

THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

by

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Story by

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FADE IN:

THE DARK OF NIGHT

Stars. Everywhere. We can't tell Heaven from Earth.

Tiny pinpricks of light shimmer, flicker. They begin arcing -- bearing downward like shooting stars. But they're not stars, they're FIREBALLS. Hurling towards --

EXT. ACRE - NIGHT

A heavily fortified port city located on Haifa Bay.

Acre is the last remaining Christian stronghold in the Holy Land. A vast network of walls, towers, and breakwaters.

And she's under siege.

WHAM! Fireballs rain down, slamming into Acre's defensive outer walls. Explosions of FLAMES. A relentless, blistering bombardment. Two of her mighty defense towers lie in ruins.

The once great city is hanging by a thread.

Super: Acre, 28 May 1291

A solitary RIDER gallops across the desert. A MESSENGER.

As he rides towards Acre, we see fireballs streaking overhead, illuminating the night sky. The massive GATES open, granting him entry, then quickly close behind him.

WITHIN THE CITY WALLS

CRUSADER KNIGHTS hold the line -- dodging the onslaught of fireballs. The remaining walls and gates are propped up by bunks of timber. Weakened from weeks of constant attack.

Our Messenger rides through streets, littered with the dead, the wounded, the dying. Looters scrounge amongst the rubble. The Messenger dismounts, rushes towards ...

THE TEMPLAR CASTLE. The last remaining structure in Acre. A massive fortress overlooking the sea shore. Waves crash against the TOWERS, emblazoned with hammered bronze LIONS.

INT. TEMPLAR CASTLE - NIGHT

WOMEN and CHILDREN huddle together in the darkness. Frightened faces stained amber in the candlelight. The last survivors of Acre, all under the protection of the Templars.

Muted blasts echo. The castle rumbles.

INT. TEMPLAR CASTLE / CHAPEL - NIGHT

At the ALTAR -- KNIGHTS kneel in prayer, receiving the Holy Sacrament from a PRIEST. We see RED CROSSES emblazoned across their white mantles. These are the KNIGHTS TEMPLAR.

The Templars remain stoic, choking back their emotions. Many know this will be their last Sacrament.

The Priest holds a CHALICE, speaks barely above a whisper ...

PRIEST
(in Latin)
-- *the blood of Christ* --

As each Knight leans forward to sip from the chalice, his face is illuminated by the flickering candlelight --

PETER OF SEVREY, (40's). Marshall of the Knights Templar. Strong. Fair. Moral.

JACQUES DE MOLAY, (50). The elder statesman. An elegant, respected Knight. Flowing white hair and beard. And --

HUGH OF PAYNES aka "HUGH THE HAND." (20's). Intense eyes. Youthful. Rugged. Loyal. And our hero.

The Knights turn to each other, embracing, speaking in Latin ... "*May the Lord be with you.*", "*... And with you.*"

The MESSENGER enters, bows before Peter, then hands him a SCROLLED PARCHMENT. Peter unfurls it, reads ...

PETER OF SEVREY
The Sultan wishes to negotiate. A peace delegation awaits us at dawn.

JACQUES
Negotiate?
(re: explosions)
Doesn't sound like it to me.

HUGH
My lord. Allow me to accompany you --

PETER OF SEVREY
I need your strength here to ensure the safety of the innocent.
(off Hugh's disappointed look)
Have faith, brother. Now arrange my escort. We leave at first light.

INT. TEMPLAR CASTLE / PASSAGEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

As Hugh walks ... A SHADOW follows him. An assassin? Hugh senses it -- spins around, grabbing someone. Torchlight reveals ... a beautiful woman, (20's). This is MARCELA.

HUGH

Marcela! Why are you still here?
You were to have left the city --

MARCELA

And go where? Our children are
gone. Dead. Without you, I'm
alone. How can I leave?
(tearing up)
I love you.

She goes to kiss him, their lips touch. Hugh gently breaks it. He takes her in his arms, holding her tight.

HUGH

There's nothing else I want more ...
But it is forbidden. My pledge, my
oath to God ...

His heart is breaking. It's killing him.

MARCELA

Is it your oath to God? Is that
why you remain here and fight? Or
is it still for those long since
dead?
(a beat)
What about me? God would want us
to be together. As would you ...

She touches a NECKLACE he wears around his neck. TWO GOLD WEDDING BANDS hang from the simple silver chain.

MARCELA

Let us leave here, while we still can.

HUGH

I love you. I always will. But you
know I cannot do that.

He kisses her on the forehead ...

HUGH

Stay here in the temple. You'll be
safe. I will come back for you.

... and is gone.

SOMEONE WATCHES FROM THE SHADOWS

ALEXIUS OF THURINGIA, (20's). Charismatic. Strong.
Germanic good looks. Alexius is a TEUTONIC KNIGHT.

*(Note: Teutonic Knights dress just like the Templars but
a BLACK CROSS replaces the Templars' RED CROSS)*

As Marcela walks away, drying her eyes, he follows ...

ALEXIUS

Strange way to show someone love.
Choosing God over them.

MARCELA

He is an honorable man. He has
suffered greatly ... and sacrificed
more than you know ...

ALEXIUS

Indeed. But what about you? He
has chosen his path in life, what
of yours?

Marcela looks away. She has no answer. It hurts.

ALEXIUS

Come with me. Tonight. I can get us
both to safety. We can be together.
I'll give you everything you desire.

She looks down, silent.

An uneasy beat. Alexius smiles, swallowing his pride. He
then leans in, and kisses her on the cheek.

ALEXIUS

Another life perhaps.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ACRE - DAWN

Sun creeping over the bone-white desert horizon, revealing
the true extent of the damage to Acre.

VARIOUS QUICK SHOTS - THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

Templars preparing for battle, suiting up, arming themselves.
DRAPERS and SQUIRES saddling up Templar warhorses.

These warrior monks are the Green Berets of the Middle Ages.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAWN

All is quiet. We find PETER and HUGH with representatives of the other two great Military Orders: THE HOSPITALLERS and TEUTONIC KNIGHTS. The escort stands ready.

ALEXIUS looks on with VISAGO OF TISZA. A towering, muscular Crusader veteran. Alexius' sergeant and close friend.

Peter secretly hands Hugh a KEY. Hugh is taken aback.

PETER OF SEVREY
 These walls won't hold them back
 for long should negotiations fail.
 The Order's survival depends on it.

They exchange a silent look. Hugh nods. He understands.

CHURCH BELLS RING, giving the all clear.

PETER OF SEVREY
 Lower the flag! Open the gates!
 (crosses himself)
 God be with us all.

Crusaders jump into action, carrying out his orders.

THE BEAUSEANT (the Templar black & white banner) lowers ...

THE GATES OF ST. ANTHONY slowly open, revealing ...

THE MAMELUK ARMY

A fierce Muslim fighting force. 200,000 strong. Infantry. Calvary. Archers. Dozens of large MANGONELS (catapults) and SIEGE ENGINES. All regiments holding in temporary truce.

Peter and his escort ride out across the battlefield towards A PARLEY TENT. The grotesque landscape is littered with DEAD BODIES. Buzzards feast on the decomposing corpses.

Tension is thick.

MUSLIM ROYAL GUARDS show Peter and his men into the tent ...

EXT. TEMPLAR CASTLE / ROOFTOP - LATER

Jacques stands, looking out over the battlefield. He seems lost. His eyes looking beyond. Hugh approaches Jacques.

HUGH
 So, what do you see?

JACQUES
 (a sad laugh)
 The end.

Hugh sees the sea of Mameluk soldiers. Insurmountable odds.

HUGH
 I fear we will forever have the
 shame of defeat.

JACQUES
 There is no shame in our defeat.
 We did our duty. We saved lives.
 We defended God's land. We spilled
 blood in the name of Christendom ...
 In our defeat, there is only glory.

Suddenly, we hear VOICES shouting in the distance.

Hugh raises a medieval TELESCOPE to his eye ...

TELESCOPE POV: Something on the horizon, distorted by the
 rippling heat haze. The wavering image comes into focus ...

A HORSE. Galloping across the battlefield towards Acre.
 And hanging around the steed's neck like a wreath are ...

THE SEVERED HEADS OF PETER OF SEVREY AND HIS ESCORT!

And thundering up behind the horse -- THE MAMELUK ARMY!!

Horrified, Hugh lowers the scope, shouting --

HUGH
 Raise the flag! Evacuate the city!

MAMELUK DRUMMERS riding camels, bang away on kettledrums.
 An unnerving, thunderous war cry.

Mameluks fire their CATAPULTS -- unleashing a lethal barrage
 of rocks, pots of Greek fire, and severed heads.

CRUSADER KNIGHTS take cover as heavy ordinance rains down.
 Sprays of stone and roaring fireballs pummel the city. A
 SEVERED HEAD slams a Crusader Knight to the ground.

Mameluks roll their mighty SIEGE TOWERS and LADDERS up
 against the city's walls. Muslim foot soldiers charge --
 climbing -- rushing to engage the Christian forces.

CRUSADER ARCHERS AND CROSSBOWMEN repel the infidel invaders.

Crusader FIRE ARROWS strike a SIEGE TOWER -- igniting it. Fiery beams fall, collapsing on top of the tightly packed Mameluk infantry below. Men burn.

It looks like the Heavens opened up and Hell rained down.

CUT TO:

JACQUES and HUGH atop their WARHORSES, both man and horse dressed in full regalia. Hugh unsheathes his sword.

HUGH

Brothers! Let us kill the enemy or die, for you need not be afraid. We are soldiers of Christ. We have sworn to defend this city. It is our duty to God. Are you ready?!

A RALLYING CRY: "AYE!" Templars raising their swords high.

CUT TO:

THE GATES OF ST. ANTHONY swing open. The TEMPLARS charge. Horses galloping -- full force -- riding "knee-to-knee." This is an unstoppable, impenetrable tight formation.

Stones and fire pots EXPLODE all around. But the Templars don't flinch. They're on a mission. MAMELUKS stand ready. Ground RUMBLING beneath their feet, as --

WHAM! The Templars plow straight into the Muslim army!

Templars battle Muslims. Fierce. Unrelenting. Nothing but a whirling blur of dust, blood, metal. And death.

Swords, spears, axes and maces smashing, slicing, gutting men left and right. Heads roll. Limbs lopped. Destriers kicking, biting. It's a bloodbath.

We find HUGH -- wielding two swords -- cutting down Mameluks at will. Unbelievable skill. Brutal. Poetic. This is why they call him "*HUGH THE HAND*."

Hugh fights along side JACQUES. The old man holds his own.

Mameluks converge on THE GATES OF ST. NICHOLAS. Mangonels fire -- a heavy hail of block-busting stones rain down.

The concentrated catapult fire PUNCHES A HOLE through the weakened gates. Timber splinters. Then, stone by stone, the surrounding walls COLLAPSE! And men are buried alive.

A breach has been made.

Thousands of frenzied Mameluks charge --

HUGH
Fall back! Everyone fall back!

He and his fellow Templars haul ass back towards Acre.

INSIDE THE CITY WALLS

Mameluks flood into Acre -- easily and quickly overrunning the overwhelmed Crusader defenses.

TEMPLARS storm in on horseback -- cutting down Mameluks -- trying to plug up the damn and regain control.

JACQUES is quickly outnumbered. Four on one. Not good.

Suddenly -- POW! A TEMPLAR WARHORSE kicks a Mameluk -- hoof to head -- sending him flying. One down.

Hugh dismounts, flips a switch on his SHIELD. A lethal, SERRATED RAZOR RING springs out around the edges.

He whirls his shield around like a SPINNING BUZZ SAW -- quickly dispatching the others. Jacques nods, "*thanks.*"

The three military orders fight together -- but they're seriously outnumbered. Rocks and Greek fire still rain down.

JACQUES
Evacuate the temple! Get everyone to the ships! Our only hope is to reach the King's fleet.

As the Crusaders fall back, we see ALEXIUS and VISAGO stand their ground -- killing MAMELUKS -- clearing a path for ACRE'S CITIZENS as they pour into the TEMPLAR CASTLE.

HUGH fights along side OLIVER OF SAUNFORDE, (late 40's). A grizzled, bear-like Templar. He's wickedly quick. Strong.

INT. TEMPLAR CASTLE - SAME

As MARCELA helps escort people inside, she sees HUGH -- fighting off MAMELUKS. She grabs a LIT TORCH and --

EXT. TEMPLAR CASTLE - SAME

-- runs through the chaos. She stabs TWO MAMELUKS with her torch, LIGHTING THEM ON FIRE! Hugh grabs Marcela -- wants to hug her, but --

HUGH

Back inside! I'm right behind you!

She nods, then runs back towards the castle.

Suddenly, catapult fire sails overhead -- HAMMERING the castle. Deafening explosions. A castle wall crumbles. THE TEMPLAR CASTLE IS STARTING TO COLLAPSE.

Hugh and Alexius both watch in horror as ...

Rocks and rubble rain down ... burying MARCELA!

HUGH

No!

Hugh runs towards her -- starts digging -- pushing away heavy rubble. He can see her, but she's just out of reach.

ALEXIUS joins him and together they feverishly dig, oblivious to the battle raging around them. As they continue digging, more of Marcela's body is exposed... her face. Arms. Chest.

Hugh tries to pull her body out. Can't. Everything below her waist is still trapped under heavy rubble. JACQUES and OLIVER rush up, pulling Hugh away --

JACQUES

We have to go! Now!

HUGH

NO!

Hugh shakes them off -- runs back to Marcela. Looks into her eyes ... they are lifeless. Vacant. Desperately tries moving the heavier blocks of rubble that trap her. Oliver pulls him back again, harder.

OLIVER

Hugh! She's gone! Let her go!

Hugh still struggles, like a caged animal.

JACQUES

That's an order!

Hugh kneels there, for a moment, numb. Then snaps to -- momentarily burying his feelings, his loss.

He holds up the KEY Peter gave him, now stained with blood.

Jacques nods, quickly rounding up Templars.

JACQUES

To the vaults! Gather everything
you can!

Hugh gives Marcela's lifeless body one final look. A beat.
He crosses himself. And then leaves.

ALEXIUS remains silent, devastated. He too stares at her.
He watches HUGH running into the temple --

EXT. ACRE / HARBOR - DAY

A mass exodus. The defenders and noncombatants of Acre flee.
We see dozens of docked TEMPLAR, VENETIAN AND CYPRIOT SHIPS.

Civilians rush towards the galleys. Panicked. Scared.
WEALTHY CITIZENS beg SOLDIERS AND SAILORS -- offering their
valuables, their bodies -- anything -- for safe passage.

INT. TEMPLAR CASTLE / SECRET TUNNELS - DAY

TEMPLARS escort women and children down the subterranean
tunnels. Bright daylight up ahead in the distance.

HUGH leads Templars down a dimly lit tunnel. Walls rumble
as the battle rages above. Torches flicker. They enter --

INT. VAULT - DAY

An underground vault. Filled with priceless TREASURE.
Gold, silver, jewels, relics, holy artifacts.

As Templars get busy -- Hugh rushes to the back of the room
-- towards an IRON GATE. He unlocks it -- pushes forward --
hurries down another narrow tunnel, towards a small ALCOVE.

Sitting amongst broken pottery -- AN OBJECT, wrapped in
cloth. He unwraps it, revealing a bejeweled BRONZED CROSS.

INT. SECRET TUNNELS - SAME

ALEXIUS maneuvers through the throngs of evacuees -- he
sees TEMPLARS exiting a side passage, carrying TREASURE!

INT. VAULT - DAY

Hugh pulls out the KEY. He looks the cross over -- finds
a large RED RUBY. Hugh then removes the precious stone.
Underneath it -- A KEYHOLE.

Hugh inserts the key, turns -- CLICK! A panel springs open,
revealing a secret compartment. Hugh pulls out --

A small, tarnished SILVER BOX with the inscribed SEAL of the Templars: Two Knights riding a single horse. It looks worthless. But whatever it contains makes Hugh nervous.

Then it hits him -- all at once. Tears welling up in his eyes. A moment. Explosions echo. The room rumbles, dust rains down. Hugh turns to leave, bumping into ... ALEXIUS!

He sees the SILVER BOX in Hugh's hand. His eyes light up.

ALEXIUS

It does exist. The Holy Grail is the source of life. We can save her!

Hugh is caught by Alexius' suggestion. A beat. He looks down at the silver box in his hands. Anger. Sorrow. Torn.

HUGH

I... I can't. That's blasphemy.

ALEXIUS

You choose dogma over love? What kind of man are you? If you truly loved her, you would do anything to save her!

Explosions rumble again. Louder. Getting closer.

HUGH

We have to go! There's nothing we can do. She's dead. You must --

ALEXIUS

(unsheathes his SWORD)
Give it to me -- now!

HUGH

The Grail is not intended for mortal men. The mysteries of life and death are for God alone. Only the worthy --

Alexius attacks! Hugh -- right there with him -- sword drawn, defensive position. The two warriors engage. Swords clanging. Blocking each blow. Both extremely well-trained.

But Alexius overpowers Hugh -- pulls out a DAGGER -- and STABS Hugh up under his armor. Hugh collapses, dropping the SILVER BOX.

Alexius grabs it, tucks it away.

ALEXIUS

I'm sorry, but I love her.

As he exits, Hugh grabs his sword -- and throws it! THUNK!
The blade pierces the stone wall, just missing Alexius' face!

HUGH
(seething, in pain)
No matter what you do. She will
never love you! In this life or
the next.

Enraged, Alexius pulls Hugh's sword from the wall -- then
lays into him with a furious two sword attack!

Hugh throws anything and everything he can to block Alexius'
ferocious attacks -- Ceramic pots, goblets --

Alexius thrusts his sword -- Hugh uses a GOLD PLATTER as a
makeshift shield. The blade SKEWERS it. Stuck. Hugh kicks
Alexius, knocking him backwards --

Hugh rolls, grabbing a BULLWHIP from his side -- A RAZOR
SCYTHE attached to the end of it -- A WHIPSCYTHE!

He lashes out -- CRACK!-CRACK!-CRACK! Alexius blocks the
blows with his other sword. Sparks FLASH! The whipsythe
blade SEVERS Alexius' sword in half!

Hugh lassos Alexius around his midsection -- the whipsythe
blade CUTTING through Alexius' armor, gouging his stomach.

A fatal blow. Blood spews.

As Alexius falls, he slices the BULLWHIP with his broken
sword. Alexius pulls the whipsythe blade out of his gut.
He shivers in pain, shock kicking in. Life draining.

Hugh drops the whip -- and pulls his own DAGGER -- ready to
deliver the death blow. As he brings the blade down --

ALEXIUS BLOCKS IT ON THE DOWNSWING!

Hugh tries forcing the dagger down -- Alexius, using all his
strength, pushes back. The dagger's razor tip hovering just
centimeters over Alexius' EYE!

HUGH
Give me the Grail!

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - SAME

Mameluk catapults fire upon the TEMPLAR CASTLE. Clusters of
boulders slam into a TOWER. Direct hit! The tower PANCAKES
in on itself -- COLLAPSING into dust and rubble, and --

INT. VAULT - SAME

The walls SHAKE violently. CHUNKS OF STONE fall -- smashing Hugh. Alexius kicks him off -- rolling away -- just as --

THE CEILING CAVES IN, SPLITTING THE ROOM IN TWO!

Our two warriors buried under rubble. As the dust settles, JACQUES enters ... finds only HUGH. Out cold, but alive.

EXT. ACRE / HARBOR - DAY

GALLEYS ablaze under the barrage of Mameluk fire arrows. Another CAPSIZES due to being overloaded with passengers. Hurling rocks splash down. People screaming, drowning.

JACQUES exits the tunnel, carrying Hugh on his back.

He grabs a brilliant BLACK HORSE, jumps on and makes a mad dash for a Templar galley -- "THE FALCON." We see the galley's figurehead is a falcon, hence the name of the ship.

And behind the wheel -- ROGER LE FLOR, (20's). Captain of this vessel and the entire Templar Fleet.

ROGER
Cast off! Quickly!

Templars KICK OFF THE GANGPLANKS. But as they reach to untie the moorings -- MAMELUK ARROWS whizz by, peppering the ship.

With a fierce "YAHH!" Jacques snaps the reigns and the horse leaps from the dock onto the ship's deck.

THE FALCON tugs at its mooring. Wood creaking, straining. MAMELUKS rush the vessel. Templars fending them off. ONE MAMELUK climbs along the MOORING ROPES, hand-over-hand --

OLIVER throws a HATCHET. It hurls through the air -- SEVERING the rope and THE MAMELUK'S HAND! Stump spurting blood, he falls screaming into the water.

THE FALCON breaks free, and sails out into open ocean.

JACQUES looks back at Acre, sees the BEAUSEANT. It falls...

We hear Muslims rejoice. Victory.

INT. VAULT - LATER THAT DAY

All is still. Then, sudden movement. ALEXIUS, caked in dust and blood, struggles as he crawls his way out of the debris.

