't quite as comforting as they'd hoped. You'll be begging to come back.

TOMAS

I'll take the chance.

A silent moment.

DOMINUS

Fine.

Dominus motions to the paused projection on the wall.

ON SCREEN

The projection plays in quick reverse. Gets to the part where young Tomas's vomiting. Plays. Rewinds. Plays again.

The thing is stuck in a continuous loop. Comical now.

BACK TO SCENE

Again, the patrons turn to watch. LAUGH and point at the distraction.

Tomas can hardly watch. Reluctantly looks.

Suddenly, Tomas snaps. Points his pistol at Dominus.

TOMAS

Take it off!

Dominus sits still. Unfazed by Tomas's threat. Stares at the unflinching priest. Takes a drink.

DOMINUS

I really don't think that is nec...

TOMAS

Shut up!

Then, Dominus suddenly slams his hand down on the table. Startles everyone except Tomas.

DOMINUS

Jesus H. Christ!

Suddenly, the video shuts off.

DOMINUS

Putting a hole in this carcass  
(points to temple)  
won't do anything. I'll be back as  
soon as I'm gone. I'd come back as  
your mother... If you had one.

The two adversaries stare at each other.

DOMINUS

(calm)

Alright, Tomas. I don't like  
arguing. That's what marriage is  
for.

Dominus lifts his glass. Brings it up to toast Tomas.

DOMINUS

A truce...

Tomas doesn't respond face filled with rage. Holds the pistol steady.

DOMINUS

To fathers and sons.

TOMAS

Guilt is all I've known. All I've had.

DOMINUS

Listen to your conscious, Tomas.

Muffled, whispering VOICES from somewhere, everywhere finds Tomas's ears.

Tomas winces. Puts his free hand to his head. Barely maintains his composure.

DOMINUS

It gnaws at you don't it? A most productive creation, I must admit. Always there pestering. Reminding. Never letting up.

The pain in Tomas's head intensifies. His hand quivering. Distracting his aim.

The VOICES get louder more persistent.

Even louder.

BANG!

From Tomas's pistol.

A sudden bullet hole in Dominus's forehead. Blood splashes a nearby, concrete pillar.

With that the VOICES cease.

Dominus's hollow eyes continue to watch Tomas. Then his body falls over limp. Dead.

Ghostly smoke emanates from the hole in Dominus's head.

Tomas swings his pistol at the patrons.

The patron's faces warp and bend. All look sinister now.

HOWLING VOICES

Fill the area. Most sounding as though they're in pain.

Tomas stands. Maintains his pistol pointed.

The patrons maintain without flinching.

HOWLING VOICES

Get ever intense.

Tomas slowly backs out of the club entrance. His sickly body barely holding him up.

EXT. LORD'S CLUB - NIGHT

Sunlight just beginning to show over the buildings.

Tomas backs out of the front entrance. As he does he wraps the bike chain securely around the door handles, locking it from the outside.

EXT. LORD'S CLUB - LATER

The entire building is engulfed in flames.

Tomas watches from afar as flaming timbers fall from the decaying structure.

HOWLING SCREAMS

from inside as the patrons struggle to get the front door open.

EXT. TIJUANA AFFLUENT NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Rain. Blurring the outline of the familiar house. Bent tree in the yard.

A close inspection of the front door. A long look. Sound of RAIN hitting the pavement.

From nowhere, Tomas stands in front of the door. Soaked with rain. Tired and sickly looking.

Tomas contemplates. Looks at the door a moment.

Then, Tomas rings the bell. Waits.

Finally, someone answers. An ELDERLY WOMAN stands at the open door. Looks at her visitor.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Can I help you?

Tomas caught off guard. Hesitates.

TOMAS

The woman... Lived here before...

The woman waits.

TOMAS

...One that died.

The Elderly woman wrinkles her nose.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Sir, you have the wrong house.

TOMAS

Was a woman murdered here.

ELDERLY WOMAN

I've lived here my whole life.  
Wasn't no one killed here.

TOMAS

(persistent)

I was here. There was a woman.

The Elderly woman is fed up.

## ELDERLY WOMAN

Like I said, young man, wasn't no one killed here. You've got the wrong house. Whatever you're looking for, the answer ain't here.

With that the woman shuts the door on Tomas's face.

Tomas just stands there. Complete confusion on his face.

## EXT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - DAY

The wet street the only hint of rain.

Detective Philemon's vacant vehicle parked across the street.

At the front door, a bald figure in black priest's garments. Tomas, hunched over, pulling the door to the church open. Slips inside.

## INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

The front door closes. Tomas, disheveled and sickly falls to the floor.

His pale face evidence of his state of health.

