

THE TWELVE

Written by

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TEASER

OVER BLACK:

DRUMS, war-like.

SUPER: The world would love you as one of its own, if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you.

- John 15:19

FADE IN:

EXT. PATMOS ISLAND - DAY

SUPER: Patmos 80 A.D.

The *DRUMS* continue. A massive crescent shaped island dominates the view.

Deep sandy beaches, rocky interior, scattered vegetation, foreboding, uninhabited.

EXT. PATMOS - BEACH - DAY

A small snake slithers into a circular crevice. Upon further inspection, it's an eye socket of a bleached human skull protruding from the sand.

Beyond, on the horizon, a massive ROMAN GALLEY approaches.

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

The bow of the Roman Galley cuts through the waves as it approaches the island.

EXT/INT. ROMAN GALLEY - DAY

Two crimson colored square masts flap in the breeze.

The ship's wood ornate, elegant, powerful. The bow of the ship beautifully curved with a purpose - ramming.

A multitude of oars match the rhythmic beats of the *DRUM*.

The drumming stops.

DRUMMER (O.S.)
Let it ride!

The slaves lift the oars out of the water, straighten them. They pant heavily, wipe sweat off their brows.

The boat gently glides, friction of the crashing waves slows it.

DRUMMER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hold!

In sync, the oars shoot straight down at the sides of the boat, the blades fully submerged.

The boat comes to a stop.

Eerie silence as we wait in anticipation.

Then... *SPLASH*.

JOHN (70s) pious, gaunt, his face weathered far beyond his years. His eyes, normally warm and inviting, now widened, terrified, desperate.

He struggles the churning waves.

John fights to get back to the surface, water fills his lungs.

He breaks the surface, gasps for air, paddles his arms frantically.

The weight of his saturated robes drags him back under. He swallows more water.

John breaks the surface again, tired and weakening.

JOHN

Help... help me!

CLAUDIUS (40s) arrogant and jaded, high-ranking Roman Officer, in leather armor is with...

LIVIUS (20s) an ambitious soldier, yet not bought into the politics, stands at the rear deck of the ship observing John.

Directly behind them stands, The ADVERSARY (30s), piercing blue eyes, blonde hair, handsome yet sinister looking, in black robes.

LIVIUS

Not going to survive.

CLAUDIUS

Then he doesn't.

The Adversary watches John struggle. He makes a faint expression of his lips, something stealthy – a smile – not a smile

John swims toward the shore with all his might. The rough surf whips him about. Seems like he's not getting anywhere.

The waves bash against him, currents fight his progress, but slowly, he's making it.

EXT. SURF - DAY

He's finally able to stand, waves crash against his back.

The beach now only a few yards away...

EXT. PATMOS - BEACH - DAY

Exhausted, he stumbles to the shore. He made it, barely.

John falls to his knees, vomits seawater, big heaves.

He breathes heavily for a moment, fights to catch his breath.

He strips off his robe.

His back is heavily scarred from all manners of torture, whippings, fresh and long healed, painful to even look at.

INT. ROMAN GALLEY - DAY

Claudius and Livius regard John.

CLAUDIUS
The bastard made it.

Livius smirks.

LIVIUS
Surprised?

CLAUDIUS
I am not.

Claudius looks down at his right hand which is wrapped in bandages.

CLAUDIUS (CONT'D)
The gods obviously favor this man.

LIVIUS
The gods? Or thee God?

Claudius glares at Livius.

CLAUDIUS
Careful now, Livius, or you shall
be joining him.

Livius looks down.

CRUNCH.

The Adversary takes a bite of an apple. Look of disgust on his face. No one takes notice. Is he really there?

Claudius turns, walks past him, nods to the DRUMMER (40s), a brutal beast of a man.

DRUMMER
Alright you derelicts! Get us out
of this surf!

BOOM. BOOM.

The drummer beats his drum.

Rows of SLAVES chained together, work the oars with all their might.

DRUMMER (CONT'D)
Back!

The oars rows backwards, the ship fights out of the surf and away from the island.

Claudius walks away, glances at Livius and shouts...

CLAUDIUS
Hail Caesar!

LIVIUS
(mutters)
Hail Caesar.

FADE OUT.

END TEASER