

AS THE VOICE OF GREAT THUNDER

by
Brandon Lee Tenney

FADE IN:

EXT. BEACH - SUNSET - FLASHBACK

Rolling waves reach further and further up the desolate beach.

The sun is poised to dip into the ocean.

JERICO and DAMIAN are the sole couple amidst the sand. Their feet intertwine, their fingers draw together in the sand between them. Damian slides his brown hand over the top of Jericho's, clasps it tight.

PANTING fades through the waves.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. BEACH - TWILIGHT

The sunset is dull and without life.

FOOTSTEPS accompany the PANTING.

The figures drawn by Jericho and Damian are petrified in the sand like a plastered footprint.

The waves are still. Frozen mid-break.

PANTING. FOOTSTEPS.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - CONTINUOUS

Jericho races, his clothes torn, weathered, stained. Sweat pours from his skin.

Three, four, seven others run behind him.

More, hundreds maybe, are frozen in place. Some with coffee at their lips, mid-sip, others terrified, most confused.

Jericho weaves between them. The others break in different directions. Jericho never looks back.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER - CONTINUOUS

Jericho's hands SLAM against the large plate glass windows of the skyscraper in front of him.

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - TWILIGHT - FLASHBACK

Thunder CRACKS, but electronic, man-made.

Damian and Jericho lose each other's fingers as they run.

Damian, faster than Jericho, increases the distance between them.

Downtown looms in the distance in front of them.

Beside their footsteps, their breathing, no sound.

Then, SIRENS.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SKYSCRAPER - LOBBY - TWILIGHT

Each of Jericho's hits against the window are deep THUDS.

The halogen bulbs flicker, still eerily awake.

His hands, feet, head all POUND the safety glass.

The elevator across from the entrance door begins to crack open.

Through the crack between the elevator doors, fingers creep, parting the aluminum doors.

Jericho SCREAMS, POUNDS with more fervor.

An elderly face, PRIEST, peeks from the elevator, parallel to the floor.

A moment of inspection. The face disappears. Then, the doors part.

Slinking from the elevator, Priest is dressed all in black save the white collar about his neck.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER - CONTINUOUS

A wind, light, electric perks the hairs on Jericho's arm.

ELECTRICAL STATIC hums in the distance, rolling toward him.

Priest slides against the glass door. The deadbolt releases and Priest throws open the door.

Jericho rushes in.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Priest slams the door shut, re-latches the deadbolt.

PRIEST

The pulse of God. The pulse of God.
Quickly, now. Quick.

Priest hobbles toward the elevator, Jericho at his back.

Jericho overtakes Priest, dives inside the elevator. Priest follows.

INT. SKYSCRAPER - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

With the friction of their hands, they force the elevator doors shut.

Lights out. The ELECTRICAL STATIC is deafening for the moment the shockwave passes through them.

A candle flickers to life. Priest lights more candles around the claustrophobic box. Some canned food, bottled water, thermoses, a wooden cross line the walls.

Jericho collapses, his head in his hands.

JERICHO

Thank you, thank you.

Priest, nudging Jericho's arm, hands him an opened can of buttered lima beans.

Jericho snatches the can, spooning the beans into his mouth with his fingers.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - TWILIGHT - FLASHBACK

An abandoned shopping cart sits half-full with cans, duct tape, plastic bags.

Damian runs with his eyes to his back, slamming into the cart, its contents pouring on to the pavement.

Damian begins to gather the cans, reset the cart.

Jericho catches up to him.

JERICHO

There's no time. We've got to go.
Damian!

Jericho tugs at Damian's jacket.

Damian slaps his hand away, stands.

DAMIAN

What do you expect to eat? Drink?
We have nothing. There's nothing.
Look around. Wake up.

Jericho is silent, his and Damian's eyes fixed.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SKYSCRAPER - ELEVATOR - TWILIGHT

An empty can of buttered lima beans is cast beside Jericho.
His face is white.

PRIEST

Were you with anyone? When it.
When they--

JERICHO

Damian.

Priest extends his hand toward Jericho.

PRIEST

And you, brother of Damian, are?

JERICHO

Not his brother, Father. Not his--

Jericho's head collapses into his hands. His hands clasp his
hair, tug.

Priest slides to the floor.

PRIEST

I apologize.

JERICHO

Shouldn't you be leading your
congregation, Father. Unafraid.

PRIEST

Because I wear this collar, it does
not make me unafraid. The answers
are not beneath this collar. This
judgement. This is no judgement.
Can't be.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - TWILIGHT - FLASHBACK

A voice ECHOES through a megaphone.

Priest is behind the megaphone. His words are of *Revelation*.

PRIEST
REVELATION VERSES HERE.

In front of Priest are a few believers. One drops to her knees.

Damian and Jericho erupt through the group, Damian ahead of Jericho.

ELECTRICAL STATIC crescendos. Deafening. Jericho, Priest, and one other drop to their knees. Everyone else freezes.

Damian, in front of Jericho, freezes, his hand outstretched toward Jericho.

Jericho, on the ground, pushes himself away from Damian. Horrified, he rolls to his feet, runs.

Priest is still, but not frozen, staring at his stolen congregation.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SKYSCRAPER - ELEVATOR - TWILIGHT

Priest sleeps amidst the trash on the floor of the elevator.

Jericho stares at him, his face hard.

A low THUD. Another.

Beating on the window.

Jericho presses his ear to the elevator door.

A male SCREAM.

Jericho claws at the elevator doors. Shoving the canned food, water, trash out of the way, he braces himself, tugging at the doors. They begin to part.

Priest grabs Jericho's shoulders, pulling him from the doors to the ground.

PRIEST
No. No!

JERICHO
Get back. Damian. Damian is out
there. Get back!

PRIEST
He's not there.

They battle for position against the doors.

JERICHO
You don't know that. You can't
know that.

PRIEST
He's gone. There are no miracles.
There's nothing but what's after.

Jericho gains leverage and pushes Priest against the back wall of the elevator. Hitting his head, he falls hard to the floor.

Jericho uses all of his strength prying the elevator doors apart. He falls from the elevator, exhausted.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

He stumbles toward the doors.

Damian BEATS at the doors outside. His head is turned behind him.

Jericho SLAMS against the doors. Their hands meet on either side of the glass. Their foreheads touch, save for the glass between them.

Jericho tugs at the door. It doesn't budge.

JERICHO
Open this door. Open this fucking
door.

Priest crawls to the elevator entrance. His head is bloodied. There's a fire in his eyes.

PRIEST
There's no one there, son. There's
only death and ice beyond those
doors.

From Priest's POV, Damian is not outside. Jericho is alone at the doors.

Jericho continues to tug at the doors. Damian stops pounding, becomes still as he looks down the street.

The lobby begins to shake. ELECTRICAL STATIC is louder, faster than before.

Priest begins to close the elevator doors.

Jericho SMASHES his hand against the glass. Damian turns toward him, vanishes.

The shockwave careens through Jericho right before his hand hits the glass again. He freezes.

Priest nearly has the elevator doors shut, but the shockwave strikes, freezing him inside the elevator.

Silence.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jericho's hand clutches the sand, squeezing it between his fingers. The sand spills from the cracks on to Damian's chest. The small mountain of sand quivers above Damian's LAUGHTER. The sand collap--. STATIC. Freeze. Frozen.

END FLASHBACK

SMASH TO BLACK.