He collapses, face to face with a broken stone statue of CHRIST ON THE CROSS. Too weak to go on. He knows he's dying. We see rage, hatred, desperation burning inside of him. His watering eyes filled with venom.

ALEXIUS
 (looking at the statue)
 How many lives must be lost to
 honor Your name? How many?!

Hands shaking, he pulls out the SILVER BOX. Dented, but still intact. He opens it, and removes ...

A tiny VIAL.

Made of glass and alabaster. Laced with stamped silver. And filled with red liquid -- BLOOD.

He holds it up to the faint light ... staring in awe. Then, with his last breath -- he raises the vial to his lips, smiles. Toasts the statue...

ALEXIUS
 The blood of Christ.

...and drinks it.

Alexius licks his lips, savoring it. Fuck you.

With that, Alexius collapses.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VAULT - LATER

Dark, silent. We hear FOOTSTEPS approaching ...

TEUTONIC KNIGHTS appear, lit torches and bloodied swords in hand. And leading the charge is VISAGO. As they sweep the room, scrounging up treasure, Visago finds ALEXIUS.

VISAGO
 My, lord! You're alive!

We realize something is different with Alexius. A FAINT GLOW to his eyes. His pupils, wolf-like.

ALEXIUS
 Take me back up to the surface ...

One of the Knights notices Alexius' severe wounds.

TEUTONIC KNIGHT

Forget him. He's good as dead.

Alexius grabs Visago, hard. For a dying man, he's strong.

ALEXIUS

Take me out of here ...

VISAGO

We must hurry. The infidels
control the city ...

EXT. ACRE / TEMPLAR CASTLE - MOMENTS LATER

Rubble. Ruins. Smoke plumes. We see ARAB SLAVES tossing
DEAD BODIES INTO HAND CARTS, hauling them away. Morbid.

ARABIAN WOLVES -- mangy, scary-looking -- skulk around,
feasting on the dead. Suddenly, they look up as --

VISAGO emerges from the temple, Alexius draped over his
shoulders. Alexius winces in the sunlight. Visago has his
sword drawn, looking out for Mameluks.

ALEXIUS

Visago, the sun hurts my eyes.

Visago covers Alexius with his surcoat. As they hurry
towards where Marcela lies buried, nearby HORSES freak,
bucking wildly. Camels groan. Sensing evil. Spooked.

Alexius sifts through the rubble, sunlight burning his bare
skin -- now RED like a bad sunburn. Fighting through pain,
he pulls out ... MARCELA. Her body broken, bloodied.

ALEXIUS

(tearing up)

No, no, no. Marcela ...

He puts his head on her chest, listening, praying for a
heartbeat. There is the faintest sign of life.

Visago unsheathes a dagger, places the blade underneath her
nostrils. No breathing. Nothing. Visago shakes his head.
Enraged, Alexius pushes Visago, pulling her body into his.

ALEXIUS

She's still alive! We must take
her with us!

VISAGO

We cannot! We must leave now, and
head north. Before it's too late.

Alexius weeps. A man who's soul has just been torn out.
He kisses her. His bloody lips on hers.

Visago drags Alexius away. Marcela's body falls back to
the ground. Alexius looks back one last time to see --

ARAB SLAVES picking up her corpse and unceremoniously dumping
it into a cart. Dead bodies are piled on top, burying her.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TEMPLAR GALLEY - DAY

Hugh wakes, lying in hay, bathed in slatted daylight.
Rocking gently. Gathering himself together, he sees --

THE BLACK HORSE. It nudges him. They're both safe.

Hugh is surrounded by the wounded, the dying. Refugees.
Faces saddened, emotionally drained. Uncertain futures.

EXT. TEMPLAR GALLEY / MAIN DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Open ocean. Roger at the wheel. Hugh appears topside.

As Hugh limps across the deck, he sees OLIVER tending to
the wounded. He is a TEMPLAR DOCTOR as well as a soldier.
MONKS bless the dead, then dump their bodies overboard.

Hugh finds Jacques, staring out across the ocean. Hugh
approaches him, sad. Ashamed. Wants to come clean.

HUGH

Alexius took the Grail... he died in
the temple's collapse. The Grail
is lost. I lost it. Forgive me ...

JACQUES

There was nothing you could have
done, brother. However all is not
lost with the Grail. That is why we
have three vials, *The Holy Trinity*.
The blood of our saviour remains so.
Christ will walk among us again.

He lays a comforting hand on Hugh's shoulder.

JACQUES

And I am sorry for your loss. She
is with God now. Take heart that
many survived, thanks to you.

Hugh nods. OLIVER approaches ...

OLIVER
 Life is for the living, my friend!
 'Tis part of God's grand plan for
 us all!

Oliver pulls a metal flask. His ruddy features suggest some good living and that he's bent the strict rules of being a Templar more than a few times. Hugh eyes the flask.

OLIVER
 Medical spirits. But not for you.
 (takes a pull)
 Now let's go help those with real
 injuries, eh?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT / OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF ACRE - DUSK

We see DEAD BODIES being set ablaze, one pile after another. Flames spiraling up into the purple skies. Funeral pyres.

ON A PILE OF BODIES

Sudden movement. Something clawing, pushing its way out from underneath the dead bodies. Fingers ... then a HAND...

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

A dark cloudless night. Sweeping desert winds.

A small camp in the middle of nowhere. GUARDS on lookout.

INT. TENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Alexius lays in a cold sweat. Visago tends to him. An ARAB SLAVE enters, jug of water in hand. He can't even look at Alexius. And hurries away.

ALEXIUS
 Why do they fear me?

VISAGO
 They fear you because a man with
 your wounds should have died. And
 yet you still live.
 (a beat)
 They call you "*Ubir.*"
 (off Alexius)
 It means witch.

ALEXIUS
 You fear me as well, don't you?

Visago doesn't answer. He leaves in silence.

A beat. Alexius picks up a DAGGER lying by his bedside. He stares, contemplating. Then something catches his eye ...

IN THE BLADE'S REFLECTION -- Alexius's face. It's soft, out of focus. As if FADING. But everything else looks normal.

He gently touches his face, scared. What is happening to me?

Off Alexius, we ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - NIGHT

A LONE FIGURE, silhouetted in moonlight, walks slowly across the dunes. Robes BILLOWING in the howling wind.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Dark, except for a single candle. A sudden gust of wind. The flame flutters, then dies.

Alexius awakens, sensing something. A presence. He sees a SHADOW against the tent. Someone standing right outside.

Winching in discomfort, Alexius rises, grabs a dagger, pulls aside the entrance flap, revealing ...

MARCELA. Haunting. Beautiful in her flowing robes. Without blemish. But she also looks pale, eyes vacant.

Alexius stares, lowering the dagger. He reaches out, touching her face ... she's cold.

ALEXIUS

Marcela ... ? You came back to me.
You came back ...

FADE TO BLACK.

Super: 16 years later

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The Languedoc-Roussillon region of France. Lush countryside dotted with grazing sheep and cows surrounds a SMALL VILLAGE.

Super: Montsegur, Southern France. 1307

IN THE VILLAGE -- We see TEMPLARS feeding peasants -- healing the sick -- building a chapel -- doing BANKING.

IN A VINEYARD -- Templars and local Villagers work side by side, picking grapes. They look up as a RIDING PARTY gallops past. The riders are TEMPLAR KNIGHTS.

They ride towards CASTLE MONTSEGUR. A massive Templar castle at the base of the Pyrenees mountains.

EXT. CASTLE MONTSEGUR / COURTYARD - DAY

The riding party dismounts. We recognize one rider as the Templar Captain, ROGER LE FLOR (now 30's). And ...

JACQUES DE MOLAY. (Now in his 60's). Looking older, wiser. And the current Grand Master. Everyone bows with respect

He looks around, sees Templars training. Swords clanging. But he doesn't find who he's looking for.

JACQUES

Where is Master Hugh de Payes?

EXT. COTTAGE - DAY

We find HUGH repairing a ROOF. Hammering nails. Sweating in the sun. He too looks older, wiser, bearded. Zen-like.

As Hugh steps down the ladder, his squire ELYAS D'ALBON (15) lugs over a pail of water. Hugh takes a drink.

Suddenly, Elyas bows. Hugh turns around, sees JACQUES standing there, smiling. Hugh bows. Respect.

HUGH

Master. 'Tis good to see you!

They hug. It's been a long time.

JACQUES

It is good to be back home.

HUGH

What brings you to Montsegur?

JACQUES

Crusade.

Hugh's eyes ruffle. Jacques motions. Walk with me.

JACQUES

The Pope believes we can take back the Holy Land. As do I.

HUGH

The Crusades were nothing more than a long act of intolerance in the name of God -- a sin in itself.

JACQUES

Perhaps. But we are a standing army without a battlefield. And the fact remains that Jerusalem still lies under Muslim control. That does not sit well with Rome.

HUGH

If it bothers them so, then let them fight for it --
 (catches himself)
 Forgive me, but there will never be peace.

JACQUES

(nods, then smiles)
 One day, I hope. Nonetheless, King Philip has sent for me at the behest of Pope Clement. We are to assemble in Paris, the first of October. They both grow concerned of uprisings in Outremer. Word speaks of a kingdom, not Muslim, Mongol or Jew ...

HUGH

Who are they?

FLASH TO:

EXT. VULGA/BULGARIAN BORDER - DUSK

Winter. Snow. Ural mountains. A small SLAVIC VILLAGE lies nestled in a sea of white.

SLAVIC VILLAGERS on patrol, trying to keep warm in the cold. Dusk turns to NIGHT. The moon low on the horizon.

JACQUES (V.O.)

No one knows. Just rumor, legends. Some call them *Vampirics*, from the word *Vampyr* or *Ubir*. Means witch or Devil. Superstitious madness really. But something evil lurks in the East. Deep within the black forests ... and they're on the move, threatening our borders ...

Movement in the SNOW below. ONE SLAVIC thinks he sees something. He raises his torch, but it's hard to see in the snow flurries. Everything remains still. He moves on ...

Suddenly, SHADOWY SHAPES silently rise from under the snow.

The SLAVIC walks, torch in hand. Suddenly, one of the SHADOWY SHAPES leaps out. Flickering torchlight reveals ...

A HIDEOUS FACE.

Wild, bloodshot eyes. Fangs. Then --

SCREAMS. Lost in the howling wind. Blood in the snow.

RESUME.

EXT. CASTLE MONTSEGUR / BALCONY - DUSK

Both men stand, overlooking the vineyard.

JACQUES

Both King Philip and the Pope see this instability as an opportunity to gain a foothold in the Holy Land. I want you to come with me to Paris. I need you at my side. As my Seneschal.

A beat. Hugh stares off into the sunset.

HUGH

Marcela questioned my faith back then ... whether I was fighting for God, or for those close to me that are long since dead. The truth is, I never knew. But I am at peace now. My retirement from war is a blessing.

JACQUES

You question your faith? I understand. Then do it, please, for a dear old man.

A beat. Hugh bows slightly.

HUGH

I would be honored.

Jacques smiles, throws an arm around him. Together.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARIS - DAY

The magnificent city on the River Seine.

Super: Paris, France - 4 April, 1307

Grey. Cold. Gloom. Remnants of rioting. Homeless litter the streets. France has seen better days.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A Gothic Catholic Church. A CARRIAGE waits outside -- surrounded by ROYAL GUARDS, holding back a growing mob.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Kneeling before a tomb is KING PHILIP IV aka PHILIP THE FAIR. (30's) Handsome. Fair complexion (hence his nickname). But we can see a quiet anger brewing behind those sad eyes.

His fingers gently touch the tomb. The name on the tomb: Jeanne of Navarre. 1271-1305. His wife.

EXT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Philip exits, escorted by GUARDS. The angry mob shouts, tossing rocks and garbage. Knights and Men-at-Arms work crowd control as Philip's carriage flees.

DOWN THE STREET

Another CARRIAGE waits. Bizarre, exotic Eastern design. Blacked out windows. The carriage is surrounded by ARMED GUARDS riding BLACK HORSES. Both adorned in strange BLACK IRON ARMOR. Almost alien-like. Intimidating.

Civilians look on, bewildered. Veering clear. Scared.

EXT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE - DAY

Beautiful. Massive. Manicured gardens. Immense wealth.

The strange CARRIAGE clatters up to the main gates. We see the sun peeking through the clouds.

INT. PALACE / BEDROOM - DAY

A BOY (8) sleeps, sweating. Pale. Gravely ill. A staff of handmaidens. Philip at his son's bedside. Helpless.

GUILLAUME DE NOGART, the King's councillor, enters.

GUILLAUME

You have a guest, my lord.

KING PHILIP

You know I am not receiving visitors
at this time.

GUILLAUME

They insisted, my lord. They have
travelled far and said the very
security of France depends on it.

(a beat)

And they bring you gifts ...

He produces a gift, wrapped in felt. Philip takes it,
opens it -- A LARGE, POLISHED DIAMOND. Priceless.

Intrigued, Philip crosses to the window, looks down, sees --

THE CARRIAGE. Surrounded by an ARMED ESCORT ON HORSEBACK.
A SQUAD OF PHILIP'S ROYAL GUARDS stand at attention.

EXT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE - MOMENTS LATER

THE ARMED GUARDS roll out a canvas AWNING -- from the side
of the carriage car all the way to the palace front doors.

The carriage door opens ... an IMPOSING FIGURE steps out.
His entire body covered in black, folded Bedouin-type ROBES.
His face covered by a fierce-looking, exotic WOODEN MASK.

Another FIGURE exits. Dressed in similar fashion with
folded robes and BLACK ARMOR. The robes wrap up around
his face, leaving only a slit for his eyes...

The STRANGER walks under the awning toward the palace, his
BODYGUARD following. The STRANGER suddenly stops at the
front doors, as if waiting for permission to enter ...

ROYAL SERVANTS gesture graciously, inviting him in.

INT. PALACE / GRAND HALLWAY - DAY

Our guests are lead down the hallway, passing by ...

THE CHAPEL. THE STRANGER sees the crucifixes, relics.

As he moves past, the chapel doors SLAM SHUT -- on their own.

INT. PALACE / THRONE ROOM - DAY

King Philip sits, surrounded by his ROYAL COURT.

THE STRANGER enters, no sound of movement. Like he's gliding on air. He gently waves his hand -- extinguishing all but a few candles, dimming the room.

He bows before Philip. Respect.

THE STRANGER
 Forgive me. For my eyes are
 sensitive to the light.

He then slowly removes his mask, revealing that the Stranger is ALEXIUS! He hasn't aged a day.

Alexius hands his mask to his Bodyguard. We recognize the stature of the Bodyguard. It can only be VISAGO.

ALEXIUS
 I am Prince Alexius of Thuringia.
 I have travelled from the Far East
 to be in your presence.

KING PHILIP
 Welcome to France, Prince Alexius.
 And now that you are here, what may
 I ask is the purpose of your visit?

ALEXIUS
 The purpose is that we share a
 common problem.

KING PHILIP
 Really? And that is?

ALEXIUS
 The Templars.

Philip bristles ever so slightly.

ALEXIUS
 The Templars are drunk with wealth
 and power. Your father practically
 gave them your whole empire. You
 may rule this land, but the Templars
 are forever tied to it unless ...

KING PHILIP
 Unless what?

ALEXIUS
 Unless you dissolve the Order.
 Do so and your debt goes with them.
 Only then will you be free.

KING PHILIP

Impossible! The Templars are untouchable, protected by the Church. It is out of the question.

ALEXIUS

I believe you will find the Pope amenable to this suggestion.

KING PHILIP

And what do you hope to gain in return? Taking on such a powerful adversary, the wounds must run deep.

ALEXIUS

You have no idea.

(an uneasy beat)

Then there is the matter of your son. I offer you my condolences. I understand he is... ill. The same sickness that took your wife two years ago this very day.

KING PHILIP

You forget your place, Prince!

ALEXIUS

I know of a way to save him. A cure.

KING PHILIP

-- there is no cure! --

ALEXIUS

-- and the Templars possess it. The Holy Grail.

Murmured gasps. Philip's interest piqued.

KING PHILIP

The Cup of Christ?

ALEXIUS

No mere cup. Something even more precious. It is life itself.

(a beat)

It is the Blood of Christ. The Holy Blood was divided into three vials. Now, only two remain --

KING PHILIP

(stands)

Blasphemy! Leave here at once!

ALEXIUS

I offer you my allegiance. I will not offer a second time.

KING PHILIP

I have no need to be part of your vendetta, nor do I need your allegiance --

ALEXIUS

-- Then your kingdom will crumble. It will become a wasteland. It will fall before me, like every one that came before yours.

Philip's MEN-AT-ARMS inch their SWORDS from their sheaths.

KING PHILIP

Challenge me if you must, but it will be your defeat.

Alexius looks around, sizing up the threat. And backs down.

ALEXIUS

Very well. Then let us part as brothers and not enemies.

Alexius steps towards Philip, hand outstretched. A beat. Philip returns the gesture. A handshake and an embrace ... A kiss on each cheek, then --

Alexius grabs Philip's face and kisses him on the lips!

Alexius's teeth BITE into his lips! We hear Philip's muffled screams as he struggles, trying to break free from this painful Judas kiss ...

Alexius breaks the embrace and Philip falls to the ground. Blood oozing from his torn lip. Coughing, trembling with fear, he looks up at Alexius ...

Alexius' EYES have changed. Blood red. Animalistic. Evil. His teeth are jagged, SHARP! Frightening.

KING PHILIP

W-what -- what are you ... ?

ALEXIUS

I am the darkness in which all life dies ...

The MEN-AT-ARMS PULL THEIR SWORDS AND ATTACK!

Alexius ducks, dodges and weaves each blow. Their blades smashing and hacking furniture, gashing tapestries --

Alexius leaps up -- his TALON-LIKE FINGERS digging into the stone wall. He crawls along like a spider.

GUILLAUME
Assassins! Assassins!

VISAGO spins -- pulling off robes wrapped around his arms -- the force of the UNFURLING FABRIC flinging STAR-LIKE DAGGERS hidden within its folds --

Daggers fly out in all directions -- THUNK! THUNK! THUNK!
Lethal blades impaling Soldiers like exploding shrapnel.

MORE SOLDIERS burst into the room, grabbing King Philip.
ALEXIUS and VISAGO take off -- out the doors --

EXT. PALACE / HALLWAY - SAME

-- and running into MORE OF PHILIP'S SOLDIERS!

They quickly ascend up a STONE STAIRWELL, leading to --

EXT. PALACE / ROOF - DUSK

Sunset over Paris. Alexius and Visago run to the edge of the roof. They quickly unravel the robes from around their arms -- and LEAP OFF THE ROOF!

As they fall, their ROBES billow out like parachutes, catching the early evening breeze ... slowing their fall ...

Philip's men can only watch as Alexius and Visago GLIDE down into the streets below ...

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - DUSK

ALEXIUS' CARRIAGE and ESCORT clatters down the street.

Alexius and Visago hit the ground running, not missing a beat. They grab hold of the passing CARRIAGE, pulling themselves inside. Gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

THE TEMPLAR CARAVAN journeys across France. Knights on horseback. Sergeants, monks, and squires in tow. Mules pulling carts, full of food, weapons, supplies.

HUGH rides the same BLACK HORSE (now named PETE). Templars hand out rations, coins to passing BEGGARS. Charity work.

EXT. TEMPLAR CAMP - DUSK

Hugh trains ELYAS. They spar, swords clanging. TEMPLARS sit, looking on, taking note.

HUGH

To be a Templar you must be willing
to make many sacrifices, abide by
many rules, and obey to the letter,
the word of our God --

The sparing intensifies. Elyas matches Hugh's every move.

HUGH

-- A Templar must be merciful without
wickedness, affable without treachery,
compassionate towards the suffering.
A just judge without favor or hate.
He must prefer death to dishonor.
And protect the Holy Church for she
cannot defend herself. But above
all, pay attention at all times ...

Hugh's sword flicks Elyas' sword right out of his hands. He sweeps Elyas' feet from under him. Elyas ends up on his ass, humiliated. Laughter from the other Templars.

Elyas grabs his sword, and is back on his feet launching into a stunning attack. Hugh has to work to keep him at bay.

SSCHINK! Elyas's blade grazes Hugh's hand. Blood seeps. Elyas freezes, horrified. But Hugh smiles ... "Very good."

JACQUES

Ferocity! Like someone else I know.
(pats Hugh)
You've taught him well.

LATER

Hugh idly plays with his GOLD WEDDING RINGS as he lays by the campfire. His eyes grow heavy, his mind drifts...

FLASHBACK -- VARIOUS SUN BLEACHED IMAGES:

A younger HUGH and MARCELA in Jerusalem.

-- Hugh as a CARPENTER, planing wooden beams. Marcela bringing him food. They kiss -- they laugh -- in love -- better days -- happier days -- Marcela's smile --

-- in a Jerusalem street, Hugh fights through PANICKING CROWDS, fleeing from marauding SARACENS -- MARCELA SCREAMS as their CHILDREN are cut down by the Saracens --

Hugh snaps to as Elyas hands him a plate of food. A beat. He takes it, nods. Thanks. Elyas looks on, concerned.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARIS - DAY

The Templar caravan arrives in Paris.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - LATER

A magnificent walled-in complex. Stunning architecture. The temple is designed like The Temple of Solomon.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE / SOLAR - NIGHT

Hugh looks out his window, out to PARISIAN STREETS BELOW. The streets are empty. Eerily quiet.