Closes his eyes a moment.

## SICARIO (O.S.)

Señor Tomas.

The Sicario's voice stirs Tomas. He looks up at the Sicario standing near him.

The Sicario stands over him with his pistol at his side.

Instinctively, Tomas tries getting up.

The Sicario pushes Tomas down with his foot.

Tomas easily falls back to the ground. His frail body no match for the Sicario.

The Sicario stands over him.

Again, Tomas tries standing to face the Sicario.

Again, the Sicario pushes Tomas to the floor with his foot.

Tomas falls to the ground again. This time finds the strength to pull himself away. Slowly, Tomas drags his unwilling body across the floor.

The Sicario follows, stalking him.

With his energy exhausted, Father Tomas gives up. Lays where he stops.

SICARIO

Looks like we've come full circle.  
First your father. Now his excuse  
for a son.

The Sicario points his weapon at the fallen priest. Readies the shot.

SICARIO

At least you were loyal...

Tomas says something muffled. Too low for the Sicario to make out clearly. Causes the Sicario to hesitate. Lowers his weapon slightly.

SICARIO

What was that?

The Sicario gets near Tomas. Kneels down next to him. His pistol at his side. He grabs a fistful of Tomas's robe.

TOMAS

We'll all owe in the end.

The Sicario smiles, readies the shot.

MOVEMENT from the front door causes the Sicario to turn to see

JUDAUS

Standing at the front door.

A SHOT

Tears through the front of the Sicario's head spilling brain onto the church floor.

WIDE SHOT

Reveals Tomas holding a smoking pistol pointed at the Sicario.

The Sicario holds his position with eyes wide for a moment as though he may actually survive without half his head before he finally falls dead.

With his remaining strength, Tomas pushes the dead man off of him.

A lake of blood surrounds the Sicario.

JUDAUS (O.S.)

Father!

AT THE FRONT

Judaus rushes to Tomas's side. Immediately sees the physical state of the priest.

JUDAUS

My God, Father.

Tomas looks up at the young eyes of Judaus. Tomas' eyes a sad state.

Reflexively Judaus goes to help Tomas up.

Judaus helps him towards the front of the church towards Tomas's study.

At the front they pass the statue of the Virgin Mary.

A long look at the statue, then movement down to its base.  
Beneath it.

INT. COMPARTMENT

A pitch black space. Nothing seen. Silence.

The RUSTLING of something within the space. Then the sound of a lighter being flicked on. Suddenly the space is illuminated by a lighter's flame.

Detective Philemon's outline now visible, arm attached to the flickering flame. His head raises as much as it can to inspect his coffin. Just enough space for his body.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

The front door to the study forces open. With the assistance of Judaus, Tomas stumbles through the door.

Judaus manages to get the priest to his couch. Lays him down.

Father Tomas MOANS in pain.

JUDAUS

Stay here.

Judaus moves quickly leaves.

The ill priest lays on the couch for a second.

Remembers something. Goes through his pockets. Finds his tin container. Manages to get the lid off. Holds it near the ground. Dumps out several roaches.

Hitting the ground, the roaches immediately scatter.

Tomas watches satisfied.

Lays his head on the sofa. Watches his creatures move about freely. Closes his eyes.

JUDAUS (O.S.)

Look at you. Sad, pathetic case.

Startled, Tomas looks toward Judaus's voice.

Judaus stands near the study doorway approaching. He points TOMAS' OWN PISTOL at him.

Tomas struggles to a sitting position. Holds his wounded hand close to his side.

JUDAUS

Frail old man. Just like the rest.  
Except I looked up to you. Thought  
you were special. Just like he  
said, a druggie and a liar.

TOMAS

Judaus. Please.

Judaus moves along the wall closer to Tomas.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - DAY

The Virgin Mary statue still. It's wooden base becoming deformed, bent. A force from within pushing on it.

INT. COMPARTMENT

Light from the outside now finding its way into the space from the spaces between the wood.

Philemon has his legs in a squatting position pushing with all his might against the wood. The wood giving in until...

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY

Tomas sits. Hunched over a little. An obvious sickly state. Face pale, lifeless.

A CRACK from outside the room.

Judaus close to him now looks towards the sound. More interested in what's in front of him, keeps the gun and his eyes focused on Tomas.

Judaus takes a chair. Situates it in front of Tomas. Sits.

#### MAIN ROOM

The wood for the statue's base now removed with broken wood planks on the ground in front.

Detective Philemon pulls himself from the tiny space. Stands. Checks the wound on his head with his hand. Dried blood only.

Remembering, the Detective lifts his shirt, rubs his chest. Finds the cross hanging from around his neck revealing the a smashed bullet right at the intersection of the cross. A miracle.

