THE MONOLITH

FADE IN:

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT - DUSK

Last light stretches across the desert. DANIEL, late 30s, and his girlfriend LAUREN, 30s, climb a rocky rise together. A dark shape stands against the fading sky.

They stop. A MONOLITH towers over them -- seamless, unmarked, impossibly smooth.

LAUREN
Tell me somebody put that here.

DANIEL
How would they even get it out here?

She pulls out her phone, trying to lighten the mood.

LAUREN
Go stand by it. I want a picture.

Daniel approaches. His reflection warps across the stone. Lauren frames him with the monolith and takes the PHOTO.

LAUREN
Okay. Now come back. Seriously.

But Daniel is staring at the surface. He lifts one hand. His fingertips meet the stone.

The wind STOPS. The desert goes soundless.

FLASHES -- A candlelit monastery. A MONK running through a narrow corridor. Bells over a plague-stricken village.

VOICES (V.O.)
Legion.

Daniel recoils. Lauren catches him as he stumbles.

LAUREN
Daniel! What happened?

He cannot answer. Her phone lights up with the photo. Behind Daniel, reflected in the monolith, stands the MONK.

She looks up. There is no one else on the ridge.

CUT TO BLACK.