Then a FIGURE walks from the darkness, into the moonlit street. Dark robes billowing in the breeze. As they draw closer, Hugh sees who it is ...

HUGH
Marcela...?

It is. She's alive! Marcela looks up at him. Beautiful. Just like the last time he saw her in Acre.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE / STREETS OF PARIS - MOMENTS LATER

Hugh runs into the streets. Marcela is GONE.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - LATER

Hugh walks the halls, confused yet elated. Jacques appears.

JACQUES
It's late. Everything all right?
(Hugh nods)
We have been granted an audience
with the King and His Holiness.
First thing tomorrow morning, after
prayers.

Hugh nods. And solemnly walks back to his room.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - DAWN

First light. Pink sky. Cold. Streets are empty, still.

Super: Friday, October 13, 1307

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - DAWN

The chapel bell rings. A medieval alarm clock.

Daily morning rituals. We see MONKS cooking, cleaning, doing various chores. TEMPLARS quietly enter the chapel.

INT. CHAPEL - DAWN

Matins. Early morning prayers. Templars kneel, in silence.

Hugh praying. He rises, crosses himself, and exits.

INT/EXT. PARIS TEMPLE / STABLES - DAWN

SQUIRES tending to horses, livestock. Cleaning stables.

ELYAS brushes PETE. HUGH approaches. Elyas sees him, stops working, bows immediately. Hugh waves him off.

HUGH

It's all right, Elyas. I'll take
it from here ...

(to horse)

Good morning, Pete. How does an
early morning ride sound?

INT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE / UNKNOWN CHAMBER - DAWN

A FRENCH SERGEANT enters the darkened room, bows. All we see are TWO, GLOWING EYES reflecting in the darkness.

VOICE (O.S.)

The order is given.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - MORNING

Jacques, Hugh, and Elyas ride. Streets now filling up with Parisians. They bow as the Templars pass.

INT. GARRISON - MORNING

KING PHILLIP'S TROOPS mobilizing. Arming themselves.

EXT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE - MORNING

Our Templars enter the main gates.

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - MORNING

KING PHILIP'S TROOPS on the move -- on a mission. Quickly and quietly. Some on horseback, some on foot.

EXT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE - MORNING

Jacques and Hugh are lead inside the palace. Elyas stays behind with the horses.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE PARIS TEMPLE WALLS - MORNING

LEGIONS OF PHILIP'S TROOPS surround the temple complex -- quickly sealing off any and all escape routes.

INT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE / THRONE ROOM - MORNING

Dark, aside from a few burning candles. We see KING PHILIP and POPE CLEMENT V (60's) sitting. GUILLAUME DE NOGARET stands at the Philip's side. Their faces hidden in shadow.

Jacques and Hugh enter, and bow before them. Jacques sees the King and Pope's animalistic eyes burning red. Something is not right. Before he can say anything ...

Someone silently emerges from the darkness ... ALEXIUS.

Hugh, speechless. Horrified. He's staring at a ghost. Hugh and Jacques exchange a look. This can't be happening.

HUGH

You ...? You're dead ...

ALEXIUS

The earth did not receive my body,
and heaven did not receive my soul.
God would not have me. This is my
resurrection.

He then smiles.

Hugh knows. Alexius drank the blood of Christ!

ROYAL GUARDS suddenly pour in, encircling Jacques and Hugh.

JACQUES

What is the meaning of this?!

GUILLAUME steps forward, unfurls a notice.

GUILLAUME

By order of King Philip of France
and His Holiness, Pope Clement V --
you are all under arrest.

JACQUES

On what charges?!

INT. PARIS TEMPLE - SAME

BAM! Doors break open -- one after another -- rapid fire
precision -- Philip's Knights rushing in -- swords drawn --
leveled at Templars' throats. Surprise!

GUILLAUME (V.O.)

... 128 charges to be exact. Including
heresy, immorality, sodomy, spitting
and urinating on the cross, associating
with Muslims ...

We see Templars being arrested throughout the temple.
Unarmed, they have no chance to fight back.

INT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE / THRONE ROOM - SAME

Jacques can't believe what he's hearing. Hugh eyes Alexius.
He knows he's behind all this. Alexius smiles.

JACQUES

These are lies!
(pleading to KING PHILIP
and POPE CLEMENT)
Your Holiness, my Lord --

POW! Guillaume hits Jacques, knocking him to the floor.
He draws his sword, pinning the blade against Jacques' neck.

JACQUES

Hugh! Run! Warn the others!

ROYAL GUARDS charge Hugh, unsheathing their swords -- but
Hugh -- already in motion -- moving fast -- he grabs A GUARD,
gets him in a choke hold, and takes his sword.

Hugh deflects the oncoming blows, using his captive Guard as
a human shield. Hugh then kicks him into the other Guards,
toppling them over. Hugh runs --

EXT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE / STABLES - MOMENTS LATER

ELYAS with the horses, waiting. PETE whinnies, antsy.

ELYAS
Easy, Pete. Easy.

We then hear sudden COMMOTION. Elyas turns, sees --
HUGH -- rounding the corner, full sprint. Panic in his eyes.

ELYAS
Master, Hugh ...?

Suddenly, DOZENS OF GUARDS AND KNIGHTS appear, chasing Hugh!
Hugh runs up, quickly mounts Pete, reaches out to Elyas.

HUGH
C'mon!

He pulls him up, then snaps the reigns, and Pete bolts --

FRENCH SERGEANT
(to horsemen)
After them! Dead or alive!

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - MOMENTS LATER

Hugh and Elyas race through the crowded streets of Paris --
galloping past The Sorbonne, Palais du Louvre ...

Behind them -- A SQUAD OF PHILIP'S KNIGHTS in hot pursuit.

Hugh spurs Pete on, entering --

LE HALLES MARKETPLACE -- The central marketplace of Paris.
Packed with merchants, customers, tradesmen, livestock.
A labyrinth of stalls and carts, full of goods, produce ...

Hugh leaps off, hands Elyas the reigns -- and his sword.

HUGH
Meet me at Saint Bernard's.

ELYAS
But, Sir! I can't leave you --

HUGH
Go! I'll draw their attention.
They're after me, not you --

Elyas nods. *"Well, of course"*.

Pete bolts -- taking Elyas away -- just as PHILIP'S MOUNTED
KNIGHTS arrive on scene, quickly surrounding Hugh.

FRENCH SERGEANT
I order you to surrender!

Hugh reaches over to a merchant stand, grabbing --

TWO HUGE HANDFULS OF POWDERED SPICES.

Hugh spins -- flinging the spice -- right into the eyes of the horses and knights. Blinding them. Eyes burning.

Horses bucking wildly -- tossing THREE KNIGHTS. They land, hard. In pain. Swords clattering to the ground. Hugh -- dodging stomping hooves -- grabs a sword. Bolts --

But the Knights don't pursue. Hesitant.

FRENCH SERGEANT
(rubbing his eyes)
He's just one man! Get 'im!

Reluctantly, they give chase.

CUT TO:

HUGH running deeper into the marketplace -- running into a dead end. Trapped. And rushing up behind him --

THREE KNIGHTS. They attack. Three on one. Hugh defends himself against the three-man attack. Blinding speed and unmatched skill. Metal clanging. Vicious. Relentless.

Hugh kicks one Knight -- knocking him back into --

A BUTCHER'S TABLE.

CRASH! Meat, entrails and blood fly. The BUTCHER, chopping meat, unwittingly CHOPS into the Knight with his CLEAVER!

Hugh snags a bloodied COW LEG BONE, mid-air.

Now armed with both a sword and a leg bone -- Hugh attacks, killing the TWO KNIGHTS. A deadly one-two punch. Suddenly --

PFHHOOOOT-THUNK! A METAL BLUR slingshots past Hugh's head.

Hugh sees a KNIFE now imbedded into the bone which he holds in his hand. He stares down at his unseen attacker.

It's the Knight -- his face and armor smeared with blood, entrails. He smiles. Hugh stabs him a look: "You're dead." His smile quickly fades as Hugh marches towards him ...

Frantic, the Knight grabs another knife. Too small. He scours again. Really panicking. This time he grabs the LARGE, NASTY-LOOKING CLEAVER from the dazed BUTCHER.

HUGH and the KNIGHT fight it out. Hugh parries with the BONE, eventually knocking the CLEAVER from the Knight's hand. Disarmed, the Knight runs.

Hugh hurls the bone like a tomahawk -- hitting the Knight upside the back of the head. He falls. Out cold.

Suddenly, PHILIP'S MOUNTED KNIGHTS appear --

FRENCH SERGEANT
Run 'im down!

Hugh runs -- climbs up onto a passing HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE -- and SURFS the carriage down the cobblestone street.

CARRIAGE DRIVER looks back, startled. Hugh throws him a look, motions -- faster! The Driver nods, does so.

PHILIP'S KNIGHTS ride up along side the moving carriage.

FRENCH SERGEANT
(to the driver)
Stop! I order you to stop!

The driver feigns bad hearing. The carriage trundles on.

KNIGHTS attack -- trying to cut Hugh off at the knees. Hugh jumps, blocks and dodges each lethal swipe. We can see and hear the REGAL-LOOKING COUPLE inside screaming.

A KNIGHT swings -- his BLADE digs into the carriage. Stuck.

And the blade is facing FLAT-SIDE UP.

Then, in one fluid motion -- Hugh STEPS OFF the carriage -- onto the sword blade -- tightropes the blade -- drops onto the horse's ass -- then catapults himself onto --

THE ROOF OF A PASSING CARRIAGE.

Heading in the opposite direction! Timed it perfectly.

Knights reign in their horses, turning around -- barely.

HUGH surfs the carriage down the street. He jumps down next to the DRIVER, taking the reins from him ...

HUGH
Forgive me.

Hugh pulls on the reins, the CARRIAGE SLOWS TO A STOP -- RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF A BUSY INTERSECTION OF NARROW STREETS!

A chain reaction of carts and carriages -- CRASHING into each other from all directions. A 14th CENTURY TRAFFIC JAM!

A CART lugging DOZENS OF WINE BARRELS crashes. An avalanche of barrels hit the streets. Some crack open, wine gushing out. Beggars and homeless rush in, slurping up free wine.

The MOUNTED KNIGHTS are stuck. They can only watch as HUGH jumps from carriage roof to carriage roof, escaping. Gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE SEQUENCE - THE TEMPLAR PURGE

GUILLAUME DE NOGARET addresses a LARGE CROWD outside King Philip's Palace, reading from a scroll.

GUILLAUME

... As of this day, Friday, October 13th in the year 1307 -- King Philip of France hereby declares that The Order of the Knighthood of the Temple are now enemies of France ...

All throughout France, we see Templars being arrested. GUILLAUME's VOICE carries over the following images:

GUILLAUME (OVER)

... They have been charged with unspeakable acts against the Crown and God. The charges include blasphemy, heresy, witchcraft ...

Philip's troops breaking into Templar churches, farms, castles -- arresting Templars. Seizing all of their assets.

Some Templars are slaughtered as they try to fight back against Philip's forces. Other Templars escape, but most are caught. It's useless. They're vastly outnumbered.

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

TEMPLARS -- in shackles, chained together -- staggering along a dirt road. Dozens more are piled into carts. Philip's Knights ride along side, prodding them along like cattle.

We find JACQUES DE MOLAY slumped inside a cart, forehead caked with blood, dust. A thousand yard stare.

Villagers grow angry, throwing rocks, shouting obscenities.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREETS OF PARIS - NIGHT

Dark. Drunks, homeless. KNIGHTS ride past, still searching. From the shadows, HUGH appears, runs towards a TAVERN.

INT. SAINT BERNARD TAVERN - NIGHT

Music. Drinking. Whoring. Hugh seeks out the BARTENDER.

HUGH
Seeking shelter for an honest
shepherd who's lost his flock.

He casually flashes his SIGNET RING. A beat. Bartender nods, hands Hugh a LANTERN.

BARTENDER
And may the Lord light your way to
the city of seven hills.

Hugh nods thanks, and slips into the --

BACK OF THE TAVERN

Dark, dingy. Low ceiling. Stacked full of WINE BARRELS. Hugh's flickering lantern bathes them in an eerie glow.

He removes a hidden KEY under his lantern. Hugh scans the oak wine barrels, finds one marked, "VII."

HUGH
Seven hills ...

He opens up the WINE BARREL. It's hollow. He crawls --

INSIDE THE WINE BARREL

Tight quarters. Beneath Hugh's feet -- a SEWER GRATE. He unlocks with the key, opens it. Lantern light reveals --

A LADDER. Covered with BUGS. Disgusting. They scatter like buckshot in the light. Hugh climbs down into --

A SECRET UNDERGROUND AQUEDUCT

Built by the Romans. An arched maze of subterranean tunnels and canals. Dark, humid, smells like shit. Rats.

As Hugh walks, he finds a SYMBOL carved into the wall:
Two knights on a single horse. The Seal of the Templars.

And beneath the symbol -- an odd-shaped SLOT. Hugh removes
 his SIGNET RING -- slides it into the slot, turns --

A STONE DOOR cracks open. And as Hugh enters --

INT. SECRET TEMPLAR STRONGHOLD - SAME

-- sword blades are pinned to his throat.

HUGH

Not too late, am I?

The blades fall away. Sighs of relief. We now see what
 Hugh sees -- TEMPLARS. Armed, and on edge. We recognize
 ROGER LE FLOR and ELYAS.

We see that this SECRET STRONGHOLD is full of weapons,
 clothing, rations, money. Ready for an occasion like this.

LATER

Hugh sits amongst his saddened brethren: DEODAT BOURBOUNTON.
 CHARLES DE FOUCHER, JOSEPH OF SICILY. LUC DE LA ROCHE,
 RAYMOND DE PAIRAUD, SIMON OF TREMELAY, GREGORY OF WROUGHTON.

CHARLES

These charges are outrageous! Lies!
 How could the Pope betray us?

ROGER

Philip's taken the temple, our ships,
 everything. It appears that "useless
 owl" has mobilized his entire army.
 After our treasure, no doubt.

Hugh sits, deep in thought. He knows who's really behind
 all this. But how does he explain it to the others?

He then notices that LUC communicates in a primitive SIGN
 LANGUAGE. Hugh leans in to Deodat, whispers.

HUGH

Deaf?

DEODAT

On the contrary, he has exceptional
 hearing. Born and raised as a child
 in silence. Part of an abandoned
 Templar experiment.

CHARLES
I call it witchcraft.

He looks up, sees LUC staring at him. Luc says something.

CHARLES
What did he say?

DEODAT
"Get stuffed."

Charles grimaces.

ROGER
We must leave Paris while we still
can.

SIMON
He's right. The survival of the
Order is in jeopardy. We face
extermination.

HUGH
Agreed. But the second vial of Holy
Blood still resides within the Paris
Temple. We must first secure the vial
and our treasures from the vaults.
(a beat, serious)
We are the protectors of the Grail.
It is our duty to the Order.

Nods of agreement from the group.

HUGH
Once we've secured the second vial,
we will head to La Rochelle. From
there we will set sail for England.

JOSEPH
But how? Our galleys have been
commandeered by the King.

Hugh opens a treasure chest full of GOLD COINS.

HUGH
Then buy one.

Joseph nods. Will do.

GREGORY
And what of Jacques de Molay and
our fellow brethren? They've
been taken to Le Château de Milieu.
(MORE)

GREGORY(cont'd)

In Chinon. They will no doubt be tried and executed. We can't just leave them there.

A heavy beat. Hugh knows he's right.

HUGH

If we're going to fight back, we're going to need help. I will take a small group of men with me and head to Chinon.

ROGER

That's suicide!

HUGH

Perhaps. But our actions will draw their attention away from you and the fleet. And besides, Jacques de Molay is the only one who knows the exact location of the third and last vial.

EXT. CHINON, FRANCE - NIGHT

THE TOUR DE COUDRAY. An eighty-foot tall PRISON TOWER.

The prison tower is only one part of Le Château de Milieu. A massive, fortified castle, surrounded by a MOAT.

INT. PRISON / TORTURE CHAMBER - NIGHT

The screams of TEMPLARS being tortured by Philip's men.

We see a TEMPLAR experiencing the STRAPPADO (*or "reverse hanging" where one is suspended in air by his hands which are tied behind his back*). Shoulders and arms dislocated. Joints and ligaments torn. Slow, grueling pain.

Others are whipped mercilessly -- some strapped to a table -- their FEET -- bathed in pig fat -- hanging over an OPEN FIRE. Their skin slowly roasting, cooking. The smell.

INT. PRISON CELL - NIGHT

JACQUES DE MOLAY lies, half-naked, bruised, beaten. Cold. A sudden unearthly SCREAM echoes, startling him awake.

He looks around, sees fellow TEMPLARS lying in their cells, shackled in chains. Disease-ridden rats scurrying about.

EXT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE / ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Marcela looks over the dark, moonlit cityscape.

ALEXIUS moves towards her. Takes her hand tenderly. He looks into her eyes. Wanting her. Looking for a spark of emotion towards him.

But there is nothing. She is vacant. Emotionless. Empty. He stares at her, thoughts probing.

MARCELA

You speak to me all day in my thoughts. I beg of you, if you wish to speak with me, speak. I am not one of your minions.

Alexius turns away, hurt. Frustrated. And leaves her.

EXT. PARIS TEMPLE - NIGHT

We see Philip's troops everywhere. Now in control.

INT. PARIS TEMPLE / VARIOUS - NIGHT

Philip's men search the entire temple, tearing the place apart. Nothing overlooked. But beneath their feet --

AND BENEATH FOUR FEET OF SOLID STONE, we find --

INT. SECRET TREASURY - SAME

TEMPLARS. Cleaning out the vaults. Quiet as church mice.

The treasury is filled with an amazing amount of wealth. Gold, silver, jewels. As the Templars bag up the place --

HUGH pulls out ANOTHER, FAMILIAR-LOOKING SILVER BOX, buried inside a stone pillar.

This is the second vial of Holy Blood.

CUT TO:

A SERIES OF SHOTS - THE TEMPLARS' TREASURE HEIST

Templars, working in unison -- tossing BAGS OF TREASURE from one man to another -- dropping the loot down through a HOLE IN THE STONE FLOOR. Which leads down into --

THE SECRET ROMAN AQUEDUCT

Where small ROW BOATS line up like limousines, waiting. Templars catch loot from above, loading up the boats --

With their boats now filled with treasure -- the Templars row through the maze-like aqueduct -- rowing towards --

AN OPENING ALONG THE BANKS OF RIVER SEINE

A LONE MERCHANT GALLEY awaits. They off load the loot onto the ship. All done quietly and under the cover of night.

INT. SECRET TEMPLAR STRONGHOLD - LATER

We see Hugh and his small strike force prep for their operation. Hugh readies himself. Deodat shows him a small, woven BLACK BAG. It looks like a medieval hand grenade.

DEODAT

"*Devil's Fire.*" A gift from
Emperor Chengzong of Yuan China.
These will be useful.

Roger approaches.

ROGER

Ship's loaded, ready to go.

HUGH

Good. We should make it to Chinon
by midday tomorrow.

Hugh hands Roger the SILVER BOX. A heavy moment.

HUGH

If I do not join you in two days'
time, you must set sail for England.
No matter what.

A beat. Roger nods. They hug.

ROGER

Bring our brothers back.
(Hugh nods)
Godspeed.

EXT. BANKS OF THE RIVER SEINE - DAWN

Hugh, atop his horse, PETE, watches the ship sail away ...

INT. PARIS TEMPLE / TREASURY - LATER

KING PHILIP'S SOLDIERS break through the doors, ready to ransack it. But the place is cleaned out.

Nothing, except for ONE, SINGLE GOLD COIN. Fuck you.

INT. KING PHILIP'S PALACE - DAY

Philip speaks. Alexius sits on the throne, simmering.

KING PHILIP

-- We have secured their castles
and properties throughout France ...
vineyards, farms, mills. Our scouts
report eighteen Templar galleys docked
in La Rochelle. We've searched all
known treasuries, but --

ALEXIUS

Enough! Where is the Grail?!

KING PHILIP

We're -- we're still looking ...

ALEXIUS

Take me to Jacques de Molay. And
bring my men.

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Hugh and his small band of Templars riding on horseback --
all dressed in civilian attire. They ride towards a small
city situated on the banks of the Vienne River.

Super: Chinon, France

And Château de Milieu stands, situated high on a plateau.

EXT. STREETS OF CHINON - LATER

Hugh, Simon and Charles walking. On recon patrol. And
right above them looms their target -- THE TOUR DE COUDRAY.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A beautiful Gothic structure. Our heroes enter ...

INT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Lit candles. People pray. We see DEODAT, LUC and RAYMOND
praying, in disguise, blending in.