Detective Philemon runs his finger across the area. Looks up at the face of the Virgin Mary then back down at the miracle in his chest.

A VOICE from the Priest's study gets Philemon's attention.

He forgets about his near-death for a moment. His police instincts taking over. Goes to investigate.

Down the isle, between rows of pews, the Sicario lays dead. The large pool of blood visible beneath him.

Philemon notices. Goes to inspect. Sees the Sicario's weapon slowly takes it not sure if the Sicario is dead.

Again, a VOICE from the hallway gets Philemon's attention.

He leaves the Sicario's body. Creeps towards the priest's study near the front.

#### STUDY

Judaus sits in front of Tomas still.

Tomas looks up at Judaus.

TOMAS

You're searching for an end that  
doesn't exist, Judaus.

JUDAUS

I've had no one my whole life. The  
Church has promised me a life. He  
has promised me whatever I want.

(looks at leg)

More than you ever offered me.

TOMAS

He's using you.

(pause)

Look at me. What I've become.

Judaus leans towards Tomas.

JUDAUS

You didn't appreciate what was  
given to you. That's the difference  
between you and me.

TOMAS

There is no difference between us.

(pause)

What happens after you kill me?

What then?

JUDAUS

I get rid of this pain forever.

Judaus raises his pant leg showing off his disfigured lower  
leg, the reason for his limp.

JUDAUS

Get to run like a normal human  
being. You don't know what it's  
like to be deformed.

TOMAS

Yes I do.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - DAY

Detective Philemon creeps through the church. Gets to the front of the church. Turns to look behind him making sure no one is there.

Nothing. Continues on. Sees the light on in the priest's study.

Judaus's VOICE coming from the room.

Detective Philemon takes a few more steps. A sudden CREAK from a wooden floor panel stops the Detective in his tracks.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - STUDY - DAY

The NOISE from just outside in the hallway stops Judaus. He turns to investigate.

As he turns, using what remaining strength he has Tomas snatches the weapon from the inexperienced Judaus.

Judaus can do nothing but watch Tomas's pistol pointed at him.

Suddenly, Detective Philemon is standing in the doorway. Pistol pointed at Tomas.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Drop the gun, Father. It's over.

An unexpected visitor. Tomas looks at Detective Philemon. Keeps his aim steady.

Philemon has Tomas dead in his sights.

Judaus sits still watches both men intently. Stuck in the middle.

An anxious moment...

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Don't do it!

Can cut the tension...

TOMAS  
I was already dead.

Tomas looks towards the Heavens.

TOMAS  
Forgive me.

BANG! Tomas shoots at the back wall purposely missing Judaus.

BANG! Detective Philemon reactively shoots Tomas in the chest.

Tomas instantly falls on his back.

Philemon passes Judaus and goes to check on Tomas. Kneels over him.

Judaus sneaks out.

WHAT TOMAS SEES

The Housewife kneeling next to him. Holds his hand. Smiles. Her smile the forgiving kind.

BACK TO SCENE

Detective Philemon in the same position as Tomas's vision of the housewife.

TOMAS  
My necklace. It has what you need.  
What you're looking for.

Tomas removes the necklace from round his neck, gives it to Philemon.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON  
What is it?

TOMAS

The blood of Christ, proof that he exists. Who you've been searching for.

DETECTIVE PHILEMON

Wait...

TOMAS

We all get what we're looking for eventually, Detective.

Tomas with a satisfied smile on his face. Like he has finally found peace.

Tomas closes his eyes and dies. Ghostly smoke emanates from his corpse.

Detective Philemon stands. Nothing else he can do except watch TOMAS'S GHOST rise up through the ceiling.

Philemon prys open the locket revealing a clear container with small amount of liquid blood inside.

OVERHEAD SHOT

of Tomas's dead body laying in the silence. His dead, empty face.

INT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH

Judaus limps towards the exit.

The saintly effigies high on the wall watching. All statues representing one of the dead priests. Tomas likeness now on one.

EXT. LAMENTATIONS CHURCH - DAY

The beautiful sun peeking through the soft clouds.

The front door to the church opens. Judaus's lower half in full view. His foot comes directly down on a roach on the Church steps.

A full look at the Judaus reveals Dominus' face now instead of Judaus. In the wet rain he lights a cigarette. Takes a drag.

Dominus looks down at where the living roach once stood. Back towards the interior of the church.

DOMINUS

Roaches. Thousand more where they  
came from.

Dominus leaves the church steps. Limpes down the sidewalk a moment then begins walking normally.

Down the sidewalk out of sight.

FADE OUT.

THE END