FATHER THIERRY DE BROUX, (50s) sees Hugh, pulls him aside.

FATHER THIERRY

(looks around, whispers)
The King's men are everywhere -- if
they find you they will arrest you or
kill you. Maybe not in that order.

Hugh lays a comforting hand on his shoulder.

HUGH
 Thank you for your concern, Father.
 But our time is short.
 (hands him a big
 BAG OF COINS)
 The Order needs you.

EXT. CHURCH / BELL TOWER - MOMENTS LATER

ALL SIX TEMPLARS stand in the tower. A clear 360 view. An unobstructed view of THE PRISON TOWER. Two hundred yards away from the church.

SIMON
 This is going to be impossible.

HUGH
 Challenging. Not impossible.

CHARLES
 And how do you suppose we get
 inside the castle?

INT. CHURCH / BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Hugh pries away a trap door in the floor, revealing ...

A BLACK HOLE. An entrance to ...

INT. SECRET UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS - NIGHT

BLACKNESS. Then, footsteps -- shuffling, echoing, and --

THREE TORCHES -- splintering the darkness -- revealing HUGH, CHARLES and SIMON -- trekking through the underground catacombs. A labyrinth of tunnels and passageways.

AND THE WALLS ARE LINED WITH THOUSANDS OF SKULLS AND BONES!

Bones are systematically stacked nine feet high. Eerie.

HUGH
 The Romans dug these catacombs
 underneath the entire city -- this
 leads straight to the prison tower.

CHARLES
 Are you sure the guards don't know
 that as well?

HUGH

Only if they know how to read.
 (checks a marker)
 That way.

And soon as they round a corner -- The catacomb instantly turns PITCH BLACK. You can't see shit!

INT. CHURCH / BELL TOWER - NIGHT

DEODAT, LUC and RAYMOND wait, hidden in shadow.

Deodat unveils a medieval TELESCOPE. He looks out towards the darkened prison tower. We see GUARDS on patrol.

EXT. BANKS OF THE VIENNE RIVER - NIGHT

A docked MERCHANT GALLEY, camouflaged by fog. At the helm, JOSEPH OF SICILY. ELYAS and GREGORY there too, on lookout.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - NIGHT

Guards throw JACQUES DE MOLAY down in front of ALEXIUS, POPE CLEMENT V and KING PHILIP. Beaten. Broken. Only his spirit remains intact.

POPE CLEMENT V

Jacques de Molay. Grand Master of the Order of the Temple. How do you respond to these charges?

JACQUES

Your grace, these are lies. Greed and deceptive politics. We have been loyal servants. Shed blood in the name of Christendom --

KING PHILIP

It was you who lost Christendom! More interested in protecting the Templar finances than the Christian faithful. The Order turned their back on Christ. You disgust us all with your lies and treachery.

POPE CLEMENT V

You must tell us what we need to know. Help spare the lives of countless others. History will not look kindly upon you otherwise. And those even with the most casual of connections to the Templars will be hunted down and executed.

Jacques stares into Philip's and Pope Clement's eyes. He no longer sees men, but something else. Something unnatural.

JACQUES

One can easily deceive the Church,
but one can never, in any way, deceive
God. Your threats and accusations
are only mere words. I hereby declare
that the Order is innocent. Its
purity and saintliness is beyond
question. I shall say nothing else.
Whoever desires may add more, but I
will not answer to you anymore.

ALEXIUS

THEN YOU WILL ANSWER TO ME!

Jacques REELS IN PAIN, screaming as Alexius closes his eyes in concentration. Alexius thoughts RIPPING his mind apart.

Jacques repeats "The Lord's Prayer" in Latin. His only defense ... A mental tug-of-war. The veins in Jacques' head PULSE to bursting, his will weakening. Sweat pouring.

INT. PRISON - NIGHT

Damp, dark, vermin infested. Cold stone walls. Lit torches. PRISON GUARDS sit, drinking. Some sleep. All killing time.

AND HIDING IN THE SHADOWS

Hugh, Simon and Charles. They're in! In mission mode.

Screams echo. Everyone's eyes dart skyward. That way.

THEY CLIMB THE NARROW STEPS, reaching --

THE PRISON KEEP

GUARDS and PRISON CELLS. They quickly and quietly overpower the Guards. Hugh grabs the KEYS -- finds DOZENS OF TEMPLARS. Bruised, beaten, disoriented. Starts unlocking cell doors --

He helps his fellow brethren to their feet. They are broken, beaten men. Some stumble, not able to stand or walk. One TEMPLAR holds up his CHAINED HANDS, free me.

HUGH

Not yet, you will need those.
Where is Jacques de Molay?

TWO TEMPLARS step up, able to move.

TEMPLAR

We know.

Hugh nods. Take me. And they're off. Moving quietly, like ghostly assassins.

CHARLES looks out a WINDOW (more like a narrow slit in the stone). We can see the darkened village of Chinon below.

As SIMON carefully stacks DEVIL'S FIRE against the window, Charles unveils a SMALL MIRROR hanging from around his neck. Grabs a nearby torch. He signals with the mirror and flame.

INTERCUT WITH THE CHURCH TOWER AND THE PRISON TOWER

DEODAT sees the signal, grabs his mirror and torch.

DEODAT

They're in. Ready your aim.

LUC and RAYMOND ready their double-curved MONGOLIAN BOWS. The arrow shafts are tied with ROPE. Deodat signals Charles.

CHARLES sees the signal, grabs a lit torch.

CHARLES

Everyone back. Back!

Everyone takes cover. Charles tosses the torch -- Ka-BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! The Devil Fire EXPLODES! The tower rumbles. Rocks, flame and debris rain down. Smoke bellows.

THROUGHOUT THE PRISON

GUARDS jump into action, grabbing weapons. Some stumble, drunk. They've been caught completely off guard.

And that's when Hugh and his men make their move, swords swinging -- taking down PRISON GUARDS at will.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIXTY FEET UP THE PRISON TOWER - NIGHT

As the smoke clears, we now see a GAPING HOLE in the tower wall. It worked! CHARLES and SIMON knock away loose stones, widening the hole. Creating a bigger target for --

LUC and RAYMOND. Arrows raised and aimed -- they fire!

TWO ARROWS streak across the night sky -- ROPE rapidly unfurling in their wake -- streaking towards --

THE PRISON TOWER

Bull's-eye! Both arrows slingshot right through the hole. TEMPLARS grab the arrows, tying off the ends of the rope --

LUC and RAYMOND doing the same -- making the rope taught.

TWO ZIP LINES. Two-hundred yards long. Stretching from the church tower to the prison tower. Both lines run at a twenty degree angle from end to end.

IN THE PRISON TOWER

Charles has a TEMPLAR loop his cut CHAINS around the rope.

CHARLES

Hold tight.

-- and shoves him out of the tower. The Templar zips down the line -- across the rooftops -- sailing right towards --

THE CHURCH TOWER

-- where Luc and Raymond catch him. Safe and sound.

Deodat escorts the newly freed Templar towards a ladder.

INT/EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

FATHER THIERRY and his MONKS usher our TEMPLAR through the church -- and out to where HORSE-DRAWN CARTS await.

INT. PRISON TOWER - SAME

Charles looks pleased. It worked! He shoves another TEMPLAR out the door, down the line ...

AS TEMPLARS ZIP DOWN THE LINE OVERHEAD

PRISON GUARDS fire arrows, trying to pick them off --

A TEMPLAR is hit -- he falls to his death!

ANOTHER TEMPLAR is hit -- but holds on -- makes it to safety.

ANOTHER TEMPLAR -- too weak to hold on -- lets go, falls.

TWO TEMPLARS are hit -- both falling -- both landing on a rooftop. One falls through the roof.

With eyes following the escaping Templars -- A SQUAD OF PHILIP'S TROOPS charges for the church.

Then we see -- ANIMAL-LIKE EYES -- glowing from beneath the DARK WATERS OF THE MOAT, watching the Templars above.

INT. TORTURE CHAMBER - SAME

Alexius breaks off the torture on Jacques. He sees something in his mind's eye. Alerting him.

ALEXIUS
They're here.

He looks at Jacques with disgust. He couldn't break him. Alexius then looks away, as if giving a silent command ...

EXT. PRISON TOWER - RESUME

Suddenly, VAMPIRIC KNIGHTS ERUPT FROM THE MOAT!

Each armed to the teeth. Hideous faces. Blackened skin slick with oil. Yellow, animalistic eyes. Tarnished metal jewelry and bones sewn into their faces.

And leading them is VISAGO. The group splits off. Visago and a few VAMPIRIC WARRIORS storm into the prison as --

SEVEN VAMPIRIC KNIGHTS begin CRAWLING UP the massive tower!
Their CLAW-LIKE FINGERS digging into stone and mortar.

And they're moving fast!

INT. PRISON TOWER - SAME

Hugh and company fighting their way towards --

THE TORTURE CHAMBER

Hugh stands outside the thick WOODEN DOOR. Tries it. Locked of course. He pulls out a DEVIL'S FIRE. Lights it. Takes cover. Ssssssssssss ... BOOM! Blows the door to splinters!

HUGH kills the GUARDS and TORTURERS. As the smoke clears, we see TEMPLARS strapped to various torture contraptions.

He sees JACQUES DE MOLAY chained to the wall, beaten. In real bad shape. Hugh grabs a set of keys from a dead guard.

JACQUES
Hugh, no... we are broken men, we
will only slow you down --

HUGH
-- Then I will carry you --

JACQUES

Alexius... the blood of the Grail has corrupted him... He seeks to destroy the last two vials. If he succeeds, it will be a world in darkness everlasting! There will be no Resurrection. The Devil will inherit the earth, and all of humanity will suffer ...

Hugh can register only shock as he hears this, then --

HUGH

We have the second vial from the Paris Temple. What is the location of the third vial?

Jacques sighs relief regarding the second vial ...

JACQUES

Only myself and one other know.
In Baldock. England. The Citadel.

We hear NOISES. Getting closer. Clock's ticking. Hugh begins quickly unlocking Jacques' bonds and straps ...

JACQUES

No! You must protect the Grail.
That is all that matters. Now go.
Leave me. That is an order!

Hugh stops. A beat. He nods. He has his orders.

VAMPIRIC KNIGHTS appear, raising their SHIELDS. Suddenly, sharp METAL SPIKES SPRING OUT! Like a porcupine. The Vampirics charge -- SPIKES IMPALING THE TWO TEMPLARS!

Hugh stabs one Vampiric, but it doesn't die.

HUGH

(shocked)
In the name of God...

VAMPIRIC KNIGHT

Not anymore.

Hugh weighs his odds, and runs --

UP IN THE PRISON TOWER

Charles hears a strange metallic sound... CHINK! CHINK!
CHINK! Curious, he peers over the side, sees --

VAMPIRIC KNIGHTS scaling the tower. Already half way up!
 Simon looks down, sees the Vampirics, then looks at Charles.

SIMON
 We need to hurry.

Charles fires a CROSSBOW BOLT -- Hits A VAMPIRIC right in the eye. Doesn't faze it. ARROW VAMPIRIC keeps climbing.

Charles reloads -- fires again! Hits it right in the mouth. ARROW VAMPIRIC BITES DOWN, snapping the arrow shaft in half.

DOWN IN THE PRISON STAIRWELL

Hugh climbing -- VAMPIRIC giving chase -- closing in --

UP IN THE PRISON TOWER

SIMON hurls BLOCKS OF STONE at the Vampirics below. But they move fast -- dodging the onslaught.

THE VAMPIRICS keep climbing ...

Simon lights a DEVIL FIRE, drops it ... A VAMPIRIC catches it, stares ... Ka-BOOM! Blows its hand off. It falls ...

Charles pushes ANOTHER TEMPLAR out the tower. A VAMPIRIC leaps from the tower -- grabbing the Templar's legs.

CHARLES
 Nooooooooo!

The Templar sails down the zip line, VAMPIRIC latched around his dangling legs. The Vampiric bites into him. He screams as we literally see the LIFE DRAIN AWAY FROM HIM.

Simon cuts the rope with his sword. They both fall. He crosses himself, saddened. He had to do it.

One zip line down. One left. AND ONE LAST TEMPLAR PRISONER.

Charles shoves the Templar out the tower -- and he flies along the zip line --

A PRISON GUARD below lights an arrow, takes aim -- fires! The flaming arrow nails the Templar in back. His clothes catch fire -- turning him into a human fire ball.

Flames ignite the rope -- it SEVERS! The Templar falls ...

IN THE PRISON TOWER

The rope goes slack. They look at each other. *Now what?*

IN THE CHURCH TOWER

DEODAT holds the slack rope, horrified. We see PHILIP'S TROOPS heading towards the church. LUC takes off -- and jumps down into the hole, into the CATACOMBS.

EXT. CHURCH / STABLES - NIGHT

THIRTY newly-freed TEMPLARS are loaded up into carts.

DEODAT

Hold on!

And they're off --

IN THE PRISON TOWER

Charles and Simon remain. HUGH rushes in --

HUGH

We have to go! Now!

They all look at him. "*How?*"

Just as -- A VAMPIRIC charges up behind Hugh -- Hugh spins, swinging his sword -- blade decapitating the Vampiric.

The headless body crumples. But the head is still alive, wobbling on the floor. Eyes full of rage.

Hugh then grabs the rope, checks the length --

HUGH

Over the side!

SIMON

Are you mad?

Hugh's peers over the edge, sees the EIGHTY-FOOT DROP and THE FIVE VAMPIRICS clinging to tower, staring up at him.

HUGH

Perhaps...

He takes a deep breath. Fuck it. Readies his sword -- and leaps over the side --

EXT. HIGH UP ON THE PRISON TOWER FACE - NIGHT

As Hugh repels -- TWO VAMPIRICS attack -- swinging their swords. Hugh moves side to side, parrying the blows --

ONE VAMPIRIC swings -- its blade just missing Hugh's rope!
Hugh sighs relief. Then, THWACK! -- beheads the Vampiric.

Hugh fights THE OTHER VAMPIRIC. They both lose their swords
-- both blades falling -- skewering the earth below.

The Vampiric lunges for Hugh's throat -- grabbing Hugh's
CRUCIFIX. Its hand BURNS. The Vampiric screams, in pain.
Hugh kicks the Vampiric right off the wall. It falls ...

Two down, three to go.

HUGH
(to Simon/Charles)
Well? What are you waiting for?!

SIMON repels the tower, followed by CHARLES --

A VAMPIRIC attacks CHARLES. He swings his sword -- misses --
blade hits stone. He loses his grip. The sword falls --
nearly impaling Simon below -- but HUGH catches it!

The Vampiric lunges for CHARLES again --

HUGH whistles -- flings his sword skyward -- SIMON catches
it -- pitches it higher -- CHARLES catches it, and
DECAPITATES the Vampiric. The headless body falls away --

A SECOND VAMPIRIC attacks SIMON --

CHARLES drops his sword -- SIMON catches it -- dispatching
the Vampiric. And not a moment too soon because --

The THIRD, and final VAMPIRIC skitters towards CHARLES --

SIMON heaves his sword skyward again -- CHARLES catches it --
and swings -- CUTTING OFF THE VAMPIRIC'S HANDS!

Handless Vampiric staggers -- flapping its handless arms --
trying to keep balance -- trying not to fall backwards -- no
good. Handless Vampiric screams and falls ...

CUT TO:

AT THE FOOT OF THE TOWER

Hugh, Simon and Charles reach bottom. Hugh grabs both
fallen swords, tosses one to Charles.

HANDLESS VAMPIRIC attacks, gnashing its fanged teeth. It's
still alive. Hugh decapitates it. Dead.

Suddenly, he sees --

MARCELA

He can't believe his eyes. Is it another dream?

HUGH

Marcela? You're alive...? How?

He's flooded with emotions. He touches her arm, feels her skin. Is she real? She takes a step toward him, something greater than Alexius' power moving her. A flicker of recognition. She reaches out to touch Hugh's face ...

CUT TO:

WATCHING THEM FROM THE SHADOWS

ALEXIUS. Crushed. If he has a heart, it's breaking. VISAGO, standing next to him, moves to intercept. Alexius' arm suddenly BLOCKS Visago, stopping him. "*Let her go.*"

RESUME HUGH AND MARCELA

Marcela's hand suddenly falls away. She becomes distant once more. Eyes vacant.

CHARLES and SIMON look on, in shock. Just as --

PHILIP'S TROOPS appear. Suddenly, they all drop to the ground, dead. Each with an arrow in their back.

It's LUC!

His head POPS OUT OF THE GROUND. He waves, "*Let's go!*"

Hugh grabs Marcela. They all run, dropping down into a small hole in the earth -- A HIDDEN CATACOMB ENTRANCE!

INT. SECRET UNDERGROUND CATACOMBS - MOMENTS LATER

Luc leads the way -- hauling ass through the claustrophobic labyrinth of bones -- his torch the only source of light.

CUT TO:

VAMPIRIC KNIGHTS drop down into the catacombs. We see their wolf-like eyes adjusting -- glowing in the darkness. We hear them sniffing, breathing. Here they come.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

PHILIP'S TROOPS pour into the church, weapons drawn --

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

-- where they find FATHER THIERRY and his MONKS. All bound and gagged. A Knight removes the gag from the Father's mouth. He coughs, putting on a great performance.

FATHER THIERRY
Those savages!

EXT. BANKS OF THE VIENNE RIVER - NIGHT

GREGORY and ELYAS off load TEMPLARS onto the awaiting ship.

GREGORY
All aboard. Quickly, quickly.

DEODAT and RAYMOND board the ship.

ELYAS
What about the others? We can't leave them.

DEODAT
No need to worry.

INT. SOMEWHERE IN THE CATACOMBS - NIGHT

Our heroes running. Flickering torchlight illuminating the eerie WALLS OF SKULLS around them. Luc stops -- searching for markers hidden in the bones.

CHARLES
Which way?

Luc holds up a finger: *Shhhhh!* He points to A MARKER. And they're off. We're then plunged into utter DARKNESS.

VAMPIRICS arrive on scene. We see their GLOWING EYES. They stop, listen. Then split off into multiple directions --

SOMEWHERE UP AHEAD IN THE CATACOMBS

Our heroes on the move. As they turn a corner --

A VAMPIRIC jumps out -- out of nowhere -- ready to kill.

SIMON attacks. Charles helps, hurling SKULLS AT THE VAMPIRIC -- one after another -- unlimited ammo. Driving it back.

ANOTHER VAMPIRIC tackles Hugh, CRASHING them into a wall of bones. Hugh grabs a SPLINTERED FEMUR BONE and STABS the Vampiric in the head.

But it keeps coming, even with a bone stuck in its skull!

Hugh grabs another sharpened bone and WHAM! Stabs it right in the heart. The Vampiric shrieks and explodes into ASH!

Hugh takes note -- shouts out to Simon --

HUGH
The heart! Go for the heart!

And Simon does. Killing the Vampiric.

HUGH
Keep moving! We're almost there!

And they're off -- but LUC slows to a stop ... he hears something. Suddenly -- A VAMPIRIC leaps out of the darkness. Luc swings -- his blade meets the Vampiric's neck. THWACK!

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Crypts. Tombs. Mausoleums. Shrouded in heavy mist.

A LARGE MAUSOLEUM.

The marble door opens -- our HEROES emerge. The docked merchant ship dead ahead. As they run through the cemetery --

VAMPIRIC WARRIORS follow -- hurdling over tombs -- gaining ground. One tackles Hugh -- taking him down -- crashing into a headstone, cracking it in half.

Hugh then shoves his sword deep into Vampiric's HEART. But it doesn't die! Hugh is confused ... "What?"

It grabs Hugh, ready to bite. Gruesome, filed-down teeth sinking closer, drool dripping, slathering Hugh's face ...

Hugh grabs A ROCK SNARLED WITH STRANDS OF VEGETATION, and -- SHOVES IT down its throat. THE VAMPIRIC freaks. Foaming at the mouth -- gagging, convulsing -- screaming.

Charles and Simon chop up the remaining Vampirics.

Hugh retrieves his sword from the Vampiric's chest and SEVERS THE HEAD. Hugh picks up the vegetative plant, cracks open the bulb. Studies it, smells his hand, winces.

HUGH
Garlic ...?

EXT. BANKS OF THE VIENNE RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Hugh and the others climb aboard the galley. Safe.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VIENNE RIVER - LATER THAT NIGHT

Under a blanket of stars, the galley slowly sails along.

INT. MERCHANT GALLEY / BELOW DECK - NIGHT

Marcela sits, staring at Hugh. Unresponsive. Hugh covers her with a blanket. A million questions on his mind.

EXT. MERCHANT GALLEY / DECK - MOMENTS LATER

JOSEPH at the helm, deck littered with Templars. Wounded, tired. CHARLES at the stern, on lookout for enemy vessels.

HUGH appears topside. Inquisitive stares from his men.

CHARLES

How is it you know this woman?

HUGH

I knew her from long ago. Before I joined the Order. She is a good woman. There is no need to worry.

CHARLES

Yet she rides with these devils.

He's got him there. A beat. Hugh nods.

HUGH

She... she is not one of them. I could not just leave her there...

(a beat, then)

Right now our main concern is reaching the fleet.

Charles nods. Understood.

Suddenly, something catches Hugh's eye --

AT THE SHORELINE

We see EYES glinting in the darkness. Vampirics? Hugh, ready at the sword, about raise the alarm, but then sees that they're only WOLVES. They scamper off into the brush.

Hugh sighs relief, then descends below deck...

Hidden behind trees, we see A LONG LINE OF ARMED VAMPIRIC WARRIORS running quickly, silently, tracking the galley. The pack of wolves running with them ...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MERCHANT GALLEY / BELOW DECKS - DAWN

Marcela sleeps in some straw by the horses. SHAFTS OF LIGHT piercing through narrow, wooden slats in the deck.

Hugh watches her sleep, gently pushes her hair away from her face. He can't help but notice she hasn't aged

HUGH
(to himself)
How? How is this possible? I saw
you die ... with my own eyes, I ...

A beam of light falls on her, light kissing her naked hand. Marcela immediately wakes, jumps up, screaming. In pain. She recoils into the dark. Horses whinny, spooked.

HUGH
Marcela, what is it? What's wrong?

She's petrified of the light. She holds her hand like a wounded animal. Hugh reaches for it, she retracts.

HUGH
It's all right. I won't hurt you.

He gently takes her hand, looks ... the skin is BLISTERED. Hugh confused, shocked. She takes her hand back.

HUGH
What has happened to you...?

No answer. She only stares at him. Eyes vacant.

Suddenly, we hear explosions. The sounds of war.

EXT. MERCHANT GALLEY / DECK - DUSK

Hugh and his fellow TEMPLARS topside, arming themselves with every weapon possible, preparing ...

As the ship rounds the bend, we see and hear a --

MASSIVE MARITIME BATTLE

EIGHTEEN TEMPLAR GALLEYS are battling it out against a fleet of strange-looking ships -- ALEXIUS' VAMPIRIC NAVY.

Lifeless bodies. Burning, sinking ships. A fiery graveyard.

ON A PLATEAU OVERLOOKING THE BAY OF LA ROCHELLE

ALEXIUS stands, watches as his catapults launch rocks and fire pots -- pummeling the Templar fleet below.

A VAMPIRIC SHIP RAMS A TEMPLAR GALLEY. The bow plunging into the galley's hull. Timbers fly. VAMPIRICS leap onto the stricken Templar galley like a swarm of angry ants.

ANOTHER VAMPIRIC SHIP heads right for our heroes --

JOSEPH
TAKE COVER!

VAMPIRICS hurl FIRE LANCES. Projectiles explode -- showering Templars with RED HOT BURNING SAND! They scream -- trying to peel away their armor as the glowing sand burns their skin.

The Vampiric galley pulls along side our merchant galley.

A TWENTY FOOT GAP BETWEEN THE TWO VESSELS

Templars and Vampirics eyeballing one another. Suddenly --

THE VAMPIRICS LEAP FROM THEIR SHIP!

Sailing into the air -- across the water -- clearing the gap -- some land on deck. Some miss, tumbling into the ocean.

THE TEMPLARS counterattack. Hugh leading the charge.

HUGH
Go for the heart!

TEMPLARS fire with deadly accuracy, dropping Vampirics.

Charles grabs TWO WOODEN SHARDS and STABS a Vampiric in the heart. But it keeps going! Intense hand-to-hand combat.

IN THE WATER

VAMPIRICS swim, clinging onto the galley's hull with their claws. Others grab hold of the oars. The galley slows -- the Vampirics' extra weight making it too hard to row.

Joseph yells to the OARSMEN below deck --

JOSEPH
Hard to starboard! Throw your backs
into it!

Oarsmen turn the galley into the Vampiric ship. WHAM! The two vessels collide. Oars shatter -- splintering like toothpicks. Shards of wood IMPALING VAMPIRICS!

The vessels SCRAPE HULLS. VAMPIRICS clinging on are crushed. We hear bones snapping -- gargling screams -- bodies popping.

ANOTHER TEMPLAR GALLEY sails towards them -- coming to their rescue -- launching fire arrows at the Vampiric ship, setting it ablaze. The ship sinks ...

IN THE WATER

TEMPLARS. Some alive, some dead. Some clinging to debris. Some struggle, trying to stay afloat -- heavy armor pulling them down. Others shouting, arms waving desperately.

Crews pluck them from the water. Hugh pulls a wounded Templar aboard. This is CHRISTUS DES BARRES.

HUGH

Where is Roger Le Flor?!

Christus points. Hugh looks, and sees --

ROGER'S GALLEY

Marooned against the craggy rocks. Surf pounding the wreckage. Lifeless bodies strewn about. Bags of gold and silver, glittering in the firelight.

AND HIGH ABOVE ON A SIXTY-FOOT CLIFF

ROGER LE FLOR fends off A HOARD OF VAMPIRIC KNIGHTS.

They push Roger back towards the edge of the cliff. There's nowhere for him to run. He's trapped.

Roger holds THE SECOND VIAL.

The Vampirics smell it. Whipping them up into a frenzy, like sharks to blood. They attack, bringing him to his knees.

A VAMPIRIC grabs the SECOND VIAL. As it raises the vial up, ready to SMASH it back down on the ground --

HIS ARM COMBUSTS INTO HOLY FLAME! Consuming its whole body. AN ARC OF HOLY FLAME SHOOTS OUT THROUGH THE VIAL, engulfing other Vampiric Knights.

The Vial drops...

...Roger dives and CATCHES IT!

As he staggers to his feet -- ANOTHER VAMPIRIC leaps -- landing on Roger's back -- sinking its sharpened teeth into his neck! They BOTH FALL off the edge of the cliff.

AS THEY FALL -- Roger sticks the VAMPIRIC with a dagger and pushes away ... but the precious VIAL slips from his grasp.

THE VIAL falls ... tumbling through space ...

Roger reaches, a desperate last grab for it ... but misses --

WHAM! Both Roger and the VIAL CRASH ONTO THE ROCKS BELOW!

The glass vial CRACKS OPEN!

HOLY BLOOD pours, mixing with frothing seawater. Suddenly --

A SHOCK OF BLINDING WHITE LIGHT!

A beat. Then the immediate area of ocean STARTS TO BOIL.

VAMPIRICS in the water scramble towards the warships as A ROLLING SHOCK WAVE OF BOILING OCEAN QUICKLY FANS OUT ...

The wave ENGULFS THE VAMPIRICS. They scream as they COMBUST INTO FLAME AND EXPLODE INTO ASH. Only the floating wreckage of Vampiric armour is left in the wave's wake, steaming.

Some Vampirics make it back to one of the WARSHIPS. ON FIRE. Their FLESH DRIPPING OFF THEM as they climb the riggings.

The rigging catches fire. The FIRE SPREADS. The deck, masts, oars, sails... anything not metal BURNS.

The WARSHIP is soon an inferno.

The boiling ocean FADES as the Holy Blood within it finally dissipates. Gone.

HUGH -- just witnessed it all -- the power of God. But at what cost? Another vial is now lost. His friend's death ...

THREE TEMPLAR GALLEYS AND THE MERCHANT SHIP are all that remain. They slip away, sailing north, towards England.

FROM THE PLATEAU

ALEXIUS, under the cover of shade, watches ...

Vampirics raise their swords in victory, letting out an unearthly, blood-curdling SCREECH.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL - NIGHT

The surviving armada of galleys heading towards England.

INT. MERCHANT GALLEY / BELOW DECKS - NIGHT

Oil lamps swaying, casting erratic shadows. MONKS treating wounded Templars, blessing the dead. HUGH navigates his way through the maze of bodies. He sees ..

MARCELA eyeing A WOUNDED TEMPLAR lying next to her, passed out. Soaked in blood. Her eyes salivating. Blood lust. She suckles on his bloodied arm, drinking hungrily.

HUGH

Marcela, no! What are you doing?
You'll become sick --

She looks up -- their eyes meet. Busted. Marcela drops the arm, almost ashamed. Cowers into the darkness.

Then it hits him. And his world comes crashing down -- Marcela's one of them! Instinctively, he lays his hand on his sword.

HUGH

No, no. It can't be... Please God,
I beg of you...

An awkward beat. He refuses to believe. He lets go of his sword. A man torn. In denial.

Off Hugh's horrified and saddened look we ...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL - DAWN

Fog. Thick. Grey. A ghostly line of lamp lights appears as our battle-weary GALLEYS approach England.

EXT. SOUTHAMPTON / PORT - DAWN

A medieval English port city. Trading, fishing, shipyards.

TEMPLARS disembark. Tired, wounded, seasick. They quickly and quietly off load supplies, horses and bags of treasure.

HUGH escorts MARCELA into a covered cart, her face covered. He signals to the others. Time to move out.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LONDON - DAY

The glorious city on the banks of the River Thames.

EXT. TEMPLE CHURCH - DAY

The infamous Temple Church aka "The Round Church." The English Headquarters of the Knights Templar.

Our Templar caravan enters the elegant monastic compound.

INT. TEMPLE CHURCH / SOLAR - LATER

A simple room. Single bed. Hugh enters, lays Marcela down.

She's breathing heavy. Eyelids fluttering. Like she's having a nightmare. We see her beauty fading. Skin losing color. Her fingers resemble CLAWS. More animal than human.

HUGH

Marcela, can you hear me --?

Suddenly, she lunges at him -- HISSING! Her face pale. Skin taut. Hair streaked with grey. Eyes WHITE except for a pinprick of black where the iris should be.

Hugh holds her back. She stares back at him. Then calms.

INT. TEMPLE CHURCH / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

MONKS and SQUIRES working, preparing food. A dead PIG being gutted. Blood pools. Hesitantly, Hugh grabs a bowl.

INT. TEMPLE CHURCH / SOLAR - LATER

Hugh lays the bowl of pig blood in front of Marcela.

HUGH

Drink ...

She sniffs it. Tastes it with her tongue. Then knocks the bowl flying. Blood splatters Hugh. Marcela HISSES.

Hugh stands there, thinking. Then, he unsheathes his dagger, rolls up his habit sleeve and CUTS his arm. His blood dripping into the bowl, filling it up.

He hands the bowl of blood to Marcela who hungrily guzzles it down. We SEE the blood course through her veins. She starts to literally rejuvenate before our eyes.

INT. TEMPLE CHURCH / GREAT HALL - LATER

Hugh sits with WILLIAM DE LA MORE (Master of the London Temple) and his fellow Templars.

WILLIAM

News from France has travelled fast.
But so far no action from King Edward.
He is to marry Philip's daughter.
He only has peace in mind with the
French. Right now, their enemy is his.

HUGH

And this enemy which King Philip
supports is infected with a plague
that can wipe out this very country.
And they will invade England. It's
only a matter of time.

William digests the grim news, then

WILLIAM

As of now, the Order has roughly ten
thousand men scattered throughout
England.

HUGH

Then we will need King Edward's
support and his troops. Once we are
settled, I will plead our case to him.

WILLIAM

He will not listen.

HUGH

I have to try. And should anymore of
our brothers arrive at your doorstep --
send them to the Citadel in Baldrock.

WILLIAM

Baldrock? There's nothing there.

HUGH

That is where the last vial resides.
That is where we all must go. The
future of humanity depends on it.

INT. TEMPLE CHURCH / SOLAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Hugh enters, looks at Marcela's bed -- empty. Hugh turns --

MARCELA!

Her eyes reflecting in the darkness. Like a wolf. But she is starting to look human again. Young.

HUGH

I am sorry, my love. I -- I should have never left you ...

She just stares. Struggle behind those eyes. She then retreats back into the corner, as if frightened.

HUGH

I will help you. And I will never leave you again. I promise.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAWN

Our Templar caravan rides along, turns off the main road, down a trail. A forest lies ahead.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

Dense forest. Day turns back into night. The caravan struggles as they maneuver through the thick foliage.

DISSOLVE TO:

As our heroes emerge through the trees -- they come upon a large CLEARING. And erected in the middle of this field, standing as high as the tallest trees ...

THE CITADEL

Crenellated turrets, towers, battlements, huge stained glass windows. All enclosed by a stone defensive wall. A moat rings the entire Citadel, full of pond scum, buzzing flies.

The forest has started to reclaim this forgotten Citadel. Covered with vines, moss. Though it's seen better days, it's still an impressive Gothic structure. We then see ...

Smoke spiraling ... A WATCH HOUSE. Hidden amongst the trees.

Hugh nods, Templars fan out, investigating.

EXT. THE CITADEL - DAY

Templars walk around it. The drawbridge is down. Hugh goes up to the imposing oak double doors behind the iron portcullis (gates). They won't budge. Locks rusted shut.

ARNAUD

So, does anyone have a key or do we break in?

VOICE (O.S.)

Well, you could break in -- or you could just ask me.

Startled, they turn to see --

A Templar Knight, (60s). And his physique suggests it's been a while since he's seen action. Dead squirrels slung over his shoulder. A man from long ago. OLIVER OF SAUNFORDE.

OLIVER

About time the Order sent some reinforcements ... or replacements.

(re: dead squirrels)

Just out getting some breakfast. Hungry anyone?

He then sees Hugh, memories flooding back.

OLIVER

Hugh? Hugh de Paynes? ... Or should I say ... Hugh the Hand!

They hug. Old friends and war buddies reunited.

HUGH

Oliver?! What're you doing here?

OLIVER

That's what I should be asking you! After the fall of Acre, I was assigned here. Protector of the Grail. Ordered here by Jacques de Molay himself. And a fine mess I was left in. Me -- a decrepid old man asked to look after this entire place all by myself.

(laughs)

And how is our beloved Grand Master these days?

Sore subject. Hugh hesitates, gathers up the courage.

HUGH

The third vial of Holy Blood... Is it here?

Oliver's face falls. Grim. A beat, then smiles.

OLIVER
Well, of course it's here!

Cheeky bastard. Everyone sighs relief.

CHARLES
This isn't a bloody joke.

Oliver inserts the key into the lock. It won't turn.
Uses a bit of brute force ... and the key snaps off.

INT. CITADEL / GREAT HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Banging. Clanging. Doors BURST OPEN, light flooding in.
Tapestries, crucifixes, furniture. All covered in dust.

OLIVER
Ah, just as I left it.

CHARLES
The place is filthy!

OLIVER
Yes, just as I left it.

A STONE GARGOYLE suddenly dislodges from the wall. Oliver quickly sidesteps it as it SMASHES on the floor. Pretty fast for an old man.

Luc feels a TAPESTRY hanging on the wall. It tears off in his hands. It looks like he's going to weep.

RAYMOND
Sacrilege. A fine way to leave the most sacred treasures of our Lord.

OLIVER
Yes, I'm sure that if and when the Second Coming of Christ comes along, he'd be really happy that we kept a bunch of useless trinkets around to remind him that we all killed him the first time round.

RAYMOND
It's so we remember, you ingrate.

OLIVER
I thought that faith and religion were in the heart, not in objects.

CHARLES

And what do you mean if the Second
Coming happens?

He pulls his SWORD, but Oliver's sword is already at his neck. Charles eyeballs the blade.

OLIVER

You forget, my boy, though my girth
might say otherwise, I was, and still
am, a Templar... one long before you.
And I must say quicker too.

CUT TO:

INT. THE CITADEL / CHAPEL - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver leads everyone into the CHAPEL.

A large sunken prayer area. Pews. An altar. Candles.
Marble floors. Walls covered with beautiful STAINED GLASS
WINDOWS. Beams of multi-colored light shining through.

Oliver crosses to a large wooden DOOR. Unlocks it ...

A long flight of stone steps leading down ...

INT. CITADEL / CRYPT - SAME

Oliver leads them down the winding steps, lit candles in
hand. Down into the lowest depths of the Citadel ...

OLIVER

Down here is where we keep all the
good stuff.

They reach bottom. Oliver lights candles. As he does, a
different part of the crypt is illuminated, revealing ...

THE TREASURY. Chests overflowing with gold and silver
coins, precious stones. Painted portraits of various
saints, chalices, holy artifacts, relics. And ...

A WOODEN CROSS

Hanging on the far wall. Big enough to crucify someone on.
Probably because it is the one and only TRUE CROSS.

Templars kneel, bowing their heads. Oliver crosses over
to shelves lined with HUNDREDS OF BOOKS. Ancient bibles
and religious texts.

CHARLES
Is that really the True Cross?

OLIVER
All the way from Jerusalem.
(thinking back)
Lost it at the Battle of Hattin.
Had to buy it back from Saladin.
Quite an embarrassing blunder.

He pulls out a thick BIBLE. Opens it. No pages. Just a familiar SILVER BOX. He hands it to Hugh.

OLIVER
I believe this is what you're looking
for... The blood of our saviour.

Hugh opens it carefully, pulls out the VIAL.

HUGH
And the last of its kind.
(off Oliver's look)
We have much to discuss.

EXT. THE CITADEL - LATER

Templars unloading, unpacking, cleaning. Oliver watches.

OLIVER
That's it, keep it going. Plenty
of room inside. Lions in war,
lambs in the home.

Hugh walks towards him, escorting Marcela. Her body covered, face obscured. As they walk past, heading into the Citadel, Oliver pulls his sword, stopping them.

He sees a glimpse of Marcela's face, then eyes Hugh.

OLIVER
A woman? Want to be expelled
from the Order, do you now?

Hugh remains silent. Eyes pleading. Oliver nods.

OLIVER
Better to keep her away from the
men. I offer you my home.

Hugh nods, thanks. And walks her towards the Watch House.

INT. WATCH HOUSE / BEDROOM - DUSK

Oliver knocks, enters, sees Marcela on the bed and Hugh finishing putting her in manacles. Her face covered.

OLIVER
A bit barbaric, don't you think? At
least let's make her more comfortable.

He unties Marcela's shoes. Powdery dust spills out from her shoes. SOIL FROM ACRE. Oliver feels it. Remembers ...

OLIVER
Very curious ...

Oliver uncovers Marcela's face. He's just seen a ghost.

OLIVER
Marcela...? She looks the same...
Not a blemish, nor a wrinkle.

Stunned, he looks at Hugh for answers.

HUGH
She is not the same person.

Hugh holds up a small mirror, angles it towards Marcela.

IN THE MIRROR -- Oliver just sees her robes. No face.
Marcela's physical body casts NO REFLECTION!

OLIVER
(to himself)
What devil possesses you, child?

Suddenly, she awakens and lunges at Oliver. Her eyes WHITE.
She thrashes violently, her manacles holding her down.

Oliver jumps back in shock. And crosses himself.

Several times.

INT. WATCH HOUSE / KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Oliver guzzles wine straight from the flagon. Takes a
moment to compose himself. Hugh sits, looking on.

HUGH
The others do not know.

OLIVER

Wise choice.

(sits, thinking back)

In my time, on my many travels, I have treated famine victims, leprosy, the plague. But this. What is this? This scourge?

HUGH

I don't know. But whatever this -- blood disease she suffers from, there are hundreds, if not thousands just like her. There must be a cure ...

OLIVER

For there to be a cure there must be a source.

A beat. Hugh comes clean.

HUGH

The source of this disease is a man. Or he used to be a man ... Alexius of Thuringia.

That's a name Oliver hasn't heard in ages.

OLIVER

Impossible.

HUGH

He drank the blood of Christ.

Oliver looks horrified. And drinks again.

HUGH

He stole that which was reserved for the son of God alone. He is now after the last remaining vial. We lost the second vial in France.

OLIVER

And Marcela is one of them?

HUGH

(nods)

I could not abandon her, not again.

Oliver lays his hand on Hugh's shoulder.

OLIVER

Love has lead many men astray, Hugh.

(MORE)

OLIVER(cont'd)

You should not have brought her here. You must realize, my brother, that she is no more than a vessel -- no more than the Devil possesses her.

(a beat)

Now. You say they feast on blood? What kind? Animal?

HUGH

Human.

OLIVER

The blood of Christ was collected by Joseph of Arimathea as our Lord was crucified. And once the Order took possession, The Keepers of the Grail divided His Holy Blood into three vials -- The Holy Trinity.

HUGH

To ensure that at least one of the vials survives for the Second Coming of our Lord.

OLIVER

A world without end. Heaven on Earth.

HUGH

But should someone destroy all three vials, God will abandon us, and the promise of salvation ends. A world forever in darkness.

A heavy beat lingers. Oliver paces, thinking aloud.

OLIVER

This army you encountered -- any weaknesses? Anything we can use against them?

HUGH

They are unmatched. Almost impossible to kill. But they all seemed affected with the same affliction.

(off Oliver's look)

They fear the simplest artifacts of Christian faith. Holy water, crucifixes, even garlic. And they hide in the shadows. Deathly afraid of sunlight. It burns them.

OLIVER

They fear the symbols of Christ
because the Devil possesses them.

HUGH

I stabbed one in the heart with my
sword... it did not die. Yet I
stabbed another with a bone from a
grave... and it was destroyed.

OLIVER

Holy artifact. Anything buried on
hallowed ground becomes holy itself.

HUGH

But how does something unholy even
walk on hallowed ground?

OLIVER

Ah. That explains the soil in the
boots. Soil from the ground where
they died. That protects them.

(a beat)

However, this is just all speculation.
You forget I was a doctor, Hugh. It
was my gift... and my curse.

Oliver crosses himself. A flicker of life back in his eyes.
A man awoken from a long slumber.

A sudden knock. CHARLES enters.

CHARLES

Someone approaches.

EXT. CITADEL - MOMENTS LATER

LUC stands, staring out at the forest. Hugh, Charles and
Oliver approach. Luc holds a finger to his lips: *Quiet*.

OLIVER

Easy for you to say.

HUGH

(whispers)

How many?

Luc holds up both hands. Ten. Everyone draws their swords.

Suddenly, the sound of horse hooves. Riders approaching.
TEN MEN. Weary. Wounded. One man is missing an ARM, the
stump cauterized above his elbow.

One rider pulls his horse forward, GUY DE PANAZ. He bows.

GUY

I am Guy De Panz. From the Order
of Barbera in Spain. We received
our orders from the London Temple.

Hugh and the others do not lower their swords.

HUGH

(testing him)

Where does the magnificence of the
Templars dominate?

GUY

(quoting from memory)

*To the Three Indias, through the
deserts toward the place of the rising
sun, through the valley of deserted
Babylon to the Tower of Babel, up to
God and the very Heavens themselves...*

HUGH

Then I bid you welcome.

INT. CITADEL / DINING ROOM - LATER

Knights sit around the table, talking. Oliver offers wine.

GUY

... We held out as long as we could,
but we were no match for the "*night
killers...*"

RAYMOND looks at the last slab of meat in the middle of the
table. Sees one of Guy's men, DOMINIQUE OF ITIER, the one
with the missing arm, eyeing it too.

RAYMOND

What happened to the arm?

DOMINIQUE

One of the devils bit me. Saw what
happened to the others. They rose
from the dead. I took care of it
myself. Though it was my good arm.

As Raymond goes to snag the last piece of meat with his fork
-- Dominique stabs the meat for himself.

DOMINIQUE

But this arm is not so bad either.

INT. WATCH HOUSE / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hugh squeezes blood from his forearm into a bowl. He hands it to a calmer, more "human"-looking Marcela. She drinks.

We see the blood flow through her veins. More flesh knits onto her bones beneath her skin. Her skin color returning.

She stares at Hugh's necklace with their WEDDING RINGS on it. Mesmerized. Hugh takes notice. He holds it up, showing her.

HUGH

We were together. You and I.
Once, long ago. Do you remember?

No response. His hopes dashed. Marcela then reaches out, and touches the wedding bands.

FLASHBACK -- VARIOUS SUN BLEACHED IMAGES:

A younger HUGH and MARCELA. Together. In love. Their children. Smiling face. Laughing. A family.

Marcela stirs. As if slowly awakening from a haze. Then --

MARCELA

(whispers)
Hugh...

Hugh looks at her. In shock. Joy. Sadness.

MARCELA

I remember... I loved you...

Hesitantly, he moves closer to her. She doesn't get agitated like before. She looks at him, eyes brimming with sadness.

MARCELA

... and you loved me. We had children. They were...

A tear falls from her eye. She remembers. Hugh sits on the edge of the bed. Old wounds opening up. For both of them.

MARCELA

I love you still ... can this be true? I died. What am I?

His hand touches hers. Cold.

HUGH

What happened? How did you survive?

A beat. Hesitant, then

MARCELA

He came for me. Said he loved me --

Suddenly, she sits up. Fearful. Eyes staring, unfocused.

HUGH

He cannot find you. We are safe here.

MARCELA

You are not safe from him. No one
is. He will find what he seeks,
and this land will fall like all
the others before ...

HER VOICE CARRIES OVER THE FOLLOWING IMAGES --

Night. Alexius surveys the windswept desert landscape.

MARCELA (V.O.)

He died in Acre, just as I did ...

He turns, his flowing CLOAK WIPING THE FRAME TO BLACK.

MARCELA (V.O.)

He wanted eternal life ... to save
me. But instead, he cursed us both.
He carries the mark of the devil, and
passes it to everyone he touches ...

Alexius and Visago ride. A SMALL ARMY marches behind them.

MARCELA (V.O.)

Villages were the first to perish...

SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE-EAST

Alexius and his men slash their way through an Arab village.
Drinking the blood of their victims.

Alexius cuts down a MOTHER, her child in her arms. He
stares at the child, and smiles, revealing FANGED TEETH.

MARCELA (V.O.)

And the dead would rise and join him.

Dark. Muddy. Raining. Alexius leads his ever-growing ARMY
through the mountainous terrain. Another village in sight.

ALEXIUS' MEN cheer as one of their own is slaughtered. BLOOD
gathered in cups. Imprisoned villagers forced to drink the
tainted blood. Now joining the ranks of the infected.

MARCELA (V.O.)
His army grew like a plague.

Alexius' growing army camped out. His Warriors FILING THEIR TEETH DOWN to razor sharp fangs.

MARCELA (V.O.)
First villages, then cities. And
then nations.

AN UNKNOWN CITY ON FIRE.

Silhouetted against the glowing flames, Alexius' men look like an army of SHADOWS. Moving with inhuman speed. Leaping from walls and rooftops. Swords slashing. Killing everyone.

Alexius' men RIPPING out the throats of the soldiers with their sharpened, filed down TEETH, drinking their blood.

MARCELA (V.O.)
Forced to fight and live in the shadows. But he found a way to survive... and thrive.

Alexius' Army marches. The procession stretches for miles. A carriage leads the way. Inside it, ALEXIUS and MARCELA.

MARCELA (V.O.)
He must extinguish all hope. He must destroy the vials of Christ's blood.

His hand takes hers. He looks into her eyes, but she looks away. She is a prisoner.

MARCELA (V.O.)
Then the darkness will fall. He will rule forever as its king... and me as his queen.

BACK TO:

As they were. Hugh taking it all in, thinking ...

HUGH
But why? Why must he destroy the remaining vials?

MARCELA
For the blood is the life. And that which created him could also be used to destroy him...
(a beat)
You know everything... as does he.

HUGH

What do you mean?

MARCELA

I am his eyes, his ears. Through me, he has seen everything. He now knows where the last vial of Holy Blood is.

(off Hugh)

We are all the same and we serve one master. When you succumb to him, you become an empty vessel to do his bidding. You lose everything... human. Hope. Dreams. Memories...

(a beat)

That is why he tortures your Grand Master, hoping to break his will. Hoping he will reveal the location of the final vial. And should that fail, then that is why he let me go with you...

Hugh takes this in. She is a victim. Everyone is.

MARCELA

I know that I love you. How and why I remember, I know not.

(looks away)

He is distant, the echo of his voice rings silent. His power over me is weak, but it grows...

(a beat)

He is coming. Now. As we speak. Assembling his troops and war machines... You cannot win.

Off Hugh's horrified look --

EXT. CITADEL / DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Hugh stands with the others. He's just spilled it all. Everyone digests what's been said. The news is grim.

SIMON

We should take the Grail and leave. Save lives while we still can.

HUGH

Leave? And go where?

SIMON

Anywhere!

HUGH

If we run, then he will follow. We will only prolong the inevitable. We must stay and fight.

CHARLES

Fight?! We don't stand a chance.

CHRISTUS

That beast betrayed us! If we kill her then we cut off their communication.

HUGH

No! She is a victim. We must show compassion.

CHRISTUS

It is an abomination of our God! It must be destroyed before more damage is done.

He unsheathes his sword. Hugh grabs his sword. The others move in on HUGH, swords drawn. A standoff.

HUGH

All of you move against me now?

SIMON

She is no longer a woman. She must be destroyed. Her soul must be saved. Whatever evil possesses her could infect us all.

CHRISTUS

Why do you protect this woman so?

A beat. Everyone waiting for an answer, then

HUGH

She was my wife.

Everyone falls silent, in shock. A beat. Hugh soldiers on.

HUGH

I gave her up for the Order. I gave up everything ...

(pulling it together)

My brothers. I have asked nothing of you before, and now I ask only this.

Templars look to each other, swords are sheathed.

HUGH

She may be able to help our cause.

CHRISTUS

Really? And how's that?

HUGH

She is their link to us, and us to them. That becomes our advantage, and their undoing. We have no time to waste.

EXT. TOWER OF LONDON - DAY

A fortress. A royal palace. And a prison. All enclosed by two parallel rings of defensive walls and a moat.

INT. TOWER OF LONDON / THRONE ROOM - DAY

HUGH stands before the new king of England. EDWARD II, (20's) Effeminate. And ISABELLA, Edward's BRIDE-TO-BE and daughter of KING PHILIP, sits nearby doing needlepoint.

HUGH

Majesty, your country is in grave danger. Enemy forces lie in wait, ready to invade England. And King Philip of France is providing support for this enemy.

EDWARD II

I will not believe such lies! You fled France like common thieves. You are all wanted men. I should have you arrested and turned over to him at once.

HUGH

Your Highness, I speak the truth. You have been deceived by a lie. The Order was betrayed by King Philip and His Holiness ...
 (a beat, desperate)
 This army is infected with a plague that can wipe out this country. Most of Europe has already fallen. We need your support and your troops. We are simply not enough.

Isabella looks up from her needlepoint in shock.

EDWARD II

You come to me with mad tales of
plague and enemy warships? You
offend my Queen by defaming her
father in her presence, asking me
to make war with France? Our
future ally? My future family?
(a nervous beat)
Leave my presence at once.

EXT. TOWER OF LONDON - MOMENTS LATER

Hugh is escorted out. Charles stands waiting. By the
look on Hugh's face, he knows it's not good news.

HUGH

We need to raise our own army.
Dispatch scouts and messengers to
the four points. Spread the word.
Travel from town to town, city to
city, and round up support. The
Order has done much good here, and
the people will not forget that.

CHARLES

And if no one volunteers for our army?

HUGH

Then we'll buy one.

INT. CITADEL / TREASURY - LATER THAT DAY

Locked chests are opened. Gold and silver coins. Gems.

SIMON

How much do you want to use?

HUGH

All of it.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

DEODAT rides into a small, but bustling village.

INT. VILLAGE GUILDHALL - DAY

Deodat meets with the ALDERMAN.

DEODAT

We seek to raise an army to protect
this land. Not to overthrow the
kingdom.

ALDERMAN

Fight alongside the Templars, eh?
 (Deodat nods)
 My father fought in the Crusades.
 I take the Templars at their word.
 What do you ask of me?

Deodat hands him a bag of coins.

DEODAT

To spread the word.

IN A VILLAGE TAVERN

Drink, music, prostitutes. RAYMOND sits by a fireplace.
 Speaks to a man. Call him GARIN.

GARIN

Looking to raise an army, are you?

RAYMOND

Aye. And you wish to join?

He nods. Raymond hands him a gold coin.

GARIN

And so does my brother.

Raymond looks at Garin's brother WILL. A tall, burly man.

RAYMOND

Can he fight?

GARIN

Aye. If he drinks enough.

Raymond hands him another gold coin.

A PRINTING SHOP -- Locals block print POSTERS on cloth.

CLOSE ON: A stack of illustrated posters "*INVASION! An enemy is at our shores - Your country needs you!*"

IN A VILLAGE MARKET

A growing queue of MEN up to a small stand. Recruits.
 Behind the stall is SIMON. Pays each of the recruits...

AT THE CITADEL

TEMPLARS chop down TREES surrounding the Citadel -- Setting controlled FIRES -- clearing the area around it. We notice the amount of MEN working has grown in number.

We see Templars digging TRENCHES -- Filling the MOAT with water -- sinking massive WOODEN STAKES. MONKS blessing it.

INT. WATCH HOUSE / BEDROOM - DAY

Marcela sleeps, her face, body covered. The door creaks open. In walks... CHRISTUS.

With the tip of his sword, he moves away the robes covering her face. She looks beautiful, still.

Christus kisses his rosary, crosses himself. He then holds his sword above her, ready to strike --

CHRISTUS
God forgive me...

As he plunges the blade towards her --

Another sword smashes through Christus' blade, severing it.

Christus turns, sees... OLIVER. Disappointed look on his face. He then quickly holds his blade under Christus' neck.

OLIVER
Get out. Now.

EXT. PORT - NIGHT

Super: Calais, France

Soot, smoke and sparks fly as VAMPIRIC BLACKSMITHS and IRON MONGERS hammer away. Hot molten iron. Smelting, forging and shaping weapons, armor ...

VAMPIRICS toil away, assembling strange looking machinery.

Standing on a cliff, surveying all, is ALEXIUS. His cloak and robes blowing in the wind. Visago by his side.

He SEES what Marcela sees. He knows what she knows ...

ALEXIUS
They raise an army to confront us.
No matter. The battleground will
be their tomb. And all hope will
be lost.

INT. WATCH HOUSE - NIGHT

... And Marcela sees what Alexius sees.

Marcela and Hugh stand over a CANVAS MAP of Europe. She shows him where Alexius's forces are mobilizing. His plans. Hugh marks the map with a piece of charcoal.

INT. THE CITADEL - DAY

Hugh addressing the others. Marked up map in full view.

HUGH

Warships head towards us from ports the world over, surrounding the British Isles. The English held port of Calais in France has also been overrun ...

(points to map)

The first attack will be here, at Dover.

(a beat, serious)

The enemy we face is like no other. And as King Edward refuses to make war with France, we shall face them alone.

(murmurs, groans

from the others)

This army carries a sickness in their blood which they can spread to others. If you are bitten, then you are dead, but still alive. The worst death of all ...

OLIVER

Remember, common blades will not vanquish the enemy, for we face an army of devils. Therefore, everything based in Christian faith can be used as a weapon against them. Crucifixes, garlic, religious relics. Sunlight will destroy them. God is the light, and the Devil is the darkness.

HUGH

From this day forward, you are all Knights. And we all fight as one. We fight to save our God, our country, our families ...

MONTAGE: A SERIES OF SHOTS - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

IN A FIELD -- Templars gather bushels of GARLIC.

ELYAS

Garlic may smell awful, but how is it dangerous?

DEODAT

When God banished Satan from the Garden of Eden, garlic grew in his footsteps. An old Christian myth.

IN THE CRYPT -- Hugh stands with fellow Templars ...

HUGH

The most effective and immediate way to kill the enemy is by use of holy artifact.

THE TRUE CROSS before them.

CHARLES

This is sacrilege. I can't.

OLIVER

Oh, stop it. It's for a good cause.

CUT TO:

Hugh, Oliver and the others CHOPPING the TRUE CROSS into pieces with axes. Charles looks on, horrified.

CHARLES

May our Lord forgive us.

Pieces of the True Cross are whittled and shaped into sharp, arrow-like STAKES. Hugh inspects them. Only a few hundred.

AT A WATER MILL -- situated on the banks of the WRAYSBURY RIVER. A DRY, EMPTY RIVER BED to one side.

Templars stack barrels of BLACK POWDER against the giant water wheel.

IN THE KITCHEN -- Bushels of GARLIC are cleaved, crushed and dumped into vats of bubbling oil. MONKS bless them.

IN THE ARMORY -- Templars dig out habits, helmets, armor, swords, shields, weapons of every kind. All covered in dust.

EXT. ANOTHER ENGLISH VILLAGE - DAY

A DRUMMER BOY leads RECRUITS through a town square. More and more villagers fall into line. Joining up.

The BEAT OF THE DRUM carries O.S.

AN ARMADA OF WARSHIPS. THOUSANDS OF VAMPIRICS marching towards them. Weapons of war and machinery.

We see a line of RECRUITS following the DRUMMER BOY. The line stretches to the horizon.

ALEXIUS boards a VAMPIRIC WARSHIP. Crowned with METAL SHIELDS. Dozens of oars emerge, digging into the water.

LONDON - A DRUMMER BOY leads a LONG LINE OF RECRUITS through the very centre of the city ...

... The sound of the DRUMMER BOY'S DRUM grows louder and louder, BLENDING IN WITH --

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

VAMPIRIC WARSHIPS cutting through rough open ocean ...

INT. VAMPIRIC WARSHIP - DAY

The SLAVE MASTER drums. DOZENS OF VAMPIRIC WARRIORS work the oars to a steady, rhythmic beat. The dead never tire.

THE SLAVE MASTER'S relentless DRUM BEAT grows louder, and louder -- carrying over the rest of the MONTAGE ...

EXT. THE CITADEL - DAY

Hundreds of civilians are trained by LUC. Learning their moves all in unison. ELYAS teaches the younger boys.

IN A BLACKSMITH'S SHOP -- Sparks fly. The loud clanging of hammers as BLACKSMITHS mold, forge and shape steel.

A BLACKSMITH hands Hugh a BROADSWORD. He holds it. The blade gleams in the flickering light. He presses a button hidden in the handle. The hilt detaches and a SMALL DAGGER BLADE snaps out. Hugh looks pleased.

DOMINIQUE receives a razor sharp metal PIKE that will fit over his stump of arm. He tries it on. Perfect fit.

THE DRUMS O.S. BUILD TO A PITCH --

We see TEMPLARS put on armor. Ready weapons. RED CROSSES are painted onto chest plates and shields.

Sword blades are dipped into garlic oil. MONKS bless each one, then bless each Knight.

EXT. ENGLISH CHANNEL - NIGHT

THE VAMPIRIC WARSHIPS closing in ...

O.S. THE SOUND OF THE BEATING DRUMS GET LOUDER ...

EXT. TOWER OF LONDON - ROYAL MENAGERIE - DAY

KING EDWARD II watches with great delight as LIONS fight over scraps of meat. A ROYAL ADVISOR approaches, hands him one of the Templar POSTERS.

Edwards reads. His face registers shock, betrayal ...

ADVISOR

Warships have been spotted off our coastline, as far north as Scotland. King Philip denies it entirely.

(a beat)

Your Majesty. This is an invading force. Hugh of Paynes was correct. Release the armies and help the Templars counter this threat.

He holds out an ORDER for the King to sign.

INT. WATCH HOUSE / BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hugh gives Marcela another small bowl of his blood. As she goes to drink the blood, she looks ashamed.

MARCELA

Please... Don't look at me. I disgust you.

HUGH

(smiles)

Never.

She holds his gaze. Hugh looks away. Marcela drinks.

INT. CITADEL / DINING HALL - NIGHT

KNIGHTS crowd around the huge table. All of Hugh's main COMMANDERS and SERGEANTS. Simple meal. Bread and wine.

HUGH

Our last supper before battle.

(raises cup)

To my brothers who will lead the fight in the north, in the west and to the south... God's blessing to you all.

(everyone sips)

We must not fail, for there is no going home. We fight not only for our Lord, but for all mankind. We shall not fear death.

(MORE)

HUGH(cont'd)

To die for our God is not the end.
It is only the beginning. Let us
pray...

Everyone bows their heads.

EXT. WATCH HOUSE - NIGHT

A clear, cool night.

Hugh sits, holding Marcela. She looks at him longingly.
Her lips move towards his. Hugh hesitates. Emotions racing.
Guilt. Duty. Honor. Then --

They kiss. She suddenly stops, and slowly pulls away.

MARCELA

I am cold to you, aren't I?

HUGH

No ...

MARCELA

It's because I am not meant to be.
Whoever I was ... back so many years
ago, still loves you ... and that
will never die.

She stares deep into his eyes. Sees him struggling for the
words. She knows. Tears streak down her face.

MARCELA

I forgive you.

A weight lifted off his soul. Hugh holds her close.

HUGH

And I will never leave you again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE CITADEL - MORNING

THOUSANDS OF KNIGHTS stand at attention, ready to head into
battle. Hugh, in full armor, stands with Oliver.

OLIVER

Leave this lot to me. We'll be ready.

HUGH

With you in charge, I have no doubt.

OLIVER

It is today that I truly live again!

The two embrace.

Hugh mounts his horse PETE, also in full armor. He rides in front of his army, looking over the many faces: Fathers, sons, brothers, husbands. He knows many will never return.

HUGH

A Templar Knight is truly a fearless knight, for his soul is protected by the armor of faith, just as his body is protected by the armor of steel. He is thus doubly-armed, and need fear neither demons nor men. This is no army we face. It is a force of will. One man's will. And we shall break it. God wills it!

Everyone cheers. The armies then split up, heading off into four separate directions.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE MIDLANDS - DAY

Hugh leads a long procession of KNIGHTS ON HORSEBACK AND WALKING INFANTRY. Everyone grinds to a halt as --

CHARLES

(pointing to the distance)

Look ...

We see THE KING'S ROYAL ARMY riding towards them. THE SERGEANT rides up. Call him BALDRICK OF ALFORD.

HUGH

Have you decided to join us... or fight us?

BALDRICK

(bows)

With the King's blessing, he has released all of his forces over to the Templar Order. We are at your command. Other divisions are already on their way to join your encampments at Anglia and Wales.

HUGH

(bows)

It is an honor to have the Royal Army at our side.

They ride off, leading their combined troops.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACHES OF DOVER - DAWN

Grey, overcast skies. Dense fog.

A heavily fortified beachhead. Templar encampment nestled between THE WHITE CLIFFS OF DOVER and the shoreline.

LOOKOUTS scan the horizon with telescopes. MESSENGER BOYS, armor slightly too big for them, sit shivering in the chill.

Hugh sits atop his warhorse Pete, surveying his hodgepodge army: Templars, Royal Knights, civilian militia. All fighting for the same cause. Charles rides up to him.

CHARLES

We still don't have enough men.

HUGH

Numbers aren't everything.

Then, suddenly --

A DARK, TRIANGULAR MASS slowly emerges through the fog ...
A SAIL. Like a giant shark fin. Dozens of oars plowing the water. A WARSHIP!

LOOKOUT

Enemy on the horizon!

Suddenly, more ships appear. A massive blockade.

Hugh raises his telescope, looks ... sees ARMORED VAMPIRICS on deck. Their blood red eyes glowing in the heavy mist. The warships drop anchor, just beyond the breakers.

KNIGHTS move into position. ARCHERS ready their bows.

GREGORY looks up to the overcast sky. No sun. At all.

GREGORY

Cursed English weather.

Suddenly, the SUN starts breaking through the clouds. Knights raise their swords, cheering.

GREGORY

God is on our side!

(egging them on)

C'mon! What're you waiting for?!

Laughter. More taunting.

HUGH
They will wait for the sun to set.
That is why we hit them now. Fire!

Templar Commanders carry out the order and ...

ON THE BEACHHEAD AND CLIFFS ABOVE

BOOM!-BOOM!-BOOM! Bombards blast away -- firing primitive cannonballs. Catapults lobbing stones and fire pots ...

Ordinance rains down. Scoring direct hits! But the heavy bombardment only DENTS the warships' outer metal shields.

Hugh takes it all in, discouraged.

HUGH
Cease fire!

As the smoke clears, the warships' metal shields slowly UNFOLD, revealing ... CATAPULTS and BOMBARDS!

Here comes the first strike.

HUGH
Take cover!

Everyone does so, just as ...

THE WARSHIPS FIRE!

Catapults launch DOZENS OF MASSIVE IRON CANNONBALLS.

WHAM! Cannonballs rain down -- SMASHING the encampment -- blowing Knights apart on impact -- explosions of sand.

A few cannonballs sail overhead, PUMMELING the white cliffs, then roll back down the cliffs like runaway wrecking balls -- rolling down into the Templar encampment.

Knights gather round, looking on intently at the strange cannonballs, weapons poised. Suddenly --

The cannonballs CRACK OPEN, revealing ... BLACK ARMORED VAMPIRIC WARRIORS! A lethal broadsword in each hand.

These are REAPERS.

Then, a bizarre WHIRRING sound emanates from within the Reapers' armor. The armor is mechanized. Feet LIFT OFF THE GROUND as metal extensions LOCK INTO PLACE! Stilts.

The Reapers now stand TWELVE FEET TALL, towering over the battlefield. Extensions lock into place on their SWORDS -- doubling the length and reach of each blade.

THE REAPERS walk -- their long strides covering ground faster than any man on foot. Broadswords slashing, decapitating Knights with single strokes.

KNIGHTS fire their crossbows, but the bolts harmlessly bounce off the Reapers' armor. No effect. At all.

CUT TO:

VAMPIRIC WARSHIPS begin launching smaller LANDING BOATS.

The small shielded boats row towards shore as ...

HUNDREDS OF ARMED VAMPIRIC WARRIORS leap from the decks of the massive warships -- jumping overboard -- splashing down into the water -- disappearing below the surface ...

ON THE BEACH

REAPERS slaughter the overwhelmed Templar forces.

GREGORY grabs a barrel of BLACK POWDER. Lights the fuse -- and kicks the barrel down the sand dune. It rolls between the REAPER'S LEGS, fuse burning down, and ...

Ka-BOOM! The barrel EXPLODES -- blowing the REAPER to shrapnel. Remains collapsing in a fiery blaze. One down.

CHARLES rolls another lit barrel -- BOOM! Blows a Reaper's stilt-leg off. It teeters, topples. Another down.

CUT TO:

HUGH runs, coils of ROPE in hand. He throws the other end of the rope to CHRISTUS. Together, they run straight towards a REAPER -- rope held in a taut line between them.

They run circles around the Reaper -- rope wrapping around its legs -- all while ducking the Reaper's slashing blades.

The Reaper steps forward and ... CRASHES TO THE GROUND!

Templars pounce on it -- STABBING swords into slit openings in the helmet and armor. Blood sprays. Templars pull the Reaper's helmet off, decapitating the Vampiric inside.

CATAPULTS launch ROCKS AND FIRE POTS at the Reapers. One Reaper is crushed by a rock. Another hit with a fire pot.

But the Reaper fights on, engulfed in FLAMES. Each fiery sword cutting down Knights or setting them ablaze.

AT THE SHORELINE

DOZENS OF LANDING BOATS hit the beach.

Gangplanks kick down and HEAVILY ARMORED VAMPIRIC KNIGHTS roll off huge, WHEELED IRON BOXES onto the beach. The boxes themselves must weigh a ton, but what's inside?

Once in position, Vampirics start rotating levers on the side of each IRON BOX. And whatever's inside starts to extend ...

A LONG NECK of interlocking IRON AND BRONZE COMPONENTS stretches high up into the air like a crane. As the neck fully extends, a BRONZE DISC begins to bloom open ...

A MASSIVE METAL UMBRELLA!

Standing 150 feet tall. The disc spans 300 feet in diameter.

And it's blocking out THE SUN.

ALL UP AND DOWN THE BEACH

We see a long line of SUN-BLOCKING DISCS unfurl. Call these giant contraptions SHADOWCASTERS.

The beach is now cast in eternal TWILIGHT.

AT THE SHORELINE

LEGIONS OF VAMPIRIC WARRIORS AND ARCHERS emerge from the surf like medieval sea monsters. Armed to the teeth.

NOTE: These "Secondary Warriors" are dressed in light armor. Not as protective from the sun as the First Wave Warriors.

VAMPIRIC ARCHERS take up the frontal position. Their arrows armed with a pointed GLASS VIAL TIP. And inside the vial ... red liquid. Blood. VAMPIRIC BLOOD. They fire.

A SWARM OF GLASS-TIPPED ARROWS BLACK OUT THE SKY!

CHARLES
Shields! Shields!

TEMPLARS raise their SHIELDS for cover -- *THK!-THK!-THK-THK!* Infected blood sprays as the glass vials shatter on impact. But dozens are hit. CHARLES checks himself. A glass-tipped arrow just missed hitting skin. He sighs relief.

THOUSANDS OF VAMPIRIC WARRIORS charge up the rocky beachhead -- all under the shaded protection of the Shadowcasters.

HUGH mounts his horse, rallies the troops.

HUGH
Let's hold 'em here! Charge!

AND THE TWO ARMIES CRASH together!

Metal against metal. Swords cut and sever. Body parts fly. Vampirics biting Knights with their sharpened teeth.

As a VAMPIRIC spars with a Templar -- IT SEES THE ROSARY AROUND THE TEMPLAR'S NECK. The Vampiric quickly looks away.

ANOTHER KNIGHT holds up his ROSARY as protection, but the Vampiric CHOPS the KNIGHT'S ARM OFF which holds the rosary.

Hugh realizes his men are losing momentum. He looks up -- an idea! He rides, yelling, pointing at the SHADOWCASTERS.

HUGH
Take 'em down! Fire! Fire!

Templars reposition their CATAPULTS, and fire -- flinging rocks and fire pots at the SHADOWCASTERS.

Ordinance rains down, pounding the Shadowcasters. One sways under the heavy bombardment. The towering structure topples over -- crashing down, killing men.

ANOTHER SHADOWCASTER weaves. Metal groans, bending. It buckles -- colliding into another one! Total domino effect.

HUGH smiles. Likes what he sees, but ...

KNIGHTS felled by infected arrows, now rise to their feet! Eyes crimson red. Feverish. They grab their weapons -- joining the ranks of the VAMPIRIC WARRIORS.

Hugh's smile fades. He rides back towards the trenches. We see line after line of ARCHERS -- ROPE tied around the arrow shafts. They stand ready, weapons raised ...

HUGH
Fire!

Arrows fly, impaling Vampirics. We follow the other ends of the ROPE ... each rope is TIED TO A LINE OF HORSES!

HUGH

Now!

RIDERS spur their horses. The horses bolt -- rope unfurling -- snags taught -- and DRAGS THE IMPALED VAMPIRICS BACK INTO THE SUNLIGHT! They scream, instantly turning to ASH ...

ANOTHER LINE OF ARCHERS fire -- skewering Vampirics -- horses dragging them across the sand, into the sunlight. Some try clawing their way back into the shade. Not gonna happen.

But the Vampirics keep coming.

HUNDREDS OF LANDING BOATS hit the shore. VAMPIRICS swarming the beach -- climbing the cliffs. They're everywhere.

A grim situation. Hugh knows it's time.

HUGH

Full retreat!

The order is passed along. KNIGHTS head for the hills.

AT THE SHORELINE

An elaborate-looking LANDING VESSEL pulls ashore.

First off VISAGO, then ALEXIUS. Alexius surveys the carnage. A Vampiric Warrior brings him his BLACK ARMORED HORSE.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

The sun hangs low in the sky. A solitary burning ember.

Hugh leads the remnants of his rag tag army across the fields. Riding directly into the setting sun.

And behind them --

VAMPIRIC WARRIORS giving chase. Closing the gap. Fast!

CHRISTUS

We'll never outrun 'em!

Hugh rides past a WINDMILL. The canvas sails in an "X" position. Hugh pulls his horse to a stop. An idea.

CHRISTUS

What're you doing?

HUGH

Follow me.

INT. WINDMILL - MOMENTS LATER

HUGH and the others work the windmill's operating gears ...

EXT. WINDMILL - DUSK

The windmill's rectangular-shaped sails turn, locking into an upright position. The setting sun behind it.

The shadow the windmill casts now looks like a CROSS!

WIDEN TO REVEAL ...

A FIELD LITTERED WITH WINDMILLS.

CUT TO:

As HOARDS OF VAMPIRIC WARRIORS ascend over the horizon, we now see what they see ...

A mile-wide line of WINDMILL CROSSES!

Vampirics are instantly CAUGHT in the long, far reaching cross shadows! They scream in horror, falling from their horses. Others turn their horses around, full retreat.

HUGH and his TEMPLAR KNIGHTS form up, swords raised.

HUGH
God wills it!

They charge towards the Vampirics -- mercilessly HACKING the heads off the fallen warriors. FARMERS, armed with pitchforks, join in, staking Vampirics to ground.

Templars watch the remaining Vampirics retreat back towards the coast. They've just bought themselves a little time.

Hugh and the others then gallop towards the forest ...

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

As the sun melts away on the horizon, the windmill shadows shrink. A few stars now visible. ALEXIUS appears, leading his vast army across the countryside.

ALEXIUS
Forward! Victory awaits.
(to Visago)
We must reach their sanctuary
before dawn.

Visago nods.

EXT. THE CITADEL - NIGHT

All is quiet. OLIVER scans the near distance. DARK FIGURES emerge from the forest, running across the cleared area.

Oliver takes a CROSSBOW. Puts on his glasses. Takes aim.

OLIVER
Oi! Who goes there?

But the SHADOWY FIGURES keep moving forward. Oliver fires. A BOLT hums past, just missing SIMON! We see CHRISTUS, GREGORY and other Knights right behind him, hands up.

SIMON
Whoa! Hold your fire!

Oliver and Knights greet them, giving them water.

OLIVER
Where's Hugh?

SIMON
On his way.

Oliver adjusts his thick lensed glasses. His distorted, large eyeballs staring back at Simon. Simon stares ...

OLIVER
I see just fine. Trust me.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Vampirics marching through dense forest, lugging heavy equipment. Their wolf-like eyes glowing in the moonlight.

EXT. WATERMILL - NIGHT

Hugh, Luc and Charles at the mill. Dozens of barrels, full of BLACK POWDER, stacked up against the mill, sluice gates.

Luc puts his finger to his lips. He hears something. They look and can see the distant treetops sway as the Vampiric Army worms its way through the forest.

EXT. FOREST / RIVERBED - NIGHT

VAMPIRIC WARRIORS advance down a rocky, sloping surface.

Visago sees hoofprints, footprints.

VISAGO
They came this way.

Alexius crouches down, fingers touching the soil. Dry. Smooth stones, laced with dried lichen. Suddenly, his ears prick up. He hears something ... a heartbeat. A voice.

EXT. WATERMILL - NIGHT

Hugh and Charles -- each with one hand dipped in the river -- the other clenched around their crucifix. Blessing the water. Both reciting the "The Lord's Prayer" in Latin.

HUGH/CHARLES
... *Libera nos a malo ... amen.*

Luc with FLAMING ARROW, raised and aimed --

EXT. FOREST / RIVERBED - NIGHT

Alexius stands up. It suddenly dawns on him.

They're all standing in the middle of a river bed.

ALEXIUS
It's a trap! Retreat!

EXT. WATERMILL - SAME

Luc fires. The watermill EXPLODES! The damned up river rushes down into the dry river bed like a TIDAL WAVE.

EXT. CITADEL - SAME

Oliver hears the blast echo. He smiles. He knows.

EXT. FOREST / RIVERBED - SAME

ALEXIUS runs for cover as the massive wave of HOLY WATER engulfs the Vampirics -- sweeping them away down stream.

Some cling onto rocks, but their flesh and muscle BURN AND DISSOLVE TO BONE as they're battered by the surging waters.

Vampirics lose their grip and are washed away. Their skeletal remains SMASHING to pieces against the rocks.

ALEXIUS looks at the remains of his army. Stragglers pull themselves from the flowing river, their LEGS AND ARMS DISSOLVED AWAY.

Half of his army destroyed. Washed away. Just like that.

Alexius' eyes burn with fury.

EXT. THE CITADEL - NIGHT

HUGH, CHARLES and LUC dismount. Winded, yet victorious.

OLIVER
Cleansed a few souls, did you?

HUGH
Aye. Just a few.

ARNAUD and GUY ride up, battle-weary, winded.

ARNAUD
They overran our defenses ...
Myself and a few men are all
that's left from Anglia ...

GUY
We fared only slightly better.
They're unstoppable.

Suddenly, distant crashing echoes. They're coming.

OLIVER
Men-at-Arms! Prepare!

EXT. FOREST / RIVER - NIGHT

A mighty oak tree crashes to the forest floor. Vampirics chopping down one tree after another.

EXT. THE CITADEL - NIGHT

KNIGHTS sharpen their swords. ARCHERS prepare their bows.
WOODEN STAKES made from the TRUE CROSS are portioned out.

OLIVER
There are only so many to go
around. Make every one count.

He sees HUGH heading off towards the Watch House ...

EXT. FOREST / RIVER - NIGHT

REAPERS cross the river, dragging the fallen trees behind them, constructing a bridge. The Reapers -- standing high up on their metal stilts -- are safe from the water below.

EXT. WATCH HOUSE - NIGHT - SAME

HUGH leads MARCELA towards the Citadel.

As they walk, she hears a VOICE INSIDE HER HEAD. ALEXIUS...

ALEXIUS (OVER)
Marcela ...

INTERCUT WITH

VAMPIRIC ARMY marches across the makeshift tree bridge.

ALEXIUS stands on the bridge, thoughts drifting ...

ALEXIUS (OVER)
*... your work is done, my love.
 Come and be by my side ...*

MARCELA pulls involuntarily away from HUGH. Fighting him...

HUGH
 What is it? What's wrong?

ALEXIUS (OVER)
... be by my side...

MARCELA
 No. No! I will not!

She clutches her head. His will is tearing her apart. Hugh fights to bring her back under control, calming her down.

HUGH
 It's all right. Stay with me.
 Stay with me ...

Marcela looks at Hugh, teary-eyed. Scared. But calm.

Alexius senses that he's losing her. He looks down at the river below. Sees his wavering reflection in the moonlit water. Except there is no reflection.

He then stares into the distance. Eyes burning with hate.

EXT. THE CITADEL - NIGHT

Everyone keeping vigilant watch. Suddenly, DOZENS OF KNIGHTS -- all dressed in the Templar armor -- emerge from the forest -- running, stumbling towards the Citadel.

KNIGHTS and ARCHERS scramble into position.

DEODAT
 Archers! Take aim!

ARCHERS draw their bows back, taking aim ...

CHARLES

Wait! Those are our men!

DEODAT

Yes, but how do we know which side they're on? They could be infected!

CHARLES

Do you suggest we slaughter our own men?!

Confusion ensues. Archers look at one another for answers.

ARCHER

Who are they? Do we shoot?

OLIVER runs up the steps, barking out orders --

OLIVER

Switch to mirrored sightings!

ARCHER

But we can't see a thing!

OLIVER

Leave that to me.

He races along the wall-walk behind the battlements.

ARCHERS clip on TELESCOPIC MIRROR SIGHTINGS. The sighting reflects the target off small mirrors into the Archer's eye.

OLIVER fires off MANGANESE FIREWORKS -- medieval flares -- *FWOOM! FWOOM! FWOOM!* Bright, twinkling sparks rain down, illuminating the night sky for a brief few seconds ...

ARCHERS target TEMPLARS in their mirrored sights --

VARIOUS ARCHER'S POV: KNIGHTS IN TEMPLAR ARMOR.

We see the magnified images of Templars. They appear normal. All casting reflections. Not infected. So far, so good.

ARCHER'S POV: A TEMPLAR KNIGHT

THE KNIGHT within the armor DISAPPEARS! NO REFLECTION in the mirrors. The empty armor walks towards them! Eerie.

ARCHER

Got one.

He fires. A HOLY CROSS-BOLT hits the knight. He screams and explodes in a plume of ASH! Empty armor, chain mail and weapon collapsing to the ground.

Archers scan, picking up MORE EMPTY SUITS OF ARMOR. They take them down. Mounds of ash litter the battlefield.

IN THE TRENCHES

GARIN sees his older brother WILL. Overjoyed, he leaps from the trenches and runs to him. Will just stares at him.

GARIN

Will! You made it. Brother...?

AN ARCHER'S SCOPE falls across Will. He's just an empty suit of armor. He's infected. We see Garin standing next to him, oblivious of the unseen danger.

Will lunges at Garin -- blood lust in his eyes -- WHAM! He suddenly explodes in a cloud of ash. Garin, in shock.

The battlefield is now empty. Non-infected Templars now safely inside the Citadel. HUGH runs up the steps ...

DEODAT

Is that all?

LUC lays a hand on Hugh's shoulders. Nods to the distance. He then loads up crossbow with a HOLY CROSS-BOLT, and takes aim at the tree line. No movement. Nothing. Then ...

A LONE KNIGHT emerges from the black forest.

LUC fires -- *PPPPPPFFT!* The bolt grazes the side of the KNIGHT'S FACE and skewers a VAMPIRIC -- just as he's about to stick him with its sword! Luc's real target.

THE KNIGHT looks behind him. Horror. He runs as --

THOUSANDS OF VAMPIRIC WARRIORS erupt from the forest!

Our Knight runs, but they kill him, feasting on his blood.

HUGH

Front line into position!

(to Luc, points to
the tower)

I want you up there.

Luc nods, and takes off. His quivers filled with arrows.

We see VAMPIRICS running across the battlefield like a dark swarm of locusts -- completely encircling the CITADEL!

HUGH
Fire! Fire!

ARCHERS and CROSSBOWMEN positioned all around the Citadel take aim and fire. Volleys of HOLY CROSS-BOLTS rain down and ... SCORES OF VAMPIRICS COMBUST INTO ASH! But they still keep coming, looming closer ...

GREGORY, ready to give the signal, shoots Hugh a look.

HUGH
Wait! Let 'em get closer!

DOWN IN THE TRENCHES

The Vampirics are almost on top of them. This is suicide. Templars grow nervous. Oliver takes notice.

OLIVER
Stand your ground!

UP ON THE BATTLEMENTS

Hugh still watching, waiting ... then nods. Now.

GREGORY
Raise the barricade!

TEMPLARS turn wheels and levers, pulling multiple lines of ROPE taut. We see lines of rope -- buried underneath the earth -- suddenly RISE UP, pulling up --

DOZENS AND DOZENS OF LARGE WOODEN CROSSES!

A chain-link fence of crucifixes spring up, ringing the entire Citadel. A spiritually protective barricade.

Vampirics scream, trying to stop. As some run past the BARRICADE OF CROSSES, they burst into ash. Some stop in time, only losing a limb or two.

The crucifix barrier holds the Vampiric Army at bay.

TEMPLARS let out a collective cheer. And sighs of relief.

HUGH
Hit 'em now! Holy fire!

ARCHERS load up cross-bolts tipped with GLASS VIALS, filled with OIL. A manganese charge and wick attached to it. A crucifix engraved on the glass. Wicks are lit. They fire!

A LETHAL BARRAGE OF FIERY CROSS-BOLTS rain down on the other side of the CRUCIFIX BARRICADE ...

... and detonate on impact. EXPLODING LIKE NAPALM! Dousing Vampirics in Holy Fire. Hundreds burn, colliding into one another, setting each other ablaze.

INT. THE CITADEL / CRYPT - SAME

Marcela chained to a wall. In the dark, except for a single flickering candle. Suddenly, her eyes snap open. Fearful.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

ALEXIUS looks out at the battle raging ahead, then at Visago.

ALEXIUS

End this. Now. No mercy.

Visago nods, then leads the VAMPIRICS into battle.

Alexius closes his eyes. Thoughts drifting ...

INT. THE CITADEL / CRYPT - SAME

Marcela screams. Agonized pain. Holding her head. Tears flowing. Fighting Alexius' voice inside her head.

ALEXIUS (OVER)

*... Marcela ... Now is the time ...
Do what must be done ...*

Marcela screams. She can't fight it anymore. She pushes down on her THUMB, harder and harder until we HEAR a SICKENING CRACK as it dislocates.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

VISAGO leads THE VAMPIRIC CAVALRY -- riding at full gallop -- dragging WHEELED BATTERING RAMS behind them.

EXT. THE CITADEL / BATTLEMENTS - NIGHT

HUGH sees them coming. Not good. He turns to Gregory.

HUGH

Ready the horses!

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

As the Vampiric riders approach the crucifix barricade, they unhook the chains, disengaging them from the horses ...

...and the BATTERING RAMS roll on like cruise missiles.
Plowing through their own warriors and tearing through the BARRICADE OF CROSSES! Timbers fly. The chain is broken.

The floodgates open. VAMPIRICS attack.

IN THE TRENCHES

Oliver leaps up onto the battlefield, sword raised high.

OLIVER
God wills it!

Templars let out a bloodcurdling BATTLE CRY and attack.

EXT. THE CITADEL / BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

The gates open. HUGH and TEMPLARS ride out into battle, aiding their brethren, killing Vampirics.

HUGH hacks and slashes. PETE kicks a Vampiric, knocking it backwards -- impaling it on the sharpened remains of a CROSS.

A VAMPIRIC attacks a Templar. OLIVER jumps in, and chops its head off. He extends the Templar helping hand ...

He sees a nasty bite on the Templar's neck. His eyes already starting to DARKEN. Before the wounded Templar can react, Oliver raises his sword ...

OLIVER
God forgive me ...

And decapitates him. Oliver crosses himself.

DOMINIQUE skewers TWO VAMPIRICS with his arm shiv. Detaches it and locks in a NEW ONE. Someone bumps him from behind. Dominique spins around, sword raised ...

... but it's ARNAUD! Battle scarred. A bloody sword in each hand. Breathing heavy. A distant look in his eyes.

DOMINIQUE
Arnaud... ?

He sees ARNAUD'S REFLECTION in his bloodied blade. Arnaud nods. Dominique sighs relief.

UP IN THE TOWER

LUC fires arrows, picking off Vampirics with deadly accuracy.

ON THE BATTLEFIELD

We see TEMPLARS, bitten and left behind, now RISE UP, returning from the dead, joining the ranks of the undead.

ARNAUD

They're overrunning our defenses!
We must close the gates!

Hugh sees his men. Outnumbered, dying. Some running back towards the Citadel, fighting all the way. But Hugh has no choice. He has to. He rides, motioning ...

HUGH

Fall back! Everyone fall back!

OLIVER

You 'eard 'im! Fall back!

Templars heed the call, falling back. Backpedaling across the drawbridge as it's pulled up. Gates closing ...

Hugh sees CHARLES running. He's not gonna make it. Their eyes meet. Charles nods. He knows. And it's okay.

INT./EXT. THE CITADEL / GATES - NIGHT

As the gates slam shut, Hugh cringes. Devastated.

OLIVER

Nothing you can do. They're in
God's hands now.

With that, they enter, barring the doors with wooden beams.

EXT. AT THE CITADEL'S OUTER WALLS - NIGHT

The Citadel is now an island.

CHARLES leads DEODAT and the last few remaining Templars back towards the Citadel, Vampirics on their ass.

CHARLES

Everyone follow me!

He jumps. Everyone jumps ... down into the moat, avoiding the wooden stakes. Everyone wading in chest-high water.

Some Vampirics jump in after them. Big mistake. As they hit the water, they burn. The moat is filled with Holy Water.

Burning Vampirics try climbing their way out, but Templars pull them back down, the Holy Water SCALDING THEM!

CUT TO:

A FIGURE in BLACK, FLOWING ROBES moves with alien-like stealth. And lightning fast. It's VISAGO!

He spins like a whirlwind -- robes unfurling -- flinging DOZENS OF RAZOR STARS in all directions! *THK!-THK!-THK!* Templars and civilian militia fall dead.

VISAGO runs, leaps -- clears the moat, and latches onto the wall. Using his claw-like fingers, he starts climbing ...

VAMPIRICS follow him. They jump, clinging to the Citadel's stone walls. Begin scaling the walls like spiders ...

UP ON THE BATTLEMENTS

Hugh peers over the side, sees them getting closer ...

HUGH

Now!

CAULDRONS OF HOT GARLIC OIL ARE OVERTURNED.

As the HOLY GARLIC OIL pours -- it's IGNITED with a torch -- setting the VAMPIRICS ABLAZE! Burning them off the walls.

They fall, splashing down in the moat below, burning. Some IMPALED on stakes. Others hang on, still ON FIRE. They continue climbing up walls as their FLESH BURNS OFF.

A wave of bubbling oil splashes over Visago, BURNING the side of his face off! Melted skin hanging. Disgusting.

But Visago hangs on. He pulls off another arm robe, WHIPS it skyward ... The other end of the robe SNAPS around the neck of a TEMPLAR who's about to dump more oil.

Inside the robe, a COILED RAZOR WIRE. The wire GARROTES the Templar. Visago pulls, yanking him off the battlement. The vat of hot oil TIPS OVER -- spilling everywhere. Oil splashes a lit torch. Flames flash, engulfing TEMPLARS!

VAMPIRICS climb up the walls, and over the battlements...

... and pour into the Citadel.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALLS

Vampirics begin dumping DEAD TEMPLARS into the moat, piling them up. Building a bridge of dead bodies.

We see ALEXIUS riding towards the Citadel ...

INT. CITADEL / GREAT HALL - SAME

The doors SHUDDER as Vampirics assail it. We hear the sounds of hatchets CHOPPING through the boarded-up windows.

GREGORY

The walls have been breached!

Suddenly, glass SHATTERS as Vampiric arms claw through the windows, reaching out. Trying to get in.

OLIVER

This is God's house! And you shall not enter!

Oliver CHOPS OFF the arms. He takes them all on! He's been cut and stabbed, but he keeps fighting. Unstoppable.

ELYAS and GREGORY fend off Vampirics, slashing mercilessly.

DOMINIQUE skewers a Vampiric with his arm shiv, then uses the dead body as SHIELD as he fends off other Vampirics!

LUC, using two swords, SCISSORS OFF a Vampiric's head.

Templars fight, but it's an increasingly hopeless situation.

OLIVER

(to Hugh)

Go! The Grail must be protected!

Hugh hesitates. Oliver grabs him.

OLIVER

And it is for nothing if the blood of our Lord is not safe! GO!

Hugh nods. He's right. Hugh runs.

CUT TO:

ARNAUD thrusts his sword into a Vampiric's mouth. With a flick of his wrist, he severs the head in half. Suddenly --

VISAGO appears. Half of his face is missing!

ARNAUD
 (looking Visago over)
 I'm going to need some help here.

LUC steps up. He and Arnaud slowly circle around Visago. Sizing each other up. Two on one. But Visago could care less. He unsheathes two swords, twirling them.

VISAGO
 You do not deserve our immortality.

Together, they attack Visago. Swords swinging. Sparks flash. Metal clangs. Insane. Intense. Violent. Blink and you're dead. The three expert swordsmen battle it out.

INT. CITADEL / CRYPT - SAME

Hugh enters the darkened crypt. He pulls out the BIBLE, in it ... the silver box. The last vial.

SOMEONE MOVES FROM THE SHADOWS --

Before Hugh can react, the unseen attacker charges -- DAGGER in hand -- swipes, SLICING his hand. Nasty gash. Hugh recoils, in pain. In the dim light, he sees ...

MARCELA. Standing there, crazed look in her eyes. A tense beat. She looks at the blood-stained dagger in her hands. Guilty. Then, tears begin flowing.

Suddenly, she attacks him again -- fighting the VOICES in her head -- hate burning in her eyes, hate mixed with tears.

Hugh grabs her, disarms her. She weeps uncontrollably.

MARCELA
 I'm sorry ... Forgive me ...

INT. THE CITADEL - SAME

Visago picks up a DEAD KNIGHT'S BODY and hurls it. The flying body slams Arnaud into the wall. Hard. Arnaud lies, stuck underneath the heavy armor. Hurting.

Visago twirls -- RAZOR STARS flying. Luc spins -- whirling his sword -- deflecting stars. Sparks flash. But two razor stars get through -- sticking Luc. He's down.

ARNAUD, lying in pain, sees a WHIPSYCTHE attached to the dead Knight slumped on top of him. He grabs it ... cracks the whip -- and LASSOS Visago's ankles.

Startled, Visago looks down, sees the whipsycthe blade embedded into his ankles. He's hooked.

He looks at Arnaud, clawed finger wagging... *Tsk, tsk.*

ARNAUD
(smiles)
No one lives forever.

And pulls. The blade SEVERs VISAGO'S FEET at the ankles!

Visago's body BURNS as he crumples to the floor. No matter where he moves, no matter what he touches -- his body BURNS.

VISAGO's FEET have been severed. No soil to protect him from standing on hallowed ground. He screams as he turns to ash.

ARNAUD
If you can't sever the head ... go
for the feet!

Templars heed the advice -- and SEVER Vampirics' legs off! They fall to ground, SCREAMING in pain as they burn.

EXT. CITADEL - NIGHT

ALEXIUS walks over the bridge of dead bodies.

INT. CITADEL - NIGHT

One Vampiric crawls towards the CITADEL DOORS ... trying to get off HOLY GROUND. Oliver walks over, grinning ...

OLIVER
No you don't, mate.

And thrusts his sword, PINNING IT to the floor.

Suddenly, the main doors BLOW OPEN! And ALEXIUS enters.

ARNAUD attacks -- but ALEXIUS throws his sword ... skewering Arnaud in the chest. He falls down ... dead.

OLIVER draws a handheld CROSSBOW, loaded with a precious HOLY CROSS-BOLT. Takes aim.

OLIVER
The devil will be vanquished!

Alexius leaps, a jumping knee kick -- striking Oliver in the throat. Oliver crashes to the floor. As Alexius lands, he PUNCHES his fist through Oliver's armor, deep into his chest.

Oliver gasps. Alexius leans in, staring, watching the life drain from Oliver's eyes. He then pulls his fist out, licking the blood from his hand.

FROM THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS ABOVE

Dawn breaks. Tiny rays of sunlight creep in through the windows. The Vampirics cower, retreating to the shadows.

Alexius looks at them with disgust. *Cowards.*

INT. CITADEL / SUNKEN PRAYER AREA - SAME

As Hugh leads Marcela, she pulls away from him. Fearful.

MARCELA

He's here. You must go!

She retreats to a dark corner.

HUGH then notices that everything is suddenly QUIET. He clasps his crucifix, quietly reciting The Lord's Prayer.

He looks up, sees ALEXIUS standing at the top. Alexius leaps, crushing a row of pews. As he rises, the PEWS scatter like leaves, smashing to splinters against the far walls.

As Alexius steps towards Hugh, he carefully sidesteps the shafts of sunlight.

ALEXIUS

And as much as I enjoy our reunion here in God's house... I must ask you for his son's blood.

HUGH

(raises his sword,
high guard position)
You live life by taking the lives
of others. It ends now.

Alexius attacks. Hugh blocks him. Here we go again.

The two adversaries go at it. Swordplay at its finest. Hugh kicks Alexius -- knocking him backwards through thin RAYS OF SUNLIGHT -- singeing his exposed hands. That stung.

Alexius recovers, swings -- Hugh steps back -- the very tip of Alexius' BLADE severs the chain of Hugh's Crucifix -- just missing his jugular. The crucifix flies off as do ...

The two gold wedding bands! They roll away.

Hugh grabs his throat, feeling naked. Alexius smiles.

ALEXIUS

Where is your faith now? You can end this. The pain, the suffering, the bloodshed. Just give me what I want.

HUGH

Never. I'll never give it to you. The Grail is for only the worthy!

Alexius grabs a LANCE -- armed with dozens of smaller blades chained to the staff. Alexius twirls the lance -- whipping the chained blades -- like a spinning propeller.

Hugh blocks the blows, but the whirling blades SEVER his sword in half -- slashing his legs. Alexius kicks Hugh, launching him backwards, knocking him against the far wall.

Hugh lands hard on impact, his broken sword clatters next to him, and spilling out of his armor ...

THE LAST VIAL

It skitters across the stone floor, and rolls to a stop ... right underneath a pool of light. Hugh smiles weakly.

Alexius walks towards the vial -- carefully sidestepping the growing laser beam shafts of daylight. He stands before it. Pondering. He then extends a hand to ... Marcela.

Under his will, Marcela walks over to him. She then bends down, and picks up THE VIAL for him, burning her hand. Flesh sizzling. Ignoring the pain, she hands it to Alexius.

ALEXIUS

Ah, true love.

He looks at the vial in his gloved hand. Smiles. Victory.

Suddenly, A CROSSBOW clatters next to HUGH, thrown by ...

ELYAS!

Hugh grabs the crossbow, loaded, ready to go.

ALEXIUS reacts all too late ...

Hugh has got him dead bang. Pulls the trigger. THE HOLY CROSS-BOLT FIRES ... And hits Alexius's shoulder. The bolt glances off the armor.

Hugh -- devastated -- his world collapsing. He failed.

Alexius laughs. VAMPIRICS gather above, looking down at their leader in his moment of triumph.

ALEXIUS

To a world forever in darkness. We
shall not be slaves to any God... or
his sons. I shall rule this world...
(to Marcela)
With my queen...

Marcela steps to Alexius' side. As Alexius raises the vial to smash it ... MARCELA KISSES HIM. Passionate. Alexius submits to her. This is what he has always wanted.

Hugh looks up, praying for help. He stares at the stained glass windows above. Various religious images -- *Christ on the Cross* -- *Mary Magdalen, weeping* -- *The Crown of Thorns* --

Alexius' defenses down, he doesn't realize that MARCELA has edged him back into a BEAM OF LIGHT -- which SEARS OFF HIS ARM -- the one holding the vial.

The vial falls...

... Hugh scrambles, fingers reaching for it...

... Alexius' severed arm and hand falls... and hits the floor -- WHOOSH! It turns to ash. The vial falls... and lands, the mound of ash softening the impact.

It doesn't shatter.

Hugh sighs relief. He then presses a button on the HILT of his broken sword, releasing the SMALL DAGGER ...

Alexius throws Marcela off of him. He looks at her. Tears of hurt and betrayal in his eyes. Speechless.

Hugh hurls the dagger. It smashes through the window.

A BRIGHT SHAFT OF SUNLIGHT shines through like a laser.

The remaining Templars pick up weapons, helmets, debris -- anything -- and throw them at the stained glass windows. As glass shatters -- SHAFTS OF SUNLIGHT flood the room!

Prisms of light BURNS Alexius. One BURNS OFF his other arm. Another BISECTS his legs. Dissecting him. Piece by piece.

Alexius falls to the floor. A ray of sunlight burns through his head ... and Alexius's remains turn to ASH.

The surviving Vampirics suddenly look LOST. Leaderless. The controlling voice in their head GONE. They withdraw, looking for shadows. As SUNLIGHT fills the Citadel, they start to BURN ... turning to ASH.

And with Alexius gone, MARCELA looks like she has been freed. Hugh takes her by the hand, leads her down into the crypt. Into the safety of darkness.

EXT. CITADEL - DAWN

Vampirics run for the dark forests. Most TURN TO ASH as they run. Some make it, where they hide in the shadows.

Templars give chase, taking down the rest.

EXT. CITADEL / BATTLEFIELD - MOMENTS LATER

HUGH, with ELYAS and LUC supporting him, walks outside with the rest of the surviving Templars. CHARLES and DEODAT climb up out of the moat, exhausted but still alive.

Together, they lift their swords in triumph and CHEER.

EXT. CITADEL - NIGHT

FUNERAL PYRES have been erected for OLIVER, ARNAUD and many others killed in battle. Hugh stops at Oliver's pyre. Says a quiet prayer. Others look on, saddened.

HUGH
Goodbye, my old friend. God will
look after you now.

He then puts a torch to the kindling. His body burns.

FUNERAL PYRES BURN as far as the eye can see.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CITADEL / CRYPT - NIGHT

Marcela lies peacefully in Hugh's arms. Tears welling.

EXT. CITADEL - DAWN

Marcela stands in the shadows. Dawn's first light. She feels the sun's warmth. Hugh approaches her.

HUGH
You are free, my love.

MARCELA

My soul is free. But I am not of
this world. I died long ago.

HUGH

No... we are together again...

She gently places her hand on his face. Looks into his eyes.
We SEE something in her eyes. A flicker of the Vampiric
instinct still there.

MARCELA

We will be together again.

A beat. Then ... she kisses him. A soft, lingering kiss.
She touches their wedding bands around his neck, smiles.

MARCELA

Remember me. I am forever yours.

She steps toward the sunlight, but Hugh holds onto her hand
... not wanting to let go.

Sunlight starts to burn her body. She succumbs to it. With
each step, more of her body slowly turns to ash ...

MARCELA

I love you.

... her hand slips from Hugh's.

She turns to look at Hugh. Smiles. Her radiant face is the
last to turn to ash.

Hugh weeps quietly.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARIS / RIVER SEINE - DUSK

The hour of Vespers. Île de la Cité. King Philip watches
from his palace window as Jacques de Molay and other Templars
are burned at the stake.

Hugh, under a hooded cloak, watches from the crowd, helpless.

HUGH (V.O.)

Though Alexius was dead, the charges
against the Order remained. Before
our Grand Master was burned at the
stake, he got word to us ...

INT. VATICAN / POPE CLEMENT V'S BED CHAMBER - NIGHT

A SERVANT carries in a tray of food and wine, and leaves.

HUGH (V.O.)

And we were happy to carry out his
last requests ...

HIDDEN IN SHADOW, braced between the wall and the ceiling
above is LUC. He SHAVES a HOLY CROSS-BOLT with a knife.
The shavings FALL into the glass of WINE. Dissolving.

POPE CLEMENT V sips his wine. Suddenly, he gags, foaming
at the mouth. His throat dissolves into ASH, followed by
the rest of his body ... Dead.

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

KING PHILIP, carried in a covered HAND CARRIAGE by loyal
aides and his HUNTING PARTY move through the field.

HUNTING DOGS have a FOX cornered. Philip leaps up. Grabs
his bow and arrow. Aides shield him with frilly parasols.

As he draw back, taking aim, SOMETHING STRIKES HIM IN THE
NECK! Blood spews. He realizes what it is ... a HOLY CROSS
BOLT. He disintegrates painfully into ASH ...

As his aides rush to help, we see A SHADOWY FIGURE in the
nearby trees. It is man? Or an animal? The wind?

INT. KING EDWARD II'S BEDCHAMBER - DAY

King Edward angrily balls up a MESSAGE. Throws it back at
the MESSENGER. ISABELLA sits next to him, weeping
uncontrollably. Both just got word of King Philip's death.

KING EDWARD II

They murdered her father. They
threaten peace. From this moment on,
we shall take possession of all that
is theirs. Their land, their castles,
their wealth -- everything. The
Templars will have no safe haven.
Every one of these criminals will be
hunted down and brought to justice.

AIDE

But, your Highness, they saved this
country.

KING EDWARD II

Yes. And let their actions be
stricken from history and rewritten
as I see fit. A hundred years from
now, their legacy will be forgotten.
Nothing more than fable.

EXT. THE CITADEL - DUSK

We see Hugh, Charles, Deodat, Simon, Gregory, Christus,
Elyas and others. Hugh holds a COPY OF KING EDWARD II'S
ORDER against them. Everyone looks offended, betrayed.

CHARLES

Fugitives again, eh? Now what?

HUGH

The Order moves underground. We
leave our castles and temples
behind. The road is our home now.
The shadows will be our church.

They all mount their waiting horses. Hugh pats Pete.

DEODAT

But what purpose do we have?

HUGH

A new crusade. The scourge of the
Devil is still among us. And as
long as just one of them remains ...

He holds up the LAST VIAL, attached to a necklace around
his neck. The two wedding bands joined with it.

HUGH

... This will never be safe. That
is our calling now.

They all ride off into the sunset.

FADE OUT.